LIFE UNDER MARTIAL LAW

The Filipino Experience

Summary of a National Survey

Foreword

The original title of this document was "Summary of National Survey of Major Religious Superiors." Its front page was marked "For Private Circulation." A copy was provided President Ferdinand Marcos. When excerpts from it were quoted in reports published in Philippine periodicals circulated in the U.S. and in the foreign press, this summary has become one of the most sought after material by those deeply interested in Philippine events.

After more than one year of martial law, there have been conflicting and confusing reports about changes -- for the worse or for the better -- about the Philippines. The survey was an attempt to obtain information for a clear and accurate picture. In the introduction to this summary, the methods used to gather the data are explained. One notes that much effort went to obtain only credible and valid results.

There has yet to emerge a study ofthe Philippine situation to match the scope and the honesty of this survey. Given the restrictions under martial law that makes a task of this nature difficult to undertake, the survey is all the more a courageous achievement and a testimony to a true concern for the Filipino people.

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INTRODUCTION

What is the role of the Church under the situation of martial law in the Philippines?

This was the question asked by the Major Religious Superiors at a meeting held in September 1973. To answer it, they realized they needed a clear and accurate picture of the situation as it actually existed in various parts of the country. Accordingly, they commissioned a team to take charge of the survey and gather the necessary information.

To undertake a normal survey drawing on a random sample of the population as to respondents to comment on government related developments in their area was clearly unfeasible. For while events deemed beneficial would presumably be expressed by the respondents, they might, on the other hand, feel apprehensive about expressing problems and difficulties they perceived as related to government policy and action. Moreover, the permits for fieldwork from the Philippine Constabulary specifically state that researchers are advised "to avoid discussion of political and ideological issues especially those that tend to incite or inflame the sentiments of the people against the duly constituted authorities because these are strictly prohibited." Although the interviewers had no intention of inciting or inflaming anyone, they did want to obtain people's views on political and ideological issues arising out of local events. Instead of a random sample, therefore, they decided to interview key informants in each region of the Philippines, persons generally recognized as knowledgeable about the area and fairly close to the ordinary *tao* or grassroots sector of the populace to have a feel of how present events were affecting him.

Some 154 persons were interviewed at length all over the country in October 1973. Occupationally, there were 14 bishops, 59 priests, 22 sisters, 3 brothers, 56 laymen and laywomen. The average age was 38.2 years.

Doing the interviewing were some 13 college educated researchers, most of whom came from the area in which they were doing the interviewing and spoke the local language. Starting out with a basic list of key informants, they expanded this through referrals suggested by their respondents. They used a standard interview guide or schedule (see Appendix), and these schedules with the recorded answers were returned to Manila in November for the analysis and write up. Analyses were first prepared for each of the eleven regions of the country. This report is a summary of these analyses.

How accurate are the findings? Do they represent the situation in the country objectively?

To answer these questions one would have to assess the credibility of both the respondents and the interviewers. The research planners took certain measures to ensure high credibility through the careful training of interviewers, by devising a valid research instrument, and establishing the trust of the respondents. Interviewers were taught how to ask questions in an objective manner without leading the respondents into a biased reply. Throughout the training program, it was stressed that whatever the feelings of the interviewers to martial law might be, they must, in justice to the desired accuracy of the survey, ignore their personal viewpoints and record their findings objectively. The interviewers later reported that they had made every attempt to comply with this injunction.

The study was explained as an attempt by church figures to understand the local situation as seen by knowledgeable local residents and without the filters maintained by the mass media. The emphasis in the discussion was to be placed on facts; hearsay or rumors were to be clearly identified as such. Moreover, the respondent was given the option of commenting only on those areas in which he felt he had some genuine expertise and where he could generalize on local views. He was assured of anonymity and his name did not appear on the reply sheets.

The survey, then represents the views of knowledgeable informants attuned to the interests of the ordinary man. While the incidents described may not be characteristis of every region of the country they do indicate important trends which need to be seriously assessed, especially if these trends begin to affect an increasingly larger proportion of the population.

LAND REFORM - FARM PRODUCTION FARMERS' ORGANIZATIONS

Land Reform

Survey data indicate that there is not much land reform in most provinces of the country. Various reasons are cited. Many landholdings in a good number of provinces are small and land reform is not applicable. (As of early November, small landholdings are now redefined as 24 hectares or less. If the landowner tills his own land or is absent from his property due to circumstances beyond his control, he is not subject to land reform. In effect this means that about 80% of tenant farmers are not covered by Land Reform legislation.) In many areas land is planted to crops other than rice and corn. Landowners throughout the country resist the implementation of the land reform program. There have been numerous accounts of harassments and threats, outright evictions of tenants in many forms, conversions of rice and corn lands to other crops, subdivisions or fishponds occur throughout all 11 regions of the country. Subdividing land among heirs and changing the status of tenants to agricultural workers is also fairly common. Politicians and government officials are generally not in favor of land reform. In some areas they are the main obstacles to the implementation of the land reform program.

The attitudes of farmers are also reported as obstacles to the implementation of land reform. They are often ignorant of the land reform program, afraid of repercussions, suspicious of government personnel, resigned to their fate, and preferring the old paternalistic system. Even where farmers are conscious of their right they are weak and without a strong voice.

