

Popular Support for the Revolutionary Movement CPP-NPA: Experiences in a Hacienda in Negros Occidental, 1978-1995

Monday 20 April 2020, by [RUTTEN Rosanne](#) (Date first published: 1 December 2019).

Why did peasants and rural workers support the revolutionary movement CPPNPA (Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army, henceforth called NPA)? The question is hardly trivial: without the support of more than a million people in Philippine villages and towns who supplied manpower, food, cash, and intelligence, the NPA would never have developed by the mid-1980s into a powerful challenger to the state. This sizable popular support for the NPA was one sign of a "revolutionary situation" in the Philippines, a situation that, as Tilly says, is characterized by the appearance of contenders with exclusive claims to state power, the "commitment to these claims by a significant segment of the citizenry," and the "incapacity or unwillingness of rulers" to suppress these contenders. [1] Here I deal with the second aspect, that of popular commitment, and seek to explain the rise (and decline) of support for the NPA among hacienda-worker families in Negros Occidental, one of the provinces where the NPA gained considerable influence and support. [2]

A common view has it that Philippine rural poor were pushed into the arms of the NPA because they were "desperate and outraged" [3] at increasing poverty, repression, and the lack of legal means to seek redress of grievances; and that their outrage was channeled by the NPA. Porter, for instance, cites "disaffection from the government arising from a number of sources: the inequalities of the existing landowning system, the process of landgrabbing by wealthy and politically influential figures, the insensitivity of the Marcos regime to the interests of poor farmers, the arbitrary and repressive local political and administrative structure, and the abuses of the military." [4] Such explanations list "invidious conditions of state and society" that supposedly cause people to join or support a revolutionary movement, but give little evidence that such aggregate conditions actually motivate or constrain them to do so. [5]

To find out what leads people to support the NPA, we need to focus on the level at which people interact, trace the microprocesses that produce this support, and start by analyzing the sequence of key interactions in which people actually decide to contribute to the NPA. Simply stated, most contributions to the NPA are solicited and provided in interactions between mobilizers and villagers. Taking these interactions as a starting point, we can then consider whether and how specific "invidious conditions" motivate people to provide these concrete contributions, what other considerations are at work, and how people's motives for support may change over time. At this level of personal interaction we can also explore how people's involvement in social networks of community, family, peers, and activists, and their connections to larger social environments, influence their mobilization and commitment.

Two considerations inform this perspective. First, we should avoid looking around for "big" causes

(for instance, a wide gap between rich and poor, or a deep socioeconomic crisis) to explain a “big” change (massive support for a revolutionary movement) but consider, instead, the accumulation of microprocesses out of which a specific large change is built. [6]

Second, we need to acknowledge that revolutionary activists may have considerable influence on why, how, and when villagers support a revolutionary movement. Like most party-led and rural-based revolutionary movements this century, the NPA gains rural support through the mobilizing work of activists, who combine ideological work, organization, and coercion in an effort to reshape communities into support bases for the NPA. The initiatives come primarily from mobilizers; the actions of villagers are primarily reactions to those initiatives. In the course of mobilization, villagers may not only enhance their capabilities to act upon their grievances and perceive new opportunities for taking such actions. They may also redefine their grievances and change their aspirations as they acquire new perspectives on society and their place in it, and as the balance of power shifts somewhat in their favor. Moreover, the very presence of armed mobilizers confronts villagers with new incentives and pressures to support the movement. [7]

This paper, then, seeks to explain rural support for the NPA by taking the actual process of face-to-face mobilization as the starting point of analysis. My focus on mobilizers and mobilized is not an attempt to dust off and reintroduce the “outside agitator” approach, but an effort to place the interactions between activists and villagers center stage.

In Hacienda Milagros (a pseudonym), a plantation in the vast sugarcane producing region of Negros Occidental, workers’ involvement with the NPA had ranged from active participation to reluctant support. I had informal interviews with women and men of the hacienda when I lived there (with one of the hacienda families) for nine months in 1992 and one month in 1995. Most people of Milagros knew me well from previous field work in 1977-78, and with several families I had maintained close personal ties. Taking my previous research as a starting point, I tried to reconstruct the mobilization histories of individual persons, families, and the community as a whole. [8] This account of experiences in Milagros does not pretend to be complete or typical of the rise and decline of community support for the NPA elsewhere, but rather suggests ways of analyzing it. Broadly similar processes of mobilization did take place, though under varying conditions and with diverse outcomes, in haciendas near Milagros, as well as in an upland village in southern Negros Occidental where I did additional fieldwork. [9]

The province of Negros Occidental—its hacienda lowlands and marginal uplands—was one of the main centers of NPA mass support in the 1980s. Located in the lowlands, Hda. Milagros was fully organized and controlled by the NPA by the mid-1980s, as were most of the surrounding haciendas. By 1992 the balance of power in the area had shifted in favor of the military, planters, and the government, and revolutionary support by the hacienda population had declined.

THE QUESTIONS “WHY” AND “HOW”

In his analysis of revolutionary movements in Latin America, Wickham-Crowley notes a shift in perspective from studies that emphasize “the *causal* role of...discontent in fomenting movements,” to studies “describing . . . the *processes* of mobilization. They seem to have replaced the ‘why?’ of an earlier generation of movement theorists . . . with a ‘how to?’” [10] Focusing on the issue of popular support for revolutionary movements, I would argue that the why and how questions are interlinked. Because mobilization processes partly shape the circumstances under which people decide to support a movement, we need to know how they were mobilized to understand why they provide support. [11]

Two approaches to peasant support for revolutionary movements are relevant in this respect. The

first has a strong “why” and a weak “how” component. Studies by Gould [12] and Kerkvliet, [13] for instance, attribute villagers’ support primarily to villagers’ grievances against landed elites and the state, and their self-generated struggle for subsistence security and land. In the cases they discuss, villagers make an “alliance” with a revolutionary movement and retain some autonomy vis-à-vis that movement. These studies provide important insight in indigenous perceptions, grievances, and aspirations (in particular the restoration of traditional subsistence rights), local leadership, and preexisting peasant solidarities. [14] They deal sparingly, however, with actual community mobilization, in particular whether village-based mobilizers exert control, change local perceptions, and institutionalize the movement within communities, all of which may affect villagers’ decisions to provide support.

Authors who follow the second approach, in contrast, contend that answering the “how” of peasant mobilization explains the “why” of their support. [15] They argue that party-led revolutionary movements develop village-based organizations that provide incentives and sanctions to induce local support. Villagers weigh their individual contributions to the movement against the benefits provided, which may include access to land, protection, and positions of power and status in the movement’s organization. [16] Referring to Olson’s concept of “selective incentives,” [17] they note that activists supply rewards selectively to promote individual participation and combat free-riding, and make rewards contingent on villagers’ ongoing support. [18] Inspired by organizational theory, they give valuable insight into the dynamics of community mobilization. They pay little attention, however, to villagers’ notions of justice and rights, how these notions are articulated and changed, and how social networks in which villagers are embedded influence their decisions to extend support.

My own discussion of mobilization and popular support for the revolutionary movement NPA explores in particular the *interplay* between people’s own perceptions, experiences, solidarities, and actions on the one hand, and, on the other, new ideas, opportunities and constraints, organizational forms and collective actions, introduced by mobilizers. [19]

That workers in the hacienda region of Negros Occidental were mobilized at all by the NPA depended on two conditions at least: party strategy and the opportunities of activists to operate in the hacienda region. These also affected how hacienda workers were mobilized. It is to these two aspects that I turn first.

RURAL MOBILIZATION AS PARTY STRATEGY

Activists based at Manila universities allied with a group of peasant guerrillas and established the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People’s Army (CPP NPA) as a Maoist revolutionary movement in 1968-69. [20] The movement consists of a political arm (CPP), a military arm (NPA), and a united front organization (NDF or National Democratic Front) which includes legal organizations such as labor unions and peasant associations. Here I will call the CPP-NPA, in most cases, simply “NPA” because the general population uses that term, many low-level cadres are not Communist party members, and the “NPA” does not present itself as communist to its sympathizers.

The student activists were influenced by Philippine nationalist ideology and were part of the worldwide wave of radical student movements of the 1960s. They adopted Mao Zedong’s blueprint for a peasant-based revolution as the only means to change the elite-dominated and corrupt political system in the country and achieve national and social liberation. [21] Their focus on the countryside was based on ideological and practical considerations. Following Mao’s analysis of prerevolutionary China, they defined Philippine society as “semi-feudal and semi-colonial,” with peasantry and workers a potential revolutionary force against landlords, capitalists, and imperialists. [22] Encircling the cities from the countryside seemed a feasible strategy since it is in

the countryside “where the widest area of maneuver is available and where armed strength can be accumulated,” as CPP head Jose Maria Sison noted. [23] Moreover, lacking external funds and external sanctuary, the NPA depended heavily on the peasantry for food, cash, and shelter. With the proclamation of martial law in 1972, sanctuary in distant rural areas became all the more pressing. The rural poor would form the main mass base of the movement and supply much of the manpower for the guerrilla army and the lower positions in the NPA’s political and administrative apparatus. The strategy of a rural-based “protracted people’s war” has, since then, been subject to numerous debates and policy changes. By the 1980s the NPA had expanded its mass mobilization efforts from the countryside to the fast-growing cities, partly through legal organizations.

Mobilizing a rural mass base remained, however, a top priority. Activists eventually followed a standardized plan of community mobilization that was refined over the years. When successful, their work progressed as follows. After a “social investigation,” through a trusted contact, of the socioeconomic structure and main problems in a community, activists organized the first group of villagers by holding political seminars in villagers’ homes. They invited interested persons to join so-called Organizing Groups of women, men, and youth of peasant and farm-worker background, and helped organize small-scale collective actions around local problems. Interested and capable members, tasked with recruiting fellow villagers, were brought together in an Organizing Committee, which was eventually formed into a Party Branch directly linked to the CPP’s organizational hierarchy. In the process, villagers became local activists for the NPA as they accepted positions in the party branch and related village committees responsible for organization, education (ideological seminars), finance (collecting rice and money for the movement), health, and security. Persuasion in the early stages of mobilization was combined with coercion in later stages to force unwilling residents into compliance and neutralize community-based power holders unsympathetic to the NPA. With the basic unit of the shadow government in place, the cadres would move to another area. Activists eventually developed a state-like political organization, loosely centralized, that reached from the national level down to region, district, section, and village, with party committees staffed by local women and men. [24]

Within rural communities the NPA acquired control over vital resources: villagers’ contribution[^] in food, cash, and information for both the political and military cadres; as well as manpower for part-time positions in the village or fulltime posts as mobile cadres or armed fighters. Other “contributions” consisted of participation in collective actions such as rallies and pickets in nearby cities, sometimes under the cover of legal organizations, which made public the extent of rural mass support for the broad left-wing cause. [25]

In each region of the Philippine archipelago, the NPA. enjoys some autonomy, and is self-sufficient regarding personnel, funding, and arms. It recruits its personnel locally, gets funds mainly by taxing the poor and extorting the rich, and acquires most of its arms by ambushing members of the Philippine Army or raiding army camps.

In 1988, the NPA had some 24,000 guerrillas in sixty of the country’s seventythree provinces. [26] Estimates of civilian sympathizers and supporters range from more than 1.7 million people in 1986 [27] to roughly half a million in 1988. [28] Another source mentions in 1989 that some 20 percent of the country’s *barangay* (villages and urban neighborhoods) were “controlled” by the NPA. [29] By 1993, the number of guerrillas had dropped to an estimated 10,600, and the percentage of NPA controlled or influenced *barangay* had dwindled to 1,300, or 3 percent. [30] This decline was partly due to an intensive counterinsurgency campaign that combined military operations with an amnesty program and forced community-based ‘surrenders’ of civilian supporters. [31] The nationwide split within the CPP-NPA in 1992-93 on issues of strategy and leadership further weakened the movement. As CPP founder Jose Maria Sison dictated the strategy of rural-based protracted people’s war, his opponents propagated more emphasis on legal struggle

(using the expanded democratic space in the post-Marcos era) and/or more emphasis on urban insurrectionist activities, and deplored Sison's stifling of party debates. [32]

MOBILIZING HACIENDA WORKERS IN NEGROS OCCIDENTAL: OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

The province of Negros Occidental is one of the main sugar-producing regions in Southeast Asia. The product of its several thousand sugarcane haciendas and some fifteen sugar centrals is sold on export and domestic markets. The haciendas range in size from about twenty to over a thousand hectares (the majority falls in the 20-150 hectares range), and are mostly owned by planter families that live in the province's towns or Manila. Some 200,000 wage-dependent workers (women and men) do backbreaking labor in the canefields and survive precariously on low and irregular wages. Permanent workers living with their families on hacienda premises, and casual workers living on or near haciendas, plow, plant, weed, and cut the ripe cane, and are joined by migrant canecutters in the harvesting season. The lowland sugarcane-growing plain is bordered by hills and mountains to the east and south, where marginal haciendas exist alongside peasant subsistence farms.

The hardship of hacienda workers, which contrasts sharply with the wealth of so-called sugar barons, has long been an issue in progressive and social-minded circles in Manila, particularly since the 1960s-70s when newspaper articles, Church publications, and a movie made it the symbol of exploitation and injustice in the Philippine countryside. [33] To CPP chairman Jose Maria Sison (alias Amado Guerrero), the revolutionary potential of sugar workers in Negros was obvious. He stated in 1969 in a letter to *The Manila Times*:

When we consider the magnitude of the land owned by so few (few in relation to the masses of the people) and the long history of exploitative relations between the landlords on one hand and the peasants and farm workers on the other, Negros Occidental is, indeed, ripe for social revolution. It is only a matter of time that the exploited masses will gather force and rise up to resist the feudal and semi-feudal oppression that they suffer. [34]

Studies on pre-NPA Negros show divergent views on the potential for worker militancy in the hacienda region. Some rate the potential high because of severe poverty, stark class differences, exploitation and repression, which all produce a fertile ground for grievances; and because of the solidary, close-knit type of proletarian hacienda community, which provides capabilities for collective action. [35] Others rate it low, and view hacienda workers in pre-NPA times as "apathetic" and "disorganized," [36] under tight planter control, vulnerable to planter repression, lacking a tradition of organized protest, and, in each hacienda, divided among themselves by their personalized ties of dependency with their planter. [37]

The constraints imposed by the hacienda system—compounded by planter control of provincial politics, the judiciary, and the police—were indeed severe. With little protection from unions or the state, workers with insistent claims could be refused work, ousted from the hacienda, put in jail by local police, or physically threatened. Many overseers carried a handgun (up to the declaration of martial law) to keep the upper hand over workers who outnumbered each individual overseer, and whose cleavers could turn into weapons. The options open to workers were either to lodge a complaint with the overseer and hope for planter benevolence, or, individually, to move out to a better-paying hacienda or to the upland frontier. Union activists found haciendas extremely difficult to penetrate. Besides several short-lived attempts to organize hacienda workers, unions tended to concentrate until the 1960s on sugar-mill workers and upland peasants. [38]

However, by the mid-1980s the lowland hacienda region had become one of the centers of NPA

activity in the country. By 1986, the NPA had mobilized island-wide in 586 haciendas and 352 villages, organized some 100,000 hacienda workers and peasants into mass organizations, and established 251 party branches. It had twentyseven guerrilla squads and several teams and squads of snipers fielded across the island. And it assisted in staging numerous protests, strikes, and rallies. [39] Left-wing Labor Day rallies drew thousands of hacienda workers to the provincial capital.

