Importing Misery: Interstate Relations, National Governance and Local Insurgency

Amador Peleo, PhD Candidate, School of Political, Social and International Studies, University of East Anglia (UEA), Norwich, United Kingdom © 2008

Abstract:

This paper examines the link between the Philippine government's dependence on international military assistance and the problem of insurgent resistance motivated by the government's attempts to suppress political opposition with military force. The justifications and resources used by the Philippine government in the most recent anti-terrorist operations do not differ significantly from those used during its operations against communist subversives during the early Cold War. However, the effectiveness of the Philippine government's use of the insurgency as a means to attract foreign military support has not been matched by a final conclusion to the insurgent problem, by military force or other means. The Philippine case demonstrates a 'securitisation paradox' created by the militarisation of a political security issue as well as the durability of 'security patronage' relations between a decolonised state and its former coloniser.

Introduction

On 20 April 2006, five hundred delegates representing fifty countries attended a conference on counter-terrorism hosted by the Philippines. The conference itself was first announced by Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo at the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in South Korea in 2005, which was also attended by US President George W. Bush. Since the end of the Second World War, the Philippine government, with aid from the United States, has been continuously fighting domestic insurgent groups, of which the communist New Peoples' Army (NPA) and the Islamist Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) have been labelled Foreign Terrorist Organisations (FTOs) by the United States and the EU. The conference drew attention to the Philippines as an ally of the United States in the 'war on terror' and has highlighted the Philippines' continued dependence on American military aid to augment its armed forces. Benjamin Defensor, a conference organiser and former chief-of-staff of the Philippine military, claimed that the gathering was necessary to "sharpen awareness and skills to fight terrorism". However, the conference also attracted critics of militarist approaches to counter-terrorism, particularly from delegates representing groups of an Islamic background. Julkipli Wadi, a professor Islamic Studies of at the University of the Philippines, claimed that although Islamist insurgent groups have been active in the Southern Philippines, there may not necessarily be a material link between these groups and terrorist groups capable of operating internationally. The three-day conference concluded without a clear endorsement of the militarist 'hard-line' approach to counter-terrorism that the American 'war on terror' seemed to signify. Instead, more emphasis was placed on the need for aid-recipient governments to find a balance between their need to keep domestic peace and order and their tendency to align with the political and economic policies of wealthier countries in order to attract aid, investment and other forms of international support (Agence France-Presse 2006a).

An economic mission sent by the American government to investigate the intertwined problems of insurgent activity and underdevelopment in the Philippines in August of 1950 arrived at a similar

conclusion. Despite having continuously received American aid after the Second World War, the Philippine government was facing a severe economic crisis and an armed insurgency that numbered about fifteen thousand fighters. Partisans of the *Hukbong Magpapalaya sa Bayan*, literally the People's Liberation Army, fought the Japanese military that had occupied the Philippines during the War, but had been excluded from mainstream Philippine politics after the War on account of their communist ideology and nationalist orientation. After two months of research, the mission authorised the release of further aid for the Philippines and recommended a programme for economic reform. However, it also cautioned that aid and reform programmes can only "provide an environment in which the people of the Philippines can work out a reasonable solution of their problems." More importantly, the mission claimed that, "what (the people of the Philippines) ultimately achieve (with the reform programme) will be determined primarily by their own efforts and by the devotion of the Philippine government to the interests of all the people" (Dorfman 1951: 691).

Armed resistance to the central government persisted in various forms in the Philippines from its colonial period, beginning in the early 16th century, to its post-colonial period from the end of the Second World War to the present. The Philippine government has opposed 'subversive' communist groups since the mid-1930s (Ocampo 2000) while various Islamic groups calling for the establishment of an independent Muslim 'homeland' in the southern Philippines have been active since the early 1970s (Bertrand 2000: 39-40). Since Philippine independence from colonial rule in 1946 the issue that continues to surround the counter-insurgent conflict is the seeming inherence of international, particularly American, aid in the Philippine counter-insurgency efforts. Taken individually, events such as the Philippine anti-terrorist summit of 2006 and the American economic mission to the Philippines of 1950 appear to be attempts by the government to compensate for its security 'shortcomings' by soliciting international help. When seen as two instances of a single political history, however, both events suggest that security-related aid and international security relations have helped to reify politically-motivated armed conflict as a 'normal' part of governance in the country.

