

**A COMMENTARY ON THE COMPENDIUM
OF THE SOCIAL DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH
CHRISTIANS FOR NATIONAL LIBERATION**



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Foreword
by Neo Padre Aglipay

The 557-page book, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, has the imprimatur of Cardinal Renato Raffaele Martino, President of the **Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace**, and Cardinal Angelo Sodano, **Vatican City Secretary of State**, with their signatures dated April 2, 2004 and June 29, 2004, respectively; copyright 2004, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City. This book is co-published in the Philippines by the **Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP)**.

As stated by Cardinal Sodano in his June 29, 2004 Letter to Cardinal Martino, the book is

a compendium... systematically presenting the foundations of Catholic social doctrine... In this light, men and women are invited above all to discover themselves as transcendent beings, in every dimension of their lives, including those related to social, economic and political contexts.¹

And in his presentation of the *Compendium*, Cardinal Martino also exhorts all Christians to participate in the challenge of

transforming social realities... today at the beginning of the third millennium of the Christian era. The proclamation of Jesus Christ, the “Good News” of salvation, love, justice and peace, is not readily received in today’s world, devastated as it is by wars, poverty and injustices. For this very reason the men and women of our day have greater need ever of the Gospel: of the faith that saves, of the hope that enlightens, of the charity that loves.²

The objective of the *Compendium* is clearly stated in the Introduction, entitled “An Integral And Solidary Humanism.” While “systematically presenting the foundations of Catholic social doctrine” on various global “social, economic and political” issues and reflecting on humankind’s social problems such as “wars, poverty and injustices” in the world, the book intends

¹ Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, London, 2005, p. xiv.

² *Ibid.*, p. xvii.

to propose to all men and women a humanism that is up to the standards of God’s plan of love in history, an integral and solidary humanism capable of creating a new social, economic and political order, founded on the dignity and freedom of every human person, to be brought about in peace, justice and solidarity.³

It is in the spirit of the same contexts, as conveyed by Cardinal Sodano’s *Letter* and Cardinal Martino’s *Presentation* as mentioned only in part above, that the Christians for National Liberation (CNL) chapters in the Philippines, through the leadership of Comrade Renmin Malaya, the CNL National Chairperson, have collectively studied the *Compendium* with the aim to comprehend the implications of the Roman Catholic Church’s social doctrine on various global concerns and glitches, and the *Compendium*’s proposal regarding the promotion of “*an integral and solidary humanism*” that would be “*capable of creating a new social, economic and political order... to be brought about in peace, justice and solidarity*” in the world. The comments of the CNL collectives have, therefore, been based on the major global issues and social problems of humanity expounded on in the twelve chapters of the *Compendium*, and have the following three particular objectives: **first**, to help correct the nearly two-century old anti-Marxist attitude and partiality of the Christian Churches for capitalism that has been globalized by imperialist powers and to let Christians, particularly the Church people, understand that Christianity and Marxism, though not necessarily compatible with each other in terms of beliefs, can complement each other in such ways wherein Christians and Marxists can enjoy in common the freedom of thought and belief, can live together, dialogue and collaborate at the same time for the peoples’ common good, and would be able to experience the far-reaching significance of what Pope Francis told in one of his interviews at the Vatican City in 2016 that “*It is the Communists who think like Christians*”;⁴ **second**, to reinterpret the social doctrine of the Church in the context of the current world realities monopolized by imperialist powers and in the framework of CNL’s concrete involvements since

³ Ibid., p. 9.

⁴ Pope Francis: “Trump? I do not judge. I care only if he makes the poor suffer,” *La Repubblica*, November 11, 2016 (https://www.repubblica.it/vaticano/2016/11/11/news/pope_francis_trump-151810120/).

1972 for radical change of Philippine society, and in this way to attain one of the objectives of the CNL work set by the CNL National Council on February 5-6, 2019, i.e., “Achieve a common understanding on the global capitalist crisis and contradictions among imperialist countries as manifested in the decay of economic, political and cultural life among the Filipino masses”; and **third**, to serve as a basic guide for the ideological, political and organizational expansion and consolidation of CNL in its work of arousing, organizing and mobilizing Christians, particularly the Church people, to participate actively in advancing the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) towards victory and a bright socialist future in the coming decades. Said three particular objectives of the CNL commentary are developed along the following eight topics:

1. A Preliminary Overview.
2. On Poverty and Inequality, and What Can be Done.
3. On the Common Good, the Universal Destination of Goods and Private Property.
4. On the Contradiction Between Capital and Labor, and How Could It Be Resolved.
5. On Monopoly Capitalist Globalization; *Quo Vadis* Humankind.
6. On Terrorism, War, Violence, and Worldwide Peace.
7. CNL Declares Firmly: Only When Monopoly Capitalism, The Ideology Of Imperialism, Would Be Replaced By Scientific Socialism Could The Global Environment Fully Recover And Be Safeguarded.
8. CNL’s Concluding Remarks: God’s Kingdom as the Reign of Truth, Justice, Peace, Love, Equality, and Liberation.