Personnel of the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) are as much praised as criticized. In some areas they are serious about their work. In others they are passive, waiting in their offices for orders and moving slowly in determining the value of land. They are rarely accused of siding openly with the landlords. But they are accused of tolerating the abuses of the latter and giving into political pressure. They are very often blamed for making amicable settlements between landlords and tenants, disadvantageous to the tenants. Often the legal council of the DAR is corrupt. Many DAR personnel lack competence. In a number of areas there is little cooperation between personnel of the Department of Agrarian Reform and the Department of Local Government and Community Development.

There is no reports of politicians cooperating fully with the land reform program. Often they clearly work against it. The P.C. and local police side with the landlords in a number of regions as do the courts.

According to a report of the Department of Agrarian Reform, 141, 744 certificates of land transfer have been issued to 99,799 tenant farmers in 49 provinces. This means that about 10% of the one million plus tenants for the nation as a whole have been covered by land reform to date. Land transfer certificates issued have been heavily concentrated on Luzon (over 25,000 in Nueva Ecija alone) where the tenancy rate is double that for the country as a whole. According to the DAR report land reform is practically non-existent in Mindanao and Sulu and very limited in the Visayas.

From the DAR report and the survey' data, it would seem that even in provinces where land reform is moving ahead, it is rather localized. Some areas are covered but little or nothing is being done in other areas. With the redefinition of small landholdings, it is expected that at most 20% of all tenants will be covered by land reform.

Land transfer certificates of themselves mean little. In Cebu share-tenancy remains in effect despite the issuance of LTC's. They lacked credit for production because of amortization payments on the land.

Farm Production and Infrastructure

A bumper harvest is anticipated in most regions of the country. There are exceptions. In some provinces the harvest will be about the same. In others it will decrease. In South and Southwestern Mindanao, the decrease is attributed to the peace and order situation. In Northern Luzon, recent typhoons have affected harvest. In Negros, Iloilo and a number of the provinces of Mindanao, rice and corn production have gone down due to the widespread conversion of land to export crops such as sugar, bananas, abaca, and copra.

Some credit is available in most regions. In a few provinces, credit is readily available. In most the availability of credit is low. There are numerous complaints that credit is given only to the wealthy. Poor farmers must still rely on traditional sources of credit at high rates of interest.

Technical assistance is available to farmers in many provinces. Even when available, however, the number of farmers benefiting from such assistance is very small.

Fertilizers and improved seeds are plentiful in some areas. In most provinces, however, they are in short supply. Where available, they are often restricted to those benefiting from Masagana 99 or to members of the Samahang Nayon.

Irrigation, though promised in some areas, has not improved. Roads, especially feeder roads, are generally in poor condition.

Middlemen are still in firm control of marketing. They, much more than the farmers, have benefited from increases in production. There are hardly any marketing cooperatives.

Though production has increased, Masagana 99 results are not as good as anticipated. The rice shortage will not be solved in the forseeable future despite government predictions. In September 1973, the available rice supply from all sources was 148,114 metric tons or 2,834,429 cavans. This was 52,977 metric tons or 745,190 cavans less than the available supply at the end of August. October's supply was also short of the average monthly requirement. A bumper crop cannot be attributed to Masagana 99. The program itself fell short by 100,000 hectares of the total area planned for cultivation and planting to high yield varieties. In addition, the crop in Mindanao has been infested by locusts, in Laguna by leaf hoppers. Lack of irrigation has set back planting and reduced chanced of better harvests in Central and Northern Luzon. Farmers are cynical about the Masagana 99 and high yield variety seeds.

The good harvests seem due more to favorable weather conditions prevailing after the droughts in Mindanao and floods on Luzon. Farmers who would normally have staggered their crops, planted at the same time. So, despite a bumper harvest, actual production increases may be more apparent than real.

Farmer Organizations

The Federation of Free Farmers can no longer function normally. Permits for meetings and seminars are generally not granted. If granted only approved topics can be discussed and government personnel must be present. Many FFF leaders have spent time in the stockade. In many provinces, due to restrictions

placed on it, the FFF is either inactive or dead. In provinces where it continues to function, membership has declined sharply and activity is minimal. The split in the national leadership has aggravated the problems of the FFF and virtually destroyed it in many areas.

In some provinces the FFF cooperates with government programs, especially the Samahang Nayon. In other places former FFF members work in government programs. Some FFF members have also joined underground movements. Others are in sympathy with the underground.

The Samahang Mayon has been recently organized in most regions. Though, in principle, membership is voluntary, as a rule farmers have been pressed to join. The general feeling is that the Samahang Mayon will not succeed. Its educational program is weak Its leadership is poorly trained. It is imposed from above. The result is many join out of fear. Others, who join, are indifferent. Farmers resent the high membership fees and the schedule of forced savings.

Though private cooperatives still operate in most areas, they are not encouraged. New cooperatives are no longer allowed to start. Existing cooperatives must re-register. Weak cooperatives cannot comply with the new requirements. They are worried. Strong cooperatives are more confident. But, they too fear the government will take them over in one way or another.