This paper will examine the 'balance' that the insurgent conflict has compelled the Philippine government to maintain between (1) maintaining good relations with security-aid donors and (2) engaging with the insurgents without excluding the potential use of coercive military force. On the one hand, the willingness of the United States in particular to support the Philippine government against 'terrorism' has obligated the latter to justify this continued support by treating the local insurgent problem as an 'international security threat.' On the other hand, a primary goal of the insurgents' use of force has been to compel the Philippine government to acknowledge their grievances against the state. Although this may be seen as an opportunity for the government to resolve the conflict peacefully and thereby obviate the need for foreign security aid, neither the government nor the insurgents, during their peace negotiations, seem to be willing to abide by an extended armistice or able to exclude the threat of force. The net effect of this 'balance' is a self-sustaining cycle of aid and conflict whereby the Philippine government 'uses' the insurgent problem as a basis for its international security relations while the insurgents regard foreign military aid for the government as an additional reason for their continued resistance. A drastic reduction in international military aid and an increase in international support for a peaceful resolution of the conflict may help break the cycle that has been in motion since at least the early 1950s. However, because the stand-off has taken the form of 'low intensity' guerrilla warfare that requires only basic equipment to fight, even non-military aid is likely to be channelled into the conflict.

Insurgency, National Conflict and International Security

Whose problem is it anyway?

Examining the link between the Philippine government's dependence on international military assistance and the cycle of insurgent conflict entails clarifying two aspects of the context within which Philippine international security relations have developed. The first is the problematic 'demarcation' between 'local' and 'international' security adopted by the Philippine government, but is not helpful for describing the international significance of the insurgency conflict itself. The Philippine case has the appearance of a limited internal conflict[1], which, despite having been fought across several decades, does not appear to threaten other countries with a 'spillover' effect.[2] Consequently, linking the Philippine government's relation with international aid donors to the actual conflict appears only secondary to the primary concern of assessing the inclination of both the government and the insurgents to either continue fighting or settle their differences amicably. But not only have both insurgents and the government tended to refuse a settlement so long as the government has been able to avail itself of international military aid. The insurgents have also attempted to align themselves with potential international benefactors notwithstanding, or perhaps because of, the government's military advantage gained through international aid. The significance of 'international' influences on what appears to be primarily a 'domestic' political and military security problem may lead the line of inquiry towards the exploration of the interests that other countries have satisfied by granting conflict-related assistance. Nonetheless, where foreign military support has remained constant for decades, the fundamental issue lies in identifying the 'gap' through which international assistance is introduced into the domestic conflict.

The inability of a government to adequately equip its armed forces to serve as a deterrent to criminality and sedition makes it vulnerable to the so-called 'political messianism' of wealthier states, particularly those engaged in the international arms trade (Holsti 1986b: 357). This is one of the implications of the appropriately-termed 'gap' theory of international conflict. Based on the notion that economic growth is the primary goal of developing states, this theory infers conflict as a result of the frustration and aggressive nationalism associated with the failure of the government to meet levels of national development expected by the population (Holsti 1975: 831). A government of a developing state would consider the reinforcement of its military and police as part of an overall plan of state 'modernisation' that, in principle, would result in security for the government and prosperity for its population. A government seeking foreign security and development aid intends to compensate for its administrative and material shortcomings and to thereby forestall any form of insecurity that could result from an administrative and financial 'gap'. Aid-seeking also 'normalises' international relations by reinforcing a peaceful 'asymmetry' between donor and recipient states. A recipient government would be expected to align itself with the political and security outlook of the donor government and accept its directions on how to best utilise the aid. Trade and other forms of interaction between states of unequal wealth and power are skewed to reflect and symbolise the overall security relationship between these states (Holsti 1986a: 647), wherein the 'stronger' state serves as the *de facto* guarantor of the 'right-to-rule' of the government of the developing state. The United States and the countries of Western Europe in particular have appeared to the governments of developing states as paragons of wealth and security to be emulated and to be entreated for development aid in return for political, economic and even cultural homogeneity (Holsti 1975: 827-29). Thus, in principle, military