Did the sugar crises of 1976-79 and 1984-85 (triggered by slumps in the world market price of sugar) force workers out of submissiveness? In those periods, planters cut back rigorously on work, wages, and the subsistence credit that tides workers over the lean season in cane cultivation, and large planters began to mechanize more cultivation tasks. Porter notes, "in Negros Occidental . . . most popular support for the NPA has been the result of years of denial of sugar workers' rights by plantation owners, massive unemployment in the industry, and the collapse of social services for workers." [40] McCoy states that "battling against market forces that are robbing them of their social role and respect, the Negros workers have turned to [progressive] Catholic priests and Communist guerrillas in a desperate quest for survival." [41]

But subsistence problems as such have poor explanatory value. We cannot assume a direct relation between increasing economic hardships and militancy, since these may weaken tactical capacities and may not be translated into kinds of grievances necessary for confrontational action. By attributing the expansion of hacienda-worker support for the NPA mainly to hardships caused by the sugar crisis of the mid-1980s, moreover, one may easily ignore other factors that were at work at the time. In my research area, for instance, NPA policy to seek a tactical alliance with planters and overseers in its campaign against the Marcos regime facilitated NPA mobilization in haciendas as it lowered opposition among hacienda management. Since mobilization processes intervene between adversities and support for the NPA, we need to turn to the interactions between hacienda workers and mobilizers.

Where NPA activists are unable to operate, mass support for the NPA remains negligible. Two preconditions for mobilization, then, need to be discussed first: activists' access to hacienda workers, in this case through social networks that reached into haciendas; and activists' room to maneuver in the hacienda region, which depended on the so-called political opportunity structure, in particular the extent of repression and other counter-actions by planters and the state. [42]

The small group of NPA activists sent from Manila to Negros in 1969—to open up the first NPA expansion area outside of Luzon—lacked any organizational link with hacienda workers. These activists, led by two Central Committee members and including several Huk-guerrilla veterans, "were either jailed or shot or forced to flee the province after only a few days work among the laborers," and apparently "laborers themselves informed authorities of the activities and location of the organizers." [43] Unable to speak the local language and lacking a political base, they were vulnerable to capture when the guerrillas killed and wounded several policemen.

The second group of NPA activists, which arrived from Manila in 1971, took care to develop a network of cadres and supporters first. They were student activists who linked up with small groups of activist students in the provincial capital Bacolod City. Though they initially noted "the absence of even a single representative from the labor sector" among their early contacts, [44] the category of NPA cadres eventually expanded from students at city campuses to peasants recruited in the southern uplands that formed the NPA's first rural base, and finally to a large number of workers recruited from and based in the province's haciendas.

This outcome was by no means assured at the onset. Initially, the Manila activists operated through the militant youth organization Kabataang Makabayan (KM, Patriotic Youth), whose reach was

limited to city colleges and high schools. In contrast, its rival in the province, the moderate urban Christian-socialist youth movement Khi Rho, was linked to the Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) which staged actions in behalf of peasants and hacienda workers and had close connections with progressive Roman Catholic clergy who undertook social-action programs for the poor. [45] KM labeled Khi Rho “clerico-fascist,” kept far from its social network, and so remained isolated from the poor whose interests they sought to represent. [46] Only when KM connected with Khi Rho and its rural activist contacts, after the declaration of martial law when KM and several moderate activists went underground, could the NPA expand into the Negros countryside. [47]

The early activists, then, eventually reached hacienda workers by linking up with social networks of Church and unions that reached into many haciendas and villages in the province. [48] Moreover, they connected to Liberation Theology which matched to a large degree the ideological frame of the NPA. The CPP-NPA nationwide had developed an interest in Roman Catholic clergy opposed to the martial-law regime and committed to Vatican II’s call for social justice. In Negros Occidental, progressive priests and nuns supported two militant unions, the Federation of Free Farmers (FFF, primarily active among upland peasants victimized by landgrabbing) and the labor union National Federation of Sugar Workers (NFSW, active among hacienda workers). Since the 1970s, they also helped organize hacienda workers and upland villagers into emancipatory Basic Christian Communities (BCCs). Confronted with repression and ineffectiveness of legal claims, as well as with NPA recruitment efforts, several priests and nuns joined the NPA and went underground, reaching influential positions in the party hierarchy; many more became sympathetic to the NPA. [49] retrospect, “the active leadership of these priests, or at least their blessing, was a vital factor in strengthening the revolution in Negros, an island which is 90 percent Catholic and where the Church, in spite of everything, is still the most credible institution around.” [50] NPA activists eventually began to recruit among local organizers of Basic Christian Communities and the labor union. In the hacienda lowlands, many of these organizers were sons and daughters of hacienda workers or overseers. Such local organizers, from poor backgrounds, knowledgeable of hacienda life, and rooted in hacienda society, eventually became the main NPA activists in the haciendas.

The activists’ room for maneuvering was constrained by harassment and violent repression on the part of authorities and planters. The declaration of martial law did partly undermine the coercive power of planters and local authorities as a gun-ban affected overseers, planters’ guards, and *barangay* captains, and as the municipal police was placed under the control of the Philippine Constabulary (PC). But the PC intensified its crackdown on suspected “subversives” and by the mid-1970s a militia force (the Civilian Home Defense Force, CHDF) was at the disposal of local authorities and influential Marcos-loyalist planters. An increasing number of abuses were committed by members of the PC, CHDF, and later the Philippine army as well (Long Range Patrol, Scout Rangers, and several army battalions deployed in the province). [51] Among the victims of military abuse were local organizers of the union NFSW and of Basic Christian Communities (BCCs), who were tagged as subversives, harassed, and a number brutally killed.

What did allow NPA activists some maneuvering space in the lowlands was the legal cover, often unwittingly, of the BCCs and union (despite harassment of its organizers). Moreover, up to the mid-1980s, much of the hacienda lowlands were spared militarization. The Philippine army focused on the isolated uplands in the south and along the eastern mountain range, where the guerrilla army was initially confined. In the hacienda lowlands, NPA activists developed a political mass base while avoiding armed confrontations. Planters, living in towns and cities, often realized the extent of NPA influence in their haciendas only when the NPA had already established considerable control there. To avoid NPA retaliations (burning of their canefields, for instance) many planters eventually opted for accommodation. [52] Many were hesitant to make a forceful alliance with the military during the Marcos regime, not in the least because of their anti-Marcos sentiment (fueled by Marcos’s

curtailment of their influence and the appropriation of sugar profits through a state sugar-trade monopoly). As the NPA established hacienda-based monitoring systems against military personnel and began to kill or threaten suspected informers, local authorities had increasing difficulties monitoring and curbing NPA mobilization. Meanwhile, as McCoy notes for the country as a whole, “local [military] commands yielded the countryside to insurgents” as military leaders were absorbed by internal factional strife, military personnel were ill-paid and ill-motivated, and support by local power holders was wanting. [53]

In the research municipality in the north-central part of the province, armed activists enjoyed an expanding room for maneuver by the mid-1980s. NPAs raided hacienda warehouses and killed several hacienda overseers and policemen. Many lowland haciendas were organized by the NPA or had NPA influence. Police were hesitant to set foot in the area. Planters had stopped visiting their haciendas, and when the NPA held up several jeeps carrying payroll money, many planters transferred the weekly payment of wages from their haciendas to the nearby town.

A marked turnaround occurred during Corazon Aquino’s presidency when, in 1987, Aquino sanctioned a concerted counterinsurgency campaign, and provincial elites, having recaptured control over their provinces with bicameral and provincial elections in 1987-88, and alarmed by the increasing influence and audacity of the NPA, allied with regional military commanders to support this campaign. [54] In Negros Occidental, the provincial commander of the Philippine Constabulary, Col. Miguel Coronel, coordinated a counter-movement to the NPA in the north-central part of the province that included planters, journalists, politicians, and several former provincial NPA leaders who had surrendered and become vocal anti-NPA activists. [55] Planters helped establish the paramilitary Philippine Constabulary Forward Command (PCFC), and by 1988 paid a compulsory contribution to the so-called Sugar Development Foundation that funded the PCFCs. The PCFCs eventually numbered about 1,600 men occupying 52 patrol bases throughout the north-central part of the province. [56]

Counterinsurgency targeting the political base of the NPA intensified in the lowlands. In 1987-89, in particular, it involved selective terror by PC, police, paramilitary PCFCs, and vigilante groups, combined with virulent anti-NPA propaganda and the labeling of Church personnel and left-wing organizations (including the union NFSW) as NPA members and communist front organizations. [57] Several presidents of hacienda-based NFSW chapters were among the victims of military and vigilante killings (e.g. Amnesty 1988, 1991). Military and paramilitary units were spread out over the lowlands in small detachments, each patrolling the surrounding areas in an effort to cut off the NPA from its mass base.

By 1989, the focus had shifted towards a mass surrender program managed by the Philippine army, aimed at NPA-influenced communities and individual NPA activists. Except for large military operations against NPA bases in the uplands, military violence decreased as the surrender strategy involved force and persuasion (coupled to an amnesty program) rather than violent coercion. From 1987 to September 1994, according to provincial police sources, 11,966 “rebels” surrendered to the authorities [58] Haciendas may now count former NPAs who became government informers or paramilitary men (members of the Civilian Armed Force Geographical Units, CAFGU). In recent years, then, the activists’ room for maneuver in the hacienda lowlands has narrowed considerably.

HACIENDA MILAGROS: CONFLICT AND ACCOMMODATION

Hacienda Milagros is an average-sized sugarcane hacienda (130 hectares) located in the north-central part of the province’s lowlands, with some sixty wage-earning families living and working on its land. The planter lives with his family in the provincial capital, a half-hour jeep ride away. A resident overseer and two or three foremen make up the local management; they are, together with

several drivers of trucks and tractors, the only salaried employees (*empleados*) in the hacienda. The resident workers or *dumaan* (women, men, teenagers, and some children) are paid daily or piece-rate wages. Their low and irregular income has long spelled poverty for the hacienda families, marked by malnourishment, illnesses like tuberculosis, and low levels of education. Conditions have somewhat improved in the last twenty years, partly brought about by workers' successful collective actions: infant mortality declined, more children are able to attend high school, and several worker and *empleado* families presently own battery-powered television sets. But most families still cannot cover basic costs of medicine and education, the cramped houses lack latrines and electricity, and making ends meet remains a constant worry.

Workers were already involved in protracted conflicts with the planter long before activists began to operate in the hacienda. These conflicts concerned their right to year-round family subsistence in return for the availability of their labor. This traditional social contract, acknowledged by planters and workers throughout the hacienda region, included the right of resident workers to (minimal) subsistence credit during the lean season, free housing (small dwellings made of bamboo and palmleaf), and emergency credit for medical costs. Though many planters tried to economize on these expenses, the tacit contract as such provided workers a standard to which they could appeal. When workers of Hda. Milagros experienced regular drops in planter patronage, they confronted the overseer, individually or in small groups, with persistent pleas and complaints. They had a good potential to act collectively: they depended on the same planter, were linked by ties of kinship, friendship, and neighborhood, worked together in the canefields, and spent leisure time together at the many small hacienda stores.

But workers depended on their individual good standing with planter and overseer in order to secure work, credit, and any possible improvement in their families' life chances, which limited workers' capabilities for collective claim-making and fostered disunity. The planter, who also distributed small gifts at Christmas and arranged regular Catholic masses in the hacienda, expected from his workers unconditional loyalty. Seeking to avoid "trouble," workers limited their protests to complaints addressed to the overseer. The *empleados*, on their part, tended to favor the status quo to maintain the meager privileges they enjoyed. So did the many worker-relatives of the overseer, whom the overseer sometimes favored when allocating work and house repair materials. Workers' concern with family subsistence and smooth relationships with planter and overseer was underpinned by a worldview that was thoroughly personalistic: there were "good" and "bad" planters, not a bad planter class as such, and one could leave a bad planter and try to link up with a more generous one.

How activists addressed these interests, and how workers responded, will be further discussed below. The account is more or less chronological, and activities of Church and left-wing union are included. Workers themselves view their organization by Church, union, and NPA as interrelated: the messages were broadly similar, social networks on the local level overlapped, and key activists from Milagros moved from Church and union to the NPA. Workers of Milagros first organized into a Basic Christian Community in the mid-1970s, then joined a moderate labor union to claim legal benefits (13th month pay) which the planter finally provided after he had locked out several active union members. They subsequently joined the left-wing union NFSW which helped improve labor conditions, and were eventually mobilized to support the NPA. By the mid-1980s the NPA considered the hacienda a "consolidated area."

CREDIBILITY OF LOCAL ACTIVISTS

Respected community leaders and local organizers played an important role in the early stages of NPA mobilization. After all, political mobilizers need to be credible and capable in the eyes of their potential following. [59] One such leader in Milagros was former overseer Rafael. Soft-spoken, well-respected, a "very persuasive talker," and with a large network of kin and ritual kin, he helped to

convince many workers and *empleados* to support the movement.

He was a vital link in a chain of mobilizers in the hacienda which started in the mid-1970s, before NPA mobilization in the area, with a respected left-wing parish priest and his sacristans who held seminars in the hacienda and established a Basic Christian Community (BCC). Their work was carried on by progressive nuns, who recruited two young single men from Milagros and an overseer's daughter from a neighboring hacienda as BCC activists in the area. These three activists began to double as organizers for the Church-supported left-wing labor union, and eventually joined the NPA in the late 1970s against the explicit will of the nuns. They had mobilized a core group of supporters in Hda. Milagros when former overseer Rafael became willing to join.

What moved these hacienda youths into NPA activism was a process of conversion among the young Church activists in the municipality who regularly gathered at the *convento* (presbytery) in town. As they experienced their powerlessness as organizers in the face of repression of workers, learned of repression and military abuses elsewhere in the province through Church seminars and rallies, had lengthy talks with NPA recruiters (friends of friends) who presented revolutionary struggle as a viable alternative, and read revolutionary literature that made this alternative seem credible and scientifically based, [60] they became jointly convinced that revolution was the only way out. From Liberation Theology it was but a small step toward revolutionary ideology, and the step was facilitated by student-activist friends and small-group pressures. Eager and committed activists, they argued that the nuns merely focused on "conscientization" and, unlike the NPA, lacked a clear program of action. The madres strongly objected to their radicalization, and heated discussions in the *convento* preceded their break-up.

Personal grievances, humanist proclivities, and contact with mobilizers prompted former overseer Rafael into activism. Son of a foreman and planter's protege, he was houseboy of the planter when young and eventually appointed overseer when still in his twenties. A religious person, and kin and friend of many workers, he felt burdened by his inability to help workers in lean months. Demoted to the position of foreman during the sugar crisis of 1976-79 (allegedly to make room for a better-educated outsider who could help rationalize the production process), he was all the more attracted by the Church's teachings on social justice. No longer hampered by loyalty to the planter, he contacted the three local Church activists and began to promote Church and union organizing in Milagros. When the planter had him jailed for two weeks on charges of padding the payroll (Rafael claimed the "padding" was accidental), he quit his job as a foreman and became a full-time activist, first for the union, later in the service of the NPA, where he eventually reached the position of secretary of a district committee.

These four local mobilizers recruited other activists from among their kin and friends in the hacienda, and eased the introduction of visiting NPA cadres, including members of Propaganda Organizing Teams, instructors of advanced ideological seminars, and eventually teams of mobile guerrilla fighters. Tasked to mobilize by persuasion, they were respectful and soft-spoken, visited workers in the evenings for long talks, and, above all, made workers courteous personal requests: to attend ideological seminars or rallies in the city, or do some task for the movement. Such face-to-face requests were often hard to refuse.

