

Internationalization of the BANGSAMORO STRUGGLE

Samuel K. Tan

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by

Samuel K. Tan

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To the cultural communities,
especially the Bangsamoro people,
this modest work is dedicated.

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Foreword

Dr. Samuel K. Tan's *Internationalization of the Bangsamoro Struggle* is an excellent multidisciplinary study of Moro secessionism. It provides a comprehensive discussion of: 1) the movement's historical antecedents in power plays between Muslim institutions and colonial forces which thwarted the expansion of the Muslim state and eroded its political, economic and cultural predominance in the South; 2) its emergence in 1968 as an organized social force, which, while precipitated by the 'Jabidah Massacre' on March 18, 1968, was born out of frustration with the prevailing conditions of life in Muslim Mindanao and the perceived neglect by the national government; 3) its designation after serious disagreements over the implementation of the 1976 Tripoli Agreement as the 'Bangsamoro Struggle' to capture and reassert the independence of the Moro nation and the cultural identity of its people; and 4) its divisions, weaknesses, strengths, and imperatives as it pursues the separatist option in the midst of contemporary developments.

The book could not have been launched at a better time. It sees print in a historical conjuncture when the world is witnessing, on one hand, the breakdown of the Soviet empire and the intensification of ethnic conflicts, and on the other, opportunities for adversaries to resolve deep-seated antagonisms in the pursuit of negotiated peace. The Serbian-Bosnian-Muslim conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the recent accord between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization eloquently illustrate these contradictory processes.

As the book comes out of press, the Philippine government panel and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) will be breaking bread in the same negotiation table in Jakarta to discuss the possibility of peace in Mindanao. Dr. Tan's book should be read by the participants in the peace process for its invaluable insights on the secessionist movement. While he discussed other conflicts in Mindanao--between the state and radicalism, between society and tribalism, between society and criminalism, and between various elements and factions which constitute the 'checkered fabric' of this complex society--Dr. Tan gives greater significance to the MNLF movement as the most serious insurgency problem in the ultimate analysis because its separatist ideology threatens national sovereignty.

Dr. Tan asserts that the Bangsamoro secessionist movement is more than just 'the resurrection of the Moro nation in history' or the establishment of a purely orthodox Islamic state in the South. It is akin to other Muslim movements for self-determination. Based on historical documents, Dr. Tan argues that the secessionist ideology considers all inhabitants of Mindanao part of the Bangsamoro identity regardless of race, religion, creed, or status. Thus, Islam is only one dimension, albeit a very important one. 'Territoriality and a sense of independence from national dominance or control constitute the unifying dimension of the ideology'. This suggests a problem in the approach of the State to the 'Moro issue'.

To date, state policies and programs to counteract the secessionist movement are based on religious premises which categorize the Moro struggle as a purely Islamic phenomenon. As a consequence, the people in Mindanao have been polarized into Christians and Muslims. Dr. Tan's worst fear is the unwitting promotion of a religious war from which 'nobody, not even the state can profit'.

The equation of the movement with Islam in the consciousness of state agents is perhaps bolstered by the admission of the MNLF into the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) in 1977. A central argument of the book, from which the title is derived, is that the development of the secessionist movement received impetus from the efforts to internationalize the Bangsamoro struggle. Sustained diplomatic activities of the MNLF as well as support from the grassroots of Muslim society and from civic, professional, and academic groups contributed to the final phase of the movement's internationalization as a member of the OIC.

As far as the Philippine government is concerned, OIC involvement constitutes an interference in national affairs, a view Dr. Tan asserts to be diametrically opposed to that held by Muslims. The author further argues that the OIC is 'indeed sympathetic to the government's desire to uphold the integrity of its sovereignty'. However, it continues to adamantly support the MNLF because it cannot ignore the 'just demands of an important part of the *ummah*', for to do so is 'to abandon its sacred mandate from no less than God'. Furthermore, it is a signatory to the Tripartite Tripoli Agreement which guarantees support for the Moro demand for real autonomy while recognizing the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic. From Dr. Tan's view, rejecting or belittling the significance and validity of the accord is counterproductive because it insults both the MNLF and the OIC.

These and the other insights imbedded in the discussion of each chapter of the book deserve attention from policymakers and peace negotiators. It is our hope that these insights, combined with a genuine desire on the part of participants in the peace process to resolve the 'Moro problem' and a deeper understanding of current developments and considerations like ethnic composition and relations, class divisions within Muslim groups, the emergence of a fundamentalist group and other factions, and the position of significant neighboring states, among others, will contribute meaningfully in forging creative strategies which will pave the way for peace and development in Mindanao.

The UP Center for Integrative and Development Studies (UP-CIDS) is proud to have supported Dr. Samuel K. Tan's research and publication of this, the third book published under the Peace, Conflict Resolution and Human Rights Series of the Center. We are grateful to the following individuals and institutions: the Ford Foundation for providing the funds for research and publication, Dr. Serafin D. Quiason and Prof. Asiri Abubakar for their substantial reactions to the first report; Dr. Isagani R. Medina for his incisive comments; Jocelyn de Jesus for editing the manuscript, the CSSP Publications Office–Prof. Laura L. Samson for providing invaluable editorial and technical assistance and supervision, Xerxes Nitafan for layouting, Zenaida Ebalan for encoding; Prof. Lormie Valino-Lazo for designing the cover; and the UP-CIDS staff particularly Bella Lucas, Joy Aparis, Teresita Tamayo, Nicolas Zircon Payawal, Ellen Cometa, Joyce Dimayuga, and Ernesto Leonardo for their unrelenting support in various stages of the research and final printing of the *Internationalization of the Bangsamoro Struggle*. Our deepest appreciation goes to the author who inspires us with his deep and sustained commitment to scholarship.

Maria Cynthia Rose Banzon Bautista, Ph.D.
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Introduction

The study of "Moro secessionism" is one of the most urgent and interesting inquiries since the outbreak of the Huk Rebellion in Central Luzon after the last Pacific War. But in a sense the "Moro Problem," as it is often referred to in historical and contemporary literature, is unique and distinct in Philippine revolutionary history. It is premised not so much on the overthrow of the national government or the political status quo - as was the case of the Huk uprising - but rather on the separation of one-third of Philippine territory described more precisely as the "Bangsamoro Homeland." The territorial imperative consists of the entire islands of Mindanao, Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi and Palawan and all the adjacent islands and islets comprehended by respective provincial boundaries, involving about 44,500 square miles of Philippine territory.

Thus the Muslim struggle, which is prominently spearheaded by the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), is the most serious from the standpoint of national sovereignty and integrity. Although in a way, the Marxist-Leninist radical movement still poses a graver fundamental threat to internal security, it does not involve territorial alienation. It only seeks the reform or radical change of the status quo. In effect, it favors the preservation of Philippine territory and does not threaten the Republic's sovereignty. It is in this context that the focus of research and study, especially academic, must be directed to the Bangsamoro struggle whose dimensions and implications to national interests and development have radically deviated from historical patterns.

This study is a modest attempt to contribute to academic efforts to provide a basis of understanding the "Moro issue." It is not a definitive study. It has no pretensions to finality. It only seeks to initiate a process of inquiry that might be able to identify the basic components of a movement whose profound effects on Philippine interests and directions cannot be ignored.

Specifically, as expressed in the research proposal early in 1989, the study hopes to:

1) determine the internal causes or preconditions to conflict which harks back to the advent of colonialism in the archipelago;

2) identify factors responsible for the internationalization of the conflict; and

3) see if there is something important and basic in the Tripoli Agreement beyond the political provisions that constitute it.

The methodology employed in the study involves a multidisciplinary approach to written as well as oral historical data - which, by their very nature, require this kind of approach if they are to be of any relevance to contemporary problems of Muslim conflict. Although oral history was largely the basis of the study, published materials had been utilized for the evaluation of oral historical data or for getting insight from external perceptions of the struggle. In a sense, the methodological thrust to bring both oral and written sources to shed light on the issue is what, to a large extent, is meant by the study's objectivity. In this regard, some amount of subjectivity is expected where empirical verification or basis is not possible.

But the methodological approach to the material is somewhat restrained by three unavoidable limitations: 1) the lack of access to diplomatic and international sources, especially primary ones like documents, correspondences, classified reports, etc. on Bangsamoro activities abroad; 2) the technical limitations of oral historical research arising from the underdeveloped academic/ professional facilities of the local research areas; and 3) the lack of audio-visual aids, except the limited use of tape recorders, thus investing a great deal of hope on field diaries and personal descriptions of data gathered by research assistants, especially the field associate.

The reliability and validity of the study necessarily have to be achieved by corroborative and indirect sources which have access to otherwise unavailable materials or information. The interviews of field informants had to be confirmed or corroborated by interviews of those who constitute the core of MNLF leadership with some participation in external decision making processes. The difficulty of getting into the view of the MNLF Chairman was somehow solved through analysis of the Chairman's taped speeches and messages, particularly the ones delivered in late 1989. This was then verified through discussions with some members of the hierarchy, including one in the inner circle of the MNLF leadership,

Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), the umbrella organization of the Muslim world.

For purposes of convenience, the study has three parts. The first deals with the etiology of conflict, and the second with its international dimension. Three chapters (1, 2 and 3) present the first part and three chapters (4, 5, and 6) comprise the second part. The third part provides the implications of the study in one distinct chapter (7). Appendices are provided for important references, and an annotated bibliography of sources ends the study.

Finally, certain terms in the study need to be defined to avoid conceptual or interpretative ambiguities and problems. First to be clarified is "internationalization," which seems to be self-explanatory if its root in "international" is simply what it is all about. However, in the study, which tries to narrow the parameter of analysis, the meaning is more confined to the specific world of Islam as represented by the Organization of Islamic Conference or its delegated authority in the Quadripartite Committee. The term, therefore, avoids the larger and complex diplomatic processes outside *darul Islam.* Otherwise, the theoretical aim of the study becomes difficult to manage. Nonetheless, within the limited time allotted to the project, efforts were made to touch on matters beyond the Muslim world, relevant to the subject of analysis.

The second term that should be defined is *Bangsamoro,* which has been adopted to the struggle or movement described in historical and other types of literature as *Moro* or *Muslim.* The term is contemporary or recent. It is not used in colonial and three decades of postcolonial history. The term *Moro* was the one used by Western sources to refer to the islamized inhabitants of the archipelago, whose level of culture or civilization, according to Western criteria and standards, was "primitive" or below Western concepts of human progress. Sometimes the term *Mohammedan* was used to emphasize the Muslim doctrinal relation to the Founder of Islam. This was the meaning adopted by the Philippine Supreme Court since colonial times. All the undesirable aspects of human behavior were associated with this level and the specific point of historical reference was the Spanish memory or perception of seven centuries of Moorish rule in Spain, and from which the term *Moro* was derived. In a sense also, the term *Muslim* has a specific reference to religious distinction applied to those who have embraced Islam in the Philippines, but the distinction does

not necessarily carry the same pejorative meaning of cultural depravity, inferiority or deficiency as does the term *Moro*. The post-independence era of Philippine history had seen the term *Muslims* being equated with a definite community of people who profess Islam and more or less living in Southern Philippines.

The other and last term that needs clarification is "secessionism" in relation to "separatism" and "struggle," two words often used interchangeably with the first. "Separatism" is the term the radical MNLF prefers to use when talking of the movement because it suggests the most significant stand of the MNLF - that the Bangsamoro nation was never really a part of the Philippines. Whereas the term "seessionism," which has generally been used by Filipinos, especially by the government, including Muslims who have supported government policies and efforts, suggests the idea that the *Moros* or *Muslims* are Filipinos but have opted for independence. Consequently, while both terms are premised on independence, the primary starting concepts are different. The study does not aim to resolve the conceptual issue but merely to situate it in proper historical and contemporary perspective. It is in this regard that for the whole phenomenon of the Bangsamoro conflict the term "struggle" is instead used to give the clear image of neutrality of inquiry and, hopefully, an objectivity of analysis. But where the specific views or perceptions of the MNLF are involved, "separatism" or its other forms will be used, in the same way that the term "secessionism" or its derivatives are employed in portions of the study dealing with the government position and its supporters.

Lastly, the theoretical approaches suggested by Harry Eckstein in "An Etiology of Internal Wars" is adopted in this study because it provides the kind of magnitude and latitude necessary in bringing all the possible issues behind the Muslim struggle and, therefore, has a better chance of providing the holistic analysis of the casual motivation of conflict. Briefly, Eckstein argues convincingly, after a theoretical review of the ideological models associated with the pre-Hegelian and Marxist paradigms, that the etiology of internal conflict, of which the Muslim struggle is a good illustration, can best be viewed in two perspectives: first, in relation to what he calls "preconditions" to conflict and second, in what he calls the "precipitants" of conflict. The preconditions are the antecedent circumstances, historical or otherwise, that form the

immediate context of conflict, but are not necessarily its cause. The "precipitants" are the direct igniting circumstances of the conflict.

With the foregoing classification, we now begin the analysis of the Muslim struggle, starting with the historical processes that have contributed to the making of the Muslim perceptions of the roots of their long conflict, and the relation they have to the contemporary character of the movement. In the course of analysis, efforts will be made to show the interconnections between historical circumstances to demonstrate the convergence of these circumstances on the Muslim, individual and collective consciousness, thus providing explanation for the complex rationale of the Muslim struggle, especially its internationalization.

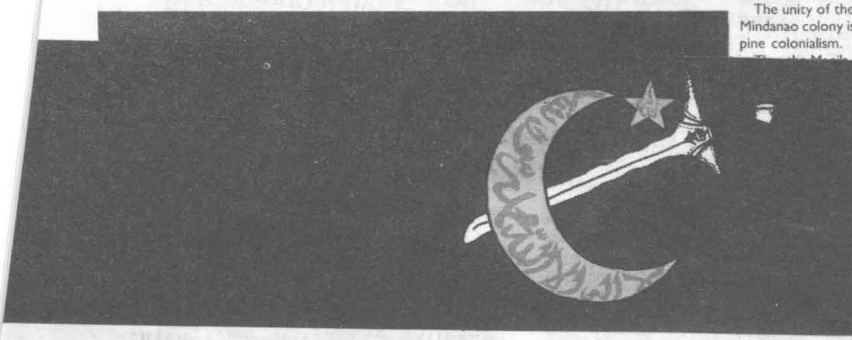
But secessionism as a social phenomenon cannot just be fairly appreciated from the standpoint of its causal dimension. There is a larger context beyond cause that needs to be understood from the perspective of inter or multi-disciplinary methodology which, in a sense, demands a kind of comparative analysis. It is in this regard that Ralph Premdas's model, referred to by the author as the "Primordial-Secondary Factors" approach, is indispensable as a theoretical tool. Premdas, after reviewing and assessing the various models like "modernization" of Arend Lijphart, "Internal Colonialism" of Michael Hechter, "The Political Economy" of the Marxist-Leninist School, and the "Phases Stages" theory of John Wood *et.al.*, suggests a more fundamental delineation between the "absolute" and, therefore, irreconcilable basis of secessionism, and the "relative", and, therefore, vulnerable motivations of secessionism in order to understand the rise and fall, the stability and continuity of the secessionist movement in both developed and developing countries. The Premdas model thus complements meaningfully Eckstein's theoretical approach.

Mahardika
(SELF-DETERMINATION AND INDEPENDENCE)

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BANGSAMORO UNITY VIS-A-VIS PHILIPPINE COLONIALISM

The unity of the Bangsamoro people of Mindanao colony is a great threat to Philippine colonialism.



MAHARDIKA
(SELF-DETERMINATION AND INDEPENDENCE)

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE MORO NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT

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Chapter I
Inertia of History

Eckstein's preconditional criteria fit into the historical context of Moro Secessionism. The movement of Muslim history is guided by the internal rhythm of the Muslim struggle somewhat influenced only by the nature of Muslim institutions and the challenges confronting them. There are, therefore, four distinguishable lines of motion which have run through over 400 centuries of struggle since the introduction of Islam in the 13th century. These are: 1) the struggle for political power, 2) the struggle for economic progress, 3) the struggle for social distinction, and 4) the struggle for cultural identity.

The Struggle for Political Power

The advent of Islam in the Philippines in about A.D. 1280 was not accompanied by the immediate establishment of Islamic political structures and institutions. It would not be until after almost two centuries of gradual Islamization that what is now the Muslim South witnessed the rise of a concrete political system called the Sultanate in Sulu in A.D. 1450 and in Maguindanao in A.D. 1511. Thus, the pre-Sultanate period was marked by the struggle of the rajahships and datuships for the maintenace of their independence until Islamization inevitably led to the consolidation and centralization of political authority in the Sultan who was the symbolic embodiment of Islam. The Sultanate, therefore, which integrated the datuships and rajahships as the foundational level of the political system, represented a blending of Islam and the indigenous political culture. This is what can be regarded as the Muslim political tradition that has figured in the subsequent struggle against colonialism, imperialism and neocolonialism.

With the advent of colonialism in the 16th century, the Muslim political struggle had been elevated to a higher level of confrontation with two external powers, Spain and the United States. Spanish and American colonial policies, although different in approaches, were fundamentally the same as far as the Muslims were concerned

because, as Christian powers, Spain and the United States shared the larger purpose of Christianization not only as a matter of colonial strategy but also as a matter of divine injunction. To colonialism, the Christianization of the archipelago would not only add to the harvest of souls but also to the economic exploitation of the islands, a direction that was predetermined by the impulses and aims of Western expansionism.

The reaction of the Muslim South, which was almost singly represented by the Sultanate, was to resist colonial intrusion and presence by diplomacy, if possible, or by armed conflict if necessary. Therefore, as would be shown subsequently, violence and diplomacy became the means of the Muslim struggle against colonialism for more than four centuries. Although suffering frequently from Spanish spoiling expeditions during the two and a half centuries of Spanish rule, the Muslims succeeded in maintaining their political dominance by controlling the seas through various Muslim fleets which consisted of the Maguindanao and the Sulu fleets of various watercraft and vessels, especially the huge *caracoas*. The latter were the Sultanate's combat vessels.

But the subsequent neutralization of the Muslim fleets by the mid-19th century, especially after 1860, with the introduction of steam gunboats inevitably led to the decline of Muslim political power and the erosion of the Sultanate foundations in both Sulu and Maguindanao. The Sultanates were compelled to enter into treaties with Spain beginning with the Simuay Treaty in 1636 between Maguindanao Sultan Kudarat and Spain, and the Sulu-Spanish Treaty of 1645, up to the humiliating treaty between Sulu and Captain General Jose Malcampo in 1876 following the destruction of the Sulu fleet in Jolo. The subsequent Spanish offensives in the next decade penetrated into the heart of Muslim land in Jolo, Lanao and Maguindanao. This resulted in the strengthening of Spanish military strongholds which further restricted the political range of Muslim activities. It also led to the emergence of a new Muslim response -- the use of the ***sabilallah***, an institution of conflict that individualized the concept of ***Jihad*** (Holy War) and, therefore, created a most serious problem to Spanish security in Muslim areas. In a sense, this new institution was an indication of the Muslims' unwillingness to give up political power even at the cost of self-annihilation and the destruction of their homeland. Only the retreat of Spanish incursions from

Mindanao on account of the outbreak of the Revolution in Luzon in 1896 gave the Muslim struggle a respite from a costly conflict. But the final settlement of the Spanish-American War through the Treaty of Paris in 1898, while resulting in the Spanish withdrawal from the Philippines, posed a more formidable challenge to the Muslim political struggle.

With a more sophisticated and devastating military technology and strategy, the American campaigns in Muslimland from 1899 to 1913 destroyed the Muslim military capacity and consequently further emasculated the datuship's and Sultanate's political power and made political compromise more urgent. On August 20, 1899, the Sulu Sultanate concluded the Bates Treaty with the United States, which recognized American supremacy and presence in Sulu -- but not necessarily American sovereignty as the native version of the treaty indicates. In Lanao, beginning in 1903, John Pershing had pressured the local datus into respecting American sovereignty by personally presenting themselves to Camp Vicors. But some recalcitrant datus, like Sajiduciman of Bayan and the datus of Bayabao, refused to do so. In other words, by the first decade of American rule, Muslim leadership had become divided -- one faction continuing the anticolonial struggle and the other accepting the new option of compromise in a liberal democracy. The organization of the Moro Province in 1903 provided the structure for the accommodation and the integration of the Muslim leaders willing to participate in the American colonial system. But those who opted to resist any compromise had to face an American leadership determined to crush any further challenge to American rule. In Cotabato, Datu Ali in 1903 and Datu Alamada in 1912 exemplified this continuing resistance, however futile. In Sulu, the armed resistance was more widespread and sustained by Panglima Hassan of Luuk (1903-1905), Datu Usap, Datu Pala, Paruka Utik, and even the Sultan himself whom the Americans suspected of being in cahoots with the resisting leaders. This suspicion led to the unilateral abrogation of the Bates Treaty in 1904. The last decisive battle was fought at Bud Bagsak in 1913, resulting in the Sultanate's ultimate loss of any political power through the Carpenter-Kiram Agreement of March 22, 1915 which only retained for the Sultan his spiritual power over his subjects. With the Sultanate's political collapse the Muslims lost the political influence they had enjoyed since the 15th century. In effect, the American

strategy to separate the Sultanate's political power from its religious function had thrown a monkey wrench on the institution's underlying Islamic concept. Henceforth the "separation of church from state" principle would deny the Muslim's access to political power. Muslim leadership began, albeit reluctantly, to explore the possibilities in the American liberal, democratic system whose rules more often than not clashed with the Islamic system of governance.

But what exacerbated the Muslim frustrations in the struggle to recover their lost power was the integration of the Christian Filipino leadership into the American colonial administration's democratic structure as active partner, however subordinate its position might be. This meant that the Muslims had not only lost power to the Americans but also to the Christian Filipinos, a political reality whose psychological impact on Muslim consciousness would find its concrete expression in the expansion of the Muslim struggle to include the campaign against the Christian Filipino leadership. But the vast resources of the American colonial apparatus were behind the Christian Filipino leadership whose role in the entire scheme as enforcers of colonial aims and policies dovetailed with the American plan to gradually shift the burden of bureaucratic administration in the local levels to the natives, thus reserving the highest level of colonial authority and power for the American officials in the central government.

Eventually, by the time civil government was established in Mindanao and Sulu in 1915 under the first civil governor, Frank W. Carpenter, the Muslims and the Sultanate, individually or collectively, had definitely lost all political advantage or leverage, despite the sporadic outbreaks of disturbance up to the Pacific War in 1941. The road to political power under American rule was through participation in the democratic processes -- especially election, which required sufficient educational exposure to American modern concepts and values. This area caught the Muslims, including their leaders, unprepared. Not that they lacked intelligence; rather, they lacked adequate knowledge of Western civilization, especially the ability to read, write and communicate in Spanish and/or English -- two linguistic vehicles necessary for real participation in the American colonial bureaucracy. It was not until Frank C. Laubach brought literacy to the Muslim South, with the breakthrough of his literacy work in Lanao in the 1930s, that Muslim efforts for initial participation saw a meaningful direction.

Only a few members of Muslim royalty, mainly the boys, found their way to American-established schools in Manila. A few, like Princess Tarhata Kiram and Hadji Gulamu Rasul of Sulu, had the privilege of being sent to the United States for education in the 1920s. Otherwise, Muslim education for citizenship and democratic participation would not really bear fruit until the middle of American rule.

By the time the United States had seriously considered the grant of Philippine independence in the Tydings-McDuffie Law in 1934, political advantage and power had become the privilege of the Christian Filipinos. The Muslims were literally left behind because of lack of academic/professional qualification and, therefore, had to either accept subordination to Christian Filipino leadership or to demand separation from the envisioned independent Philippine Republic. The latter was expressed by a group of Muslim leaders in a petition to the United States President in 1930 not to include the Muslim South in an independent Philippines, but to organize it as a territory of the United States. But the rising star of the Christian Filipinos was an inevitable reality. It had been determined by the very rationale of American colonial rule, designed precisely to achieve the kind of native interaction consistent with the liberal democratic ideology and system. The Commonwealth government (1935-1946) provided the Christian Filipinos the transition period with which to crystallize the direction of the Filipino nation. For the Muslim political future, especially the Sultanate, the prospect of recovering the lost power of yesteryears was gone. No less than President Manuel L. Quezon ended the political succession of the Sulu Sultanate in 1936 after the death of the Sultan, thus subjecting all succeeding Muslim leaders under the Commonwealth authority. But Muslim leadership insisted on the Sultanate's continuity despite its apparent reduction to an impotent political entity vis-á-vis the Filipino national state. Undoubtedly, the question of identity and survival was paramount in the consciousness of the Sulu Muslims.

Thus in 1937 two sultanates were established, one under Sultan Ombra Amilbangsa, a datu from Simunul with no historical linkage to the royal datuship but whose claim to succession was premised on his marriage to Hadji Dayang Dayang Piandao, the last of the House of Kiram. The local leaders accepted this new political twist as the best way to reconcile the sultanate's need to

survive and the imperative of national sovereignty as declared by Quezon. The latter recognized Ombra's Sultanate as part of the local political system for purposes of integration, but not for purposes of governmental administration. It was the Sultanate's parallel and subordinate relation that further eroded the institution's historical relevance to the traditional framework of power. Consequently, a rival Sultanate was established in Patikul under Datu Tambuyong, who assumed the title of Sultan Jainal Abidin II and supported by Princess Tarhata Kiram and her husband, Datu Punjungan. Since then, the postwar period of Philippine history, which was significantly marked by the establishment of the Philippine Republic in 1946, witnessed the political dichotomy in the Sulu Sultanate until the issue of proprietary rights over the Bornean territory of the Sultanate pushed aside the latter's political issue. In September 1960 Sultan Ismael Kiram relinquished, in an instrument, the Sultanate's sovereignty to the Philippine government in the interest of achieving the best financial settlement or proprietary gains from the Borneo (Sabah) territory on which the British and Malaysian governments had laid absolute political sovereignty.

That the relinquishment of the Sultanate's claim to political sovereignty was relative to the economic issue was clear from the proviso of the 1960 "deed of cession" which declared that sovereignty would revert back to the Sultanate in case of the Philippine government's failure to pursue the Sultanate's claims over Sabah. Thus at the outbreak of Muslim separatist or secessionist movements in 1968, the economic dimension of the Muslim political struggle had become the principal concern of Sulu leaders. In the process, too, the Sultanate had been reduced to almost an insignificant entity in the political decision-making processes of the State, including those directly affecting the future of the Muslims in the archipelago. The erosion of the traditional base of political culture and powers would shift the burden of political struggle to the new breed of Muslim leaders with an orientation far more radical but subtle, ruthless but effective, nontraditional but integrative.

The Struggle for Economic Progress

At the time of Western contact in the early 16th century, the Muslim South had developed a lucrative economic system that

linked it to the rest of the Philippine archipelago in both a beneficial domestic trade and a kind of foreign trade that brought Southeast Asians and their goods into the Sulu archipelago from as far as Manila through Muslim intermediaries. The external trade attracted Western traders and companies which gave the Muslim South the strategic economic importance it enjoyed for a long time. The economic advantages and leverages of the Muslim South in the external trade provided the basis for its political influence and dominance in the archipelago through the Sultanates of Sulu and Maguindanao and an economically active system of local datuship and rajahship.

But this economic advantage would be effectively neutralized by the entry of Western colonialism at the turn of the 16th century in Southeast Asia. In the Muslim South, the impact of colonial intrusion and interference would be seen in a series of transformations in the patterns of economic processes and activities. The fall of the Muslim Kingdom of Manila to Spanish forces under Miguel Lopez de Legazpi in 1570 subsequently led to the elimination of one of the most strategic and progressive Muslim entrepots of trade in the archipelago. From Spanish chronicles and records, Manila was the converging point of the archipelago's internal and external trade, including that with Brunei which involved the chieftains of Central and Southern Luzon. No less than Governor Francisco de Sande admitted that his expedition to Brunei in 1579 was related to the seizure of economic initiatives and control over the Brunei-Manila trade by conquest of the Muslim South. For this purpose, 400 Spaniards, 1500 natives and 300 Borneans were used, which constituted an alliance of economic interests seeking to profit from the breakup of Muslim monopoly.

The failure of Spanish efforts to obtain this economic objective shifted strategy to the neutralization of Muslim Mindanao by destroying the vital role of Sulu and Maguindanao in the trade pattern. This would be done through either conquest or diplomacy, or both. It was in this attempt to subdue the Muslims of Mindanao through an expedition under Captain Gabriel de Rivera that the Spaniards saw the importance of the Muslims' economic control to the Spanish designs on the archipelago. Even the Spanish troops' food provisions were dependent on Spanish-controlled areas. De Rivera's forces had to retreat to Kawit in Zamboanga because proper subsistence could not be had in Pulangi which was

controlled by the Maguindanaos. The same was true of the experiences of subsequent expeditions to Maguindanao. Likewise, the Spanish incursions into Maranaw territory under Captain Francisco Atienza with 50 Spaniards and Caragans in 1693 had to confront not only the serious danger in the interior areas but also the access to food resources.

Therefore, the Mindanao Muslims' violent reactions to Spanish intrusion were not only in retaliation to the human losses inflicted by Spanish weapons, but also to prevent the further disruption of a lucrative internal and external trade. The same situation also occurred in Sulu where Muslim economic losses to Spanish spoiling expeditions included not only the destruction of farms and villages in Jolo Island, but also the seizure or destruction of trading vessels and the looting of valuable merchandise and items by Spanish troops. This directly affected the economic resources of the Muslim leaders who played crucial roles in raids to the Visayas and Luzon. Rajah Bongso personally led the raids on the Camarines in response to the reported maltreatment of Datu Ache, his immediate aide, and the confiscation of the latter's trading items despite the earlier peace agreement between the Sultan and the Spanish government.

In addition to the interdiction of trade, Spanish expeditions were also motivated by the desire to acquire lands as *encomiendas*. This was evident in the case of Captain Francisco Esteban de Figueroa, who led a large expedition in 1596 to the Pulangi in Mindanao -- a rather risky and costly venture which he personally financed and organized with encouragement from the government. The only conditions Figueroa asked were that a) he be appointed Governor of Mindanao for life and b) lands acquired by conquest and pacification be distributed as *encomiendas*, one-third to him and two-thirds to those involved in the expedition. Had Figueroa survived the Maguindanao *kampilan* clash and succeeded the agrarian pattern would have, earlier in Spanish efforts, wiped out the series of ancestral lands in Mindanao.

What had not been accomplished by direct conquest through subsequent expeditions since 1596 had been gradually realized by the process of town -- or settlement -- building from native converts in Mindanao as well as migrants from Luzon and Visayas who were encouraged by Spanish pacification efforts, and, especially, Christianization. This more or less followed the

reduccion successfully applied by the Spanish government in Luzon. Thus, as fast as converts were made and areas pacified, permanent settlements were established, whose affairs were managed by the religious. In Mindanao, the role of the Jesuits and the Recollects was decisive in gradually strengthening Spanish rule in the Southern islands, including the alienation of territories from ancestral lands of hill tribes and Muslim groups. The 19th century in Mindanao was marked by the rise of towns in Davao, Cotabato, Misamis, Zamboanga, Surigao, and even in the Sulu archipelago, in the process breaking up the economic patterns of internal trade which was dominated by the Muslims. Then, the destruction of the Muslim naval hold, by mid-19th century, after the disastrous Antonio de Urbiztondo expedition to Jolo in 1851, also altered the external trade of Southern Philippines in favor of Spanish rule and other European powers which had converged economically on the region, either through treaties or international pressures. Consequently, the 19th century for the Muslims marked the final loss of the economic advantage they have enjoyed for so many centuries, despite the withdrawal of Spanish troops from the south in 1899.

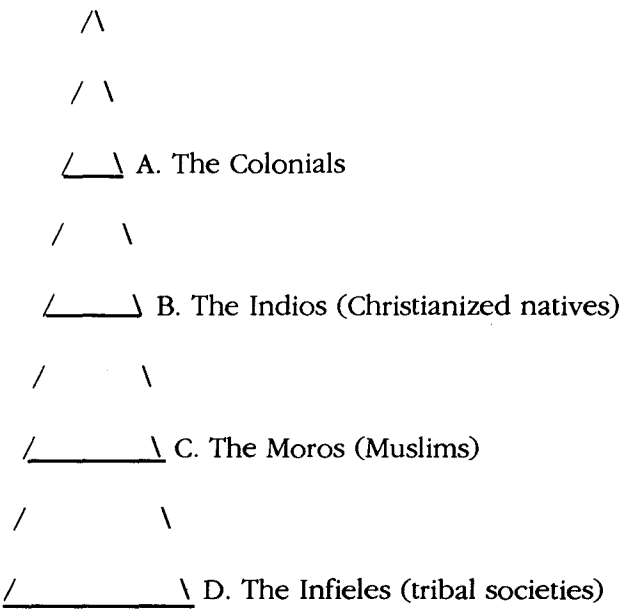
The American entry into Southern Philippines, following American acquisition of sovereignty from Spain in the 1898 Paris Treaty, subtly eased out whatever economic sway the Muslims had retained. The pattern of internal and external trade continued to push the Muslims and other cultural communities toward the periphery of the American colonial system. The Christian Filipinos and foreign sectors performed the role of economic intermediaries subverting Muslim influence. The end of the American war against the Filipino revolutionists in 1901 had encouraged even former military personnel to explore the economic possibilities in the archipelago. American entrepreneurs, adventurers, and business firms began looking at the rich lands and resources of Mindanao, particularly in areas like Davao, Cotabato, Lanao, Bukidnon, Basilan, and Sulu. Even Japanese interests, which were first noted in the American road project in Luzon, started to move to Davao where they developed abaca plantations. The holding of industrial fairs during the term of Gen. Tasker H. Bliss as Governor of the Moro Province (1906-1909) was not only to reorient the natives, including the Muslims, toward the American free enterprise economic system, but also to draw the American agricultural and

business interests to the development of American plantations and business in Southern Philippines. The best examples were the rubber plantations in Basilan, the coconut plantations in Zamboanga and Sulu, and the pineapple plantations in Cotabato and Bukidnon.

By the end of American colonial rule, the economic system of the Philippines had already integrated the Philippine territory along the American free enterprise and monetary systems which were zealously enforced by the American colonial officials, who utilized the Christian Filipinos effectively as enforcers. Such an integration forced the Muslim participation to the periphery of the colonial economy. Specifically, agricultural production was pegged to the basic consumption needs of local societies and the traditional barter trade exchanges between traditional communities. In the case of the Sulu archipelago, the Tausug-Sama economic interdependence flourished. But the external trade between the Muslims had been so restructured to fit into the needs of the colonial economy, in which the Muslims merely supplied the raw materials since the technology and expertise were provided by the Christian Filipinos, Chinese, and other foreign intermediaries. In particular, the more important foreign trade, which in precolonial times was a near-Muslim monopoly, had become dominated by the Americans. Consequently, the Muslim loss of revenues from trade and commerce, aggravated by increasing population and new economic needs, fueled Muslim frustrations. The absence of any participation in industrial or semi-industrial activities generated by colonial policies and programs steadily eroded the Muslim capacity to gain any economic advantage from the colonial system. The local Muslim leadership was particularly affected, thus inducing them to turn to the political arena as the quickest avenue to the economic and material concessions of colonialism. But the political road to well-being, as earlier explained, had also become a difficult struggle, except in cases where Muslim leaders were prepared to subordinate themselves not only to the American, but also to the Filipino political leadership. The case of the sultans and datus was illustrative of the necessary emasculation of their political role -- a reality they had to accept, however painful and humiliating. The effect of such a politico-economic deterioration was evidenced by the loss of their status and importance in the colonial society.