[1] By 'internal conflict' is meant the violent or potentially violent political disputes whose origins can be traced primarily to domestic rather than systemic factors, and where armed violence takes place or threatens to take place primarily within the borders of a single state; see Brown (1996: 1).
[2] Spillover refers mainly to the problems that local wars pose to countries on the periphery of the conflict and to networks of international relations into which these and other countries are incorporated; see Lawson (2003: 83), Debiel (2002: 2), Brown (1996: 583).

and development aid prevent militancy and other forms of insecurity in a recipient state by ensuring that its government has the means to fulfil its administrative functions and is assured of support from its wealthier and secure 'patron' state.

In practice, however, the foreign aid intended to fill the administrative 'gap' of the government of a developing state can itself be the grounds for insecurity, particularly in the form of domestic resistance against the government. This is because economic rationalisation, rapid industrialisation and other development formulae accompanying the grants can prove to be socially disruptive when implemented by the recipient government. Although aid programmes are intended to improve government functionality and social welfare, their implementation can disrupt existing relations and practices and antagonise sectors of society not immediately able to accommodate changes to their norms (ibid.: 830-32). The Philippine government had attempted to accommodate communist and Islamic insurgents by incorporating them into security agencies such as the military and the police or by recognising the political authority they hold over particular areas. However, these attempts have fragmented the insurgencies, and have resulted not only in the renewal of the conflict between government and the insurgents but also in a 'new' conflict between insurgent factions (Belen 2006, Doronila 2003, Bordadora 2003). Military aid compels the recipient government to justify its alignment with the military and geopolitical orientation of the donor government to a population with a potentially unfavourable opinion of this linkage.[3] Moreover, a recipient government risks popular resentment if it were to use the military that had been reinforced through foreign aid for national police duties, particularly for deterring political opposition to the government.[4] Sending military aid to a government facing an insurgent conflict risks further insecurity – not only by enabling the fighting to continue, but also by worsening the political divisions between the government and its opponents. The military aid received by the Philippine government has attracted critical attention from non-violent activists and has compelled the government to suppress suspicions of its turn to authoritarianism.[5] The insurgent conflict can be regarded as indicative of much broader and 'durable' problems in the Philippines, such as post-colonial vigilantism and political violence (Hedman and Sidel 2001: 36-37). Filipinos appear to be in an open 'competition' for the control of a state in a 'war of systematic exclusion' whereby victory is assessed in terms of the ability of a faction to continue to advance its own interests at the expense of the interests of the other (Hardin cited in Holsti 1998: 124). The Philippine government has, since the establishment of the Philippine Commonwealth under the United States in 1935, tended to be composed mainly of wealthy landowners and industrialists and has traditionally relied on American support to suppress mass-based resistance movements (Greenberg 2007, Holsti 1985, Karnow 1990: 254ff.).

Living with a 'Small' Problem and with 'Big' Neighbours: Domestic Insecurity and Foreign Aid

The second aspect of the 'security context' within which the Philippine government's threat-perception of the insurgent problem has developed is the ready availability of foreign support for the government's 'regime defence' against its domestic rivals. The Philippine government has 'securitised' the insurgent threat to make it appear compatible with American security interests and to thereby 'share' the burden of the counter-insurgent conflict. A more recent example of this was the 'foreign terrorist organisation' designation obtained by the Philippine government from the US government in 2002 for the Communist Party of the Philippines – New People's Army (CPP-NPA) (Herrera and Pablo 2002). American Secretary of State Colin Powell called the CPP, 'a Maoist group… aimed at

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[3] Conversely, a recipient government remains under the scrutiny of the donor government concerning the former's political-security alignment. For a recent example, see Uy (2006). This recalls the Philippine government's anti-communist orientation supported by American security aid in the 1950s: see Hart (1953: 67-68).

[4] For a recent example, see Ubac and del Puerto (2006).

