

Intrastate Rivalry Project
Marie Olson Lounsbery, PhD
East Carolina University

Case Chronology Example: Mindanao rivalry in the Philippines

1920

Control of Mindanao and Sulu passed from the US administration to the Philippine legislature.

1935

Newly established Commonwealth. A group of 120 Moro datus from Lanao petitioned the US president, repeating earlier requests either to give the Moros political independence or to let them remain under US rule. They claimed that Christian Filipinos discriminated against Muslims and treated them abusively. Increasing incidents of clashes between Muslims and Christian settlers.

1947

US awarded military bases on the islands.

1948-1960

Large movements of settlers to Mindanao more than doubling their populations. Pattern continues during the 1960s.

1957

Creation of the Commission on National Integration. Provided scholarships to Muslim students. Muslims resented being considered a minority, and viewed the CNI's objective as the destruction of Philippine Muslim identity.

1961

Mandanao State University opened as part of Manila's effort to develop this remote, 'backward' region.

1963

Senate Committee on National Minorities report. "The Problems of Philippine Cultural Minorities." Identified migration and land grabbing as the major sources of conflict in Mindanao, but brought no real change in policy.

1965

Marcos becomes president.

End of 1960s

Disputes over land between the Muslim population, tribal peoples, and Christian settlers were becoming more frequent and more violent, and the growing number of settlers was threatening the electoral base of many Muslim politicians.

1968

3/18/68 – Jabidah massacre of 28 Muslim army recruits by their officers. Incident sparked violent communal clashes all over Mindanao that lasted for several years, including some attempts by the Christian Ilaga and similar paramilitary groups of evicting all remaining Muslims from parts of the island.

6/68 – Misauri started the MNLF with an intent of armed struggle for an independent Mindanao. Begins as a political underground movement.

7/68 – start of incompatibility according to PRIO

1969

Marcos is re-elected amidst allegations of election fraud.

According to BBC, Muslim separatists begin their campaign of guerrilla war.

1970

1971

Senate Committee on National Minorities report. “The Deteriorating Peace and Order Conditions in Cotabato.” Identified migration and land grabbing as the major sources of conflict in Mindanao, but brought no real change in policy.

A government task force sent to Mindanao in an attempt to mediate between conflicting groups, but had little success. By the end of the year, official sources acknowledged that over 1500 people had been killed in clashes between Muslim and Christian groups and the military.

1972-1974

Widespread fighting

1972

Several smaller such as Muslim and Christian self-defence groups were actively fighting each other (68-72)

9/72 – martial law proclaimed. Seemed to foreclose the Moslem claim on local power. It also produced a decree in which all Filipinos were ordered to surrender their firearms. The Moslems refused, and within 6 months of the declaration, their resistance had taken the form of outright rebellion.

9/21/72 – Marcos declared that the system was no longer working, suspended congress and proclaimed himself absolute ruler. (lawyer’s coup d’etat) Quickly bolstered the size of the military from 60K to 155K with an attendant increase in the officer corps and rapid promotion, thereby creating an important group of generals and colonels who owe their careers and loyalty to Marcos. Aquino sentenced to death, military detention centers housed thousands of other outspoken opponents. Wealth was redistributed from former oligarchs to a new set, the friends and relatives of the Marcos.

11/72, organized MNLF launches its first offensive against government troops.

12/72, government launches major naval air and ground assault to recapture the rebel stronghold, but after 4 days of intense fighting, had to withdraw.

Martial law declared, with the situation in the south as part of the reason. Parliament is suspected, opposition politicians are arrested, censorship imposed.

12/26/72 – thousands flee as fighting between rebels and troops increase. Increasingly tense situation on Sulu.

Statement by Army headquarters: refugees fleeing to avoid being recruited by the dissident bands and to escape possible crossfire. Missing airforce C-47 believed shot down over Tonquil Island. Had been supporting troops. 7 outlaws killed, no casualties on govt side.

12/17/72 - Statement by Brig Gen Guillermo Pecache:

reported an accord between Moslem dissidents and the army in the southern region. First official report on continuing clashes. Casualty figures said to be alarming. Placed the number of govt troops killed or wounded at no less than 100 since fighting started about a month ago, with those on the enemy side at four to five times more.

12/26/72 – Information Secretary Tatad briefing:

Fighting continuing in Mindanao. Govt forces were in control of towns but not control of some barrios in certain provinces in Mindanao. There is definitely a secessionist movement active in Mindanao and Sulu and supported from outside the Philippines.

Comments made in connection with his announcement that the former governor of Cotabato, Matalam, leader of the Mindanao independence movement, called on Marcos in response to the President's appeal for cooperation. Matalam revealed confidential information including the first official confirmation of training camps under foreign instructors. After 1969, foreign-trained soldiers were sent to him by a former political science professor at U of Philippines, Misuari, who the army said had teamed up with outlaw groups in the Sulu area. Matalam said he had sent them away and that some of them were operating in Mindanao, using mobile training camps. Promised to help stop the secessionist movement, to collect arms and to assist in gathering Moslem leaders for a conference with the President on Jan 3. Matalam indicated that his group sought only to bring govt attention to the economic and social plight of the Filipino Moslem minority. Accepted pledge of cooperation.

1973

“While clearly intent on a military victory over the MNLF... President Marcos arranged a meeting of Filipino Muslim leaders and announced a package of social and economic measures. These included the establishment of a Muslim Amanah Bank; removal of restrictions on the historic barter trade between Mindanao-Sulu and Malaysia; creation of an Institute of Islamic Studies within the U of Philippines; proclamation of Muslim holidays; and a commitment to the codification of Shari'a law, though this was not promulgated for another four years.” May page 343.

Several economic projects were initiated.

Presidential Task Force for Reconstruction and Development of the Southern Philippines created to coordinate efforts of the agencies involved (unclear how much to benefit the Muslims).

A new constitution gives Marcos absolute powers.

3/16/73 – Philippines notified SE Asia Treaty Org and Assoc of SE Asian Nations that the renewed Moslem rebellion in its southern island of Mindanao is being assisted by foreign trained troops bearing foreign made arms.

Tatad news conference:

Diplomatic notes on the rebellion had been delivered to the US, Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, France, Britain, and Indonesia. Not asked for action... we should solve our own problems using our resources. We are in control of the situation. We have some initial reverses – a detachment-sized squad and a company sized garrison were overrun – but we have established

control except for small pockets. There is an insurgency in Southern Mindanao by Maoist Christian and Moslem outlaws, pirates, and secessionists. Also have reports of the presence of uniformed foreign elements, but we have not captured any.

Moslem secessionist groups estimated by the military to number 'several thousand' have kept up sporadic attacks against military outposts in a wide area of Cotabato Province and outside Pagadian City of Zamboanaga.

Brig. Gen. Fortunato Abat says:

Insurgents were well armed and well trained. Rebels began engaging govt groups on 2/27, the last day of the govt amnesty for dissidents, by attacking a naval force patrolling Linao Bay. The attacks spread to 10 towns in Cotabato Province while other rebel bands skirmished with govt units in the provinces of Zamboanga and Sulu. At least 175 rebels, 25 civilians, and 26 govt soldiers dead. European made weapons not carried in the inventories of the Philippine armed forces were reportedly captured from the rebels. Also said to have been seized were vehicles, communications equipment, and WW II weapons.

March and April 73 – Long simmering grievance by the 3 million Moslem Filipinos against the Christian-dominated central government erupted into the open. Rooted in land disputes with new settlers, in govt neglect, and in the desire to maintain political and economic dominance in their areas, the fighting broke out following the nationwide confiscation of firearms by the martial law govt. After intense fighting that resulted in more than 3000 casualties on both sides, the rebellion subsided after the Govt promised to give Philippine Moslem culture an honored place and to give economic assistance in the region.

1974

Under pressure from the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), a consultative council of Muslim leaders was created by Marcos govt. Marcos feared that it might face an oil embargo if it adopted an uncompromising stance.

At Jidda, the front presented six demands, calling on the Philippines to recognize the territorial integrity of a Moro homeland that would include Mindanao, the Sulu Archipelago, plus the islands of Balisan and Palawan. Also demanded that the internal sovereignty and pol autonomy of the area be recognized with itself as the nucleus of a govt that would have its own security force and exclusive responsibility for the maintenance of internal order. The autonomous state would be loosely associated with the Philippines, much as Sabah is now linked to Malaysia. But aside from the responsibility of protecting the new state from external aggression, Manila would have no role there. Misuari refused to budge from this position. Marcos proposed to settle the dispute by giving the insurgents jobs in the local govt and stepping up development. Marcos's secretary made a side trip to Libya, then later to Cairo to present the Philippine case: new codification of Moslem law, a new bank to lend money in accord with the precepts of the Koran, a Moslem development fund, new highways, ports and power projects. President's advisors say that he will not give way on the question of autonomy, even if the Moslems reduce their sweeping territorial demands.

Conference in Marawi City, nominally sponsored by the Federation of the Royal Houses of Mindanao and Sulu, but in fact orchestrated by the government, recorded a vote of confidence in Marcos's leadership and endorsed a list of socioeconomic policy proposals intended to address some of the grievances of Philippine Muslims.

Marcos announced the creation of the Southern Philippines Development Authority, the establishment of two regional offices headed by Muslims, and the commissioning of the armed

forces of 12 former rebel leaders. Did little to address demands for a separate Moro homeland and a return of the lands now occupied by Christians

1/16/74 – Fighting has erupted again in the last month on Mindanao between govt troops and small groups of Moslem rebels. At least 12 soldiers have been killed and parts of 3 towns have been burned down. Some 10000 people have fled their homes. In recent months, the govt set up a credit system for Moslem farmers and fishermen, built roads and ports, extended trade privileges, and created an information and cultural center for the Moslem population. Roughly 16000 rebels applied for amnesty and laid down their arms, several hundred hardcore resisters stayed in the hills.

6/26/74 – 5th Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers issued what amounted to a condemnation of the Philippine Govt for its treatment of its Moslem minority. Called on Marcos to ‘desist from all measures which resulted in the killing of Moslems,’ to halt military operations against the rebellion and to negotiation a solution with rebel leaders - whose minimum demand is Moslem autonomy within the Philippines.

Viewed as a setback for the govt, which is dependent on Arab oil and which has been trying to ameliorate the Moslem unrest with social and economic programs, but has refused to recognize the rebels as a legitimate political group or to negotiate with them.

Conference members were convinced that such measures would not alone solve the problem. Insisted on political settlement through negotiation with rebels, particularly MNLF. Solution within the framework of the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of Philippines.

The Philippines has charged that Malaysia is aiding the Moslem insurgency. Denied. An integral element of the dispute is Manila’s continuing claim to the east Malaysian state of Sabah, in Borneo, where most of the aid is said to be coming from, or at least funneled through.

10/74 – A Moslem resident (reported in NYT) said that in Palimbang (Mindanao) a detachment of Marines systematically started executing Moslem noncombatants; 800 dead. Non Muslim sources said the incident did occur, but it was 200 dead. Govt denies, but part of the ‘popular history of the war.’

In small town of Pikit, where 100 Christians have been supposedly killed since the fighting began, the residents have a similar popular history, only theirs is full of Moslem atrocities. In the fighting there, Christians and Moslems have drawn apart into rural enclaves, exchanging villages and farm land under the pressures of war. In between is no man’s land that they shoot across daily. Asked how long it can go on, a Christian replied, “Ten, 15 years – in short, a generation.” The same question was put to a Moslem in Cotabato. “As long as one serviceable gun is in the hands of one Moro,” he said.

2/74 – Jolo City briefly taken over by rebels

1975

Negotiations. Under pressure from the OIC (Organization of the Islamic Conference), MNLF dropped its demands for independence and settled for autonomy. Followed by break away factions: MNLF-Reformist Group led by Pundato, and the New MNLF (later MILF) led by Hashim. Hostilities resumed and continued into the early 1980s, with the MNLF accusing the government of insincerity during the negotiations.

OIC help out the possibility of loans for schools, housing and roads in the southern island of Mindanao if a settlement was reached.