As a rule, local activists avoid any mention of the Communist Party in their contact with potential supporters. They present themselves as members of the *hublag* ("the movement") and of "the NPA, the genuine army of the poor" (*ang matuod-tuod gid nga army sg pumuluyo*) that helps to defend the interests of the poor against "despotic" landlords and an oppressive government. The reason is simple: "the masses are against communism," as one former activist said, "the old people fear they will be killed under communism and made into *betsin* (food seasoning)." Others feared they would have to share the few belongings they had. Confronted with the result of decades of anti-communist

propaganda, the mobilizers' strategy is to initially deny any connection to communism, and only gradually inform selected people of CPP "guidance" and eventually invite these into the party.

IDEOLOGICAL WORK: REFRAMING

The willingness of most people of Milagros to support the NPA did not arise naturally from their experiences as hacienda workers. The conceptions they had of their own position in society, including their vulnerability vis-à-vis the powerful, favored (grudging) accommodation with the planter and state authorities or, in case of conflict, leaving and settling elsewhere.

Activists had to overcome workers' reluctance toward confrontational collective action. They tried to convince workers that it was in their own interest to act collectively, "to move," as they put it. They sought to change people's perceptions in order to inspire action: they (re)defined workers' condition as unjust, identified the people or structures that were to blame, argued that workers, when organized, could do something about it, and outlined a course of action. In presenting such "collective action frames," [61] they connected to the existing standard of justice among hacienda workers—the right to subsistence—but expanded workers' notions of rights to include the right to a true and lasting improvement in their life chances.

Workers of Milagros, by themselves, certainly had grievances enough against the planter. But, as a worker recounted, "we lacked a 'voice' to protest (*reklamo*)." Their notion of subsistence rights was closely tied to personal dependency on the planter and their claim-making was limited to presenting complaints to the overseer and waiting for a benevolent reply. What they lacked was a forceful language to make claims, an ideology that legitimized confrontational claim-making, and an organizational format that enabled them actually to make these claims.

All activists, including the early Church and union organizers, tried to provide this protest "voice." They all used seminars to do so. Their analysis was Marxist and nationalist: not "bad" planters or personal failures caused workers' poverty, but an exploitative system represented by planters, supported by the government, and backed up by imperialist powers. "Oppression" was the key word; it suggested the cause, the people to blame, and the solution to workers' misery. Seminars of Church and union [62] familiarized the workers with the image of Philippine society as a pyramid (drawn in chalk on battered blackboards) with "ninety percent" of the population forming the broad base of poor and destitute people, and a small percentage made up of landlords, capitalists, and government leaders forming the top, who were in turn under the yoke of imperialists. It would only require a united effort of the poor, the activists said, to turn the pyramid upside down and produce a truly liberated society without oppressive structures. The activists redefined the shared identity of workers from "we, the poor (*mga imol*)" into "we, the oppressed (*pumuluyong pigos*)," and sketched how hacienda workers, scattered in hundreds of separate haciendas, were part of a nationwide category of oppressed people. They called for class-based unity and action.

So when the NPA began to recruit in the hacienda, the workers were already, in a sense, "culturally prepared," to borrow Ileta's formulation. [63] NPA activists needed to take the analysis by Church and union one step further to convince workers of the necessity of armed struggle. In places where union actions were not successful, they argued there was another, more effective way to fight landlords. In Milagros, where union actions had success, they argued union gains would be tenuous unless a "people's army" would defend these gains and eventually overhaul the whole oppressive system to provide genuine long-term improvements. Through seminars, workers were persuaded to shift their focus from the so-called *partikular* (workerplanter relations within their own hacienda) to the *universal* (the encompassing system of exploitation represented by "feudalism, bureaucrat capitalism, and imperialism"), to ensure their continuing support for the struggle even if their own conditions would improve. [64]

The oppression frame used by Church, union, and NPA was new to workers of Milagros in that it provided a systemic rather than a personalistic worldview and called for collective confrontational action. It was, however, linked to familiar notions. The clergy in town, for instance, once portrayed the liberation of hacienda workers from planter oppression by staging an adapted version of “Exodus.” NPA activists connected to folk notions of the good life— notions that emphasized subsistence security, family well-being, and basic human dignity—by envisioning liberated society as a place in which “all will be equal, no poor, no rich” (*palareho tanan tanan, wala pigado, wala manggaranon*), “no slaves, no masters” (*wala sg ulipon, wala sg amo*), and defining genuine freedom and independence as freedom from landlord control and free access to land.

The activists’ call to action, then, was not just to defend traditional rights to subsistence, but to claim new rights that could finally deliver workers from poverty. Clergy and union focused on workers’ legislated rights—which workers had only been partially aware of. Legitimate by definition, these provided a powerful rallying point. NPA activists, on the other hand, stressed much broader self-defined rights to land and to political influence, and sought to convince workers of the legitimacy of these claims in at least the following ways:

Simply stated, they argued that workers had a right to a better life and should not accept current conditions. “You are victims of injustice. You earn too little to cover your needs. Do you want the same miserable life for your children?” former overseer Rafael said in his activist role. Legislated wages and benefits were not enough, and true improvement of workers’ livelihood was impossible under current conditions, the activists argued. Using the labor theory of value they carefully computed cane yields and profits per hectare to convince workers they had a right to planter profits.

They delegitimized planters (as the descendants of Spanish landgrabbers) and government leaders and so denied them the right to land ownership and state power. They referred to the constitutional right of citizens to government services and asked workers what the government did to solve their problems of poverty, illness, and lack of education. Very little, indeed. After the seminars of Church and union had firmly introduced the notion of legislated rights, the NPA seminars emphasized that these rights were trampled upon, and workers began to feel shortchanged of rights they had only recently been informed about. [65]

The claim to land—which appealed most to workers of Milagros as it embodied, they said, the end to planter oppression and the possibility of true improvement— may illustrate this point. The notion that workers had a right to hacienda land did not come from the workers themselves. As descendants of migrant laborers from Panay island who had settled in Milagros after serving in other haciendas as well, workers of Milagros used to accept the planter’s right to private property as selfevident. After the Japanese Occupation, for instance, resident workers returned to the planter, without a grudge, the hacienda land they had planted to subsistence crops when cane cultivation had ceased. “Of course we returned the land, we had just borrowed it,” they recounted, and they had welcomed the opportunity to earn a wage again. In the course of mobilization, they started to link the planter’s regular disregard of their subsistence rights to systematic planter oppression and began to perceive land reform as the only way to end it. The growing influence of the NPA in the 1980s in the province and country at large suggested that this goal could be realized. [66] Not all workers went along with this. An elderly woman, for instance, objected that the planter had rightfully inherited the land from his father, but an activist worker criticized her for being “satisfied” with her present condition.

The NPA seminars formed the backbone of mobilization in the hacienda. Held regularly in one of the hacienda houses for women, men, and teenagers, they brought hacienda residents together in small-group settings conducive to conversion. The seminars were intensive social affairs that lasted from one day to more than three days, and they were live-in events, which fostered a strong sense of

camaraderie. The so-called “instructors” were familiar figures: the former overseer, and eventually other women and men of Milagros who were schooled in the new ideology. The seminars introduced people step by step deeper into the movement, and marked the trajectory of entrance and upward mobility in the NPA hierarchy. The NPA leadership had developed a series of courses with standardized scripts, and each consecutive course indicated a higher degree of commitment to the movement. The first of the series, the General Mass Course for all workers, helped to create sympathizers willing to contribute in small ways. It presented an analysis of the hacienda system and of Philippine society and history at large within the exploitation-and-liberation frame. Attending this first seminar pulled workers over the threshold of illegality (they were aware the seminar was “illegal”), which one of the instructors marked by stating at the end, “now we are all NPA.” The series proceeded with so-called “deeper” courses for selected interested workers, including one based on Mao’s “Five Golden Rays,” [67] which made them eligible for positions in the organization. It culminated with the Basic Party Course for a select few, capped by a secret oath-taking ceremony for candidate party-members. Almost all workers in Hda. Milagros followed the first course, and a large number also participated in the consecutive courses as they began to take up tasks in the organization.

Many workers, having little formal education, were interested in the seminars, eager to learn more about Philippine society and their place in it, and to make sense of it all in terms of the new image presented. The first seminar appealed directly to their own condition and problems in the hacienda. “It helped me to understand the real situation, and the oppression of the people by the landlord, and I became interested to join the movement,” as a worker recounted. The positive value that the Philippine poor attach to education as a means to self-advancement certainly added to the attraction of the seminars. “The explanations of the instructors encouraged us to learn more, to become knowledgeable,” as one worker said. Most important, they felt this knowledge empowered them to change their condition. [68]

Reluctant participants, on the other hand, included women and men who were illiterate and therefore suspicious and slightly afraid of anything having to do with pen and paper. Some elderly who felt a personal loyalty towards the planter (for instance, because the planter’s father had brought them from one of his haciendas to Milagros) condemned all NPA activities as anti-planter and tried to persuade their children not to attend the seminars. Others had never liked going to school and were bored by the classroom-like atmosphere of the seminars. As one of them said about the seminar she attended, “it simply didn’t enter into my head.” They would not advance beyond the first seminar.

Some workers resisted the early teachings because they feared planter and military reprisals: “what if I lose my job, can the hublag (the movement) support my family?” An old male worker said, “we’ll all get killed because of you!” A female worker doubted the activists’ faith in the power of worker unity “because the rich have the money,” and she feared concerted action would provoke conflict and battle. Such objections died down as repressive measures were not imposed on the hacienda in the early years of mobilization.

The new understandings did not become fully shared in the hacienda community. The extent to which workers adopted NPA ideology was, apparently, roughly related to the level of seminars they had followed and the degree of their incorporation in the NPA apparatus. Many workers easily grasped the notions of planter and government oppression, given their own life experiences and their endless need to haggle with the planter to cover their family’s subsistence needs, and given the entwining of political and planter elites. Apparently, many also accepted the need to organize and to support the NPA in its struggle against this oppression. Among those who held positions in the local NPA organization, the need to change the system of government and remove the planters as a class appeared widely accepted.

CREATING COMMITMENT TO THE ORGANIZATION

Studies of institutionalized revolutionary movements argue that a revolutionary organization needs to provide individual benefits first, before villagers are willing to contribute to collective goals and eventually to sacrifice for the organization's broader aims. Providing such benefits produces among villagers "a political commitment to the survival of that organization and to the actualization of its goals." [69] Writing about the revolutionary movement in Vietnam, Race notes that people were offered "contingent incentives," [70] i.e. access to benefits such as land, protection, or positions of power, which they could only benefit from as long as they supported the organization, and as long as the organization had a strong local presence to guarantee these benefits. Individual interests were thereby aligned with the interests of the organization.

The mobilization process in Hda. Milagros suggests a more complex development of commitment, though the gradual creation of an organizational structure of incentives in the hacienda has certainly been crucial. The first stage in commitment formation concerned the "mass organizations" in the hacienda, which dealt with immediate individual and family interests, provided short-term material benefits as well as a sense of empowerment, and helped forge a more solidary community. Activists organized the hacienda population into groups of "mothers" (*nanay*), "fathers" (*tatay*), "youth" (*pamatan-on*), and later of local management and other salaried employees as well. These community-based organizations were all in the "legal" sphere; the threshold for joining was relatively low. Established by union activists in Milagros who had shifted to the NPA, these organizations were under NPA influence.

The second stage concerned participation in the hacienda-based institutional structure of the NPA, which demanded resources while providing few immediate benefits in return, except social rewards. The third step was made by workers who became full-timers in the organization, which involved severe personal sacrifices and required a large degree of personal identification with the interests of the NPA. Though most people in the hacienda passed through the first stage, a minority experienced the second, and a smaller number still (some fifteen persons) moved on through the third.

This was by no means a smooth process. The appeals of the *hublag* crosscut loyalties to planter and family. Some *empleados* and old workers initially strongly resisted the confrontational mobilization against the planter. Later, infra-family conflicts ensued when women, men, and teenagers started to take up tasks in the local organizations of the *hublag*: some husbands protested that their activist wives spent too much time away from home, and many parents tried to forbid their teenaged children from joining the *hublag*. Moreover, as some workers became powerful NPA officials in the hacienda, frictions developed with fellow workers who criticized their performance.

In the following, I deal with the process of commitment formation and concentrate on those who participated in the movement and eventually became more deeply involved.

APPEALING TO WORKERS' FAMILY INTERESTS: CHANGING THE POWER BALANCE BETWEEN WORKERS AND PLANTER

Primary concerns of married women and men (organized as "mothers" and "fathers") were wage income and family subsistence, and these were the interests that activists initially addressed. The groups of "mothers" and "fathers," whose membership overlapped with union membership, dealt with labor conditions, wages, and protests against the planter. The women's group was as concerned with these issues as the men's. Whether they worked in the canefields or not, women were particularly motivated by their responsibility to make ends meet as keepers of household finances, a responsibility of married women in the Philippines that may provide fertile ground for militancy. [71]

Workers highly appreciated the activists' concern for their labor problems as well as their careful advice on how to bargain with the planter and make collective claims. A core of interested workers seized the opportunity and collectively presented demands, piecemeal, at the planter's house in the city or in the hacienda itself. These workers had some previous experience in collective action: in 1974-75, they had contacted a moderate labor union (the National Union of Sugar Industries, NUSI) to press the planter to pay legislated benefits, no doubt encouraged by the mobilizing work of the progressive clergy at that time. Responding to the union's radio program, they had signed up at the provincial office of the NUSI, filed a labor case against the planter with the assistance of the union, but then experienced planter repression in the form of lock-outs, decreased work assignments, and long delays in the court case that drained them of funds. Though they finally won the case, they were discouraged from filing cases in court that left them vulnerable to planter repression—all the more so since only a part of the workers in the hacienda had joined.

In contrast, the strategy suggested by the left-wing union NFSW, in the late 1970s, appealed to these workers, because it avoided costly court cases and concentrated instead on informal collective demands that were more effective. This mobilization effort coincided with the sugar crisis of the 1970s, whose effects were felt in the hacienda by 1977-78: the planter economized on work and subsistence credit and tried to lower piece rates, all of which formed acute reasons for collective protests. The planter found it difficult to refuse the persistent face-to-face demands by a growing number of workers, which dealt with concrete subsistence issues. As the planter gave in, "the other workers saw that we won, that we got what we asked for" (as one active member recounted), "and eventually they all became members." The union won a certification election in 1981, and the planter finally signed the first collective bargaining agreement in 1983. As the planter's bookkeeper explained, "he probably got tired of the persistent protests by his workers, and hoped the union would discipline the workers."

Pre-existing networks of relatives, friends, neighbors, and members of workteams, were instrumental in this process of union mobilization. Such networks can cut both ways. When Rafael was still the overseer, most of his relatives were antiunion, as they feared losing the few privileges they received compared to others in the hacienda. His kin group only gravitated towards the union when Rafael lost his management position in the late 1970s and turned union organizer, which facilitated the full unionization of the hacienda by the early 1980s. [72]

In retrospect, workers mark this period as one of gradual empowerment with support of the union as well as the NPA. "Before, the people were afraid of the planter, now the planter is afraid of the people." They note they are "wise" now, can no longer be fooled by the planter or other authorities. They say they learned to face the planter without fear, state their demands with confidence and defend these tenaciously—all to the initial astonishment of the planter and his wife. The planter's bookkeeper recounted: "Before, everything was fine. Now the workers talk and argue, and the planter cannot answer!" The planter started to address some of the most tenacious (female) spokespersons of the workers with the term *atorniya* (attorney), partly jokingly, partly in exasperation. A crucial change had occurred in workers' behavior: feelings of embarrassment (*huya*, shame) in the face of the powerful, common among the Philippine poor in their dealings with employers and authorities and inhibiting assertive protest, [73] eased as workers enhanced their sense of self-worth and efficacy through seminars on workers' dignity and rights, learned to overcome feelings of shame in the course of collective actions, and experienced an increasing bargaining power.

