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The Japanese and the Philippine Church, 1942-45

ALFREDO G. PARPAN, S. J.

In the early days of the Japanese occupation of Manila (1942) many high ranking Filipino churchmen spoke out in favor of cooperation with the Japanese Military Administration (JMA). Bishop Cesar Ma. Guerrero, Auxiliary Bishop of Manila, is reported to have said in a radio sermon: "Now Almighty God has decreed that our country should pass into the hands of a sister Oriental nation. The Nipponese Empire has offered us a chance to reform our national life . . . Let us pray to the noble company of Nipponese saints to guide and fructify the relations between their nation and ours . . ." ¹ Bishop Santiago Fonacier, head of the Philippine Independent Church, said in a radio address:

. . . we have been assured respect for, as well as the free exercise of, our respective religions. It should be against our aspirations as a nation to fail to take advantage of this opportunity, which we had been searching for in the past, to bring about a rebirth of our nation, free and independent. For this reason, our duty, I believe, should be to lend every assistance to Japan towards triumph of the just ideals of securing Asia for the Asiatics and the Philippines for the Filipinos. Let us lift our fervent prayers to the Almighty so that these great aims may soon be realized.²

Bishop N.S. Binstead of the Episcopal Church drafted an edifying circumspect pledge:

I freely acknowledge the authority *in all things temporal* of the Imperial Japanese Army High Command in the occupied areas of the Philippines. I do hereby promise to conform to all commands, orders, and regulations

1. A.V.H. Hartendorp, *The Japanese Occupation of the Philippines*, vol. 1 (Manila: Bookmark, 1969), p. 458.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 234.

issued by the said constituted authorities . . . the assurances given above are made by me in good faith and in appreciation of the generous consideration and courteous treatment accorded to the Christian Churches by the Imperial Japanese Army High Command in the occupied areas of the Philippines and in the belief that it will make for the spiritual happiness and well-being of the people committed to my care.³

The Federation of Evangelical Churches, under the initiative of Dr. Enrique Sobrepena, had also pledged "to cooperate wholeheartedly with the authorities in their endeavor to bring peace and order within our shores."⁴

But these statements were largely empty rhetoric. The candid fact is that the Japanese failed to win the Christian community (both Catholic and Protestant) to the cause of *Dai Nippon*, despite the added appeal to a common stand against a common foe—communism. What was painfully clear to the JMA (and later doubly embarrassing to the Laurel Japanese-sponsored government) was the unmistakable fact, that in contrast with most Japanese-occupied territories in Southeast Asia, the Philippines was able to sustain significant anti-Japanese guerrilla activities by indigenous groups professing loyalty to a Western power.⁵ Near the end of the Japanese Occupation, the JMA, assessing the situation in the Philippines, found it inexplicable and frustrating. As it reported to the Imperial General Headquarters: "Even after their independence, there remains among all classes in the Philippines a strong undercurrent of pro-American sentiment. It is something steadfast, which cannot be destroyed. . ."⁶

Thus, despite efforts at the higher levels for the "conscious accommodation" of religion in general and the Catholic Church in particular, the Japanese attempts to win the local Christian community ended in frustration. The public utterances and avowals of cooperation made by high-ranking church officials were nothing more than empty promises.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., p. 462.

5. General MacArthur, in fact, considered the Philippine guerrilla activities "the greatest Resistance Movement in the War" as quoted on the book jacket of Haggerty's *Guerrilla Padre in Mindanao*. For a brief comprehensive account of such activities, cf. Teodoro A. Agoncillo and Oscar Alfonso, *History of the Filipino People* (Quezon City: Malaya Books, 1967), pp. 479–84.

6. Cf. Dispatch: Imperial General Headquarters, Army Section Report Saikin in Okeru Hito Hijo (Recent Situation in the Philippines: 31 March 1944, p. 1) in *U.S. Army Reports of General MacArthur*, vol. 1, pp. 311–12. "Japanese propaganda failed most in the Philippines and was most successful among the Burmese," avowed a Japanese journalist-visitor in Manila, Masuo Kato, during the occupation. Cited in Gregorio F. Zaide, *Philippine Political and Cultural History*, vol. 2. (Manila: Phil. Educational Co., 1957), p. 353.

This article presents four major reasons for the failure of the JMA to win the cooperation of the Philippine Church. They are the religious and cultural traditions of the Filipino people, the "Western" presence in the Philippine Church, the failure of the Japanese to understand Filipino psychology especially in religious matters, and the credibility gap between Japanese words and actions.

RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL TRADITIONS

A Filipino historian, Teodoro Agoncillo, attributed Filipino resistance to Japanese blandishments to Christian pride or a sort of Christian superiority complex. He expressed the sentiments of the common *tao* when he wrote: "The people as a whole considered the non-Christian Japanese unfit to teach them morals and religion."

Being Christians, the Filipinos believed, rightly or wrongly, that non-Christian Japanese had nothing to teach them in matters of faith and morals. To many Filipinos, particularly to the fanatics among them, the Christian is superior to those professing a different faith. This misconception arose from the historical fact that the Spaniards had taught them that there was no salvation outside the Catholic Church . . . Having been conditioned in this kind of thinking, the Filipinos as a predominantly Christian people feel superior to their neighbors in Asia.⁷

Or perhaps the opposition could be attributed to the "pious instincts" of a Christian people who "felt" the "incompatibility of their religion and that of the Japanese emperor-worship." "In truth," wrote Hartendorp,

there was no possibility of conciliation between Christianity and the state religion of Japan, which was simply a system of political propaganda, artificially created in the latter half of the nineteenth century with primitive Shintoism as nucleus.

Christianity from the first derived much of its strength from its direct and indirect assertion of the unique worth of the individual man, not only in his relations to God, but in his relations with his fellowmen and the body politic. On the other hand, Christianity could not place a human being

Zaide offers two reasons for the dismal failure of Japanese propaganda: 1) love of freedom is deeply rooted in the Filipino soul and the people would not barter it for a totalitarian way of life and 2) the Filipinos are too intelligent to be deceived by sugar-coated Japanese falsehoods.

7. Agoncillo, *The Fateful Years*, vol. 1, p. 475.

beside God, or recognize the childish superstition that any human being beside God is the direct descendant of divinity. Christianity could not accept the more ancient tyrannies. Christianity and humanism are at one in that they both consider the state as made for man not man for the state. Christianity, of course, holds additionally that God is above both man and state, but so long as the principle of the separation of church and state is adhered to, there can be toleration between Christianity and the democratic state. Christianity could live in a scientific, even in an agnostic or atheistic society. But Christianity must be forever at war in a state which would compel the worship of a local human god, under a hysterical ideology of blood and soil, impressing in its service religion as well as education and every medium of information and communication.⁸

The Christian Filipino did not object, as would his more militant and sensitive Southeast Asian brother, the Muslim Indonesian, later object to the obsequious bowing in the direction of the Imperial Palace as part of the rituals of almost every social activity during the Occupation.⁹ Such rites, missiologists reasoned, were merely formal expressions of respect and loyalty to the Japanese head of State—the Emperor.

One could conjecture on the fate of the Church had Japan remained master of the Philippines. Hartendorp predicted that in such a case, “the Church would in time have been either tortured to death, so twisted and contorted as to be unrecognizable.”¹⁰ For the Christian who

8. Hartendorp, *The Japanese Occupation*, Vol. 2, p. 77. Although the charter of 1889 decreed religious liberty, the number of converts never rose above a few hundred thousand. In 1940, a year before the outbreak of the Pacific War, the Japanese government adopted a number of measures designed to convert the Christian churches to its use, including a forced amalgamation of the various Protestant denominations into the “National Christian Church.” The new laws insisted that the Christian movement in Japan conform to the Japanese structure and ideology. The Japanese, notes Hartendorp, took the same step in the Philippines in 1942 and 1943. *Ibid.*, pp. 77–78.

9. Harry J. Benda, *The Crescent and the Rising Sun: Indonesian Islam Under the Japanese Occupation: 1942–1945* (Hague and Bandung: W. Van Hoeve, Ltd., 1958), pp. 122–23. “The Japanese concept of a Chosen Race, superior to all others, was difficult to accept for all Indonesians who resented the racial superiority arrogantly exhibited by their ‘liberators.’ But the Japanese insistence on the divinity of the emperor in particular clashed head-on with the Islamic faith. Bowing in the direction of the imperial palace was, therefore, widely resented, the more so since the deep-bow the *Saikeirei* prescribed for this ceremony resembled the prayer bow performed by Muslims.” (Underscoring supplied). The venerated Minangkabau reformist, Dr. Abdul Karim Amrullah, fearlessly exposed the irreconcilability of emperor worship and Islamic monotheism. On one particular occasion, Amrullah, the only Indonesian seated among Japanese officers, remained seated when all others rose to perform the *Saikeirei*. In the eyes of the true believer, the Japanese remained in the final analysis, “barbarian idolators equipped with military force.” *Ibid.*, p. 108.