CNI abolished.

3/24/75 – Marcos invited all Moslem rebel leaders to a conference on April 17 in Zamboanga City, key capital in Moslem Mindanao. Decision following meeting with cabinet and military leaders. Discussed renewed fighting resulting in about 200 dead on both sides over the last week. President studied peace proposals recently transmitted through the WIC. ‘Looking exhausted, the President said tonight that proposals made by MNLF could not be the subject of negotiations since they did not recognize the territorial integrity of the Philippines.’ The Moro liberation front leader, Misauri, had indicated he would talk only if the Govt made a prior acknowledgement of Moslem demands for complete autonomy as a basis for talks.

8/14/75 – Philippine govt announces that MNLF has accepted a ceasefire. ‘Modalities of autonomy and an internal force’ in the rebels’ area would be discussed as would the creation of an internal force which would be in the context of the territorial integrity of the Rep of the Philippines. About 20 other rebel groups have already accepted the Govt’s offer of concessions to end the discontent among the 2.8 Moslems in the southern islands. Acceptance of the ceasefire was conveyed by Hamid Lukman, spokesman of the front, accompanied by Melchor (exec sec) and Rear adm. Espaldon the Pres’s chief negotiators with the Moslems. Marcos had pledged a measure of autonomy earlier this year. He then reorganized southern Mindanao under four regions, each headed by a commissioner of known pro-Moslem sympathies. He named other Moslems to top positions in the economic and social welfare offices in the south. The Govt concessions, coupled with firm military action to quell outbreaks, caused thousands of rebels to surrender. The higher ranking ones who proved their sincerity were absorbed into the armed forces.

The MNLF, however, held out and insisted on its demands that a Moslem army undertake internal security in the Moslem areas. The MNLF also wanted recognition by the Govt of the cultural and political unity of those areas, designating boundaries well into the Christian-occupied regions. The Govt rejected these boundary demands. The announcement gave no indication how far either backed down. The Front had apparently been weakened by the surrenders and by the political crisis in Sabah that resulted in the declaration against supporting secessionist movements.

1/75 – Govt officials met with front leaders in Jidda Saudia Arabia and offered proposals for a ceasefire.

The Manila Govt has gone a long way in the last two years in encouraging Moslem studies and codifying Moslem law to form a basis for more sympathetic administration of southern region. Several Middle East nations pledge to finance some development plans/projects if peace could be attained.

In recent years, the Moslem insurrection has sapped the Govt budget and diverted funds, and has been a principle obstacle to development of the Philippines.

8/18/75 – Annual report of Philippine Constabulary listed 275 violent encounters in the Mindanao region in the twelve months ended in July, with 566 rebels killed and 183 wounded. Govt casualties were not listed though they were reported to be large. The govt has allotted a huge slice of its budget for defense since 1972 and despite a huge deficit this year appropriation for the armed forces continued to rise.

Official announcement said that Marcos had held the first of two meetings with a rep of the MNLF to discuss key demands of the dissident Moslem minority on Mindanao. Said Lukman (spokesman of the MNLF) had accepted a ceasefire. Escorted to Palace by Melchor and Espaldon, aids to Marcos. Lukman will meet with Marcos again to discuss autonomy and set up an “internal force” for Moslem areas.

A Moslem source said that Misauri had proposed a federal type of autonomy under which Moslem Mindanao would relate to the central Govt as Am states relate to Washington. The Philippine Govt on the other hand instituted what it called 'autonomous' reform by appointing pro-Moslem regional administrators responsible to the Pres. Informed sources said that the MNLF was determined to survive as an internal security force displacing govt troops. Marcos recently had placed Moslem officers and a Moslem contingent in the hierarchy of Philippines armed forces.

9/11/75 – Deputy chairman of the MNLF, Alonto (a 29 yr old law school grad), has declared in a rare interview that the Moslem rebels have not accepted a ceasefire as claimed by Marcos. They would fight on until they receive full autonomy. "there is no ceasefire – it is only a ploy by Marcos to divide us." Misauri (once a student radical) lives in the Middle East where he has helped to obtain political support and military aid. Alonto was interviewed during a break in a day-long strategy meeting with a group of Moslem religious leaders and townspeople who had come to this isolated location at lake Lanao in central Mindanao. The guerrillas are spoken of with affection here by the people as 'the children.' The guerrillas were armed with automatic rifles and grenades; some wore captured army uniforms. As a truck was being loaded in Marawi City with fresh bread for the guerrillas, a military officer in it chatted amiably with a youthful rebel. "No need to worry," the rebel explained. "this is a people's war and everyone contributes in his own way. That's my brother."

Despite talk of ceasefire in Manila, the war continues here. Last week a band of guerrillas, under Alonto's orders, sent mortar shells into a Philippines constabulary camp in Iligan, on the coast, killing 28 soldiers by the rebel's count. The Govt did not release casualty figures. A few days earlier, a group of about 40 Moslem farmers, their wives and children were massacred, reportedly by Christian irregulars who had been armed by the Govt. It appears that Lukman represented only a small, if important, faction of the Front, from the Sulu islands. The Govt's claim, some Filipinos believe, stems from Mr. Marcos' penchant for trying to solve difficult problems by rhetorical sleight of hand, rather than by more painful action.

The overall level of fighting has declined from a peak last spring. To judge from two days spent with the rebels here in central Mindanao, there is still little prospect of either a real negotiated settlement or a military victory for the Govt. The Philippine Army, poorly trained and poorly disciplined, is in many ways the rebels' best ally, at least in this province. Frightened soldiers, often with only two or three weeks training, seldom patrol outside their own encampments, close to the cities. Security precautions – thorough checks at roadblocks, bunkers for protection against mortar attack – are nonexistent. Drunken or otherwise abusive soldiers regularly antagonize local Moslems by beating up civilians or molesting women. Govt's control over Lanao del Sur is so tenuous that at best local officials can say they have soldiers stationed in only 7 of Lanao del Sur's 28 municipalities.

The provincial governor, a Moslem and an army general, has been trying secretly for months to get rebel permission to make a face-saving transfer – to move an army battalion over a guerrilla-held road from one end of the province to the other. Aggravating the situation, the regional army commander Zafre, has been accused by Moslems and Christians alike of extorting money from local residents and of seizing valuable land for army use.

In an interview in Manila this week, Marcos ascribed the army's lack of offensive action here to his recent order to reduce the level of killing in an effort to win a political resolution. Insisted that progress was being made toward bringing in Alonto and other rebels through envoys he had sent 'walking on foot over mountains.' "As a former guerrilla myself" – v. Japan in WW2 – "I

sympathize with them and respect them for being willing to die for what they believe in.” “We are ready to give them the utmost autonomy.”

Marcos took some action – name commissioners for two of four specially created Moslem regions. The commissioners, in theory, are autonomous, but must report directly to the Pres. Lukman was one of them.

Every village on Lake Lanao’s rim has a rebel militia. Alonto says that the rebels’ main source of income is the local people. “They provide the money and we buy our guns from the army,” he said with a grin. There is no way to substantiate his statement but many guerrillas do carry American made M-16 rifles, the main weapon of the P. army.

In the Maranao view (tribe in the area), the war in many ways appears to be a continuation of the Moslems’ struggle against outsiders. “The people here never accepted the Govt in Manila and we do not consider ourselves Filipinos,” said Lingga, the pol secretary of the Northern Mindanao committee, an arm of MNLF. Grievances against outsiders have intensified in the last few years as more and more Christians have migrated into Mindanao, buying or seizing the best land, squeezing the Moslems into an ever-smaller area. The rebellion has taken slightly different forms in the regions of the other two main Moslem peoples here, the Tausug, in the Sulu islands, and the Maguindinao, around Cotabato on the southern coast of Mindanao. Both the Tausug, who are the most warlike of the 3, and the Maguindinao are somewhat better organized than the Maranao, and have mounted heavier attacks against Govt forces.

The rebellion in the Maranaos’ area has become mixed up with old political quarrels and a tradition of banditry. Over the last month, a mayor was assassinated, two banks were robbed, a French woman and a Japanese male tourist were kidnapped, countless individuals were abducted or murdered. Though the Govt has held the MNLF responsible for most of it, Alonto denies it vigorously, “We do not accept terrorism.” The front had helped to free the French woman and the Japanese man when the bandits who had captured them were found, according to Alonto. The front’s goals according to Alonto: “We want a political solution, not more bloodshed. For after all, we depend on the support of the people and they don’t like the killing. But we must have our own autonomous govt, not direct rule by Marcos, through his commissioners.”

Suggested that the new govt might pattern itself on the Am federal-state system. Called for an end to the US military aid to Marcos, which currently runs at about \$15mill a year. “I think it is high time for the Am people to stop supporting the Marcos dictatorship. You don’t want what happened in Vietnam to happen here. We are not subversive; we don’t want to destroy the Philippines, or secede, as Marcos claims.” “The Govt tried to claim we were Communists, but as Moslems we cannot tolerate Communism. We get no aid from Russia or China.” The Govt recently announced that 8000 of the front’s 16000 guerrillas have now surrendered; unofficial estimates put the rebel strength at more than 20000. The army now has 40 battalions deployed; the marines have 5 battalions and the Philippine constabulary, a field police force, has 10. Military specialists say the army probably has lost 7-8000 men in fighting, from disease and from malnutrition.

Violence has subsided significantly since the negotiated surrender of a large group of rebels in early 1975.

Despite this rapid growth of the military and what would appear to be high costs, knowledgeable sources in Manila say the war still is not a serious burden on the Govt. The current military spending still amounts to only 3 % of the GNP. The armed forces total strength is 120000.

A guerrilla soldier: "We are the only people in the Philippines who have always fought against the colonialists and the dictators in Manila. We have never been conquered. And yet we are always pictured as the villains. So now we will write our own history."

9/12/75 – Mindanao State Univ president dismissed last month for alleged corruption, after its bank was robbed by a gang of heavily armed soldiers and its radio station was shot up.

Moslem students, after receiving heavy doses of reserve officers' training – complete with coldstream guards red uniforms and high fur hats – left to join the MNLF in the hills and villages. Manila increased the school's budget from \$400,000 to \$10 mill last year. "It was a simple effort to buy off the rebels. They knew most of the money would leak out of the campus." It did. According to several professors, some went to pay off four rebel or bandit groups demanding protection money, some went to buy 90 small buses that, mysteriously, are now run commercially and some went to pay for luxury housing for staff. Other funds went into building a luxury resort hotel on campus. Shooting every night, and at least one student has been killed. A guerrilla who graduated last year: we hope the school will stay open. "Where else can we get books to read while we are out here in the jungles expect in the library."

9/30/75 – a Philippine admiral Espaldon forced some 40 Moslem pirates today to surrender unconditionally and release a Japanese freighter and 29 hostages they seized on Friday. Rebels were armed with two light machine guns a rocket launcher and automatic rifles. The rebels demanded \$133,000 for the release of the vessel. Rebel members were said to be from MNLF.

mid-1970s

Numerous reports of surrenders by Moro fighters.

1976

Tripoli agreement, provided for the grant of autonomy to 13 of 23 provinces in Mindanao, Sulu and Palewan islands, and the cities located therein.

Several months later, President Marcos implemented his own version of autonomy by establishing two separate regional governments, which were regional but not autonomous.

12/76 – mediation by Libya (Qaddafi), and under the auspices of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, Philippine government officials and MNLF leaders negotiated a settlement known as the Tripoli Agreement. The agreement included a ceasefire and the granting of autonomy to thirteen provinces where the majority of Muslims lived. Included separate legislatures, administrations, legal systems, security forces, schools and financial and economic systems, but with the right to participate in national government. However, the Tripoli agreement was never genuinely implemented by the Marcos regime.

4/11/76 – three MNLF gunmen hijacked an airliner and their 12 hostages. Stalled in Thailand for a second day of what was supposed to be a short refueling stop, but were searching for a country that would offer them sanctuary. Refused sanctuary in Libya and Egypt. The plane had been hijacked Wed and ordered to Manila where they exchanged the plane's passengers for airline employees, one of whom reportedly carries \$300,000 ransom. The hijackers sought sanctuary in Sabah, but were turned away after landing.