The CBA (collective bargaining agreement) marked a significant change in the power balance; from relatively powerless dependents, workers had developed into recognized partners of the planter in institutionalized bargaining. Eventually, activists guided workers to present so-called "tactical" demands aimed at small nonlegislated benefits whose acceptance signified that "whatever our

demands, we can successfully face the planter,” as a confident member explained.

Conditions that facilitated these successes included the increasing membership and influence of the left-wing union provincewide, the growing morale of workers as they were convinced of their (legislated) rights, the personalized form of collective claim-making, and the need for the planter to maintain a minimum of goodwill in his contacts with the workers, if only to enable him to visit the hacienda without trouble.

The coercive power of the NPA contributed to these small victories as well. As NPA influence in the area expanded, the NPA started to back worker demands by burning canefields and hacienda trucks of planters who were unwilling to give in. Reluctantly, planters began to yield to wage demands. In the case of Milagros, former overseer Rafael, as member of the NPA section (and later, district) committee, formed a mediating link between planter and NPA. He exhorted the planter (by letter) to treat the workers well, advice the planter heeded, and during the sugar crisis of the mid-1980s he requested the planter to yield several hectares of hacienda land to the workers as subsistence lots, which the planter did. In return, Rafael exempted the planter from forced NPA taxation and protected his property from destruction when the planter was late in giving in to demands.

Workers tended to credit the NPA, in part, for these collective short-term benefits. This enabled activists in the hacienda to present the NPA as the true “army of the people”: “the NPA will defend us when we have problems with the planter,” and, “without the NPA, we will lose our gains and the planter will become despotic again.” The short-term gains began to function as “contingent incentives” that induced continued support of the movement. Workers were willing to provide the regular contributions to the NPA expected of “organized masses” (*masa*), in particular a monthly contribution of a small can of rice and two pesos (about onetenth of the daily wage in the mid-1980s).

THE YOUTH GROUP: CULTURAL ACTIVISM

Young, unmarried people are, as a category, least interested in mundane problems of family subsistence but are the most “biographically available” for fulltime activism, having fewer family responsibilities than married persons. [74] The activist youth group in the hacienda (called *kultural*, the cultural group) did not bother the hacienda teenagers with actions for better wages and benefits, but appealed to their longing for entertainment, adventure, friendship, and purpose in life. It functioned, in a way, as an extended peer group for girls and boys of fifteen years and older from Hda. Milagros and two neighboring haciendas. Former overseer Rafael started the group as a serenading circle, which serenaded at the homes of people celebrating their birthdays, and at the houses of wayward youths to persuade them to join. As a former hacienda leader of the conservative Catholic Barangay Sang Virgen movement—a province-wide movement that was short-lived in the hacienda after its introduction by the planter in the early 1970s—Rafael used its songs and serenading practice but gave them a left-wing twist.

An outside activist who came to live in the hacienda for a year in the early 1980s reshaped the group into an *agit-prop* theater group, training the youths in songs and sketches every evening after work in the fields. They would perform at rallies throughout the area, which gave them a vivid sensation of being part of a larger movement. A professional *drama* instructor further developed the group in the mid-1980s, when Milagros had become one of the best organized haciendas in the area.

The youths became bearers of the movement’s ideology. The *drama* and songs they staged—also in the hacienda during special occasions—vividly depicted landlord and government oppression and the need for a liberating struggle, and were meant to “enlighten people who do not yet understand,” as a former youth-group member explained. They also suggested the need to bear sacrifices, and

included heartbreaking presentations about women whose husband or son was killed by the military. These songs and plays attached social value to sacrifice, expressed collective sympathy and support for the bereaved relatives, emotionally prepared workers for the possible loss of loved ones, showed that personal sacrifice would be acknowledged by the movement and valued by the community, and thereby eased the way toward high-risk, full-time involvement in the movement

Consciousness of oppression, among some of these youths, came about in the course of their activist work, even though they had labored in the canefields since they were ten, twelve years old. One young man recounted that he joined the group “for fun,” but as he acted out the stories of injustice and oppression, “I started to reflect on them.” A woman explained that even when she performed in the cultural shows, as a teenager, “I was only reading the script, I didn’t really understand it yet.” Only when she became an organizer herself, and had to analyze and explain to others, the message about systemic oppression, of hacienda workers in particular, “really came from my brain.”

Intended to draw teenagers into the movement, the youth group eventually formed the main recruiting ground for full-time cadres. Once part of the group, youths tended to be more open to participation in ideological seminars, more moved by the activists’ message about injustice and abuses in the province, more interested to do tasks for the movement, and more motivated to take part in the struggle. Peergroup feelings were strong: “we were very close.” Several became part-time youth organizers in Milagros and neighboring haciendas under the guidance of older workers, and learned to be activists by trial and error. “We were snubbed at first,” as one recounted, because “we were not yet able to explain well.” Most of the fifteen young women and men of the hacienda who eventually became full-time cadres (most of them single) had started their movement-career in the youth group. Only few of the youths who did not participate in the group would take up tasks in the movement.

However, the disciplining authorities of *hublag* and parents sometimes clashed with the teenagers’ drive to liberate themselves from social fetters. Some youths resisted the NPA’s ban (intended for youthful activists) to attend dances at fiestas and other occasions, and were not impressed by the cadres’ warning that, at dances, women were treated as a commodity. One girl recounted, “I wanted to be in the *hublag*, but I also wanted to have fun—after all, I was a *dalaga* (adolescent girl)!” She loved going to dances, broke the rule together with other members of the group, had to sweep the hacienda’s basketball court as punishment, and eventually she and her friends quit the group, which then was moribund for a while. When the theater instructor settled in Milagros in an empty house and brought along teenagers of other haciendas for training, the niche of sexual freedom they established there brought married hacienda women up in arms, until one of the local female activists (Rafael’s wife) began to chaperon the place.

On the whole, however, many teenagers developed commitment to the *hublag* through this youth group which familiarized them with the organization’s ideology and aims and embedded them in a network that was tightly linked to the organization.

THE ORGANIZATION OF LOCAL MANAGEMENT

Local management (overseer and foremen), as well as truck drivers, tended to be hostile to the movement. They feared losing their position and partly identified with the interests of the planter. [75] In order to win over and “neutralize” them, Rafael and other activists in the area proposed to organize them into an association of their own. They made a creative reinterpretation of the position of local management to suit the purpose: overseers are not, they argued, “the auxiliary class of the landlord” as official doctrine has it, but exploited wage earners essentially similar to hacienda workers, and their grievances should be taken seriously. The aim was “to use the overseer to mediate between workers and landlord and to convince the landlord that the organization of his

workers was not a threat to his interests,” as one of the activists recounted. It called for a non-confrontational approach: overseers would be persuaded to negotiate with the planter to solve workers’ practical problems.

This *rapprochement* to local management, which included a temporary shift away from confrontation with individual planters, took place in the mid-1980s in the context of two broad developments. One was the sugar crisis of 1984-85, which left planters in dire financial straits and lowered workers’ chances of obtaining better wages and financial benefits. Second, it was the time of the broad anti-Marcos alliance, in which the political left in the province allied with members of the middle classes and planter elite. Expecting a revolutionary victory soon on the wave of this concerted anti-government drive, movement cadres in the province were convinced that “the main goal now is to topple the Marcos dictatorship,” as one of them said. Anti-planter militancy was toned down in that period.

Educated activists of middle-class background were tasked to address overseers on an equal footing, discuss the financial problems of their respective planters, and stress that planters, too, were exploited, by sugar mill owners, the government sugar trade monopoly, and the United States. They evoked the image of interdependence rather than antagonism between planter, overseer, and workers, and called for a concerted effort to solve the problems of the country. Implemented at least in the north-central part of the province, this strategy was successful in facilitating and expanding worker organization by coopting local management.

In Hda. Milagros, local management was organized at a time when NPA control was already fully established in the hacienda. The overseer, foremen, and drivers who had kept aloof of the *hublag* had been socially and politically marginalized. The association of local management in the hacienda lessened worker-management frictions and helped reinsert the *empleados* into hacienda social life. Though the *empleados* considered their association part of the *hublag*, they were not too reluctant to join. Some pointed at the increasing respectability of the movement at that time, as they interpreted the growing support by members of the middle-class and elite for the province-wide left-wing campaign against Marcos as support for the *hublag*. One foreman said, “if even planters and lawyers are joining, then why shouldn’t I?” But activists in the hacienda also exerted pressure, and one foreman said he joined to avoid being ostracized.

BECOMING PART OF THE NPA ORGANIZATION: TASKS AND TARGETS

As an increasing number of workers of Milagros participated in the political institution of the NPA, they became part of a top-down command structure, responsible for executing party directives and collecting local contributions for the movement. This subjected them to a wholly new incentive and sanctioning structure and produced new short-term interests. Besides other considerations and convictions, the incentives provided by the NPA organization itself became important in motivating their participation. Moreover, as these workers acquired responsibilities within the organization, their commitment to the movement increased. A key word here is “tasks/obligations” (*hilikoton*), which people in the hacienda used over and over when talking about their involvement in the movement.

The process of institutionalization took place as the leaders of the haciendabased mass organizations were brought together in an organizing committee and later into a party branch, which had a direct link to the regionwide CPP-NPA organization. When the party branch was in place, the following part-time positions were held by workers in the hacienda: secretary of the party branch; chairpersons of the organizations of mothers, fathers, and youth; officials responsible for ideological work, simple medical services, collecting the monthly contributions in cash and rice as well as emergency contributions, gathering intelligence information, and providing security. Each of these

officials had his or her own personnel, for instance, people who went house to house to collect the taxes in cash and rice, eavesdroppers, paramedics, unarmed militiamen, and couriers. Women did work having to do with finances, medical services, and information gathering; men were local militiamembers and couriers; both women and men did organizing work. In many households in the hacienda, at least one member had some task or another, from trivial to time-consuming and influential. All the while, most of these part-timers still worked as laborers in the canefields.

Two things struck me when I talked with workers who held responsible positions in the hacienda-based NPA apparatus. First, their language was thoroughly institutional. Their work evolved around "tasks," "targets," "activity plans," "assessments" (they used the English terms). Their daily worries were those of any member of an institution: doing their tasks well and avoiding a bad record. Second, they tended to speak in the passive voice. They often used expressions such as, "I was called by higher officials," "I was given the task of ..." They spoke as agents of an institution, executing directives handed down from above.

And indeed they were. They were now doing tasks that were not (only) in the immediate interest of themselves and their fellow workers in the hacienda, but in the interest of the wider institution. They were asked to secure the contributions expected of each hacienda household: a small can of rice and two pesos a month for the full-time cadres and guerrilla fighters, participation in at least the first basic seminar of the NPA, participation in workers' collective actions in the hacienda, and regular participation in rallies in Bacolod City by at least one member of the household, in particular the rally at Labor Day. Besides, they helped provide courier services, intelligence information, food and shelter for mobile activists and guerrillas, and other services.

They usually did not volunteer for these positions, but were asked by higher-ups within the hacienda, or by outside activists, often at the closing of a seminar they attended. Some were very interested, others were ashamed to refuse, still others thought they might be considered anti-movement if they turned down the request. They tended to identify with the interests of the organization once they were made responsible for a task, however small, as is common in any organization. Partybranch members would even ask some reluctant supporters to carry out tasks in order to weaken their resistance.

Once given a task, what motivated workers to carry it out, to "move" so to speak, was not only their conviction that the NPA defended their interests and, in many cases, a belief in the wider aims of the movement. They were also prompted by the activity plans and assessments. All people in the organization, down to the members of the party branch, operated on the basis of activity plans—transmitted by higher-ups and elaborated by the responsible collectives at each level—that stated the tasks and targets of each activist within a certain period of time. The head of the party branch would receive, for instance, the target to mobilize thirty workers for the Labor Day rally in the city, and his activity plan included house-to-house visits to request people to attend.

Everyone was accountable to his or her direct superiors. Members of the party branch had to attend weekly or monthly assessment meetings in which a member of the section party committee checked targets against actual performance. People who fell short of their target needed to explain at length why they did so, which pinpointed obstacles to mobilization but also pressured the particular activist to do a better job next time. Many activists I talked to found the assessments a nuisance, in particular the lengthy questionings when they fell short of their targets, which certainly served as a powerful sanction. A good performance, on the other hand, led to a good record, personal satisfaction, and opportunities for upward mobility within the organization.

Workers were interested to hold responsible positions and learn new skills, something their life as hacienda workers rarely offered. What they valued most was gaining a sense of effective agency, of

being able to change their lives through systematic analysis and planned action. This carried over into their daily lives: much more than during my first stay in the hacienda, I heard people tackle a problem head-on once it was mentioned, analyze it point by point, and weigh various types of solutions.

This sense of personal achievement and collective efficacy was fostered by a training in self-restraint, foresight, cooperation, and the making of short-term sacrifices for future benefits. Through “criticism and self-criticism” sessions (referred to by its acronym, CSC), party-branch members were trained to increase their ability to control their impulses and analyze objectively. These sessions were only gradually introduced in the hacienda because, as a mobilizer said, the workers were rather “emotional”: some were “arrogant,” others got angry when people did not accept their point. A premium was placed on the individual learning process (“the person who does not want to be taught, does not want to progress”) in the service of the larger struggle. Though the local activists hardly reached the ideal behavior propagated, they certainly made an effort to move in that direction. Also in their personal and family lives workers showed a greater interest in planning ahead and making sacrifices for future benefits. Some pointed to the high rate of family planning in the hacienda and to the many worker families that sacrifice to send one or two children through high school, and compared this situation favorably with that in a neighboring hacienda where workers had been mobilized less intensively and where workers, in their view, “just make babies, drink and gamble, without thinking about the future.”

GOING UNDERGROUND

The step towards full-time work in the movement as a mobile activist was a major step towards, what Me Adam calls, “high-risk activism.” [76] It involved a high threshold. It yielded no (material) benefits to the people involved nor to their families, but instead demanded severe sacrifices. Then why did people move in and stay in? Race notes, for the revolutionary movement in Vietnam, that the opportunity to gain access to positions of status and power provided a strong incentive to poor village youths. [77] Others argue, concerning the NPA, that the personal experience of a severe injustice, such as landgrabbing or military abuse, convinced people to take this ultimate step. [78] In the case of Milagros other incentives were relevant as well, which may be uncovered by a more sequential analysis, with an eye for the smallgroup settings in which recruitment took place.

Some thirteen teenagers and two married men left the hacienda to become fulltimers, each carrying a knapsack with some clothes and a blanket, and stepped into lives of fully illegal work. This group included young single women who were asked to become organizers, financial officers, and medical cadres linked to guerrilla squads, and young men who were recruited as organizers, guerrilla fighters, members of assassination squads, and operators of radio handsets, deployed throughout the province. Engaged in illegal work, they were given an alias and were assigned outside their home area to avoid being recognized.

What moved them in? “I saw that the system was rotten and that even with hard work we remain poor, and I wanted to change it,” a former cadre said when asked why he became a full-timer. Others mentioned “to change the social system in the Philippines,” or “to serve the people.” Though sounding like exemplary answers expected of cadres, the youths’ belief in the righteousness and aims of the struggle, and in their own sense of mission, appeared sincere enough. These convictions were, in many cases, not the direct result of an injustice they or their families had suffered, but were developed in the course of their participation in the mobilizing organizations in the hacienda, in which other incentives were at work as well. [79]

First, they had already followed a “career” in the movement as part-time activists, which eased the way. Most had started in the cultural group, then worked

as part-time youth organizers and finance officers (young women) and organizers and local militia members (young men), which created a first identification with the movement and a genuine interest in its goals. Taking up these tasks, they became part of the network of local hacienda-based activists and developed new loyalties towards this group. On a practical level, they developed familiarity with their tasks, and most continued in the same line of work when they became full-timers: for instance, part-time organizers became full-time members of mobile Propaganda Organizing Teams, militia members became guerrilla fighters.