The Struggle for Social Distinction

As had been noted, the loss of political and economic power led to the decline of social importance. Being rooted in power through superior technology and economic wealth in a colonial monetary system, the colonial system deprived the Muslim and other cultural communities of the capacity to achieve the level of equality in social status. Although generally prejudiced against the natives, whether Indios, Moros, or "Pagans", the colonial system accorded the Christian Filipinos a higher status than the non-Christians. Thus the structure of the colonial society looked like the following:



Under the colonial structure, the native leaders or elites -- including the sultans and datus, whether Christian, Muslim, or "Pagan" -- were subordinate to the colonialists. The only difference was that in the native social stratification the colonial officialdom and people regarded the Christian Filipinos as socially higher than the Muslims and "pagans". It can be seen from the socially-determined hierarchy that the Muslims had been relegated to a secondary position in society. This was a contrast to the

precolonial period when the Muslims enjoyed a comparatively higher social status than the other ethnolinguistic groups. In the colonial society, the public recognition of Muslim royalties was confined to their respective local areas of jurisdiction. With the establishment of American rule throughout the archipelago, the colonial society had further reduced the Muslim royalties and leaders to lesser importance even in their own localities. Thus the sultans and datus and other local leaders had to struggle to gain attention and significance, together with their own subjects whose access to equal social opportunities had eventually been made possible through colonial education and individual initiative.

The emergence of a new Muslim middle class composed of the educated and professionals further eroded the status of the traditional elite. Consequently, they had to pre-empt the pending fall into social oblivion by allowing their own sons and, later, daughters, to acquire colonial education, which was hitherto considered inimical to their traditional values. The case of Princess Tarhata Kiram and Hadji Gulamu Rasul of Sulu was illustrative of the irresistible cooptation of the Muslim elite by colonialism. The subsequent employment of royalties, like Dayang-Dayang Hadji Piandao, the last of the House of Kiram, in the civil service had reduced the Muslim royal class to ordinary government employees. Then, the limitation of the once vast landholding of the Sultan of Sulu to a few hundred hectares also reduced the Sultan to a mere landholder, and even just a cultivator of his private land --with little significant difference to the bigger landlords in Mindanao. He had been replaced by a number of American planters with bigger land concessions, and migrant Christian Filipinos from Luzon and the Visayas who had acquired rich lands during the American period, especially during the Commonwealth under President Manuel L. Quezon. In fact, it was part of Quezon's agrarian policy to encourage by law and other means the settlement of Christians in Mindanao and Sulu as a way of finally integrating Muslim Mindanao into the "national mainstream." The flow of thousands of Christian settlers to "the Land of Promise", as Mindanao was popularly called, became the work of pioneer leaders like Gen. Paulino Santos, whose role in the settlement of the fertile valleys of Cotabato had given him a prominent place in the history of Cotabato so that the capital was named in his honor. At the same time, the process of Christian migration and settlement altered the

character and contour of Muslim ancestral lands through land laws imposed by colonialism throughout the archipelago.

With traditional elitism virtually stripped of both its dignity and prestige as a result of political and economic processes, and with an emergent Muslim middle class of ilustrados and professionals, Muslim societies, including that of Sulu, was made vulnerable to both the good and the ills of progress. The consequent ferment stirred by exposure to modern Western influences -- from chewing gums to ideas -- resulted not only in the institutional dichotomies in Muslim societies, but also in an intrusion into the Muslim value systems. It was in this area of Muslim culture -- the very foundations of Muslim strength and identity -- that Muslim fears and anxieties began to build up. This became more obvious when the prospects of Philippine independence had become clear with the American withdrawal of sovereignty definitely with the Tydings-McDuffie Law, notwithstanding the effects of the Pacific War on the Philippines which raised speculations about the extension of American rule even after 1946.

The Struggle for Cultural Identity

The eventual grant of Philippine independence in 1946 gave rise to Muslim fears that whatever political, economic, social, and cultural possessions they had preserved under the American liberal democratic system might finally be lost to the Christian Filipinos who had become virtual heirs to the American colonial government. Among the Muslims' real fears included a crisis in identity. To a large extent the Muslims believed that their Islamic roots were being threatened by the dynamic changes initiated by colonialism. In effect, the Muslims wondered whether or not they could remain Muslims in the light of the change from American to Filipino rule, and vis-á-vis unrelenting pressures from Christian Filipinos in Moroland. But then, the new Republic was more concerned with addressing postwar recovery and reconstruction so that even the Muslims -- who were no less affected also by the war -- were preoccupied with the need to restore order in their societies. The Muslim leaders, including the Sultans, actively participated in wangling some benefits and aid from the American postwar financial package for Philippine reconstruction.

No significant Muslim disturbances were thus noted during the first decade of the Republic -- except for the Kamlon Uprising in Sulu in 1950, which was triggered largely by inter-Muslim feuds and unresolved land problems. The government's role in pacifying the conflict unfortunately turned into one of confrontation with the Kamlon people, who suspected the government to be supporting their local enemies and fanning the flames of conflict.

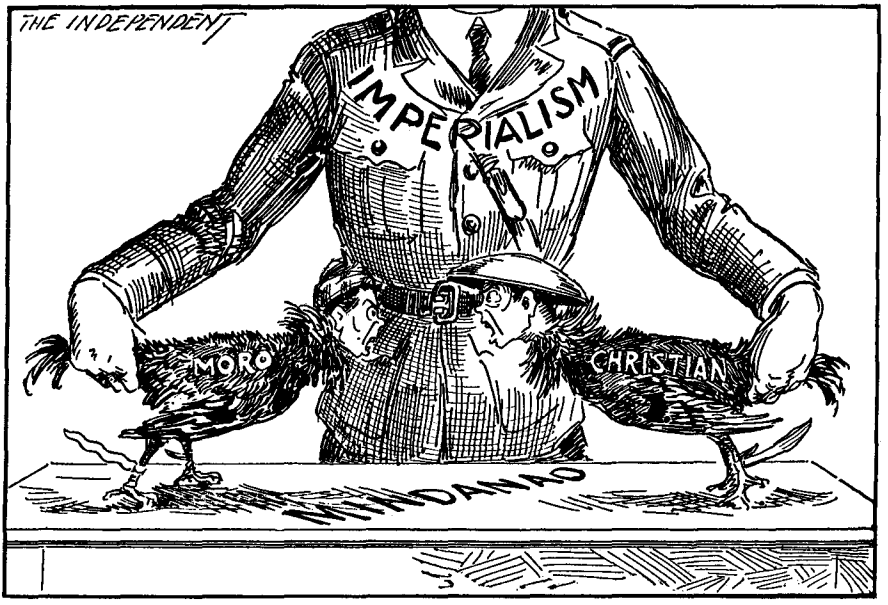
The surrender of Kamlon and his subsequent incarceration at Muntinlupa -- instead of being immediately resettled outside of Jolo, preferably in Tawi-Tawi, together with his followers -- only confirmed the Muslim perception that the government could not be fully trusted. The cunning former President Ferdinand Marcos pardoned and released Kamlon on September 11, 1968, Marcos's birthday. A good media coverage was given this event by way of showing Manila's sincerity to restore good relations with the Muslims. Ironically, the year also saw the founding of the secessionist movement by a militant group of Muslim youths and traditional leaders -- including Nur Misuari, who was to gain national and international recognition with his Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). Appropriately, the MNLF considered March 18 its memorial day, to commemorate the massacre of Tausug-Sama trainees on Corregidor Island after the Jabidah project fiasco.

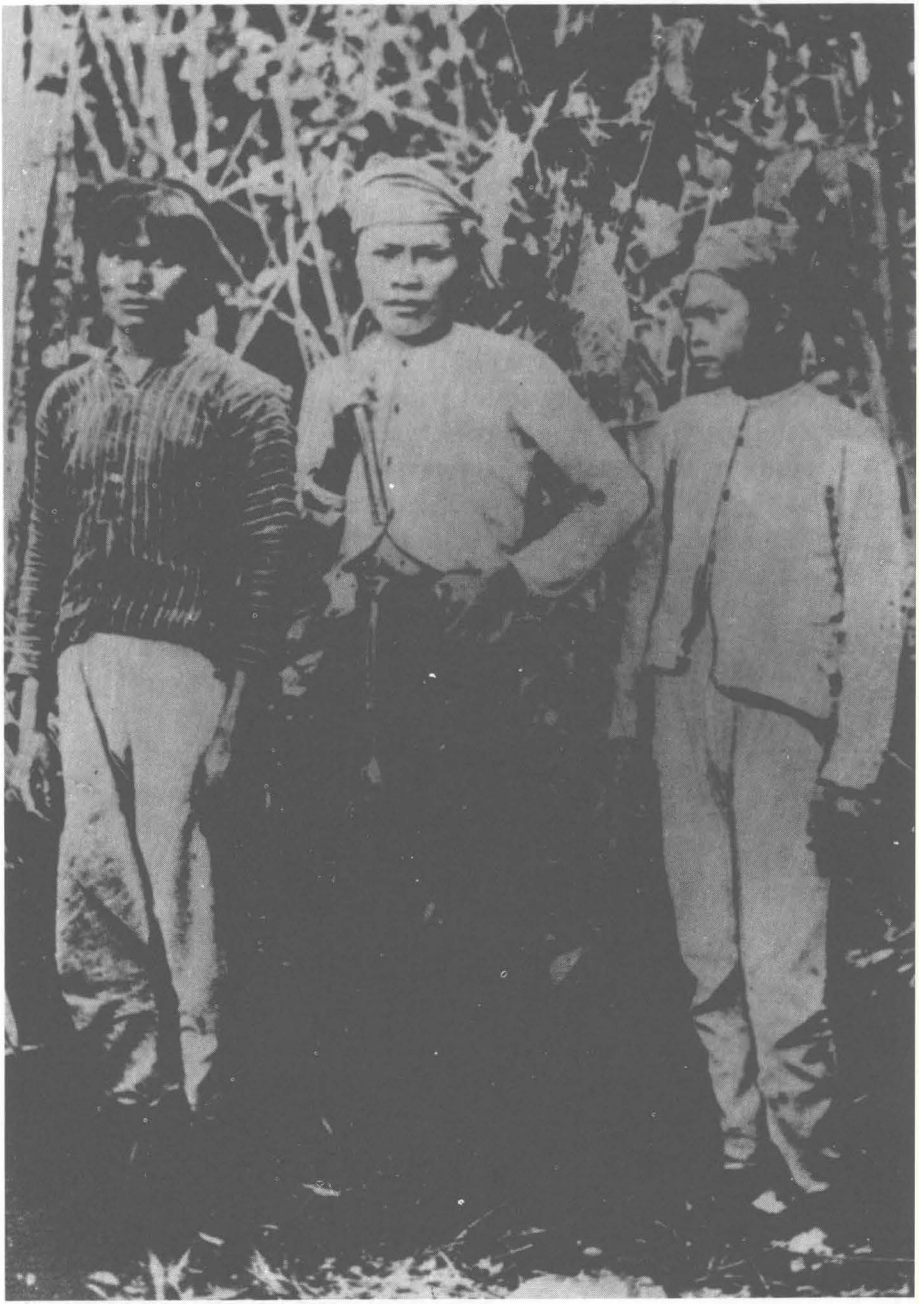
The government's answers or solutions to the nagging issue of Moro demands and aspirations could be seen in clear historical perspective. The next chapter categorizes the various government approaches. The historical context represents the "preconditions" in Eckstein's model. The "precipitant(s)" that triggered the secessionist movement in 1968 was the Jabidah Massacre on March 18, 1968 which has since become the Bangsamoro Day. This has been celebrated yearly by the MNLF as its founding anniversary. What was the Jabidah Massacre? How did it bear on the secessionist struggle? Why did it eventually become the MNLF's point of reference? These are some of the questions that lead to the understanding of what Eckstein means by "precipitants" of internal conflict.

To Muslim secessionists, the Jabidah Affair clearly demonstrated the Filipino leadership's regard for the Muslim minority in the country. The revelation of Jabin Arula, the lone survivor of the massacre, that the innocent Muslim youths were recruited and

trained for a subversive and sabotage mission against their Muslim brothers and kinsmen in Sabah, made the Muslims in the Philippines and the Ummah realize that as Filipinos their rights to life, liberty, and happiness were not guaranteed and protected by the very government expected to ensure these rights. Consequently, to the Muslim perception, Filipinism as an ideology is limited and relevant only to the aspirations of the Christian majority in the country. This brought to a powerful focus the convergence in Muslim consciousness of their historical losses to colonialism and Filipinism, including the last and most sensitive -- their Islamic identity. In effect, the Muslims believed that the unfortunate tragedy that befell the youthful trainees on Corregidor, hidden from the public, happened precisely because they were Muslims.

Although many Filipino politicians, including Benigno S. Aquino, Jr., denounced and criticized the Marcos administration for the massacre, they failed to neutralize the event's psychological impact which led to the secessionist alternative. Not a few regarded the high-profile tirades against government as more of an anti-Marcos reaction than any real empathy for the Muslim cause.





Chapter II
The Moro in History

One of the products of more than six centuries of Muslim history is the development of a Moro *Mujaheeden-Mujahidat* consciousness and profile in contemporary times. In the course of centuries of historical interaction from the introduction of Islam around A.D. 1280 up to the present, the Moro has acquired a name that evokes two contrasting perceptions of the Moro personality. The imagery serves as a means of understanding the attitudes, values and behavior of the Moro in relation to himself, his own kind, and other people.

The Moro in Tradition

From oral literature, which represents the richest source of Moro cultures, the Moro at once presents the typical image of a native with a natural instinct to recreate some aspects of Mother Nature in poetic, musical, and artistic expressions in order to fill the void in his preliterate mind. The image varies from one ethnic group to another, which serves to heighten the complexity of the Moro mind and personality.

As seen from various ethnic literatures, which have been well preserved, the Moro moves from one diversity to another while being bound by a common thread. The Tausug *parangsahil*, an ethnoepic of beauty, glorifies the exploits of a unique individual called the *sabilallah* (from the Arabic, meaning one who dies for the faith). In the epic, the Moro emerges as a hero seeking death as the only means toward the highest self-fulfillment. His passion to kill as many of the enemy - who is not a Muslim - is an act that brings social and spiritual merit. The *darangan*, an epic of sublime passion, is an embodiment of Maranao and Maguindanao psyche. The Moro image in this epic rises from the hero Bantugan, whose anti-Spanish or anticolonial struggle is glorified as a mark of heroism and culture.

From the oral literatures of the three major groups (Tausug, Maranao, and Maguindanao), the Moro image is an expression of

that remarkable courage which defies death and is dedicated to the Moro cause. In effect, the oral traditions present the positive image of the Moro as a lover of freedom and an enemy of all forms of foreign intrusion and bondage. And yet, there are other equally important types: the farmer; the woman who patiently grinds the cassava for food; the fisherman who paddles his vinta to sea; and, finally, the artist who sings the *luguh* and the *lolo*, who dances the *pangalay* or *singkil* with utter grace, and who carves the *ukkil* (*okir*) or *gulis* designs on his watercraft, utensils, and weapons. The various images of the Moro personalities portray the less-perceived dimension of the Moro character, that which shows the Moro as a lover of peace, a humanist interested in his creativity, and a man sensitive to the rhythm of nature and the universe. The gestures and sounds he makes with his hands, mouth and feet, while inscrutable to Western sensibilities, express the sublime in him.

In brief, the Moro's prehistorical image he never wrote, distorted that, before colonialism and civilization transformed it into its antithesis, the negative aspect of Moro personality that was also characteristic of societies or cultures threatened by external influences. This same distortion has kept the Moro alive in written sources and has made history a source of great injustice. But the Moro's survival in colonial history and his neocolonial forms in contemporary times is attributable to the life-giving energies he has imbibed from his Islamic roots. In effect, the period during which his personality was changed by Islam was really the beginning of his ancient history.

The Moro in Ancient History (1280-1565)

The 13th century, probably around A.D. 1280, marked the beginnings of Islam in the Philippines. A new consciousness was superimposed on the Moro mind as he began to appreciate what Islam could offer. As he embraced the faith, he began to feel that he was part of a larger world, the *darul islam*, which the *ummah* conceptually created. It is anchored on the belief that he who believes in Islam, especially the Five Pillars, becomes a part of a universal body of believers bound only by common spiritual ties. This is expressed forcefully in the *shahada*, the First Pillar: "There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his messenger." The Moro consciousness effortlessly transcended the boundaries of ethnicity

and geography and provided a sense of community otherwise absent in the pre-Islamic societies.

With this new consciousness, the Moro was transformed into a personality which sought like-minded spirits while searching to give new meaning to his activities and struggles. And yet, while cherishing his Islamic acquisition, he was not willing to abandon entirely his old ethnic culture. Instead, he found to his great satisfaction the blending of the two elements and, in the process, created a folk Islamic tradition. Around this cultural synthesis has revolved his life. Thus, the Moro had reconciled two forces, a world view which enabled him to see his roots as inseparable from his environment while simultaneously providing him a window to a vast world of new realities and hopes. Undoubtedly, he was deeply religious, venerating Allah as the one true God, although he also paid significant attention to the ancient spirits that animated his world. Thus the significance of the *tonong* among the Maranaos, the *omboh* of the Sama, the *kokok* and *lagtao* of the Tausugs, and in addition, the *jinns* which the early Muslim mystics (*awliya*) introduced. The importance attached to pre-Islamic spiritual institutions was evident in the many rituals and rites, such as the *lalabutan* (food offering), *duwaa* (thanksgiving), and *hinang-hinang* (special ceremonies). Usually, the festivals and feasts for religious purposes or otherwise became appropriate times for folk-Islamic traditions to come to public notice as people gathered to see themselves moving in a world of their own - Islam and native cultures sharing preeminent roles in their activities. One, therefore, sees in the Moro cultural milieu, before Western contact, the integration of Islam into the life of the people. The "al Fatihah," the opening chapter of the Koran, found a special place in rituals which included varieties of local customs and colors. At the hours of prayer, the Moro performed the required *rakaat* in either the *masjid* or *langgal*. The latter was the typical Southeast Asian house of prayer rather structurally and architecturally different from the Islamic mosque.

But the Moro was more than a religious and cultural creature. He, too, was a fisherman, farmer, and trader, whose intermediary role was evident in the Philippine internal trade, particularly between Mindanao-Sulu and Visayas, Mindoro and Manila, and in the external trade between Brunei and the Philippines. In his economic activities, the Moro developed seafaring values that

literally made the sea his playground and the watercraft his creative preoccupation. Thus, he produced the remarkable varieties of seacrafts such as the *sappit, kumpit, pelang, sakayan, biggung balanghay, parau, caracoa,* etc. which served particular purposes. He also became an expert sailor who knew the currents, the wind, and other forces of nature. But he also developed mystical relation with his environment, attributing to nature certain supernatural or supranatural intelligence quite beyond his understanding. Consequently, by his own fertile imagination, he formulated rituals and formulas to neutralize nature's wraths, such as the storm, thunder, and lightning. The *tawal* and *duwaa* were two rituals he frequently performed to calm the sea, tame the storm, and salute the thunder. The ideal location of Moroland in a relatively typhoon-free zone reinforced the Moro's trust in his mystical powers. The *tawal,* which has been preserved through time, is a verbal formula from Koranic passages-particularly the "Fatihah" - uttered in a solemn and exorcistic manner. The *duwaa* is a food-offering ritual to give thanks and praise to Allah's divine favor. The Moro's seafaring life thus developed in him not only a fatalistic attitude toward life, but also a courage honed by constant encounters with natural dangers and the threat of death. Risk-taking became a source of excitement, and the constant exposure to the hazards of trade helped forge the Moro character that earned him an unflattering niche in the Filipino psyche and western historiography.

And yet, the Moro energy also found expression in the subtle world of art as he applied his inborn instinct to carve the *ukkil* or *okir* on the bow of his seacraft and the beam of his house on land or stilts; the geometric engravings on his gravemark as well as the intricate designs on his weapons, utensils, tools, and instruments. He was indeed an artist of nature. But in no other expression of art was the mystique of the Moro imagination more evident than in the colorful designs and motifs of the *malong, batawi, badju, higot, pis,* and the literary varieties thereof, in which the creative feminine touches played an important part. The same was also obvious in the more noted culinary arts of Moro ethnic groups, which was in the tradition of the Indo-Malay world. The Moro as artist had a strong sense of pride in his art and exercised the liberty of expression which was strongly influenced by his folk Islamic culture.

In effect, the development of the Moro from the harmonious blend of the Islâmic and the indigenous was his most extraordinary achievement, the constant source of his self-fulfillment. It was at this time, around the 15th century, when the synthesis of culture had definitely strengthened the *ummah*, when a new political institution debuted in Moro history. The "Sultanate", as the institution was popularly known formally emerged in 1450 when "Sheriful Hashim" or Abu Bakr founded the Sulu Sultanate, the first in Philippine history. Then, early in the 16th century, at around 1511, Sherif Kabungsuan established the Maguindanao Sultanate in Maguindanao, the modern-day Cotabato City in Mindanao mainland.

This new political structure broadened both the Moro's political vision and sense of authority beyond the confines of the datuship or the rajahship. The Moro datu/rajah and his subjects were not subject to the higher authority of the Sultan whom they readily accepted because under Islam, the Sultan was regarded as the "shadow of God" and, therefore, carried a divine mandate. This was one of the most important contributions of Islam to the Moro mind. Therefore, while the Moro zealously guarded his personal liberties and individuality, he now accommodated a higher authority whom he was willing to obey. He viewed this new divine authority not as a challenge or threat to his freedom, but as a means of enhancing that freedom, since the essence of his struggle was intertwined with his faith in God. The Sultan's authority complemented what he possessed because it provided him with a dimension of commitment beyond the self. In a sense, he found a greater sense of security in a system that succeeded in bringing together the otherwise independent and often conflicting local chieftaincies under a common loyalty. It was this final blending of the Moro as an individual and an *ummat sin nabi* (follower of the Prophet) that brought the new Moro personality which would confront the challenge of colonialism as it bewildered the Occidental mind.

The Moro in Colonial History (1565-1946)

In 1565, the first major challenge to the Moro came upon these shores. The last Spanish expedition under Miguel Lopez de Legazpi at last established Spanish presence in Cebu where Rajah

Tupas and his subjects accepted Spanish rule and were converted to Christianity. From this initial contact, Spain launched the process toward the conquest of the Moro and his homeland. In 1570, the Spaniards under Martin de Goiti, upon instructions from Legazpi, took the initiative to penetrate the Moro stronghold of Manila, the most developed trading center in the archipelago. The Moro chieftain, Rajah Sulayman, was to experience the first major challenge to the Moro independence and way of life. As a man of courage and peace, ready to receive a friend or fight an enemy, he welcomed Goiti's overtures of friendship through the help of a Moro convert. The preliminary contact led to the first *sandugo* (blood compact) between a colonial emissary and the Moro. This ritual of friendship, sealed by drinking a mixture of the parties' blood , provided the basis for the Spanish entry to Manila as it neutralized Moro resistance to Spanish presence. But the compact was threatened by rumors of a Spanish plan to force the Moros to pay tributes as token of their recognition of Spanish sovereignty, the way it had been done in Cebu five years back. When word about the plan got to Rajah Sulayman an outbreak of hostilities nearly erupted, but Goiti promptly denied the rumor. The Spaniard reiterated his mission of friendship through another *sandugo*, this time involving Sulayman and two other powerful chieftains of Manila and thereabout -- Rajah Lakandula and Rajah Laya (Matanda).

The peace and friendship, however, did not last long. The outbreak of hostilities was precipitated by a mutual distrust over the movements of Spanish and Moro vessels in Manila Bay. The hostilities ended with the burning of 1,500 Moro houses, the death of 500 residents, and the capture of several weapons and *lantacas* (native cannons). The famous Battle of Bankusay (modern Tondo) finally eliminated the Moro resistance in Luzon. Shortly, the Spaniards, with their Visayan allies, occupied the Moro stronghold of Manila. To the Moro, this event marked a new history of relations with the West , and the bloody road to peace became an option. As events would show, the Moro would be traveling this road for centuries, the Moro generations after the fall of Manila letting their blood along the way.

Following the Spanish conquest of Manila, the colonizers immediately began the interdiction of the lucrative Brunei-Manila trade for both political and economic reasons. This move was also

to justify the Spaniards' preemptive conquest of Mindanao and Sulu, the base of the Moro sultanates. Thus, the Moro now had to face the Spanish thrusts into his home and beginning with the expedition under Francisco Sande in 1576, which consisted of 40 ships, 400 Spaniards, 1000 Filipinos, and 300 Borneans. This was followed in 1578 by another expedition to Jolo under Captain Esteban de Figueroa; and two more in 1579 to Mindanao, Sulu, and Borneo under Gabriel de Rivera and Juan de Arce Sardonil. To the Moro - whether datu, warrior, or serf - the Spanish operations were indeed efforts not only to erode his economic foundation, but also his political and cultural future in the archipelago.

The Moro responded to these armed intrusions not only by resisting but also by initiating retaliatory raids right into the heart of Spanish bastions, sparing no villages or communities. For the Moro as a fighter, the period from the Figueroa expedition in 1578 to that of Urbiztondo in 1850 marked his successful attacks on the Colonial State, determined only by the blow of the *vendavales*, *bonanzas*, and *brisas*. Spanish records of the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries have preserved what the Spaniards referred to as *piraterías mohametanas* (Moro piracies). Spoils of raids, especially captives, obsessed Spanish writers, chroniclers, and reporters - especially the religious, who readily attributed deliverance and escape to God's or some saint's miracles. In fact, a human interest story is told in a *Relación* written by a priest in 1628, of a Spanish woman who was taken captive in the Sulu raid of a shipyard in Camarines in 1626 led by Sultan Bongsu. A Spanish fleet of *caracoas* under Captain Cristobal de Lugo gave chase. Jolo, the home of the Sultan, was attacked, including the Sultan's palace on a hill. But negotiations to retrieve the Spanish woman failed, not only because the Sultan had become very fond of her, but also because the woman opted to remain as an influential person in the Sultan's kingdom. This prompted the imaginative historian to ask: what could the Moro Sultan have possibly offered Doña Lucia that led her to prefer captivity? Going by the record of his exploits, written by no less than his enemy, the Moro had also demonstrated a romantic charm second to none.

And yet, while he spared no effort to destroy his enemy, the Spanish or Christian *kafir*, the Moro was a pragmatic trader who sought fortunes or opportunities from his sanguinary activities. At the turn of the 18th century he had factored into a new motive for

his raids to the Visayas and Luzon, the lucrative returns from the slave trade in Southeast Asia, as well as the need for farm hands and such help in his own homeland. He thus developed the art of war and trade; mere vendettas were of secondary importance. Thus, captives of all sorts were taken: the able-bodied for the farms and labor markets; the marriageable women for the slave markets in Batavia (Jakarta) where Chinese, European, and native buyers were ready to bid for concubines or house help; the weak, old, and infirm for the human sacrifices of Bornean tribal rituals; and the children for adoption and rearing up in Moro households where eventually they would be integrated as new Moros ready to act and serve as one. In fact, a story is told of a child taken in one of Sultan Kudarat's depredations. He was brought as one of the Sultan's own children. Later, when presented with the choice of returning to where he came from, among the Spaniards and Christians, he chose to remain in Moroland where his freedom was recognized, protected, and preserved. Evidently, the natives found life under Spanish rule repressive, and Moroland was some sort of refuge.

But the Moro could only enjoy his values, and freedom for as long as his mastery of the sea and homeland remained undisturbed. Otherwise, as it was by the 1850s, disequilibrium would surely set in. So that over the next decade the Moro character and image also began to change. The introduction of the steamboats or gunboats in the last half of the century effectively wiped out the Moro fleet. Consequently, the Moro raids to the Christian areas, while still conducted with as much daring, became increasingly counterproductive to Moro interests. The renewed Spanish thrusts into Moroland eventually stopped the Moro raids and transformed Moro responses into defensive reactions to Spanish presence in their own homeland. The destruction of Moro villages, farms, and seacraft crushed the Moro capacity to retaliate. Despair set in and his dependence on powers beyond himself - on the supernatural and his charms - increased tremendously.

Before long, the Moro became a bundle of frustrations, anger, and fantasies - a fanatical personality and fighter willing to die any moment for his struggle and especially for his faith. By late 19th century, especially after the campaigns of Jose Malcampo in 1876, the Moro had become the *sabilallah* whom the Spaniards called *juramentado* (amuck). It was this image of the Moro as a mere death-seeker that dominated the perception of outsiders, especially

the Christian communities whose losses from the *sabilallah* were notorious not in number but in the manner of death. This Moro image was most certainly feared, and as such formed the Moro stereotype in Philippine literature and history, as well as the basis of Christian prejudices against the Moro peoples.

At the turn of the 20th century, when a new colonial power had taken over Spanish rule, the Moro had acquired a notoriety that eclipsed his highly evolved image in precolonial times. The peaceful trader had become the scourge of the sea, preying on vessels flying the colonial emblem. The former nature lover and artist had become a bitter and ferocious nemesis of the symbols of Hispanism and Christianity: Even the gentle and Moro women had assumed the warlike posture of their men. But this new savage image could not be entirely blamed on the Moro. The image was largely propagated by colonial writers whose interpretation of Moro history and culture had remained unchallenged simply because the Moro had ignored the development of an intellectual tradition. The Moro was unmindful of the intellectual necessity to neutralize the onslaught of colonial propaganda against him and his culture. The failure to develop this intellectual tradition enabled colonialism and neocolonialism to preserve the prejudice against him, the cause of the greatest hindrance to Moro aspirations.

Thus, the United States, which succeeded Spain in 1898 as colonial ruler, confronted for the first time the Moro savage as the early American writers described him as not much different from the North American Indians. What mattered to the Moro, as exemplified by the resistance of Datu Ali in Cotabato (1903-1905), Panglima Hassan in Sulu (1903-1905), Datu Tungul, Datu Gamour, and Datu Ampuanagus in Lanao (1902-1903), was the defense of the Moro homeland and the "ancient liberties" he dearly cherished. Having lost to the Spaniards his economic preeminence in the Southeast Asian trade, his fleet having been demolished by Spanish gunboats, his Islamic faith was certainly under great threat, too. But instead of being broken, the Moro was toughened by conflict: he swore forever before Allah and his mother's grave to resist every foreign intruder in his homeland. His fanatical and passionate defense of his freedom and independence was the only thing that kept him alive generation after generation.

Naturally, when the United States tried to force her sovereignty on the Muslim South from 1899 onward the Moro resisted every

American expedition and defied the new military weapons the Americans used. The Moro lost several lives in the Lanao campaigns from 1899 to 1903, in the operations against Datu Ali from 1903 to 1905, in the Bud Dajo Massacre (1905) and the Bud Bagsak encounter (1913), the last decisive fight. After 1913, the Moro had been compelled by circumstances to accept, at least nominally, American rule. Consequently, revolts, uprisings, and disturbances punctuated the half century of American rule in Moroland. The battles and encounters during the period of the Moro Province (1903-1913) were succeeded by organized disturbances during the entire span of the civil government (1914-1935). The most prominent of these violent reactions to continuing colonial and Christian rule were the disturbances in Kidapawan (1917), the independence movement in Lanao led by Datu Mamadra (1924), the Tahil Uprising in Jolo (1927), and the Kutah Fights in Lanao (1930-1934) during which Moro leaders like Dimakaling and Amai Milon threatened not only to resist government operations but also to proclaim their own government. In a sense, the Moro had become wary of what they perceived to be subtle colonial efforts to derail their aspirations as expressed in numerous letters of datus and sultans to the American authorities. It was only the outbreak of the Pacific War in 1941 that more or less blunted the Moro independence movement.

The Japanese invasion of the Philippines in 1941 and the consequent establishment of Japanese presence in Moroland were accompanied by unparalleled atrocities which spawned a Moro-Christian united front, under American leadership, against the so-called "yellow peril". Many Moros joined the USAFFE and other anti-Japanese organizations until the enemy was finally ousted in 1945. The Moro contributed his share of sacrifice and blood and, somehow, the common experiences of the war gave both Moro and Christian reasons to live together and help each other. But the political inertia of earlier Moro independence movements had not really been forgotten. So that when the United States proclaimed Philippine independence on July 4, 1946 and transferred sovereignty to the Christian Filipinos, the Moro faced a great dilemma: Would he accept now a subordinate role under the Christian Filipinos whom he had regarded with suspicion and misgivings? Would he abandon now his struggle for independence for a prospect that was thus far ambiguous?

The Moro and Filipino Rule (Since 1946)

Like his Filipino-Christian counterpart, the Moro regarded the Philippine postwar independence as more symbolic than real. His political freedom was now determined by neocolonialism which indirectly allowed the manipulation of a former colony for certain interests. American economic, military and cultural rights and privileges in postwar Philippines neutralized the gains and prospects of Filipinism and nationalism. In this connection, Moro loyalty to the American colonial state had remained the only way of responding to the postwar dilemma. He now adopted a bifurcated response: One was represented by a segment of the Moro elite who were not satisfied with the Filipino concessions or commitment to the Moro struggle. The intensity and fervor of secessionist agitations from 1946 to 1968 were subdued, often diluted and neutralized by the government's preemptive concessions to political and traditional leaders. But the growing neglect of Moro societies, especially their socioeconomic improvement, eventually provided the more idealistic Moro youths and professionals the reason for organizing the secessionist movement in harmony with the imperatives of traditional patterns.

This became particularly necessary and urgent after the government's failure to deliver benefits. The Kamlon uprising in 1951-1955 failed to bring results beyond nominal benefits to Haji Kamlon and his immediate kin. The Commission on National Integration (CNI), which was organized in 1957 to take care of the non-Christian minorities, only succeeded in providing scholarships to a small number of Moro youths, who would ironically constitute a group that supported the secessionist cause. Although direct beneficiaries of the meager educational funds of the CNI, the Moro youths saw how they and the other minorities had been denied access to national benefits because of an unjust social system. By 1960 the Moro homeland had been virtually taken over by a Christian majority, except areas like Lanao, Cotabato, Basilan, and Sulu. In fact, the fact-finding Senate Committee under Sen. Manuel Manahan reported in 1963 that the Moro people had been alienated by worsening problems of education, livelihood, health, transportation, and communication, and, especially, landgrabbing, which robbed the Moro of their rights to ancestral lands.

Thus, the 1968 proclamation by Gov. Udtog Matalam of Cotabato, a traditional Maguindanao leader, of a Mindanao Independence Movement (MIM) caught the government by surprise. It declared that the establishment of an Islamic state in Mindanao was the only answer to Moro aspirations. However, it was only useful in publicly formalizing an aspiration of the Moro people. Matalam was persuaded by the government to reconsider, which he did, so that the initiative passed on to the new Moro breed who organized themselves into the MNLF. In effect, historical forces had made the Moro a liberationist.