[5] For an example of Filipino reactions to the US-backed anti-terrorist legislation in the Philippines, see Ubac and Lopez (2007).

overthrowing the Philippine government through guerrilla warfare,' and stated that 'the NPA… strongly opposes any US presence in the Philippines and has killed US citizens there' (ibid.) This subsequently led to a search for, and freezing of, the organization's funds based in Europe (Dalangin et al. 2002), and eventually to a 'terrorist' label from the European Union (Dalangin 2002). Another recent example is the Philippine government's claim to have 'defeated' the Islamist-terrorist Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) through 'sustained military operations' and US military supervised development aid (Associated Press 2007). The ASG has long demanded a separate Islamic state in Mindanao in the Southern Philippines and has engaged in daring and violent raids since 1991. These include the razing of a public market complex in Ipil town in Mindanao in 1995 and the kidnapping of more than 30 foreigners in 2000 and 2001 (from which they received large but unspecified ransoms) (Abu Sayyaf Group 2005). The Philippine and American militaries continue to conduct joint training operations aimed specifically at countering subversives intending to emulate the guerrilla tactics used by the ASG. Official government spokespersons, however, rule out the possibility of sending American troops against Philippine insurgents (Orejas 2006). Nonetheless, these joint operations are likely to serve as a show of force against the active Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), another secessionist insurgency from which some ASG members originated and which is suspected by the US military to have links with international terrorist groups (CDI Terrorism Project 2004, Bertrand 2000: 41).

The definition of securitisation used here is derived from a recent Copenhagen School definition of security (Williams 2003: 511ff.), which is 'a kind of stabilization of conflictual or threatening relations, often through emergency mobilization of the state'. Where security refers to, 'the ability of states and societies to maintain their independent identity and functional integrity against forces of change which they see as hostile' (Buzan 1991: 432), the securitisation concept continues the definition by emphasizing 'survival' as the bottom line. State security, or securitisation in and by a state, implies the preservation of the individuals, societies and institutionalised 'ways of life' within the boundaries of the state (Buzan and Wæver 1997: 242-43). Any public issue can be located in the spectrum ranging from non-politicised (the state does not deal with it and it is not, in any other way, made an issue of public debate and decision) through politicised (the issue is part of public policy, requiring government decision and resource allocations or, more rarely, some other form of communal governance) to securitized (the issue is presented as an existential threat, requiring emergency measures and justifying actions outside the normal bounds of political procedure). The securitisation of an issue follows a linear path first across initial attempts to solve the problem through existing, hence non-politicised, government procedures. After this comes the practice of politicisation, where the issue is subjected to public discussion and debate and thereby to the pressures of competing sectoral interests. The goal of politicisation is to formulate new legislation that enables the government to deal with the issue. Only when both practices are insufficient to contain the problem at hand will securitisation be employed, with a view to recovering the stable milieu and maintaining an orderly system of issue-identification and response (Buzan et al. 1998: 23-24).

A core concept of securitisation is that the state speaks security for its society as a whole (Williams 1998: 438). That is, a security problem always has a 'referent object' within a society which it threatens, such as the economy, the environment or military relations (Buzan et al. 1998: 36ff., Williams 1998: 435). Moreover, the government, which is typically the state's 'securitising actor' (Buzan et al. 1998: 40ff.), addresses an 'audience' to which the identified problem is a relevant existential threat. Securitisation most directly 'refers to' and 'addresses' individuals or groups within a state, and/or their practices, beliefs and other institutionalised forms of behaviour. The Philippine case, however, shows that a government can choose to securitise threats to long-standing inter-state relations that it considers vitally important to the country's well-being. The Philippine government seems unwilling or unable to disassociate its security relations with the United States from the securitisation of the insurgent conflict (Quismundo and Ubac 2007). By having 'broadened' the audience to which its securitisation attempt is addressed to include a foreign government, the Philippine government appears to have given up some control over its own domestic security