Second, they were pulled in through persistent requests by their superiors, who were themselves driven by activity plans that called for more recruits. These superiors were, for instance, party-branch members or former overseer Rafael— relatives or otherwise thoroughly familiar figures in the hacienda, whose NPAbacked authority the recruits had come to respect. They were always on the look-out for new recruits, supervising youths who were doing part-time tasks, assessing them for their willingness and capability to become full-timers. A valued quality was the ability to explain and persuade well, crucial for any activist, and youths who had “a slow brain” or “a limitation of the brain” (*limitasyon sa otok*), as locals called it, were not selected. Nor were young men who suffered from a “gunpowder brain” (*otok pulbura*), that is, who were only interested in battle and not in the political work that carried the armed struggle.

Third, recruitment took place in a web of peer group and kinship ties that produced added incentives and pressures. For instance, three childhood friends entered the cultural group together, became local militia-members, and jointly decided to become full-timers after they had been invited to do so. In several families, two or three children became full-timers, one convincing the other. Partybranch members (female and male), as well as cadre Rafael, often concentrated on close relatives in their recruitment work, and former cadres would recount, for instance, that they were “recruited by my aunt” or by their relative Rafael.

Attracted, too, by adventure, some appeared hardly aware of the personal risks involved when they decided to go full-time; this was particularly true of the most youthful activists.

Those who were fully aware of the risks were their parents. And parents had much to lose—a child and a breadwinner—whereas the NPA had little to offer in return—no salary and only an occasional small allowance for the full-timers themselves. Worker families depended heavily on the wage income of teenaged daughters and sons just to make ends meet or to cover the schooling costs of younger children. Some teenagers (girls and boys) had followed several years of high school thanks to the financial sacrifice of their families, and the parents had high hopes their child would obtain a better paid job and help his or her siblings in turn. Fearing for the safety of their son or daughter, anxious about the loss of a breadwinner, and seeing their hopes for family improvement along the educational route dashed, many parents were adamantly opposed to yielding their children to the *hublag*, even those parents who were themselves active in the movement. A teenager’s decision to become a full-timer, then, usually entailed struggle and conflict within the family.

The NPA dealt with parent opposition by seriously and solemnly asking parents permission, and focusing on the moral value of the sacrifice. High-placed activists were responsible for this task, and it was former overseer Rafael, in his position as section-committee secretary, who persuaded many parents of Milagros to let their children go. He would ask them: “Do you accept that your child, in the course of his life, will be oppressed by the rich, just like you have been?” He argued that the only way to give their children and grandchildren a truly brighter future (a prime cultural value) was to let the activist child join the struggle, thus recasting familial sacrifice and loss as contributions to future family improvement.

Parents who asked about death benefits or allowances in case their child would perish were answered that the organization had no material assistance to offer since “it is the movement of the poor and the oppressed,” but “if he dies, the most important is that he has served the people: he will be like a hero,” and the *masa* in the hacienda would stand by the bereaved family. Some parents were not convinced, but the face-to-face encounter with Rafael or other authoritative activists pressured them to tone down their opposition. Whatever their sentiments, they could not force their children to stay. Many youths left against their parents’ will.

Once they were in, these new full-timers faced serious disincentives: hardships, poverty, feelings of shame because they had to depend on the meager food supply of hacienda workers and poor villagers in their areas of operation. The few who were married and had a wife and children in the hacienda had a particularly hard time. When I asked one of them what his positive experiences were as an organizer in the extremely poor uplands of the municipality, he said, “none; my head was always reeling from anxiety—whether I was in my area, or taking part in the assessments, or home for a visit and confronted with my family’s lack of income.”

What kept them “moving” despite these disincentives was, for one, their identification with the movement and its wider goals. Since they lived apart from their families, their daily sense of self-worth was closely linked to the success of the movement and their own efforts to contribute to it. Some women who had been full-time organizers elsewhere, for instance, told me how happy and proud they were when they were able to mobilize large numbers of people for a rally in the city or when they had successfully guided workers in staging collective actions against planters. Activity plans and assessments provided added incentives, as did supervision by superiors, and opportunities to rise in the hierarchy. Moreover, the full-timers established new ties of loyalty that mediated their loyalty to the movement. All full-timers were part of a “collective,” a group of some five to eight people who shared the same work (e.g. organizing) within a designated area. They came together for task assignments, assessments, and criticism/self-criticism sessions, as well as for informal gatherings. This collective became the activists’ new peer group. Within this group, social pressures were at work to perform well as an activist; bad performance reflected on the other members of the group. If one member would quit, the other members would be “ashamed towards the masses that one of them was no longer serving the people,” as one said. As they were redeployed and visited other areas for seminars and assessments, their network of contacts within the movement expanded, and their sense of loyalty to the larger movement increased. “We share a bloodline with the organization,” some former full-timers said, expressing a sense of connectedness and loyalty.

Eventually, many gained a new, activist identity geared to “service to the people,” helped along by criticism/self-criticism sessions that condemned *personal enteres* (personal interests) and that emphasized service to the *masa* and contribution to the “struggle” (*paghimakas*) as their main purpose in life. There were temptations, as life in the movement provided opportunities, despite controls, for embezzlement of funds and illicit love affairs, in particular among members of the same collective. Such transgressions were not uncommon in the movement; those responsible would either flee the area or succumb to “disciplinary actions,” mainly demotion or ouster from the movement. [80] A full-time organizer from Milagros, for instance, with a family in another hacienda, ran off to Mindanao with a female comrade.

The cost of “exit” [81] was a disincentive to drop out, but was not so high as to force full-timers to stay in. Those who moved out lost their claims to their achieved positions and, upon re-entering, would have to start at a much lower rank. Dropping out could also be dangerous: returning to one’s home area could lead to arrest or worse. But the organization did not severely condemn those who moved out, just lay low, and returned to their families or moved to the city. This type of moving out was called “to rest” (*magpahuway*), a euphemism that signaled that the people in question had not lost their loyalty to the movement and might re-enter anytime. A main worry of the organization was,

of course, that people who moved out would leak information to the authorities, but it dealt with this problem not by severely sanctioning those who had left active duty, but by monitoring them.

MONITORING AND CONTROL: THE USE OF COERCION

A small-scale community is a favorable setting for the monitoring and sanctioning of individual behavior (through gossip, community meetings, and public sanctions, for instance), and thus for inducing the participation of all in collective action. [82] Community sanctioning, then, may serve as a powerful tool for activists to gain support or compliance. I concentrate on negative sanctions here.

In pre-NPA times, local management and the overseer's kin, backed by the planter, formed the main sanctioning force in the hacienda. They used, for instance, malicious gossip, veiled threats, and an occasional anonymous letter with warnings to discourage workers from associating with the progressive nuns in town. As the balance of power in the hacienda changed, a core of local NPA activists formed the new community sanctioning force, backed up by the coercive powers of the NPA.

The mobilization strategy of the NPA calls for the support or compliance of all members of a community, partly inspired by the illegality of the enterprise. Once there is a core of active NPA supporters and a large group of interested-to-neutral supporters, NPA activists start to pressure unwilling community members into compliance. Coercion was used late in the mobilization process in Hda. Milagros, possibly because NPA influence in the area was still weak at the time mobilization started.

NPA activists institutionalized a system of monitoring and sanctioning in Milagros that encouraged workers to police their own ranks, but whose effectiveness ultimately depended on the NPA's punitive powers. The rules were simple. What made a person suspect was his unwillingness to contribute to the movement. Relevant here were the basic contributions expected of all hacienda members (or their households): the monthly portion of rice and cash for the guerrillas, participation in at least the first seminar of the NPA, and participation in city rallies and in hacienda-based labor actions. Another "contribution" expected of everyone was silence about the NPA vis-à-vis outsiders. These contributions, most of which could be easily checked, functioned as yardsticks of people's loyalty to the movement. As the NPA established control, unwillingness to give in to requests to attend a rally or participate in a seminar was considered an act of resistance.

Several families in the hacienda, or one of the spouses in certain families, were publicly known to be unwilling supporters. They were old-timers in the hacienda, workers and a driver. Personal loyalty to the planter, fear of the risks of collective action and NPA support, lack of confidence in the NPA, social isolation, and an unwillingness to go along with the rest, were among the reasons for their reluctance. Some openly resisted the activities of organizers in the early period of mobilization. An old widowed worker, for instance, used to argue with activists, refused to accept their message, and was tagged by local activists as someone who "always thinks he knows better." As the NPA established institutional control, vocal resistance was curtailed and reluctant supporters tried, instead, to disengage from their institutionalized obligations. [83]

People unwilling to contribute were branded *backward* by activists (using the English term). Considered potential informers for the authorities, they were socially marginalized, isolated from the NPA core group, and not informed, for instance, about impending military operations in the area. They were monitored by fellow workers who were tasked to "collect data" (*kuha datos*), not only about trespassing outsiders such as military men, police, and itinerant vendors, but also about locals. The hacienda monitoring force consisted of some fifteen people, primarily women and girls operating under the party branch, who were simply alert while going about their daily chores. They

also tried to check whether “very talkative” people (mainly women) provided information to outsiders, and suspected culprits were subjected to thorough interrogations by party-branch members and an outside activist.

When persuasive talks by activists did not induce compliance, threats followed. The threats were not made by local or outside activists (tasked to persuade), but by mobile teams of guerrillas or snipers with whom the activists coordinated. The ‘suspects’ were given several so-called *warnings* through intimidating home visits by these heavily armed men, and knew they might be killed after the third time if they failed to heed the message. “There are no prisons in the NPA,” as one activist said. The threats were effective: people of Milagros were well aware of NPA liquidations of suspected informers or abusive overseers in the area, though none of their own rank fell victim.

How people experienced the punitive power of the NPA depended, quite obviously, on their position vis-à-vis the organization. As part of the apparatus, responsible for tasks in the hacienda-based organization, local activists approved of coercion to make everyone contribute his or her share: the rules were clear and contributions not too burdensome, so people who received a *warning* were themselves to blame. Unwilling supporters, in contrast, felt threatened. They participated in city rallies in order to “avoid a bad record,” as one of them explained. They were cautious in what they said when local activists were around. Coercion prompted many of their contributions. To the large category of more or less sympathetic supporters, the possibility of coercion was probably always at the back of their minds when they received requests for contributions once the NPA began to exert control, but this was combined with other considerations and incentives.

With monitoring in the hands of community members, as well as the ability to request punitive action, one might expect petty jealousies and animosities—the nastier side of community life—to play a role in these sanctioning activities. To avoid this, the NPA had made the section committee, and not the local party branch, responsible for decisions about punitive actions, and required local checks on incriminating information. In Milagros, for instance, several workers had tagged personal enemies as informers but activists dismissed the accusations. A woman whose younger brother was a guerrilla did succeed occasionally in threatening her personal opponents with *warning* visits by members of her brother’s squad.

NPA HEGEMONY IN THE HACIENDA

By the mid-1980s, a new power group had emerged in the hacienda: the workers (women and men) who had made active use of the opportunities offered them in the course of their mobilization. They eventually formed the party branch, backed by the organizational and coercive powers of the wider NPA organization. Social boundaries in the community were redrawn as the balance of power changed. The members of the party branch formed the center of local power and the center of social life. Linked to them were the workers who had some tasks in the local organization. Further to the margins were the families who only provided the basic contributions, the *masa*. At the margins were unwilling supporters, the *backward* people. Local management was marginalized as well, up to the time when they were organized into their own association. The hacienda was, in appearance, still fully controlled by the planter, with laborers drudging in the fields and collecting their wages on weekly pay-days. In reality, worker-activists regulated community life to a large extent, and controlled the allocation of hacienda work among the laborers, which was formally still the responsibility of the overseer.

Eventually, the party branch headed an institutional structure (extracting contributions for the NPA) that appeared to be self-perpetuating: local personnel carried out the state-like functions of taxation, policing, intelligence, and justice (settling local quarrels). Unwilling supporters were coerced into compliance. The youth group formed a pool of interested recruits for full-time activism. Commitment

to the organization was perpetuated by, among others, regular gains in workers' bargaining power and benefits vis-à-vis the planter, and by workers' responsibilities within the local institutional structure. Regular "cultural shows" by the youth group, participation in rallies and occasional seminars, informal singing of revolutionary songs, and "mass meetings" attended by most workers each Sunday, provided ideological reminders and made the ideology of the movement into a part of local commonsense. Activists were successful in neutralizing competing mobilizers: they monopolized workers' contacts with the planter and shielded the workers off from patronage politicians by enforcing a boycott of the 1984 congressional elections and the 1986 presidential elections (with the argument, for instance, that "whoever wins, it won't make any difference to our situation"). Such conditions are crucial to the ongoing support for any social movement. They involve the establishment of a "routine flow of resources into the organization" and an "ongoing production and maintenance of meaning and ideology" that keeps members committed to the movement's collective action frame. [84]

A conducive environment, by the mid-1980s, made this ongoing support for the NPA possible. First, risks were relatively low at that time, since planters opted for accommodation with the NPA, and the military concentrated on NPA bases in the uplands. Though the authorities did resort to killings and torture in the lowlands, people in Hda. Milagros were, at that time, not yet personally affected.

Second, benefits were relatively high, in particular in the form of gains vis-à-vis the planter. Workers reached a strong bargaining position; their protests helped to prevent mechanization of cultivation tasks in the early 1980s, and during the sugar crisis of the mid-1980s they obtained from the planter access to farmlots that somewhat cushioned the drop in family income. Partly responsible for these gains were the province-wide expansion of union influence and the growing coercive powers of the NPA. Moreover, the NPA was "rich" at that time, as some people said, thanks to income from taxes and support from members of the middle and upper classes in the province, and so it could temporarily provide some allowances to the families of married cadres. [85]

There was, moreover, a strong link between the local party branch and the higher levels of the organization, in particular through former overseer and high-ranking cadre Rafael. Finally, workers thought the NPA was on the winning side. As the broad anti-Marcos alliance, which had a strong left-wing component, staged ever larger demonstrations in the provincial capital, workers experienced this as a sign of increasing support for the *hublag*. The NPA persistently expanded its provincial mass base in this period. When I visited the hacienda briefly in 1985, there was a slightly euphoric feeling among the workers that "liberation" was soon to come.

DECLINE AND SPLIT IN LOYALTIES

The installment of a democratic regime in 1986 under President Corazon Aquino did not, in itself, weaken support for the NPA in the hacienda region. In 1986-88, support among hacienda workers even peaked in the whole north-central part of the province, according to several activists. Since activists presented left-wing electoral candidates as supportive of the *hublag*, people of Milagros perceived electoral politics as potentially supportive of, rather than opposed to, the NPA struggle. But support for the NPA did start to decline in Milagros in 1988. Apparently, the immediate causes were (1) the intensification of counterinsurgency activities that started in 1987 and hit Milagros hard in 1988, disrupting the mobilization routine, increasing risks of NPA support, and weakening the links with the NPA apparatus; (2) the split among regional NPA leaders in 1987, with "moderates" resigning from the movement and turning against the NPA; former overseer and NPA district secretary Rafael shared the viewpoints of the moderates and, after his capture in 1988, became a countermobilizer in the service of the military; (3) retention of benefits gained by the union, at least in Hda. Milagros, which convinced some *masa* that they could do without the NPA [86]; and (4) some negative experiences of workers with continued NPA control. The

nationwide split of the CPP-NPA in 1992-93 further reduced people's willingness to provide support.