8/17/76 – major earthquake (8) struck Mindanao. 75 killed.

12/22/76 – Marcos declared the a 9point agreement had been reached with the southern Moslem rebel leaders, leaving only one issue unresolved. 5000 people are believed to have died in the fight. Reached in Tripoli. Before the talk, the rebels issued a 9 pt demand, including self-rule

with its own militia force in the southern island of Mindanao, Palawan and Basilan and the Sulu archipelago. Talks were preliminary with follow up to occur in Saudi Arabia.

12/27/76 – Marcos had news conference: he hoped the final pact would be ready for signing. Qaddafi had agreed to visit Manila in April to witness the signing. Talks scheduled for Feb 3. Said his negotiators had offered increased autonomy for the Moslem southern region to persuade the Arab-backed MNLF to end all dissidence among the holdouts there. Greater autonomy has been offered through the proposed establishment of a regional legislative body, and executive council and Moslem courts. But these bodies would remain under the national govt. Said his aim was to enable the Moslem community to feel that it ran its own affairs. But he stressed that any move to combine the Moslem areas into a single region would be subject to the referendum that he announced yesterday. Also said that a regional security force had been agreed to in principle in Tripoli, but such a force would be under the nation's armed forces. In reference to other rebel groups, he said that other regions in the country would be granted similar autonomy "ultimately," but not at the same time, and he renewed a pledge to relax gradually the martial law rule imposed 9/21/72.

New constitutional amendment empowers Marcos to rule by decree whenever he deems it necessary. Also declared that all decrees and orders that he had issued unilaterally under martial law remain the law of the land. Last month, a plebiscite was held on constitutional amendments to create what was called 'a Filipino system of parliamentary govt.' Amount to a fundamental revision of the constitution, returning to an even stronger Presidential govt. Pres will be Chief Exec with explicit control over all ministries while the PM will be nominated by him and serve as principal administrator. Pres will have right to dissolve parliament, run unlimited number of times, and can appt successor. Amendments passed.

1977

Marcos proposes a plebiscite regarding the issues of Muslim autonomy realizing that population shifts left much of the traditional Muslim lands with a Christian majority. MNLF rejects and accuses the government of violating the Tripoli agreement. It was supported in this by the OIC, ICFM and Qaddafi.

Marcos goes ahead to proclaim an autonomous region, appoint a provisional government, and organize a referendum to determine the form of autonomy. MNLF rejects invitation to participate in provisional government and boycotted the referendum.

Referendum predictably rejected the MNLF/ICFM plan and endorsed a more limited form of autonomy put forward by the Marcos government.

End of 1977 - As a consequence of Marcos' decision, fighting broke out once more before the end of 1977, but did not again approach the level of intensity experienced prior to the ceasefire. The Muslim separatist movement entered a period of disarray marked by factional infighting (including the founding of the MILF) and a weakening of popular support.

Latter half 1970s

MNLF seriously weakened by a number of surrenders and by a three-way split in the movement along personal, ethnic, and ideological lines. MNLF led by Misuari was socially progressive and geographical support base was centered in Sulu.

1977 - Creation of MILF, more religiously oriented led by Salamat, a Maguindanaon from western Mindanao.

MNLF-Reformist Group created comprising mainly Maranao people led by Abbas.

2/16/77 – Marcos suddenly postponed for a month a referendum that he had just as suddenly scheduled 5 days ago. Last Monday, slightly behind schedule, another session of the Tripoli conference got under way to work out a final agreement. Marcos said postponement was to undertake an information campaign for voters, but interpreted that things are not going well in Tripoli.

Informed Philippine and diplomatic sources reported that their agreement to the peace plan was imposed on them by the Libyan leader, who is thought to be seeking to temper his image as a sponsor of rebellions.

The Tripoli accord has not been made public in Manila. Marcos often speaks about it, yet has failed to define the autonomy the Moslems would have. But a copy of the agreement circulates in Manila and is held in official and diplomatic circles to be authentic. In 10 clauses purporting to define the nature of autonomy, the document leaves the following issues to be ‘discussed later:’ The joining of the national and rebel military forces, the place of Moslem schools in the national education system, the relationship between Moslem and national administration, the relationship between the autonomous and the national economic and financial system, representation of the autonomous region in central govt, regional security forces and the sharing between regional and central govt of revenues from the region’s mines and mineral resources. Marcos insists that the agreement calls for the referendum he has ordered, but Misauri has repeatedly declared since the signing that he opposes it. These statements have not been reported in the Philippine press. Marcos bases his last contention on the last paragraph of the agreement that states that implementation shall be through ‘all necessary constitutional processes.’ Although the agreement refers to “autonomy for the Moslems” in the southern P, Marcos has stated repeatedly that regional autonomy is being introduced throughout the P and autonomy in the south has no specifically Moslem character. “We don’t even call it Moslem autonomy.” He said in an interview Saturday. Moslems here consider this a negation of their essential demand, which is for recognition of their specific Moslem identity.

Marcos made statistics public which state that the 13 provinces covered by the agreement include 8 in which Christians are in the majority, overwhelmingly so in some. Official statistics have been denounced by the MLF, which asserts that they misrepresent Moslem numbers. Impartial observers see some justification for this charge but do not seriously question that Moslems are a minority everywhere in Mindanao except in the provinces of Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao, around this city, and on the southern islands of Sulu, Tawi-Tawi and Basilan.

Despite these numbers, the MNLF has been demanding, with Qaddafi’s support, control over all 21 provinces of what it considers the historic Moslem empire of Mindanao, the Sulu archipelago and the outlying island of Palawan. For the time being, the ceasefire is working.

3/26/77 – Marcos today proclaimed autonomous a large area in the southwestern P. covered the island of Palawan, the Sulu archipelago and roughly half of Mindanao island. Created a provisional govt to administer the areas temporarily while preparations were made for a vote that will determine the final form of the regional setup. Qaddafi worked out the peace formula with Imelda Marcos who traveled to Libya for that purpose. Qaddafi said the agreement would ‘put an end to the war and open a new page in the relations between the P and the Islamic states.’ P notified all of its Asian neighbors of the agreement and Libya informed the conference of Islamic States of its commitment to persuade the MNLF to end its rebellion. The war has cost the govt almost \$1 billion in military expenditures, 500,000 displaced persons, and est 10,000 dead. Today’s proclamation made clear that Moslems would not be running the region alone but in partnership with Christians. The proclamation specified the powers to be allotted the provisional govt as

administrative but promised 'other powers as Marcos may direct.' The MNLF has consistently demanded that the region should have the power to tax its inhabitants and levy royalties on mining companies. There was no official word on such powers, which are important because the areas contains the bulk of the country's known oil deposits.

4/16/77 – P Govt is going ahead with a referendum tomorrow on proposals for autonomy for its southern region despite a boycott by the rebel MNLF, which is insisting on negotiated change. Residents of 12 provinces on Mindanao Island and the island province of Palwan are to be polled on 9 proposals taken from a MNLF position paper on autonomy and two proposals by the P gov't. Since some Moslems did not support the Moro insurgency, analysts here foresee a decisive defeat for the MNLF proposals, except perhaps in Sulu Province. MNLF told gov't today it would boycott the voting, but not break the ceasefire. Defense secretary Barbero said after returning final conferences with all parties involved in the dispute: "With this referendum, chances of a peaceful solution to our Mindanao problem are very great."

4/18/77 – early official returns from voting in 13 southern provinces today indicated an overwhelming rejection of Moslem rebels' demands that they be given control of the region. Turnout of about 40-45 %. With about 37.5% of the returns in, going about 10 to 1 against it.

4/23/77 – final returns showed that nearly 98% of the votes were against a gov't run by MNLF in an autonomous region.

6/11/77 – Statement by admiral Espaldon: warned Moslem rebels still holding out to surrender or face attack. Ordered local officials in western Mindanao to urge the rebels to surrender because "sooner or later we will have to go after them."

In a related development, the gov't announced today that the outlawed Philippine communist Party had armed itself with weapons "from Communist China." Contained in an indictment charger 92 persons with membership in the party, which is punishable by a 12 yr prison sentence.

9/20/77 – Troops supported by aircraft attacked suspected rebel forces today in a breakdown of the 8 month truce. Col. Mison, an army brigade commander, said: he had ordered the operation after leaders of the Moslem-controlled MNLF ignored an ultimatum to surrender terrorists accused of killing 23 civilians with a land mine. "The artillery and air strike operations were launched this morning." At least two light planes, designed for low level strafing and bombing missions, had been used.

Periodic violations had occurred before, reportedly by both sides, but nothing to this extent. The landmine explosion that brought on the attack destroyed a truck carrying 81 workers at a Gov't owned experimental rubber plantation. 23 dead, 58 wounded, 35 seriously. Today's fighting was far from the landmine explosion, thus violating the agreement.

10/2/77 – Soothed by the efforts of two Middle Eastern diplomats, P gov't troops and Moslem rebels agreed over the weekend to scale down hostilities, strengthen the 9-mo old ceasefire and move toward negotiations to bring peace to southern Mindanao. Announced by gov't command and confirmed by MNLF. The deteriorating situation alarmed the Islamic Conference. The Conference's dep sec Shiri arrived in Manila to talk to both sides. An Egyptian delegation headed by Oweida, has also visited Manila and Mindanao. Dr. Manjoorsa, chief rep of the MNLF on the ceasefire committee said: "the ceasefire is fragile and temporary. Both sides should exert efforts to achieve a better atmosphere. The Gov't knows the solution to the problem in Mindanao but is reluctant to adopt it." (ie autonomy). Acknowledged he had received a new offer for peace negotiations; he would leave this week to consult with Misauri.

Early 80s, the separatist struggle gradually transformed itself into a popular, mostly unarmed movement.

1/18/78 – Rebels suffered heavy casualties in a major battle with Govt troops in south. Southern command headquarters report by Castro: heavy fighting between gov't troops and heavily armed terrorists' in Maguindanao.

1/28/78 – Philippine troops, aided by civilian militia, are pressing their drive in the Sinumaan Mountains on Jolo island in an attempt to capture the Moslem rebel band that is believed to have killed a Filipino general and 34 of his men last October. Casualties in 10 days of fighting are said to have reached 150. Espaldon (also civilian administrator of the Jolo-Zamboanga region) said: his forces had captured the main rebel hideouts near the site of the October killings and were in pursuit of the rebel leader, Sali. Rebel activity continued elsewhere. A Moslem band attacked Upi town in the cotabato area of the island of Mindanao on 1/17 and engaged a local army unit in a 4 hour battle. Similar actions occurred in the towns of Dalikan and Kabakaan (also in cotabato).

Military observers here said the recent actions may be diversionary in view of what they said was the desperate situation of Sali's band. Sali and his 600 men have been hunted since last October, when they were said to have killed Brig. Gen. Bautista, 9 of his officers, and 25 enlisted men without warning in a market where the general's party was said to have gone for peace talks with the rebel band. Jolo was closed off and military forces searched the jungle terrain. On 1/19, a gov't paramilitary unit made contact with the rebels' advance command post on Bagsak Hill. Gov't forces were said to have routed the rebels and cleared the Panamao area. The first infantry division attacked north toward Patikul, overran a jungle camp with 15 bunkers and stockpiles of food and ammunition, but failed to locate Sali. However the town was cleared, enabling the gov't to restore civilian officials.

Marines were landed on the north coast and moved south toward Danag-Guimba, where they encountered 300 rebels armed with machine guns, rifles and rocket launchers. Military headquarters reported 7 marines were wounded and 50 rebels killed.

4/16/78 – Marcos accused of election fraud and repression. Six leaders of the People's force and about 600 sympathizers were arrested last week during a protest march through Manila. But most were quickly freed when reports from American correspondents created bad publicity. Marcos needs favorable press in Washington. He is negotiating a \$1 billion deal for continued American use of bases in Phil. The economy relies heavily on American aid, loans and credits.