potential. This implies a diminished ability to 'desecuritise' the insurgent conflict or any other security issue to which it has attached foreign, particularly American, security aid or interest. The Philippine insurgent problem has proven 'significant' to the security interests of the United States in different ways at different times. The American attention attracted by CPP throughout the Cold War, and the alleged collusion of the Philippine Islamic insurgencies with the Al Qaeda organisation prior to the War on Terror has justified the re-development of the Philippine military as an anti-terrorist force with American help (Labog-Javellana 2005). Although it has not totally eradicated any particular insurgent movement, the Philippine government has nonetheless retained a tactical advantage over the insurgents through foreign aid, and is therefore unlikely to alter the asymmetrical inter-state security relations that has developed through the securitisation process. It remains to be seen, however, whether the Philippines can maintain a balance between the benefits derived from its asymmetric security relations with the United States and the 'culture of conflict' that has emerged from the long-term securitisation of the conflict.

Indeterminate Problem, Incomplete Answers: American aid and the Hukbalahap

Discrimination and Disappointment; Renewing the Bases for Resistance

The paradox of the Philippine insurgent conflict emerged out of the political insecurity of the Philippine government immediately after the Second World War. In 1946, the government of President-elect Manuel Roxas was uncertain about how to deal with the *Hukbong Bayan Laban Sa Hapon,* literally The Nation's Army Against the Japanese, or *Hukbalahap* for a shorthand. Popularly called the Huks, it was the largest and most successful all-Filipino guerrilla group that resisted the Japanese occupation simultaneously with other groups that were organised by personnel of the United States Army Forces in the Far East (USAFFE) (Tarling 2000: 173). However, the Huks' organisation and membership derived from the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) which was founded in 1930 and outlawed in 1932 by the Philippine Commonwealth under the authority of the American government. After the war, the Huks fielded candidates in the 1946 national elections and won several congressional seats. These Huk representatives, like their CPP predecessors, were critical of the United States' direct influence on Philippine government and economy that persisted despite the country's 'independent' standing under the Commonwealth. The Huks also continued the aggressive campaign to improve labourers' welfare begun by the CPP, which would have put them in direct conflict with most other Philippine politicians who were plantation owners and industrialists (Chapman 1946: 268). The American military suspected the Huks of planning, through the Democratic Alliance (DA), to replace the government with a socialist system and to thereby align the Philippines with the Soviet Union (Macgrain cited in Greenberg 2007: 39). The immediate problem that the Huk-DA candidates posed to the post-war government was that they would have probably voted against a bill that would have granted Americans 'parity rights' with Filipinos over property ownership in the Philippines in exchange for post-war reconstruction aid (Golay 1955: 56, Vinacke 1947: 724). The Huk-DA representatives won by large vote margins in the areas they represented, but the Roxas government withheld their congressional seats on the charge that they obtained votes through fraud and coercion.[6] Although the Huks protested vigorously, the Philippine government began a renewed crackdown against 'communist' organisations following of the 'Truman Doctrine' 1947 whereby the US extended aid to foreign governments that opposed communism. The Huks returned to their jungle bases in Central Luzon, changed the 'Huk' label to mean *Hukbong Magpapalaya sa Bayan*, literally the People's Liberation Army or HMB, in 1948, and directed their guerrilla activities against the government. The inefficiency and corruption of the Philippine government and the indiscriminate

[6] Rodney S. Azama, The Huks and the New People's Army: Comparing Two Postwar Filipino Insurgencies (Quantico, VA: Marine Corps Command and Staff College, 2 April 1985), p. 127, as cited in Greenberg (2007: 59).

attacks by constabulary forces on rural communities suspected of supporting the Huks further strengthened the latter's intensive recruitment and reorganisation efforts. By 1950, the Huks numbered over 15,000 fighters and over 100,000 supporters distributed across Central and Southern Luzon, and were conducting guerrilla raids on nearly a daily basis in areas surrounding Manila.[7]

Although the CPP received support from the Soviet Union in terms of training and political networking for its officials prior to the Second World War, the Huks did not receive any foreign assistance during and after the war. The Soviet media even criticised the Philippine government for the 'dishonest trick' of linking the Huks with the Soviet Union in 1948. And although some Soviet attention was drawn to the battlefield successes of the Huks from 1948 to 1950, it did not result in the granting of material support. The Huks' guerrilla attacks against government targets were necessary both to acquire equipment and information as well as to reinforce Huk authority in the 'Huklandia' areas throughout Central Luzon (Morris 1994: 81).