10. Hartendorp, *The Japanese Occupation*, vol. 2, p. 78.

would undergo such an experience, it would be small consolation to reflect that Christ remains the Lord of History and that the Church, as the Mystical Body of Christ on earth must undergo the phases of Christ's life on earth! Or that the Church in almost 2000 years of existence as an institutionalized supra-national entity had somehow managed to outlast its persecutors and extricate itself from more trying circumstances, verifying time and again Christ's promise to His Church that "the gates of hell will not prevail against it."¹¹

In the Japanese Occupation the religious, i.e., Christian, background served as a built-in roadblock against Japanese blandishments of collaboration. In the cultural (i.e., democratic) sphere, the people with an experience of well over four decades of living in an open and democratic society naturally felt the loss of their "four freedoms" (and resented that loss) in a closed, repressive society and looked with derision on the existence of Laurel's government as a colossal fraud—a belief clandestinely but popularly expressed in their reference to Radio PIAM as an acronym for "*Philippine Independence a Mockery*."¹² In their deliberate noncollaboration with the JMA, Catholic churchmen (with a few exceptions) appealed to the principle of the "separation of Church and State"—a principle deplored and lamented in closed Catholic circles ('*Catolicos cerrados*') since the principle's acceptance in the Malolos charter of 1899 and reaffirmation in the Commonwealth charter of 1935.¹³

This principle of "separation of church and state" was a western, democratic innovation which the Japanese found especially frustrating and unintelligible in the light of their own domestic experience in Dai Nippon where religion and nationalism burned in one fused martial flame for the Emperor. In a 17 January 1942 meeting with the JMA, Archbishop Michael O'Doherty declared "he was pleased that religion

11. Cf. Matthew 16:16, "Thou art Peter and upon this rock, I will build my Church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it." The Church has outlasted the persecutions of the Roman emperors from Nero to Diocletian and the various "isms" of the last decades. Cf. Richard J. Cronin, *Ages of the Church* (Quezon City: Ateneo Publications, 1964), esp. the chapter on "The Persecutions."

12. In a letter to Lt. Gen. Wati, Recto admitted that one of the most pressing problems of the Laurel government was how to convince the people of the reality of Philippine independence: Cf. *Documents on the Japanese Occupation of the Philippines*, ed. Mauro Garcia (Manila: Philippine Historical Commission, 1965), p. 111. Cf. also exchange of letters between Salipada K. Pendatun and Paulino Santos, and Teodoro Garcia and Paulino Santos in the December 1966 issue of the Philippine Historical Association *Historical Bulletin*, pp. 56-86.

13. Cf. editorial, "Church-State Relations, Philippine Style" in *Philippine Priests Forum* 4 (December 1972): 2-5.

would be respected and protected by the Japanese Army . . ." but that "the people and country were accustomed to the separation of Church and State and that while the clergy exercised authority in things spiritual, it always had the policy to refrain from taking part in matters purely political as enjoined by Canon Law."¹⁴ The Archbishop of Manila restated the argument emphasizing that the work of the clergy was entirely spiritual:

The Holy Father has expressly and strictly forbidden us from engaging in any other profession or activity but the religious. We are a company apart. We are willing to leave civil and political matters to minds better fitted or at least more interested in the pursuits of the world. We have done this not out of cowardice but because of the deep conviction that every civilization must be based on spirituality. It is for this reason that we have turned our backs on all other professions and devoted ourselves to the building of those spiritual and religious foundations without which no civilization can stand.¹⁵

The Reverend John F. Hurley, Superior of the Jesuits, and an eyewitness and, in fact, principal spokesman for the Hierarchy in that 17 January 1942 round table meeting with the JMA representative, gave this account:

The archbishop practically turned over the confrontation to me. When the interpreter finished a statement or two, Archbishop O'Doherty tossed the ball over to me at once. I countered the proposal [i.e., that if the archbishop would authorize a statement from all the pulpits, insisting and exhorting the people to collaborate with the Japanese, they in turn would give very special protection to the Church everywhere in the Philippine Islands] by explaining to the Japanese that in the Philippines there was absolutely separation of Church and State. The Church never attempted to interfere in purely political matters and conversely the government maintained a hands off policy towards all religious organizations. *This was the American system and it has been adopted by the Philippine government in their constitution. The Philippine people accepted this policy of separation of Church and State without demur.* If you attempt, I told the Japanese officers, to have the Church use its moral persuasion to obtain the collaboration of the Filipino people, you are choosing the worst possible means. The people will say to themselves very quietly that this is no business of the Church. We are accustomed to separation of Church and State. The Church should remain in its own sphere, the government should attend to its own business and not interfere

14. Hartendorp, *The Japanese Occupation*, vol. 1, p. 227.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 228.

in religious matters. Therefore, I went on, if you want your attempt at collaboration to fail, then you are using the best possible means to make it fail. The archbishop, I said, should not, could not do, as they requested . . . (Underscoring supplied.)¹⁶

The American Jesuit also insisted that the Japanese

did not appreciate the psychology of the Filipino people. For the archbishop or any of the Church prelates to try to ram collaboration down Filipino throats, would only stiffen Filipino backs . . . if such a proclamation of collaboration were made by the ecclesiastical authorities, we would set back the Church many years, because the people did not relish the occupation by the Japanese and they were rebelling internally.¹⁷

Truly, as Hartendorp averred, "Churchmen in the Philippines could not have brought the people to cooperate with the Japanese even if they had tried to do so."¹⁸ Church officials, therefore, sensing the antipathy of the Filipino masses, despite the "official" declaration of Vargas and his associates (and for that matter, the "official" statements of Bishop Cesar Ma. Guerrero), knew they would only reap a harvest of anticlericalism if they were to preach collaboration.

"WESTERN" PRESENCE IN THE PHILIPPINE CHURCH

From the start, the American and European (e.g. British, Belgian, Canadian, Dutch) presence among the clergy and missionaries spelled

16. Hurley, *Wartime Superior in the Philippines* (New York: Fordham Press, 1966), pp. 32-33. One should note however that even before the American regime, Filipinos had opted for the principle of the "separation of Church and State" as is shown by the Malolos Constitution. For the historical background, cf. Cesar Adib Majul, *The Political and Constitutional Ideas of the Philippine Revolution* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 1967), esp. chapters 6 and 7.

17. Hurley, *Wartime Superior*, p. 33. This internal rebellion expressed itself in silent or vocal ridicule and derision. Thus, on greeting the Japanese guards at street corners, one says "ohayo" (good morning) muttering an added *p* to make it "ohayop" (beast!). The acronyms for PCPI (Preparatory Commission for Philippine Independence) and Radio PIAM were interpreted differently: "Please Cancel Philippine Independence" for the former and "Philippine Independence A Mockery" for the latter. DOMEI, the Japanese News Agency was branded as the "Department of Military Erroneous Information."

18. Hartendorp narrates an anecdote told by one of the priests in the camp. "The Japanese permitted only a few chosen individuals other than themselves to use gasoline for fuel for their automobiles; the few other allowed cars had to use alcohol. The archbishop's car (before it was finally taken away from him) had stopped in a little town not far from Manila. Some Filipinos came up and unscrewed the cap of the fuel tank. The

no whole-hearted (nor even partial) cooperation with the martial cause of *Dai Nippon*. As Father Edward Haggerty testified, to the Filipinos, the American priests represented the United States and while they were around, the American cause was obviously visible.¹⁹ The "Western" presence among the Christian community (Catholic and Protestant) undoubtedly stiffened the backbone of resistance to the Japanese overtures for cooperation. A thoroughly "Filipinized" Church, especially of the Hierarchy, would probably have seen the same phenomenon that befell the Filipino political elite of the time—cowed and submissive (albeit internally rebellious) to the Occupation authorities. Thus the special bitterness of perceptive Japanese military officials against the foreign missionaries. Of them, the University of Sto. Tomas Camp Commandant, Kato, observed: "Those people are not civilians; they are soldiers out to fight this war to the end with their preaching on every corner."²⁰

Thus, there were the varied attempts, subtle and otherwise, to alienate the Filipino people from that Western presence. The unceasing Japanese distibes against the West and Western imperialism were clearly meant to embarrass the Western personnel of the local Catholic Church hierarchy. Eighteen top-ranking prelates were not native Filipinos: Archbishop O'Doherty of Manila was Irish; Bishop Constans Jurgens of Tuguegarao was Dutch; Bishop James T.C. Hayes of Cagayan, American; Bishop James P. McCloskey of Jaro, American; Bishop John C. Vrakking of Surigao, Dutch; Prefect Apostolic Jose Billiet of the Mountain Province, Belgian; Prefect Apostolic William Finnemann of Mindoro, German. There were also scores of foreign American and European missionaries—men and women—working throughout the length and breadth of the country.

