The subject of this dissertation is the food problem in the Philippines during the Japanese occupation, 1942-1945. In particular, this work focuses on the rice shortage, plans taken to counteract the shortage, and failure of these plans.

There have been many academic researches on the Japanese occupation of the Philippines, but most of these have focused on political, cultural or military aspects. Hardly any attention has thus far been paid to the economic aspects of the occupation. In particular, there has been no detailed examination of the rice problem in the Philippines. Rice is the main staple food in most of the country, and thus a shortage would, as in Japan, threaten the stability of the country as a whole. Since the rice shortage during the Japanese occupation grew so acute, it had a lasting
impression on persons who experienced the occupation, and was a significant factor in developing anti-Japanese and anti-administration sentiments among the people. On the other hand, parts of the plans made during the occupation were used just after the war in an attempt to recover from the ravages of war and to attain self-sufficiency. Because of the fact that there have been no in-depth researches on this important subject, I have chosen to write on this topic.

This dissertation thus presents for the first time, a detailed examination of the causes of the rice shortage in the Philippines, attempts by the Japanese Military Administration and the Filipino government to deal with the shortage, and the reasons for the failure of these plans. It also examines the Filipino people's reaction to the increasingly severe food shortage.

Since food problems inevitably result from war, similarities with other countries' experiences can be expected. However the Philippine case has several unique points. Among these are the following: 1) a pre-war lack of self-sufficiency which prompted planning for increased production; 2) existence of an experienced Filipino bureaucracy and rice control organization since before the Japanese occupation; 3) two phases in administration during the occupation years - the Japanese Military Administration first, and then the a theoretically independent Filipino republic - which resulted in various production and distribution plans, within conflicting goals.
The rice problem is examined from production to distribution to consumers. Thus, the term food administration, as used in this dissertation, includes production, milling, procurement from farmers, transport and distribution, rationing and price control of rice. Factors which aided or hindered any of these stages - such as incentives, guerrilla activities and the like - are examined in determining the success or failure of these plans.

The sources used for this dissertation are many and varied, the result of over ten years of research in three countries. As much as possible, primary sources have been used, which include official reports, minutes of meetings, orders and diaries, private memoranda and letters written by Filipinos, Japanese and Americans, in English, Japanese and Tagalog. Wherever possible, I have sought to confirm incidents with other sources, including newspapers, journals and periodical articles of that period. To supplement the administration sources, I have also used Filipino and American guerrilla reports and documents. I have also interviewed several persons - Filipinos, Japanese, and other nationalities - who either helped plan the rice measures or were affected by them.

In examining the subject, the pre-war rice situation and corresponding plans are examined first, to place the Japanese occupation period in perspective. The occupation period proper has been divided into four phases: 1) the initial phase of the Japanese Military Administration; 2) the latter phase of the Japanese Military Administration; 3) the initial phase of the
occupation period Philippine Republic and 4) the latter phase of the republic. The main characteristics of each period are discussed below. Within each period, the overall situation is reviewed, followed by the various food production, distribution and price control plans and their execution. After this, the Filipino response and reaction to the plans and the overall conditions is examined. In order to further situate the occupation period policies and their effects on Philippine planning, the dissertation ends with rice and food policies right after the war, allowing a comparison of the Japanese plans with post-war U.S. and Filipino plans.

Chapter I deals with the general state of the Philippine economy and food conditions before the Second World War, until the outbreak of war. As a result of Spanish and American colonial policies, the Philippine economy was an agricultural export-oriented economy. As a result of this, the Philippines was not self sufficient in rice, and had to import it from neighboring Southeast Asian countries. In addition to this, poor cultivation methods, agrarian problems resulting from a feudal land system and foreign control of rice mills and the retail trade contributed to a potentially destabilizing force in the country. As preparation for independence, which the Americans promised to grant in 1946, a semi-autonomous government was established, which sought to strengthen and vitalize the Philippine economy, particularly the rice industry. Towards this end, the National Rice and Corn Corporation (Naric) was established. The outbreak of war in Europe in 1939 and the imminence of war in Asia and the
Pacific made necessary the drafting of plans towards self-sufficiency in food and rice production, as well as towards control of distribution and prices. Due to the prevailing peace-time mood, however, these plans did not proceed quickly, and when the Pacific War broke out, most of them collapsed.