Context of the first two developments was the expanded maneuvering space provided by the Aquino administration to elites, military, and initially to the political left as well. Planters and military in Negros Occidental joined in a concerted drive to counter the expanding influence and violent operations of the NPA that included hacienda raids, raids of small army camps, attacks of police precincts and town halls, and assassinations of chiefs of police. On the side of the NPA, the widened democratic space under President Aquino led to strategy debates, with so-called "moderates" in the Negros regional party leadership propagating more participation in the legal political sphere. When after the collapse of the cease-fire agreement in February 1987, the national NPA leadership apparently opted for a break with politically moderate allies and an intensification of military actions and urban assassination campaigns, moderates in the Negros leadership resigned, were granted amnesty by the government, and became vocal countermobilizers when one among their ranks was killed by the NPA. [87] A prominent member of this so-called "splittist group" was Nemesio Demafelis, former secretary of the regional executive committee of the Negros Regional Party Committee. Former overseer Rafael had been a close subordinate of Demafelis, and Rafael's capture and surrender came in the wake of the resignation of his former superior.

By Rafael's own account, the NPA's policy shift in 1987 signaled that the immediate interests of the lower classes were sacrificed to the interests of the armed struggle. As district secretary, he was ordered to cut ties with non-government organizations (NGOs) that were not sympathetic to the NPA (but whose assistance he had helped to broker for livelihood projects of hacienda workers) and was told to disband the organization of local hacienda management (which had gained concessions from planters through peaceful negotiations). He protested that "food" was sacrificed for "arms," but his protests were overruled. In 1988, his resentment against NPA leadership further increased as he was denied financial aid to cure his severe tuberculosis. He was captured while in Bacolod City for medical help. In military custody, cut off from NPA contacts, Rafael was confronted with several military men with nationalist reformist leanings, and he saw common ground in their populism, nationalism, and anti-landlord attitude. Out of conviction or force of circumstance, he came to believe that the government (generous with livelihood funds for the rural poor at that time, partly in the context of counterinsurgency) offered the better solution to rural poverty. In 1989 he became a countermobilizer within one of the army's Special Operations Teams (SOT) stationed close to Hda. Milagros, and a regular speaker at mass surrenders staged by the SOT throughout the area.

In Milagros, the intensification of counterinsurgency increased the risks of supporting the NPA, in particular when the Philippine Constabulary (PC) and its paramilitary PC Forward Command were responsible for counterinsurgency in the area in 1987-88 and used terror against suspected NPA cadres. Four men of Hda. Milagros were killed by military or paramilitary groups. Three were guerrillas or snipers, one was a courier. One of them, a young man, was mercilessly killed right inside the hacienda in 1988 (before Rafael's capture), and his torture and murder in public view terrified the population. The victims' families received emotional and material help through a large support network in the hacienda, embedded within the *hublag*. But the hacienda killing signified to the people of Milagros that the military were well-informed, and people were fearful who would be next. This traumatic event had far-reaching effects.

For instance, links with the NPA hierarchy weakened as outside activists avoided the hacienda because of the risks, and as non-activist workers (who belonged to *masa*) became less willing to support the organization and its cadres out of fear. For safety reasons, ideological seminars in the hacienda ceased, and the youth group was disbanded when it came under police surveillance. Workers' participation in rallies in Bacolod City declined as the police and PC began to pick up suspected NPAs at rallies, some of whom (from other haciendas) were tortured and killed. Thus, the "routine flow" of contributions to the NPA was disrupted, as well as the regular ideological work

through seminars, rallies, and cultural shows. Disrupted, too, was the routine of activity plans, meetings, and assessments of the hacienda party branch and supporting activists—hitherto enforced by higher NPA cadres— which had helped to encourage local activists to keep on “moving.”

Countermobilizers subsequently entered the community. An army Special Operations Team that settled in the detachment near Milagros in 1989 took over counterinsurgency work from the PC in the area and introduced a persuasive, relatively non-violent community-based approach. Activists in Milagros were made to participate in a mass surrender of suspected NPA activists and supporters in the municipality, which included a three-day, live-in “seminar” in town on “the evils of communism” and the alleged good intentions of the government, and a collective pledge of loyalty to the Philippine Republic. Though some later said they were not impressed by this effort at re-legitimization of state authority and remained committed to the *hublag*, the accommodating behavior of these military, and the government’s offer of livelihood funds, created some openings towards military and government. Moreover, after the “surrender,” patronage politicians re-entered the place during election campaigns. [88] Even though most people of Milagros saw no contradiction between supporting the *hublag* and participating in electoral politics, some links with prominent local patronage politicians were (re)established which may have demobilizing effects in the long run. Furthermore, the Roman Catholic Church in town (in conservative hands since the departure of the left-wing priest and nuns in the late 1970s and early 1980s) was led since the late 1980s by a priest who made strong appeals to his parishioners to return to the old faith by means of taped prayers and religious songs broadcast from a loudspeaker attached to the church’s belfry, which carried far and wide over the canefields. From Hda. Milagros, the Church attracted in particular women who sought solace for personal worries and distress, including wives and mothers of local activists and full-timers.

Most influential as a demobilizer was Rafael. Though people feared he might inform on them (which he himself denied), they valued the protection he provided against military violence by mediating between Milagros residents and the army’s SOT, and by guaranteeing proper treatment of captured cadres from Milagros. Close relatives of Rafael quit their positions as local activists. Demotivated by Rafael, they were also distrusted by fellow activists as potential informers for the military. Several anxious parents of full-time NPA cadres moved closer to Rafael; he could have their children’s names removed from the military order of battle if they would persuade them to leave the movement. Members of the *masa*, who were not part of the NPA apparatus, valued “peace” above all, abhorred “trouble” (*gamo*, violence from both sides), and appreciated accommodation with the military through Rafael. Several reluctant NPA supporters, pressured into support in the days of NPA control, eventually felt they had enough backing to distance themselves from the NPA. Though Rafael helped form a paramilitary group (CAFGU) of former comrades who had followed him out of the movement, sentiment and organization in Milagros was still such that no-one else from the hacienda joined his or any other paramilitary group, unlike several former NPA cadres in nearby haciendas. Based at the military detachment near Milagros, Rafael’s group was linked to the army’s SOT and was generally considered decent and non-abusive.

By 1992, the army’s SOT had moved out (and so had Rafael, who settled in a detachment some ten kilometers distant), and a more aggressive military battalion and paramilitary team had taken its place. Meanwhile, NPA cadres had reestablished links with Milagros and mobile NPA guerrilla teams again frequented the place (under cover of the tall sugarcane) as part of a provincewide effort to recapture lost areas. NPA presence backed up the power of local activists, but also increased people’s fear of armed encounters.

Loyalties in the hacienda fragmented along the following lines: First, a core of full-timers and local activists remained committed to the *hublag* and its wider goals; but part of the *masa* began to credit only the union for the benefits of their improved labor conditions and bargaining power, and started

to define the NPA as a potential source of “trouble,” fearing military encounters in particular. One female worker muttered when referring to mobile guerrillas, “people who only roam around and ask others for food,” and said she feared they would spend the night in her ramshackle house. Local activists worried that these workers were taking the union gains for granted and had lost sight of the need for the NPA’s countervailing power. Rafael’s close relatives formed a separate category among the *masa*, suspected by activists of having been “brainwashed” by Rafael.

Second, organizational problems common to any institution divided local activists. Workers who held positions of power in the hacienda “collective” (formed by local officials in the NPA apparatus) were suspected by fellow workers of favoritism and furthering personal interests. They left their posts with a grudge, tended to retreat from the NPA network, and, together with other workers, considered the new local officials unfit and not credible as local leaders. Few competent full-time organizers were available in 1992 who could mend such divisions; as experienced cadres were surrendering or simply laying low, the gap was filled with hastily trained newcomers who, in Milagros, commanded little respect and were unable to unite local activists and beef up the collective.

Most full-time cadres from Hda. Milagros left the movement when counterinsurgency intensified. They moved to Manila or Mindanao to escape capture, decided to lay low, or surrendered through mediation by Rafael. According to their own account, the increased risks, the decline of the movement provincewide, the unending hardships and receding prospect of victory, and the resignation of superiors of the “splittist group,” lowered morale and commitment, whereas the pull of their families was strong. The amnesty program of the government indicated the opportunity of a safe exit. An added disincentive to carry on was demographic in nature: those who had entered the *hublag* as teenagers, had married in the movement, and had placed their children under the care of others (“since the *hublag* takes precedence over the family”), yearned finally to live with their spouses and children and lead normal family lives.

Finally, some negative experiences of workers with NPA control diminished their trust in the *hublag*. Besides alleged mismanagement by local activists, these included the conflict-ridden experiment with communal farming. The collective had successfully claimed from the planter not only several hectares of hacienda land for family subsistence lots, but also some irrigated land for communal rice cultivation to be managed by the collective. Conflicts soon broke out about work remuneration. The system of an equal share for all was swiftly changed into remuneration by work points to solve the free-rider problem, but even then there were numerous protests about alleged unfair computations. This experience did not endear workers to collective production.

Though the NPA did not specify to the *masa* that it aimed for collective land ownership, it did profess in a general manner that everything would become *komun* (collective property), in the sense that everyone would share equally in the use of resources. The term *komun*, meant to capture the social equality the NPA stood for, and closely related to the term *komunismo*, thus got a negative connotation among Milagros workers when they gained some practical experience with it. As one female worker said in 1992: “Communism is bad because then everything is *komun*. Like with the farmlots that are *komunal*, that’s already communist. When everything is *komun*, there’s trouble (*gamo*). I don’t agree with it.” Another said with some amusement that the communal farmlot was meant to draw the community together but it had only torn it apart. Workers, including some local activists, told me that the land reform they hoped for was a distribution of land into family-owned plots, not communal property. Some expected collective land ownership under NPA rule, others said they were assured family lots. Both may have been right. Cadres envisioned first a distribution into family lots, and later communal ownership when people’s “consciousness” would be ready for it.

The nationwide split of the CPP-NPA in 1992-93 did little to boost workers’ confidence in the NPA.

The split into the faction of CPP leader Jose Maria Sison (the “reaffirmists”) and the faction against the line of Sison (the “rejectionists”) materialized in Negros in 1993, when the Negros Regional Party Committee sided with rejectionists, and all people connected to the movement, down to village and hacienda level, were expected to take sides. [89] Mass meetings were organized, by district, for full-time cadres and local part-time activists, in which the so-called “controversy” was explained, hefty position papers from both sides were discussed, and the participants asked to make their own decisions. The anti-Sison faction in Negros claimed a majority following in Negros, in particular among guerrilla forces, but it was weakened as its top leaders were captured in January 1994. [90] The two factions staked out their own territories on the island. The split was carried over to legal mass organizations, which became visible with separate demonstrations in Bacolod City on Human Rights Day and Labor Day, and during the *Welga ng Bayan* (people’s strike) on February 9, 1994 against the oil price hike. [91] The left-wing union NFSW sympathized with the pro-Sison faction, but part of its staff split off and founded a rival union more sympathetic to the anti-Sison side, apparently taking a number of organizers and organized haciendas with them in the north and south of the province. Realignment was such that NFSW organizers were sometimes barred from their unionized areas by NPA guerrillas who belonged to the anti-Sison faction.

In Hda. Milagros, the split further alienated workers from the NPA. It confused the *masa*, who knew little of the inner-party conflict. Faced with a split in the union and some efforts at organization by its rival, most workers emphatically sided with the union that had supported them for more than ten years: “that’s where our heart is,” “it’s through them that we got benefits.” Local activists and former full-timers, on their part, were thoroughly discouraged, and even disgusted, by the split. They blamed top leaders and began to doubt the leadership and organization as such. A female activist said: “it’s a problem of the higher-ups, I don’t understand it,” and added, “so I stopped doing tasks for the movement.” A former high-ranking cadre deplored the split as “a controversy over theory and interpretation at the national level,” and recounted with regret that after the long seminar on the conflict, the members of his collective of NPA fighters “began to distrust one other, and I feared I might be shot by one of my comrades,” which prompted his exit from the movement. Though (former) activists of Milagros did take the controversial issues of strategy and leadership seriously, the organizational fragmentation of the *hublag* left them “unhitched” from the NPA organization, as one said.

Nevertheless, activists and former activists in the hacienda still expressed commitment to the aims of the *hublag*—changing the social system and government, and empowering the poor—even as they distanced themselves from NPA leadership and organization. They sustained this commitment through involvement in union and NGO networks (that also kept them informed on national issues that were rallying points of the political left) and informal contacts within and beyond the hacienda. Some former cadres envisaged an active role for themselves in the newly established Rebel Returnees Association in the municipality (an association formed in the context of the government’s amnesty program), “to keep it on the right track of mass struggle,” as one said. Several activists have taken steps to seek coverage of the hacienda by the government’s Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law, even though chances of success are limited. As their link with the NPA organization weakened, as the armed struggle became less and less viable, and as unions, NGOs, and local government agencies had gained some influence vis-a-vis local power holders, (former) activists in the hacienda have become all the more interested in legal forms of action.

A NOTE ON REPRESSION AND SUPPORT FOR THE NPA

Some studies on the NPA suggest a direct relation between repression (including repression of legal forms of claim-making), militarization, and military abuse on the one hand, and popular support for the revolutionary movement on the other, and argue that repression and abuse provoke support for the NPA. [92] Some assume a linear relationship, with popular support rising and falling depending

on the intensity of repression and abuse.

The experience of Milagros shows a more complex relationship. It indicates variations in people's response to repression depending on the place, timing, targeting, and type of repression, as well as on people's involvement in supportive organizations that recast repression and military abuse as rallying points for activism. [93]

Repression did induce Church and union activists from Milagros—in the late 1970s when they were thwarted in their union activities in haciendas near Milagros—to support the armed struggle, helped along by NPA proselytizing that presented armed struggle as a viable alternative. Not themselves victims of military abuse, they were deeply affected by the Church's protest campaigns against military abuses elsewhere in the province, campaigns that created empathy for distant victims and outrage against the government.

But when repression abated and opportunities for legal collective action expanded in the Milagros area around 1980-87, support for the NPA did not decline but, on the contrary, increased and peaked. A main reason was that opportunities for NPA mobilization were favorable: while repression remained a rallying point (repression elsewhere in the province, and the potential of repression locally), cadres could easily operate in the hacienda, workers' risks of supporting the NPA were low, benefits were high in the form of successful union actions backed by the NPA, and workers' confidence in NPA strength increased since a military backlash did not occur for some time. Moreover, workers viewed legal and NPA activities as mutually reinforcing.

Support in Milagros declined when militarization and military abuses intensified and hit the community itself. The first victims from Milagros were NPA activists, mostly full-timers, who were killed in places *outside* the hacienda when the hacienda was already fully organized by the NPA. Considered casualties of war, their killings confirmed anti-government feelings and did activate involvement in established NPA networks as workers provided emotional and financial support to the victims' families. But when a worker's son and cadre was killed *within* the hacienda, when workers harboring guerrillas risked "strafing" of their houses by military patrols, and as military surveillance in the hacienda increased—in short, as the community itself was targeted—the risks to family safety proved a strong disincentive for supporting the NPA. Moreover, the risks of detection deterred cadres from operating in the area.

Repression, then, may prompt activists and victims to support the NPA, and activists may learn, in turn, to accept the personal risks involved in NPA activism. But repression may also narrow the opportunities of mobilizers to solicit support, and may weaken people's willingness to provide such support when they fear retaliations against their own community and family.