Opting for the "Filipinization" of the Church, the *Tribune* columnist bluntly declared:

... If we are proud of the fact that we are the only East Asian nation predominantly Catholic, that pride is quite justified ... If we want to become more Catholic than ever, we should be more active in controlling the Church. Why should we let our beloved Church remain under the control of so many foreigners? The days of foreign missionaries should have been over long ago considering the long history of 400 years since the

archbishop's chauffeur asked them what they were doing. They smelled the cap, then said: 'It's all right, but if this had been gasoline, we would have made you drink it.' Hartendorp, *The Japanese Occupation*, vol. 2, pp. 75-76.

19. *Woodstock Letters*, vol. 74/2, June 1945, p. 163.

20. Hartendorp, *The Japanese Occupation*, vol. 2, p. 37.

introduction of Catholicism in our islands. Judging from the histories of Catholicism in other lands, it is about time we made more effort toward Filipinizing the Church.²¹

Much later, after the grant of Philippine Independence, the *Tribune* would opt for the "Filipinization of our spiritual ideals."

The fact that we are a Catholic nation is a historical accident. Of course, there is nothing wrong in being Catholics . . . we are a very religious nation, but can we say that we have digested and assimilated our imported Catholicism sufficiently to make it harmonize with our general attitude toward our daily life? Is not the faith in most of us too passive, docile, and ceremonial? After all, we are what we are due to historical accident. Yet we have reached a stage in our national progress in which a more activating and invigorating religious guidance is imperative. Along with the Filipinization of politics and economics, we require Filipinization in our spiritual ideal.²²

The following morning's column gave the apologia for this stand: "Those who are advocating the Filipinization movement are just as faithful to Catholicism as those who are trying to preserve the status quo in the present church hierarchy in the Philippines. And, after all, they are asking no more than what the Catholics of other nations have sought and gained."²³

On the seventy-second anniversary of the execution of the three priest-martyrs (Fathers Gomez, Burgos and Zamora), 17 February 1944, the *Tribune's* 'Maharajah' voiced public lament:

The claim may have some truth that we do not have a sufficient number of Filipino priests to replace all the foreigners in the parishes. But it is equally true that we do have several Filipino bishops fully prepared to head the Catholic Church in our Republic and do so with honor and dignity. And no one should resent the fact that our legitimate aspirations as a nation demand that one of our own people should head the Church here.²⁴

21. *Tribune* column, "Our Tomorrow," 2 May 1943.

22. *Ibid.*, 5 February 1944.

23. *Ibid.*, 6 February 1944.

24. Of the eighteen leading prelates of the Catholic hierarchy in the country, ten were native Filipinos: Archbishop Gabriel M. Reyes of Cebu, Auxiliary Bishop Cesar Ma. Guerrero of Manila, Bishop Mariano Madriaga of Lingayen, Bishop Alfredo Verzosa of Lipa, Bishop Pedro P. Santos of Caceres, Bishop Santiago C. Sancho of Nueva Segovia, Bishop Casimiro M. Lladoc of Bacolod, Bishop Miguel Acebedo of Calbayog, Bishop Manuel M. Mascariñas of Palo, Bishop Luis del Rosario of Zamboanga. *Directorio Eclesiastico*, 1941.

On 4 June 1944, the Philippine Government Bureau of Religious Affairs initiated, pointedly, a Mass for the late Msgr. Gregorio Aglipay, founder of Aglipayanism.²⁵ The following month, the Japanese military authorities acted forcibly to remove the "Western" presence from the Philippine scene. On 8 July, some 500 Catholic and Protestant missionaries were brought once more to Santo Tomas and the following morning taken to the new prison camp at Los Baños, because "they had abused the generosity of the Japanese and had extended aid to the guerrillas and engaged in other anti-Japanese activities."²⁶

FAILURE TO UNDERSTAND FILIPINO PSYCHOLOGY

It is strange but true. Despite their being fellow Orientals, the Japanese failed to understand Filipino psychology. Otherwise their other "excesses" might have been forgiven and even summarily dismissed as due to the inevitable exigencies of war. As Fr. Hurley himself admitted,

lack of mutual understanding between Filipinos and Americans could and did cause unpleasant incidents. When the Japanese occupied the islands, their complete ignorance and disdain of Filipino culture was one of the major reasons for Filipino hatred of their occupiers.