5/2/78 – VP Mondale began 5 nation tour. In Manila made pointed reference to the value of individual freedoms and democracy on his arrival. Greeted by Marcos. Stressed special interest in promoting individual liberty, democracy and national independence. Marcos said he will try to demonstrate his country's belief in human rights.

1979

3/5/79 – More than 100,000 refugees have been squatting in Sabah, Malaysia in NE Borneo. Majority Muslims. Christians presumably flee elsewhere. Met with benevolent indifference. From 1972 to 1976, the Chief Minister Mustapha supported the Moro rising. It is generally believed by officials and knowledgeable Sabahans that Mustapha, a fundamentalist Islamic, encouraged the inflow of Moslem Filipinos to increase the minority Moslem population in Sabah, where Christian and animists form the majority. Also labor shortage. Largely timber based. UN called in only in 1977 largely to provide housing. A refugee: "We like it here; its peaceful." Refugees do favor the rebels though. "I don't want to go back to where there is

trouble and no earnings.” But he said he would eventually go back, even if the P govt defeats the rebels, whom he favors. Asked why he did not join them: “If I am killed, no one will take care of my family.”

4/2/79 – Marcos announced today that elections would be held May 7 in the southern P. War has claimed some 60000 lives. MNLF has denounced any such elections as a charade intended only to create the impression of autonomy. Viewed by diplomats as a carefully timed event by the Marcos govt to counter attempts to persuade a coming Islamic conference to increase aid to the insurgents and possibly impose economic sanctions against P.

Although Moslem separatist movement I the P has long been given a low priority at international Moslem meetings, supporters of the rebellion here are expected to call for such sanctions as an oil embargo when the Islamic reps meet in Rabat, Morocco. 90% of countries supply of oil comes from Saudi Arabia and Iran. Brownouts are now a twice-daily occurrence in Manila. MNLF supporters, buoyed by potential help from the new Islamic rulers in Iran, are now lobbying for condemnation of the Marcos regime.

Mustafa Dreifa, the Libyan Ambassador to the P, who helped last week negotiate the release of an American minister held 19 days by Moslem rebels, said elections without the participation of the MNLF would ‘have no meaning.’

The President has responded to charges that he is unwilling to renew peace negotiations by saying he does not know with whom to negotiate because of the split in the Moro leadership. Salaxat, who was educated in Cairo and who is based there, broke last year with Misauri and says he leads the rebellion. The two have reportedly met in an attempt to end their differences. Marcos, who is apparently confident that his forces now have military superiority in western Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago has insisted that Moro leaders must prove they still control the area before he will negotiate with them. He also insists that they come to Manila for future talks. Marcos has said that the elections will set a pattern that will be followed gradually in other areas as part of a return to more democratic rule.

12/31/79 – Some 27 persons allegedly plotted to kidnap two army generals, storm Malacanang, the presidential palace, assassinate Marcos, and install US-based Filipino exiles as leaders of a revolutionary regime. Implicated in coup attempt, were former Senators Estrada Kalaw and Manglaupus, the latter in exile in the US since 1972 and now president of the Movement for a Free Philippines. Both denied involvement.

1979 – Marcos managed to extract from US Pres Carter \$500 million, 5 year commitment in military and economic aid as “compensation” for American use of the important air and naval bases at Clark Field and Subic Bay, even though the existing agreement does not expire until 1991.

1980

6/20/80 – Suspected members of MNLF wounded 38 when they threw grenades into the middle of a park and in front of a school in Santos City.

6/20/80 – Hearings begin on subversion charges against Light-a-Fire Movement. Defense suggests that Marcos govt is not legit. Tribunal maintained that a “foreign power” was alleged to have given cover support to the group.

7/20/80 – Political rival (jailed since 1972 martial law) Benigno Aquino is trying to persuade the Moslems in the southern P to moderate secessionist demands. Two weeks ago, despite a stern State Dept warning, he flew to Damascus, Syria to meet with Misuari. “I have asked them to give up their secessionist claims.” Also met with Lucman, whose Saudi-based Bangsa Moro

Liberation Organization also supports the Moslem struggle, but does not see eye to eye with the Misauri group. "we have made progress."

8/80 and 9/80 – series of explosions in Manila claimed by the April 6 Liberation Movement, named after the massive 1979 anti-Marcos demonstration. Followed the highly controversial, and publicized speech given by Aquino to the Asia society in NY on 8/4 where he warned Marcos of upcoming, organized violence, mentioning Light A Fire movement. Marcos responded: "Why, we should have asked them to cure not only his heart but his mind, as well. Because this is certainly insanity!"

9/27/80 – six attacks by MNLF killed 17 people and injured 120 in the last week. Military spokesman: rebels were apparently trying to discredit comrades who have made agreements with the govt.

It is estimated that 40K have accepted govt peace overtures and that 10K are still fighting on Mindanao.

Dissidents from another minority group, the Kalingas of the extreme northern region ambused a military patrol killing 7 soldiers and wounding their patrol leader. Ambush by members of the NPA. Opposition stems from govt plans to dam the Chico river, which runs through tribal homelands. Demanding that the dam be stopped and that army units leave their region.

An effort to settle the Moslem insurgency has been made by the Islamic conference, and Marcos has agreed to send negotiators to Jakarta next month to meet with reps from the front. Talks will center on pol autonomy with the front seeking broad powers under its own flag. The govt wants to retain overall control, but has given many Moslems who had opposed it positions in local govt and developing agencies.

In their attacks, rebel threw grenades in the market in Pagadian, and in crowds during a town fiesta Monday in Carmen Cotabato. Two nights earlier, grenades exploded in 10 places in the city of Cotabato, the last at the headquarters of the local govt. In Illigan, rebels fired on a minibus of the Dansalan Jr College, which is run by Protestant missionaries. Ambush in Miagao. These places are predominately Moslem, but have many chrisitan settlers. A leader of the Christian province of Misamis Oriental has asked that non-Moslem reps be allowed to participate in the Jakarta talks. Would help speed resolution, said Assemblyman Canoy.

10/4/80 – bombs exploded simultaneously this evening at 3 hotels in Manila and one in Angeles, 50 mi. north, injuring 10 including one Australian visitor and two American servicemen. Statement issues by the April 6 Liberation movement: they were responsible. Warning tourist associations not to hold meetings in Manila as Marcos 'can no longer control the anger of the people.'

The 112 nation World Tourism Congress is now being held at the Philippine International Convention Center. International Hotel Assoc. plans to hold a convention there too, followed by an American Society of Travel Agents. The April 6 Liberation Movement took responsibility for the previous bombings (between August 22 and Sept 12) saying it wanted to warn Marcos that he should end his rule. Statement tonight: it hit the 3 Manila hotels because 'these are known watering holes of members of the Marcos oligarchy.'

Authorities have arresting only 3 people since bombings began, brothers of American-Philippine heritage.

Four people were killed and 68 wounded when 4 grenades were thrown into a crowd in the southern town of Tagum. MNLF were believed to have been responsible. 10 were arrested for questioning.

10/19/80 – bomb exploded in the midst of the Am Society of Travel Agents Conference in Manila. Exploded 20 rows from where Marcos was sitting insuring 20 conventioners. Marcos immediately issues 30 arrest warrants for Aquino, Salonga, Manglaupus and Osmena. Again the April 16 (?) Movement claimed responsibility. Salonga was arrested (having been photographed at a social gathering in the US with Victor Lovely, a confessed bombing suspect. He responded: the president should not fail to distinguish between real terrorists and those in democratic opposition, ‘however expedient it may be for the martial law regime to confuse the two to serve its own purposes.’

11/1/80 – Top commander of the Philippine sthn region, Espaldon, said: that the great majority of Moslem rebel forces had laid down their arms and that the promise of Pres Marcos to end martial law in 1981 might be realized. “the return of 40K of the estimated 50K rebels has brought peace to Mindanao... the military arm of the MNLF has been rendered incapable of duplicating the large-scale attacks they mounted in 1974-75.” Ambushes and grenade attacks in some provinces bordering the Moro gulf in recent weeks, the admiral said, were isolated terrorist acts designed to draw international attention to the insurgency. Govt initiatives by the govt to mend relations with the Islamic nations ‘that had been misled by the MNLF propaganda.’ The Philippine claim to Malaysian Sabah is now being dropped. ‘We are hoping Malaysia will join us in a border agreement similar to what we now have with Indonesia.’

Marcos said recently that he would end martial law when the Mindanao problem was solved. A Philippine panel composed of Govt officials and returned rebels is ready to talk peace with hard-core rebels under the auspices of the Islamic Conference. While the situation is under control, the govt is still pursuing a policy of reconciliation, Espaldon said in explaining govt eagerness to participate in the Islamic conference next month in Jakarta. Misauri has been invited. Espaldon said that a major demand of the rebels that Moslem areas of Mindanao be policed by Moslems would be granted. “A bold experiment for cautious adoption is to withdraw regular armed forces into cantonment areas and allow indigenous security forces to take over.” The crux of the Govt’s efforts take the form of small bonuses and loans given rebels if they lay down their arms and agree to start small businesses or join the civilian militia.

The promised development of Mindanao is also under way, Espaldon said. A road and causeway and an electrification project have just been completed in the southernmost island of Simunul. 11/16/80 – Acting on information that Moslem terrorists were planning to kidnap the president of a local college, police killed 8 suspected members of the MNLF after they opened fire at a roadblock reported the Philippine constabulary. According to Lt. Col. Abendan, a roadblock was set up about 540 miles southeast of Manila. Several hours later the terrorists arrived and gunfire was exchanged.

1980 – when Saudi Arabia received reports suggesting that the Phil had embarked on a campaign of extermination against Filipino Moslems, Saudi Arabia threatened to terminate its oil supplies. Imelda quickly flew to SA to ensure them there was no such plan.

1981

Hashim wrote a program for “Jihad in the way of Allah” ‘claiming that in the years 1981-2000 the organization should dedicate itself to Islamize all parts of Bangsamor life, build up military strength, become self-reliant, and strengthen the organization to be able to pursue an armed fight for an independent Islamic state in Mindanao.

Martial law is lifted. Marcos wins presidential elections.

Mid-Jan 81 – Marcos proclaimed the lifting of martial law.

2/7/81 – Armed men believed to be Moslem rebels have ambused a truck carrying logging camp workers, killing 5 and wounding 1. Occurred in a village in Lanao del Sur, a southern province where govt forces are battling MNLF.

6/6/81 – Marcos' office announced they had arrested 8 people for a terrorist plot prepared by a fugitive opposition leader with aid from the Libyan-based Moslem rebels. Statement: Plot was an outgrowth of a recent meeting in the ME between former opposition senator Aquino, who is now living in Boston, and Misauri.

1981

Ministry of Muslim affairs created, but its activities appear to have been largely devoted to organizing Koran reading competitions and the annual haj, accrediting madaris, and supporting the implementation of Shari'a.

Fighting continued, but government's preoccupation with the "moro problem" seems to have diminished in the early 80s.

1982

3/9/82 - Marcos is schedule to visit Saudi Arabia this month for the first time. An opportunity to reply to charges that the predominantly Christian Philippines is not doing all it could to resolve peacefully the Moslem conflict. Headquarters of 42-nation I.C., which has repeatedly adopted resolutions urging members to 'exert pol, soc, and econ pressure' on the P to carry out an agreement worked out in Tripoli. Marcos had said 2 weeks ago that it had fulfilled the agreement. Had even offered the chairmanship of the provisional govt to Misuari, but Misuari denounced the plan.

P govt has claimed victory over the secessionist MNLF and has agreed to peacetalks to be held in Indonesia, but the Govt maintains that the Front refuses to attend. Espaldon said at least 40K insurgents had 'returned to the folds of the law' since 1972. "Those left in the hills are bandits, terrorists, and kidnapers."