LABOR, UNEMPLOYMENT AND WORKING CONDITIONS

Economic Conditions of the Workers

Many cases of non-compliance with the minimum wage law are reported from all over the country. The workers most affected are those in stevedoring, logging, sugar, tobacco, cottage industries and salesgirls. Many stevedores receive only P3 a day. In logging, workers are sometimes not paid for from 4 to 8 months. Male sugar workers in Negros receive as low as P1.50 a day; women P1.00 and children P0.75. Padded payrolls are very common. Few hacienderos admit to employing women and children. Eighty percent of the haciendas in Negros do not pay the minimum wage of P7 - P8 a day during the offseason. Seventy percent do not pay the minimum wage during the milling season. Wages in the haciendas of Negros vary from a rate of P2.50 to P7.50 per day. Tobacco workers in Isabela and La Union receive as low as P2.00 and P3.00 per day. In the cottage industries of Albay wages vary from P0.90 to P2.80 a day. Salesgirls in Iloilo sign that they receive P6.00 a day but receive only P3.00.

Among logging, sugar and tobacco workers the *cantina* system is in operation. *Cantinas* on the average charge thirty percent more per item than do ordinary stores. Laborers generally must buy from the *cantinas*.

Social Security benefits, though often deducted from the workers' salaries, are not paid. In many places workers find difficulty in receiving medical treatment under medicare because hospitals have to wait so long to have their bills paid.

Unemployment

Almost every region of the country reports heavy lay-offs of government personnel. In the private sector, the mass media, steel and metals, textiles, footware and utility firms are the hardest hit. Lay-offs are due to shut-downs, lockouts, rotation and retrenchment of firms, *especially those owned by vocal critics of the present administration.*

In Misamis about 1,000 workers were laid off in coconut processing plants. In Zamboanga del Norte, 200 workers were laid off in one industry in Dipolog. In Negros Occidental over 300 hacienda workers have either been locked out or dismissed for union activity.

Many reasons have been given for the unemployment problem. In Mindanao the refugee problem was cited. The shortages of building materials and fuel have affected the construction industry. Lack of funds or misuse of funds has affected infrastructure projects. Power failures have disrupted business. In some areas workers are being replaced by new machinery. The requirement of clearances by the mayor and the P.C. for domestic workers in Isabela has led to unemployment. The closing down of schools and declining enrollments in many schools have left many teachers unemployed. In Davao City, two-thirds of the 1973 graduating teachers have been unable to find teaching positions. Eviction of tenants due to the conversion of lands to other uses has left many jobless.

Shutdowns - Terminations

Presidential Decree No. 21 requires employers, intending to shut down or terminate workers with or without cause after one year of employment, to file a clearance with the Department of Labor. To date no request for clearance has been rejected by the Secretary of Labor and no workers have been reinstated. There is a silent agreement between employers and the Department of Labor that, if no clearance is received within five days, workers may be dismissed. Storeowners in Cebu are reported to have received clearances for closing down their stores and dismissing their employees. They immediately opened new stores in other locations. This was in direct violation of the law which states that closures can only be effected "without prejudice to the workers' rights." But workers' rights are only determined, if at all; after they have lost their jobs.

Since martial law to avoid payment of the minimum wage casuals are gradually replacing regular factory workers and a quota system is being imposed. A coconut processing firm in Mindanao, recently fired workers, for reasons of disability, because they were unable to shell 1,000 coconuts in eight hours. Most of the dismissed workers had been with the company for from ten to twenty years.

Decree 121 provides for a change from the present cabo type unions among stevedores and pier workers to cooperative type unions. One such change was reported in Camarines Sur with good results. In Catanduanes, however, a cooperative type union registered with the CAO, was organized by the businessmen themselves and functions as a cabo type union. In a cabo type union in Mindanao, half of the wages of the workers are divided between the cabo and the union president. At a tri-partite conference in Bacolod, presided over by the Secretary of Labor, "pakyaw" rates for the sacadas were decided. To reach the legal minimum wage of P7.00 a day, a sacada would have to cut three tons of sugarcane which is almost impossible. A well known labor leader in Negors, who heads a series of company unions in the haciendas and centrals, proposed an even lower rate than the planters themselves. The "pakyaw" system, based on extremely low rates, is becoming very common throughout Negros as a way of avoiding payment of the minimum wage. In the past few months 2,000 affidavits have been collected from sacadas. They show that after six months of work, their take home pay varies from between P300 to P600.

Attitude of Management and the Military

In many companies the attitude of management has noticeably changed. Collective bargaining agreements are no longer binding. In a national communications firm, the 1972 Christmas bonus and wage increase provisions totalling more than one million pesos were not implemented. In a Manila department store, owned by a Taiwanese, the officers of the union were dismissed. Job security and grievance machinery provisions were completely ignored. In a mining firm, management has refused for one year to sign a collective bargaining

agreement with a duly certified union. Because the military refused to recognize a militant public utility union, most of the officers and more than one thousand union members were dismissed as undesirable. The CIR was also ordered by the military to dismiss all cases filed by this union before martial law.

Throughout the country, unions feel their weakness because of the no strike law. Management, usually with the help of the military, takes advantage of this.

In the haciendas of the Visayas and Mindanao company unions are growing. Independent unions are harassed. Known union members are threatened with loss of rice rations and of benefits. they are evicted, locked out, at times beaten and even jailed.

The military protects loggers in Mindanao; pressures workers to sign unjust compromise agreements in Cebu; arrests union leaders in Negros and Antique and forces the acceptance of absurd settlements on workers such as the payment of a P3.00 differential payment to hacienda workers over a three year period. In Northern Luzon the military have either curtailed or stopped union activities in some mining companies. They require official permits for meetings and seminars. So many questions are asked, that workers no longer seek permits. If they meet at all, they do so secretly.