One thing to which the Filipinos objected especially was the slap in the face they got from the Japanese for any slight transgressions. The Japanese did not recognize the great importance which the Filipinos put on *dignidad*. The Spanish had planted deeply in the Filipino mind the idea of the dignity of the human person. To the Japanese, a slap in the face was the slightest punishment that they could mete out . . . The Japanese could not fathom

25. Agoncillo considers that the Aglipayan Church, the "one enduring result of the Revolution which, loosely considered, includes the Filipino-American hostilities, was a failure." Though founded during the American regime, the Aglipayan Movement had its origin and inspiration in the Revolution. Teodoro A. Agoncillo, *Malolos: the Crisis of the Republic* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines, 1960), esp. pp. 669-70. Cf. also remarks of William H. Taft, *The Church and One Government in the Philippines* (Notre Dame: University Press, 1904) on Aglipay and Aglipayanism, pp. 43-44. For what many consider the definitive work on the subject, cf. Achutegui and Bernad, *Religious Revolution in the Philippines*. 4 vols.

26. As Hartendorp shrewdly observed: "This was probably true in some cases, but the Japanese had long been convinced that they could get no 'cooperation' from the priests and missionaries, and the sudden move to intern them was due—so everyone thought—to a Japanese realization that the American relief forces would reach the Philippines soon." *The Japanese Occupation*, vol. 2, pp. 282-83. On 10 July, a group of twenty Catholic priests and nuns and Protestant missionaries, most of them elderly and

nese, military or civilian, who were inadvertently jostled or pushed, immediately slapped or beat persons they thought guilty of pushing them.²⁹

"The present deplorable situation," Recto stressed,

is principally due to the failure on the part of many Japanese since the beginning of the occupation and even after the Republic was inaugurated, to understand the character and psychology of the Filipinos. Had there been an effort to do so, and had a policy of friendship and conciliation been observed towards them, particularly in the general relations with them of Japanese soldiers and civilians, much unpleasantness would have been avoided and a real feeling of amity and cooperation between the Filipinos and Japanese would have been developed. . . .³⁰

THE CREDIBILITY GAP

Right from the start, of course, the Japanese suffered from a credibility gap which all the tricks in their propaganda bag could not bridge. Their record in Korea, Manchuria and China (even before the occupation of the Philippines and the rest of Southeast Asia) had already proclaimed to the world the dire import of Japanese hegemony and the "Greater East Co-Prosperity Sphere." Of this phrase, Fr. Hurley would remember:

The conquerors spoke often of a New Order in a Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Juan de la Cruz, the Filipino man in the street, soon had an answer to that. In the Tagalog language, the particle *ko* added to a word indicates possession—that is *mine* or *our*. Juan soon declared that when the Japanese spoke of co-prosperity, they really meant prosperity-*ko*.³¹

As one contributor to *Woodstock Letters* observed:

The Japanese were the only ones in the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere who got enough to eat. That Sphere was their invention. All their conquered countries belonged to it. 'Co-prosperity isn't a term in English,' said one Filipino student, 'It's algebra! As the tangent approaches infinity, the co-tangent approaches zero. As Japan prospers, look what happens to us!'³²

29. "Documents on the Japanese Occupation," *Historical Bulletin*, 4 (March & June 1965): 113.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 118.

31. Hurley, *Wartime Superior*, p. 31.

32. *Woodstock Letters*, vol. 74/3 (October 1945), p. 189.