It is the hope of CNL that this commentary would be for the benefit of CNL collectives in their revolutionary underground work of arousing, organizing and mobilizing (AOM) the Christians—the ordained, the religious, and the laity especially the Christian youth from both the Catholic and Protestant Churches—who are of good will and open to radical change for the liberation of Christ’s least brethren, the PDO (poor, deprived and oppressed) within the overall context of the Filipino people’s revolutionary struggle for freedom, people’s democracy and socialism. In the course of doing revolution, the underground work is so important in expanding

and consolidating the backbone of the people’s mass movement for radical change. Similar to the Christian catacombs, which were used during the persecutions of Christians for about 245 years from 68 AD to 313 AD, not only as secret burial places for Christians and chapels for worships but most especially serving as secret rooms for catechesis (Christian education), the underground work of revolutionary organizations today is serving as effective defense and best approach against state fascism that uses the reactionary army and police forces which try maliciously to stop the Filipino people’s revolutionary mass movement for national and social liberation.

At the same time, this CNL commentary can also help and contribute in the promotion of “An Integral And Solidary Humanism” which the *Compendium* has proposed in its Introduction, and which can be complementary with the socialist revolutionary objectives of resolving the roots and causes of “wars, poverty and injustices” in the world. Citing the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council’s Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium* (1965) and Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (1966) as the source of its spiritual inspiration, the *Compendium* in its Introduction states:

The Church, the sign in history of God’s love for mankind and of the vocation of the whole human race to unity as children of the one Father, intends with this document on her social doctrine to propose to all men and women a humanism that is up to the standards of God’s plan of love in history, an integral and solidary humanism capable of creating a new social, economic and political order, founded on the dignity and freedom of every human person, to be brought about in peace, justice and solidarity. This humanism can become a reality if individual men and women and their communities are able to cultivate moral and social virtues in themselves and spread them in society. “Then, under the necessary help of divine grace, there will arise a generation of new men, the molders of a new humanity.”⁵

⁵ *Compendium*, p. 9.

To particularize the aforementioned point, CNL declares that, for the past century after World War I (1914-1918) up to the present day, imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism, has been using and continues to employ Christianity as a spiritual cloak of its exploitative and oppressive system, and will forever be a stumbling block to the rise of “a generation of new men” and women as “molders of a new humanity.” Thus, the basic principle, which CNL desires to develop in this commentary, is that Christianity and Marxism or scientific socialism/communism can complement each other even though they may not necessarily be compatible in terms of spiritual and political beliefs. Meaning, Christians and Marxists can live together, dialogue and work in partnership for the people’s common good, especially that of the toiling masses of workers, peasants and national minorities, leading to “a generation of new men [and women], the molders of a new humanity” in the world. This further means that Christians and Marxists can uphold in common the freedom of thought and belief. They can coexist without giving up their distinctive philosophies and beliefs. Such basic principles, that can be recognized in dialogue and openness by Christians and Marxists as their point of unity, are expounded on in the discourse of the aforementioned eight topics of the CNL commentary.

CNL cadres and activists in the Philippines are very much grateful to Professor Jose Maria Sison, the Founding Chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the Chief Political Consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), for sending to CNL his Postscript. Learning golden and excellent lessons from the Filipino people’s historical experiences from the past 500 years of Christianity in the Philippines in which Catholicism had been utilized by the Spanish colonialists to fully colonize the country for more than three centuries and wherein the US imperialists also followed by employing the Christian Churches, both Protestant and Catholic, in order to establish and maintain the Philippines as a semicolonial and semifeudal society up to the present day, Professor Sison in his various articles has been asserting and continues to uphold the correct principle that Filipino Christians and Marxists can, indeed, enjoy in common the freedom of thought and belief as they complement each other in pursuing the struggle for national liberation and radical change in Philippine society.