Labor leaders in a sugar central in Central Luzon, a phone company in Manila, a fishing empire in Navotas, Rizal, a first class luxury hotel in Manila and a cigar factory in Paranaque, Rizal, are all known to have been either harassed or detained by the military on false charges.

The military also plant CIS operatives in factories to spy on union activity.

The Department of Labor and the National Labor Relations Commission (N.L.R.C.)

A Department of Labor circular issued on September 1973 ordered compulsory contributions, through salary deductions from all government employees, for projects endorsed by the President or First Lady.

The NLRC has done little for workers to date. In some regions of the country it is inactive. In others, workers are unaware of its existence.

Union leaders claim there are many more grievances now than before martial law. This is due to the suppression of legitimate trade union organizations and increased exploitation of workers by management.

Cases of workers before the NLRC have been conveniently lost. When workers are lucky enough to win an arbitration case, the appeals and motions for reconsideration which follow often prevent any settlement from ever taking place. Appeals by management are often decided against workers.

Three hundred arrastre security workers were dismissed by the operators, Guacods and Razo. They won reinstatement with full back wages. When the case was reviewed by the NLRC, the back wages amounting to more than P100,000 suddenly disappeared. Up to the present less than 10% of the workers have been reinstated.

A large firm with branches throughout the Philippines admitted violating several provisions of the CBA. The union won an arbitration decision ordering the company to comply with the provisions of the CBA. The union officers went to Malacanang for assistance in having the CBA implemented. A high ranking Malcaflang official agreed to assist the workers on condition that he receive 10% of the total claim which amounted to more than a million pesos. He did expedite the release of the order to implement the CBA. Management refused to comply with the order. The workers up to the present have not received one centavo of their claim. The Malacanang official did receive the P100,00. He demanded it be deposited by the union before expediting the claim.

The NLRC cannot implement its decisions. Even when decisions are favorable to the unions, workers are generally forced to compromise with management for considerably less than the original claim. A thousand workers of Yupangco Textiles in Rizal each won more than P1,000 in underpay differential, overtime pay, holiday pay and other benefits through NLRC. Management refused to comply with the decision. The workers were forced to accept P55.00 per worker or less than 5% of the original demand. From April 1 – October 30, 1973, Medicare has paid out less than 10% of its total collections of P63.84 million to workers in Medical benefits.

There are many complaints of corruption in the Department of Labor. An Under-Secretary in the Department of Labor stated that of the 7,000 employees in the Department, only about 15 were honest. Appointments within the Department, to the CIR and NLRC still seem to be a matter of politics.

Job Opportunities

New job opportunities at present *are more promise than fulfillment.* There are prospects if oil or new mineral deposits are discovered. Cottage industries are seen by some as a solution to the unemployment problem but they are declining at present. Some are losing their markets. Entrepreneurs are reluctant to open up new ventures. The situation is too undertain. The Meralco-Lopez incident is cited as an indication of why business is insecure.

The labor picture can be summed up briefly. There is no equal protection of law at present. The law is enforced only on and against labor. Management flagrantly violates the law. Sometimes these violations are open. Sometimes devious methods are used to subvert the law. The military, the courts and the Department of Labor connive with management in violating the law. The objectives set for labor under the New Society are not being achieved.

POLITICAL SITUATION - PEACE AND ORDER

Political Situation

Seventy-five percent of all respondents feel the political situation throughout the country is worse now than it was before martial law. Though the military are in power, actual office holders such as governors, mayors, etc. are, with few exceptions, the pre-martial law politicians. Instead of controlling the abuses of local politicians, the military in most of the eleven regions of the country are seen as party to the abuses. There is a marriage of convenience from which both military and politicians profit. The ordinary people are the ones who suffer. There is no one to defend their rights. No one to whom they can appeal their grievances. They are intimidated, fearful. They have no recourse from either the abuses of the military or the politicians and abuses are common. There is a general feeling that all important decisions are made in Manila; that the barangays merely echo these decisions. People are afraid to express their real opinions except in private and to trusted friends. They do not participate in decision making.

Referendum and Plebiscite

In every region of the country, harassment and intimidation were common in both the referendum and blesbiscite. Numerous examples of tactics used were given in the interviews. People were not free to vote their minds. They knew this and resented the manipulation.

Crime

The interviews did not give a clear picture of the overall crime rate for the country at present. In each of the regions, some felt it was increasing, others that it was decreasing and still others

that it was about the same. News censorship was cited by many as the reason why it is difficult to form an accurate estimate of the crime rate. It is hard to know what is happening outside of one's immediate area. However, there is fairly general agreement on the following points:

1. Crime still exists even violent crime. Crimes against persons, however, such as housebreaking, petty thievery, robbery have generally declined.
2. For a period immediately after the declaration of martial law, crime decreased but it is increasing again. (Recent statements in the press and accounts of arrests for backsliding tend to confirm this.)
3. Graft and corruption still exist though practiced more subtly than before martial law. As one respondent put it, "No one now asks directly. There are many ways of making one's intentions clear."
4. From region to region there are many accounts of abuses and of corruption on the part of the military and the BSDU. In the cities of Central Luzon, the 1st P.C. Zone Command protects gambling and houses of prostitution. In Cebu and Eastern Visayas, the 3rd P.C. Zone Command protects smuggling and vice, which are reported to be much worse now than before martial law. From Zamboanga del Norte there are many reports of crimes committed by the military against defenseless Muslim civilians. In Mindoro the P.C. are accused of land grabbing from the Mangyans.
5. Even when the wealthy are in open violation of the law, the P.C. defend their interests against the poor often by harassment, threats and if these do not work, imprisonment on false charges.
6. Many crimes are unrecorded.
7. Rivalries and open violent conflict between the different branches of the military have been reported in Mindanao and Sulu.