Nuruladji Misuari, head of the MNLF, epitomized the new Moro breed - the liberationist, the alternative leadership to the traditional which included that of Rashid Lucman, the man responsible for organizing the Moro youth in 1969 for secession. And inevitably, as Lucman would later reveal, he had to part ways with Misuari because of the latter's ideological leanings. In brief, Misuari had an ideology distinct from that of the traditional leadership.

What was, and is, Misuari's Moro ideology? It is actually a synthesis of Islamic and Marxist elements springing from Misuari's personal and professional experiences. Misuari was born in Cabingaan, Sulu, an island inhabited by Tausug-Sama and somewhat isolated from modernization processes. Nur, as he is popularly known among colleagues and professionals (and "Professor" to the general Moro public), does not hail from the traditional elite. His humble origins drove him to the pursuit of progress through education and his personal resources. Early in his academic life he had shown radical inclinations that would later be of much use. But it was during his years at the University of the Philippines, the state university famous for its academic standard and as the home of radical thinkers and ideas, that shaped his consciousness. As a student of Political Science and Asian Studies, and later, as Instructor in the Department of Political Science, Nur's extensive exposure to radical ideology and experience led him to become one of the founding members of the Kabataang Makabayan, together with Jose Maria Sison. It was also in the University that Nur saw from an intellectual and pragmatic perspective the arduous and frustrating struggle of the Moro people for their rights and progress. It was not long before he became convinced that only the radicalization of the Moro struggle along progressive lines

can ultimately propel the struggle to triumph. Thus, his departure from the State University to the local Muslim College in Jolo marked the new road to liberation which, in 1969, had found expression in the movement that carried his name.

Thus, the Moro liberationist as exemplified by Misuari has become a modern and formidable foe, no longer circumscribed by the limitations of traditional concepts and strategies which had burdened his predecessors. As a modern freedom fighter, Nur could appreciate both the confrontational approach of his forebear and the guerrilla tactics of a contemporary people's war. He saw the practicality of the struggle to achieve victory at the least cost as well as to achieve glory by dying.

In effect, the Moro had learned to value the liberationist concept of people's war which recognizes above all else the collective interest of the people rather than the individual's self-fulfillment. When before the Moro would not run away from combat even when he was staring defeat or death in the face, the Moro liberationist regards retreat or evasion as equally an act of heroism. And yet, he too, is willing or ready to die, if doing so achieves the highest collective good and effective strategy against the enemy. Consequently, the liberationist has endeavored to acquire expertise in the use of modern weaponry, technology, and propaganda, including the subtle use of the media. He has also come to value establishment of ties with other like-minded movements, giving as much support to his comrades as he has received from them. In short, the Moro has joined the international ranks of liberationist fighters in the Third World and has acquired the international stature exactly the opposite of the global image he had been accorded during the age of colonialism. This new and international dimension of the Moro insurgency, as the Philippine government calls the Moro struggle, has made Moro secessionism the most potentially explosive of all internal conflicts.

The Moro Today

Today, the Moro no longer stands at the crossroads of history where he found himself immediately after the last world war. He has definitely taken the road to liberation and independence, two revolutionary aims that have made secession the option left to the Moro people. The less extreme alternative of autonomy, which

was agreed upon by the Philippine government and the Moro representatives in the Tripoli Agreement of 1976 - the first such settlement internationally endorsed - was an accommodative measure to allow serious reflection for both parties on the ultimate Moro-Filipino relations. Of course, the government has consistently interpreted autonomy as the limit of its compromise just as the Moro leaders, regardless of factional affiliations, have regarded autonomy as, at least, an acceptable minimum for the immediate solution of current problems. The Aquino government, since its takeover in 1986, has reiterated the same position and the inalienability of Philippine sovereignty in the dramatic meeting between Aquino and Misuari in Jolo in September 1986 and, again, expressed in the Jeddah agreement after the Plebiscite of February 2, 1987. But while the newly-ratified Constitution institutionalized the government position, it has also institutionalized the Moro distrust of the Filipino government.

No less than Misuari had expressed public and official opposition to the autonomy provision of the Constitution before the February 2 plebiscite. But the government ignored his demand to suspend that particular provision until after peace talks had been concluded. In effect, the ratification of the Constitution had drawn a definite line that made independence non-negotiable as far as the government is concerned. This has, therefore, created for the Moro struggle a problem not so much in objectives but in strategy and methods. The MNLF has amply demonstrated that it has taken autonomy as a basis of peace talks, a fact that placed the Misuari-MNLF faction on the same position as the MNLF Reformists under Dimas Pundato and Macapanton Abbas, and the MILF (Muslim Islamic Liberation Front) under Ustadz Hashim Salamat. Interestingly, the three factions represent the three major ethnic groups, respectively: Tausug, Maranao, and Maguindanao.

Whether the ethnic character of Moro factionalism which serves as a deterrent to Moro aspirations has been exploited by certain interest, it has definitely been used by the Moro factions to obtain substantial concessions and commitments from the government. But the government, from the Marcos to the Aquino administrations, has followed the unitary approach to the Moro problem. Marcos concluded the Tripoli Agreement in 1976 with the MNLF under Misuari and, despite the subsequent breakup of the Moro movement into three factions, the Aquino leadership

continued the unitary approach. But why has the Moro response in recent times resisted the unified stand on negotiations? Some had advanced the view that the factional character of the movement has made it quite difficult for the government to realize an acceptable solution, thus keeping the problem in a highly, negotiable state for more concessions to Moro demands, including the ultimate independence of Moroland. On the other hand, Moro factionalism has also reduced the armed threat to Philippine security.

Interestingly enough, the Moro factional leaderships have expressed sincere desire to see a unified Moro profile in dealing with the government. This is apparently the view of the OIC (Organization of Islamic Conference) and, in a sense, also that of the government. And yet, the unification of the MNLF, MILF and MNLF Reformists has eluded the Moro mediators. One barrier to this is the insistence of the Pundato-Abbas and Salamat factions that equal status with the Misuari group be accorded them by the government. The other hindrance to unity is Misuari's consistent position that he is the sole representative of the Moro people. His claim is based on both the implicit recognition of such view in the 1976 Tripoli Agreement and on the support of the Islamic states.

Thus, the Moro personality and mind have presented today a complex problem to both the Moro people and the government. Conference after conference has been held by public and private agencies, institutions and organizations as well as by interest groups trying to seek an honorable solution to the Moro Problem. The most recent was the "First Scientific Workshop on Muslim Autonomy" in a countryside resort, the Makiling National Park from September 15 to 19, 1986. Discussions were extensive and workshops were conducted up to the wee hours of the morning. The various commissions tasked with specific issues or areas of concern arrived at some consensus. But the expected "Organic Act for the Muslim Autonomous Region" had yet to be crystallized in conjunction with the provision of the 1986 charter. It is precisely the constitutional mandate which poses a problem to any lasting solution since Misuari's secessionist faction had earlier opposed such constitutional limitation on the Bangsamoro freedom.

In 1980 Misuari declared two concepts relevant to the Bangsamoro struggle. These are "*gaosbaugbug*" and "*kaadilan*". The former consists of two specific concepts compounded into a whole: *gaos* which means "strength", and *baugbug* which means

"commitments", "conviction", or "jurisdiction". By integrating the two ideas in a native ideological component, Misuari has introduced into the MNLF struggle the primacy of the "capacity of commit" to a cause. This commitment is anchored on the second component expressed in *kaadilan*, which refers to "destiny", similar in implication to the messianic expectation of the "Datu Adil". This second concept, which was declared by Misuari in 1983, refers to the antithesis of all forms of injustices to the Moro people and, therefore, expresses the ideal state of political, economic, social, and cultural existence. In a sense this is equivalent to the utopian future that, in the MNLF ideological dissertation, is beyond the narrow interests of the State and Society. Taken together, *gaosbaugbug* and *kaadilan*, from the indigenous ideology of the MNLF, are necessary in a theoretical attempt to derive a guiding principle from the roots of culture in a folk Islamic tradition.

Although the terminologies are Tausug, the concepts are general and expressible in similar ethnolinguistic terminologies. In effect, they can be subsumed under the more preferable designation, *Bangsamoro* ideology. This term provides the national identity to an otherwise ethnic concept because it integrates into a forceful ideology the concept of Islam and the diverse ethnic traditions. In short, the Moro today is no longer just a liberationist; he has become a real nationalist who has finally found a nation to speak of, a community of people distinct from the Filipino. Undoubtedly, the Filipino and his government oppose this ideology, believing that a Filipino nation had already been formed by history and culture by the turn of the century and confirmed by international treaties and recognition. It is precisely this kind of argument that gives much credibility and right to the Bangsamoro to claim as valid their own notion of a nation which their distinct history and culture had also shaped earlier than that of the Filipino.

As a nationalist, the Moro considers his nation no longer a matter for debate. Only the strategy to get the Philippine government to accept this reality interests him. It is this search for the best method that occupies his energies and mind. This sense of nationhood forged along historic rights rises in direct proportion with the inability of the government to satisfy Moro aspirations. In fact, the continuing peace talks between the government and the MNLF, with other Moro groups taking secondary roles, are premised not on the abandonment of the historic Moro claim to

nationhood but on the possibility or prospect of realizing a "nation within a nation", an autonomous structure that can reconcile the prerogatives of national sovereignty on the one hand and the demands of Moro aspirations on the other.

How this elusive reality can be captured in a political agreement has been the main thrust of both informal and formal talks since the Tripoli Agreement of 1976. The Moro representatives led by Habib Hashim had accepted the negotiating premise of autonomy and expressed sincerity to finish the talks as early as possible within 45, instead of 90 days. But in a radio interview over *Radyo ng Bayan*, the same Habib Hashim reiterated the Moro adoption of autonomy as the official MNLF position, albeit with a somewhat different definition of autonomy than what was generally assumed by government negotiators. Autonomy, as clarified by Hashim, is based on popular consultations, not plebiscites.

In effect, what the latest Moro proposal for peace specifically implies is that the autonomous region enjoys the freedom to have the government it wants as well as its own security force, educational and economic systems, taxation, and cultural development programs that accord with Moro concepts. It concedes merely nominal and ceremonial relations with the Philippine state for a semblance of national sovereignty. This possibility drastically reverses the system of governance that has kept the country under the highly centralized government. As a pragmatic secessionist, the Moro wants to realize the substance of independence and relegate the form to subsequent struggle. Through the approach, the retrieval of ancient liberties and historic rights can be achieved with the least bloodshed, so that the Moros' energies can be devoted to plans of Marxist-Leninist paradigm - the deprivation theory developed by a number of writers, particularly Ted Robert Gurr in *Why Men Rebel*, or, the purely theological approach which attributes all evils, including human conflict and violence, to the work of the Devil and man's depravity. It is even highly provocative for the scientific mind to attempt a study of Moro secessionism making use of John Stuart Mill's "four methods of experimental inquiry" namely, "the method of agreement", the "method of difference", the "method of residues", and the "method of concomitant variations."

But it may hardly be rewarding to follow any of the models expressly developed for analytical purposes simply because the

models are derived from situations unique or peculiar to the cultural group or groups being used for model-construction, or perhaps, from purely written dissertations on the subject, however important the latter might be. Without necessarily denigrating the theoretical contributions of a host of constructionists to theory-building, Eckstein's "An Etiology of Internal Wars" is convenient and useful in studying the Moro independence struggle and movement. Eckstein suggests that in dealing with "causal explanations" or "different kinds of causality" one has to distinguish between "preconditions" and "precipitants" of internal wars. The "preconditions" are "those circumstances that make it possible for the precipitant to bring about political violence." While not discounting the validity of studying internal wars from specific standpoints such as economic, social, political and cultural factors, Eckstein considers the more comprehensive view in terms of preconditions and precipitants more meaningful.

The suggestion is practical and useful in approaching Moro secessionism which has become more complex because of clear historical continuities, multi-ethnic realities, and external interests in contemporary Philippine society, especially in the Mindanao-Sulu-Tawi-Tawi-Palawan area. The independence or secession issue is brought about by the long historical antecedents in the Moro struggle which spans about 400 years. Thus, any theoretical model dealing largely with contemporary explanations unjustly ignores the historical struggle. In fact, the major demands of the Moro negotiators are rooted in historical and not contemporary facts. It is this historical aspect that fits conveniently into Eckstein's "preconditions" just as the contemporary realities that lead to Moro secessionism fit into his "precipitant" category. But how the Moro in the Philippines can finally be understood and his struggle put in meaningful perspective will depend, perhaps, on the insights into other movements or struggles in the world.

Chapter III
Options and Conflict Resolution

The search for solutions to the Muslim issue have followed three lines of possibilities which also marked the Philippine-Muslim relations' three periods of postwar history. The period from 1946 to 1968 was dominated by the integrationist view of the problem. The second, from 1968 to 1987, was characterized by a trend toward the secessionist option; and the last, from 1987 up to the present, saw the emergence of the separatist alternative.

The Integrationist Approach (1946-1968)

After the end of the Pacific War in 1945 and the subsequent proclamation of Philippine Independence by the United States on July 4, 1946, whatever issues that remained in Filipino-Muslim relations were generally perceived by the Filipino leadership as problems that could be resolved by the rapid integration of the Muslims into the new Filipino republic. Not a few Muslim leaders shared this view, as shown by their government participation and in their involvement in other aspects of national development as Filipino citizens.

Prominent political families in the Muslim South, that were simultaneously wielders of traditional power, were actively involved in postwar national and local elections. In Lanao, the Alontos, the Lucmans and the Dimaporos, were politically active families. Later, the Tamanos, the Pangandamans and the Morohomsars joined the political arena. Also, in Cotabato, Maguindanao political families like the Sinsuats, the Mangelens, the Pendatuns, the Piangs, and, later, the Matalams and the Masturas participated in the contests for positions in the government. The Sulu archipelago bred the Kirams, the Abubakars, the Tulawis, the Rasuls, the Sangkulis, the Annis, and, later, the Tans and the Loongs. Other smaller clans had also begun transforming politics into often bloody interfamilial feuds.

However, what contributed to the integration's dynamic quality was the successful involvement of Christian and non-

Muslim families in the electoral processes. The Maranao voters elected Tomas Cabili, a Catholic, to Congress. The Tausug and Sama elected Leon Fernandez, a Catholic lawyer, Governor of Sulu; and Felix Bello and Vicente Santos won as Mayors of Siasi. The Izquierdos, the Calixtos, and the Carpizos enjoyed political patronage in local Jolo politics. The same was true of some prominent Chinese families like the Tans, the Lims, the Kongs, the Teos, and the Hos who landed political roles in the predominantly Muslim areas. In fact, the pattern continued along this integrational direction until about 1968 when a new element in Muslim attitude and, consequently, aspirations, resulted from the Jabidah Massacre.

While Muslim political families maintained the postwar period's integrational pattern as a matter of practical importance, the new element saw the beginning of radicalism in the Muslim struggle different in nature and purpose from, although similar in objective and goals to, the earlier Muslim revolts. This radical element is more related to the idea of "secessionism" which presumed the recognition of the Muslim South as a part of Philippine territory, and, therefore, subject to Philippine sovereignty. This also marks the second period of the Muslim struggle and the State response --- The Secessionist Option.

The Secessionist Option (1968-1976)

Spearheading the secessionist movement is the Bangsamoro Liberation Organization (BMLO) led by Datu Rashid Lucman of Lanao in 1968 following the Jabidah Massacre. Lucman initiated this step to create an umbrella organization for various Muslim groups seeking independence from the national state, albeit with little unity to speak of. The various groups, although Muslim, still remained very much divided by ethnic and other local factors. In the view of the movement's Muslim leaders it was crucial to have a unified front composed of the three largest Muslim groups in the archipelago: the Maranaos, the Maguindanaos, and the Tausugs (including Sama). Even with the smaller factions out for one reason or another the struggle for independence would still be formidable. Thus, the 90 or so Muslim youths who were sent to Malaysia for combat and revolutionary training came from the three major groups. Three of these young radicals would later emerge as the rallying personalities of the three ethnic components

of what became known as the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF): Dimasangkay Pundato, Hashim Salamat and Nur Misuari, representing the Maranao, Maguindanao, and Tausug-Sama, respectively.

At this point in time, in the late sixties, the Muslim struggle was ideologically anchored on a semi-conservative view that the Muslims were Filipinos and thus historically constituted a part of the Philippine state. Somehow, their long neglect by the government compelled them to seek independence from the Philippines. This view could be attributed to the initial core of leadership in which the traditional leaders like Rashid Lucman and Domacao Alonto of Lanao, Udtog Matalam of Cotabato, and Maas Bawang of Sulu wielded considerable influence. Traditional leadership, which was either the beneficiary or self-appointed conduit of state resources intended for the benefit or development of their localities tended to downplay whatever radical elements had permeated the Moro consciousness. Somehow, the ties of traditional leadership with the central authority in Manila had kept the Muslim struggle within what the central government perceived as a controllable level. There was something in these relations that would hinder a Muslim breakaway process from historical linkage with the Filipino State. In fact, events would show that the traditional element in the Moro struggle had been most vulnerable to compromises with the government as they were responsible for paving the way for the return to the "fold of the law" of a good number of rebels.

One of the most tangible means of compromise was the 1976 Tripoli Agreement which was concluded between the MNLF under Nur Misuari and the Philippine government represented by Carmelo Barbero, with representatives of the OIC as witnesses. While there was a breakthrough in the series of peace talks following the 1974 outbreak of MNLF hostilities in Jolo, it was also from this point when a rift in MNLF leadership began to appear. Expectably, the traditional leaders began to see the difficulty of winning over the Moro struggle which had definitely moved along radical lines.

The Separatist Alternative (1976-1990)

In a series of statements and public speeches after 1976 Nur Misuari clarified MNLF's ideological thrust. There was actually no

formally recognized ideology of the Movement other than Misuari's declaration. Nor was there any institutionalized set of doctrines adopted by the movement. Thus, the MNLF ideology was perceived by other leaders in the Muslim struggle as Misuari's ideology. This was, of course, something to be expected in a struggle where no historically determined ideology had guided the Muslims of various ethnic or local persuasions. The result was a somewhat reluctant acceptance of Misuari's dominant role, notwithstanding the general acceptability of Misuari's ideological declarations. Although in the germinal stage, Misuari's ideological concoction of Islamic, Socialist, and Marxist-Leninist sources turned out to be a good rallying point for the youthful recruits from schools or from the ideology oriented elements.

In contrast to the traditional view, Misuari's ideology primarily established the fact of an independent "Moro Nation" long before Spanish colonialism. It was never a part of the Filipino state or nation, but was in fact developing separately from the Filipino or Christian community. It was in the course of this development that a bitter struggle had to be waged against the colonial government which vigorously sought to subdue the Moros. The MNLF movement was therefore a way of reasserting and/or establishing the separateness of the Moro nation. Secessionism could not be correct because it implies being a part of the Filipino state from which the movement seeks independence. Thus the idea of separation as an ideological thrust brings a new radical dimension that would appeal to a larger number of Muslims. The idea that the Moros were never a part of any nation boosted the Moro claim that they were never conquered.

In response to the increasing intellectual pressure for more concrete components of the MNLF ideology, Misuari declared in a speech in Maimbung - and published in the MNLF's official paper, *Mahadlika* - that the MNLF ideology could be viewed from two concepts - *gaosbaugbug* and *kaadilan*. While these were indeed attractive to Tausug-Sama elements, they were ambiguous to the non-Tausug-Sama components. In a way, this ideological linkage of the MNLF with Tausug-Sama reinforced the ethnic perception of MNLF leadership as being substantially reoriented to suit the interests of an ethnic group. This is similar to the ethnicization of the Mindanao State University along Maranao interests. While *gaosbaugbug* and *kaadilan* may not really conflict with non-

Tausug-Sama concepts, the ideology's ethnic character was an inescapable factor in the movement which greatly affected the stability of the MNLF leadership and struggle.

The crack in the movement's solidarity was occasioned by a confidential note from Rashid Lucman to the Tripartite Committee of the OIC wherein he mentioned certain Muslim leaders who should be contacted by the organization to resolve the pending Muslim issues. Lucman also implied that Misuari's ideology had taken the Marxist-radical line and thus would not be in the best interests of Islam and Muslims in the Philippines. Then, the reported breakaway of Hashim Salamat, and later, Dimas Pundato from the MNLF served to isolate the Maranao and Maguindanao groups from the movement, thus reducing the MNLF under Nur Misuari to a Tausug-Sama-based separatist struggle.

Misuari's reaction to the reported breakaway of the MNLF Reformists and the MILF (Moro Islamic Liberation Front), the new names taken by the Pundato Maranao and the Salamat Maguindanao groups, respectively, was to deny the move as a fundamental repudiation of the MNLF ideology. But he confirmed the break as motivated by purely personal interests. He charged that external forces, including the Philippine government, was exploiting the internal issues of MNLF leadership.

That Misuari recognized the seriousness of the breakaway of the Maranao and Maguindanao leadership components could be gleaned from the appeal of Misuari to his core of Tausug-Sama supporters as well as from his diplomatic maneuvers. In a Tausug message delivered in Tausug to his Sulu base in 1989, he reminded his constituents of the three motivating concepts which powered the Moro struggle: *hula*, *agama* and *bangsa*. While these concepts applied to the aspirations of other Muslim groups, including the Maranaos and the Maguindanaos, Misuari's message in Tausug clearly showed the intended audience. Briefly, the concept of *hula*, Tausug for homeland, suggests the idea of "territoriality." The second, *agama* which means religious tradition, suggests the idea of identity. Then, *bangsa*, which means race, suggests beyond identity the idea of proud origin based on biological and historical beginnings. In a sense, by the time of the Aquino administration, the separatist alternative had been reduced to the demands of the Tausug-Sama group. This fact was subsequently reinforced by the return of Dimas Pundato and his reformist group to the government,

and Pundato's acceptance of the directorship of the Office of Muslim Affairs (OMA). In effect, Pundato as head of the MNLF Reformists, had followed the traditionalist approach to Moro problems by finally settling for integration. The other Maguindanao faction lead by Hashim Salamat had been the object of government overtures, and the prospect of the faction accepting the integrationist solution had become brighter with the OIC support firming up in favor of Nur Misuari's MNLF by 1989. The OIC resolution of support in 1989 expressed strong support for Misuari as the rightful representative of the Bangsamoro people. This OIC endorsement has kept the separatist option attractive to the Muslims in the Philippines.

Government Responses to the Moro Issue

Since 1946, the government answer to Muslim movements and struggle had been based on the old colonial idea of integration. The only discernible distinction between the colonial and the Filipino approach lies in the fact that the former was related to the necessity of Christianization and the latter was more or less guided by the constitutional guarantee of religious freedom. In other words, while the Spaniards and the Americans directly promoted the Christianization of the non-Christians as the basis of integration, the Filipino administrations since 1946 had sought to eliminate this kind of integration, at least, in terms of policy declaration.

But as it turned out, colonial bias against non-Christian culture was difficult to eradicate. It continued to affect the implementation of state policies and programs as well as the role of private institutions in the development of non-Christian potentials. In other words, the Filipino Muslims continued to suffer from neglect under a new Filipino leadership after independence in 1946. There had been limited opportunities in government service and mostly in secondary levels of the bureaucracy.

Consequently, despite excellent policies and programs, which had virtually become merely political slogans and propaganda - especially before national elections - Muslim alienation from the State intensified, as the national population increased, which considerably strained available resources. Thus the minorities went several notches down the priority list. While there might not

have been a deliberate violation of justice, the bias against the non-Christian minorities remained the single most important psychological barrier to nationalism and Filipinism. There is little use denying that the Christian majority in the country had not only enjoyed the benefits of abundant resources, but the near-monopoly of national power as well. In fact, to a significant extent, they even shared sufficient power and influence in the local non-Christian communities including the Muslim areas.

The radicalization of the Muslim struggle through either Islamic orthodoxy or Marxist-Leninist ideology awakened the government to the urgent need to realize integration by more substantial concessions to the Muslim leadership, not necessarily to the Muslim masses. Apparently, the government correctly believed that by giving enough political, economic, and social concessions at least to the various Muslim leaders, the Muslim threat to national security can be neutralized. To pursue this thrust in the government approach to the "Moro Problem" was most practical from the standpoint of resources. It did not take a good chunk of budgetary resources to take care of the Muslim leaders as it would to spend on the millions of needy Muslim masses throughout Southern Philippines. Thus, several Muslims from the traditional elite found themselves in prominent national and local positions, - a fact which caused the political integration of prominent Muslim families of Lanao, Cotabato, and Sulu into the national leadership. This political concession was strengthened by the subsequent share of Muslim leadership in the economic resources through trade, commerce, agriculture, and other revenue-generating schemes.

In a sense, it was the co-optation of the Muslim elite by the government that had seriously blunted the Muslim secessionist or separatist struggle, especially after the creation in 1957 of the Commission on National Integration (CNI) and in 1968 of the Mindanao State University (MSU), which gave the Muslim leadership the sense of importance they had been seeking, as well as the venue to project their political and intellectual profiles in Philippine society. Not a few from the Muslim sector gained considerable mileage from the far-reaching effects of the two government institutions. In fact, most of the young leaders in the Muslim struggle had come to notice via the Commission's scholarship program, which was its only meaningful contribution, and MSU's

academic activities, which were largely participated in by Muslim intellectuals and academics.

By the late 1960s, the radicalization of the Muslim struggle along either secessionism or separatism had crystallized, constantly fed by the government's inability to meet Muslim demands for socioeconomic benefits vis-à-vis their more progressive Christian neighbors. Certainly, the ineptness of the Muslim leadership to satisfy their constituencies contributed to the worsening situation. In fact, the political ferment in the Muslim areas had compelled even the traditional leaders to re-examine their goals and aspirations vis-à-vis their people. The young Muslim leaders had taken up the issue of Muslim destiny in the light of their continuing neglect and frustration. The ferment brought a segment of the Muslim traditional leadership into the radical option.

This crack in the relation between the government and the traditional Muslim leaders alarmed the national leadership, especially with the declaration in Pagalungan, Cotabato by Gov. Udtog Matalam of the Muslim Independence Movement (MIM) in May 1968. This was a historic declaration on the part of the Muslim elite who had always tried to preserve their political ties with the national leadership which continued to invest in the former. A personal meeting between President Marcos and Governor Matalam was arranged in an attempt to neutralize the new radical threat. Although Matalam was persuaded to give the government the opportunity to prove its commitment to Muslim progress and welfare, the process toward a larger united front had become inexorable. The trend could only be accepted, its challenge met. The outbreak of war in Sulu in 1974 was the bloodiest and costliest conflict between the government and the newly formed Moro National Liberation Front, the symbol of a new Muslim unity seeking independence for the Bangsamoro.

Jolo, the setting of this bloody confrontation, was razed to the ground. Hundreds of government troopers and MNLF *mujaheedeens* were killed. Residents were reduced to poverty as properties and valuables were lost to fire and theft. Other islands up to Tawi-Tawi triggered serious clashes with government troops, thus turning the entire Sulu Archipelago into a war zone. Clashes in Lanao and Cotabato, Zamboanga, and Basilan were reported. The Muslim South saw the Muslim war of independence in which traditional and radical Muslim leaders joined hands against the government.

The government's armed response to the MNLF challenge was premised on the outright rejection by the government of any compromise on Philippine territorial sovereignty.

The realities of the post-1974 conflict for both the government and the Muslims pointed to the political and pragmatic way of dealing with the vital issues. The losses on both parties were tragic and the effect on nationalism and Filipinism had been serious. The logical direction was for the negotiating table peace talks, which was concluded, after hectic diplomatic work, in the historic Tripoli Agreement in December 1976. In this accord the MNLF, under Nur Misuari, and the Philippine government, represented by Carmelo Barbero and witnessed by OIC representatives, agreed to pursue a peaceful solution to the Muslim struggle without prejudice to Philippine sovereignty through the guarantee of a process toward Muslim autonomy.

However, the steps taken by the government to carry out the provisions of the Tripoli Accord, especially the holding of a national plebiscite and the establishment of the autonomous structures for the Muslim South, were coldly rejected by the MNLF. In fact, Nur Misuari, through his spokesmen, like the lawyer Ibrahim Uy of Cotabato and Uztadz Zain Jali of Jolo, accused the government of insincerity and duplicity. Thus, the post-Tripoli relation between the government and the MNLF was marked by intensified propaganda against each other and calculated armed attacks, usually for politico-psychological purposes. Until the ouster of the Marcos government from power in 1986 by a coalition of forces led by Mrs. Corazon Aquino, - no significant breakthroughs were achieved to resolve the impasse. This situation of political uncertainty and ambiguity was exploited by the "people power"-installed government of Corazon Aquino to create a new hope for the Muslim struggle. No less than a visit of Aquino to Jolo to meet Misuari in September 1986 was initiated to give the new revolutionary government the mandate to implement the Tripoli Agreement.

Public and private talks followed between MNLF representatives and government officials in the Philippines. This process was augmented by official missions to the Middle East to dialogue with Nur Misuari and key leaders of the OIC. The Jeddah Accord, which was secured in 1987 by a team composed of Sens. Aquilino Pimentel and Agapito Aquino, gave certain bright prospects to a breakthrough in the search for solutions to the

Muslim problems. Just like the ambiguities of the Marcos approach to the Moro issue, the uncertainties of the Aquino formula brought only intensified charges by MNLF propagandists that the government was not sincere in solving the problems, and that it had in fact increased efforts to divide the Muslim people and exploit their weaknesses.

By late 1989, the Moro issue had begun to take on its most recalcitrant stance, which made the prospects of a compromise dimmer. The new element responsible for this "hardening" was the increasing OIC disappointment over efforts of the Aquino government to implement the Tripoli Accord. The OIC attitude had been progressively expressed in the various resolutions. The last one in 1989 gave the impression of an impending admission of the MNLF as a full member of the organization. This prospect of an international recognition for the MNLF served to alarm the architects of Aquino's diplomatic approach, and which brought to light the serious implications of the Moro issue. Clearly, it meant that the government would have to deal with the formidable OIC, which further meant that the MNLF would obtain a leverage or advantage in fighting the government.

Thus, the Aquino government, through the Department of Foreign Affairs, tried to neutralize the OIC factor by initiating diplomatic offensives to deny the MNLF any significant advantage. The MNLF's main vulnerability lay in its divided leadership and inability to maintain a decisive armed presence in areas it claimed as Bangsamoro territory. Thus, despite the call for direct MNLF-government talks, Foreign Affairs Secretary Raul Manglapus, presumably on Mrs. Aquino's instructions, expressed the government's readiness for talks, but only with a unified Muslim group composed of the MNLF under Nur Misuari and the other two splinter groups headed by Pundato and Salamat. By maintaining this negotiating position the government had succeeded in exploiting the problem of Misuari's leadership. Misuari's inability to forge a unified front seriously undermined the MNLF's posture in the OIC which had long been expecting a Muslim united front principally represented by Misuari's MNLF. Apparently, the government had succeeded in softening the Pundato and Salamat groups through certain enticements. The first casualty, as it were, was Dimas Pundato of the MNLF Reformists who accepted the directorship of the Office of Muslim Affairs along with other perks

that came with a patron-client relationship so well entrenched in the Philippine political system. The government had also penetrated the otherwise fundamentalist structure of Salamat's MILF with juicy offers of political positions and economic opportunities, including access to financial resources.

The government's encroachment on MNLF grounds got a boost from the much-publicized creation of the autonomous government of Muslim Mindanao based on the results of the plebiscite in February 1991. The inauguration of the regional government headed by Gov. Zacaria Candao, a supporter of the Aquino leadership, boosted the government's diplomatic offensive to show the OIC that the administration was serious about honoring the Tripoli Accord. Although the OIC still maintained support for the Misuari faction, the government offensive appeared to have made a dent on the OIC stance. One more such stroke of genius on the part of the government would have knocked the shaky situation altogether. Fortunately for the government, the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait polarized the Arab and Muslim world between an Iraq-led faction and the Saudi Arabia faction. The MNLF's response - neutrality - certainly affected its relationship with the OIC. Without meaning to, the MNLF somewhat disappointed the Saudi Arabian leadership which was seeking to unite the Muslim world against Iraq's aggression. As a major contributor to the OIC and the benefactor of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and other Muslim revolutionary struggles including the MNLF, Saudi Arabia's possible withdrawal of support for unsympathetic groups signaled serious troubles. The MNLF thus became a dilemma of the post-Gulf War realities and had to turn to the Bangsamoro homeland or other Muslim countries for support since the usual Saudi Arabian package may not appear as generous, or forthcoming for that matter.

The MNLF profile as the voice of the Philippine Muslims continued to be muffled by its inability to stage credible attacks on government troops as it had in 1974 in Jolo, even in areas under MNLF influence. Government propaganda and resources succeeded in neutralizing the MNLF bases by using Muslim politicians and traditional leaders who had somehow been ignored or underrated by Nur Misuari. The ceasefire imposed by the 1976 Tripoli Agreement was exploited to explain the lack of MNLF armed response to government initiatives against suspected MNLF terrorists.

The MNLF leadership was also forced to disown groups that engaged government troops or kidnapped civilians as "lost commands" - a psy-war strategy to dissimulate the MNLF's lack of control over its field commanders, especially in remote areas.

Recapitulation

When we look back to the efforts taken by both the government and the MNLF to solve the problem of secessionism or separatism before 1978, the steps toward integration were almost all attributable to the government, with the Muslim leadership taking a don't-know or don't-care attitude. If taken together with the subsequent indifference of the MNLF to the idea of integration, the pre-1978 period of the resolution of conflict was marked by a one-sided initiative taken by the government, from Roxas to Marcos.

In other words, there was practically no meaningful Muslim input into their integration process in the national stream. The process, theoretically or otherwise, was left largely to the national leadership in Manila to decide on through either legislation or executive guidelines. The Muslim attitude toward these attempts was either due to lack of any clear vision of what integration meant or to the long history of government's lack of will in implementing integration.

The option, therefore, of secessionism or separation, which is based on the reality of independence, offered the simple way out. The only serious obstacle to this ideal was the grim determination of the government to resist any attempt to dismember the republic by peaceful or violent means. The government's rejection of Muslim independence and its insistence on "Muslim autonomy" as a compromise posed the single most important barrier to the MNLF struggle after 1968. The lack of Muslim armed resources to match the government's military capability clearly pointed to the need for some kind of foreign aid for the MNLF or, if possible, foreign intervention in favor of Bangsamoro independence. The international dimension of Bangsamoro independence struggle had to be cultivated. The initiative towards this end is discussed in the next Chapter.

Chapter IV
Internationalization from Within

The urgent need of the MNLF for foreign support was clearly felt when the government responded to the increasing pressures, violent or otherwise, from the Moro struggle by deploying more troops and military resources to Southern Philippines by late 1960s. Estimates claimed that 70 to 80 percent of the AFP resources were readied for Southern Philippines. Marcos's determination to meet any armed challenge to Philippine sovereignty from the MNLF added pressure to diplomatic options. Realizing the inadequacy of Muslim domestic resources vis-à-vis the government forces, the Bangsamoro struggle was forced to seek more international support, either through diplomatic pressures or the supply of much needed ammunitions and funds. The Muslim world was undoubtedly the most logical source for Muslim diplomatic contacts.

