




INCREASE OF TERRORISM IN PHILIPPINES

The recent resurgence of terrorism in central Luzon appears to be essentially a reaction to President's Marcos' efforts to end lawlessness in the Philippine countryside. Marcos' campaign has tended to disrupt a mutually beneficial collusion between local officials and lawless elements, some of which are still controlled or influenced by the Huks.

The strength of the Huk movement was broken in the 1950s by the late president Magsaysay, and subsequent efforts to revitalize it has been hampered by dissension among its leaders. Nevertheless, remnants of the movement have maintained a profitable alliance with gangster and political elements, particularly in its former stronghold in central Luzon.

This area has long been plagued by lawlessness, corrup-

tion, and civil unrest, encouraged by the vast divergences in personal wealth. President Marcos, soon after taking office, began a broad program of military and civic action aimed at wiping out sources of discontent in the area. In the face of the most recent incidents, including the assassination of a strongly anti-Communist mayor in mid-July, Marcos has authorized additional troops and initiated a crash civic reform program utilizing the civic action troops slated for Vietnam.

The Huk threat has frequently been overplayed by Filipino leaders and the sensationalist Manila press, both for domestic political reasons and as a lever for seeking greater US aid. However, if Marcos' reform program fails, central Luzon provides an ideal environment for a significant Huk revival. 