Local Insurgency, International Interests and the Problem of Relevance

In contrast, the post-war Philippine governments made extensive use of the 'insurgent threat' as a means to solicit American support for the development of the country in general. In 1950, an economic mission was sent by US President Truman to the Philippines at the request of President Quirino to survey all aspects of the Philippine economy and to recommend measures that would make the country economically self-sustaining. But the economic mission was also to investigate the apparent ineffectiveness of the large amount of post-war development aid in solving 'political instability' and 'economic difficulty' in the Philippines. The mission verified earlier reports on the numerous problems that persisted even after the war and thereby indirectly confirmed the insurgents' motives for resistance (Karnow 1990: 345-46). These were, namely, a feudal system of land organisation, inefficient and inadequate production that resulted in low wages, over-reliance on basic agricultural exports, widespread inefficiency and corruption in the government service, and a general disregard by landlords and industrialists for the welfare of labourers (Fifield 1951b: 118). The mission concluded that the opportunities to transform the Philippine economy from a system dependent on American concessions to a system capable of supporting an independent country had already largely disappeared. Moreover, the government had allowed the economy to deteriorate beyond the point of self-correction. The government was close to depleting its foreign currency reserves and was wasting the low foreign exchange rate by importing basic goods which could have been produced locally as well as 'luxury items' that did not contribute to greater social welfare. The mission recommended a reformation of the tax system to assess greater levies against high incomes and large property holdings. Agricultural and industrial productions were to be improved, and numerous social welfare programmes, including land reform, benefitting low-wage earners were to be implemented. The civil service was to be improved and wages of government employees were to be increased. Finally, a loan of US $250 million was to be granted to the Philippine government, though its disbursement was to be supervised by a technical commission appointed by the American government (Dorfman 1951: 690-92, Fifield 1951a: 38).

The Philippine government also benefited greatly from American support channelled through the Joint US Military Advisory Group to the Philippines (JUSMAG). Attached to the US embassy in Manila, the JUSMAG was established on 1 November 1947 to oversee a modest military assistance programme and worked in conjunction with various economic programmes implemented soon after the war. The JUSMAG rose to prominence in 1950 when the US government concluded that the Philippine government was incapable of withstanding political and military pressure from the Huks. Funds allocated to the JUSMAG increased from US $12.6 million to US $21.8 million in 1950. Since it

[7] Robert R. Smith, The Hukbalahap Insurgency: Economic, Political, and Military Factors (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1963), p. 92, as cited in Greenberg (2007: 67).

had become the sole source of US military assistance to the Philippines, the JUSMAG oversaw the large deliveries of weapons, ammunition and vehicles to the Philippine military. JUSMAG aid was also used to increase the salaries of military personnel, the first 'special request' for US $10 million being granted in 1951 as part of the reformation of the Philippine army.[8]

Ramon Magsaysay, the previous Chairman of the House Committee on National Defence under the Roxas government and subsequently Secretary for National Defence under the government of Elpidio Quirino, rose to political prominence in the Philippines through coordinating with the JUSMAG. By working closely with JUSMAG advisor US Air Force Lt. Col. Edward Lansdale and his assistant US Army Maj. Charles Bohannan, Magsaysay developed plans for the reorganisation of the Philippine military and new aggressive tactics to match the Huks' guerrilla warfare (Bonner 1987: 37-38). Magsaysay also incorporated a civil resettlement programme to complement the development of the military. In 1950, the Economic Development Corps (EDCOR) was formed both to help ease captured and surrendered Huks back into civilian life and to persuade active Huk cadres to surrender. The former guerrillas were indoctrinated to the point of accepting government authority and they were taught modern agriculture and land management (Kerkvliet 1974: 288-89). In January 1951, Philippine Army engineers were sent to Mindanao to develop resettlement areas for the first batch of EDCOR trainees using equipment and construction materials supplied by the JUSMAG. By 1954, the government had developed three more EDCOR sites, one in Mindanao and two in Luzon, totalling at 250,000 hectares. And all the EDCOR sites had settled about 1200 families which totalled to about 5200 persons (Greenberg 2007: 91).