Muslim View of Foreign Support

From the 35 selected respondents covering Zamboanga, Basilan, Tawi-Tawi, and Sulu, the move to solicit revolutionary help from the Muslim world was unanimously regarded as vital to Bangsamoro victory. The informants, who came from the MNLF rank-and-file and had served the movement through the difficult years from 1970 onward, were highly optimistic over world Muslim support because of Islam. They believed that the MNLF was fighting for the cause of Islam, whose future in the Bangsamoro homeland was threatened by what they perceived as deliberate government effort to convert Muslims to Christianity and destroy their sacred institutions. They were convinced also with what the MNLF claimed, that Muslim land and properties would be confiscated by the government. This led to the popular Muslim support for the MNLF separatist aims. The informants also believed that the Muslim world would support the Bangsamoro struggle because, as Muslims, they should be helped by Muslim brothers everywhere. This perception of spiritual ties in the *Ummah* formed the basis for

the popular confidence of the Bangsamoro in the ultimate triumph of their cause.

But Muslim leaders in government had also expressed the need for external aid from the Muslim world along socioeconomic lines to improve the standard of living in Muslim areas. They believed that the aid must come in various forms, such as cash grants, investments in Muslim areas, and projects with full funding from the OIC. Although they had not expressed support for external Muslim help for the MNLF separatist cause, their silence on this matter suggested some support for the MNLF effort to get full OIC aid. One prominent leader even said that a strong MNLF posture with OIC support gives the future Muslim community in the Philippines good leverage in their efforts to wangle attention and benefits from the government. In other words, the MNLF factor in the relation between the Christian majority and minority groups had a significant bearing on the government attitude toward minority rights and needs. Thus, it appears that both the Muslim leadership and people looked to the Muslim world as a vital source of help for their basic needs as well as for their struggle toward the Muslim identity and destiny.

Voice from the Field

Significant in the MNLF's effort to capture international attention has been the attitude of the international community toward the Muslim struggle in the Philippines. Especially crucial is the attitude of the Muslim world which has expressed itself largely through the OIC and, to a certain extent, through the other Muslim organizations. To develop this international attitude, the MNLF believed that the Muslim masses in the Philippines played a vital role, not only through active participation as *mujaheedeens* and other functions, but also through direct or indirect appeal for support from international sources.

Relevant to this issue of international support are the various opinions and sentiments of the MNLF's rank-and-file as well as of its broad supporters. They come from the provinces of Region 9, or Western Mindanao, and represent the reactions of the Sama, Tausug and Yakan ethnic groups that currently constitute the main MNLF base after the withdrawal of the Pundato and Salamat groups from the Moro coalition. The views presented provide a cross-

sectional perspective of the secessionist movement as well as an insight into the local perception of the movement's international dimension.

From Tawi-Tawi

a) *Mansur Sakili* is a Sama Muslim in his early forties (42), married with seven children, and a resident of Bongao. A former public school teacher, he joined the MNLF in 1975 as a civilian volunteer for three reasons: the threat to Islam, the treatment of Muslims as second-class citizens, and the neglect of the Muslim areas by the government. But he was not for independence as decreed by the MNLF; rather, he was only for a meaningful autonomy, the reason that later led him to return to the "fold of the law" and to support the autonomy act. Although still committed to the Muslim cause, he believes it can be realized through peaceful means and not through armed struggle. It is in this context that he looks at the involvement of the OIC as important because the OIC's financial and logistic support is rooted in history and religion. What he means is the Muslim world can help in the peaceful settlement of the conflict. Sakili currently heads the Philippine Information Agency Extension at Bongao.

b) *Sylvia Jalil* is a 34 year-old Sama Muslim, married with two children. She was third-year high school and member of the YMC and YMBB in Tawi-Tawi when she joined the MNLF in 1973 as a medical aide. Her participation in the movement was simply to provide the much-needed medical service for her "people." Her desire to continue her studies led her to the termination of her involvement after about a year. Although she believes in the Aquino program as a solution, she boycotted the plebiscite and she looks to the continued help for the MNLF from the Muslim world, especially Libya, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Brunei, as crucial to the ultimate grant of Bangsamoro independence with the least bloodshed.

c) *Saidali Abdullah* is a Sama Muslim teaching at the MSU Branch in Tawi-Tawi. He is 40 years old, and married with seven children. He had been a public school teacher for

seven years when he joined the MNLF as a line officer in 1975 and served as such until 1977. He returned to the "fold of the law" to pursue his academic career, and earned a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education and postgraduate units toward a master's degree in Health Education. He joined the MNLF because of the government's exploitation of the Muslims, and the rampant graft and corruption among government officials. He severed active involvement in the MNLF and "returned to the law" because he believed that reforms could be achieved in the local level. He believes the "peace solution of the Aquino government would not succeed because of the lack of sincerity and nonparticipation of the MNLF in the peace process." He also deplores the failure of the Aquino government to give more political and administrative opportunities to qualified Muslims. He views OIC assistance to the MNLF as a vital factor in the Muslim struggle and believes it will flourish because it is based on the concept of Muslim brotherhood in the *Ummah*.

d) *Ibnu Hassan* is 38 and married with three children. He is employed as a driver-mechanic at MSU, Bongao. He joined the MNLF in Parang, Sulu where he was born on January 1, 1955. He served in the MNLF as a fighter from 1970 until 1976 when he "returned to the law" because he wanted to earn a living, having only finished first year college. He joined the MNLF when it called on the Muslim youths to get involved in the struggle against government injustice. His resolve was strengthened by the declaration of martial law in 1972 part of whose rationale, as stated by President Marcos, was to neutralize the Bangsa Moro struggle for independence.

e) *Panglima Abdullah Sansawi* is a Tausug Muslim landowner in Ipil, Tawi-Tawi, 55 years old, and married with six children. Although he finished only two years of elementary education, he was recruited to the MNLF as a logistics supplier for the movement. He joined the MNLF because he believed that as a progressive landowner his interests could be protected from any future political changes in the region. But after the surrender of MNLF Commander Yusop, he

moved to Bongao and severed his connection with the movement. As a traditional leader, being a Panglima, he had been more interested in protecting his business interests and had nothing to say about the movement's international dimension. The lack of adequate educational exposure is the obvious reason for Sansawi's detachment from the struggle's most pressing issues.

f) *Hadji Hatab Yusop* is a Tausug Muslim born in Indanan, Sulu on May 18, 1950 and married with seven children. He voluntarily joined the MNLF in 1969 because he was thoroughly convinced by the MNLF propaganda that the government was bent on destroying not only the Muslim political future in the country, but also their religious identity as Muslims. He was only in third year college when he joined the movement. But in 1974, he returned to the "fold of the law" after realizing that the MNLF struggle was not a "religious war." He was convinced that the autonomy solution offered by the government was a better option to the Muslim problem and that independence, as desired by Nur Misuari, could only be realized through a voluntary grant by a government. Hadji Yusop is currently the Deputy Governor of Tawi-Tawi, and no longer actively giving assistance to the movement.

g) *Datu Amiril Maindan,* a Tausug Muslim, was born on July 1, 1950 at Ipil, Tawi-Tawi, and married with nine children. He was only in first year college when he joined the MNLF as a sympathizer in order to "avoid conflict" with the MNLF leaders. He cooperated with the movement because he believed the movement had legitimate cause to wage a struggle and seek independence. He later discontinued active cooperation and became, instead, a security guard of the MSU branch in Bongao. Maindan had little to say about the struggle's international aspect; he was more concerned with protecting his present job.

h) *Augusto Herrera* is a Catholic who has lived in Bongao for a long time. He thus considers himself a real native. He joined the MNLF because he sincerely believed in the justice

of the Muslim struggle, having seen the government's failure to redress Muslim grievances on account of the country's defective political system. He finds democracy mind-boggling and believes that its modified form is more acceptable. But he thinks the autonomous government as designed by the Aquino administration is not the answer. He joined the MNLF as administrator and planning officer under Commander Yusop Dais. After a year he rejoined the Civil Service as Budget Officer of the MSU branch in Bongao until his retirement.

i) *Ibnu Unaid* is an inactive member of the MNLF strike force currently engaged in farming. He was born in Siasi in 1958, married with six children and residing in Bongao. He only finished grade 4 and joined the MNLF, like most recruits, to empathize with the Muslim cause. Although he did not fully understand the struggle's rationale, he supported the movement until the death of Commander Dais, an event that led him to surrender to the government. He has since lost interest in the movement, concerned mainly with farming, his only source of income.

j) *Sawadjaan Atiulla* was a retired public school teacher in Tapul, Sulu before he joined the MNLF as a coordinator. He is a Tausug Muslim, born in 1922 in Pampang, Tapul and is married with four children. He has a bachelor's degree in Elementary Education. He has remained an active member of the MNLF because he believes in the struggle of the Bangsamoro people as beneficial to both Muslims and non-Muslims in Mindanao. He also thinks the government has not complied with the Tripoli Agreement of 1976, and the establishment of the autonomous government in Muslim Mindanao will not bring peace and solve the conflict. He is confident in the final triumph of the Bangsamoro struggle, which he believes must continue because it has the support of "foreign countries". Although a returnee, he has not lost his conviction.

k) *Eliasin Jainal* is a former MNLF member under Commander Hadji Isahac Tahir of Tawi-Tawi. Before joining the

movement he was a policeman in Maimbung, Sulu. He joined the struggle because his relatives had also been involved with the MNLF, particularly Commander Tahir. He had only finished two years of high school when he joined the MNLF. He later returned to the "fold of the law" and lived in Isabela, Basilan together with his family of three children. He is 35 years old and is still a strong believer in the ultimate triumph of the Bangsamoro cause.

From Siasi

"Siasi" refers to both the progressive town and the island on which it is located. Later, the entire group of islands constituting a municipality in Central Sulu was called the Siasi Island Group. Today, the island opposite Siasi and its satellite islets is called the municipality of Pandami, thus limiting the term to only the island and islets opposite Pandami demarcated by the swift channel that has served as a trade route. It was in this Siasi Island Group that the MNLF succeeded in establishing a remarkable network of supporters. Those who represented a cross-section of the support base were as follows:

a) *Hasinon Tingkahan* was a former Commander and Vice Chairman of the MNLF in Siasi, next only to the MNLF Chairman in the area, Hadji Jamalil Taradji. He was born on July 4, 1952 at Latung, Siasi, whose influential leader was the late Panglima Baladji Jumahali, Tingkahan's grandfather. He was the Vice Mayor of Saisi. He won unopposed in the 1987 local elections. He has continued to develop his farm as the main source of his family support.

Tingkahan was in second year high school when he joined the MNLF on January 10, 1972 out of conviction in the triumph of the MNLF cause. He was convinced by the MNLF declaration that the Marcos government was out to convert the Muslims to Christianity and, eventually, confiscate all their lands. He was appointed as the Commander of Latung. He had fought government soldiers several times and was wounded together with 18 of his men. He recalled being surrounded in one operation by 15 naval boats, including

three PCFs. He surrendered in November 1976 together with 73 fully-armed followers. He cited personal differences with the MNLF Chairman of Siasi and the prospects of better medical treatment for his wife in government hospitals as his reasons for yielding. He was given amnesty and his ailing wife was granted free medical treatment in Manila.

Although he now lives quietly with his wife and nine children, he believes that the status quo is better than the autonomous setup. He also believes that the Arabs will continue to support the MNLF cause as a matter of obligation as Muslims.

b) *Cesar Utam* was a former commander of the Bangsamoro Army. He was born in 1957 in Jambangan, Siasi. His father was a public school teacher. He is married, with seven children and supports his family by fishing.

He joined the MNLF movement in 1972 on account of the declaration of Martial Law by President Marcos. He believed that martial law was not good for the Muslims. He trained for nine months in Libya and had traveled to places including Sandakan and Tawao in Sabah, and Zamboanga, Cotabato, and Davao in the Philippines. As field commander, he was responsible for the areas of Bunut and Mount Sinumaan in Jolo, and Tictapul in Zamboanga del Sur. From Bunut, he attacked government troops in Indanan and the week's fighting resulted in an estimated loss of 100 Muslims killed and 200 wounded. No information was available on the government forces' casualties. According to Utam, a foreign journalist, Teddy Roland, witnessed the encounter. Later, Channel 15 in Europe televised the capture of two armored personnel carriers (APCs) by the Muslim rebels.

On November 18, 1989, Utam surrendered with his men in response to the peace initiative of the Aquino government through Defense Secretary Fidel Ramos. His specific reasons for returning to the "fold of the law were": (1) his desire for peace so he could educate his children; (2) the change of government from Marcos to Aquino; and (3) the internal

problems in the MNLF leadership which gave rise to the dreaded "lost commands." But like most Muslims, he believes that the continuing support of the Arabs for the MNLF as a Muslim movement to protect Islam is crucial. However, he believes that the establishment of the autonomous Muslim government is a positive means towards achieving Muslim aspirations because it would mean the establishment of more *madaris* (schools) and Shariah Courts.

c) *Sali Ilaji* was born on August 7, 1954 in Buan, Siasi to Police Sergeant Ilaji Haradji and Andahaw Salip Bassal. He was a criminology student when he joined the MNLF in 1972 after the declaration of martial law. He cites "disenchantment" with the Marcos administration, the foreign debt problem, and the long government neglect of the Muslim Mindanao as the reasons for his involvement with the movement. Because of his college and ROTC training, he immediately saw action in the field battle against government forces. In 1973 he fought in Sibuco where, allegedly, 19 government soldiers died and three were wounded, and only two Muslim fighters died while three were wounded. After about three years of struggle, he decided to surrender through Admiral Romulo Espaldon on November 27, 1975 with 204 fully armed followers. He yielded because he desired peace so that he could educate his six children and live peacefully with his family. He is the Chief Security Officer of the Mayor of Siasi.

Although he believes that the Arabs' assistance to the MNLF cause continues, Ilaji thinks that the Tripoli Agreement is not the key solution to the conflict. He thinks that the government approach by way of the autonomous government can be the answer to the Muslim problem.

d) *Apalal Julkanain* was born on January 15, 1952 in Lugus, Siasi, to Abbas Julkanain and Mastura Abdula. When he became a widower he joined the MNLF. He had six children. He only finished high school when he formally enlisted as a recruit on January 2, 1973. His reasons for turning rebel

was disappointment with the Marcos government which had given him no justice for the death of his two brothers and four cousins in the infamous Jabidah massacre on Corregidor. He became vulnerable to the MNLF propaganda against the government and was sent for training for three months as a rebel fighter at Tambisan, Sabah.

After training, Apalal returned to Siasi and became assistant to Commander Bakkang Jadlil Sammah, sometimes also known as Commander Mohammad Essil Jaddil Sammah, of the Pandami Revolutionary Command. He fought twice under Commander Bakkang. The first was at Hambilan on April 13, 1973 against a combined government force of police, Integrated Civilian Home Defense Force, and regular army elements. Two of his companions were wounded. Two weeks later, in an encounter with the 24th Army Battalion, the MNLF suffered heavy casualties with 10 killed, including Commander Bakkang, and seven wounded. No casualty figures were available on the government side in the two battles.

After the death of Commander Bakkang, Apalal received a written order from Commander Hadji Isaac Tahir, Commander of the Tawi-Tawi Revolutionary Command, to move to Tawi-Tawi to assume his new position as Commander of the municipalities of Basbas, South Ubian, Tandu Bas District, Bacbakan, Jakarta, Tumbagaan, and Sugbay. After two years he voluntarily returned to the "fold of the law" because of differences with some groups in the MNLF. He resumed his business and concentrated on sending his children to school.

Apalal believes that the MNLF support from the Arab World was due to the convincing propaganda of the MNLF. He is also convinced that the Philippine government was anti-Muslim and that the Muslims were fighting for freedom and independence in the name of Islam. However, he thinks that the autonomous government can be the solution to the conflict.

e) *Samad Abdurahim* is a 48-year-old farmer. He is married, with seven children. Like most recruits he joined the MNLF in 1972 to fight for Muslim independence and, specifically, to defend his own barangay against military atrocities and abuses. He believed in the MNLF claim that the Marcos soldiers were indiscriminately burning the mosques and shelling Muslim villages, like his own barangay, Kungtad. After two years with the movement, he was compelled to surrender in 1974 to Col. Likub, pleading illness. He was brought to Espaldon and eventually to Marcos, who granted him and his 50 men absolute amnesty. He recalled killing about 70 soldiers, excluding those who were wounded.

Although he is now peacefully attending to his farm and family, he still believes the Muslim world will continue to support the struggle. But he thinks that the autonomous government of Muslim Mindanao is the solution to the Muslim problem.

f) *Matlib Usman*, 52 years old, is married, with nine children. He was born in 1939 at Tanjung Siowing, Siasi to Usman Tadjirul and Tanjila Alih. He had not gone to school, but was a successful farmer-businessman when he joined the MNLF in 1972.

He joined the struggle because of Marcos's oppression of the Muslims and the government's suppression of Islam. He thought that the struggle against the government was a holy war (*jihad*) in which every true Muslim is expected to participate. He was trained four-and-a-half months at Kutah Bullud, Malaysia. Upon his return to Sulu, his initial battles against the government were at Bakal, Pandami, his area of responsibility. He claimed these encounters killed 72 soldiers and wounded an unknown number of soldiers. He said his losses were only 11 killed and four wounded. Later, he was transferred to Tawi-Tawi as overall commander of the Tawi-Tawi Revolutionary Command. Here he fought at Katipunan, Busay, and Tanjung where MNLF Commander Cid lost one of his men and a member of his medical team.

After 12 years with the movement, Matlih was captured by Philippine Naval Boat 31 while on his way from Jampiras, Sabah to Sulu. He was jailed at Calarian, Zamboanga City for several months before he was given amnesty. He subsequently convinced 120 members of his command to surrender to the government at Siasi. But he still believes in the leadership of Nur Misuari. He thinks that being Muslims, the Arabs will continue to help the MNLF struggle for freedom and Islam with both money and materials.

g) *Mudjahirin Arasain* was born on March 18, 1952 in Jambangan, Siasi to Imam Arasain Jumaani and Aridda Arasain. He finished a B.S. in Agriculture and was a successful farmer when he joined the MNLF in 1973 as Barrio Chairman of Barangay Jambangan. As told them by the MNLF, their objectives were to: (1) fight for Muslim freedom in Mindanao, the Bangsamoro homeland; (2) fight for the cause of Islam: and (3) check government military abuses against Muslim women and religion.

Mudjahirin fought in three battles as MNLF District Commander in Saisi after 15 days of training at Kambing, Luuk: (1) the Battle of Kungtad in 1974 where MNLF Commander Sahisa was wounded; (2) the Battle of Sipanding where some of his men were wounded; and (3) the Battle of Siburri where two women in his unit were killed. However, on November 25, 1975, he and 238 armed followers surrendered to Espaldon because of disillusionment in the movement. They were subsequently granted absolute amnesty by Marcos.

Although he still believes that the Arab assistance to the struggle will continue, he had wanted the establishment of the autonomous government in Muslim Mindanao, which he thinks will lead to (1) the opening of Moro state colleges and universities; (2) the establishment of more *madaris* and Shariah Courts; (3) the grant of more rights and privileges to natives in employment and access to natural resources; (4) the strong representation of Mindanao in the national government; (5) a greater share of regional income; and (6)

the integration of qualified Muslims into the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

h) *Malinsa Hasim* was born at Duggo, Siasi to Hasim Isnain and Indang Adain more than 50 years ago. He had no formal schooling but is a successful farmer supporting a family of six children. Like both his parents, he was illiterate. He joined the MNLF after the declaration of martial law with only his courage to offer the movement. He feared for losing his religion and so he joined the movement.

He was assigned to Duggo and had some 100 armed followers but their 11 encounters with government forces took place all around Siowing where they lost about 50 men, and several injured. They continued in the struggle for about 10 years believing that Arab assistance would bring final victory. But he was forced to surrender after realizing that being illiterate meant that he would be left out by the MNLF leaders when they moved to Sandakan, Sabah. With no other motive to go on, he yielded to Col. Juhalim Hadjula with 100 of his men, 70 of whom were fully-armed. They were granted absolute amnesty.

He thinks the autonomous government of Muslim Mindanao will empower the Muslims.

i) *Mrs. Kuraisiya Hussin* was born on March 6, 1959 in Duggo, Siasi to Annung Hassin and Hussin Sali. She only finished fourth year high school and was a single woman when she joined the MNLF as a member of its medical unit. She learned the ropes from the MNLF medical team that came from Jolo to Duggo.

Kuraisiya's reasons for joining the movement were the appointment of her uncle, Malinsa Hasim, as MNLF Commander and her belief that the government was carrying out the plan to convert Muslims to Christianity. She remained active for six years but surrendered to the government along with her uncle. She believes that Arab support for the cause is crucial but she thinks the Muslim

Mindanao autonomous government can solve the problem and bring peace. She is a widow and currently a teacher at the Duggo Elementary School, having finally obtained a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education.

j) *Mudjahirin Sarani* was born in 1963 in Tubigan, Sipanding, Siasi. He was only an elementary school graduate when he joined the MNLF as a training officer under Commander Nizam Abubakar. He was given the codename "M." Since 1973 his involvement had been with the Palawan Revolutionary Command, but was assigned as training officer at Siburi and Laminusa, Siasi MNLF Training Centers.

He joined the movement for three reasons: (1) the defense of the Bangsamoro homeland seeking independence; (2) the defense of Muslims who were harassed by the military; and (3) the defense of Islam which was threatened by the Marcos government. He said that the Arab aid for the MNLF would go on not only as a matter of obligation between Muslims but also as a reciprocal gesture for MNLF's combat assistance to Arab countries fighting their enemies. Like Misuari he believes that the government-sponsored autonomous government for Muslim Mindanao will not work and bring peace. Although living peacefully in Siasi, he is still an active member of the movement but has observed the cease-fire agreement with the government. But he is ready to respond to duty in the movement because he is committed to the ultimate independence of the Bangsamoro people.

From Jolo

Of all the places in Sulu, Jolo is the most important. It enjoys the distinct honor of being the center of Sulu's history and culture. In a sense, it is Sulu itself, the hub of its political tradition and processes through which the outside world can be perceived. Like the other island groups Jolo consists of the biggest island bearing its name and a number of islets that form its satellites. But its essence really comes from the old settlement already known in the beginning of Spanish rule as "Jolo," and "Xoloo" and "Sug" in the

locality. But more relevant to this study is the fact that Jolo island is the main base, or heart, of the MNLF secessionist struggle. The Muslim view of the struggle from this island base is expressed by the following informants:

a) *Hadji Alhabsi Bin Mutalib* is single and 32 years old. He was born in Indanan to Muslim parents, Hatib Salahuddin and Sahatul Muharram. He was in third year college when he joined the MNLF in 1973 as an information officer with the rank of colonel. His reasons for taking up arms were: (1) to fight for freedom and dignity of the Muslims in Southern Philippines; and (2) to be part of the Muslim struggle for independence.

Alhabsi still considers himself active in the movement. He believes that the Bangsamoro struggle developed into a separatist movement because of the Aquino government's failure to implement the Tripoli Agreement. He revealed that not only the OIC is sympathetic to the MNLF; the non-aligned countries and to a certain extent, the United Nations, are also supportive of the MNLF. The autonomous government in Mindanao is not the solution. It is just a divide-and-rule strategy of the government to exploit the Muslims. He is convinced that only war can lead to peace and to the ultimate victory and independence of Moroland through the MNLF.

b) *Hadji Bawang Estino* is 70 years old, married, with two wives and seven children. He is a Tausug Muslim and a son of Panglima Estino and Jaddariyah Estino. He joined the MNLF in 1972 when he was the Barangay Captain of Punay. His reason for joining was the rampant abuses committed by the military against many innocent Muslims.

Maas Bawang, as Estino is popularly known, served only for one year as MNLF Commander of Punay. He surrendered to the government because of dissension in the movement and joined the government paramilitary forces. But he believes that the splits in the MNLF would not weaken Misuari's leadership nor lessen the OIC's support for the

movement. Moreover, he thinks the autonomous government will not bring peace because it is not acceptable to the MNLF, which is aiming at full independence, and runs counter to the Tripoli Accord. Although still a believer in the Bangsamoro struggle, he is now preoccupied with his farming business.

c) *Morofred Sangkula* is a native of Parang, Sulu. He is married, with seven children. Before joining the MNLF as an information officer and propagandist, he was a teacher in Lamitan, Basilan and later, a scholar in Egypt taking pre-med. He joined the movement and served for seven years because of the government's "perennial neglect" of the Moros. His involvement was voluntary and there was no salary from the organization except allowances that were paid from foreign aid.

He returned to the "fold of the law" and was appointed Executive Assistant to the Administrator of the Southern Philippines Development Authority (SPDA). He resigned his post in 1987. Although he surrendered, he still regards himself as an active rebel. He has not abandoned his belief in the struggle. He believes that the MNLF has achieved an international status and continues to receive OIC aid because of religious ties. Like the other Jolo informant, he thinks the rift within the MNLF is not caused by Misuari but is a part of the Philippine government's "divide-and-rule" tactics to weaken Muslim leadership, and as such will not affect the foreign support for the movement.

d) *Hadji Alan Salahuddin* is still an active member of the MNLF operating in the municipality of Indanan, Sulu. He is known more as Commander Alan. He is the elder brother of MNLF Information Officer, Hadji Alhabsi Bin Mutalib. He already had a Bachelor of Arts degree when he joined the movement in 1979. He is 35 years and married, with five children.

He joined the MNLF not only because of his brother but also because he felt it was the duty of all Muslims to help attain

independence for Mindanao. He strongly believes in the triumph of the MNLF in its struggle for Bangsamoro independence as well as in the crucial support of the OIC.

e) *Professor Amirul Ahajul* is 34 years, single, and Muslim. He is teaching at the Jolo branch of the Mindanao State University (MSU). Although not a member of the MNLF, he is a sympathizer, having been a member of the Muslim Youth of the Philippines which supported the aims of the MNLF. He believes that the MNLF has historical basis for fighting against the government and has been supported by the OIC and some European countries because of its struggle for the freedom of the Filipino Muslims from oppression. He does not believe that the creation of the autonomous government is a solution to the Mindanao problem and believes in the inevitability of war against the Aquino government because of the latter's failure to grant the Muslims complete freedom.

Ahajul believes that the OIC will continue to support the MNLF despite the apparent dissension in the movement because the MNLF is fighting for a Muslim cause and Misuari is still recognized as a leader who can be the rallying point for the Muslims in the Philippines. He is a firm believer in the final victory of the MNLF and the steadfastness of the OIC support, especially Libya.

f) *Amil Jawari* is 48 years old and a Tausug Muslim. He is married, with four children. As a Hadji, he commands respect from the people. He only finished Grade 4 but was the top councilor of Indanan when he joined the MNLF as Commander of the Municipality of Indanan in 1971. His reason for joining was purely religious -- the defense of Islam.

After about 10 years with the movement, he surrendered in 1981 in the interest of peace. But he says he has remained committed to the ideals and aims of the MNLF. He also says that Misuari was not angry at the returnees. He understood the circumstances of their "return" which did not necessarily

mean a rejection of the MNLF goal of Bangsamoro independence. He still supports the MNLF and hopes that with the OIC's continued support for freedom for the Bangsamoro will soon be realized.

g) *Muksan Taguidid*, a Tausug Muslim, was born on April 8, 1950 at Sangkapa, Pata, Sulu. He is married, with four children. He is a member of the Paghambuuk and the Party Parhimpuanan Kabangsahan Anok Islam. He was a first-year college student when he voluntarily joined the MNLF as a student leader in 1969. His reason was the anti-Muslim attitude and activities of the government. He was active in the movement until 1975 when he returned to the "fold of the law" because he could not see the point of Filipinos fighting Filipinos or Muslims against Muslims. But he believes in continuing the revolutionary cause within the parameter of the law.

He believes the Muslim countries will continue to support Misuari as a matter of religious obligation to Muslims fighting for their freedom. No less than the Koran invokes this commitment and duty, according to Taguidid. As for the Aquino-engineered autonomous government, he says it is not the solution to the Mindanao problem because it fell short of Muslim expectations.

From Basilan

Historically, Basilan has served as a convenient link between mainland Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago. In a sense, it was a natural bridge for various contacts and encounters between people involved in the rich Southeast Asian trade that brought together the entire Philippine Archipelago from Luzon to Sulu into a lucrative politico-economic relation in precolonial times. Today, Basilan and its islets have assumed a complex geographic role, including that of lairs for all kinds of seafaring bands and pirates, whose activities in ancient times extended to the entire chain of Balangingi islands between Basilan and Jolo. The perception of Muslims from this island group is expressed by a number of informants.

a) *Assi Diong* is a Tausug Muslim who was born in San Raymundo, Jolo on May 10, 1945. He was a former soldier of the Armed Forces of the Philippines before joining the MNLF as an intelligence officer. He served in the same capacity under MNLF Commander Ustaj Kalbi Tupay before the latter became an assemblyman under the Marcos government. He joined the MNLF because he believed in its objectives. He eventually surrendered and became a member of the special military forces in Basilan. He now lives in Maluso, Basilan and has since become a successful businessman. He believes that the present government will eventually bring peace for Muslim Mindanao.

b) *Habib Harun Aldam*, a Tausug Muslim, was born on March 17, 1951 at Kulasi, Maimbung, Jolo. He was in first year college when he joined the MNLF under his relative, Commander Ustaj Kalbi Tupoy. He confirmed the fact that the Muslim countries were giving material, financial, and moral assistance to the MNLF.

Although he believed that the defense of Islam was why he joined the MNLF, he surrendered after five years together with Commander Tupoy. He was appointed as an officer in the AFP's paramilitary unit and became a supporter of the Aquino-sponsored plebiscite and the subsequent establishment of the Muslim autonomous government.

c) *Hadja Maimona Karama Aldam* was born at Putulan, Maluso, Basilan. He is a Tausug Muslim devoted to the cause of Islam. As her name suggests, she had gone to Mecca on a pilgrimage. She was a typist in the Bureau of Posts in Basilan and an active member of various organizations when she joined the MNLF as a medical aide. As the daughter of Commander Kalbi, she also became a rebel and after three years (1972-1974) she surrendered together with her father.

Upon returning to the "fold of the law," she was employed as a Records Officer in the Isabela office of the Department

of Environment and Natural Resources. She, too, supported the Aquino-designed autonomous government.

d) *Habib Naho Hasim* is a Tausug Muslim and a native of Lantawan, Basilan. He was a fugitive in Palahangan, Pilas, Lantawan when he decided to join the MNLF as a mere activist and fighter. He was simply discontented with the government. He surrendered and, despite his low educational attainment (elementary graduate), he served as Vice Mayor from 1981 to 1986. He left the MNLF because of disenchantment with Misuari's leadership and the lack of direction in the movement.

e) *Yusop Aldam* was born on May 7, 1959 in Palahangan, Basilan. He finished third year, BS Biology, when he joined the MNLF as a mere follower. His reasons were disenchantment with the government and the influence of many relatives who had joined the movement, including his own father. He saw the government's neglect of the Muslims and incidents of oppression. Later, he joined the surrender under Ustaj Kalbi Tupoy and became a barangay captain. No definite views on the MNLF ties with foreign interest and supporters were expressed.

f) *Hadji Malik Alsad* is an MNLF Commander but inactive for the time being and engaged in a relatively prosperous business in Isabela, Basilan. He was born in Baluk Baluk, Basilan in 1940 and at the time he joined the MNLF as a Commander he had nine children. As a Tausug religious leader, he believes that the movement will triumph because of the support of the Muslim world. He believes strongly in the freedom and independence of the Bangsamoro people.

g) *Gerry Salapuddin* was formerly the Provincial Chairman of the MNLF in Basilan. His real name is Abdul Gani Arul Salapuddin. He was born in Buki Sama, Tuburan, Basilan on March 25, 1952. He is a Yakan Muslim, married with one child. At the time he joined the MNLF he had only finished high school. He turned to radicalism because of what he perceived as discriminations against his Yakan tribe. He

personally experienced this when he failed to get a CNI scholarship despite passing the qualifying examination as one of the top ten in Region 9. His involvement in the MNLF was a means of drawing attention to the plight of the Yakan people.

He was sent to Malaysia for training, and upon completion and return to the region, was appointed Chairman for Basilan. He was convinced that the MNLF objectives were just and noble and that the OIC would support it to victory. Although still committed to the Bangsamoro ideals of real freedom, he decided to return to the "fold of the law" after witnessing the defective MNLF leadership. He thought that the Muslim objectives and ideals could best be achieved through the democratic mechanism available in the political system. Consequently, he supported the government autonomy law as an initial step. Although the "yes" lost in the plebiscite, his hope for Yakan progress has remained vibrant after getting for the Yakan the provincial political leadership, from governor to the board members.

The Bangsamoro Meetings and Congress

Perhaps the more direct and effective method of the MNLF's efforts to draw international attention were the organized congress or mass gatherings of the front's armed followers and multisectoral supporters. The most impressive congregations after the Marcos era were those of MNLF followers in Maimbung, the movement's stronghold. No less than Misuari was the central figure in these occasions. The conference in 1986 was conducted to prove to both the Aquino government and the Muslim world that the MNLF was a force to reckon with and was still working for the freedom of the Bangsamoro people. This was followed by Misuari's and his group's dramatic swing through Zamboanga under the watchful eyes of the armed forces. His dramatic landing on the beach of the Al Makdum University was welcomed by proud Muslim residents and was promptly reported to the OIC by the MNLF propagandist.

Misuari's sorties to chosen areas of Mindanao, where the MNLF supporters were numerous and undisturbed by the government, gave the MNLF what government sources called

"bloated importance" in the national media. The OIC's acknowledgment of the MNLF's show of force was expressed in the 17th OIC Annual Resolution of March 1988 which declared unequivocal support for the MNLF as the representative of the Bangsamoro people.

Different from the military-political demonstrations by MNLF's armed followers, but equally important, was the convening of the Bangsamoro National Congress by a multisectoral group in March 1989 at the Maharlika Village in Metro Manila. The congress was organized by the former OIC Governor Almarin C. Tillah who was appointed chairman of the two-day congress. Apart from various Muslim sectoral representatives, particularly the youth, Christian leaders also attended. Among them were Reuben Canoy of MIM, former Assemblyman Homobono Adaza, and Mrs. Celia Diaz Laurel, representing her husband, Vice President Salvador H. Laurel. There were also professionals, academicians, and other leaders who attended, among them Odillon C. Mallari, chairman of the Movement for Free Mindanao; Abdulgaffur S. Hajirul, chairman of the Bangsamoro Solidarity; Sultan Panangan S. Pangandaman of the Bangsamoro Lanao Professionals; and Captain Manodel, a Tiboli leader.