The second chapter deals with the establishment of the Japanese Military Administration and the execution of its rice plans during the first phase, from January to May 1942. During this period, American and Filipino forces waged a protracted defense campaign, and Japanese control over the whole Philippines had not yet been established. The main aim of Japanese plans at this time was to reinstate a sense of normalcy in the occupied areas, as well as providing for the needs of Japanese military forces. This involved the resumption of rice sales in Manila and other cities; limiting the amounts individuals could buy in order to conserve the limited stocks; setting up a price control system; strengthening Naric; and resuming rice harvests which had been disrupted by the war. All these, however, faced skepticism from the general public, who did not consider the occupation to last long. Furthermore, the continued fighting made travel to the provinces and farms dangerous, due to unsettled peace and order conditions; transportation was also disrupted.

Chapter III covers the period from the surrender of the U.S.-Philippine defense forces to the Japanese declaration of Philippine independence in October 1943. During this period, the Japanese Military Administration attempted to establish a controlled economy in the Philippines, patterned after methods
employed in Japan, Taiwan and Korea. This included food production campaigns; introduction of Horai rice from Taiwan and fertilizers from Japan; development of irrigation systems; the institution of rationing through neighborhood associations; establishment of producers', distributors' and retailers' associations; and the general reorientation of the Philippine economy towards food and strategic war material production. Although these plans were intended to stabilize supply and distribution of rice, most of the Filipino people were unenthusiastic, considering the Japanese brutal invaders and those Filipinos in the administration as their puppets.

Because of this lack of Filipino cooperation, as well as an increasingly aggressive guerrilla resistance movement, the Japanese attempted to win Filipino loyalty by offering to grant the long cherished Filipino desire of independence. Chapter IV discusses the initial period of the theoretically independent Philippine Republic under President Jose P. Laurel. The Laurel administration tried to enforce rice distribution measures which would benefit the Filipino population, and launched renewed food production drives. However, continued Japanese control of transportation, fuel, distribution associations and facilities, as well as a disastrous typhoon and flood, and lack of authority in the provinces prevented the Laurel government's plans from being successful. As a result, most Filipinos were gradually forced to rely on their own means to procure rice to survive.

The latter phase of the Philippine Republic, from May to
December 1944, is discussed in Chapter V. This period was characterized by a growing deterioration in production, supply and distribution. The Japanese decision to make the Philippine the site of the next decisive battle, and the resultant increase in Japanese troops in Philippine soil, added pressure on the Laurel government and reduced its authority. In an attempt to break the surging rise in prices, the government attempted enforced buying, impassioned appeals to rice producers and higher buying prices of rice, but none of these actions could cope with the increasingly severe rice shortage and the competition with Japanese buyers and the black market. In the end, government rice policies collapsed and the government was virtually forced to work out joint procurement of rice with the Japanese, which in actuality meant Japanese take over of rice procurement and supply. This made conditions in Manila and other cities worse, because priority was given to supplying the Japanese military, and by the end of 1944, deaths by starvation began to increase to serious proportions.

Before starvation could wipe out Manila's population, the Americans returned. In the ensuing fighting much of Manila was destroyed, but the Americans quickly instituted relief measures and began to rehabilitate the rice industry. With the return of the Commonwealth government, Filipino administration took over relief and rehabilitation work. The Philippines became independent in July 1946. Its president, Manuel Roxas, had served as one of the economic planners under Laurel, and his initial plans to resolve the post-war food crisis were to launch food
production drives similar to the occupation period campaigns. Certain other methods to increase production, which had been introduced during the occupation, were also utilized.

Several of the plans to increase production during the Japanese occupation were sound, and some of them were put into practice after the war. Other distribution and control plans instituted by the Japanese, however, were too radical and did not enjoy support by the Filipinos, especially when they did not live up to their promises. Without the loyalty of the Filipinos, attempts by the Japanese Military Administration did not meet with success. The Laurel administration was not able to win the people's loyalty either, thus also providing one factor to the failure of the Laurel plans. Japanese control of transportation and economic associations hindered the Laurel government in executing its plans; without the support of the people, the plans collapsed. After the war, with greater public support, food production and distribution plans succeeded, although price control efforts still met with marginal success.

These lessons have contemporary significance in improving the rice industry in the Philippines, and in developing a stronger and more independent Philippine economy.