The comprehensive security-related redevelopment of the Philippine government sponsored by the JUSMAG compounded the problems of the insurgents that began with a split between the HMB and its Politburo in January 1950. In October 1950, 22 simultaneous government raids in Manila resulted in the capture of six senior leaders of the CPP politburo.[9] By April 1953, the military had overrun the Huk's field headquarters in Mount Arayat, Pampanga. Magsaysay used the political leverage gained from the successful military and civil programmes of the Department of Defence and the endorsement of the JUSMAG to win the Philippine Presidency in the national elections of 1953. At the beginning of 1954, the strength of the Huks had been reduced to two-thousand active guerrillas. In February 1954, the government began its 'Operation Thunder-Lightning' in Central Luzon, which mobilised five thousand troops and lasted for 211 days. Luis Taruc, leader of the Huks, surrendered on 17 May 1954.[10] The military reduced the Huks' numbers to less than one thousand after the end of their operation, and thereafter no longer considered the HMB as a threat to the national government.

A Bottomless Bottom Line and a Resurgent Insurgency?

Although the Huks' numbers continued to dwindle after 1955, the American government continued to send large amounts of military aid into the Philippines. The annual amount in 1953 and 1956 was held constant at US$ 28.4 million but rose to $35.1 million in 1957. After Magsaysay died in a plane crash in 1957, Carlos Garcia was elected president and remained in office until 1961. The amount of aid received by his government was only slightly less than that received by the Magsaysay government. The rate slowed further during the presidency of Diosdado Macapagal, to US $14.3 million in 1964, but aid increased again to US $21.5 million at the beginning of the presidency of Ferdinand Marcos in 1965. Towards the end of his presidency in 1969, the Philippines received well over $25 million

[8] Irwin D. Smith, The Philippine Operation Against the Huks: Do Lessons Learned Have Application Today? (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 24 January 1968), p. 6, as cited in Greenberg (2007: 81).
[9] Ismael Lapus, The Communist Huk Enemy, *Counter Guerrilla Operations in the Philippines 1946-53*, (Ft. Bragg, NC: U.S. Army Special Forces Center and School, 15 June 1961),p. 19, as cited in Greenberg (2007: 67).
[10] Reports, JUSMAG to CINCPAC, "Monthly Summary of Activities for August 1954," 10 Sep 54; and "Report for September 1954," 9 Oct 54, both in MMRD, RG 330, box 46, NARA, Washington, D.C., as cited in Greenberg (2007: 140).

annually in military aid. The total amount of military aid received by the Philippines during the first four years of the Marcos government was almost equal to that sent to the Philippines in the four years after the end of the Second World War, during which the Huk insurgency was at its strongest. Conversely, the amount spent by the Philippine government for its military remained significant even after the surrender of the Huk leadership in 1953. Post-war Philippine military expenditure first peaked at US $83.9 million in 1953. From a rise of US $84.7 million in 1958, the rate soared to $149.4 million in 1968, exceeding the amounts spent by the government to fight the Huks from 1950 to 1955.[11]

Table 1: Foreign Military Aid to the Philippines and Philippine Domestic Military Expenditure, 1950-1968 (in US$ millions, at 1960 prices and 1960 exchange rates)[12]

Year	Foreign Military Aid	Domestic Military Expenditure
1950	24.3	54.4
1951	24.3	57.9
1952	26.4	82.8
1953	28.4	83.9
1954	28.4	80.1
1955	28.4	78.4
1956	28.4	79.0
1957	35.1	80.9
1958	31.8	84.7
1959	21.0	87.6
1960	26.4	87.1
1961	27.6	89.4
1962	24.7	87.1
1963	18.6	87.1
1964	14.3	83.3
1965	21.5	93.0
1966	23.2	111.4
1967	25.4	124.6
1968	(14.7)	149.4