While the congress gave the impression of popular support for the MNLF, its real value lies in the series of strongly-worded resolutions crafted by a hard-working secretariat that worked overtime in Tillah's Makati home. The resolutions were approved and passed by the congress and immediately transmitted to the OIC on March 10, 1989, in time for the organization's annual meeting on March 13-16. The resolutions were as follows:

Resolution No. 1 appealing to the OIC to grant membership to the MNLF

Resolution No. 2 calling for the resumption of peace talks between the MNLF and the Philippine government

Resolution No. 3 rejecting the Organic Act for Muslim Mindanao

Resolution No. 4 urging the Philippine government to implement the 1976 Tripoli Accord

Resolution No. 5 reiterating the congress's recognition of Nur Misuari's leadership

Resolution No. 6 calling for the solidarity of Muslims, Christians, and the highlanders who support the independence of the Bangsamoro homeland

Resolution No. 7 calling for the demilitarization of Mindanao and other islands

Resolution No. 8 desisting the continued exploitation of the Bangsamoro homeland by multinationals and their local counterparts

Resolution No. 9 urging the just indemnification of all the victims of human rights violations

Resolution No. 10 recognizing the sovereignty of the Palestinian state and the legitimacy of the Palestinian struggle

Resolution No. 11 condemning Salman Rushdie and his novel, Satanic Verses

Resolution No. 12 calling for the establishment of the Bangsamoro media

One of the results of the 18th meeting of the OIC's Foreign Ministers, held from March 13 to 16, 1991 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia was Draft Resolution No. 18-P on the issue of the Philippine Muslims. The resolution reaffirmed the "unflinching adherence" of the OIC to the Tripoli Agreement and its support for the full implementation of its provisions. In arriving at this statement the OIC recalled all its past resolutions and considered the note of the General Secretariat and the report of the Quadripartite Committee. In effect, it sets aside, the Philippine government's diplomatic offensive and rejected its version of the Muslim issue. After deploring the failure of the Philippine government to honor the Tripoli Accord as an international agreement, it urged the member states "to extend material, financial and humanitarian assistance to

the MNLF... to defend the Muslim people and Islam and claim their rights." Part of the OIC resolution expressed an unusual concern of the OIC because it called for the adoption of "measures," if the Philippine government continued to maintain a "negative stand" on the implementation of the Tripoli Agreement. From reports of the MNLF representatives, the Bangsamoro congress resolutions presented in green folders, were received by the OIC and duly given formal recognition.



Chapter V
Internationalization from Without

After the formal and public inauguration of the Muslim Independence Movement in 1968, efforts to internationalize the Moro struggle were directed toward foreign diplomacy. Simultaneously given attention was the strengthening of the domestic front. Contributing initially to this was the growth of what started out as a purely Muslim independence movement into a broader and comprehensive struggle in southern Philippines. The MIM was the tangible evidence of this united Mindanao front. Its membership consisted of Muslims, Christians, and Lumads who shared the common vision of a free, independent and prosperous Mindanao.

With the new organizational mechanism, the Moro struggle had become the struggle of a regional population not bound by a common religion, but by a common aspiration, a goal anchored on the conviction that the progress of the region lies in independence from, and not integration into, the Philippine state. But the burden of internationalization was on the Moro people, and several initiatives were taken after the Jabidah massacre.

The Lucman Initiatives

It appears from sources that Haroun al-Rasid Lucman, a prominent Maranao leader from Lanao del Sur was the first to take steps toward the internationalization of the Moro struggle. He established contacts with Malaysian leaders especially Tun Mustapha of Sabah for the training of Moro youths and leaders in a movement toward Moro liberation. With help from Tun Mustapha, 90 Moro trainees, including Nur Misuari, were sent to Pulau Pangkor in 1969 for training and orientation. It was also here that the MNLF was organized with a central committee headed by Nur Misuari.

But the most important step taken by Lucman was to establish ties with Arab countries in the course of his visits to the Middle East in 1971. One of the results of these visits was the Libyan connection. Aside from the Muslim obligation to assist oppressed

Muslims, Lucman utilized the likelihood of Zionist influence behind the Philippine government's treatment of the Moro people as an argument to get the unequivocal and passionate support of Libyan President Muammar Ghadafi for the MNLF. Libya's commitment was obtained and the Malaysian connection of the MNLF emerged as the natural conduit for Libyan aid. In June 1972, Libya's formal support for the MNLF was declared by President Ghadafi who pledged substantial military and other assistance to the Moro cause. As a result, the Bangsa Moro Army was organized and equipped with modern military weapons and hardware, including the Belgian KAL, Kalashnikov AK 47, B-40 anti-tank weapons and armalites. That the Libyan aid was substantial could be deduced from Misuari's own statement in an interview with J. Thiery Roland of Belgium for the European media, that Libya gave the MNLF "all kinds of support." Apparently, as subsequent events would bear out, the support Misuari meant included Libya's strategic and vital role in the MNLF's diplomatic efforts, especially in the OIC where all the heads of state of 46 Muslim countries were members. As a key element in the internationalization of the Moro struggle, the Moro problem was included in the agenda of the 1972 OIC Conference (Third) in Jeddah upon the suggestion of Libya. For the MNLF, and especially Misuari, whose star was beginning to rise, this attention to the Moro issue was no small thing. It was historic and elating because the most powerful Muslim body in the world had given formal recognition to the Moro issue and deemed worthy of support by the OIC. Although not yet part of the OIC, Resolution 12 of the Conference emboldened the MNLF in the face of the Marcos government which was exhausting all means to thwart the Moro struggle. The resolution called upon the Marcos government to guarantee the rights and security of the Moro people. Thereafter, the OIC became the formidable force behind the Moro struggle, as shown by subsequent developments.

The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC)

With the Moro struggle becoming an OIC concern, the gradual growth of Misuari's importance here and abroad was inevitable. Without the OIC, the MNLF struggle would not have been as meaningful, and Misuari knew this only too well. Which is why he spent most of his time in the Middle East and the Muslim

world, shuttling between conferences and meetings with Muslim leaders whenever possible. In 1973, the OIC held its fourth conference in Bengazi, Libya. The MNLF, with the help of Libya, earned the OIC Resolution No. 4, which expressed concern over the genocidal campaigns of the Philippine government against the Moro population. The resolution called for the formation of an OIC delegation to visit the Philippines and to report its findings. The team was composed of a representative each from Libya, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, and Somalia. Indonesia and Malaysia, as OIC member-states, were also enjoined to use their good offices to help the Moro people. Then in 1974, the Fifth OIC Conference held in Kuala Lumpur allowed the MNLF to present its petition, resulting in Resolution No. 18 which reiterated the previous OIC commitment and support, while also noting the Philippine government's effort to address the problem and to improve on prospects for peace. The Conference urged the Philippine government to negotiate a political solution with the MNLF. By enjoining the Philippine government to dialogue with the MNLF, the OIC had actually given Misuari a fresh boost, while challenging the Philippine government's ambiguous posture on the matter. As a concrete show of support, the conference also created the Filipino Muslim Welfare and Relief Agency -- a plus factor in the MNLF struggle, since the agency would deal with the critical needs of the Moro people not effectively served by the Philippine government.

The subsequent developments proved encouraging for MNLF efforts to seek full membership in the OIC. In 1975, the Sixth OIC Conference was convened in Jeddah, where the MNLF demands were presented and approved for adoption in the conference's Resolution No. 10. The demands were: self-government for Mindanao, Basilan, Sulu, and Palawan; an internal security force composed of MNLF and other minority groups; dismantling of all Philippine government armed forces in the Moro homeland; a system of Shariah courts; control of elementary and secondary education by the local government; control of all Muslim institutions by the Moro government; Moro control of all economic affairs of the region; and full and free participation of the Moro people in the central government. But it was not until the Seventh OIC Conference in Istanbul, in 1976 that the OIC support for the MNLF was strongly reaffirmed, putting real pressure on the Philippine government to grant meaningful autonomy to the Moro people.

The result of subsequent negotiations, with Libya exercising decisive intermediary role, was the conclusion of the historic Tripoli Agreement on December 23, 1976, an accord that sealed the basis for the ultimate solution to the Moro problem without sacrificing Philippine sovereignty.

Unfortunately, the subsequent efforts from 1977 to 1980 to carry out the ambiguously general provisions of the Tripoli Agreement resulted in fundamental differences in interpretation. The series of charges and countercharges between the parties to the agreement led to a frosty conclusion when formal talks between the MNLF and the government ceased altogether. Meanwhile, the Marcos government went ahead with what it considered as the faithful carrying out of the Tripoli Accord, including the establishment of two Muslim autonomous regions in Mindanao -- Region 9 (Western Mindanao) and Region 12 (Central Mindanao). But the MNLF dismissed all the measures and structures as government manipulation of democratic processes and, therefore, unfaithful to the spirit of the Tripoli Agreement. The MNLF position was strengthened internationally when it acquired from the OIC an observer's status in 1977. This allowed the MNLF Chairman access to the OIC leadership. In 1981, at the 12th OIC conference in Baghdad, Misuari lambasted the Philippine government for its genocidal campaigns in Pata island and called upon the OIC to take drastic and urgent measures. In subsequent conferences, short of giving the MNLF full-membership status, the OIC went on reiterating support for the MNLF as the sole official representative of the Moro people and rejecting measures taken by the Philippine government as not in keeping with the Tripoli Agreement. By 1985, political situations in the Philippines had turned increasingly against the Marcos government and the MNLF expressed support for the opposition forces seeking Marcos's overthrow. The MNLF position was premised on the prospect of getting a better deal for the fulfillment of the Tripoli Accord, having obtained from chief oppositionist, former Senator Benigno Aquino, Jr. the promise to carry out the agreement in the event that Marcos would be unseated.

In effect, the position and status of the MNLF in the OIC has remained the most important leverage of the Moro struggle for self-determination or, at least, a meaningful autonomy. Psychologically, the OIC has given moral and political strength that military forces could not. In fact, whatever military threat the MNLF forces would

present even in the self-declared MNLF-controlled areas could be readily neutralized by the AFP. Only the OIC factor has been a formidable third party in the conflict. Without the OIC's consistent support for the MNLF the Moro struggle would have gone the way of all its frustrated struggles in the past.

Clearly, the OIC insistence on the Tripoli Agreement as the only basis of any settlement goes beyond the agreement's provisions. As an international accord, it has institutionalized the MNLF struggle's international character. It has given Misuari a semblance of sovereignty as MNLF chairman. The Agreement is so unique that the OIC and its member states are bound collectively and individually to uphold the MNLF cause. Islamic principles dictate that the OIC commitment is a sacred responsibility. Conversely, the MNLF is bound to the Agreement and therefore cannot exceed the limits set by the accord. For instance, it cannot ask for more than a truly meaningful autonomy for the Moro homeland because the Agreement honors Philippine sovereignty. This particular provision has kept the OIC from granting the MNLF full membership status which the movement has been seeking since 1977. When the binding nature of the agreement ceases depends more on what the Philippine government does with the agreement and on how the MNLF can convince the OIC that the Philippine government violated the agreement.

For the OIC, to grant the MNLF full membership would be to negate the Tripoli Agreement. It would accord the MNLF the status of a sovereign Muslim state. In other words, by consistently denying the MNLF full membership, the OIC has given the Philippines the best guarantee of sovereignty and thus remains the only hope of the Philippine government to resolve the Moro issue without waging a costly decisive war against the MNLF. This means that the Tripoli Agreement should be the starting point of renewed talks, as the MNLF itself has often said. But the Aquino government did not give this point serious attention, insisting instead on treating the issue as an internal problem that can be adequately dealt with by the Philippine Constitution. This was the line pursued by the panel in the Jeddah Talks which led to the Jeddah Accord of January 3, 1987 with its ambiguous provisions. The same process was also evident in the manner in which the Pelaez Panel presented the government's point-by-point answer to the MNLF 26-point proposal of February 20, 1987.

Anticipating the government's move to force the MNLF to conform to its mode of settlement, the MNLF opposed the ratification of the 1987 Constitution. As expected, the Aquino negotiators used the ratification of the constitution in the Muslim areas as an argument to ignore the Tripoli Agreement as the basis for peace talks.

Dr. Mohammed Mukhtar Awld Bah, OIC Deputy Political Secretary General, said during the meeting of the Quadripartite Ministerial Committee on February 18, 1989, that the position of the Philippine government had further complicated the issue.

What stood in the way of the Philippine government's approach was the rejection by the OIC of what the government had done insofar as the Tripoli Agreement was concerned. The OIC scored the passage of the Autonomy Act of 1990 and the subsequent establishment of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao. The OIC has consistently called upon the Philippines to carry out the provisions of the Tripoli Agreement, again boosting the MNLF's international posture. For as long as the Philippine government keeps ignoring the Agreement, the delay buys time for MNLF campaign for full membership in the OIC. In the event that it does, the MNLF may now pressure the OIC to nullify the Agreement and free the parties from all obligations therein. In short, the abandonment of the Agreement works in favor of Moro secessionism or separatism, the MNLF's original goal, which has been effectively checked by the OIC.

Other Diplomatic Offensives

Although the MNLF's diplomatic focus was the OIC because of the organization's considerable clout, contacts with individual Muslim states and its leaders, as well as with influential non-Muslim countries, were pursued by Nur Misuari. The MNLF established an office in Pakistan, and its presence had also been made visible through representatives in Sabah, Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta, and Darrusalam. But the biggest attention was given to contacts in Jeddah and Tripoli, since Saudi Arabia and Libya were the top supporters of the MNLF and the Moro struggle.

Following the decline of Libyan assistance to revolutionary struggles in the world on account of its own troubles in the Middle East, the MNLF, while still nurturing the Libyan connection

entertained prospects of getting aid from Iran under the revolutionary and fundamentalist leadership of Ayatollah Ruholla Khomeini. Although data on the Iranian aid are not available, indirect information confirms likely aid from Iran to the MNLF. I recall that in 1979, during the conference on the Ghadafi's Green Book in Bengazi which I attended on the invitation of the Libyan government, I was questioned by an Iranian revolutionary about whether the MNLF struggle deserved assistance. I avoided the issue since I was merely a guest observer together with Juan Perez of the *Philippine Daily Express* and Jose Luna Castro of the *Philippine Journal.* I thought the question was best addressed to Misuari who was also in the conference with his delegation. But I discerned from the query that some form of aid had been extended to the MNLF cause by Iran. In the same conference I also saw Misuari busily talking to the various delegations, and at one instance, was in a huddle with Ghadafi. No doubt that Misuari was establishing or strengthening ties with other revolutionary movements in the world to give the MNLF the international dimension. I learned that the various groups in the conference -- except the three observers from the Philippines -- were there precisely to get a slice of Ghadafi's revolutionary budget. How much the MNLF got from Libya was not known, but the smile on Misuari's face when I managed to talk to him was an indication of a continuing Libyan aid.

I had the opportunity to ride with Misuari in a van that took us to our dormitory. I talked to him in Tausug about the Moro struggle. He vehemently attacked the Philippine government using Tausug expletives to denounce not only Filipino colonialism but also the government's irreconcilable position. I asked him as one academic to another when he was going to write a book on the MNLF and his role in it. His answer was brief and revealing: "This is not the time to write a book." Indeed, this confirmed the fact that Misuari and the MNLF had adopted a separatist stance after the eighth OIC conference in Tripoli on May 20, 1977 where Misuari accused the Philippine government of violating the Tripoli Agreement and continuing its genocidal campaign against the Moro people.

Misuari's diplomatic activities were not confined to the Muslim world. He reportedly visited the former Soviet Union and China to seek assistance for the MNLF. Accordingly, the Soviet

Union provided help through Vietnam on condition that the MNLF coordinate with the Soviet-influenced CPP-NPA. The same was true with China whose willingness to help the Moro struggle was contingent on linkage with the NPA movement. There are no documentary sources to bear out this highly probable China connection. But Misuari's channel to Soviet and Chinese sources was possible through his academic and intellectual ties with leaders in the Philippine leftist movement, one that dates back to his activist years in the University of the Philippines.

The United Nations and other world organizations also became a convenient fora for the presentation of the MNLF position. The UN High Commission for Refugees, Amnesty International, Islamic Development Bank, Motamar Al-Alam Al-Islami (World Muslim Congress), Rabitatul Alam Al-Islami (Islamic Call), World Assembly of Muslim Youth, and World Forum of Muslim Minorities (WFMM) in London were among the MNLF's stages. The WFMM through its Secretary General, Dr. A. Abo Rasid, on March 24, 1988 sent an appeal to the OIC to admit the MNLF as a full member.

But the more effective tools in the internationalization process were Misuari's lecture circuit and talks with heads of state. On January 27-28, 1987 Misuari addressed the plenary session of the 5th Islamic Summit of Muslim Heads of States in Kuwait, wherein he again underscored the failure of the Philippine government to carry out the Tripoli Agreement, and the urgency of admitting the MNLF as a full member in the OIC. Then, he reported to the OIC Secretary General Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada at the OIC headquarters in Jeddah his consultative visits to Southern Philippines, showing the media coverage given such visits to various parts of Mindanao, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi. This was followed by Misuari's visit to the Foreign Minister of the Democratic Republic of Somalia, Dr. Mohammed Ali Hamud. In this meeting, Misuari stressed his "quest for peace in the Bangsamoro homeland" and Somalia's support for the MNLF full membership in the OIC as "the key to peace." Then, in his dialogue with Ibrahim Fall, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Senegal, Misuari discussed the Mindanao problem and "the MNLF struggle for peace and freedom." Again, Misuari sought Senegal's support for the MNLF bid for full OIC membership. There was little doubt that in all of Misuari's foreign visits he projected the confidence of a head of

state and impressed his hosts with his knowledge and skill, especially with the use of titles of MNLF leaders.

But perhaps of greater impact were the two lectures Misuari delivered before the 7,000-member faculty of the famous Al-Azar University in Cairo. The second was particularly important because it dealt with the topic, "Jihad in the Bangsamoro Homeland, Its Roots, Ordeal, and Future" wherein Misuari dramatized the Moro people's long and sanguinary struggle and the price they had to pay for their liberation. After the lecture, he had all the media exposure he desired when he was interviewed by the leading national papers. In this lecture, he was accompanied by his Foreign Affairs Secretary General Abdulbaki Abubakar.

Another important lecture Misuari delivered was during the Second Plenary Session of the 8th Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers on February 18, 1989 wherein he revealed the probable secret collusion between the Aquino government and the Zionist Club International to train young Christian Sabahans in the Hacienda Luisita with the blessings of Jaime Cardinal Sin. He suspected the scheme to be part of the government's anti-Moro design. Consequently, he appealed for the favorable consideration of the MNLF bid for full membership in the OIC, reminding the conference of the series of past endorsements to the same effect such as the Dakar Resolution of 1979, the Islamabad Final Communique of 1980, the Sana'a Resolution of 1984, and the Amman Resolution of 1985.

Not the least was Misuari's identification with the Palestinian *intifada.* He never missed the chance to demonstrate this connection whenever possible. In 1989, Misuari sent a warm greeting to PLO Chairman Yaser Arafat, which reads:

> *On behalf of the Bangsamoro people and the leadership of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), I join the world leaders in welcoming your declaration in Algiers of the State of Independent Palestine.*
>
> *The world has long awaited the birth of independent Palestine. In truth, the heart of oppressed humanity bleeds for the just cause of the oppressed people of Palestine. Thus, your declaration has been hailed and re-echoed in many capitals of the world.*

Such is a great augury for the struggle of Palestine and its people.

Allow me at this historic juncture to reiterate the solidarity and support of the MNLF Mujahideen and the Bangsamoro people behind the just and triumphant cause of the struggling people of Palestine.

May Allah bless the way for the final emancipation of Palestine and its people and Al-Quds Al-sharif Mosque from the oppression and tyranny of Zionism and its evil collaborators.

The Psychology of State Violence and Peaceful Bangsamoro Demonstrations

Since 1968, one of the effective means employed by the MNLF propaganda arm to attain the internationalization of the Moro struggle was the graphic and emotional portrayal of massacres, killings, rapes, and such human rights violations in Muslim areas by government troops in the trimedia of the Middle East. Especially effective were Misuari's speeches before various fora, particularly the regular conferences of the OIC and the series of publications containing descriptions and pictures of the mangled bodies of Moro fighters, women, and children. Of great psychological value in arousing Muslim rage at the Philippine government and sympathy for the Moro struggle was the pamphlet authored by Misuari, entitled "The Unbroken Thread of Genocide in the Bangsamoro Homeland" (1989). First it attacks the failure of the Aquino government to follow up the prospects of peace presented in the "Jolo Peace Dialogue." It notes "the colonial treachery and downright military oppression." Then it enumerates and describes several of the incidents to prove the government's genocidal campaigns:

1) The Manili Massacre in 1970 in North Cotabato wherein the Philippine Constabulary ordered the Muslims to attend a peace conference in the Manili mosque. Here all the Muslims - men, women, children, young and old - were shot and killed, including Muslim pupils in a nearby school. Misuari called the place the Manili Graveyard.

2) The Malindong Massacre in September 1974. Misuari recounts that on September 25, nine naval boats landed on the Malindong beach and rounded up the Muslim residents in a barbed-wire concentration area. Here, an estimated 1,500 Muslims of all ages and gender were ordered to dig their own graves and were massacred.

3) The Motong Massacre in 1976 in Zamboanga del Norte wherein 15 pregnant women, 14 children, and old people were executed. Later, a French journalist uncovered from the scene the victims' skulls and photographed them.

4) The Naga Massacre in Zamboanga del Sur wherein hundreds of Muslims were surprised by Ilaga-PC troopers and killed. Those who escaped to the sea were rescued by a Japanese or South Korean boat.

5) The Basilan Massacres. Misuari noted the series of merciless killings in Tuburan, Sangbay, and Dasala islands by government troops.

6) The Merciless Killing of an *imam* in Palawan, whose body was hanged and left to rot in front of his mosque.

7) The Pata Massacre in 1981. An estimated 3,000 to 5,000 Muslim residents were massacred by avenging government soldiers. Children and orphans were thrown to the sea for the sharks, and women were raped for weeks before they were killed and thrown to the sharks.

In another four-page tract, "The Bangsamoro Tribune," the cover shows Moro *mujaheedens* with clenched fists and high-powered guns, under which is printed "*Allahu Akbar*" (God is great), a slogan popularly used in the *jihad*. The article is about the four-day encounter between 320 *mujaheedens* and government troops in Maguing and Lumba-Bayabao wherein 186 soldiers were killed. The Arabic translation of the article is printed on one side. Photos of Moro children killed and Moro women preparing themselves for *jihad* carry an emotional message to the Muslim world.

What makes these tales potent are the photographs of victims, starting with that of the five members of the Lomondot family who were massacred in Kalilangan, Bukidnon on June 3, 1976. This was followed by the pictures of Tukuran village which was razed to the ground in 1973; two bodies of infants killed in the massacre of 37 Muslims in Tikalaan, Lanao del Sur on August 5, 1975; 74 skulls of Muslims killed in Motong, Zamboanga del Norte on November 28, 1975; two naked Muslim men killed by the Alsa Masa in Davao; one mangled body of a child killed in the massacre of 48 Muslims in Siroman island in December 1987; the charred bodies of 17 Muslims killed in the Rizal Alih incident in Zamboanga City. The pictorial concludes with the photograph of the Sibuco mosque in utter ruins after bombardment by the Philippine Air Force in September 1987. The pamphlet is distributed by the MNLF Mahardika Press through the MNLF Commission on Information.

The portrayal of state violence in the Philippines against the Moro people was obviously meant to impress upon the OIC and the Muslim world that the Philippine government was not sincere in its quest for peace and that the Muslim countries must continue to support the MNLF not only in its difficult struggle against the government, but also in its bid for full membership in the OIC.

In contrast, the MNLF in several issues of the *Mahardika*, particularly the January-February 1989 issue, portrayed in great detail the peaceful activities of the Moro people in the different parts of the Bangsamoro homeland. In Palawan, the Shatan Palawan Revolutionary Committee (SPRC) marked a two-day celebration with cultural activities in a liberated area together with the full military display of the *mujaheedens* and *mujahidat* in the distinctive uniforms. Hoisting of the Bangsamoro and MNLF emblems was followed by the singing of their national anthem, *Kamahaldikaan* and pledge of allegiance to the Moro struggle. The day ended with the closing message of Vice Chairman Col. Sandal Sumandal of SPRC and Misuari's recorded remarks. In Kutawatu, Brig. General Datus Muslimen Sema of the Uttara Kutawatu Revolutionary Committee led about 100,000 people in the Freedom Day festivities. The raising of Bangsamoro emblems, a 21-gun salute, a pledge of loyalty, a military review, a cultural program, and a parade in Cotabato City comprised the celebration. The same celebration was presented by Brig. General Al-Fattah Karim, Chairman of the Shatan Ranao Revolutionary Committee;

in Lanao del Sur. In Lanao del Norte Uttara Ranao Revolutionary Chairman Solitariuo led the celebration.

But perhaps more impressive was the Freedom Day in Zamboanga where Christians, Lumads, and Muslims all joined in celebrating the occasion with cultural programs; *hajat* prayers, military review, and displays of MNLF and Bangsamoro emblems-including the pictures of Misuari and Khomeini. Basilan which is historically related to Zamboanga, also observed the day with similar activities. In Tawi-Tawi, Brig. General Damming led the solemn occasion marked by a cultural presentation, a public parade in Bongao, and the public airing of Misuari's message. But it was in Sulu or Lupah Sug that the most impressive part of the national Freedom Day was staged, with thousands of the Bangsamoro masses participating. Full military review by thousands of *mujaheedeens* and *mujahidat* in full battle gear in Lampaki, Indanan was the focus of attention to underscore the MNLF's determination to achieve freedom for the Bangsamoro people. The occasion was also marked by the raising of the Bangsamoro flags, a 21-gun salute, singing of the *Kamahaldikaan* cultural programs, and the appearance of the key leaders of Sulu, such as Ustadz Abdurakib Adjhari; Imam Yakob Isni; Sulu Vice Governor Kimar Tulawie; MNLF Deputy Secretary General Datu Sakiruddin Bahjin; and Lupah Sug Revolutionary Committee Chairman, Brig. General Paei Sahijuan.

Outside the Bangsamoro homeland, the most important celebration was held in Metro Manila where professionals, students, and other sectors of Bangsamoro supporters celebrated by peaceful demonstrations, rallies, and a motorcade to Maharlika Village in Taguig, Rizal. There, a lengthy program was presented with various speakers representing both Muslim and non-Muslim sectors sympathetic to the Moro struggle. Those who addressed the crowd were Abul Khayr Alonto, Former Governor Almarin Tillah, and Ruben Canoy.

Obviously this strategy of visibility was of great value to the MNLF's efforts to show the Muslim world that the MNLF enjoys a dependable base in the Philippines which includes the non-Muslim sector. Thus the portrayal of support for the Moro struggle was not limited to the Moro masses; it was also demonstrated by the Christian and Lumad sectors, a particularly effective demonstration of the MNLF claim that the Bangsamoro struggle

was one of all the people of Mindanao who share the common goal of independence. To dramatize this fact, the January-February 1989 issue of the *Mahadlika* carried a full-length article on the MIM resolution supporting the MNLF cause, including its full membership in the OIC. The multisectoral representatives identified in the report were Ruben Canoy, Fr. Halcyon Palcun, Rev. Absalom Cerveza, Rep. Baltazar Sator, Joseph Banghulot, and Carlos Apostol. They were also presented as the individuals who would compose the MNLF peace panel in Mindanao.



Chapter VI
Moro Secessionism Compared

As a last word on this study, it is necessary to compare the contemporary secessionist struggle with its antecedents and other similar movements in the archipelago's non-Muslim areas, as well as with Muslim secessionist movements outside the country. The comparative perspective is essential in further understanding the serious implications of the impasse to the renewed peace talks with the MNLF. For convenience, Moro secessionism may be compared in relation to three categories of movements:

The Pre-Secessionist Muslim Struggle

From the almost five centuries of Muslim armed struggle against colonialism and neocolonialism, it is quite clear that the cost in lives, possessions, and territory was staggering, not to forget the more damaging impact the losses had on Muslim consciousness. By the middle of the twentieth century, it was difficult for the Muslims to accept that they had indeed lost their power and status to the colonizers from the West, and, eventually, even to the Christianized natives who had become allies of colonialism. But equally significant was the Muslim realization that the tragic losses to colonialism was attributable to the superior military technology of the West and other modern advantages. It was this realization that would contribute toward the radical change in the subsequent, especially contemporary, period of the Muslim struggle.

The radical change was apparent after 1968, when the secessionist option gained more appeal and the *mujaheeden* or the *mujahidat* had emerged as the struggle's principal figure. This radical character of the movement involved the abandonment of the ancient value emphasis on the individual acts of heroism and the obsession with the ultimate glory in martyrdom. Instead, the MNLF adopted the modern-day guerrilla tactics and war strategies with greater emphasis on mobility and coordination in the movement. What became paramount to all was victory against the enemy, and at a lesser cost the better it would be for the overall

goals of the Muslim struggle. That this was the movement's new thrust was clear from the series of activities - including ideological - that the MNLF undertook in various ways, means, and venues. In other words, contemporary Moro secessionism has the same aspirations and goals as its predecessors, and the only thing that changed was the method of carrying them out. This reality has made the contemporary Muslim struggle quite difficult to control. The massacres of Muslim fighters would not be as simple as they were in the American period when artillery and machine guns effortlessly decimated ready martyrs.

Struggle of the Tribes

In relation to the various tribal groups in the archipelago, which have also been fighting for survival and social justice, the Muslim struggle looks more promising in all respects. Tribal movements, except those in the Cordillera and Central Mindanao, are virtually nonexistent. In fact, if ever they are given token attention by society, especially the government, it is on account of the work of several nongovernment organizations, including those initiated by the Episcopal and Catholic churches.

In Mindanao, the tribal struggle had become more organized with the formation of the Highlanders Association through the initiative and leadership of Datu Joseph Sibug, a professional of Manobo-Pampangueño ancestry from Kidapawan, and, especially, through Lumad-Mindanao, a recently organized multisectoral group from the tribal communities in Mindanao, with support from both Christian and Muslim leaders in the region. There are hardly any differences between their goals with those of Moro secessionism. They are fighting for the recovery of their ancestral domains, the preservation of their way of life which is under constant threat from demographic movements, the freedom from political interference, and their share of social progress. These are clearly the same objectives which the MNLF has been articulating in many of its information materials and in numerous fora here and abroad.

What differentiates Moro secessionism from tribal movements is its radical ideology and tactics. Like the ancient Moro warriors, the tribal fighters also adhere to the ancient concept of war which gave primacy to individual personalities rather than collective

efficiency in battle. But unlike their Moro counterparts, tribal movements are more peaceful and dependent on the help of outsiders and organizations to realize their aims. Thus, without this initiative and assistance, from the outside, tribal movements often remain static. Consequently, they become vulnerable to exploitation and manipulation for either political or economic purposes. In effect, they are comparatively worse off than the poor in other areas of the country. Because of a lack of effective means of struggle, they do not constitute a real threat to the state or the immediate community. In short, they can be easily neutralized with the minimum of military pressure.

Muslim Secessionism Abroad

Perhaps no better comparative perspective can emphasize the gravity of Moro secessionism than the portrait of the various secessionist movements in Asia. For purposes of illustrating the point, focus will be on the Patanis in Thailand, the Tamils in Sri Lanka, the Kurds in West Asia, as well as the various internal rumblings in the once vast empire of the Soviet Union in which six of the 15 Soviet Republics are Muslim. The Institute of Policy Studies in Pakistan stated in 1980 that "The Soviet Union" is a country with the fifth largest Muslim population in the world, with over 60 million Muslims expected to grow to 100 million by the turn of the century.

Before the 1917 Bolshevik October Revolution Muslim rule was imposed on the border regions of Russia where Muslims lived. But in the 17th century, Czar Alexei Mikhailovich (1645-1676) issued a decree which set the de-Islamization process underway in Russia and beyond, prescribing severe punishment for Islam converts. The first casualties of the imperial decree were the Khanates of Kazan and Astrakan. De-Islamization went on for 300 years until the fall of Merve in 1584. What followed the political conquest of the various Muslim states or principalities were the intensified activities of Christian missionaries, so that by the last quarter of the 19th century Russia began subjugating the Muslim states in Central Asia. The Russian conquest was facilitated by the lack of a unified authority in the Muslim region and the serious internal and inter-state conflicts among the Muslim leaders. This

enabled Russia to seize Merve, Khiva, Zaravash, Fergana, and Kokand between 1864 and 1884, marking the incorporation of Central Asia into Czarist Russia.

But conquest was one thing and ruling was another. It was difficult to maintain Russian rule in the Muslim areas without the aid of formidable military forces, a fact that consumed a large portion of state resources and kept the Muslim areas relatively underdeveloped. But the 1917 revolution, which led to the ouster of Czarist rule, presented prospects for improving Russian image and rule in the Muslim regions. Although still generally influenced by the Byzantine cultural tradition, the Soviet Union allowed the Muslim areas to enjoy some degree of autonomy. This enabled the Soviet Union to keep any movement for independence minimal, if not nonexistent. But the breakup of the Soviet Union, following the political reforms started by Mikhail Gorbachev, led to the rise of several Muslim independent states such as Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kirghizia, Daghestan, Tataria, Baskhiria, and Azerbaijan, all with nominal ties to the newly reconstituted Commonwealth of Independent Republics. However, what emerged as serious secessionist or independence movements were areas where there had been simmering conflicts between Muslim and Christian elements. The most tragic is the complicated Serbian-Bosnian-Muslim conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Like Moro secessionism, the Muslim struggles in former Yugoslavia as well as in Azerbaijan and Armenia have been internationalized through the involvement of the OIC and the United Nations. This entails a difficult and complex solution that will ultimately lead to self-determination through some kind of devolution or federation short of total independence.

The secessionist struggle in Sri Lanka involving the Tamils has also invited the intervention of India which has interests in the outcome of the Tamil independence movement. But De Silva and Samarasinghe, two Sri Lankan specialists on the Tamil issue, have observed that there has been some inconsistencies in India's treatment of Tamil goals in relation to the Indian minority's - largely Tamil - encroachments into Kandyan Sinhalese interests. In other words, while supporting Tamil secessionist movement against Sinhalese encroachments into the Tamil homeland in the Northern and Eastern provinces, India seems to favor Tamil encroachment into Sinhalese homeland of Kandy and fails to recognize Sinhalese

rights to their ancestral domain. Similarly, the Muslim independence movement in Kashmir, where a Muslim majority is ruled by a Hindu minority, has been the source of constant friction between Pakistan and India. Ironically, too, a Muslim minoritry has ruled a Hindu majority in Hyderabad. Unlike the Indian and Sri Lankan cases, Moro secessionism is firmly anchored on the international support of the OIC and enjoys favorable factors that will help it realize its aims.

