

Mindanao

THE MINDANAO CROSS
Cotabato City

ASIA COLLECTION
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII LIBRARY

Saturday, August 10, 1974

JOINT MESSAGE

To All Muslims and Christians of Cotabato:

On August 4, 1974, mimeographed copies of a message "TO CHRISTIANS OF COTABATO", were found in the Cathedral of Cotabato City. The same copies were found to have been discovered in other places of the city.

After describing various incidents of atrocities supposedly done by Muslim rebels, the anonymous letter calls on all Christians of Cotabato to unite against the Muslims. It exhorts them to fight the Muslims "in broomlike manner", and to do it right now, because "NOW IS THE HOUR TO STRIKE".

Aside from the apparent inaccuracies in the relation of some incidents mentioned in the letter, it presents the Cotabato problem as a religious conflict between Christians and Muslims. We believe, however, that the present conflict is more of a socio-political, rather than a religious problem.

Islam, Christianity, or any civilized society never condone, much less approve, indiscriminate killings and atrocities -- "in a broom-like manner" as proposed by the letter.

We, therefore, vehemently disown any part whatsoever in the production of the said letter and its distribution. For we totally disagree with its sentiments of revenge, indiscriminate killing of the innocent, and any atrocity committed by either Christian or Muslim or anybody for that matter.

The problem facing us is no doubt, real and serious. It is complex and cannot be resolved by a simplistic and inhuman solution as proposed by the letter. We call on ALL to unite in begging Almighty God to enlighten us to see our way to a true and human solution to the problem. Lasting peace in Mindanao can be attained only if each and everyone concerned will humbly and prayerfully reflect before God and discover how he personally can contribute to the solution of the problem.

Let ALL unite to bring about understanding and reconciliation based on justice and love. This is the only way to TRUE AND LASTING PEACE. Only the people of Cotabato with the help of God Almighty, can bring this about.

(Sgd.) Most Rev. A. Nepomuceno, OMI, D.D.
Chairman, Muslim-Christian Religious
Leaders Association of Cotabato

Prof. Omar Bajunaid
Co-Chairman

Bishop Constancio Manguramas
Secretary