

# Our Navy's Patrol Force

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HE topography and the geographical disposition of the Philippine Islands suggest a great mass of rock and soil splattered into pieces of varied sizes on a particular spot in the vast Pacific. The country's shoreline totals 14,700 miles, broken up in large patches of beaches, countless coves, bays of different proportions, each one of which is supposed to be guarded by the Republic's sea-going armed force: the Philippine Navy and, in particular, the Patrol Force.

The Patrol Force was organized on May 12, 1950 as the combat arm of the Philippine Navy. Its primary mission is to train, maintain, and operate naval forces for combat; render naval support needed by the other branches of the Armed Forces; and to perform the Navy's police functions. It is therefore a combination of Navy and Coast Guard with regard to functions.

First headed by then Commander Carlos Albert, the command was turned over to Commander Heracleo Alano when the former became Chief of Naval Staff. On February 3, 1956, Alano in turn was relieved of the position to become Chief of Naval Staff by Captain Juan B. Magluyan. Patrol Force commanders invariably succeed to the position of the Chief of Naval Staff. Magluyan is an oldtimer who started in the Navy's forerunner, the Off-Shore Patrol way back in 1939.

#### Patrol Force Duties

In order to appreciate the immensity of the tasks assigned to the Patrol Force, one has to study the factors within its operational area. The primary mission of any Navy

toms, and Immigration agents. The fact that the activities covered by aforementioned bureaus can take place in any cove and any size of beach brings to light the depth of the PF's duties. Its duty is further compounded by its being called upon frequently to render services whenever natural or artificial calamities befall the people. Thus, its duties cover guarding against invasion, curbing smuggling, suppressing anti-conservation activities like dynamite fishing, apprehending illegal immigrants, and performing humanitarian activities.

#### Equipment and Training

To carry out this variegated duty, the PF has several ships well-suited to the nature of its work,

*Operating parallel to a coastline measuring 14,700 miles, and assigned various missions that include enforcement of customs laws, ill-equipped Patrol Force manages to establish for itself impressive record that merits for it confidence of people and greater financial support*

is, of course, to repulse invaders. This particular mission of our Navy, however, is lightened immeasurably by the presence of United States Naval Forces within our shores and along our seas, and the fact that throughout the archipelago, there are only a limited number of places wherein an invasion force of appreciable size can land. The invasion of the Philippines, therefore—armed, full scale invasion, that is—does not require relatively much equipment and men from the Philippine Navy in order to be guarded against. However, our Patrol Force has also been deputized by Executive Order as Fisheries, Cus-

ranging from small patrol craft to minesweepers and sub-chasers. Manned by adequately trained men, some of these ships are wooden hulled patrol craft whose shallow draft enable them to pursue, if need be, suspicious vessels attempting to escape apprehension by seeking the protection afforded by water too shallow for bigger boats. Nearly all of the ships are equipped with electronic devices like sonar and radar, and each one is armed with weapons of diverse calibers and kinds.

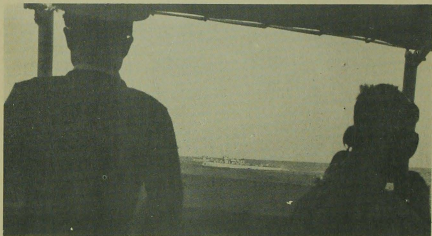
Many of its officers and men, as in other branches of the Armed Forces, have undergone training in the United States. The men of the

Patrol Force undergo constant training to keep them in step with the latest techniques involved in their particular work, and to keep them adept, precise and combat-ready. In addition to what every sailor is supposed to know about his duty, the men are also trained in the use of small arms since they have occasion to go on landing parties. Their overall efficiency was manifested when they recently went on sea-maneuvers

out too well the benefits the country will gain if this lack were remedied.

#### Patrol Force Activities

A case in point is the activity of the PF in the south. Yearly a steady stream of smuggled goods flow into our southern ports from all points in the world usually coursed through nearby Borneo. Cigarettes, rugs, perfume, textile, and jewelry whose worth runs to seven figures



Patrol Force keeps a round-the-clock vigil over the vast Philippine waters. With inadequate personnel and equipment, it does its best to accomplish her numerous missions.

under the watchful eye of both local and foreign experts.

Adequate men and adequate equipment are matters different from each other, however. Hampered by lack of funds, the PF has nevertheless tried to perform the duties assigned to it through the resourcefulness and diligence of her officers and men. That the PF has chalked up the impressive record that she has, with insufficient means, only points

are sneaked via unobtrusive and speedily elusive *kumpits* or via the more common methods of smuggling like concealment among legal goods. The PF has confiscated several millions worth of these articles and turned them over to the regular customs authorities for proper disposition; the culprits captured are turned over to qualified authorities for prosecution.