In contrast, the secessionist movements in Pakistan that led to the independence of what is now Bangladesh (East Pakistan) and the Kurdish secessionist struggles in Iran, Iraq, Syria and Turkey that have remained uncertain had not been internationalized because they are not struggles against non-Muslim states. They are inter-Muslim conflicts requiring a different approach based on Islamic principles. Yet, Bangladesh succeeded in obtaining independence simply because West Pakistan was unable to administer East Pakistan justly and effectively due to what Professor Harun-or-Rashid of the University of Dacca called "differing social structures, the regionally-based nature of the power elite of the state, the abnormal geography and the strategy of economic growth and development of the capitalist economy as adopted by the Pakistani rulers..." On the other hand, the Kurds have failed to obtain self-determination from Muslim states of which they have been a part. Comparatively, Moro secessionism is a Muslim minority struggle in a predominantly Christian state which the Muslims perceive as discriminatory and oppressive.

Finally, a comparison with the Patani secessionist movement in Thailand gives a more meaningful insight into Moro secessionism. Both movements are minority struggles in non-Muslim states. In Thailand, which is Buddhist, the Muslims in the Patani region have been demanding self-determination for the same reason that the Muslims in the Philippines have. And yet, Thailand is still struggling to solve the problem despite the apparent measures to really give better treatment to its Muslim minority and the absence of the international factor such as the OIC. The Patani Muslims' desire to have their own state is what has kept the movement alive. On the other hand, the Moro struggle enjoys the backing of the OIC, a long, solid political history as a people resisting all foreign intrusions, and a cultural tradition that has given them a sense of belonging. In other words, with the comparative advantages of the

Bangsamoro struggle as a minority movement, there is a greater possibility that it might succeed insofar as attaining the kind of autonomy it seeks under the Tripoli Agreement. Unlike most of the secessionist movements without international support, Moro secessionism profits from the state's dilatory tactics in the resolution of conflict. Time is on its side; it stands to gain from any impasse in renewed peace talks.



Chapter VII
Summary

Undoubtedly, one of the difficulties in the research on secessionism is the gathering of pertinent data. While many have already written and published articles, theses, and commentaries on the secessionist movement, both foreign and local, there are still serious gaps in information partly attributable to the lack of primary sources. Consequently, a great deal of information, whether fact or fiction, come mostly from one side of the conflict: the government or the State. But even these sources, as my own experience proves, are limited by the rule on classified and declassified information. Therefore, one gets only what the State wishes to give, while the rest of the puzzle languishes away in the State's unreachable files. Then, the meager information one gets from the other protagonist--the rebel--is also restricted by access to the primary source of data on account of the risks to life and the highly suspicious attitude of the rebels toward outsiders researching on their most sensitive struggle.

Many times we have been suspected as foreign agents out to penetrate the secessionist movement. My field researcher, who is a respected professional in the locality was not spared from these suspicions. But fortunately, our roots and connections with the local culture and people helped deflect such notions. Kinship ties with some rebel elements were positive factors in the daunting task of establishing research connections for oral history on Moro secessionism. The relatively successful preliminary inquiry into the hitherto unknown sources of history was achieved not through what we could offer financially or materially, but through certain psychological ties that have remained of utmost importance to Muslim societies. The only promise we could offer them - and which moved them - was to recognize the justice of their struggle in the study.

This study clarifies certain fundamental issues that concern us as Filipinos, as a nation desiring earnestly to be one, as a united people hoping to finally take our place in the distinguished family of truly independent and developed nations. But for as long as a

part of us remains committed to the cause of a separate identity, notwithstanding the sacrifice and cost, our vision of the ideal will ramain elusive and, perhaps, even be lost to us forever. Therefore, while some sectors of the Christian community have expressed separatist aims like Canoy's MIM, the Moro secessionist struggle is the most serious since it has become the synthesis of local and international elements, thus differentiating it from its historical antecedents.

The evolution of the Moro personality from a simple creature of the environment to a present-day *mujaheedeen* and *mujahidat* in the span of four centuries, provides the principal actor for the contemporary secessionist struggle. With this new image he brings to the Bangsamoro consciousness the four historical motivations of secessionism, namely the desire to recover political power, economic well-being, social importance, and cultural distinction.

The approaches to the Moro struggle have followed three historical options: integration, secession, and separatism, with the government consistently pursuing the integrational alternative through the nationalization and Filipinization of the Muslim life and society, and until recently, the advocacy of regional autonomy as a compromise. But failure to substantially implement real autonomy has encouraged the development of Moro secessionist or separatist tendencies.

One issue which concerns us today is best expressed by a prominent government official: *Do the Muslims consider themselves truly Filipinos? The answer to that is: "Filipinos?" Yes. Truly "Filipinos?" We do not know.* This perception has been confirmed by preliminary data from field research. Those who answered in the affirmative could only reason out that Sulu is part of the Philippines. Beyond this geographic reference, which is based on Constitutional declaration, certain other aspects of Filipinism have remained vague. Those who answered in the negative refer to their neglect and treatment as second-class citizens even in their own homeland, and so they doubt if they are indeed part of the Filipino nation. Those who could not give any answer recounted certain recollections. This suggests a kind of dilemma among Muslims involved in a struggle that has been going on for years. There is also apparently a lot of ambiguity in what their goals are, although the desire for meaningful freedom is unmistakable.

But when interviewed on the basis of the autonomy being offered under the Autonomy Act passed by Congress, there was

a general sense of hope that it might work. There remained a desire for peace, for liberation from the horrors of war. Those who gave this impression were those who had returned to the fold of the law. It appears that the desire for an end to the war is the dominant sentiment. Whether this suggests ultimate resignation or just a respite, as it was in colonial times, is still undetermined.

Another issue which concerns us is whether the involvement of external forces, like the OIC is welcomed by the Muslims. But yes, the response is positive and unanimous. Nobody regards the OIC involvement as an "interference." This means that the Muslim view is diametrically opposite that of the government, which has continued to view the OIC involvement as an interference. This follows the government's basic premise that the Moro secessionist movement is a local internal problem which can, and should, be settled internally.

While the government view idealizes the situation, the course of conflict has made the isolation for the Moro problem increasingly difficult. It is both interesting and revealing to see how our informants justify the OIC involvement in the Muslim community to help the Moro struggle for justice because, as a part of the *ummah*, they are spiritually and morally entitled to such aid. It is an obligation required by the Holy Koran of all Muslims in times of crises. Presumably, the OIC shares a similar view, as shown by its consistent support for the Moro struggle. In fact, the commitment of support in the 1989 OIC resolution for the MNLF under Nur Misuari is firm. This has not changed, despite the series of government efforts to carry out the autonomy mandate of both the Tripoli Agreement and the 1987 Constitution.

From a lengthy exchange of views with high-ranking Muslim leaders in the government, there is the same positive perception of the OIC's role. One even categorically said that the OIC is actually supportive of the Philippines' desire to maintain its sovereignty over the Muslim south, that it has consistently favored not independence, but autonomy for the Moros so that it has continued to deny the MNLF regular membership. But the diplomatic source lamented the government's negative perception of the OIC's role, that State policy makers have failed to truly understand the OIC sentiment.

In this regard, the question should be asked: if the OIC is indeed sympathetic to the government desire to uphold the

integrity of its sovereignty, why has it adamantly supported the MNLF cause? The answer is at best the fact that, in a sense the OIC is in a dilemma. It cannot ignore the just demands of a part of the *ummah* of which the OIC is the most important part. In fact, for all intents and purposes, it is the guardian and upholder of the *ummah* because of the politico-economic power it wields in world politics. It cannot ignore the Moro struggle without hurting its own conscience, without, in effect, abandoning its sacred mandate from no less than God. Moreover, it is a signatory to the tripartite Tripoli Agreement which guarantees support for the Moro demand for real autonomy. To the OIC, therefore, the Tripoli Accord is a sacred document. Consequently, rejecting or belittling the significance and validity of the accord by public declaration insults both the MNLF and the OIC.

In effect, any autonomy, however excellent its provisions or honorable its intent, if offered not on the basis of the Agreement, procedurally or otherwise, cannot satisfy the psychological dimension of the MNLF's and the OIC's expectations. For this reason the government's insistence on the 1987 Constitution as the only valid basis of settlement tends to alienate the MNLF and the OIC. This is why the Autonomy Act and, consequently, the autonomous government, cannot possibly be accepted by the OIC and the MNLF. In brief, what is happening in the Muslim South is outside the process of the Tripoli Accord and, therefore, unacceptable.

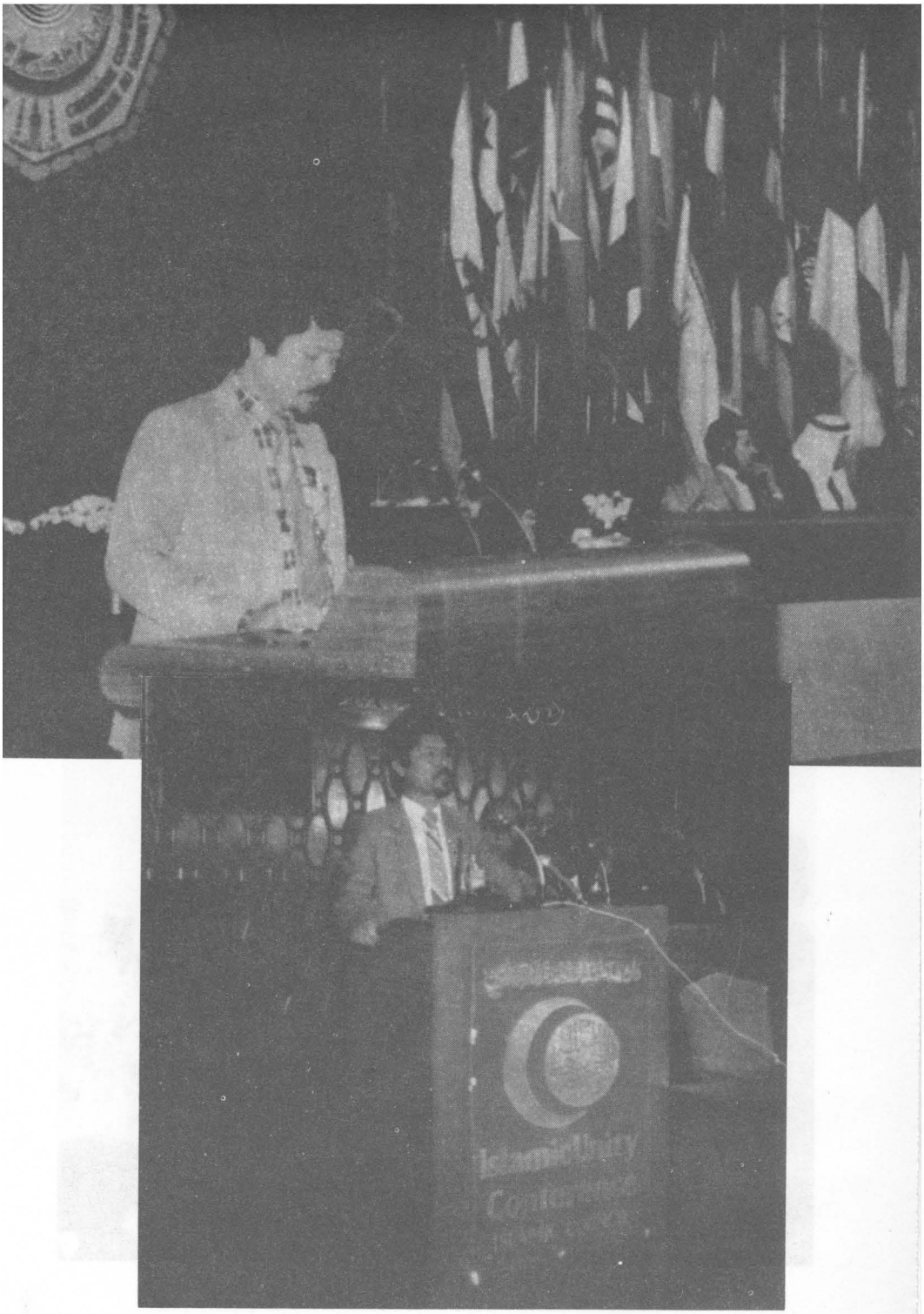
Although this view is not expressed publicly by Muslims in the government for obvious reasons it is nonetheless the core of their sentiments. This suggests that the solution to Moro secessionism will remain remote until the acceptable concepts and premises are clarified. The longer we fail to arrive at a compromise, the more difficult it becomes to bridge the gap, psychological and otherwise. This prospect is starting to crystallize in the Muslim South, despite the election of the autonomous government which has only raised more questions and doubts about peace in Mindanao.

Central to the Moro Issue is the MNLF simply because it is the one singly supported officially by the OIC as representing the Moro people. While the OIC empathizes with the other factions, it can only deal formally and diplomatically with the MNLF because the latter is the single recognized representative under the Tripoli Agreement. In fact, the two tapes of Misuari's messages in late 1989

to the OIC and the Moro people are revealing, particularly the one in August 1989 delivered in Tausug to strengthen his call to arms and more sacrifices. What I consider important are certain words Nur used to remind the Moros, especially the Tausug world, of the basic rationale of the MNLF struggle. Nur referred to three Tausug words to summarize what the struggle seeks to preserve as sacred, inalienable heritage of the Moro people: *Agama*, *Bangsa*, and *Hula*. These may be translated respectively as *Faith*, *Race*, and *Homeland*.

Spoken in popular Tausug, Nur's message appeals like a lamentation, a plaintive echo of a long and arduous struggle. It is not given the usual fighting rhetoric one often hears from a revolutionary, but in a casual and fraternal tone. It is like listening to a son or brother recounting a long and tiring battle with bleak prospects, but with the tone of conviction in the struggle. How the call for supreme sacrifice with no promise of glory is received by the people to whom it is addressed can only be judged by what this year brings to the Southern Islands.





Conclusion

From the preliminary and tentative findings, certain generalizations can be drawn. First, the Muslim's perception of Filipinism is ambiguous, the awareness being merely territorial or geographic in nature. The problematic essence of Filipinism reflects the serious ideological problem confronting the nation today. In other words, there is a serious failure in our efforts to promote Filipinism as a national ideology either through our educational system or other agents of public information and communication. In effect, while our budgetary allocations and bureaucratic structures and programs have considerably increased through the years, we have yet to see nationalism and Filipinism clarified in a language and action readily or easily understood by the common man, especially those who belong to the non-Christian or cultural communities.

Consequently, we can reasonably conclude that whatever thrust was given to nationalist education, which is supposed to build a foundation of Filipino consciousness, had been insufficient to neutralize or reverse the factional tendencies in our national society - particularly the more extreme ethnonationalistic tendency toward separatist and secessionist goals. This implies that we are facing, indeed, a serious and critical ideological problem in our effort to unify the nation. Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, and Indonesia have more or less succeeded in bringing their people together. Although South Korea and Thailand are experiencing some radical disturbances, they have been steadily moving toward more optimistic prospects. Of course, we can be thankful that our State affairs have not gone the way of countries where wars have been raging in the name of national unity. Even the Soviet Union, with its sophisticated political structure, and despite *perestroika* and *glasnost*, is going through the pains of dealing with demands for democratic reforms from ethnic forces that have recently articulated the ethnonationalist ideal of independence from the Soviet Union. This only underlines the fact that unity based on the dominant exercise of power by the central government or by the national majorities cannot last in a pluralistic society such as ours. This should serve as an eye-opener for us to seriously think of

dealing with the national minorities not as minorities per se but rather as important complements to national unity and growth.

Another generalization that can be made is the inevitable internationalization of the Moro secessionist movement. Consequently, our official regard for it as a purely internal problem has become untenable and can no longer provide sufficient solutions to the separatist problem in our midst. Muslim history is replete with accounts of the massacre of Muslim warriors in Mindanao and Sulu since colonial time, a bloody fact that has failed to dampen Muslim resistance to external domination and threat.

We must now ask the question, notwithstanding the irreconcilable positions of the government and the MNLF in the current issue of secessionism or autonomy: Are there prospects for the ultimate resolution of the issue without resorting to military might? The answer is *yes, but.* We still have the will and the means to realize this goal. There is still a substantial number of Muslims and Christians who adhere to autonomy and not independence as the most ideal setup for the Muslim South. But the number is decreasing in proportion to the specific and concrete measures taken by the government to achieve what the Muslims have regarded as just demands because they involve the recovery of historical losses, namely: political power, economic progress, social importance, and cultural identity. To the Moro people the option of secessionism or separatism is clear as to the cost, sacrifice, and time it exacts. Are they willing and prepared to face the reality?

The closing words of Misuari in a 14-page speech before the Sixth Islamic Conference of Muslim Heads of State in Senegal, December 9-12, 1991 is the best answer to the question.

> *Whatever happens, Mr. President and august assembly, and considering the utmost urgency of this subject well known recognition and support of our people's right to self-determination as a veritable safeguard against the insidious attempts to liquidate our national identity as an Islamic nation, I would like to make known here before you our unalterable and steadfast decision to pursue this just and legitimate intention through to the end; until the Bangsamoro Islamic nation shall be able*

to finally assume its rightful place in this prime institution of the Islamic Ummah-biidznillah!

Finally, the peace and development in the Muslim South are inseparable. They are the basic components of human progress. Without peace, development is impossible, without development, peace is unattainable. Both remain problems in Mindanao. There is an unsettling calm, but there is no peace. There are motions of human activity but they do not indicate any real, meaningful development.

It is, therefore, necessary to view these two components vis-a-vis the contemporary conflict in Mindanao, especially in relation to such a movement as the Moro struggle for self-determination. There are only three points to consider in relation to this dichotomy of peace and development.

The Imperative of Peace

To understand the dichotomy is like trying to answer the question: Which came first, the chicken or the egg? This approach is unproductive; rather, it will be practical to focus analysis on the urgency of realizing peace as well as development. Both require top priority. This is particularly true in Mindanao where the seriousness of conflict, violence, and crisis is quite obvious from the fact that not only is the government fighting the radical revolutionary elements seeking the complete overthrow of the capitalist system, but also an equally determined secessionist movement seeking to establish an independent Bangsamoro Republic on the basis of historical necessity and contemporary Islamic ideology. To understand the imperative of peace requires a treatment of its antithesis: conflict.

Conflict is best understood, in the case of Mindanao, in relation to five aspects of human radicalism: 1) between the State and radicalism; 2) between the State and secessionism; 3) between society and tribalism; 4) between society and criminalism; and 5) between various elements and factions that constitute the checkered fabric of Mindanao society. These, in short, reflect the face of the Mindanao conflict. These are the rugged pathways to peace that have to be trimmed and cleared. They have to be studied before peace in Mindanao can be truly understood.

What then is the conflict between the State and radicalism in Mindanao? Undoubtedly, it is a microcosm of a national and international conflict between two equally powerful ideas, one catering to the interests of the elite and the other one serving the interest of the masses. What makes the conflict extremely difficult to resolve is the solidifying element provided by radical ideology, the notion of class conflict that has now transformed the Mindanao conflict into an irreconcilable one, unless Philippine society is reconstructed into a classless society. In brief, this is the fundamental and ultimate aim of radicalism in Mindanao, as well as in the rest of the country. Those who are committed to this objective cannot be simply neutralized by massive military pressures because guns and bullets merely destroy the body, and not the ideology that propels the struggle. There will be others to replace the ranks of those who perish in the battlefield for as long as the ideology remains valid and unneutralized by an equal or better ideology.

Therefore, the State is faced with a conflict that is not ultimately decided by force of arms but by the force of ideas. It may have the most devastating weapons in the arsenal, but if it lacks the persuasive argument against radical ideology, the conflict continues. Since the State is in form and essence an antithesis, being anchored on the capitalist ideology it has inherited from colonialism, it must be able to present the merits or advantages of the capitalist system insofar as the aspirations of the lower classes are concerned.

Confounding the Mindanao conflict is the second issue between the State and secessionism. What in essence is this conflict? Clearly, it is different from the first because it aims at independence which involves the territorial separation of a part of the country, unlike radicalism which seeks to preserve the territorial integrity of the country and to overthrow the political status quo. Moro secessionism does not necessarily aim at the total destruction of the capitalist system but merely the desired level of social reformation in accordance with an ideological synthesis of Islamic and radical elements essential in the evolution of a Muslim modern identity. It is misleading to equate the Bangsamoro secessionist movement with purely the resurrection of a Moro nation in history. Nor is it realistic to associate it with the narrow goal of establishing a purely orthodox Islamic state in Southern Philippines, however this is expressed in some of the manifestos

of Muslim movements in the country. It is best to view the secessionist phenomenon as a product of both historical and contemporary realities similar to a certain extent to the Libyan socialist experience or to international Muslim movements for self-determination.

In fact, the ideological ferment in the Muslim movements, particularly in the MNLF, if historical documents are to be used, shows the presence of a kind of Bangsamoro ideology that considers all inhabitants of Mindanao, subscribing to the historical reality of Mindanao as a distinct homeland, as a part of the Bangsamoro identity regardless of race, religion, creed, or status. In effect, Islam, while important, is not the only ingredient in the Bangsamoro ideology. Territoriality and a sense of independence from national dominance or control constitute the unifying dimensions of the ideology. Consequently, even the Christian secessionist movements are viewed as an integral part of the Bangsamoro secessionism.

What this contemporary secessionist ideology suggests is the somewhat problematic approach of the State to the issue of Bangsamoro secessionism. There is a growing perception of the people that State policies and implementing mechanisms and programs to counteract the secessionist movement are anchored on religious premises which categorize secessionism as a purely Islamic phenomenon. If so, it is difficult to see how the conflict between the State and secessionalism can be really pursued without polarizing the people between Muslims and Christians, without consequently promoting a religious war from which nobody, including the State can profit. The immediate and long-term consequences of the Holy crusades and *jihad* should be enough historical reminders for those in State decision making processes to reflect upon.

When we add to the two types of conflicts the three other categories, it is easy to see why peace in Mindanao has been elusive. Although somewhat localized, the conflicts between the State and tribalism, criminalism, and factionalism have contributed to the complexity of the Mindanao problem, requiring entirely different approaches. For instance, the conflict between the State and tribalism revives the issue of ethnonationalism versus nationalism, ethnicity versus Filipinism. Once complacent and indifferent, tribal communities have joined the Muslim struggle for

national attention, recognition, and importance. They have been awakened to the increasing threats to their identities, resources, and even existence brought about by the irreversible process of modernization and from outside forces serving other interests than their own.

How we deal with this fundamental issue of ethnocentrism or tribalism is not susceptible to the stereotype approaches of colonial times. It can only be realistically approached by an objective, scientific understanding of the multiethnic diversity of Mindanao society. It can only be truly comprehended from below, from the very core of the ethnic community or society itself, not from the macro perception of national priorities and interests which until now are still characterized by ambiguous meanings and uncertain directions. We have yet to tackle the issue of how nationalism or Filipinism can be promoted without destroying ethnic identities that have remained the only concrete source of tribal unity, strength, and dignity. In effect, we have yet to define, clarify, and declare in tangible, understandable terms the meanings of nationalism or Filipinism beyond vague generalities that escape even the national leadership.

Now, if tribalism or ethnocentrism has made the Mindanao conflict complex, criminalism has made it chaotic. Criminality referred to here is one that is organized or syndicated, not the individual acts of crimes or violence against persons or properties. It is common knowledge in Mindanao that organized crimes are led by people with resources, influence and daring. They are governed by no ideology except that of self-interest. They are, therefore, the common problems affecting Christians, Muslims, and other sectors in Mindanao. They complicate the peace and order in the region.

There are no ideological answers to criminalism. Only the moral pressures through education and religion can be done to get to the root of this conflict. The State has responded through penal institutions and military neutralizers.

Finally, another conflict that has contributed to the State's dilemma is the tension and even violent clashes between factions in both the radical and secessionist movements. Purging of suspected deep-penetration agents of the government, which is not an unreasonable assumption, has contributed to strife within the radical struggle. This has been worsened by the reorganization

of the former radical elements into anti-insurgency units of the State. The same may be applied to the secessionist movement where factional problems are as serious as in the radical ranks. Rebel returnees have been organized into anti-secessionist units of the government. The three major factions in the Bangsamoro struggle continue to give problems to the State in dealing with Muslim demands.

The Imperative of Development

What is development? This is usually the first thing that we ask, and we can easily dispense with it by merely repeating the excellent definitions which are provided by the various disciplines. But development, for purposes of this study, refers to the progressive growth of the political, economic, social, and cultural conditions of society brought about by the action of individual and or collective freedom. If we are to apply this to Mindanao's development, it will provide an explanation for the conflict and lack of peace in the region.

In effect, why has development become the key issue in the resolution of conflict when it has been unfolding since colonial times, changing the land and the people? This requires an analysis of the historical aspect of development.

If we now look at Mindanao from the perspective of various periods of Philippine history, we cannot escape the following realities:

a) The period before colonialism was generally marked by freedom and interdependence of various ethnic groups in relation to a vibrant internal and international trade involving what we conveniently call upland-lowland, upriver-downriver, or interisland dichotomies. This was, therefore, a time of mutually beneficial, enriching, and complementary relations between societies or communities.

b) But the next period of colonialism which introduced into the archipelago, including Mindanao, a system of exploitation and oppression, dictated by racial factors and interests, which were rationalized and moralized by the imperatives of the Christian religion, gradually and ultimately tipped the

balance of development in favor of colonial and Christian preferences. So that, by the last century of Spanish rule, political power had been concentrated in an alien group; economic resources especially lands, had become, by virtue of Spanish absolutist policies, the exclusive possession of colonialism; colonial social structure had reduced all native societies to subordinate and inferior levels in the colonial hierarchy; cultural importance and primacy had become the inherent prerogative of the colonial-Christian community. All of these drastic changes were brought about by conscious colonial policies to the prejudice of the various ethnic societies including the two Muslim sultanates in Mindanao.

c) The third period of American imperialism accelerated the further alienation of the native societies from their traditions and identities except the Muslims and other cultural communities which succeeded either in initially resisting American colonial offensive in the first decade, or in accepting limited interaction through American liberal democratic policies. While American rule allowed real but limited native participation in government, unlike Spanish rule, it was consistent with American imperialistic interest to promote the primacy of Christian and modern culture already achieved by Spain in the archipelago. In fact, by the end of the second decade of American rule, the migration of Christian settlers to Mindanao and the conversion of natives in the region to Christianity had altered the demographic balance. The rise of the Christian Filipinos as the dominant sector in Mindanao continued unhindered. Consequently, the status of the Muslims and other cultural communities was minimized, which also affected their share of resources and benefits.

d) Naturally, the post-colonial period of history was marked by the Christian Filipinos inheriting the mantle of leadership and privilege in Mindanao as a part of the transfer of sovereignty by the United States to the Philippines, wherein national leadership was automatically assumed by the political elite of Manila. The failure of the United States to decentralize political power to the local or sectoral level

proved detrimental to the liberal democratic system established in the region. Thus, the Muslims and other non-Christians were subjected to the dominant control of the Christian leadership.

While non-Christians were prepared to assume the subordinate and inferior place in colonial times, they were not ready to accept the same under the Christian Filipinos without prejudice to their sense of dignity and pride. It was difficult to see a social sector that was once under Muslim dominance emerging by the fiat of colonial policies to become the permanent power in the archipelago.

In brief, the broad history of Muslim-State relations tends to show the vital role played by historical experiences in the Muslim perception of their problems, aspirations, and hopes. In effect, historical consciousness is a factor in the success or failure of the peace process and development efforts. This leads us to the last point.

Priority Areas of Development

It is essential to declare that while developments are necessary and even urgent, in all aspects of regional life, some are comparatively more urgent than others. Considering the nature of conflict in Mindanao, the approach to the Mindanao problem is to give priority to the elimination of the psychological problems that have either complicated or confused the issue of autonomy and self-determination. The successful resolution of the psychological issue allows the substantative aspects of the Mindanao problem to be dealt with nationally and objectively.

Consequently, the development process to deal with this psychological issue ought to first eliminate the perception that Muslims and non-Christians are discriminated against in the upper echelons of power and decision making. How can this be done? Visibly, there should be non-Christian, especially Muslim, participation in the highest level of national decision making. Representation may be advisory or substantial in nature. Such a representation will create the impression that the Muslim or non-Christians are not secondary in national importance, that the national leadership trusts the cultural communities. If this measure is supplemented in other national government agencies, especially the military, the psychological barrier will eventually be eroded.

It is logical to say that with the elimination of the psychological problem, the rest of the development plans, including the establishment of an autonomous government for Mindanao, will receive a more sincere and meaningful response from the cultural communities. Perhaps, the next priority can begin on the regional level with the devolution of power through a federal system. Then, the economic and socio-cultural development plan can be formulated along federal concepts.

Undoubtedly, the development steps suggested here might have a very good prospect of minimizing, if not eliminating, the complexity of regional conflicts and lay the basic foundation of a more lasting peace in the region and the country. In brief, the general thesis is to theoretically establish that before meaningful peace and development can be expected in Mindanao the psychological gap between national leadership and regional relations has to be bridged. Otherwise, peace will remain elusive and development will continue to suffer from misguided policies and the lack of popular support from the cultural communities, especially the Bangsamoro people.



Bibliographical Essay

There are numerous sources that deal with the Moro struggle in the Philippines, but there is still a dearth of materials on the specific issue of Moro secessionism. Those that have been written, not necessarily published, generally constitute only a part of general works on the Moro people. Not all are mentioned in this essay. Only those that were used more than once are described together with other standard sources.

First to be acknowledged for the background on Moro secessionism, which is treated in Chapter 1, are the historical sources from colonial to contemporary times. The principal ones are the Spanish records, the most important of which are available in English translations in Emma H. Blair and James A. Robertson's *The Philippine Islands, 1493-1898* (Cleveland, 1903-1909), in 55 volumes, including the index and bibliography. Particularly useful in this monumental work are translations of Juan dela Concepcion's *Historia de la pirateria mohametana en Mindanao, Jolo y Borneo* (Madrid, 1888) which takes the events up to the last quarter of Spanish rule; Francisco Combes' *Historia de las islas de Mindanao, Jolo y sus adyacentes* (Madrid, 1667) which ends about the third decade of the 17th century; and Vicente Barrantes' *Guerras piracticas en Filipinas* (Madrid, 1878) which records, in more arresting details, the Moro raids.

The American sources that are used in the historical analysis are the reports of the governors-general, particularly those of the three governors of the Moro Province: Leonard Wood (1903-1906), Tasker H. Bliss (1906-1909), and John J. Pershing (1909-1913). Of special value is the report of Civil Governor Frank W. Carpenter (1913-1920) of the Department of Mindanao and Sulu. These were made more meaningful with data from the private papers of the foregoing officials in the U.S. Library of Congress and the National Archives in Washington D.C. Also important in this regard are Najeeb M. Saleeby's *The History of Sulu* (Manila, 1963 reprint) and *Studies in Moro History, Law, and Religion* (Manila, 1905); Vic Hurley's *Swish of the Kris* (New York, 1936); and Sydney A. Cloman's *Myself and a Few Moros*, (imprint) which give insight into the early years of American rule in Moroland.

The more contemporary sources, although secondary in nature, which have more or less synthesized and summarized the long period of colonial impact on the Moro people, are Cesar Majul's *Muslims in the Philippines* (Quezon City, 1973), Samuel K. Tan's *The Filipino Muslim Armed Struggle* (Makati, 1978), Alunan C. Glang's *Secession or Integration* (Manila, 1969), and T. S. George's *The Revolt in Mindanao* (London, 1980). Majul traces the Moro struggle up to 1898 and Tan continues the thread up to 1970. To a limited extent, Peter Gowing in *American Mandate in Moroland* (Quezon City, 1977) elaborates the dynamics of the first two decades of American rule in the Muslim south. Glang was one of the earliest to fully discuss the Moro secessionist problem from a Muslim perspective. The above sources are essential in understanding chapter 1 of this study.

Relevant to secessionism and very useful for the present perspective are Ron J. May's "The Moro Secessionist Movement", published by the International Center for Ethnic Studies, Sri Lanka in *The Ethnic Studies Report*, (July 1989) as well as his "The Wild West in the South: A Recent Political History of Mindanao" (Chapter 9, *Mindanao: Land of Unfulfilled Promise*, (Quezon City, 1992) and Samuel K. Tan's "Moro Secessionism in the Philippines," published also in the *Ethnic Studies Report* (July, 1988). While both ideal with the same subject, May provides a more contemporary appraisal of the issue, and Tan traces the evolution of the Moro image in history from earliest times to the contemporary period. Both are used in Chapter 2 of the study. For the discussion of the resolution of conflict in terms of the options of integration, secession, and separation, which are treated in Chapter 3, employed to a large extent are the various conference papers on the Mindanao issues, particularly two sets of papers: (1) The Papers on the Tripoli Agreement published in 1986 by the UP International Studies Institute of the Philippines and (2) those presented in the UP-MSU sponsored conference in Makiling, (Los Baños, 1989). Also used for evaluation are the confidential communications of commanders such as the letter of Commander Romulo Espaldon of Southcom and Hadji Isahac Tahil to Amar El Akbar, the code name of Commander Julkanain Apalal.

On the more important question of internationalization, dealt with in Chapter 4 and 5, the most vital sources are the oral historical data which are stored in tapes and transcribed and translated by

Mr. Jilhani Susulan. The data are the views of 35 informants in Region 9 on specific questions related to secession. The interviews of the informants were conducted from May 1989 to April 1990. The data are now in the SKTan Collection. But the materials are only relevant to the internationalization process within Moroland. The process outside the Philippines, mainly in the Muslim world, is dependent on the published materials from the MNLF Information Bureau which has circulated numerous pamphlets and tracts which include the essays and speeches of Misuari. Among these are the ones listed in the appendices. The other document used is Protocol No. 1 between the representatives of the MNLF and Presidential candidate Eduardo M. Cojuangco of February 17, 1972, shortly before the last presidential election. The protocol reveals the importance of the MNLF issue during the election.

For the comparative perspective in Chapter 6, useful are W. K. Che Man's *Muslim Separatism: The Moros of Southern Philippines and the Malays of Southern Thailand* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1992) on the Patani Muslim secessionist movement in Thailand; K.M. de Silva's "Separatism in Sri Lanka: The Traditional Homelands of the Tamils" and S.W.R.A. de Samarasinghe's "The Dynamics of Separatism: The Case of Sri Lanka" in Ralph R. Premdas, et al. (editors), *Separatist Movements in Comparative Perspective* (London: Pinter Publishers, Ltd., 1990) on Tamil secessionism which has affected seriously the Muslim minority in Sri Lanka; and the *Journal of the Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Vol.IX, No.1, January 1, 1988 in which the various Muslim movements in Central Asia are presented substantially. The comparison of Moro secessionism and the tribal movements in Southern Philippines is based on *Mindanao: Land of Unfulfilled Promise* (Quezon City, 1992), edited by Mark Turner, R.J. May, and Lulu Respall Turner of Australian National University, as well as on the contemporary day to day reports, essays, and commentaries of various national and local dailies. Useful mainly for the conclusive part of Chapter 7 is a paper entitled " Peace and Development in Mindanao," submitted by the author to then Director Carolina C. Hernandez of the Center for Integrative and Development Studies, for use in the University's evaluation of the Mindanao issue in national affairs.