CONCLUSION

With this sequential analysis of the rise and decline of support for the NPA in a hacienda community, I argue that workers' motives for supporting the NPA were affected by the mobilization process itself, and that their motives and aspirations changed in the process. Their support came about in the course of their interaction with mobilizers within a wider structure of political opportunities that allowed mobilizers room for maneuver and enabled mobilized workers to acquire new perspectives and gain some tangible social and economic improvements.

The image of rural communities making an alliance with a revolutionary movement to defend traditional rights, relying on indigenous solidarities and remaining relatively autonomous of the revolutionary organization, does not fit the experience of Hda. Milagros. Movement and community

became intertwined: workers of Milagros became NPA activists themselves and thus part of the revolutionary organization. They began to claim new rights as defined by the NPA. Their mobilization produced (if only temporarily) new solidarities in the community. Worker-activists started to identify with the wider aims of the NPA, in particular, capturing state power and removing the landlord class. Moreover, the institutionalization of the NPA in the community changed the balance of power in favor of worker-activists who replaced local management as the new power group in the hacienda. I elaborate some of these developments below.

First, NPA activists did not just try to address the immediate problems and grievances of the workers. Rather, they redefined workers' interests, shifted the object of workers' grievances from the individual planter to an encompassing exploitative system, and outlined a course of action to end their exploitation. Moreover, they expanded the definition of workers' rights, moving from traditional rights to family subsistence (which had motivated earlier collective demands by workers) to rights to land and a life without oppression. In presenting this collective action frame, the activists could connect to previous ideological work by progressive clergy and a left-wing union in the hacienda. By linking the problems of workers to an exploitative system that they were helping to overthrow, activists could solicit from workers considerable contributions for the wider struggle of the NPA. Despite initial resistance by supervisory personnel and worker-relatives of the overseer, most workers eventually accepted the basic premises of the new frame, not in the least because it appeared to be true—collective actions against the planter, inspired by the exploitation frame, were successful—and widely shared, as shown by the large demonstrations in the provincial capital that people of Milagros joined.

Thus we cannot assume a clear-cut distinction between indigenous, selfgenerated views on justice and rights among poor rural populations and external, mainly urban views propagated by movement leadership, as some of the peasantmovement literature suggests. Instead, the case of Milagros shows that notions of rights among the rural poor may change as movement leaders inform local populations of new rights whose enforcement appears plausible, and as movement activism helps improve opportunities for making successful claims. External notions of rights may thus become "indigenized."

Second, the movement was gradually institutionalized in the hacienda through local "mass organizations" and eventually a party branch. Through these channels, workers began to connect their individual and family interests to the interests of the NPA—which mitigated the potential conflict between the two—and developed commitment to the movement in the process. Cadres and worker-activists promoted labor organization and labor actions whose successes the workers credited, in part, to the coercive powers of the NPA. In return, workers were willing (some more than others) to make the basic contributions to the NPA in rice and cash expected of "organized masses" (masa). Many hacienda teenagers were less concerned with problems of family subsistence and developed, instead, an initial commitment to the organization through the "cultural" youth group that appealed to their longing for peer-group company, entertainment, and purpose in life, and eventually to their ideal—generated in the process—of helping to create a just society for all.

Those workers who were incorporated in the NPA party branch and related committees (the local activists) began to operate, to a varying extent, in the interest of the wider organization and with wider aims in mind. Exposed to a system of incentives and sanctions common to any institution, with activity plans and assessments, they gradually identified with the NPA organization and operated as its local agents. Some eventually became full-time cadres. Because full-time activism demanded severe sacrifices, only a strong identification with the interests and aims of the organization, combined with institutional incentives and support by the cadres' peer groups, kept these activists motivated. Personal ties of kinship and friendship with mobilizers (often fellow workers) and the small-group settings in which each mobilizing act took place, contributed to workers' individual

decisions to increase their involvement in the movement.

Finally, the balance of power in the hacienda profoundly changed as active NPA supporters and officials became the new local power group. Backed by the NPA organization and by fellow workers, they helped to pressure the planter into accommodation, neutralize local management, and coerce unwilling residents of the hacienda into compliance.

The recent decline of support for the NPA in Milagros can be seen in terms of a lessening of interactions between cadres and workers. The intensification of counterinsurgency since the late 1980s disrupted the mobilization routine, increased the risks for NPA supporters, weakened the community's links with the NPA apparatus, decreased the power of local activists, and diminished ideological work in the hacienda. The surrender and amnesty policy of the government as well as the successive splits in the regional leadership of the movement, led to an increase in surrenders and captures. Former NPA cadre Rafael became a countermobilizer in the service of the military and helped to undermine NPA hegemony in the hacienda. Some negative experiences with continued NPA control in the hacienda also weakened workers' confidence in the movement's leadership and policies. As NPA strength declined in the province and country as a whole (exacerbated by the party's split of 1993) and prospects of an NPA victory looked ever more dim, workers of Milagros lowered their aspirations. A core group of worker-activists who remained committed to the aims of the movement and involved in activist networks turned, more than before, to legal forms of action.

Rosanne Rutten

[Click here](#) to subscribe to our weekly newsletters in English and or French. You will receive one email every Monday containing links to all articles published in the last 7 days.

P.S.

Project MUSE

<https://muse.jhu.edu/chapter/2140448/pdf>

The Revolution Falters: The Left in Philippine Politics after 1986 - Preface

<http://www.europe-solidaire.org/spip.php?article52919>

Contemporary Philippine Leftist Politics in Historical Perspective

<http://www.europe-solidaire.org/spip.php?article52920>

From Vanguard to Rearguard: The Theoretical Roots of the Crisis of the Communist Party of the Philippines

<http://www.europe-solidaire.org/spip.php?article52932>

Of Motorcades and Masses: Mobilization and Innovation in Philippine Protest

<http://www.europe-solidaire.org/spip.php?article52942>

Beyond Boycott: The Philippine Left and Electoral Politics After 1986

<http://www.europe-solidaire.org/spip.php?article5296>

When a Revolution Devours its Children Before Victory: Operasyon Kampanyang Ahos and the

Footnotes

[1] Charles Tilly, *European Revolutions, 1492-1992* (Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell, 1993), p. 10.

[2] Research was financed through a grant from the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences. While in the Philippines in January-November 1992, I was affiliated with the Institute of Philippine Culture, Ateneo de Manila University. An earlier version of this paper was written while I was a Visiting Researcher at the Center for Studies of Social Change (CSSC), New School for Social Research, New York, in 1993-94. I wish to thank Charles Tilly and the members of his Proseminar on Political Mobilization and Conflict at the CSSC for their comments and for the opportunity to develop my argument in an intellectually stimulating atmosphere. Thanks are also due to Patricio Abinales, Rod Aya, Ben Kerkvliet, Vina Lanzona, Kim Scipes, John Wiersma, and Frank de Zwart for critical comments and suggestions.

[3] David Rosenberg, "The Philippines" *Revolution and Political Change in the Third World*, Barry M. Schutz and Robert O. Slater, eds. (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1990), p. 165.

[4] Gareth Porter, "The Politics of Counterinsurgency in the Philippines: Military and Political Options," *Philippine Studies Occasional Paper* no. 9 (Honolulu: Center for Philippine Studies, University of Hawaii, 1987), p. 25.

[5] Rod Aya, *Rethinking Revolutions and Collective Violence: Studies on Concept, Theory and Method* (Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis, 1990), p. 12.

[6] cf. Arthur Stinchcombe, *Theoretical Methods in Social History* (New York: Academic Press, 1978), pp. 61-62.

[7] On changing capabilities and opportunities, see Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action and Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994) and Charles Tilly, *From Mobilization to Revolution* (New York: Random House, 1978). On pressures exerted by armed mobilizers, see Norma J. Kriger, *Zimbabwe's Guerrilla War: Peasant Voices* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) on Zimbabwe

[8] In Hda. Milagros, I had the opportunity to talk to both supporters and critics of the NPA since, by 1992, neither the NPA nor the government, through its military forces fully controlled the hacienda. Though I was viewed as sympathetic to the political left, partly because in the 1970s I was introduced in the hacienda by progressive Catholic nuns, I believe I was not closely identified with any one party during the research. Initially, I spent most time with old friends among the worker population who were former activists and who were, as such, relatively independent of the NPA apparatus. Gradually, I could reestablish old contacts and friendships on various sides.

[9] Although I focus on the hacienda, my understanding of support for the NPA also profited from interviews around the province with (former) NPAs, planters, military men, government officials, union leaders, and priests; analysis of provincial newspapers; and fieldwork in an upland village in 1992 and 1995.

[10] Timothy P. Wickham-Crowley, *Exploring Revolution: Essays on Latin American Insurgency and Revolutionary Theory* (London: M. E. Sharpe, 1991), p. 7.

[11] Cf. Alvin H. Scaff on former members of the Huk movement in Central Luzon: "Why they joined the Huks is inseparable from the process of how they joined, for motivation includes the entire complex of action in becoming a Huk and not simply the reasons which one may give for joining or the appealing aspects of the Huk propaganda. Becoming a Huk is a series of interlocking acts, one leading to another like links in a chain." Alvin H. Scaff, *The Philippine Answer to Communism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1955).

[12] Jeffrey L. Gould, *To Lead as Equals: Rural Protest and Political Consciousness in Chinandega, Nicaragua, 1912-1979* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina, 1990).

[13] Benedict Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion: A Study of Peasant Revolt in the Philippines* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977).

[14] James C. Scott, "Peasant Revolution: A Dismal Science," review article, *Comparative Politics* 9 (1977): 231-48. Also James C. Scott, "Revolution in the Revolution: Peasants and Commissars," *Theory and Society* 7 (1979): 97-134.

[15] Joel S. Migdal, *Peasants, Politics, and Revolution: Pressures Toward Political and Social Change in the Third World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974). Also Samuel Popkin, "Political Entrepreneurs and Peasant Movements in Vietnam," *Rationality and Revolution*, Michael Taylor, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988). Also Jeffrey Race, *War Comes to Long An: Revolutionary Conflict in a Vietnamese Province* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972). Also Michael Taylor, "Rationality and Revolutionary Collective Action," *Rationality and Revolution*, Michael Taylor, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

[16] Race, *War Comes to Long An*, pp. 174-75

[17] Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965).

[18] Migdal, *Peasants, Politics, and Revolution*, p. 274; and Race, *War Comes to Long An*, p. 15.

[19] There are similarities with social-movement studies on micro-mobilization that provide a sequential analysis, take account of small-group settings, include a concern for changing perceptions and social identities, and pay attention to the wider social context in which mobilization takes place. For a good overview of the literature, see Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy, and Mayer N. Zald, "Social Movements," *Handbook of Sociology*, Neil J. Smelser, ed. (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1988).

[20] Both had been linked to the old Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP), whose leadership had abandoned the idea of guerrilla struggle after the PKP-controlled peasant guerrilla movement Hukbalahap (Huk) was practically defeated in the 1950s. Francisco Nemenzo, "Rectification Process in the Philippine Communist Movement," *Armed Communist Movements in Southeast Asia*, Lim Jao Jock, ed. (Hampshire: Gower Publishing Company, 1984).

[21] Gregg R. Jones, *Red Revolution: Inside the Philippine Guerrilla Movement* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989) and Nemenzo, "Rectification Process in the Philippine Communist Movement."

[22] Amado Guerrero, *Philippine Society and Revolution*, 3rd ed. (Oakland, CA: International Association of Filipino Patriots, 1979).

[23] Jose Maria Sison, with Rainer Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader's View* (New York: Crane Russak, 1989), p. 165.

[24] See also William Chapman, *Inside the Philippine Revolution* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1987), pp. 125-27, and Victor N. Corpus, *Silent War* (Quezon City: VNC Enterprises, 1989), pp. 36-43, and Jones, *Red Revolution*, pp. 13-14, 185-99, on community mobilization by the NPA.

[25] It is crucial for any social movement to make public displays of its "numbers, determination, unity, and worthiness" in order to become, and remain, a political force acknowledged by powerholders and the wider public, if not by its own followers. CPP documents on mass mobilization specifically state, by period, what issues activists should focus on when mobilizing workers, peasants, students, and other sectors. They also specify short- and long-term demands by sector (higher wages, genuine land reform, for example), time-tables for specific rallies, pickets, and other forms of collective action, and slogans to be used (e.g. Negros Regional Party Committee 1987). Quote from Charles Tilly, "Social Movements as Historically Specific Clusters of Political Performances," *Berkeley Journal of Sociology* 38 (1993-94): 8.

[26] Jones, *Red Revolution*, p. 297.

[27] Alfred McCoy, "Low Intensity Conflict in the Philippines" *Low Intensity Conflict: Theory and Practice in Central America and South-East Asia*, Barry Carr and Elaine McKay, eds. (Melbourne: La Trobe University, Institute of Latin American Studies, and Monash University, Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, 1988), p. 61.

[28] Jones, *Red Revolution*, p. 297.

[29] Douglas S. Blaufarb and George K. Tanham, "Deadly Combat Without End—The Philippines Today," *Who Will Win?: A Key to the Puzzle of Revolutionary War* (New York: Crane Russak, 1989), chapter 7, p. 117.

[30] John McBeth, "Internal Contradictions: Support for Communists Wanes as Party Splits," *Far Eastern Economic Review* (August 26, 1993).

[31] Rosanne Rutten, "'Mass Surrenders' in Negros Occidental: Ideology, Force and Accommodation in a Counterinsurgency Program," Paper for the 4th International Philippine Studies Conference, July 1-3, 1992, Australian National University, Canberra.

[32] McBeth, "Internal Contradictions," and Joel Rocamora, *Breaking Through: The Struggle Within the Communist Party of the Philippines* (Pasig, Metro Manila: Anvil Publishing Inc., 1994)

[33] Arsenic C. Jesena, SJ, "The Sacadas of Sugarland," *Action Now* 1, 44 (1969): 4-11. Also Antonio Ledesma, Gerry Bulatao, Nini Abarquez, Felix Pasquin, Rufino Suplido, eds., *Liberation in Sugarland: Readings on Social Problems in the Sugar Industry* (Manila: Kilusan ng Bayang Pilipino, 1971).

[34] Amado Guerrero, "Letter to the Editor: CPP Leader Writes on Negros Landlords," *The Manila Times*, September 22, 1969.

[35] Frank Lynch, SJ, *A Bittersweet Taste of Sugar: A Preliminary Report of the Sugar Industry in Negros Occidental* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1970), p. 31. Also Norman Schul, "A Philippine Sugar Cane Plantation: Land Tenure and Sugar Cane Production," *Economic Geography* 43 (1967): 168-69.

[36] John A. Larkin, *Sugar and the Origins of Modern Philippine Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), p. 235.

[37] John Adkins, "Land Control and Political Behavior in the Philippines: A Comparative Assessment of the Impact of Land Usage Patterns on Socio-political Relationships and Behavior in Occidental and Oriental Negros," (PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, 1975).

[38] In the 1930s-50s, the militant labor union Federacion Obrera de Filipinas concentrated primarily on workers in sugar centrals. The Negros chapter of the Federation of Free Farmers made short-lived attempts to organize hacienda workers and migrant laborers in the late 1950s-early 1960s in several milling districts but, as these were thwarted by planter repression, shifted by the early 1970s to organizing small upland farmers victimized by landgrabbing. See AMRSP, *The Sugar Workers of Negros* (Metro Manila: Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines, 1976), pp. 103-04; Alfred W. McCoy, *Priests on Trial* (Victoria: Penguin Books Australia, 1984), pp. 115-18, 134-36; and Alfred W. McCoy, "The Restoration of Planter Power in La Carlota City," *From Marcos to Aquino: Local Perspectives on Political Transition in the Philippines*, Benedict J. Kerkvliet and Resil B. Mojares, eds. (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1991), pp. 112-13.

