

ROLF HANISCH: *Der Staat, ländliche Armutgruppen und legale Bauernbewegungen in den Philippinen. (Darstellungen zur internationalen Politik und Entwicklungspolitik, 6).* Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlagsgesellschaft, 1983. 432 pp., DM 78. -

This major work on Philippine rural conditions is divided into three main parts. Part I (p. 27-124) delineates the general framework of the political, social and socio-economic conditions in the rural Philippines. The author's main emphasis here is the role of the state and its political organization/organizational structure. The other part of this chapter deals with the situation of the Philippine lower rural classes. This part draws, however, largely on sources which the author has published previously. Anybody familiar with the pitiful state of Philippine statistics in general and agricultural statistics in particular will read this part with quite some profit. The economic conditions, productivity, markets and marketing are well portrayed (p. 76-116). Hanisch's main thesis here is the gradual proletarianization of the rural population.

The legal peasant movement is described and analysed in part II which is mainly devoted to three peasant organizations, namely Federation of Free Farmers (FFF); the Filipino Agrarian Reform Movement/Federation of Land Reform Farmers (FARM/FLRF) and the Federation of Agricultural Industrial Toiling Hands/Hukbalahap Veterans (FAITH/HukVets). To a lesser degree the following organizations are included: Malayang Samahang Magsasaka (MASAKA) and Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Association (ARBA). Among the three mentioned farmer organizations the FFF has been allotted by far the greatest coverage. This federation is taken as an example in the theoretically oriented parts of this work as well. One is tempted to judge the work as predominantly an analysis of the FFF which has been compared with some other farmer organizations. This also reflects the methodological approach of the author who relies almost entirely on the availability and accessibility of written material in English. On the other hand, it partly reflects the importance of the FFF on a national scale. Furthermore, the FFF as the most bureaucratically organized among the three organizations mentioned, can provide the researcher with the biggest stock of data.

This study may well be the first account of the internal structure of the Philippine peasant movements. There is much data to be found about the nitty-gritty of administration of these organizations, but most important for the Filipino nation is the demystification of Mr. MacFabian as a farmer leader without farmers (FARM/FLRF) (p. 177).

Part III "The Emancipation-Potential", deals with two principle questions. Firstly, "Emancipation through Services and Organization of Self-Help?" (p. 235-264) and secondly, "Emancipation through Political Actions?" (p. 265-285). The first question is answered by the author through a few examples of legal aid, provided by FAITH (p. 236-238) and by FFF (p. 238-245), as well as back-up assistance in the maze of Philippine administration.

The other part of this question is then answered, virtually entirely, by taking a close look at the Free Farmers' Cooperative, Inc. (FFCI); the FFF's largely foreign funded "Relief and Rehabilitation Programme" for flood victims in Luzon and drought victims in Mindanao (1972-1974). As a case study, a socio-economic analysis is made of several FFFC's, especially the branch in Davao, Mindanao.

The second question which attempts to shed light on the problem of the emancipation of Filipino farmers is pursued in the so-called "political sphere". The activities of the three mentioned organizations are described. Hanisch separates the period before the declaration of Martial Law (1972) and during the Martial Law administration. Here, Jerry Montemayor (FFF) and Ka Luis Taruc (HukVets) play an ever prominent role, especially as members of the Interim Batasan Pambansa. MacFabian's activities in mass actions (however abortive) are described, together with various demonstrations and strikes of the other mentioned farmer organizations. Hanisch clearly shows the ambiguity of these three farmer leaders and, again, leaves no doubt about the predominantly personal interests of MacFabian. The author shows great skill in portraying the two fascinating political figures J. Montemayor and Ka Luis Taruc throughout the study. Martial Law has crushed whatever initial momentum these movements originally had by utterly destroying their very base of power.

The concluding chapter, "Achievements, Perspectives, and Alternatives of the Legal Peasant Movements in the Philippines" (p. 287-320) provides the author's attempt to assess the impact of these movements for the Philippine nation as a whole by comparing them with movements in other countries and other continents (p. 293-295) and by a sketch "On the Theory of Peasant Mobilization" (p. 296-300). In "Perspectives of the Legal Peasant Movements in the Philippines" he concludes that in spite of some influence they might have had before the Martial Law period, the impact tends to be zero as far as establishing a just agricultural society and emancipating the rural population is concerned. Their function during Martial Law was to stabilize the very system which is the cause (according to Hanisch) of the miserable plight of the rural people. He (broadly) sees the future developments of these organizations (read FFF) in their becoming trapped in the dead end of a rural service organization and not as a transitional phase for the emancipation of peasants and landless workers in other agriculturally productive sectors of Philippine rural society (p. 301-303).

Hanisch ends his work with a highly personal account of the New People's Army (NPA), the active anti-government guerilla as an example of an illegal organization. Finally, the German reader's responsibility is appealed to in a critical summary of politics of development aid with special reference to "self-help" organizations.

An appendix contains 96 tables (p. 323-405), an impressive bibliography (p. 407-422) as well as a list of abbreviations and a useful index.

Two major points of criticism should be mentioned here. The book

omits theoretical discussion of the two central concepts of the book: "Emancipation" and "Legal/Lawful". It seems to be understood that the former is the object of the latter. But what is emancipation? Reading between the lines I conclude that it is something like: the authority and power of rural people to determine their own fate through their institutions together with the general absence of domination. Let us also assume that this is a somewhat utopian goal, and that for the present, exploitation and domination is a better way to describe Philippine society (here I agree with Hanisch). Again, in what relationship can one place a legally operating organization when the aim of emancipation is to change the entire social structure? It is not only contradictory for any legally operating organization; furthermore, it is and has never been part of the ideology of these peasant organizations. In addition, it makes the concept of "legal organizations" a relative concept, since the borderline between lawful and illegal depends during a dictatorship on a stroke of the pen of the president, during normal times on the majority of a parliament. This would have given the author ample opportunity to reflect on the role of the state as promised in the title. The so-called Leyte incident (p. 221-223) in the FFF showed that this conflict between "state/emancipation/legal organization" nearly led to a split of the FFF. Hanisch, however, devotes little space to the rebels' views.

The second major objection is levelled at the empirical basis of the data. It is a book entirely based on assessment of farmers by others, mainly the farmers' leaders. Inasmuch as the leader's opinion does correspond with reality, the views of the farmers are missing. This makes the analysis somewhat unbalanced as it presents mainly the thinking of farmer functionaries.

Last not least: it requires considerable effort to follow the author's language, even for a German.

All in all: this is a big and important book. It has assembled the most impressive collection of data on agricultural economics and social conditions in the rural Philippines in the German language. Furthermore, the author concerns himself with problems extremely important for the Philippines and the general discussion on rural social organizations. For these reasons, this work will serve for many a year as reference and source book.

Frank Hirtz