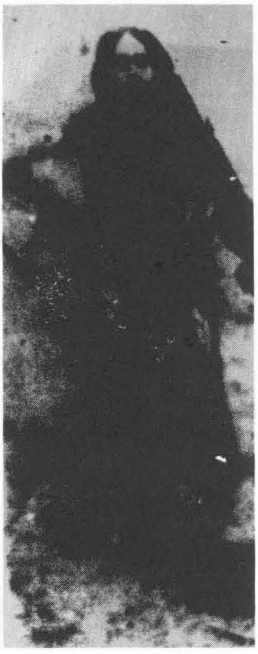






Appendices


MNLF







Appendix A
Questionnaire

University of the Philippines
Center for Integrative and Development Studies

Note: This questionnaire is designed to provide insights into vital issues involving secessionist movements and/or tendencies. Interviewees are requested to be as open, frank and accurate as possible in answering questions. Anything said will be strictly kept confidential except for purposes of evaluating issues which are the subject of this study. The concern of the University is mainly to provide empirical or scientific studies/ research on vital areas of national concern. Answers may be in English, Filipino or local language (Tausug or Samal).

A. On Personal Background

1. Name
   a. Full name _____
   b. Pen name _____
   c. Aliases _____
   d. Wife _____
   e. Children/grandchildren (if any) _____
   _____
2. Age _____ 3. Ethnic identity _____
4. Sex _____ 5. Status _____ 6. Province _____
7. Religion _____
8. Parents
   a. Father _____
   b. Mother _____
9. Brothers _____
10. Sisters _____
11. Grandparents
    a. Grandfather _____
    b. Grandmother _____

12. Uncles _____
13. Aunts _____
14. Past experiences before MNLF:
    a. Educational Attainment (include madrassah, pangadji, etc., if any) _____
    b. Positions held _____
    c. Associations _____
    d. Others (if any) _____
15. When did you join the MNLF and why? How long have you been a member? What was or is now your position? How much did or do you get for compensation? Are you happy and ever committed? Please explain.

16. Did someone influence you or did you join the movement on your own choice? Who or what do you admire in the struggle? Please be specific.

17. Do you consider yourself a Filipino? Explain your answer.

B. On Moro Secessionism

1. Why did the Muslim struggle develop into a separatist movement? Give specific reasons from what you know in the movement or as you perceive it?

2. Do you favor independence? Why? Give your own personal view.

3. Why has the Moro struggle acquired international character? Give reasons as you see it.

4. Is your consciousness of historical experience of political, economic, social and cultural injustices a causal factor in the internationalization of secessionism?

5. Do you favor the involvement of Muslim countries in the Moro struggle?

6. What specific foreign involvements do you favor in the Moro struggle? Give specific names of persons, countries or agencies if any.

7. What are the concrete and specific forms of foreign participation do you see in the Moro struggle? Is it growing in magnitude or waning?

8. Do you know if or perceive that foreign involvement is for Moro independence or autonomy? Explain your answer. Cite specific circumstances, events, etc. if possible.

9. How do you assess the prospect of the Moro secessionist movement? Will it succeed and why?

10. Is Moro secessionism possible without war? Explain.

11. Do you perceive yourself being involved in larger or lesser responsibilities in the Movement? If yes, in what specific areas of activities?

12. Do you believe that the future of Moroland is brighter after independence? Why? Give specific reasons or elaborate if necessary.

13. Have you heard of the Organization of Islamic Conference or OIC? What do you know about this organization?

C. On the Government Response

1. Is the Autonomy Act passed by Congress the answer to Moro secessionism? For either answer, give reasons.

2. How will you rate the chances of acceptance of the Autonomy Act for Mindanao? Check your answer.

   a. Very good [ ]
   b. Good [ ]
   c. Not so good [ ]
   d. Cannot determine [ ]

3. Do you see any change of attitude in the OIC as far as the Autonomy Act is concerned? Do you see a softening or hardening of the OIC support for the MNLF as a result of the Autonomy Act? Please explain your answer.

4. Who in the government, Muslim or Christian, are credible and acceptable to the MNLF as far as renewing talks is concerned? Or do you believe the talks are no longer necessary?

5. How do you regard those who left the Moro armed struggle and returned to the fold of the law?

   a. with admiration [ ]
   b. with sympathy [ ]
   c. with contempt [ ]
   d. cannot decide [ ]

6. At any time in your involvement, have you considered returning to the fold of the law? When and why?

7. How do you regard the government military build up in Moroland? Is it a deterrent or a provocation of war? Explain your answer.

8. Is federalism an acceptable alternative to secessionism? If so, how should the government pursue this alternative?

D. On Moro Factionalism

1. Do you regard the existence of three Moro factions in the Muslim struggle as an indication of an ethnicization of the movement? Please explain fully.

2. Is Moro factionalism rooted in some ideological differences? Be specific in your reply.

3. Do you regard Nur Misuari as the cause of Moro factionalism as advanced by certain quarters? Explain your answer.

4. Is Moro factionalism more helpful to the government than to the Muslims? Explain your answer.

5. Is the expressed support of the OIC for Misuari's MNLF an indication that the other factions have lost relevance? Do you see the OIC support as a means of pressuring Moro factions to rally behind Misuari?

6. Do you perceive the lack or absence of a unifying ideology as the fundamental problem of the Muslim movement? If so, why has Islam not been able to provide the ideological unity? Explain.

E. On Foreign Countries

1. Do you know whether Malaysia, Brunei, and Indonesia are helping the MNLF? If yes, in what forms: financial, diplomatic, moral, military? Please elaborate.

2. How far has the MNLF established its international connections? Is it limited to the Muslim countries? Be specific with your answer.

3. Has the Sabah issue brought changes in the Moro struggle? If yes, what are these changes? If no, why has it not brought changes?

4. Do you see the revival of the Old Sulu Sultanate as a possible alternative to Moro secessionism? If yes, do you think it will create more problems for the Muslims or the government or both? Explain your answer.

5. How will the heirs to the Sultanate respond to the MNLF call for a united front? Explain your answer.

6. Is a secessionist war inevitable in Mindanao with foreign support as seen by the MNLF? Why?

7. Will foreign support be a decisive factor in the prospect of secessionism? Or, is the popular base of the movement adequate? Explain your answer.

8. Do you perceive the trends in world opinion as favorable or unfavorable to the Muslim secessionist movement? Explain your answer.

9. Do you have direct access to information on secessionist activities abroad? Please elaborate.

Appendix B
List of Informants

Total Number of Informants
(35 Informants)

Siasi Informants:

1) *Hasinon Tingkahan* - former Commander and Vice Chairman, MNLF, now Vice Mayor of Siasi.
2) *Cesar Utam* - former Commander, MNLF, now a peaceful citizen and a businessman.
3) *Sali Ilaji* - former District Commander, MNLF, now Chief Security Officer of the Mayor of Siasi.
4) *Apalal Jukanain* - former Commander, MNLF, now President and Treasurer of the Siasi Stevedoring Company, Inc.
5) *Samad Abdurahim* - former Commander, MNLF, now engaged in farming.
6) *Mathlih Usman* - former Chairman of the MNLF Pandami Revolutionary Command, now a businessman-farmer.
7) *Madjahirin Arasain* - former MNLF District Commander, now a farmer.
8) *Malinsa Hasim* - former MNLF Commander, now a farmer.
9) *Mrs. Kuraisiya Hussin* - formerly with the First Aid team of the MNLF, now a public school teacher.
10) *Mudjahirim Sarani* - MNLF Staff Training Officer and still with the organization.
11) *Hadji Alhabsi Bin Mutalib* - former Information Officer and Colonel of the MNLF.
12) *Hadji Bawang Estino* - former MNLF Commander of Punay, Panamao District, Sulu, now a farmer and businessman.
13) *Morofred Sangkula* - former MNLF Information Officer and Propagandist, now a businessman.
14) *Hadji Alan Salahuddin* - MNLF Commander still with the organization and brother of MNLF Information Officer Hadji Alhabsi Bin Mutalib.

15) *Professor Amirul Ahajul* - MNLF symphatizer, presently one of the professors at the Mindanao State University, Jolo Branch.
16) Amir Jawari - former MNLF Commander, now Vice-Mayor of Indanan, Sulu.
17) *Muksan Taguidid* - former MNLF Community Organizer of the Pata Revolutionary Command, Pata, Sulu; a former Mayor of Pata, now the President of the People's Economic Council (PEC) of the Province of Sulu.

Tawi-Tawi Informants

18) *Mansur Sakili* - former civilian volunteer of the MNLF; as a returnee/surrenderee, he was appointed Commissioner to help draft the Organic Act for the Regional Autonomous Government for Muslim Mindanao; and presently, he is presently the Head of the Philippine Information Agency Extension Office in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi.
19) *Mrs. Sylvia Jalil* - former medical aide of the MNLF.
20) *Professor Saidali Abdulla* - former MNLF Officer Trainee, now teaching at the Mindanao State University, Bongao Branch, Tawi-Tawi.

Basilan Informants:

21) *Ibnu Hasan* - former MNLF Trainor at the Satellite Camp in Buka-Buka, Parang, Sulu; presently employed at the Mindanao State University, Bongao Branch as a driver-mechanic.
22) *Panglima Abdula Sansawi* - former MNLF symphatizer and supplier of some MNLF needs, now a peaceful farmer-businessman.
23) *Hadji Hatab Yusop* - former MNLF member, now Deputy Governor for Bongao, Tawi-Tawi.
24) *Datu Amiril Maindan* - former MNLF symphatizer, now working as Security Guard of the Mindanao State University in Bongao and a peaceful citizen.
25) *Augusto Herrera* - former MNLF Administration and Planning Officer assisting MNLF Commander Yusop Dais of Tawi-Tawi, now a retired Budget Officer of the Mindanao State University, Bongao Branch. He is a Catholic.

26) *Ibnu Unaid* - inactive member of the MNLF Striking Force, presently engaged in farming.

27) *Sawadjaan Atiulla* - MNLF Coordinator still in active duty; a former public school teacher before he joined the organization.

28) *Eliasin Jainal* - former MNLF (Activist) follower of Commander Hadji Isahac Tahin of Tawi-Tawi, before joining the MNLF, he was a policeman in Maimbong, Sulu; he is now engaged in "seaweeds farming" in Isabela, Basilan.

29) *Assi Diong* - former MNLF Intelligence Officer, now a businessman at Maluso, Basilan.

30) *Habib Harun Aladam* - former MNLF Trainee; now businessman in Isabela, Basilan.

31) *Hadja Maimona Karama Aldam* - former Medical Aide of the MNLF, now Records Officer at the Bureau of Lands, Isabela and Cagayan.

32) *Habib Naho Hasim* - former MNLF activist, now a businessman at Lantawan, Basilan.

33) *Yusop Aldam* - former MNLF activist, now a Barangay Captain of Barangay Palahangaw in Lantawan, Basilan.

34) *Hadji Malikalsad* - an MNLF Commander, he has not surrendered but inactive for the time being, engaged in business in Isabela, Basilan.

35) *Hon. Gerry Salapuddin* - former Provincial Chairman of the MNLF in Basilan Province; now the Governor of the Province of Basilan since winning the last local elections.

Appendix C

Bangsamoro Congress and Resolutions

Bangsamoro National Congress

"In approaches, diversity; in purpose, unity."

March 2 & 3, 1989 / Maharlika Village
Taguig, Metro Manila

The Bangsamoro Struggle

The Bangsamoro struggle, like all the struggles, of nations in history, is deeply rooted in history and culture. From the introduction of Islam in late 13th century to the rise of the Sultanate in mid-15th century, the *ummah* had established the foundation of a Moro Community that marked its rendezvous with destiny in the archipelago. It had brought into the Philippine historical ecumene a sense of unity that was slowly and gradually bringing a direction to over seven thousand islands is the Southeast Asian World. Political, economic, and cultural processes radiated from the center of this ancient nation in Mindanao northward to the bustling Kingdom of Rajah Sulayman in Manila and southward to the Indo-Malay world.

But the powerful onslaughts of colonial conquests and pacification from 1521 to 1946 had challenged the will and capacity of the Bangsamoro nation to resist and survive. After over four hundred years of costly wars and suffering, it had emerged by 1946 a new community of people still held steadfastly by the *ummah*, constantly remembering those who had fallen in battle, and learning the art of modern diplomacy and war. Since 1946, the Bangsamoro struggle has never failed to draw inspiration, sustenance, and strength from its historical legacy written in sweats, tears, and blood of Bangsamoro men, women, and children.

Today, the Bangsamoro struggle has opened a new world of reality for the Bangsamoro people not in the neocolonial sphere of Filipinism but in the wider realm of Islam and the family of nations. It is only in the Bangsamoro liberation from existing neocolonial relations that the true meaning of liberty can be really

found. Guided by the ideological imperative of *gaosbaugbug* and *kaadilan*, the Bangsamoro struggle cannot fail to bring the Bangsamoro people to the place destiny had reserved for them. This is the ultimate of the struggle because from it begins a new history of identity and progress for the Bangsamoro people. No greater honor and pleasure can one give than to be a part of the struggle according to the measure God had given to him.

The Bangsamoro National Congress is a part of the recent effort to bring history to life and to remind the Filipino people that the Bangsamoro nation cannot be denied its right to exist. It is in view of this fact that the subsequent program of activities is dedicated to the cause of the Bangsamoro struggle.

Third Bangsamoro National Congress

10 March 1989

Your Excellency:

Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh.

On behalf of the Bangsamoro National Congress and its Governing Council, please allow me the liberty, pleasure, and distinct honor of presenting to you, this set of documents, papers, and other instruments which represent the sentiments, views, and longings of the Bangsamoro People. It is our fervent prayer to Allah that you and our Muslim brothers in the world will find our cause not only worthy of your attention but also of your full support in all aspects of our struggle.

May Allah continue to grant grace and strength to Your Excellency and your people. With our highest esteem. Insha Allah.

Very sincerely yours,

(Sgd.) HADJI ALMARIM C. TILLAH
Chairman, Bangsamoro National Congress
Former Governor, Tawi-Tawi Province, Mindanao, Philippines
Former Vice President for Mindanao, National League of Governors and City Mayors of the Philippines
Former Executive Director, Region IX Commission (Forerunner of the Autonomous Government)

Bangsamoro National Congress

RESOLUTION ADOPTING A 12-POINT AGENDA AS PROPOSED BY THE DELEGATES TO THE BANGSAMORO NATIONAL CONGRESS

WHEREAS, it is a historical fact that the Bangsamoro people have for four centuries remained steadfast and resilient in the defense of their fundamental right to self-determination;

WHEREAS, in the articulation and demonstration of this right, incalculable and unspeakable loss in lives and properties have wrought havoc upon the Bangsamoro people and their National Homeland of Mindanao, Sulu, Basilan, Tawi-Tawi and Palawan;

WHEREAS, in the face of current developments and sinister designs and machinations of the Philippine Government, aimed at depriving the Bangsamoro people of their just and legitimate vision for peace, dignity, justice and freedom, the need to define and ascertain the collective will of the Bangsamoro people becomes highly compelling and indispensable;

WHEREAS, in the pursuit of this lofty ideal, the Bangsamoro National Congress participated in by delegations representing all sectors within the Christian, Highlanders and Muslim communities in the Bangsamoro Homeland, was convened from Rajab 25 to 26, 1409 corresponding to March 2-3, 1989 at Maharlika Village, Taguig, Metro Manila, Philippines;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved by the delegates to the Bangsamoro National Congress, to adopt the following resolutions as submitted:

RESOLUTION NO. 1 - RESOLUTION REITERATING AND APPEALING OF THE ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC CONFERENCE (OIC) TO GRANT FULL MEMBERSHIP TO THE MORO NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT (MNLF)

RESOLUTION NO. 2 - RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE IMMEDIATE RESUMPTION OF PEACE TALKS BETWEEN THE MNLF AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE O.I.C.

RESOLUTION NO. 3 - RESOLUTION REJECTING THE ENACTMENT OF THE PROPOSED ORGANIC ACT FOR MUSLIM MINDANAO AS PROVIDED FOR IN THE 1987 PHILIPPINE CONSTITUTION AND OTHER MATTERS

RESOLUTION NO. 4 - RESOLUTION URGING THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT TO IMPLEMENT THE TRIPOLI AGREEMENT WITH THE FULL PARTICIPATION OF THE MORE NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT (MNLF) AND THE ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC CONFERENCE (OIC)

RESOLUTION NO. 5 - RESOLUTION REITERATING OUR RECOGNITION AND SUPPORT TO THE LEADERSHIP OF HADJI NUR MISUARI CHAIRMAN OF THE MORO NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT (MNLF)

RESOLUTION NO. 6 - RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE STRENGTHENING OF THE UNITY AND SOLIDARITY OF THE BANGSAMORO PEOPLE COMPRISING THE MUSLIMS, THE CHRISTIANS AND THE HIGHLANDERS AND THE INDIVISIBILITY OF THEIR NATIONAL HOMELAND OF MINDANAO, SULU, BASILAN, TAWI-TAWI AND PALAWAN

RESOLUTION NO. 7 - RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE DEMILITARIZATION OF MINDANAO AND ITS SATELLITE ISLANDS

RESOLUTION NO. 8 - RESOLUTION DESISTING THE CONTINUED EXPLOITATIVE OPERATIONS OF MULTI-NATIONALS AND LOCAL STRUCTURES AND ENTITIES IN MINDANAO

RESOLUTION NO. 9 - RESOLUTION URGING FOR THE IMPARTIAL INVESTIGATION AND INDEMNIFICATION OF ALL VICTIMS OF WAR AND HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 10 - RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE SOVEREIGNTY AND INDEPENDENCE OF THE PALESTINIAN STATE AND THE LEGITIMACY OF THE STRUGGLE OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

RESOLUTION NO. 11 - RESOLUTION EXPRESSING STRONG CONDEMNATION AGAINST SALMAN RUSHDIE, HIS NOVEL ENTITLED "SATANIC VERSES" AND HIS SUPPORTERS

RESOLUTION NO. 12 - RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BANGSAMORO MEDIA

RESOLVED FURTHER, to humbly request His Excellency, The Chairman of the 18th Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (ICFM), that this Resolution be read during the Plenary Session and entered into the records and minutes of the Conference for the information and support of all concerned;

RESOLVED FINALLY, that copies of this Resolution be furnished His Excellency, The Chairman, 18th Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (ICFM); His Excellency, The Secretary General, Organization of Islamic Conference; His Excellency, The Chairman of the Quadripartite Commission of the Organization of Islamic Conference; and His Excellency, The Chairman, Central Committee of the Moro National Liberation Front, through the good offices of the Chief Coordinator, 18th ICFM, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY at Maharlika Village, Taguig, Metro Manila, Philippines, this 26th Day of Rajab 1409 corresponding to the 3rd Day of March 1989.

(Sgd.) HADJI ALMARIM C. TILLAH
Chairman

Attested:

(Sgd.) IBRAHIM S. IRIBANI
Secretary

Resolution Adopting
a 12-Point Agenda

STATEMENT OF SUPPORT TO THE 12-POINT AGENDA OF THE BANGSAMORO NATIONAL CONGRESS

WE, the undersigned official representatives of our respective organizations in Mindanao, hereby declare our support to the 12-Point Agenda as adopted by the delegates to the Bangsamoro National Congress held at Maharlika Village, Taguig, Metro Manila, Philippines, on the 26th Day of Rajab 1409 corresponding to the 3rd Day of March 1989.

(Sgd.) ATTY. ODILLON C. MALLARI
Chairman
Movement For Free Mindanao

(Sgd.) ATTY. REUBEN R. CANOY
Chairman
Mindanao Independence Movement

(Sgd.) ABDULGAFFUR S. HADJIRUL
Chairman
Bangsamoro Solidarity
General Santos City and South Cotabato

(Sgd.) SULTAN PANANGAN T. PANGANDAMAN
Bangsamoro Lanao Professionals

(Sgd.) CAPITAN MANODEL
T'boli Tribal Leader

Third Bangsamoro National Congress

RESOLUTION NO. 1

RESOLUTION REITERATING AND APPEALING TO THE ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC CONFERENCE (OIC) TO GRANT FULL REGULAR MEMBERSHIP TO THE MORO NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT (MNLF)

WHEREAS, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) has demonstrated and proven beyond reproach its commitment and determination to serve and defend the fundamental and inalienable right of the Bangsamoro people to self-determination;

WHEREAS, for almost two decades, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) has waged political, military and diplomatic campaigns to emancipate the Bangsamoro people from the yoke of Philippine colonialism;

WHEREAS, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) has for more than a decade been accepted in the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) as a member with observer status;

WHEREAS, the elevation of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) into a full regular member as the sole and legitimate representative of the Bangsamoro people in the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) will greatly enhance the final victory of the Bangsamoro people's JIHAD FI SABILILLAH against Philippine colonialism;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved by delegates to the Bangsamoro National Congress to reiterate and appeal to the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) to grant full regular membership status to the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

RESOLVED FURTHER, to humbly request His Excellency, The Chairman of the 18th Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (ICFM) OIC, that this Resolution be read during the Plenary Session and entered into the records and minutes of the Conference for the information of all concerned.

RESOLVED FINALLY, that copies of this Resolution be furnished His Excellency, The Chairman, 18th ICFM-OIC; His Excellency, the Secretary General, Organization of Islamic Conference; Her Excellency, The President, Government of the Republic of the Philippines; His Excellency, The Chairman, Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY, at Maharlika Village, Taguig, Metro Manila, Philippines, this 26th Day of Rajab 1409 corresponding to the 3rd Day of March 1989.

(Sgd.) HADJI ALMARIM C. TILLAH
Chairman

Attested:

(Sgd.) IBRAHIM S. IRIBANI
Secretary

Resolution No. 1
Page 2

Third Bangsamoro National Congress

RESOLUTION NO. 2

RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE IMMEDIATE RESUMPTION OF PEACE TALKS BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES AND THE MORO NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT (MNLF) UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC CONFERENCE

WHEREAS, the hostilities between the Armed Forces of the Philippine Government and the Muslim Revolutionary Forces have already dragged on for years causing destruction in human lives and properties;

WHEREAS, such destruction have caused incalculable harm, miseries and sufferings upon the Bangsamoro people and their national homeland;

WHEREAS, the settlement of conflict through peaceful means is a more accepted and effective means for achieving solutions to problems in civilized societies;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, that the Bangsamoro National Congress urge the Government of the Republic of the Philippines to:

1. resume PEACE TALKS with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) under the auspices of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC);

2. take the initiative in the resumption of such peace talks as it is incumbent upon the Government to take all necessary avenues in order to attain peace in Mindanao;

3. continue such talks until an agreement satisfactory to all concerned shall have been reached and all implementing guidelines shall have been officially enacted;

RESOLVED FURTHER, that copies of this Resolution be furnished H.E., The President, Government of the Republic of the Philippines; H.E., The Secretary General, OIC; H.E., The Chairman, 18th ICFM-OIC; H.E., The Chairman, Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY, at Maharlika Village, Taguig, Metro Manila Philippines this 26th Day of Rajab 1409 corresponding to the 3rd Day of March 1989.

(Sgd.) HADJI ALMARIM C. TILLAH
Chairman

Attested:

(Sgd.) IBRAHIM S. IRIBANI
Secretary

Resolution No. 2
Page 2

Third Bangsamoro National Congress

RESOLUTION NO. 3

RESOLUTION REJECTING THE PROPOSED ORGANIC ACT FOR MUSLIM MINDANAO AS PROVIDED FOR IN THE 1987 PHILIPPINE CONSTITUTION AND OTHER MATTERS

WHEREAS, the proposed Organic Act for Muslim Mindanao, bereft of historical and moral bases, is utterly repugnant to the cherished ideals and aspirations of the Bangsamoro people for genuine and full autonomy;

WHEREAS, the enactment of such Organic Act is a serious abridgement of the rights of the Bangsamoro people under the Tripoli Agreement of 1976 and unduly undermines the integrity and shortchanges the involvement of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Moro National Liberation Front in the settlement of the Bangsamoro Issue;

WHEREAS, such proposed Organic Act perpetuates the existing exploitative and oppressive colonial relationship between the Philippine Government and the Bangsamoro people thereby depriving the latter of their just and legitimate vision for national self-determination;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, by the delegates to the Bangsamoro National Congress, to reject the proposed Organic Act for Muslim Mindanao as provided for in the 1987 Philippine Constitution and to resist individually and collectively the passage thereof.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that copies of this Resolution be furnished Her Excellency, The President, Republic of the Philippines; His Excellency, The Chairman, 18th ICFM of the OIC; His Excellency, The Secretary General, Organization of the Islamic Conference; His Excellency, The Chairman, Moro National Liberation Front; The Honorable President, Senate, Republic of the Philippines; and the Honorable Speaker, House of Representatives, Republic of the Philippines.

ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY, at Maharlika Village, Taguig, Metro Manila, Philippines, this 26th Day of Rajab 1409 corresponding to the 3rd Day of March 1989.

(Sgd.) HADJI ALMARIM C. TILLAH
Chairman

Attested:

(Sgd.) IBRAHIM S. IRIBANI
Secretary

Resolution No. 3
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Third Bangsamoro National Congress

RESOLUTION NO. 4

RESOLUTION URGING THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT TO IMPLEMENT THE TRIPOLI AGREEMENT WITH THE FULL PARTICIPATION OF THE MORO NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT (MNLF) AND THE ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC CONFERENCE (OIC)

WHEREAS, the Tripoli Agreement was formulated and formally entered into by and between the Philippine Government and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) with the active participation of the Organization of Islamic Conference through its Secretary General on December 23, 1976 at Tripoli, Libya;

WHEREAS, the continued disregard and non-implementation by the Philippine Government of the Tripoli Agreement the formulation of which was mediated by the OIC constitutes an affront to the OIC member countries;

WHEREAS, the Tripoli Agreement is an International Agreement duly recognized and upheld by the OIC and its member countries and the rest of the World Community including the Philippine Government, the latter being one of its signatories;

WHEREAS, the continued non-implementation of this International Agreement will leave the Bangsamoro people as represented by the MNLF without any recourse but to pursue the struggle for Independence which is a legitimate exercise of their birth-right to their national Homeland of Mindanao, Sulu, Basilan, Tawi-Tawi, and Palawan;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, that the Bangsamoro National Congress strongly urges the Philippine Government to:

1. fully implement the Tripoli Agreement, its letter and spirit without any reservation and with the active participation of the MNLF and the OIC;

2. desist from and abandon its own plan of autonomy through an Organic Act in Congress as it is already rejected by the Bangsamoro people, some sectors in Philippine society dedicated to peace, the MNLF and the OIC through its Resolution as passed in the 17th Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (ICFM) in Jordan in 1988.

RESOLVED FINALLY, that copies of this Resolution be furnished Her Excellency, The President, Government of the Republic of the Philippines; His Excellency, The Secretary General, Organization of Islamic Conference; His Excellency, The Chairman, Quadripartite Ministerial Commission-OIC; His Excellency, The Chairman, Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY, at Maharlika Village, TAguig, Metro Manila, Philippines, this 26th Day of Rajab 1409 corresponding to the 3rd Day of March 1989.

(Sgd.) HADJI ALMARIM C. TILLAH
Chairman

Attested:

(Sgd.) IBRAHIM S. IRIBANI
Secretary

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Third Bangsamoro National Congress

RESOLUTION NO. 5

RESOLUTION REITERATING OUR RECOGNITION AND SUPPORT TO THE LEADERSHIP OF HADJI NUR MISUARI, CHAIRMAN, MORO NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT (MNLF)

WHEREAS, Hadji Nur Misuari, as Chairman of the MNLF, epitomizes the true and dedicated leadership for the Bangsamoro struggle;

WHEREAS, chairman Nur Misuari has demonstrated in almost two decades of struggle his unswerving loyalty to the cause of the Bangsamoro people;

WHEREAS, the international recognition of Chairman Misuari's leadership has been firmly established in the historic declarations of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and other international and local organizations; and

WHEREAS, the unqualified support for Chairman Misuari's leadership is vital to the ultimate triumph of the Bangsamoro struggle JIHAD FI SABILILLAH;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, that the Bangsamoro National Congress reiterates its support for, confidence in and recognition of Chairman Misuari's leadership and that the Bangsamoro National Congress conveys this sentiment to the Organization of Islamic Conference.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that copies of this Resolution be furnished His Excellency, The Chairman, 18th ICFM-OIC; His Excellency, The Secretary General, Organization of the Islamic Conference; His Excellency, The Chairman, Quadripartite Ministerial Commission, OIC; and His Excellency, The Chairman, Central Committee, Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY, at Maharlika Village, Taguig, Metro Manila, Philippines, this 26th Day of Rajab 1409 corresponding to the 3rd Day of March 1989.

(Sgd.) HADJI ALMARIM C. TILLAH
Chairman

Attested:

(Sgd.) IBRAHIM S. IRIBANI
Secretary

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Third Bangsamoro National Congress

RESOLUTION NO. 6

RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE STRENGTHENING OF THE UNITY AND SOLIDARITY OF THE BANGSAMORO PEOPLE COMPRISING THE MUSLIMS, THE CHRISTIANS AND THE HIGHLANDERS AND THE INDIVISIBILITY OF THEIR NATIONAL HOMELAND OF MINDANAO, SULU, BASILAN, TAWI-TAWI AND PALAWAN

WHEREAS, the Bangsamoro people comprising of the Muslims, the Christians and the Highlanders have been united in their quest to chart their own destiny as an expression of their collective will to assert their right to self-determination;

WHEREAS, the Bangsamoro people of Mindanao are one in their conviction that their problems arise from the continuous exploitation of their natural resources, non-recognition of their socioeconomic, political and cultural rights, and deprivation of their ideals for peace, justice and dignity;

WHEREAS, the common destiny of the Bangsamoro people lies in the establishment of a new order ensuring their freedom, peace and prosperity and general well-being;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, that the Bangsamoro National Congress calls for the strengthening of the unity and solidarity of the Bangsamoro people comprising of the Muslims, the Christians and the Highlanders and jointly work to preserve the sanctity and indivisibility of their National Homeland of Mindanao, Sulu, Basilan, Tawi-Tawi and Palawan.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that appropriate measures and strategies be devised to ensure a continuing interaction and consultations among the three groups;

RESOLVED FINALLY, that copies of this Resolution be furnished H.E., The Chairman, 18th ICFM-OIC; H.E., The Secretary General, OIC; H.E., The President, Government of the Republic of the Philippines; and H.E., The Chairman, Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY, at Maharlika Village, Taguig, Metro Manila, Philippines, this 26th Day of Rajab 1490 corresponding to the 3rd Day of March 1989.

(Sgd.) HADJI ALMARIM C. TILLAH
Chairman

Attested:

(Sgd.) IBRAHIM S. IRIBANI
Secretary

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Third Bangsamoro National Congress

RESOLUTION NO. 7

RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE DEMILITARIZATION OF MINDANAO

WHEREAS, the military presence in Mindanao, Sulu, Basilan, Tawi-Tawi and Palawan has caused widespread disillusionment apprehension and sufferings for the Bangsamoro people;

WHEREAS, the military presence in any form or magnitude constitutes a serious provocation and a deterent to the peace process and initiative;

WHEREAS, past experience have shown how the presence of the military in Mindanao aggravated the tremendous loss in lives and resources of the people of Mindanao;

WHEREAS, the maintenance of peace and order can be effectively undertaken by the local authorities;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, that the Bangsamoro National Congress and the people of Mindanao call for the immediate demilitarization of Mindanao as a prerequisite to the attainment of a more lasting and genuine peace.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that copies of this Resolution be furnished Her Excellency, The President, Government of the Republic of the Philippines; His Excellency, The Chairman, 18th Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers; His Excellency, The Secretary General, Organization of Islamic Conference; and His Excellency, The Chairman, Moro National Liberation Front.

ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY, at Maharlika Village, Taguig, Metro Manila, Philippines, this 26th Day of Rajab 1409 corresponding to the 3rd Day of March 1989.

(Sgd.) HADJI ALMARIM C. TILLAH
Chairman

Attested:

(Sgd.) IBRAHIM S. IRIBANI
Secretary

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Third Bangsamoro National Congress

RESOLUTION NO. 8

RESOLUTION DESISTING THE CONTINUED EXPLOITATIVE OPERATIONS OF MULTINATIONALS; AND LOCAL STRUCTURES AND ENTITLES IN MINDANAO

WHEREAS, the Multinationals and other local entities have been one of the principal instruments of exploitation and oppression of the people of Mindanao and their rich natural resources;

WHEREAS, their years of operations have resulted in the unmistakable disenfranchisement of the people, the denudation of the forests and the depletion of their resources;

WHEREAS, their continued presence in Mindanao will deprive the future generations of the Bangsamoro people their rights and benefits from their resources.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, that the Bangsamoro National Congress denounces the continued exploitation of Mindanao by the Multinationals and local structures and entities and call for the cessation of all their exploitative activities.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that copies of this Resolution be furnished Her Excellency, The President, Government of the Republic of the Philippines; His Excellency, The Chairman, 18th Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (ICFM); His Excellency, The Secretary General, Organization of Islamic Conference; and His Excellency, The Chairman, Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY, at Maharlika Village, Taguig, Metro Manila, Philippines, this 26th Day of Rajab 1409 corresponding to the 3rd Day of March 1989.

(Sgd.) HADJI ALMARIM C. TILLAH
Chairman

Attested:

(Sgd.) IBRAHIM S. IRIBANI
Secretary

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Third Bangsamoro National Congress

RESOLUTION NO. 9

RESOLUTION URGING FOR THE IMPARTIAL INVESTIGATION AND INDEMNIFICATION OF ALL VICTIMS OF WAR AND HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

WHEREAS, records show the alarming increase in human rights violations by the government particularly in the Bangsamoro Homeland of Mindanao, Sulu, Basilan, Tawi-Tawi and Palawan;

WHEREAS, such violations had been documented by international agencies and institutions; and

WHEREAS, there are clear indications of people growing alienated from the present government and gravitating to those who can guarantee protection and security;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, that the Bangsamoro National Congress condemns all kinds of human rights violations and demands impartial investigation at the soonest possible time and that sufficient indemnifications be made to all such victims.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that copies of this Resolution be furnished Her Excellency, The President, Government of the Republic of the Philippines; His Excellency, The Chairman, 18th Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers; His Excellency, The Secretary General, Organization of Islamic Conference; His Excellency, The Commissioner, United Nations Commission on Human Rights; His Excellency, The Chairman, Central Committee, Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF); and the Philippine Commission on Human Rights, Manila.

ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY, at Maharlika Village, Taguig, Metro Manila, Philippines, this 26th Day of Rajab 1409 corresponding to the 3rd Day of March 1989.

(Sgd.) HADJI ALMARIM C. TILLAH
Chairman

Attested:

(Sgd.) IBRAHIM S. IRIBANI
Secretary

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Third Bangsamoro National Congress

RESOLUTION NO. 10

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE SOVEREIGNTY AND INDEPENDENCE OF THE STATE OF PALESTINE AND THE LEGITIMACY OF THE STRUGGLE OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

WHEREAS, it is undeniable that the Palestinian people have been deprived of their birthright to their sacred Homeland of Palestine;

WHEREAS, in the course of such deprivation brought about by the expansionist and colonial policies of Zionism in conspiracy with the imperialist enemies of Islam in both the East and the West, and of the concerted desire of the Palestinian people to liberate their homeland and regain their national dignity in the family of nations, a series of wars were fought and enormous destruction in both lives and properties of the Palestinian people ensued;

WHEREAS, despite these sufferings, miseries and atrocities committed against them, the Palestinian people have preserved the indomitability of their national spirit and noble conviction to dismantle all vestiges of Zionist domination over their affairs and the continued illegal usurpation of their national homeland of Palestine;

WHEREAS, in the furtherance of the just and legitimate struggle of the Palestinian people for Nationhood and Freedom, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) through the Palestine National Council (PNC) has formally and officially declared the Independence of the State of Palestine;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved by the delegates to the Bangsamoro National Congress, to recognize the Sovereignty and Independence of the State of Palestine and the legitimacy of the struggle of the Palestinian people.