The foreign aid and the increasing military budgets did not, however, result in the redevelopment of the military from its anti-insurgent and police functions. Moreover, anti-insurgent operations in Central Luzon were taken up by paramilitary 'hunter-killer' squads known as the 'Monkees', so called in order to distinguish them from the typically long-haired Huk liquidation squads who were called the 'Beatles' (Hedman and Sidel 2001: 42). Nor did the Philippine government perceive the need to develop the military to assume the primary responsibility for external defence of the country. The Mutual Defence Treaty of 1951 between the Philippines and the United States and the presence of American military bases developed since the early 20th century were assumed to be an adequate deterrent against external attack (Mutual Defence Treaty Between the Republic of the Philippines and the United States of America, 30 August 1951). The communist insurgency re-emerged under the leadership of Jose Maria Sison in 1969 (Liwanag 2007), and the Moro National Liberation Front began calling for the secession of the Muslim peoples in Mindanao to form their own independent Islamic state (Moro National Liberation Front 2007). Although the Philippine government has yet to conclude

[11] All amounts are at 1960 exchange rates. Table 1B.1 'Western powers' military aid grant to third world countries', *SIPRI Yearbook of World Armaments and Disarmament* (1969/70: 284-85).
[12] SIPRI Yearbook 1969/70,p. 284

its struggle with these resurgent insurgencies, the military support it receives from the United States still resembles that given to combat the Huks, and is therefore likely to serve as a basis for the continued resistance of the insurgents.

Conclusion

Ironically, the 'balance' maintained by the Philippine state between the need to maintain domestic political security and the need to foster international security relations has resulted in neither the conclusive defeat of local insurgencies nor the end of the country's dependence on foreign military aid. The 'equilibrium' that the Philippine government has maintained between its domestic counter-insurgent operations and its international security relations, particularly those with the United States continues to drive the cycle of counter-insurgent violence. By making the local insurgencies appear as 'terrorists' of international significance, the Philippine government has, in this case, 'shared' the responsibility of its own national security with the United States that still willingly supports the Philippine anti-insurgent campaign. The option of 'limiting' the insurgent problem to an entirely local issue to be settled between Filipinos remains as open as it has been since the start of the Hukbalahap conflict in the 1950s. However, an inherently 'conflictual' security culture that has developed since that time may mean that Filipinos continue to fight each other with, and because of, international aid for the foreseeable future.

The Philippines' Post-Second World War 'Huk problem' and Post-Cold War 'anti-terrorist problem' are comparable, insofar as the Philippine government has turned its domestic insecurity into the foundation of its foreign security relations. Past and present insurgencies constitute a military, economic and political security threat, even if the insurgents themselves have regarded their struggle as pursued primarily for political accommodation and reform. By having resumed and maintained its role as the Philippine government's security 'patron' from the Second World War, the United States essentially compelled the Philippines to favour a purely military securitisation-response. The joint EDCOR and battlefield operations of the military in the early 1950s nearly exterminated the HMB and this type of strategy became the reference point for the development of the AFP armed forces and for the government's general security outlook. From that time onwards, the government expected the AFP to fulfil a socio-civic development role and to 'keep the peace' through threat and coercion in areas where insurgent influence remained. The suppression of political dissent had become a primary function of the military. Consequently, preferential funding of the military had become essential to the survival of the incumbent government. Although the Huk insurgency had grown out of specific grievances against the government, its defeat by the AFP effectively 'institutionalised' militarisation as the primary securitisation response of the Philippine state.

The intensive militarisation of the insurgent conflict also implied that the Philippine political elite had accepted the securitisation paradox as a manageable 'risk' of governance. American support for the military had become a reliable resource for the defence of incumbent officials against their political enemies. The HMB could not withstand an American-funded AFP for long, and the present-day insurgents are unlikely to overthrow the government that is still funded generously by the United States. This form of 'political survival', however, is anathema to conflict mediation based on local negotiation and accommodation. It also ensures that insurgent movements will re-emerge as soon as conditions become more favourable for the militants. As long as the Philippine government prefers to 'balance' its domestic security with foreign security aid, the problem of insurgent resistance is likely to remain unresolved, notwithstanding, and partly because of, the recognition it accords to the insurgents.

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