Peace and Order

In S outh and Southwestern Mindanao, Basilan and Sulu (Region IX and XI) the peace and order situation is much worse than before martial law. (Ninety percent of the province of Sulu is controlled by rebels.) Though actual fighting at present is sporadic, no one feels the fighting is over. The Muslim rebels are contained for the moment but they are not defeated. They are well armed. Evidence of outside assistance seems clear. Ambushes and reprisals are still taking place. About 10,000 Muslim dissidents are estimated to be fighting in the provinces of Zamboanga, Sulu, Cotabato, Davao and Basilan. There are about 100 armed rebels mostly Khi Rho in the hills of Davao Oriental and Davao del Norte. In Misamis Oriental and Agusan, there are about 50 armed guerilla fighters. The Lanao provinces are strangely quiet at present. The Muslim Black Shirts control the mountains and the P.C. stay away from them. The Manobos in Bukidnon and other minority groups are reported to be getting restless.

The combined units of the Philippine Armed Forces in the Mindanao Sulu area are estimated to be close to 8,000 men. Casualties are heavy on both sides. Exact figures are hard to get. Estimates place AFP casualties at 1,000 dead and 3,000 wounded in the fighting since martial law was declared. Muslim casualties are even harder to verify but they are placed roughly at 2 to 3 times the number of AFP dead and wounded.

The basic issues in the Muslim conflict are political and economic. The national government through the local Muslim datus and politicians have exploited the ordinary people badly. There is a general feeling that the government is not sincere, that the government policy of reconciliation is really no policy at all. The exact number of refugees is hard to determine. A conservative figure would be around 250,000 at the height of fighting. Many have now returned to their homes.

In the Visayas (Regions VI, VII, VIII), the NPA is concentrating its effort on Panay. It is having success in gaining support especially on both sides of the Iloilo-Capiz boundary, in the mountain areas of Aklan and in the Sibalom valley of Antique. NPA regulars on the island number about 300. But, recruitment is brisk especially from the mountain barrios of Capiz and Aklan. The presence of U.S. military personnel directing the anti-dissident campaign on Panay has been confirmed by very reliable sources. American army men in uniform are working on the road from Iloilo to Capiz. This is NPA infested territory so people wonder why. The rural electrification project being built for Iloilo, Capiz, and Antique is supervised by Americans. In the rural areas, the people feel closer to the NPA than to the P.C. The P.C. only cause terror. People are offered money to give information on the NPA. One priest in Iloilo admits he is working for the C.I.S. Other priests have received offers. CIS have also been reported in schools in Antique.

With the exception of Sorsogon, the peace and order situation in the Bicol area seems to have improved. The NPA is active in Sorsogon. One report places the number of NPA regulars at 100. This does not include part-time guerillas or barrio self-defense units. There have been encounters between the NPA and the P.C. in Matnog, Bulan, Bulusan, Irosin, St. Magdalena, Basud, and Guiamlamong. Farmers and townspeople are sympathetic to the NPA possibly due to the brutality and ruthlessness of the P.C. in the early stages of martial law. There were three reports of dead bodies being mistreated by the P.C.

In the Southern Tagaloc provinces, guerilla activity is insignificant at present. There is some reported on Mindoro and in Laguna and Quezon provinces.

In Central Luzon, there are about 300 guerillas operating in Bulacan. They broke away from the Lava controlled C P in June 1973. There are reports of a number of clashes with the P.C. An 8:00 p.m. curfew has been imposed in the towns of Angat, Bustos, St. Maria, Pandi, Plaridel, Marilao and San Ildefonso.

In Northern Luzon, the situation is reported to have improved. There are still about 150 NPA regulars operating in Isabela.

Prisoners

There are no accurate estimates on the number of political prisoners but all regions report there are some. They are generally accused of subversion. There are frequent reports of physical torture from all regions of the country. The families and relatives of prisoners are kept under surveillance. *Extortion money is asked of prisoners for their release in a number of regions.*

The President

Throughout the country generally, people feel that all important decisions are made in Manila. Views of the President, however, differ. Some respondents feel he is sincere, that his programs are good but that he lacks the right people to implement them. A few who favor him feel his image would be much better were it not for his family.

Other respondents feel he is not sincere. They appeal to his desire to stay in power, his extensive investments and landholdings especially in key export crops such as sugar and abaca, his dishonest propaganda and the growing state of oppression.

There is more distrust of the President on Mindanao and Sulu than in other regions of the country. Many here simply referred to him as a Dictator.

In the Visayas, the reaction is mixed. Landlords generally are favorable but cynical about the President and his family. Many are apprehensive about the future.

In Northern Luzon there is no clear picture of peoples' attitudes towards the President. In La Union some people favor the President because they feel the peace and order situation has improved in their area. Others blame him for the rising prices. Elsewhere in region I there is either apathy, disinterest or disapproval of the President's actions.