Much of the south remains under emergency rule because the Govt believes it is unsafe. Close ties with Saudi Arabia have been developed primarily as a result of the P export labor program, which this year is expected to send thousands of Filipino labors to Saudi oil fields. The P has been trying to insure its supply of oil as well. More than 75% of its energy comes from petroleum imports, and 40% from Saudi Arabia.

There has been speculation that Marcos will try and see Misuari. The speculation came from Espaldon's remark that such a meeting was possible. The Pres subsequently chided Espaldon and said he would not meet with any rebel leader. Espaldon also commented that the nation's 'friends in the Islamic world' would like to see the Moslem conflict resolved, suggesting that the ME countries had the oil and revenues to back up their arguments.

6/5/82 – Legislative elections, postponed twice this year, re to be held on Monday in the Moslem-dominated south, and opposition leaders are charging that the balloting will not be fair. Elections were initially scheduled in April, but were postponed when opposition elements began organizing a boycott. The Pres' proclaimed eagerness to hold elections in the Moslem south after his return from Saudi Arabia is widely seen here as reflecting a desire to satisfy the demands of a govt that provides 40% of the P oil. Apparently came under great pressure to end conflict. Espaldon: "Our friends in the Islamic world would like to see this solved as soon as possible." At Saudi Arabia's urging, the regions of Mindanao have become the focus of the nation's most ambitious development projects. Nearly \$600M in programs funded by the World Bank is beign

allocated for Mindanao this year. In addition, funds from Saudi Arabia are expected to be spent on projects largely for Moslems, including the building of a Mosque in Manila. While Marcos has officially declared victory in the conflict, fighting continues. Death toll 50K. There are weekly bombings, kidnappings, and killings. Marcos called the continued violence “nothing more than the final desperate gasps of a dying rebellion.” During his visit, Marcos received assurances from the IC that members would not interfere in the internal affairs of the P.

7/11/82 – Growing sympathy for the MNLF. “The reason is the dam; the dam changed life here.” Said community worker in a nearby village (Marawi). When the dam construction started, it was welcomed as the beginning of a new surge of development for Mindanao. At the urging of ME countries, particularly Saudi Arabia. But to the people of Marawi, the only predominantly Islamic city in the P, the dam has come to represent what they regard as the insensitivity of the Christian national govt to the needs of the Moslem people. See changes it brought as threats to their livelihood and religion. Many residents who once blamed the MNLF for the arrival of the military in Marawi now blame the dam for keeping them there. A local high school instructor said that the dam is giving the impression to the ME countries that marcos is doing something for Moslems, but the electric power is ‘going to other places in Mindanao, the Christian areas.’ A lot of side effects due to dam impacting farmers, religious practices/mosques, and fisherman.

By 1982 – Iran had reportedly become a backer of the MNLF, even though the Philippine Moslems belong to the Sunni rather than Shiite branch.

1983

8/21/83 - Aquino returns to the Philippines, but is shot dead as he leaves his plane. The military is blamed for the murder.

10/8/83 – a group of prominent Filipino Moslems warned Marcos today to heed calls for national reconciliation or risk a revival of Moslem separatism. The group of 11 leaders announced their support for a pla of unity and expanded pol freedom that was first proposed several weeks ago by Jaime cardinal Sin, the archbishop of Manila. In their message, the group urged a ‘grant of general amnesty for all political offenses.’ Called Manifesto of the Moslems of the P Supporting the Call for National Reconciliation.

After a midday mass for Aquino in Tondo north of the Pasig River, several thousand local residents and supporters of Aquino gathered to hear speeches denouncing the govt. No violence.

10/9/83 – Moslem separatists still around, but intensity seems to have declined. The Moslem uprising and the Communist rebellion had intensified after Aquino was killed last month. “the Moslems around here are sympathetic to the rebels, but they don’t seem to share their goal of independence,” said climaco, the Christian Mayer of Zamboanga city. Governor Sali Izquierdo of Sulu province says the guerrilla forces are still active in his territory, once their stronghold, are now negligible. Asri, a provincial official in Jolo, is one of the former Moslem rebel commanders who came out of the hills under an amnesty, “we were misled into thinking it was a religious war; then why do some Moslems stay in the hills and fight? It can be more lucrative than coming into town and looking for a job.” According to a Mindanao historian and politician Canoy, says the current moro insurgency came out of the wholesale seizure of firearms from the Moslems shortly after Marcos proclaimed martial law in 72. “To be deprived of his gun is an affront to the Moro, who regards it as a status symbol and an essential item of survival.”

Moderate Moslems like Governor Izquierdo had been so pleased with the gains at Tripol, which include economic help as well as recognition of Islamic courts and such Moslem customs as divorce – strictly forbidden in the P – that they have become fervent supporters of the Marcos

regime, a turn that places them at odds with many powerful Christian politicians here. The rebel forces are said to have dropped to a few hundred, according to knowledgeable sources.

10/20/83 – Fighting in Jolo appears to have stopped, according to Izquierdo, in the wake of peace overtures by Pres, including offers of limited autonomy.

1984

3/3/84 – Marcos said he would submit his powers of decree to a review and possible abolition by the new Parliament to be elected in May.

1985

10/17/85 – US Senator visits Marcos asking for honest assessment of communist threat, which appears to be growing to now 12K fighters. Reagan was concerned over growing insurgency and the widespread corruption and economic decline that was feeding it.

10/21/85 – Govt discounts Communist threat.

Prior to elections of 1986, Marcos's opponents held talks with MNLF leader Misuari promising to address Muslim demands if the MNLF joined the opposition forces.

Fall of Marcos

1986

Popular revolution with newly elected president, Aquino (but not after Marcos had declared himself the winner, followed by mass protests, 'people power' in Manila, and the military withdraws support for Marcos. He flees the country for Hawaii. New govt claims he looted billions of dollars). Ceasefire negotiated between Aquino MNLF. New constitution drafted for the area. Peace talks resumed, but broke down in 1987.

3/11/86 – Arrest warrants today for two marcos backers. Also, three foreign based rebel leaders of a faction of the MNLF accepted an invitation from the new govt to return to negotiated some form of autonomy. "We consider the assumption to power of the new leadership under Pres Aquino as a historic opportunity to culminate the revolution and unite with the new leadership," the 3 Moslems said (Sangkapan, Farook Mohd Hassan and Napis Bidin who represent a breakaway faction)

3/20/86 – Violence in Sabah following Christian elected govt. Filipino Moslems (Moros) paid to take part in demonstrations.

5/13/86 – A couple of fierce battles on Sulu. 5 soldiers and 7 rebels die. Squirmishes between Govt and MNLF. They may just be jockeying for political attention from the new govt. Religious leader Zain Jali said "the southern P is like a caldron that is boiling; if the people are not satisfied there will be armed fighting."

The insurgency has fragmented into three bickering guerrilla factions.

In negotiations with the Marcos govt, the Moro movment wanted its guerrillas incorporated into a 15K man regional security force. The govt demanded that it be limited to 3K, including Christian militiamen. Both sides have since disowned the accord.

Moslems have generally welcomed Aquino. To revive the formula of autonomy without independence, the new govt has made overtures to Misuari. The Pres' brother in law, Butz Aquino, said: "We cannot have peace in Mindanao without Mr. Misuari." Told this to a rally in Zamboanga. Mr. Aquino met with Misuari abroad several times and promised that when new talks were held, "Nur Misuari himself can choose who is to sit beside him and who is to sit behind him." Misuari's authority is challenged by his less militant rivals. Salamat quit the Moro

movement's central committee in 1977, accusing Misuari of giving the rebels a Marxist orientation, and set up the MILF. Salamat would accept regional autonomy, as would Pendato, who with Abbas Jr. leads a faction of the MNLF. A Moslem activist estimated that Misuari had 15K armed men, Salamat 5-6K, and Pendato only 1500.

On a recent visit, posters downtown denounced Reagan as "the mad dog of Israel."

An 'indignation rally' drew about 20K in support of Libya (which was being bombed by US).

According to Mr. Aquino, the govt wants to settle this thing, because "once we settle this one, we can tackle the really big problem" – the Communist insurgency. In Zamboananga, he asked the Moslems to give the govt 4 months, "Let us be patient, because if we proceed too fast, we might stumble down." Misuari has already spoken of launching a 'second phase' of the revolution. He is not alone. "A lot of young people are now talking about another round of war to attract the attention of the govt," said Khayr alonto, head of a Moslem pol party.

9/86 – Misuari meets with Aquino in Sulu. Subsequently, Misuari and reps of govt meet in Jeddah, held under OIC auspices, to continue discussions on autonomy through a joint commission. MILF and MNLF-RG were invited to join talks; MILF rejected and soon after launched a series of attacks on govt installations, while the MNLF-RG played some part in the later negotiations. Misuari's demands included extension of autonomy arrangements to all 23 provinces in Mindanao and Sulu; incorporation of the MNLF's Bangsa Moro Army into the Armed Forces of Philippines; withdrawal of AFP from the south; fiscal autonomy; and control over mineral exploration in the region. Considered unreasonable by govt.

9/9/86 – Military officials today said that Moslem rebels excluded from peace talks had attacked a Roman Catholic wedding ceremony, killing 10 and wounding 96. In Salvador, on Mindanao. Two of the 5 guerrillas were shot. Col. Raul Aquino, army commander in the area, said the attackers were members of the MILF.

9/14/86 – Aquino arranged a truce with a small separatist rebellion led by a former priest, Balweg, in the Cordillera mountains of Luzon. Aquino traveled to Jolo agreeing with the Moro leader, Misuari, to extend the defacto truce.

Misuari and Aquino sign ceasefire.

10/25/86 – Misuari announced he would campaign against ratification of a proposed new P constitution. The constitutional plebiscite appears to increasingly be a vote of confidence in Aquino's govt. Opposed it because not enough Moslems had been included in the commission that drew it up.

12/10/86 – ceasefire between communists and govt.

1987

1/87 - MNLF signs agreement relinquishing its goal of independence for Muslim regions and accepting govt's offer of autonomy. Not accepted by MILF.

Talks continue between MNLF and government over proposed autonomous regions, but eventually deadlocked by mid-year. OIC had urged MNLF to accept compromise.

1987 constitution provides for autonomous Muslim Mindanao. The Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) was passed in Congress

1/87 – executive order dismantles Office of Muslim Affairs and Cultural Communities, replaced by new Office of Muslim Affairs, but little evidence of new policy initiatives.

1/87 – a 60-day ceasefire in effect with the communist insurgency, an umbrella group called the National Democratic Front, which is demanding a long agenda that includes land reform and removal of US military bases. Govt has said it would emphasize a shorter agenda that includes

economic development, certain social reforms, and an amnesty for rebels who lay down their arms. US promises to support P govt if the ceasefire should break down.

Two govt officials returned from Saudi Arabia where they had met with reps of a Moslem insurgency (MNLF). Had agreed to settle for some form of regional autonomy rather than full independence on the southern island of Mindanao. But they predicted complicated and difficult discussions, including a Moslem demand for changes in a draft P constitution.

1/15/87 – 14 attacks reported on Mindanao, apparently carried out by a Moslem faction MILF that has been excluded from peace talks between govt and a larger rival. One killed and 12 injured. Attack preceded by a statement: “The hour has struck for the resumption of hostilities against the govt.” Salamat warned that more would follow. Maj. General Ermita said in Manila he was unsure what groups were involved. Said there were indications that the MNLF were involved in some of them. Series of attacks began in area of Cobato where Aquino was due to speak.

The Cabinet set elections for local and regional seats a little more than 3 months after national legislative elections.

8/87 – coup attempt

8/87 – Moslem attacks at the towns of Sibuco on the Zamboanga peninsula and Maluso on the island of Basilian. Coup attempt has stretched govt thinner. Referred to as communist Moslem rebels. Estimated at 6K. Half are said to be armed with rifles and automatic weapons, and the other half unarmed or have only pistols.