Throughout the seas, PF vessels,

whenever advisable and possible, chase or stop every suspicious-looking boat. In this way, the PF has caught several foreign fishing craft violating Philippine territorial waters, dynamite fishers, and unlicensed ship-operators. A part of their duty as enforcers of customs laws is to see to it that each vessel has the necessary facilities for its particular cargo; either goods, passengers, or boats. Thus, vessels are inspected for possible overloading, inadequate sanitation, medical

the ferrying of VIPs on inspection trips. The PF, needless to say, was not principally intended for this mission. Its vessels, for the most part, were designed for combat and every inch of space has been planned for that sole purpose. Be that as it may, an inspection of a PF ship would often reveal that it is crammed with cases of food, bales of clothings, artesian wells plus perhaps several refugees from a disaster area. Nevertheless, the PF has seldom, if ever, denied any plea for assistance, mak-



*Personnel of Patrol Force undergo constant training to keep themselves abreast of latest techniques in their work. Local and foreign experts were highly impressed by sea-maneuvers held recently by Patrol Force along the archipelago's shorelines.*

and life-saving facilities.

PF units engaged in enforcing laws may be called to scenes of disaster as is often the case. Whenever relief supplies and men concerned with the disaster need ferrying, the PF is asked to provide the means. In addition, it is also currently engaged in performing the task required of it in connection with the country's reconstruction program. Still another facet of its work is

ing up for inadequate facilities by improvising ways and means.

It also transports armed forces personnel with their equipment, supplies, guns and ammunition. It also assists in Army operations against dissidents by acting as the supply line or by lending direct fire support; helping confine bandits trapped on islands by denying them escape through the sea, and by denying the enemy the chance to reinforce or aid

his ranks by way of the sea. These, coupled with its constant watch against Red infiltration by means of watercraft or submarines, constitute the military aspect of the PF's operations.

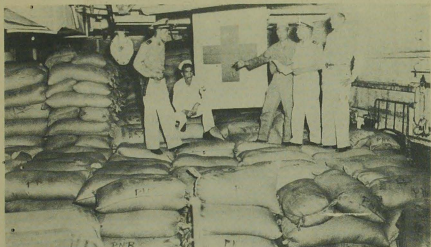
#### Anti-Red Drive

At present the PF is also engaged in critical battle. No gun fire is involved, no noise is heard — but the consequence is serious. It is the constant war against the infiltration of Communist agents.

The Huks, at first glance, seem to have been busted with just minor mopping-ups required to eliminate the menace completely. However, this may be far from the truth. The Huk movement may be likened to an iceberg; the much greater part of an iceberg is below the sea surface; the greater part of the Huk menace is below the surface of observation. The Huks may have shifted their methods but without doubt their intention to subdue the



*Patrol Force units comb the territorial waters of the country, and stop and inspect all suspicious-looking vessels to check illegal activities like smuggling and infiltration by unauthorized aliens to whom the Philippines is open through all compass points.*



*Whenever disaster strikes in any area of the Islands, the Patrol Force is called upon to transport relief goods and refugees. It also ferries farm implements to the rural areas where they are needed as a contribution to RM's rural development program.*

government remains. Their leaders undoubtedly realized that their ranks have been critically depleted, and their morale gravely lowered. Thus, to infuse new blood to the movement, Red agents from foreign countries may have imported themselves here. The Philippines is open to infiltration through all points of the compass: from Red China in the north or Indonesia in the south, not counting the proximity of North Borneo, or the vulnerability of the eastern sea board to submarines from Vladivostok. Red agents may be secreted to the shores, disguised or mingled with the population, or may be picked up by Huk armed guards on designated spots with information, supplies or equipment to strengthen their cause.

To guard against such infiltration, the Navy's Patrol Force is intensely

engaged in forming a figurative defense net around the country. Units of the PF comb the coast, around the clock, ever-alert and ever-watchful of its clever and diabolical adversary.

The task involved in denying entry to infiltrators is, by itself, immense enough, considering the equipment which the PF has to work and the limited number of personnel which is below table of organization requirements for all its units due to perennial budget restrictions. Its efficiency however, belies the inadequacy of its tools, and it is a tribute to the personnel of the Patrol Force that this is so.

In its six years of existence, the Patrol Force has strung up a record of achievements which it, and the people it serves, can very well be proud of.