SQUATTERS

The plight of the squatters has not improved under martial law. Squatters are evicted for government beautification projects and for cleanliness campaigns. Owners take advantage of Presidential decrees on squatters to drive off unwanted squatters even if the land is not needed for immediate development. Relocation, even if planned, is unsatisfactory. Even if not evicted, squatters are insecure. Income is low but prices have increased rapidly. There is more concern for legalities and beautification than for the human dignity of squatters.

The Provinces: Ejections

In Jolo, two-thirds of the squatters by the sea, have been driven out for beautification purposes.

In General Santos, Cotabato, about fifty squatter sheds and soft drink stands were removed from Callejo Boulevard as part of a beautification project. No provision was made for relocation.

In Dumaguete City, squatters were threatened with ejection for a beautification project. There were no provisions for relocation.

In Cotabato City, Muslim squatters were evicted by force for a beautification project. They are much worse off than before.

In Roxas City, many private owners have been using the presidential decree to eject squatters from their properties. even those who have been paying rental. One respondent, a government employee, was offered bribes to eject squatters.

In October, in Alaska Beach, Cebu City, women and children stoned security guards and workmen demolishing their homes. The land is owned by an American. The people have asked that it be expropriated for their use. Many promises were made but the ejections continued. The people felt the stoning was the only means left to them.

Relocation Conditions in the Provinces

In Davao City squatters have been removed from seashore areas such as Kinawitnan, Bogo Aplaya, Baltan, Agdao, Lanang and Maa. Some have been relocated but not all. Two hundred and fifty re-located squatter families have been cramped into an area that can only accommodate one hundred and fifty families. Conditions are sub-human. There are no lights, no water. The place is inaccessible to public transportation. it is situated on the bank of a river which overflows frequently in heavy rains.

In Cebu, Tisa is a proposed relocation site for all squatters from Cebu City. Squatters are to be relocated to allow businesses to expand, to enlarge the Philippine Navy compound and to improve the drainage system of the city. There is also talk about a Free Trade Zone. The relocation site is outside the city limits. There are no facilities whatsoever. The squatters do not like to be transferred because their meager earnings will all be spent on transportation to and from the city. The squatters are organized and even trying to federate their organizations. Lately, it seems that all ejections are suspended until some relocation plan has been worked out.

In Iloilo a meeting was held at City Hall on the squatter problem. The squatters were moved two times and finally ended up in a very crowded place without light and water. People were very angry. One man was ready to burn down the house of the city engineer. The relocation place is 10 km. outside the city. No assistance was given. Employment prospects were not considered. The remaining squatters are insecure. They can be moved at any time.

In Roxas City the city government had a plan to give each family 100 square meters. But the relocation area was too from the city.

In Butuan City a number of squatters have been relocated but rentals in the relocation area are too high for them.

In Benguet, after a typhoon destroyed their homes some squatters moved on to private property. They thought it was government land. The owner is evicting them. There is no government action for relocation.

In Bacolod there is a relocation plan. The planners do not want to repeat the tragic experience of Carmona. They plan the relocation in several phases. Housing as well as employment will be taken care of. The business that is supposed to move into the area after the infrastructure is finished will be encouraged to employ manpower from the locality.

In Naga City, squatters were successfully relocated from the train station. This was due to the combined efforts of the City Government and private individuals.

In Cagayan de Oro, the City is planning a housing project for squatters from Camiguin Island.

The Greater Manila Area

In the Greater Manila area it is hard to estimate the number of squatters. One estimate places the number at 201,000 families. The Presidential Assistance on Housing and Resettlement Agency (PAHRA) places the number at 116,000 families.

Since martial law PAHRA claims to have removed 10,359 squatter families: 6,074 from esteros and canals and 4,285 from other areas. Of those resettled 5,086 families are in Carmona, 170 in San Pedro and 3,812 in Sapang Palay. The rest, 1,291 families, have returned to the provinces. From September 1972 to May 1973, 2,502 families have left Carmona.

Because of the Presidential decrees on squatter removal and the numerous ejections, squatters remaining in the City are very insecure. They are also resentful over the constant equation of squatter removal with cleanliness and beautification or with the need to make areas more attractive for tourists, e.g. the Pasig River Beautification Plan. Squatters are generally willing to relocate if the site is near their work. Their main complaint with the present relocationareas is the great distance from their places of work and the ensuing high transportation costs.

Squatter Organizations

In general, squatter organizations are free to meet and discuss without securing special permission. There have been arrests of full time organizers for alleged subversion. Squatter leaders have been picked up on several occasions and released after questioning.

In recent months squatter organizations have taken strong action to dramatize their legitimate requests. In mid-November, 800 members of ZOTO set out on a March to Malacanang to protest unauthorized ejections along the Pasig River. They were stopped at Quezon bridge by the Metrocom and the leaders brought to Camp Crame. General Olivas agreed with their position and cautioned the officials involved not to repeat unauthorized demolitions.

During the rice Crisis in September, 1,000 residents of Barrio Lapuz, Iloilo marched to NGA headquarters to request rice.

PRICES

Respondents in all eleven regions a-

gree that prices have gone up. Prices were described as having risen "drastically", "tremendously" or "very much." In quantitative terms, they were said to have *doubled, tripled or quadrupled* since Martial law.

In northern Luzon and Northern Mindanao, the prices of basic food commodities such as rice, corn, sugar, milk, fish and pork increased on the average by 55%. In the Southern Tagalog region, the increase was 43% while in Southwestern Mindanao and Jolo, the average increase in food prices was 80%.