9/11/87 – 18 months after Aquino’s People power revolution, lawlessness continues in Jolo. Impression that life has deteriorated since then. For more than 2 months, there has been no electricity, water supplies are inadequate, no telephone link with rest of P. Vengeance killings are routine. Town does not have a member of congress. There is much sympathy for the MNLF. MNLF promises economic development. Moro leader also tells that the MNLF promises more, including social and cultural development, without the pol ideology of the communists. The moro front has also promised complete freedom to the active and influential Roman Catholic community. Many members of the Moslem rebel group are graduates of Notre Dame college in Jolo. Rebels stay in touch with their Catholic teachers and intermarriage is not unusual. Priests and lay workers say they are sometimes apprehensive about promises made by the Moslems, as they await a grant of regional autonomy from manila, because of the experience of other nations with Islamic govt. Moslem leaders dismiss the fears. “Moslems, Christians, and others have been exploited and discriminated against by the people of Luzon and the Visayas,” the front spokesman said.

Marines and Jolo residents appear to respect one another. Residents said that marines were appreciated as professional who did not engage in abuses they had experienced with army troops, who were both violent and corrupt.

9/23/87 – Army spread thin between communists and Moros. Govt has not succeeded in alleviating poverty and inequality. This was one of the complaints lodged against Aquino by Col. Honasan, who led the coup attempt in the P last month.

1988

2/88 – MNLF resumes its armed insurrection, but little fighting resulted.

2/1/88 – 6 Moslem separatists and one soldier were killed in a one hour gunbattle. 4 soldiers and 15 villagers were wounded. Erupted when 200 MNLF rebels attacked an outpost in Northern Cotabato.

1989

11/89 (or 1/89?) - Plebiscite on ARMM. Only 4 provinces opted for inclusion into the new autonomous structure. Both MNLF and MILF were against it claiming it was not enough, and that they had not been invited to participate in the process.

Accusations that MILF members cooperated in joint attacks with MNLF that killed 43
Although the Aquino govt failed to resolve the conflict in the south, a cease-fire with the MNLF was maintained (albeit with occasional violations), and the OIC formally recognized the efforts of the govt to find a peaceful solution.

12/89 – US jet assist Philippine government forces in suppressing an attempted coup.

1990

1/27/90 – Clashes between government troops and MILF in North cotabato province.

2/4/90 – Large scale clashes between government and MILF in North cotabato. Incident was provoked by clashes between MILF and paramilitary groups in the area the previous August.
Early 1990s, several incidents of high-profile kidnappings by criminal gangs as was as conflict parties.

12/6/90 – ARMM becomes formal.

Military officials convicted of murder of Benigno Aquino.

1992

Election of Fidel Ramos – he visits Libya

1992-1996, 4 years of negotiations.

US removes bases.

12/14/92 – 20 Gunmen massacred 40 people in a remote village of Sinaguarn in southern part of country.

1993

Some clashes reported at the end of the year, possibly triggered by the onset of the peace process between MNLF and the government. The MILF clashes did not result in 25 fatalities.

12/29/93 – An American was kidnapped. No group took responsibility, but the incident came as the govt negotiated with the MNLF to end the war.

Suspected Christian militants fired grenades at two mosques here on Tuesday wounding 5, apparently in reprisal for a bombing that killed 7 on Sunday at the Roman Catholic San Pedro Cathedral.

1994

1/30/94 – Ceasefire with MNLF. Yan, chief P negotiator with Misuari.

1995

4/4/95 – Hundreds of heavily armed Moslem rebels attacked Ipil killing scores as they robbed banks, looted stores and set part of the town on fire. The P govt ordered soldiers and police officers flown in by helicopter. Orders from Ramos to ‘shoot to kill’ any of the Muslim rebels who remained in the city. Enrile, chief of P armed forces, said attack was by a breakaway faction of MNLF, which is currently involved in peace talks with govt.

The P police has alleged that another Muslim separatist faction, Abu Sayyaf, was involved Arab terrorists in planning a series of attacks across Asia. It was unclear if ASG was involved in this attack.

4/7/95 – Govt battles Muslim rebels. At least 20 killed and 5 civilians taken hostage by ASG. Brig. Gen. Cardones said more than 300 govt troops were involved in the fighting and about 900 were on standby. ASG blamed for attack. But the P national police said members of MNLF and MILF joined in the raid. ASG members have been linked to defendants in the World Trade Center bombing and to plots to kill pope and kidnappings. 49-52 dead in raid.

1996

6/23/96 – MNLF and govt agree to create a guerrilla-led transitional body to run the region. Move to set up the Southern Phil Council for Peace and Development which would open the way for the creation of an autonomous region in the southern P. Ramos statement: “This effectively resolves a most contentious political issue bugging the peace negotiations and hopefully paves the way for a final peace agreement in the near future.”

Expressed hope that a formal peace would be signed next month in Jakarta. Indonesia is chairman of the OIC, which has been mediating peace talks since 1993. The two key issues that are left to be resolved – a demand by the rebel group to set up its own regional police force of 20,000 former guerrillas and the integration of some rebels into the regular army – will be discussed by a special working group, the statement added. “Maybe we are the tail end of the typhoon” Misuari added. Yan: “Our destination is in sight. There are some pitfalls along the way, but they are no longer as dangerous and steep.” In the steps agreed today, the rebels would head the council for peace and development and have the power to supervise econ development in the Mindanao region and adjacent islands.

6/96 - Series of negotiations between Ramos and Misuari, brokered by the OIC, culminated in the signing of an agreement on points of consensus. A decision to establish, as “Phase 1 of the Implementation of the Tripoli Agreement,” a Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development (SPCPD), within a Special Zone of Peace and Development in the Southern Philippines, which is to include the (now) 14 provinces covered by the Tripoli Agreement (and all cities therein). The SPCPD is to have a chairman and a vice-chairman and three deputies (representing the Muslims, Christians, and Lumads); and it is to be appointed by the president upon recommendation of the MNLF and in consultation with “the various leaders and sectors in the Southern Philippines.” The SPCPD will be assisted by a Darul Iftah (religious advisory council) created by the SPCPD chairman, and there will be a Consultative Assembly of 81 members, including 44 members of the MNLF. The powers of the SPCPD are described as being “derivative and extensions of the powers of the President,” and the funding for the SPCPD and the assembly are to come from the Office of the President. Local govt units in the region, including the ARMM, will continue to operate. Misuari accepted an appt as chairman of the SPCPD.

8/17/96 – Ramos and Misuari are to meet on Monday in their first face to face meeting in more than 10 years. Would address a rally in support of a peace plan that many Christians in the southern P angrily oppose. To meet in town of Malabang in Lanao del Sur.

8/19/96 – meeting takes place. Ramos: “We have agreed to end war and restore peace.” Final agreement to be signed on Sept 2. Agreement to be carried out by new council, and followed in 3 years by voting in 14 southern provinces with large Moro populations to determine the size of an eventual autonomous political region. In exchange, Misuari has abandoned sessionist claims and

will run as a candidate of Ramos's party for the leadership of the 4 province Autonomous region of Muslim Mindanao.

But both the Christian majority and some Muslim factions have denounced any peace agreement, leaving open the possibility of continued fighting. Ramos spoke: "I am fully aware of the apprehensions of some groups in Mindanao about the Southern P Council for Peace and Development; I realize we cannot wipe out centuries of misunderstandings, decades of mutual distrust and conflict overnight."

Agreement calls for Misuari to coordinate various development projects. After the plebiscite determines which provinces would fall under an autonomous Moro govt, various elements of Islamic education are to be introduced into the school system in areas controlled by the Moros, a system of independent taxation are to be introduced and an independent executive and legislature are to be elected. Rebels to be integrated.

"The Christian stereotype of the Moro is that they are lazy and stupid. The Muslim stereotype of the Christians is that they are selfish and aggressive." Said prof of PS.

Avance-Fuentes, member of Congress: "The bottom line is distrust and fear between the non-Muslim and Muslim communities; for so long our people have looked at the MNLF as rebel people who killed so many of our people, who raped women, looted villages. The fear is they will not govern fairly."

The local city council in Zamboanga city appropriated \$192,000 for the purchase of firearms to defend the citizens against what they say is a Muslim threat.

"There have been protests, and there will be more protests." Dalman, governor of Mindanao's Zamboanga del Norte province. "The Pres says this is the rantings of a noisy and misinformed minority. I say this is the majority."

MILF and ASG have also denounced agreement. Magno: "The council is what Plato calls a royal lie. It is not an autonomous government. It's something Misuari subscribes to. It does not diminish the power of the local lords. It basically delivers the Muslim vote to Ramos's camp in '98, which will count."

9/96 - MNLF leader Misauri was elected governor of the new ARMM with the backing of President Ramos's Laban party. MILF did not participate, the group had committed not to stand in the way of peace, and fighting decreased in the following years. Low level talks between MILF and government.

Substantial funds had been made for infrastructure, social services, and environmental protection in Mindanao over a 3 year period.

Promises of investment from OIC countries, including Malaysia and Indonesia had been made.

10/96 - Following the formal signing of the SPCPD agreement in Indonesia, the AFP had announced that some 3000 MNLF fighters, 2000 MILF, and 500 others had been accepted for integration into the AFP, and the Bangko Sentral had offered to establish an Islamic banking unit.

Creation of the SPCPD was bitterly opposed by a number of Christian groups and members of Congress, and the president's commitment was challenged by the Supreme Court as unconstitutional.

1998

5/98 - Estrada elected president.

11/27/98 - Three days of fighting between troops and Muslim guerrillas in the south ended to allow negotiators the chance to reach a settlement. Gen Bautista said: the MILF freed 22

civilians and lifted a blockade of a major highway. MILF vice chairman for military affairs, Murad said: I have ordered our forces to clear the highway and withdraw.” He said the military agreed not to pursue withdrawing rebels of about 300 – 500.

1999

1/9/99 – govt will resume peace talks with Muslim rebels early next month, according to Estrada’s national security adviser Aguirre. MILF and govt had agreed on a schedule for talks.

2/11/99 – The head of a Muslim rebel group fighting to set up an Islamic state in the P said in an interview with the BBC news that his group received money from Osama bin Laden. The leader Salamat Hashim of the MILF has reached agreements with the P military that he expected to lead to formal peace talks.

3/17/99 – Misuari and Salamat meet, but deny they were joining forces.

3/30/99 – NPA and MILF formed an alliance to fight the govt, said the chairman of the country’s communist party, Liwanag.

12/1/99 – Misuari invited to Indonesia to help mediate with Aceh separatists.

2000

Government launched an ‘all out war’ policy against the Moro groups leading to an escalation of the conflict and the breakdown of peace talks.

Impeachment proceedings start against Estrada on allegations of corruption, betrayal of public trust, and violation of the constitution.

3/18/00 – MILF seize town of Kauswagan capturing the town hall. 47 feared dead. Third day of fighting with govt forces, with withdrew after meeting with Muslim officials.

5/1/00 – According to BBC, P govt has yet to ratify ’96 agreement. Misuari says this is causing some young men to join MILF and even ASG.

5/3/00 – MILF sized 70 civilians for use as human shields after attacking a major army camp. The rebels blocked a major highway linking Talipao with the port of General Santos. Clash between govt forces and MILF.

Misuari acting as govt’s top hostage negotiator.

In what appears to be a separate incident, 21 hostages, including 10 foreign tourists, were kidnapped on April 23 from a Malaysian diving resort and taken to a hut in Talipao on Jolo. It appears to be ASG. Threaten to behead two of them if the govt does not pull back from its position surrounding the rebel’s hideout in Jolo. AFP reported that two hostages had been shot as 100 heavily armed guerrillas tried to flee through a military cordon. At least 1 soldier was killed and six were injured. Rebels deny hostages were dead, but later confirm saying the rebels did not do it.

A separate group of 27 hostages including 22 children are being held by ASG on Basilan island.

6/30/00 – Talks between govt and MILF suspended after rebels refused to abandon their secessionist goals and lay down their arms.

7/00 – Govt soldiers capture headquarters of MILF in Mindanao. Estrada travels there to hoist the P flag.

8/5/00 – Armed men shot and killed 16 people, many of them students, in Cotabato Province after dragging them out of vehicles. Suspected Muslim rebels. MILF denied involvement.