However, despite the official protestations of goodwill and promise of protection which the JMA had assured them of, the grounds for the Archbishop of Manila's formal complaints voiced at the beginning of the Japanese Occupation would, time and again, be confirmed by various related incidents: e.g., the Japanese used the Cagayan Cathedral as a garage; churches in some places were turned into dance halls by the soldiers, losses in precious altar vessels and vestments were reported; there were the murders of the Filipino Jesuit, Fr. Consunji in Manila and the Irish Columban, Fr. Douglas in Laguna; of the Canadian PMEs (Paris Foreign Missionaries of Quebec), Frs. Leblanc and Poirier in Cotabato; and that of Bishop Finnemann in Mindoro.³³

Time and again, the Japanese avowed policy of "conscious accommodation" (i.e., in the words of Col. Nuruzawa: "it is the purpose of the army to do everything possible for the benefit of the Catholic Church and its followers") would give way to Japanese military expediency.³⁴ Thus the Jesuits protesting the planned seizure of the Ateneo de Manila appealed to the JMA and reminded them of their "praiseworthy desire not to interfere with religious worship" in vain.³⁵ Thus too, the churches in Manila were occupied and used as warehouse and barracks in September-October of 1944.³⁶

The people as a whole were not taken in by the Japanese propaganda. As Agoncillo noted: "Far from impressing the Filipinos with their protestations of love for mankind, the Japanese succeeded in antagonizing the people, for it was patent that what the Japanese said about "brotherly love" and "loving their neighbors" was promptly disproved by the *kempetai* and the soldiers who daily practiced maiming or killing the Filipinos with their bayonets and samurai words . . ."³⁷ As a Filipino official endeavored to convey to a JMA officer in a "personal and confidential" letter: "The Filipino is both simple and worldly-wise. He bases his judgment on the things he sees around him however seemingly unimportant those may be. A little act of kindness

33. Hartendorp, *The Japanese Occupation*, Vol. I, pp. 228, 514-515 (esp. for murder of Bishop Finnemann); Vol. II, pp. 75-76; Hurley, *Wartime Superior*, pp. 16-30. Also Haggerty, *Guerrilla Padre*, for the travails of the Church in Mindanao (pp. 150-52 for the murder of the two PMEs). While confined, Fr. Kennally (who became Bishop of the Caroline-Marshalls) broke an arm carrying latrine pails in Fort Santiago.

34. Nuruzawa's words quoted in Hartendorp, *The Japanese Occupation*, vol. 1, p. 228.

35. Cf. Fr. Hurley's letter of protest in Appendix II. May be found also in Hartendorp, *The Japanese Occupation*, vol. 1, pp. 78-79.

36. The last two to be seized in Manila were the Santa Cruz Church and the Quiapo Church, the latter was the shrine of the Black Nazarene.

37. Agoncillo, *The Fateful Years*, vol. 1, p. 476.

and consideration is worth to him incalculably more than a thousand words of propaganda."³⁸

JAPANESE RETALIATION

Due to this complexus of reasons, the Japanese failed to win the sympathy of the people and the Church in the Philippines. In point of fact, however, what the JMA wanted was not collaboration nor cooperation for "peace in an expanding world" from the Church, but outright submission and readiness to be used as a tool. Foiled and frustrated in its design, it gave vent to its rage in the Manila bloodbaths (to cite just the most bloody) of February 1945. Thus was the Filipino Church mistrust confirmed.

Postwar investigations revealed that "massacres of many civilians took place in anticipation of a Japanese withdrawal, or an allied attack or invasion, in order to prevent their liberation."³⁹ What occurred in Manila was no spontaneous outburst of savagery as at Nanking in 1938. The massacres, the wholesale rape and arson perpetrated were coldbloodedly planned. Orders were captured which put the matter beyond doubt.

The following extracts are taken from a file of 'Manila Navy Defense Force' and South-Western Area Fleet Operation Orders, dated from 23 December 1944 to 14 February 1945.

Be careful to make no mistakes in the time of exploding and burning when the enemy invades.

When killing Filipinos, assemble them together in one place, as far as possible, thereby saving ammunition and labour. The disposal of dead bodies will be troublesome, so either collect them in houses scheduled to be burned or throw them into the river. (Underscoring supplied)

Extracts from the captured diary of a Japanese warrant officer, named Yamaguchi, confirm the evidence that these atrocities were carried out in pursuance of orders.

38. Recto to Wati in *Historical Bulletin* 4 (March and June 1965): 110.

39. Lord Russell, *The Knights of Bushido* (New York: Dutton, 1958), p. 152. Also Hartendorp, *The Japanese Occupation*, vol. 2, pp. 553-56. It was brought out at the trial of Tojo before the International Military Tribunal for the Far East in Tokyo that the official U.S. War Dept. estimate was that 131,028 Americans and Filipinos were murdered, starved, and tortured to death in the Philippines. Listed as nonbattlefield casualties were: 23,039 men from the U.S. Armed Forces, 597 American civilians, 27,258 men from the Filipino Armed Forces, and 91,184 Filipino civilians.