In Northern Luzon, prices of clothing and shoes have increased by 50%, in the Southern Tagalog region by 90%, in Northern Mindanao by 65% and in Southwestern Mindanao and Jolo by 130%.

Prices of Construction materials have also increased by 45% in Northern Luzon, 105% in the Southern Tagalog region, 85% in Northern Mindanaw, and 110% in Southwestern Mindanao and Sulu.

Electricity and water rates have increased by 20% in Northern Luzon, 47% in the Southern Tagalog region, 5% in Northern Mindanao and 15% in Southwestern Mindanao and Jolo.

People blame the President, the government, the rich businessmen, the middlemen, the Chinese, the military and local officials for the sharp rise in prices. In Mindanao the peace and order situation was frequently mentioned.

The government is blamed for many reasons. It has failed to control hoarding. *It has overemphasized export crops such as sugar.* The seed and fertilizer requirements of the Masagana 99 program are unrealistic. *Merchants and middlemen are hoarding and profiteering.* Milling is inefficient. Rice lands have been converted to other crops. Sugar and grapes were mentioned. The National Grains Authority price of P30.00 per cavan of rice is too low. *Chinese agents offer more.* A license is required to sell rice. The sale has to be in kilos. Many sellers closed shop. They did not want to spend for a license and expensive weighing equipment when the duration of the license was uncertain.

People generally are resentful and angry about the rising prices and about the food shortages. Some are resigned. Most resented rationing. Too much time was wasted. It often took a whole day to get one or two gantas of rice. Government employees and their friends often got more rations. Panic buying was reported. *Many were disillusioned by the referendum. They felt if they voted "yes" the food problem would be solved.* Fear to complain publicly and express their irritation, because of government agents, thought to be planted everywhere, aggravated the situation.

In many areas the barangays were reported to be helpful in the distribution of rice. In some areas hacienderos helped either through financial contributions or actual rice distribution. Some accept the situation and are resigned to the price increases. They feel they will manage somehow. It is a trial from God. They feel if they survived the war and the Japanese occupation, they will survive the present situation. Others feel there is something wrong with the system.

CONSCIENTIZATION

Seventy-eight respondents were interviewed on conscientization. Not all understood the term in the same way. There was a general agreement, however, that it did involve "an awareness of the national situation." Such things as human dignity, injustice, lack of freedom were mentioned. Twenty six felt that this awareness was increasing. Thirty-eight felt it was declining. Fourteen said it was about the same.

The increase in awareness of the national situation was seen by some as due to the oppressive situation itself. Respondents point to government control of the mass media; the discrepancy between what actually happens and what is reported; loss of freedom; sham and manipulation of the referendum; increasing militarization and the fact that the military are "mayabang" (proud) and "abusado" (abusive). Others mostly in Ilocos and Bicol feel the New Society educational efforts are achieving their purposes.

In Negros Occidental, the work of Father Jalandoni has made many priests aware. When he was arrested, they came out with a letter endorsing his fight for justice. The recent harassment of another priest has increased their awareness. When asked by the mayor to present a proposal for community development, the priest did so. In it, he mentioned the need for land reform and payment of the minimum wage. The mayor and council then passed a resolution asking for his removal. The priests of the diocese passed a unanimous resolution requesting the bishop to retain the parish priest.

A decline in awareness of the national situation is noted in the Southern, Tagalog region, in Eastern and Central Visayas and in Southern Mindanao. *Reasons given are indifference and fear.* In Southern Mindanao it is fear of CIS agents and informers. In parts of the Visayas and Southern Mindanao all Church efforts at conscientization have been stopped, e.g. sermons on Justice, chapel meetings, seminars on land reform.

The decline in conscientization was also attributed to the fact that genuine issues are no longer discussed in the mass media. *An analysis of some of* the interviews from Southern Mindanao indicate that it is not so much the awareness of the people that is declining as opportunities for further conscientization. People are aware of refugees, fighting, ambushes, higher prices. evictions, unfair labor practices and lack of freedom. But they have no way of knowing how widespread these problems are or their real causes.

Most respondents who reported no change in awareness of the national situation were from Bohol, Siquijor, Mindoro and the Bicol region. Reasons given were, there was no conscientization before, people were never really aware of the situation, apathy, fear, helplessness, resignation and cynicism that anything can be done about the situation.

Type of Programs at Present

Before martial law, credit unions, the Christian Communities Program, the FFF and other seminars were used to develop awareness of the dignity and rights of individuals and groups. Social Justice and Liberation were themes developed in seminars and meetings.

With martial law FFF activity has been stopped in most regions of the country. Credit unions still exist but there are reports of harassment from many areas. Agenda for meetings and seminars have to be cleared with the military. In some places such as North Cotabato cooperative assemblies have been stopped.

The CCP and catechetics generally are allowed. But, they are not entirely free. CCP themes have changed. They no longer treat explicitly of Justice or Liberation. Though less outspoken than before, the CCP is still suspect by the military. In areas of the Visayas, Northern Luzon and Bicol, the CCP is still used effectively. In other areas, especially Mindanao due mostly to military surveillance, it is less effective than before. The words Justice and Liberation cannot be used.