8/17/00 – Estrada declares: “If they want war, we will give them defeat” In reference to the Muslims. His poll numbers went up. Estrada has becoming increasingly the subject of jokes,

gossip and coup rumors. Economy is faltering, corruption and cronyism seem to be ascendant and Muslim separatists and kidnappers are getting out of hand in the south.

Estrada has unleashed his army in a cathartic take-no-prisoners campaign against the rebels on Mindanao. Determined to resolve a kidnapping of westerners on Jolo which has continued for almost 4 months. A recent spate of bombings have occurred in Manila, which have been attributed to the Muslim rebels.

Estrada has fallen back on making hundreds of decrees in the first two years. (Estrada a former B movie actor.)

8/19/00 – Hostage release breaks down. Azzarouq, a former Libyan ambassador was part of the negotiating team working with ASG. He would return when rebels were ready to talk.

Breakdown occurred when rebels insisted on releasing hostages in two batches for security reasons. Estrada had ordered release of all at once. His orders raised suspicions among the guerrillas that they would face attack soon after the release. Rebels had offered to free two Europeans. Negotiators rejected.

10/6/00 – 600 rebels surrendered in a ceremony led by Estrada. He then urged the remaining MILF to resume talks with govt.

11/7/00- 100 MILF fighters with grenades and assault rifles stormed the jail in Gen. Santos and freed 68 prisoners, including several rebel commanders. 1 prisoner killed, 3 guards and 2 civilians wounded.

12/30/00 – 22 killed and 120+ wounded in 5 bombings in Manila.

2001

1/01 – Impeachment trial is suspended followed by mass protests. Military withdraws support and Estrada stands down on the 20th proclaiming his innocence. His VP, Arroyo, is sworn in.

1/9/01 – Senate impeachment trial deadline set for 19th for completion of testimony.

7 Muslims indicted in connection with 12/30/00 bombings, including Salamat Hasim, MILF chairman.

2/20/01 – Pres Arroyo said that she would order a ceasefire with MILF in an effort to boost talks. She approved the release of 49 dissidents to help restart talks yesterday with MILF and with Communists.

2/27/01 – Letter from MILF said they are studying govt's offer to restart talks. Govt described letter as a breakthrough official contacts.

3/01 – MILF declares ceasefire and says its ready to hold talks with the government. Peace process seems to resume, fighting decreases 2001-2002.

3/01 – ARMM governor Misauri also accused of corruption and removed from his position as head of MNLF.

4/01 – Estrada is charged with plundering more than 80 million dollars from state funds while in office. He is eventually found guilty and jailed for life... then pardoned.

6/23/01 – Govt and MILF agreed on ceasefire and on talks on the return of rebel-claimed territory held by govt troops. The accord was reached after talks in Tripoli led by el0Silam, a son of Qaddafi. Details remain, but ceasefire is to be immediate.

8/8/01 – Ceasefire signed. Arroyo met with Eibrahim, chief of staff of the MILF, in Malaysia after the signing. Arroyo refuses to meet with ASG, because it holds dozens of hostages, including two Americans.

11/01 – a week before elections, Misauri and followers seize some military bases on Jolo island. Government mobilized, Misauri fled to Malaysia where arrested and extradited.

11/22/01 – Fresh fighting on Jolo. 100 dead. Guerrillas loyal to rebellious governor involved. Govt responds with helicopter gun ships and WW2 vintage bombers. They said they also sought help of Malaysia to keep the governor, Misuari, from escaping there by sea. Military said latest attacks were meant to prevent elections on Monday to pick a successor to Misauri. Cimatu said skirmishes were occurring in Panamao, Patikul and indanan, mountainous areas. Arroyo has accused him of mismanaging the region. Misuari has maintained that the region is still poor because the govt has failed to release funds to develop it. Arroyo met with Pres Bush who said he would increase military aid and economic aid to the P for its fight against Muslim separatists calling it an extension of the war against terror. US to give nearly \$100 mill to help P fight the ASG. Local military accused Misuari of entering into alliance with ASG.

2002

01/02 - US says joint exercises with Filipino military signal new phase in war on international terrorism. Exercises take place near stronghold of Abu Sayyaf group, which US says has links to Osama Bin Laden.

Misauri charged with rebellion followed by new clashes between the MNLF faction and government forces. After Misauri was jailed, the faction ceased to exist. Most rejoined MILF or MNLF.

1/11/02 – Suspects in Singapore are linked to al Qaeda and plans for anti-US attacks, closely tied with Malaysian network. Two foreigners visited the group in Sept to assist the group. One was ‘Mike’ was described as a trainer and bomb-maker for the MILF.

2/28/02 – Suspect in plot to blow up American embassy in Singapore (Mike) appeared before court in Manila being questioned about confession to 12/30/00 Manila bombings. He does not appear to be the person that did the bombings. Connection with Afghanistan (trained there), Al Qaeda and MILF were noted.

4/21/02 – Pipe bomb explodes in General Santos, Mindanao killing 15. Another one defused, and two shopping complexes burned down inexplicably.

Arroyo response: “The Abu Sayyaf has been trying to get into General Santos and it has been very difficult for us to justify our support for the United States.” Comment made in connection with proposed US senate bill described below.

4/27/02 - \$300K ransom paid to ASG to release 2 Am. Hostages. But kidnappers demanded 200K more. Joint P and American exercises on island of Basilan thought to impede exchange. US spy planes being used, but dense terrain.

Five have been arrested for earlier pipe bomb. A few days prior to the blast, P intelligence officials alerted the authorities in Mindanao that the MILF was preparing terrorist acts, including a bomb. The plotters were identified in the report, but it is unclear what actions were taken if any. A person called a radio station claiming ASG was responsible. At times, Am and P officials have linked ASG to Al Qaeda, but privately officials say those links are tenuous. It is basically a group of thugs who kidnap for ransom, said an Am diplomat.

5/15/02 – 600 American soldiers helping P Army track ASG. US Senate debating bill that would provide advantage to Andean tuna importers (as opposed to Filipino). Arroyo suggests such a move would force her to withdraw from the war on terror. The tuna boom has helped persuade all of the rebels movements except the Abu Sayyaf to daly down their arms under armistices with the government.

6/3/02 – P soldiers came upon the rebels holding the hostages last week. One Am and the Filipino hostage were killed, the other wounded.

Am sent 1200 troops, including 160 special forces to P.

8/02 – Communists added to US terror list along with National Democratic Front (its front org).

9/16/02 – 21 Men arrested in Singapore linked with plans to attack US targets. One is Faruq, and al Qaeda operative. Travelled on a false passport to Mindanao and trained with MILF.

9/21/02 – Report linking Jemaah Islamiyah (Indonesia) to MILF.

10/02 – Series of deadly bomb blasts on a Manila bus and at 3 locations in Zamboanga city, blamed on Islamic militants.

Bombing death of American Green Beret spurs Arroyo and Rumsfeld to agree on plan initiated in 2/21/03.

10/28/02 – Article in NY Times reports several specific links from Al Qaeda to the MILF.

According to the article, bin Laden funneled money to the MILF and ASG, and set up a separate cell in Manila whose target was the US. According to the article, Faruq (Qaeda operative arrested in Indonesia) said that he had a dual mission in the Philippines: to work with Islamic radicals and to prepare terrorist attacks on US interests. He attempted to get MILF and ASG to work together, but ASG was a bunch of thugs. At bin Laden's request, MILF opened its camp Abubakar to foreign jihadists. In 2000, the P Army basically demolished Camp Abubakar.

12/25/02 – MILF suspected of bombing the home of the mayor of Datu Piang on Mindanao killing 13 including the mayor. MILF denies.

12/27/02 – MILF blamed for killing 12 and wounding 10 in an ambush of a vehicle owned by a Canadian mining company. MILF denies.

2002 - Rajah Solaiman Movement supposedly founded.

2003

2/03 – ceasefire between MILF and government breaks down. Planned talks are called off in May after rebel attack on Mindanao kills 30.

Car bomb exploded outside the airport terminal in Cotabato City, killing 1.

2/21/03 – US combat force of 1700 headed for P to fight Muslim extremists opening a new front in the war on terror. Not limited to an advisory role. Operation will last as long as necessary to 'disrupt and destroy' the estimated 250 members of ASG. About 750 ground troops and 350 special ops to conduct or support ops on Sulu province. About 1000 marines armed with Cobra attack helicopters and Harrier AV-8B attack planes will stand ready aboard 2 ships offshore to act as a quick response force and provide logistics and medical support.

Arroyo's spokesperson said mission was an 'exercise' that would 'more or less' resemble the mission last year on Basilan island. Arroyo has said she will not seek re-election making it easier for her to deal with any political fallout.

ASG commander reportedly died from wounds suffered during a govt assault on his hide-out on Jolo a day earlier, according to a P military commander.

2/28/03 – Pentagon announces 350 soldiers to join P military on Jolo with another 700 support troops to be based in Zamboanga. To have a combat role. Drawn cries of protest in the P.

Viewed by some as invasion by former colonizer. Pursuit of ASG described by commander Allaga: "We hit them, they scamper away. Like you attack a group of wild pigs, and they scatter in all directions. And then before you know it, they are back in one group again."

In reference to ASG's link to al Qaeda, one P senior official said: "you cannot establish a direct line from point A to point B connecting them. There is a lot of intelligence about a connection

but not real evidence that would stand up to scrutiny.” Massacre of Muslim resistance by American troops during the Spanish American war recalled in article (1906). Known as massacre of Mount Dajo. Deployment of Am troops could actually make the situation worse, some analysts say. Salamat Hashim of MILF said: “We are pushed to the wall. We have to fight back. All who have firearms must fight to the death.”

3/5/03 – A recent surge of violence in southern P. Bomb at an international airport killed at least 21 and wounded 170. P army has recently opened an offensive against the MILF. MILF spokesman denied involvement in attack, but 5 MILF members were arrested. ASG took responsibility. Arroyo: “A brazen act of terrorism that will not go unpunished.”

Bombings in Zamboanga in recent months where US is located.

Explosion in Tagum wounded two people.

A town hall in Cotabato was destroyed by a rocket-propelled grenade. A fuel tank maintained by the govt’s energy dept was attacked too.

Explosions have destroyed electric towers in Mindanao causing blackouts.

Early 2003 - Conflict between government and MILF escalated again, especially in first 6 months. Numerous clashes and a couple of major offensives conducted by the military resulted in approximately 700 casualties.

3/5/03 – Political concerns in Manila last week led Washington to drop a dubious plan to send Americans into battle against ASG. Cooperation is still planned, but details are being worked out.

3/14/03 – Police file charges against 150 suspects for airport bombing, including leaders of MILF. Some suspect that ASG is responsible. Military had rejected ASG claims as grandstanding. Police seem to have lost credibility in their jump to blame MILF. Some senators have contended that the govt might have instigated the bombing to justify the arrival of US troops.

3/26/03 – According to report, communists threaten to form a tactical alliance with Muslim separatists (specifically MILF).

4/25/03 – hundreds of rebels attack two towns killing 12 and taking dozens hostage.

Counterattack by govt involves attack helicopters and armored vehicles. MILF flees.

5/19/03 – Bush and Arroyo meet. Bush affirms commitment to send troops. Says: “She’s tough when it comes to terror. She fully understands that in the face of terror, you’ve got to be strong, not weak. You can’t talk with them; you can’t negotiate with them. You’ve got to bring them to justice.” Details still not worked out. Bush: “We will be involved to the extent that the president invites us to be involved.” In regards to MILF: “That group must abandon the path of violence. If it does so, and addresses its grievances through peaceful negotiations, then the United States will provide diplomatic and financial support to the renewed peace process.”

5/30/03 – Southern P accused of becoming the training center for Al Qaeda’s E Asia affiliate, Jemaah Islamiyah. In an area under control of MILF. Western officials say hundreds of Qaeda recruits trained at Moro camps in the 90s. Moro rebels steadfastly denied any links. Officials admitted their information was sketchy, and they were reluctant to provide details.