[39] Miguel Coronel, *Pro-Democracy People's War* (Quezon City: Vanmarc Ventures, 1991), pp. 658, 660, 665-66.

[40] Porter, "The Politics of Counter-insurgency," p. 20. See also Chapman, *Inside the Philippine Revolution*, p. 128.

[41] McCoy, *Priests on Trial* p. 73.

[42] The concept of "political opportunity structure" refers to the "receptivity or vulnerability of the political system to organized protest by a given challenging group" which provides "incentives for people to undertake collective action by affecting their expectations for success or failure." Quote from McAdam, et al., "Social Movements," p. 699. See also Tarrow, *Power in Movement*, p. 85. Skocpol, for instance, emphasizes this aspect when she argues that peasant support for institutionalized revolutionary movements depends on whether revolutionary cadres can "operate effectively in the countryside" and "address peasant needs successfully" and relates these conditions to the strength of state power. See Theda Skocpol, "What Makes Peasants Revolutionary?," *Power and Protest in the Countryside: Studies of Rural Unrest in Asia, Europe, and Latin America* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1982), pp. 169-72.

[43] John Adkins, "Land Control and Political Behavior," p. 225. See also Primo Esleyer, "Social Justice and the Thompson Sub-Machine Guns," *Sugarland: A Magazine for the Sugar Industry* (Bacolod City) 6, 8 (1969): 39; and Jones, *Red Revolution*, pp. 91-92.

[44] Leonardo S. Nicdao, "History of the Establishment of the CPP/NPA in Negros Occidental," typescript, n.d., p. 1.

[45] Fr. Hector Mauri, SJ, one of the early leaders of the FFF [Federation of Free Farmers] in

Negros, introduced Khi Rho members to the social activism of the FFF: "I found them a little bit vague in their idealism with no concrete program, so I invited some of them to work with me for something positive and clear that may uplift the sugar workers in their own province, instead of talking about national and international problems." "Sworn Statement of Fr. Hector Mauri before Supv Agt Dionicio A Lapus of CITF, C2 Division, HPC, Camp Crame, Queon City this 12th Day of December 1972 in the Office of CITF." Mimeographed copy of typescript, p. 2.

[46] In pre-martial law days, the conflict in Manila between radical (KM) and moderate student movements carried over to the provinces. Cf. Benjamin Pimentel, Jr., *Edjop: The Unusual Journey of Edgar Jopson* (Quezon City: Ken Inc., 1989).

[47] Interview with Nemesio Demafelis, former chairman of the Negros Island Regional Party Committee, Bacolod City, March 17, 1995; and with a former Khi Rho member, Bacolod City, March 15, 1995.

[48] Nicdao, "History of the Establishment of the CPP/NPA," p. 5.

[49] Cf. "The Makings of Revolutionaries," *Viewpoints* (Bacolod City) 2, 5 (1987): 4-7, 14. Also Vicente Pelobello, "Talambuhay ni Ka Seloy" [Life Story of Comrade Seloy], a typed copy of the autobiography of Fr. Vicente Pelobello, among documents captured by the Philippine Constabulary at a CPP training camp in Gawahon, Victorias, Negros Occidental, July 1, 1987. Date of manuscript, 1984. The NPA's early ally was Fr. Luis Jalandoni, son of a planter family who, as the chaplain of the Federation of Free Farmers and director of the Social Action Center of the Diocese, experienced the powerlessness of the poor in court as well as in peaceful collective actions. He joined the NPA in the early 1970s. Charismatic and widely respected, he helped persuade a number of other priests and nuns. Jalandoni later became a member of the CPP Central Committee and director of the NDF international office in the Netherlands.

[50] Niall O'Brien, *Island of Tears, Island of Hope: Living the Gospel in a Revolutionary Situation* (New York: Orbis Books, 1993), p. 52.

[51] For instance, in 1977 at least twenty-six civilians were killed and thirty tortured by military forces in Negros Occidental. See *Itum: fitter Times in the Land of Sugar*, n.p. (Task Force Detainees of the Philippines, 1979), p. 5. In 1985, at least sixty-two civilians were killed, including twenty workers, peasants, and students who participated in a "people's strike" rally in the northern town of Escalante. See "A Diary of Terror in Sugarlandia," *Singgit* (Bacolod City) 4, 3, (1985): 15. Published by Task Force Detainees of the Philippines-Negros.

[52] Nanette G. Dungo, "Changing Social Relations in the Negros Sugar Hacienda: The Eroding Relation of Patronage Between the Hacendero and Worker in the Context of Developments in the Wider Political Economic Milieu," (PhD dissertation, University of the Philippines, Quezon City, 1993), p. 244.

[53] McCoy, "Low Intensity Conflict in the Philippines," p. 60

[54] McCoy, "The Restoration of Planter Power in La Carlota City," pp. 141-42.

[55] Coronel, *Pro-Democracy People's War*.

[56] *Ibid.*, p. 728

[57] Coronel, *Pro-Democracy People's War*. Also McCoy, "The Restoration of Planter Power in La Carlota City." Also TFPD [Task Force Detainees of the Philippines], *Vigilantism in Negros* (Bacolod City: Task Force Detainees of the Philippines-Negros, 1988).

[58] They were classified as 495 party members, 5,402 mass activists, and 6,069 sympathizers and supporters. *The Visayan Daily Star* (Bacolod City), November 8, 1994.

[59] Cf. Popkin, "Political Entrepreneurs and Peasant Movements in Vietnam."

[60] In particular the study by CPP founder and former university lecturer Jose Ma. Sison, alias Amado Guerrero, *Philippine Society and Revolution*, first published in 1970. Reprinted (Oakland, CA: International Association of Filipino Patriots, 1979).

[61] On collective action frames, see David A. Snow and Robert D. Benford, "Master Frames and Cycles of Protest," *Frontiers of Social Movement Theory*, Aldon Morris and Carol Muller, eds. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992) and William A. Gamson, *Talking Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992). Gamson discusses three components of collective action frames: injustice, agency, and identity, which refer, respectively, to the "moral indignation expressed," the "consciousness that it is possible to alter conditions or policies through collective action," and the "process of defining [a] 'we' typically in opposition to some 'they' who have different interests and value." Gamson, *Talking Politics*, p. 7.

[62] The so-called "Self-Discovery Seminar" organized by the progressive clergy in the Catholic high school or *convento* in town, and the "General Trade Union" seminar held by union organizers in the hacienda.

[63] Renaldo Clemena Ileta, *Pasyon and Revolution: Popular Movements in the Philippines, 1840-1910* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1979), p. 24.

[64] For similar observations in another region, see Chapman, *Inside the Philippine Revolution*, pp. 134-35

[65] Some authors argue that people tend to support a revolutionary movement when they cease to view the government as legitimate, in particular when the government fails to provide the basic services expected: e.g. Timothy P. Wickham-Crowley, "The Rise (and Sometimes Fall) of Guerrilla Governments in Latin America," *Sociological Forum* 2 (1987): 473-99. The case of Milagros suggests that movement mobilizers may actively encourage such delegitimization.

[66] Kerkvliet similarly argues, regarding poor people's claims to land ownership in Central Luzon, that under favorable conditions that include "the inability of those at the top to maintain control," lower-class people "might indeed go further in both thought and action." Benedict Kerkvliet, *Everyday Politics in the Philippines: Class and Status Relations in a Central Luzon Village* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), pp. 264-65. The more farreaching notions of rights to land that may then become prominent he views as "otherwise latent." Kerkvliet, *Every Politics in the Philippines*, p. 265. Here, I argue that such notions may be newly acquired.

[67] The text, mimeographed in the local language Ilonggo, was widely used in Negros Occidental. Mao Zedong, "Lima Ka Bulawanon nga Silak" [Five Golden Rays], n.p., Pangrehiyon nga Departamento sa Edukasyon, 1976. Mimeographed.

[68] Cf. Ruth T. McVey, "The Enchantment of the Revolution: History and Action in an Indonesian

Communist Text," *Perceptions of the Past in Southeast Asia*, Anthony Reid and David Marr, eds. (Singapore: Heinemann Educational Books, ASAA Southeast Asia Publications Series, no. 4, 1979), on ideological work among (potential) cadres of Indonesia's PKI [Partai Komunis Indonesia] in the 1950s-1960s.

[69] Migdal, *Peasants, Politics, and Revolution*, p. 250.

[70] Race, *War Comes to Long An*, pp. 174-75.

[71] cf. Rosanne Rutten, *Women Workers of Hacienda Milagros: Wage Labor and Household Subsistence on a Philippine Sugarcane Plantation*, Publikatieserie Zuid-en Zuidoost-Azie, no. 30 (Amsterdam: Anthropologisch-Sociologisch Centrum, Universiteit van Amsterdam, 1982). The issue of gender relations was treated as a secondary problem in the women's group, possibly to avoid discord in the workers' ranks. Cadres spoke of women's subordination, but blamed the social system rather than local men, and gender relations hardly formed a rallying point for local collective actions. However, the movement's professed goal of gender equality did eventually induce several women to report cases of wife-beating, in particular, to the local party branch, which helped to pressure these husbands to mend their ways.

[72] Rosanne Rutten, "Class and Kin: Conflicting Loyalties on a Philippine Hacienda," *Cognition and Social Organization in Southeast Asia*, Frans Husken and Jeremy Kemp, eds. (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1991).

[73] Michael Pinches, "The Working Class Experience of Shame, Inequality, and People Power in Tatalon, Manila," *From Marcos to Aquino: Local Perspectives on Political Transition in the Philippines*, Benedict J. Kerkvliet and Resil B. Mojares, eds. (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1991)

[74] cf. Doug McAdam, "Recruitment to High-Risk Activism: The Case of Freedom Summer," *American Journal of Sociology* 92 (1986): 70.

[75] After Rafael's demotion, the position of overseer was occupied by several outsiders and local workers in succession. The high turnover was partly due to the effective organization of the workers, whose collective complaints about various overseers were heeded by the planter. As a result, the successive overseers had a rather weak power base in the hacienda. Both locals and outsiders, moreover, lacked a (large) local kinship network.

[76] Doug McAdam, "Recruitment to High-Risk Activism", pp. 64-90.

[77] Race, *War Comes to Long An*, 174.

[78] Porter, "The Politics of Counterinsurgency," p. 15.

[79] In contrast to people from Milagros, two married men who lived elsewhere when they became full-timers (but who presently live in Milagros) mentioned repression as an important reason. One was a union organizer suspected by the military of NPA activities, the other had done part-time work for the NPA which had been exposed to the authorities. They went underground to avoid being "salvaged" (summarily killed) by the military.

[80] Similar frictions regarding a movement's code of conduct have been discussed, for Huk guerrillas in Central Luzon in the 1950s, by Jeff Goodwin. See Jeff Goodwin, "The Libidinal

Constitution of Social Movements: The Case of the Huk Rebellion," Paper presented at the 1992 Annual Meetings of the American Sociological Association, Pittsburgh, PA, August 1992.

[81] Albert O. Hirschman, *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Response to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970).

[82] Cf. Taylor, "Rationality and Revolutionary Collective Action," p. 67, and Michael Hechter, "The Attainment of Solidarity in Intentional Communities," *Rationality and Society* 2 (1990): 142-155.

[83] Cf. F. G. Bailey, *The Kingdom of Individuals: An Essay on Self-Respect and Social Obligation* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), pp. 7-17, about disengagement within collectivities.

[84] McAdam et al., "Social Movements," pp. 724-25

[85] Other benefits to workers of Milagros included funds for livelihood projects, in particular inputs for workers' farmlots and a poultry project. These funds were part of the flow of international aid to Negros Occidental set in motion by the sugar crisis of the mid-1980s and the subsequent international media focus on the plight of Negros sugar workers, in the context of the broader international attention for the political and economic crisis under the Marcos government. The union and newly created left-wing NGOs channeled part of this flow to leftwing constituencies.

[86] Unlike developments elsewhere, the union chapter in Milagros preserved its influence and the planter continued to honor the CBA. In neighboring haciendas, planters used the "mass surrenders" in 1990 to force their workers to switch from the alleged NPA-friendly union to a company union.

[87] *The Visayan Daily Star* (Bacolod City), March 17, 1988. Also Benjamin Pimentel, Jr., "The Outlaws of Negros," report in three parts: *Midweek*, July 27, 1988, August 24, 1988, September 14, 1988.

[88] Rosanne Rutten, "Courting the Workers' Vote in a Hacienda Region: Rhetoric and Response in the 1992 Philippine Elections," *Pilipinas* 22 (1994): 1-34.

[89] For cadres in Negros Occidental whom I talked with early in 1995, the "controversy" concerned explanations for the decline of the NPA and policies to remedy it, and the leadership style of Sison. Reaffirmists blamed the decline in Negros in large part on the past policy (1987-92) of aggressive actions, including confiscations of hacienda property (rice provisions, livestock, fertilizer, radio handsets), hold-up of payroll clerks, and killing of policemen, which had invited planter repression and militarization in the countryside, though they admitted they had appreciated those actions at the time. They also deplored the rapid expansion of guerrilla forces at the expense of mass organizing and economic uplift, and agreed with Sison's call to return to the original strategy of a rural protracted people's war; after all, they said, Negros was still a "semi-feudal" society. Rejectionists argued that this original strategy was outdated because rural militarization had considerably narrowed the NPA's room for maneuver in the countryside, and because Negros had developed, they said, into a "semi-capitalist" society which required other forms of action. They called either for more emphasis on (urban) legal mass organizing, or, apparently, for a more insurrectionist stand. Moreover, they assailed Sison for having stifled broad policy discussions, and supported the call for a second Party Congress to discuss the differences. Cf. also Jaime Espina, "Inside the Negros Rectification Movement: Special Report,"

Today News-Views (Bacolod City), April 19, 20, 21, 25, 27, 1994 and May 3, 7-8, 14-15, 1994. For an analysis of the decline of the NPA nationwide, see Walden Bello, "The Crisis of the Philippine Progressive Movement: A Preliminary Investigation," *Debate: Philippine Left Review* 4 (September 1992): 44-55.

[90] *AFP-Negros News and Features*, October 8, 1993, January 12, 1994, February 9, 1994. AFP is published by the 602CRT, 6CRG, CRSAFP, Headquarters, Armed Forces of the Philippines, Bacolod City, weekly from July 1987 to April 1994. Mimeographed.

[91] *Today News-Views* (Bacolod City), May 2, 1994.

[92] For instance, Kessler speaks of a "historical pattern of repression-rebellion-suppression" in the Philippines. See Richard J. Kessler, *Rebellion and Repression in the Philippines* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), p. 140. Rosenberg says, "the rebels will continue to attract recruits as long as the poor rural majority are victimized by ... military abuses," among other factors. See also David Rosenberg, "The Philippines," *Revolution and Political Change in the Third World*, Barry M. Schutz and Robert O. Slater, eds. (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1990), p. 187. Hawes states, "the landless laborer or tenant who seeks piecemeal or peaceful reforms is almost immediately brought face-to-face with the repressive machinery of the state. Often, the average peasant or rural worker faces the choice of accepting his or her fate in an unequal and unjust situation or offering support to an armed revolutionary movement." Gary Hawes, "Theories of Peasant Revolution: A Critique and Contribution from the Philippines," *World Politics* 42 (1989-90): 297. See also Porter, "The Politics of Counterinsurgency," p. 22, and David Wurfel, *Filipino Politics: Development and Decay* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1988), p. 268.

[93] For a discussion of relevant literature on repression and protest along similar lines, with a case study on developments in Guatemala, see Charles D. Brockett, "A Protest Cycle Resolution of the Repression/Popular-Protest Paradox," *Repertoires and Cycles of Collective Action*, Mark Traugott, ed. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995).