Where priests and religious are conscientized themselves, sermons, missions and retreats are effective means for conscientizing the people. In Northern Luzon with the exception of Baguio City, sermons are described as irrelevant, traditional. In Capiz and Aklan, the bishop is against conscientization in and by the Church. In Bohol, sermons do not touch the people. Conscientization is lacking. In Mindanao generally the situation is better except for South Cotabato and

Zamboanga. In South Cotabato respondents felt the bishop and priests who are mostly foreign religious, are overly cautious.

In North Cotabato, Davao del Sur and Northern Luzon some are developing new approaches to conscientization. In Cebu there are still small underground groups engaged in conscientization. Morality plays are used effectively in one area of the Western Visayas.

In Negros the National Federation of Sugar Workers is very effective in conscientizing the people.

More generally there are no new initiatives for conscientization at present. The situation has made most people, including many bishops and priests, overly cautious.

THE CHURCH

Present Image

With the exception of Bukidnon and North Cotabato, respondents rate the performance of the Church under martial law as poor. Generally the institutional Church is seen as cooperating with the Government in everything. She openly associates herself with politicians and others in power. She endorses the trisectoral program of the present regime. She accepts the role of a spectator. Her concern is seen as "the purely spiritual." In Northern Luzon and the Visayas, she is accused of being unaware, of exercising no leadership at all. Some feel, the Church cooperates because of fear or weakness or indifference, others think she wants to protect her own interests, while still others feel that the Church approves of martial law and of the New Society because she feels discipline and order are needed for economic development. Whatever the reason, the Church is seen as going along with the present situation in spite of oppression and injustice. She has no plan for action, no clear stand.

The position of the institutional Church has generated tensions in most dioceses. A good number of priests are frustrated by the general attitude of the Church. Bishops will not allow them to speak out or to denounce abuses. Some bishops even forbid priests and religious to engage in social action. Excuses given are danger to their vocations or to avoid embarrassment.

Other priests are defensive. They try hard to justify the present situation. They accuse those who would take a more critical view of naivete, of being misinformed, of being manipulated by the left. This is leading to polarization in many dioceses. Those so accused strike back with their own charges of "tutaism" and lack of concern. Bishops, with no clear stand try to be diplomatic. In the process, they alienate both sides even more, and appear to be totally ineffective in the pursuit of justice.

Foreign priests generally are especially cautious. If their bishop does not take a firm stand against abuses, they feel vulnerable. Except for Cotabato and Bukidnon, bishops have not taken a firm stand. Some bishops warn their foreign priests to keep silent. They say the political situation is an internal affair and as foreigners they should not get involved.

Tensions are also generated by differing theological views on development and liberation.

The position of the Church and the tensions generated by her official stand, or absence of a stand, are seen as a reflection of the confusion on the part of some churchmen regarding the mission of the Church in today's world. They also reflect the isolation of most bishops and priests from the ordinary people.

Some dioceses had very dynamic Social Action Centers. Since martial law a number of these centers have been rendered ineffective. Bishops have changed

the Directors. They have changed the programs. In a few cases they have even allowed the military to distate policy. They were unwilling to offend the military who consider social action subversive.

In the few instances where bishops have given real leadership in denouncing abuses and defending human rights, they have been harassed by the military or by politicians. There are, however, few tensions among their priests, whether local or foreign, and they enjoy the respect of the ordinary people.

Expectations

Respondents feel the Church must become more actively involved. Basing herself on the Gospel message, she must speak out against manipulation, injustice and oppression of all kinds, and not just in vague and general terms. She may suffer but that is the risk she must take if she is to serve the people.

In the present climate of fear and distrust, people look to the Church for hope. They feel the Church must get close to the people. She must shed her traditional image. Feel what the people feel. Sense what they sense. She must be a sign of the faith she preaches. The choice before the bishops is a choice between the widest moral influence and the greatest formal power. They can no longer retain both. To come to this conclusion, they must go beyond surface appearances. But this is not easy. Usually they are last to hear the dilemma put that bluntly in the Church in this country.

REFLECTION ON THE SITUATION

From the data the following points become clear and are appropriate for theological reflection:

1. There is abuse of human rights to peaceful assembly, association, information, privacy, and to safeguards in matters of arrest, detention and trial.
2. Present economic policy is questionable on two points:
   a. economic growth is stressed at the expense of integral human development;
   b. the poor bear an unequal share of the sacrifices required for economic growth.
3. There are many evidences of torture of male and female prisoners.
4. There is widely reported fear of expressing opinions or taking action in anything related to government programs and policies.
5. The State is becoming totalitarian and is suppressing the free development of other societal institutions, such as organized labor and farmer organizations. There is increased dependence on government and on persons perceived as close to ruling powers.
6. There is little free participation of the people, especially at the grass roots, in decision making.

MOVEMENT FOR A FREE PHILIPPINES

The Movement joins the many Filipinos in the U.S. and their American friends who are helping the people of the Philippines resist martial law. Founded on the belief that the suppression of basic human rights, as is now practised in the Philippines, cannot be the price for the building of a new society, the Movement strives for the restoration of those rights.

It seeks by peaceful means for a return to genuine constitutional rule. It affirms that the 1973 Constitution was invalidly ratified and that it illegally confers dictatorial powers on President Ferdinand Marcos whose term of office expired on December 30,1973 as stipulated by the still valid 1935 Constitution.

It subscribes to the principle that a form of government where the popular will of the people prevails over the will of one man is still the most workable system within which a society can progress with dignity and justice.

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