American officials say the only solution to the ASG problem is a military one because the group has no real political goal about which to negotiate. That is not the case with MILF, making a negotiated outcome possible. “The economic situation in Mindanao is becoming so bad that the people have nothing to lose by joining the MILF.” The govt has talked about development but never done anything, said one ambassador. The American role, which includes a promise of at least \$30mill in development assistance, has been embraced by the leadership of the rebel group.

American officials says a negotiated settlement would create a less hospital environment for terrorist training camps.

6/6/03 – announcement that joint US-P mission would be postponed for at least 6 months. Needed time to train P in counter terrorism and to break an impasse over rules for the operation that would conform with the P constitution (which does not allow foreign troops to carry out combat missions). US has hired a private polling firm to canvass residents in the Jolo area to gauge their sentiments about a joint military mission. Since last year's exercise, ASG has been badly weakened with many of its leaders killed or captured, Am and P officials said. US has resisted P overtures to join in attacks on MILF.

6/11/03 – 4 arrested in plot to bomb embassies and resorts in Thailand, reportedly members of Jemaah Islamiyah. One reportedly received training at a MILF camp in Mindanao.

7/03 – Government signs ceasefire with MILF ahead of planned talks in Malaysia.

7/19/03 – Ceasefire between MILF and govt took effect today, opening way to resumption of talks to settle issues. Agreement for ceasefire was reached Friday. Arroyo ordered military to halt assaults including the suspension of arrest warrants and corresponding cash bounties for rebel leaders accused of terrorism. Also granted safe passage for rebel negotiators to travel to Kuala Lumpur. Rebel spokesman, Kabalu, said his group was observing the truce. Arroyo said: "I asked our people to give peace a chance. I am confident that we shall also effectively isolate and marginalize the dwindling terrorist cells in Mindanao and across our seas in the region."

Months of sporadic talks in Malaysia were suspended in March after a series of bombings and raids the govt blamed on terrorists in the rebel group. More than 200 killed in attacks this year.

7/03 – Army mutiny in Manila; some 300 soldiers seize a shopping center but surrender peacefully following negotiations. President Arroya declares state of rebellion.

8/5/03 – Salamat Hashim dies of heart attack said Jaafar, a vice chairman of the MILF. Hashim had wanted the US to be part of the talks since fighting was still occurring in Mindanao. Last month the Am ambassador Ricciardone announced USIP would be observer at talks.

10/2/03 – The US is "very, very concerned" about links between Jemaah Islamiyah and MILF said ambassador Ricciardone. Warned that the links could jeopardize millions of dollars in Am aid to Mindanao. Western and P intelligence officials say MILF have provided training grounds for Jemaah Islamiyah (tied to nightclub bombing in Bali). "The US will not provide econ development assistance in areas controlled by the MILF if that organization maintains its ties with outlaws and terrorists."

10/18/03 – Bush in Manila today. Has already announced some \$340 mill in aid this year. In Aug, Gen Abaya, chief of the P armed forces, made an alarming statement about the condition of the military: "I admit there is graft and corruption at all levels." Selling military hardware on the black market. Recent raids of MILF have turned up caches of arms with P military markings. American weapons are finding their way into ASG (M-16s, rifles, grenade launchers, etc). Second half of 2003, relations became less hostile and several attempts to start peace talks were made; several ceasefires were also in place, lasting until most of 2004.

Activity of Abu Sayyaf Group decreased somewhat in 2003, but resulted in more than 100 casualties.

2004

1/5/04 – Communists growing. Military spokesman Lucero said: Communists 'are out utmost security concern at present. We consider them a much bigger threat than the ASG, the MILF, or the Jemaah Islamiyah."

02/04 – Peace talks between government and communist rebel New People’s Army start in Norway, but area called off by the rebels in August.

2/27/04 – Ferry attack by explosive device in TV kills more than 100. Bombing of public ferry by Abu Sayyaf group (over 100 dead). Also clashed several times with government troops.

4/7/04 – Bush adm warns P that it is not doing enough to crack down on terrorists. Report indicates that a new Islamic organization has emerged that claims that Muslims were here before the Spaniards, who brought Christianity, and focuses on converting Christians to Islam, then sending them to terrorist training. Referred to as Rajah Solaiman Movement (RSM). Over a period of months, the US has given P intelligence that should have led to arrests of suspected terrorists, including ASG leader, but the P govt did not act. Eight days later, on Mar 30, P authorities, acting on US intelligence, arrested 6 people suspected of planning attacks in Manila. 180 pounds of TNT seized. Arroyo claims that “another Madrid” has been avoided. Report indicates that ‘an alliance of sorts’ have been formed between JI, ASG, and MILF. Moro leaders continue to deny that they tolerate any camps. The Arroyo adm has been reluctant to move against MILF saying it will disrupt negotiations.

According to P intelligence report, RSM is financed by Saudi Arabia which is channeled through charities in the P. Report said that ASG gave the group \$200K for operational activities.

Within the past year, ASG seems to have returned to religious roots, the officials said. It may have done so after receiving a message from al Qaeda to cease kidnappings because they were bringing too much retaliation from the Am military, an Am official said.

6/04 – Arroyo wins presidential elections.

6/28/04 – US and P will hold joint military exercises in the P in a counterterrorism training program aimed at destroying the Islamic cells of the SE Asian network with links to Al Qaeda, Filipino officials said Monday. Will help weed out 40 operatives of JI. Filipino authorities have arrested several foreigners over the past year suspected of being JI operatives. According to Western and P authorities, JI has been running training campus in territories controlled by MILF. P officials had said the camps had been closed down, but senior W military officials say at least two of these camps are still operating.

6/30/04 – P police arrested 4 people suspected of being JI in Manila. Four had planned to carry out attacks to disrupt inauguration of Arroyo.

8/27/04 – Govt plans to drop murder charges against 185 members of MILF, the largest Muslim separatist group, removing a major barrier to resuming peace talks. A rebel spokesman Kabalu said: move “a positive development.”

Sporadic clashes continued in 2004 and 2005 amidst fresh peace talks.

11 and 12/04 – hundreds killed in floods and mudslides

2005

1/05 – Heavy fighting between troops and MILF rebels breaks the July 2003 ceasefire.

4/05 – Breakthrough on contentious issue of ancestral land achieved at peace talks in Malaysia between government and MILF rebels.

Negotiations continued between MILF and government. Not a lot of progress, but ceasefire largely respected and fighting de-escalated below the 25 bd threshold for the first time since 1995. However, ASG carried out attacks and bombings.

4/21/05 – third day of ‘technical meetings’ in Malaysia between govt and MILF. Said they had reached an agreement on substantive issues over ancestral land. MILF claims a swath of land, but govt wants to open the region to foreign miners.

Govt rep said: 'This is truly a breakthrough.' Joint statement did not give details but said talks were a breakthrough 'toward a just and durable solution to the Mindanao conflict.'

Iqbal, rebels' chief negotiator said: "Since we have been talking peace to the P govt this is the first time we have touched on the substantive agenda of the peace process. I suppose if we can fully harness this issue" then the next issue of finding a negotiated political settlement in the province of Mindanao "would be quite easy for us." "We have had some detailed consensus points. We agreed that we have bridged 60 or 70 % of the issue in the area of ancestral domain." Both sides hope to begin formal peace talks by June with more preliminary meetings to be held in about a month in Malaysia, which has helped broker the negotiations.

6/05 – Influential Cardinal Jaime Sin, who led two peaceful revolts, dies at 76.

7/23/05 – US and P launch joint operations to capture ASG. The MILF is allowing the P Army to operate in the region, since the two sides are now in peace talks, the officials said. More important, a brigade of the group's formidable army is helping to block ASG's possible escape routes. The general added that the Moro group was not aware that Am forces were involved in the military operation, or else they probably would not have participated. Americans were not to participate in combat, but numerous reports that they were. Intelligence for this operation is coming from a P3-Orion surveillance aircraft and from small drones. US has offered a \$5 mill reward for the capture of Janjalani, ASG leader.

7-9/05 – Pres Arroyo is pressured to resign over allegations of vote-rigging. In Sept, she survives and opposition attempt to impeach her.

Nov and Dec 05 – Scores are killed during clashes between troops and Muslim Abu Sayyaf rebels on the southern island of Jolo.

2006

2/06 - More than 1000 people are killed in mudslide on island of Leyte.

2/06 – Arroyo declares a week-long state of emergency after the army says it has foiled a planned coup.

8/1/06 – government launches major offensive against rebels on Jolo. Reported that ASG chieftain Janjalani was killed.

8/06 – Arroyo survives an attempt to impeach her over allegations of corruption, human rights abuses and election fraud.

12/06 – Hundreds are feared dead after Typhoon and mudslides.

2007

1/07 – tests confirm that Janjalani is dead from fighting in 2006.

Conflict in Mindanao flared up again. MILF became active again as a negotiation deadlock between warring parties persisted for the larger part of the year.

1/11/07 – Three bombs within an hour killed at least 6 and wounded 27 amid warnings that Muslim militants may try to disrupt this weekend's Asian regional summit meetings. First explosion in General Santos City with 6 dead. Regional police chief said the police had so suspects but he said the regional militant network of JI and its ally, the local ASG "usually are the ones doing all these explosions in the region." Also looking into the possibility that the blast stemmed from the failure of the kiosk operator to pay winners of a lottery draw (lottery booth). Army spokesman said its possible that people involved were trying to sabotage peace negotiations between govt and MILF.

Second explosion was in Kidapawan and the third at a dump in the city of Cotabato.

2/07 – Government report accuses military figures of being behind the killings of hundreds of mainly left wing activists since 2001.

4/07 – new dyad – 400-strong MNLF faction under Malik declared holy war on the government. ASG showed greater tendency for tactical and logistical cooperation with other armed Moro groups carrying out several attacks with MILF, mainstream MNLF and the Malik faction separately.

4/07 – Military says it is stepping up its offensive against the Islamic militant group, ASG, after the group beheaded seven Christian hostages on the southern island of Jolo.

5/07 – Parliamentary and local elections. More than 120 die in violence in 3 months of campaigning.

7/12/07 – at least 14 P marines killed in fighting with ASG in Tipo-Tipo on Basilan (at least 10 beheaded). Marine spokesman Caculitan said that 50 marines had clashed with more than 300 rebels. “We were totally outnumbered.” Maj. Gen. Mohammad suggested that the beheadings might have been in retaliation for the slaying of the son of one of the rebel group’s leaders. However, MILF said it was their own fighters that had fought with the marines and they had killed 23 of them. But MILF spokesman Majid said they had not beheaded them. It was done by ‘unidentified groups’ after the fighting. Said 4 rebels had been killed and 7 wounded. Marines had been trying to locate priest that had been kidnapped last month in Zamboagna province. Ceasefire is still in effect, but there have been violations. Ceasefire requires both sides to notify each other of movements into area where the other is present. Marines did not do this, said Majid. Iqbal, leader of the MILF’s negotiating panel said “Our troops thought they were under attack. That’s why they fought back. It should not have happened.”

The P govt said that some MILF members had been working with ASG and JI. MILF denies this.

8/07 – 26 soldiers killed in fighting with separatists on Jolo.

9/07 – Ex president Estrada is found guilty of massive corruption and is jailed for life.. then pardoned.

11/07 – Renegade soldiers make a failed coup bid at luxury hotel in Manila after breaking out of court where they were standing trial for a failed 2003 mutiny.

Late 07 – MILF and government meet in Malaysia, jointly stated that all previous points of consensus on the core item of the territorial issue were affirmed, and significant headway in defining key principles relating to maritime domain was achieved.

12/15/07 – talks cancelled as the MILF backed out.

12/15/07 – MNLF and MILF agreed to reconcile by Sept, a pledge that has raised hopes that the insurgency in the south may finally come to an end, officials said. Meeting with Qaddafi’s son, leaders of both said they should be able to resolve differences. Groups differed over the boundaries. Filipino officials, peace advocates and leaders of the OIC have long urged the two to reconcile and make it easier for the govt to deal with the conflict.