RESOLVED FURTHER, to humbly request His Excellency, The Chairman of the 18th Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (ICFM), Organization of Islamic Conference, that this Resolution be read during the Plenary Session and entered into the records and minutes of the Conference for the information of all concerned.

RESOLVED FINALLY, that copies of this Resolution be furnished His Excellency, The Chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO); His Excellency, The Chairman, 18th ICFM-OIC; His Excellency, The Secretary General, Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC); and His Excellency, The Chairman, Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), through the good offices of the Chief Coordinator, 18th ICFM, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY at Maharlika Village, Taguig, Metro Manila, Philippines, this 26th Day of Rajab 1409 corresponding to the 3rd Day of March 1989.

(Sgd.) HADJI ALMARIM C. TILLAH
Chairman

Attested:

(Sgd.) IBRAHIM S. IRIBANI
Secretary

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Page 2

Third Bangsamoro National Congress

RESOLUTION NO. 11

RESOLUTION EXPRESSING STRONG CONDEMNATION AGAINST SALMAN RUSHDIE, HIS NOVEL ENTITLED SATANIC VERSES AND HIS SUPPORTERS

WHEREAS, the Holy Qur'an is most sacred to every Muslim faithful and provides the only source of meaning to life including the proper conduct thereof, both for the individual Muslim and his society;

WHEREAS, any blasphemous or sacrilegious reference to it, its tenets and teachings, in any form or manner, undermines the very essence of Islam itself as a Divine Message to Mankind and subverts the integrity of every Muslim his society, life and being;

WHEREAS, it is a religious duty of every Muslim and a moral obligation of all members of civilized societies to denounce such blasphemy and unpardonable affront to an established Religion professed by over One Billion Muslims in the world;

WHEREAS, the Muslim World or *UMMAH* is one in denouncing Salman Rushdie's Satanic Verses as a malicious revilement and blasphemy against Islam, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and the Faithful;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, that the delegates to the Bangsamoro National Congress strongly condemn Salman Rushdie and his cohorts in the writing and printing of the novel entitled "Satanic Verses".

RESOLVED FURTHER, to urge the Government of the Republic of the Philippines to ban the printing, publication and sale or distribution, in any form or manner, of said novel in the Philippines.

RESOLVED FINALLY, that copies of this Resolution be furnished H.E., The President, Government of the Republic of the Philippines; H.E., The Chairman, 18th ICFM-OIC; H.E., The Secretary General, OIC; and H.E., The Chairman, MNLF.

ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY, at Maharlika Village, Taguig, Metro Manila, Philippines, this 26th Day of Rajab 1409 corresponding to the 3rd Day of March 1989.

(Sgd.) HADJI ALMARIM C. TILLAH
Chairman

Attested:

(Sgd.) IBRAHIM S. IRIBANI
Secretary

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Third Bangsamoro National Congress

RESOLUTION NO. 12

RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BANGSAMORO ISLAMIC MEDIA

WHEREAS, distortions and vicious use of negative journalism in media reports against the Muslims have alienated the Muslims and Christians against each other;

WHEREAS, the present media establishments exhibit a prejudicial bias against anything related to the Muslims, be they local or foreign;

WHEREAS, information about the Muslims in Southern Philippines as well as in foreign countries are often false, distorted or inaccurate;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, that the Bangsamoro National Congress:

1. move for the establishment of the Bangsamoro Islamic media to check errors, distortions and inaccuracies and to stop vicious use of negative journalism against Muslims in media reports;

2. move that the Bangsamoro Islamic media be given the task of protecting and defending Islamic from unwarranted attacks in the media, of providing a channel for full exposure of the Bangsamoro Muslim perceptions, views and ideas;

3. move that the Bangsamoro Islamic media should come to the assistance of Muslim Brothers throughout the world through the enlightenment of world opinion regarding their struggles and problems;

4. move that the Bangsamoro Islamic media in the Philippines shall have its won channels of communication by putting up a publication house, a printing press, radio and television stations, just as the major religions in the country like the Catholic Church which has its own Radio Veritas and the Iglesia Ni Kristo which has its own Radio Station DZEC.

RESOLVED FURTHER, that copies of this Resolution be furnished His Excellency, The Chairman, 18th ICFM-OIC; His Excellency, The Secretary General, Organization of Islamic Conference; and His Excellency, The Chairman, Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF).

ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY, at Maharlika Village, Taguig, Metro Manila, Philippines, this 26th Day of Rajab 1409 corresponding to the 3rd Day of March 1989.

(Sgd.) HADJI ALMARIM C. TILLAH
Chairman

Attested:

(Sgd.) IBRAHIM S. IRIBANI
Secretary

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Appendix D

Speech of Nur Misuari Before the Plenary Session of the 18th ICFM, March 14, 1989

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

SPEECH

His Royal Highness, the Chairman
Your Highnesses and Your Excellencies:

BROTHERS:

ASSALAMU ALIAKUM WA RAHMATULLAHI WA BARAKATUH!

To begin with, let me congratulate His Excellency the new OIC Secretary General, Dr. Hamid Al-Gabid, and His Royal Highness, Prince Saudi Al-Faisal for His Highness' election to the Chairmanship of this 18th annual session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers.

Our people convey their prayers for the continued success of this Organization, which is fast emerging as a force to reckon with in the shaping of the future of the world community.

And let me join the distinguished leaders of delegation in welcoming the message of solidarity expressed by the Khadinul Haramain Wa Sharifain King Fahad bin Abdul-Aziz, as well as the new Secretary General. The solidarity of the Islamic Ummah is the most pressing and urgent need of the hour in view of the grave challenges we face today.

And let me express our thanks to all those who have genuinely extended all forms of moral, political, financial and humanitarian assistance to the MNLF Mujahideen. May Allah multiply their fortune many-fold.

Our special thanks to the World Muslim League, the Daawatul Islamic International, the Muslim World Congress and a host of

other Islamic movements in various parts of Islamic Ummah. And our profound gratitude to the Islamic Development Bank for extending financial assistance for our people's humanitarian projects, the latest being the Sarangangon Welfare and Orphanage Organization intended for children of Bangsamoro Shuhadah.

And, finally, our thanks for the invitation to this Conference and for the opportunity to address this august Assembly.

With your kind indulgence, let me invite your attention to the latest developments in our people's *Jihab fi Salillillah*.

ONE YEAR AGO TODAY, in Amman, the historic capital of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, I was fortunate to have addressed your august Assembly during its final plenary session. Just the night before my speech, I came from a lengthy meeting with the honourable members of the Quadripartite Ministerial Committee, convened by the former Secretary General H. E. Syed Sharipuddin Pirzada. To us that meeting was like a watershed. While we discussed the broad spectrum of the Bangsamoro struggle and the variety of causations that thwarted our widely hailed peace process with the new government in Manila, yet we did not rush to any conclusion. Instead, we emerged with the common understanding that we should give ourselves one more chance to ascertain once and for all what was the real and unalterable intention of the Manila government with respect to its solemn pledges and commitments to the MNLF and the Islamic Conference Organization.

The distinguished representatives of the Quadripartite Ministerial Committee were as usual farsighted and considerate. Reflecting the democratic spirit of the OIC and guided undoubtedly by their unflagging commitment to Islamic solidarity and the legitimate aspirations of oppressed Islamic commonties in the world, they kept the MNLF option open, for which the MNLF and the Bangsamoro people are grateful. Nonetheless, the MNLF leadership saw the wisdom in not forcing the issue.

The MNLF delegation was given the liberty to request the presidency of the Conference to discreetly canvass the prevailing sentiment to accurately determine whether there was indeed sufficient support to ensure smooth passage of a formal move for our membership. The MNLF delegation had noted a definite groundswell of support. In fact, we were fully convinced that the commitments of support already obtained by the MNLF delegation,

following as series of hectic consultation and meeting with the various heads of delegations, were more than enough to meet the two/thirds votes required for the purpose. For we had made a silent conversing of our own before the March 23, 1988, QMC meeting, and the trend was clearly positive, barring any change of heart on the part of those whom we had talked to.

But considering the shortage of time and the many unresolved business on the last day of the Conference, and more importantly, in deference to the wise counsel of the distinguished members of the Quadripartite Ministerial Committee, so we decided to refrain from exercising this option. Thus we gave President Corazon Aquino and her government one last chance to search and plumb the depth of their conscience so as to demonstrate their sincerity to abide by their solemn pledges and commitments to "implement in full" the Tripoli Agreement, which the OIC considers as the most honourable solution to the problem.

This is not to mention the Jeddah Accord of January 3, 1987, solemnly signed by the representative of President Aquino, on the one hand, and the MNLF representative, on the other, with the formal blessing of the Secretary General of the Islamic Conference Organization. Former OIC Secretary General Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada blessed the Accord and signed it as a witness.

The Jeddah Accord, as you all know, called for the restoration of the entire Bangsamoro Homeland back to the political jurisdiction of the Bangsamoro people under the aegis of a full autonomous government whose structure, functions and other details were to be finalized within ninety days in a follow-up negotiation alternately in Manila and in the capital city of the Bangsamoro Homeland. The negotiation met its debacle owing to the insincerity of the Philippine government and its unreasonable demand of subjecting the peace agreement to its newly created constitution which the MNLF Chairman had openly condemned as the greatest obstacle to both the Jeddah Accord and the Tripoli Agreement. The provisions on autonomy in the new constitution are the end-result of the conspiracy of all the powerful pressure groups and individuals who are flagrantly opposed to genuine Muslim or Bangsamoro autonomy. These pressure groups range from the fascist elements within the Cabinet and the Advisory Council of President Aquino down to the entire armed forces generals, the Catholic Church, the local and multi-national business sectors, the

Zionist Shaloom Club International, and certain powerful politicians specifically the current president of the Philippine Senate and the speaker of the House of Representatives respectively. We have dwelt at some length on these pressure groups in the past and we have added new revelations in the position papers that we have distributed in the Conference. Suffice it to say that for as long as the present constitution remains enforced and these pressure groups and individuals continue to wield such an enormous influence on President Aquino and her policies on the Bangsamoro people and their Homeland, it is impossible to expect any real and meaningful Muslim autonomy nor any end to the colonial war of genocide and the suffering of our oppressed people.

We therefore fully subscribe to the conclusion of H.E. Dr. Mohammed Mukhtar Awld Bah, the OIC Deputy Political Secretary General, who presided over the February 18, 1989, meeting of the Quadripartite Ministerial Committee, that the position of the Philippine government has increased the complexity of the issue. Consequently, it has made the problem all the more difficult to overcome and resolve.

At any rate, shortly after my speech in the Final Plenary Session, where I formally decided to defer our membership application, a very important piece of resolution was unanimously adopted to give added impetus to the peace initiative and create suitable condition for the final verification of the truth of the matter.

The resolution, labeled "Resolution 41\17-P", contained the following provisions:

> "1.That (the Conference) expressed deep regret over the failure of the government of the Philippines to honour its commitment to implement the Tripoli Agreement of 1976;
>
> "2.That it affirmed that the so-called steps taken by the Government of the Republic of the Philippines, including the formation of the so-called (regional) consultative council, are in no way in conformity with the provisions of the Tripoli Agreement, which CLEARLY PROVIDES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AUTONOMY TO THE

THIRTEEN PROVINCES, SPECIFIED THEREIN, AND WHICH CONSTITUTES A BINDING INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT. (Emphasis supplied.)

"3.That it condemned all forms of repression inflicted upon the Bangsamoro people and the denial of their fundamental rights.

"4.That IT CALLED UPON THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PHILIPPINES TO HONOUR THE COMMITMENT TO THE TRIPOLI AGREEMENT MADE TO THE MNLF AND THE OIC REPRESENTING THE COLLECTIVE WILL OF THE MUSLIM NATION. (Emphasis supplied.)

"5.That it strongly urged member states to extend material, financial and humanitarian assistance to the MNLF to defend the Muslim people and Islam and to pursue its just and legitimate rights. And, finally:

"6.That it requested the Quadripartite Ministerial Committee and the Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Conference to INTENSIFY EFFORTS FOR THE FULL AND URGENT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TRIPOLI AGREEMENT..."

The MNLF Chairman, on various occasions, had informed the OIC Secretary General of the readiness, as usual, of the MNLF to comply with the said resolution. We thought that one year, while precious, would neither be too long nor too short a time within which to undertake this task.

Certainly, our people are a little bit impatient, despite their legacy oflong-drawned out struggle against the relentless aggression of Western and Asian colonialism and imperialism. Besides, they thought that they had correctly grasped the real intention of Philippine colonialism and its local and foreign collaborators. That they were definitely opposed to genuine rapprochement between

the Aquino government and the MNLF. Indeed, it turned out rather clearly that even the "Peace Dialogue" between the MNLF Chairman and Philippine President Corazon Aquino, as well as the cessation of hostilities and the peace accord that followed, were nothing more than a mere stratagem to hoodwink the MNLF and the Bangsamoro people and the Islamic World.

The MNLF leadership was ensnared by its good faith and its own presumption that the new regime was in dire need of peace with the MNLF Mujahideen, considering the gravity of the internal dissension within the Philippine Armed Forces and the ever growing challenge posed by the New People's Army, the military arm of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the National Democratic Front.

Under the circumstances and considering the popular demand for peace, to seek confrontation and war with the MNLF Mujahideen would be the height of madness. Obviously, nobody, least still President Aquino and her fractious regime, would profit from a new crisis or war. Besides, Mrs. Aquino should have known better that without peace in the Bangsamoro Homeland it is well-neigh impossible to have durable and lasting peace and stability in Luzon or in the Visayas.

The longer the Bangsamoro problem persists, the more dangerous and catastrophic it will be not only for the people but as well for any government in Manila, if not for the future of the Philippines itself. As a matter of fact, the MNLF and the Bangsamoro struggle have already influenced the tribal people of Northern Luzon who have organized their own liberation movement with the avowed intention of seeking political emancipation from Philippine colonialism. Likewise, the people of the Visayas, the central region of the "Philippines" have openly declared their intention to liquidate Philippine colonialism in their homeland and to establish a separate nation of their own even through the arbitrament of armed struggle. Indeed, they have defiantly declared their intention to purchase weapons and to prepare for any future eventualities should the Aquino government fail to recognize and respect their legitimate demands.

It is noteworthy to mention here that they also are seeking some kind of political accommodation with the MNLF for the creation of a "Federal" or "Confederal" Republic of the Visayas and Mindanao. On the other hand, the Christian population of

Mindanao, in collaboration with some Muslim and non-Muslim tribal leaders, have organized their own "Federal Republic of Mindanao", with the declared objective of liquidating what they call Philippine "colonialism" in Mindanao and establishing a sovereign and independent nation for themselves. At the moment, they are seeking common cause and solidarity with the MNLF and are consistently supporting the MNLF application for OIC membership on the premise that it is good not only for the Muslims but also for the rest of the people of Mindanao and its islands.

To concretize their resolve to forge ahead with their political goals, their leaders had attended the Third Bangsamoro Congress held from 2-3 this month in Manila and decided in principle to jointly hold a "Summit" of Mindanao and Visayan leaders.

At this juncture, I would like to inform this august Assembly of my premonition that once that Summit is held a new dimension would be likely introduced and any further initiative for autonomy would then become counter-productive, if not altogether futile. The honourable Chairman of the recently concluded Bangsamoro Congress is here with us, bringing a number of vital resolutions to be formally forwarded to this Conference. He told me in confidence that none of those Christian leaders from Mindanao and the Visayas is willing to accept autonomy. Therefore unless we are able to consolidate our position in this historic Conference, through your sagacious and forward-looking decision, the MNLF and the Bangsamoro Jihad Fi-Sabilillah may yet lose their pre-eminent role in the struggle for peace and freedom for the people of the Bangsamoro Homeland.

It was ironical that Mrs. Aquino, who so desperately needed MNLF cooperation at such a critical moment, had chosen to betray the MNLF and the Islamic Conference Organization and condemned the people, both Filipinos and Bangsamoro, to another period of uncertainty.

One wonders why it was so easy for President Aquino to have forgotten the legacy of her husband, the popular clamor for peace, the untold suffering of the people as a consequence of the nearly two-decades of colonial war of genocide, and last but not the least, her sense of obligation to the MNLF leadership and the whole Bangsamoro people for supporting her to come to power and helping her to remain in power.

It will be recalled that at one stage during her desperate moment in November, 1986, when signs of military coup d' etat

were so imminent, President Aquino, through her emissary even sought MNLF assistance to help protect Malacañang Palace and to request the MNLF Chairman's presence in Manila. But the MNLF leadership refused to be drawned directly into the crisis and insisted that certain conditions had to be met first by Malacañang before they would agree to the request for security assistance and for the MNLF leader to make the return visit to Manila. It was during the Peace Dialogue and upon the suggestion of erstwhile Defence Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and the former AFP Chief of Staff General Fidel Ramos that Mrs. Aquino asked the MNLF Chairman to repay her visit. "I came to visit you in your homeland," she said, "and so you must visit me in Malacañang Palace in return."

The MNLF Chairman could not categorically accept such request because the peace agreement had not yet been reached; and besides, he could not afford to gamble his integrity and expose his life and his men to unnecessary danger. Furthermore, Malacañang refused to comply with the pre-conditions demanded by the MNLF leadership. Which gave the later valid excuses not to get themselves directly involved in the internal conflict of the new regime.

Nevertheless, to minimize interruption in the peace process and hopefully enhance the chances of peace, the MNLF had openly threatened to declare war on whoever would unjustly seize power in Manila and overthrow the Aquino government. The MNLF and the Bangsamoro people had invested a great deal, including precious lives, to weaken the Marcos' government politically, economically and militarily; and consequently sow the seeds of its eventual downfall. And the MNLF leadership was confident that the new leadership in Manila could muster enough wit to understand the supreme advantages of peace in the Bangsamoro Homeland through genuine cooperation and partnership with the MNLF.

Unfortunately, the MNLF was deceived. Its trust in the sincerity of President Corazon Aquino became its pitfalls. Mrs. Aquino's government brazenly betrayed the MNLF and the Bangsamoro people as well as the Islamic Conference Organization. In so doing, she ended up betraying the peace and embroiling her government in a new colonial war that her government, like its predecessor, cannot expect to win, biidznillah.

Besides, the MNLF leadership, considering their keen understanding of the Filipino mentality and their sad experiences under Philippine colonial rule, knew what Manila was up to.

The MNLF leadership and Bangsamoro people believe that after the series of abortive coup attempts, President Aquino has become so weakened morally that she has virtually become a puppet in the crafty hands of the Defense Minister Fidel Ramos, her socalled "saviour" from the failed coups. Her inexperience and inherent weakness have contributed to her misery and caused her to fall under the evil influence of her political and military advisers as well as the powerful sectarian, economic, military and foreign pressure groups. None of her advisers and the pressure groups. None of her advisers and the pressure groups are happy to see a genuine rapprochement between Malacañang and MNLF for fear lest the Muslim people and Islam may resume their paramount position in their sacred Homeland of Mindanao and its component islands.

Apart from the danger posed to the MNLF and the Bangsamoro people, the situation can bedevil the peace and security of Southeast Asia and the emerging industrial nations in the Far East. The Bangsamoro Homeland and its territorial waters are a host to two vital waterways through which the maritime commerce of Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and other countries are passing. On normal days, over the hundred commercial boats, including at least ten to twelve giant tankers, ferrying commodities and fuel to and fro Middle East, ply these routes. In time of war, these passages could be extremely dangerous to pass through, as past experiences would show.

Besides, a new element has entered the picture of late. The Philippine government, as part of its colonial policy of encirclement, is harboring some dissident elements from the neighboring State of Sabah and are reportedly training them with the Yellow Army of President Aquino at Santa Luisita Hacienda in Tarlac. Young Christian Sabahans are being patronized by the powerful head of the Catholic Church, Cardinal Jimmy Sin, who is the Filipino version of Cardinal Richelieu of King Louis XIII of France. The younger brother of the Chief Minister of Sabah is liaising with Manila and allegedly even with Tel Aviv.

The Philippine government and the Zionist movement are collaborating in an effort to weaken the Islamic countries in Southeast Asia. They are even conniving to bring about the fragmentation of Malaysia by assisting the underground movements in the Malaysian States of Sabah and Sarawak.

According to our information, the headquarters of the MOSSAD in Singapore is being transferred to Manila to bolster the extent of collaboration between Manila and Tel Aviv. While the president of the Zionist Shaloom Club International has been appointed by President Aquino as the "policy adviser" in the Department of Foreign Affairs and at the same time is in control of the Information Bureau, not to say of his influence over the passport division.

You will get a wealth of vital information and up-to-date analysis of the complex situation in our region should you find time to glide your eyes through our progress report and other vital documents which we have made available to you in this Conference.

What we only want to emphasize to you is the fact that there are too much conspiracies against our people, our Homeland and Islam, and unless your do something to strengthen our position in this Conference like your have correctly done to our heroic Palestinian and Afghan brothers, chances would be that you might lose your Bangsamoro brothers to the enemies of Islam and the Islamic Ummah, Allah in His infinite mercy forbid. And when that tragic episode comes, the fate and destiny of Islamic Southeast Asia and its nearly two-hundred million Muslims will be jeopardized. Anyone who understands the waves of history of 20th century Asia and, specifically, Southeast Asia will tell you that what I am saying makes sense. I am not a prophet of doom. I am a Mujahid, engaged in the most glorious and noble endeavour that Allah had mandated for the oppressed humanity. I cannot lead such a long and ardous struggle if I am not an optimist. But I have to tell you my honest impression about our future. Modesty aside, the Bangsamoro people and Mujahiden are among the staunchest defenders of the Islamic faith, at least in our region of Southeast Asia. By helping the MNLF, you will be helping also the Muslims in the region, considering our geopolitical importance as the "backdoor of Asia". By strengthening the MNLF your strengthen the Muslims and Islam in the region as well. And the best way to strengthen the MNLF, being the vanguard of the Bangsamoro Jihad Fi-Sabilillah in our Homeland and the sole legitimate representative of the Bangsamoro people, is by accepting its application for membership. That way, you render justice where justice is due, considering the fact that the Bangsamoro people, through the MNLF, has every right to become a member of the OIC and be an integral and inseparable part of the Islamic Ummah which this Organization represents.

Before we came to this Conference, we had studied your Charter and we pondered on your actual practices. Besides, we had made extensive consultation with legal experts of the Organization. To our delight, there is no legal nor moral impediment that can be successfully invoked to deny us admission. It is only a matter of mustering your political will in favor of your oppressed brothers and Islam in the Bangsamoro Homeland and in Southeast Asia who are facing such a great peril to their existence

We were advised by your legal experts that to be admitted as a member, the applicant should have received the for recognition of the OIC and its member-states as "a people" or "nation".

In our documents, your will find very plausible argument that leave no doubt about the fact that you have already formally recognized us both as a people and as a nation. Independence is not a pre-requisite, unlike in the case of the U.N. Charter. At any rate, I would like to assure you that the greater parts of the Bangsamoro Homeland are already firmly under the control and administration of the MNLF and its revolutionary provisional government. As a matter of fact, in Amman last year, some brotherly delegations had informed us that the main reasons that prompted them to decide to support our proposed application for membership were their recognition of the MNLF success in putting vast areas of the Bangsamoro Homeland under theory political and military jurisdiction, in addition to the fact that the membership of the brotherly Palestinian Liberation Organization may well serve as an ideal precedent.

There is no substantial difference between these two organizations, except for the fact the PLO is a full member while the MNLF is only an observer. While the PLO is recognized as the "sole legitimate representative" of Palestine, the MNLF is also recognized by this Organization as the "sole legitimate representative" of the Bangsamoro people or nation. Go back to your historic Dakar Resolution in 1979; your Islamabad Final Communique in 1980; your Sana'a Resolution in 1984, and your Amman Resolution last year. You will see how far you have gone in bestowing your formal recognition of our status as a Muslim people or nation, which to our understanding is the only essential requirement for membership.

In Islamabad, your declared formally in your Final Communique, saying:

We reaffirmed our support for the struggle of the Bangsamoro people under the leadership of the Moro National Liberation Front with the view to achieving self-determination.

Your reference to our people as "Bangsamoro people", not just a mere tribe; and to our people's right to self-determination are clear and indisputable.

And your formula recognition of the MNLF as the "sole legitimate representative of the Bangsamoro people" adds further depth and dimension to the way you now regard the status of our people, and their problem, which is one of the longest single problems weighing heavily on the conscience of this Conference almost since its birth.

In so doing you have correctly realigned your understanding of our people and their glorious past, for we are an heir to a once powerful state, whose government commanded the respect of many countries in the world. As a testimony to our existence as a state, our government have entered into a series of peace treaties with such powerful European nations like Spain and the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland as well as the United States of America, recognizing the sovereignty and independence of our Islamic nation.

Frankly, the main cause of our debacle in solving the problem has been our mistaken assumption about the underlying character of the problem. Our strategic formula has not been in consonance with the colonial character of the problem. Perhaps, the medicine we prescribed is not commensurate to the disease. In truth, the only correct solution to the problem is out-right decolonization, otherwise, we may revolve within a vicious cycle, with Philippine colonialism continuing to keep the problem at the twirl of its fingertips.

Since the passage of the Amman Resolution last March, which called upon the Philippine government to comply with its solemn pledges and commitment to implement the Tripoli Agreement, our eyes have been focused with great anticipation on the goodwill and sense of obligation of Manila.

The Philippine government, from Marcos down to the present regime, has been repeatedly pledging to honour its commitments for the full implementation of the Tripoli Agreement.

In view, therefore of the Amman Resolution, we expected with optimism the prospect of a new peace talks with the Aquino government.

To our disappointment there was neither peace negotiation nor the promised implementation of the Tripoli Agreement.

Regrettably, Manila has been emboldened to the point that it stubbornly refused to respond to the Amman Resolution. Indeed, it did not even bother to acknowledge with elementary courtesy the formal communication of the OIC Secretary General sent to President Aquino through the Philippine Embassy in Jeddah in May last year.

Actually, we are perplexed at the negative attitude of Manila. Instead of adding its weight to the relaunching of the failed peace process, the Philippine government committed more combat-ready forces to create tension and drag the MNLF Mujahideen into actual military confrontation and war.

Thus small-scale fighting has commenced since the beginning of this year and is continuing up to the present day. Unless a decisive step is taken here in the Plenary, I can only contemplate the escalation of the war, as in the past. I can only see dark foreboding, especially so if we look into the present step now being recklessly pursued in the Philippine Congress.

Last night, Mr. Angelo Palmones of Radio Mindanao Network informed me that several Congressmen from Mindanao who had earlier sponsored the so-called Organic Act for Muslim autonomy had withdrawn their sponsorship, because they resented Malacañang Palace's interference. The Congressmen charged President Aquino of tinkering with the original version and substituting it literally with its own draft.

As it stands now, the draft organic act, as President Aquino's emissary had told the OIC Secretary General and the Quadripartite Ministerial Committee in 1987, does not entail the transfer of political power. Rather it merely calls for administrative autonomy --- without substantive power. There was no internal security force specified in the Tripoli Agreement. Without internal security force, it is impossible to exact obedience from the people. The Philippines is notorious for the existence of private armies. The Philippine Armed Forces had declared that at least half a million firearms are on the loose. Can one imagine the MNLF Mujahideen surrendering their weapons and entrusting their lives and the lives of their

children to the enemy that had killed through mass murder at least 135,000 Bangsamoro children, women and innocent civilians?

Thirdly, the new organic act calls for the holding of so-called "referendum" or plebescite to determine the number of those voting either in favor or not.

Referendum or plebescite was never envisaged by the Tripoli Agreement. The size of the territorial jurisdiction was final, namely, thirteen provinces including the cities and villages situated therein. Besides, all what is needed to implement the agreement is the issuance of an Executive Decree by the Philippine head of state.

This was the basic reason why both the MNLF and the Quadripartite Ministerial Committee, as well as the OIC Secretary General Dr. Amadou Karim Gaye, had vigorously opposed the 17th April, 1977 referendum conducted by the Marcos government.

Furthermore, there are other important features of the Tripoli Agreement that are totally absent in the said Organic Act.

So I can understand why at least 9 Congressmen who had earlier sponsored the bill had reconsidered their position. Besides, they said that the present Organic Act will only trigger new war in the Bangsamoro Homeland of Mindanao which they do not like to happen at all to avoid repetition of the past tragedy.

I was also informed that the Mindanao Congressmen had learned of the existence of a secret document containing the actual position of the strategic policy platform of the Aquino government vis-à-vis the problem of Mindanao.

Here with me is a xerox copy of that controversial document. Among other things, it says that the Aquino government, using the press media and other disinformation devices, will "discredit" Nur Misuari before the OIC and exert every effort to convince the OIC that the grant of autonomy to the Muslims in South Philippines through the context of the (1987) Constitution is "in effect an implementation of the Tripoli Agreement." This is a grave act of deception against an honourable Islamic Organization.

Besides, it will do everything in its capacity to convince the OIC to cut its support for the MNLF and to remove the Muslim problem from the agenda of the OIC. Furthermore, this document says conclusively that the Philippine government has decided to "de-internationalize the MNLF issue" by treating it as a domestic local issue. Apparently, this is to counter-act the declaration in Amman recognizing the Tripoli Agrement as a "binding international

Agreement." In fact, it says that it will treat the problem solely as a "regional" and not even a national problem.

The demand for autonomy will henceforth be met through the Regional Consultative Commission mandated by the 1987 Constitution. This is the same Commission repudiated by the Amman Resolution. Furthermore, the Aquino government will discourage negotiations while a political settlement is being worked out by Congress through the Organic Act for autonomy.

It added that should their be a resumption of peace talks with the MNLF, then it should be on MNLF's request to resume and without any precondition. Such peace talks, it emphasized, "SHOULD BE WITHIN PHILIPPINE TERRITORY AND WITHOUT ANY PARTICIPATION BY FOREIGNERS."

Your Royal Highness: I think we have reached the high point in our search for the truth. We have pampered the enemy too much by our tolerance and by our procrastination with our action.

It is our duty to protect the integrity of the Islamic Ummah and this Organization. Forgive me for saying this: That what we have done so far is already too much. To give the enemy another chance will make us look unreasonable. Largely owing to our wrong decision, we forty percent of our Islamic land has been compromised and our freedom has been lost to colonialism. Yesterday, Your Royal Highness had declared accurately that colonialism in any form has no place in this world. Allah by His Infinite Mercy and Infallible Guidance, has redeemed us by causing the enemy to commit mistake. Why should we then insist?

I would like to urgently appeal to this august body to examine the wisdom of our proposition, with the assurance that we will never force the issue of membership without the endorsement of the Quadripartite Ministerial Committee.

But I would like to tell you honestly that once we become a member, the Philippine government will insha'Allah come to the Conference table and grant full and genuine autonomy in six month's time. Otherwise, the Bangsamoro people, in collaboration with their Christian and indigenous tribal brothers will insha'Allah surge forward, liquidate colonialism and assert their independence in a matter of one year's time. The Philippines will disintegrate, with Visayas emerging as another sovereign and independent state.

For your information, Your Royal Highness, the leader of the liberation movement of the Visayas has sent a message to me

through one of our delegates who is present here in the Plenary Session saying that once we establish our provisional government in Mindanao, they will immediately declare their own republic in the Visayas.

Once again, I leave the final decision to you.

But before I conclude, let me formally submit to your Royal Highness these resolutions of the Bangsamoro congresses which are all expressive of the unanimous support of the Bangsamoro people for our membership in this conference.

In the series of resolutions passed during the Third Bangsamoro Congress held in Manila early this month, the representatives of the Muslim, Christian and indigenous people throughout the Bangsamoro Homeland, including Palawan, have declared that they support our quest for OIC membership and that they are unanimous in accepting the MNLF and its leadership as the legitimate voice of the people of Mindanao and its islands.

Over a billion Muslims all over the world hail this historic conference, while fifteen million Bangsamoro people are awaiting your wise decision on their problem and ultimately on their future and the future of their Islamic land and Islam.

Allow me Mr. Chairman, to join the nations of the world in extending our formal recognition of the brotherly State of Palestine as well as the Interim Government of Afghanistan and to reiterate our unbreakable solidarity with their just and triumphant cause.

My thanks for the declaration of support my brother H.E. Foreign Minister Gulbudin-Hekmatyar behind our people's JIHAD FI SABILILLAH.

And finally, my debt of gratitude to my Brother His Excellency, DR. KENAN ATAKOL, the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Turkish Cypriot for his reiteration of support and concern.

Inshallah, the oppressed Muslim people and Islam everywhere will continue to march triumphantly and irresistibly against the forces of appression and tyranny and establish the supremacy of the Almighty Allah and Islam in the world.

Thank you and wassalamu Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakatuh!

(Sgd.) NUR MISUARI
Chairman
Moro National Liberation Front
14 March 1989
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About the Author

Dr. Samuel K. Tan is a native of Siasi, Sulu, born of Tausug-Sama-Chinese parentage. He is a holder of several degrees and a recipient of honors and awards. He finished two years of Business Administration at Silliman University as a consistent University Scholar; a Bachelor of Theology at Ebenezer Bible College where he taught and served as Dean of Men; a Bachelor of History at the Zamboanga A.E. Colleges, *summa cum laude*; a Master of Arts in History at the University of the Philippines; and a Doctor of Philosophy in Social Science Interdisciplinary Studies at Maxwell School Syracuse University.

His published works include *Sulu Under American Military Rule, 1899-1913* (1967); *The Filipino Muslim Armed Struggle, 1900-1972* (1978); *Selected Essays on the Filipino Muslims* (1982); *Decolonization and Filipino Muslim Identity* (1985); *The Critical Decade, 1921-1930* (1993); and several essays on history, culture, politics, and religion. He edited or co-edited four regional histories of Mindanao: *Haylaya, Linibung, Bagani*, and *Daragen* (1980). He also contributed several essays in the regional histories of Luzon and Visayas: *Atang, Handog* (1986). He was a Research Fellow and Consultant of the *Tadhana* Research Project, 1974-1983, and a Fulbright-Hays Senior Research Fellow, 1983-1984.

In addition to his academic duties as former Chairman and Professor, Department of History, University of the Philippines, Dr. Tan has lectured at the Development Academy of the Philippines, National Defense College of the Philippines, and national forums on the Filipino Muslims and Mindanao issues. He has presented papers in international conferences and was a member of the UNESCO Advisory Committee on Southeast Asian Cultures (1982-1984). He was a member of the Fulbright-Hays Selection Committee from 1987-1989.

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