We are ordered to kill all the males we find. Mopping up the bandits [sic] from now on will be a sight indeed . . . Our aim is to kill or wound all the men and collect information. Women who attempt to escape are to be killed. All in all, our aim is extermination.⁴⁰

The thirteenth chapter of the *Knights of Bushido: The Shocking History of Japanese War Atrocities* deals with "Atrocities Against Civilian Population" and covers, among others, the round-up of civilians in the Ermita district (some 200 of them) at Plaza Ferguson; the carnage at Fort Santiago where "the doors were barricaded, petrol was sprinkled everywhere, the buildings set on fire and many hundreds burned to death"; the atrocities committed in the German Club; St. Paul's College; the headquarters of the Filipino Red Cross; Intramuros where "even the cathedral was entered by Japanese troops who dragged young girls outside and raped them in the west porch just before they set fire to the building"; Lipa, Batangas; and the province of Iloilo. Entries from captured diaries of Japanese soldiers covering the period from December 1944 to March 1945 confirm all the other available evidence.⁴¹

As soon as he was able to communicate with Rome, Msgr. Piani, the Apostolic Delegate, sent a radiogram giving a brief account of the losses suffered by the Church in the Philippines. Several weeks later, the American Consulate General in Manila transmitted a message from the Apostolic Delegate at Washington to Msgr. Piani. It ran:

Monsignor Montini has acknowledged your message in which you report atrocities by the Japanese in Manila such as the killing of great number of civilians including priests and religious. Japanese officials publicly deny the truth of the report of atrocities. It is accordingly requested that you telegraph confirmation of your message referred to and also that you forward by letter further details.⁴²

On 19 April 1945, Msgr. Piani was able to send the following radiogram to Msgr. Giovanni Cicognani, the Apostolic Delegate in Washington:

40. Russell, *The Knights of Bushido*, p. 253.

41. *Ibid.*, pp. 252-61. For an account of Mindanao atrocities, cf. Haggerty, *Guerrilla Padre in Mindanao*, pp. 125-91. Also *Historical Bulletin* (March and June 1965), for "Maltreatment of Filipinos by the Japanese—Memorandum for His Excellency the President of the Republic of the Philippines," pp. 130-38.

42. *Woodstock Letters*, vol. 75/1 (March 1946), p. 42.

Please forward following message to Mons. Motini stop supplement previous radiogram regarding Japanese atrocities with following details stop fourteen Augustinians six Recollects ten Franciscans six Capuchins killed with hand grenades in Intramuros stop three more Capuchins bayoneted and shot in Singalong Convent stop ten Vincentians shot in Ermita stop Sixteen Christian brothers bayoneted in La Salle College stop four Columbans taken by Japanese Military Police and never heard from again stop two secular priests killed in Tayabas stop one Jesuit Scholastic and one seminarian killed in Laguna stop total killed verified to date eighty-five stop in addition about thirty killed by Japanese snipers or died in fires started by Japanese soldiers stop Apostolic Delegation Archbishop's Palace ten churches nine Monasteries and convents twelve seminaries and schools two hospitals and one orphanage totally destroyed stop letter with names of dead further details follows.⁴³

Adding insult to injury, Japanese officials had the temerity to brand the Apostolic Delegate's report of Manila atrocities a lie and only the prompt action of Fr. Hurley and the newly-established Catholic Welfare Organization (CWO) could expose the brazen effrontery. Filipino distrust of the authentic benevolent spirit of the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere was not, to put it mildly, unfounded.⁴⁴

43. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

44. Does Japan really have any sense of war guilt? In the past, Japan formally admitted its guilt. But if it is sincere, a *Far Eastern Economic Review* writer observes, it should now reward, not punish, those who it claims opposed the war effort. Since the war ended, it has given awards to more than 2.6 million ex-soldiers for loyal and meritorious services and new awards continue to be announced. Yet, it refuses obstinately to clear the names of those who died because they opposed the war. Moreover, it has done nothing to punish those who planned the war and were guilty of war atrocities. Cf. "Asian Flashes," in *Impact* (May 1973), p. 148.