A Commentary on the “Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church”

CNL collectives in the Philippines express heartfelt gratitude to Comrade Luis Jalandoni, CNL Founding Member and Member of the National Council of the NDFP, and Comrade Coni Ledesma, also Founding Member of the CNL, who have similarly sent their Comments on the CNL Commentary on the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*. Comrades Louie and Coni have inspired and continue to embolden Christians and Church leaders from both the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches to be involved in the Philippine revolution for national and social deliverance from semicolonial and semifeudal oppression and exploitation. Both of them have sent their Greetings and Comendations to the CNL on its 50th anniversary this coming February 17, 2022.

On the 50th anniversary of CNL, we wish to dedicate this commentary to all the heroes and martyrs of the Philippine National Democratic Revolution (NDR), including those members of CNL (with a total of 190 since 1974, as of the CNL National Council Meeting on February 5-6, 2019). In particular, we present this CNL commentary in memory of Sr. Mary Francis “Comrade Pua” Añover, RSM who passed away on April 11, 2021. She and all the heroes and martyrs of the NDR offered their selfless service to the people in the struggle for national freedom and democracy. Their heroism and martyrdom inspire the Filipino masses to firmly pursue the revolutionary path. Their death does not lead to the end of the Philippine revolution, but rather nourishes the seeds of the revolutionary process to grow to plenty of gigantic trees for the unceasing creation of a robust forest among the Filipino people towards a bright socialist future. **SOME TREES MAY DIE BUT THE FOREST CONTINUES TO GROW WIDER AND LIVES FOREVER!**

The lists of important references are found at the end of the CNL commentary. These references are needed to support the facts and views that have been conveyed by the remarks of the CNL on the *Compendium*.

Readers are invited to forward to CNL their critique, questions and recommendations on this CNL commentary.

*Neo Padre Aglipay*⁶

Overall Facilitator

September 8, 2021

⁶ Neo Padre Aglipay is a collective name of the spokesperson of the Fr. Nilo Valerio Unit (FNVU), the spokesperson of the Christians for National Liberation in Northern Luzon (CNL-NL). The acronym of the collective name of the FNVU's spokesperson is NPA, which is in memory of the Katipunan revolutionary priest, Fr. Gregorio Labayen Aglipay who joined the armed revolution against Spanish colonialism, and had fought fierce battles against the US imperialist armed forces during the Filipino-American War. Together with other Katipunan commanders under the Tinio Brigade like Isabelo Abaya from Candon, Ilocos Sur and the two Villamor brothers from Abra, Fr. Aglipay, a Catholic priest, led in 1899-1901 the Tinio Brigade's 2nd Provincial Battalion consisting of Katipunan-Ilocano guerrillas based in Ilocos Norte. On the other hand, the FNVU, the CNL-NL's epithet, is in remembrance of Fr. Valerio, one of the commanders and political officers of the New People's Army (NPA) in the Ilocos-Cordillera in the 1980s. Fr. Nilo Valerio, one of the five Catholic priests who joined the NPA, was beheaded, together with Resteta Fernandez and Soledad Salvador, by the fascist Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in Bakun, Benguet on August 24, 1985.

A Commentary on the
Compendium of the Social
Doctrine of the Church

Part 1

A Preliminary Overview

The *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, has comprehensively expounded on the Roman Catholic Church's social principles, teachings and policies that are founded on the Bible, as well as on papal encyclicals, dogmas and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* concerning almost all important social issues—economic, political, cultural, military, peace, war, globalization, relations among peoples and nations, and other fundamental issues at the global level. It includes the Roman Catholic Church's criticisms of the abuses of capitalism, and strong opposition and condemnation to Marxism, socialism and communism. It is, therefore, very important for all Catholics, especially the laity as well as the clergy, and even Christians from other Church denominations to study this book as a vital guide to relevant Christian social actions towards fundamental and radical change of societies today.

Historical Contexts of the Social Doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church

There is a pressing need to put in proper context the contents of this book as most of these are based on dogmas, teachings and papal encyclicals that date back from the 4th century to the 17th century. In particular, these dogmas and other Roman Catholic Church's teachings have been based on the writings of Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas Aquinas. Saint Augustine (354-430), who became bishop of Hippo (now Annaba, Algeria) in 395, made use of Platonic philosophy and taught that “in the search for truth people must depend upon sense or a priori experience.” This he applied to assert the “existence of God prior to all creation.” This thinking was his basis of writing his treatises *On Free Will* (388-395); *On Christian Doctrine* (397); *The City of God* (413-426), a theological philosophy of history in which human history is presented as a struggle between the forces of good and evil; and *On the Trinity* (400-416). On the part of Saint Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), he taught and insisted that the truths of faith and those of sense experience, as taught by Aristotle (384-322 BC) and by Saint Augustine, are fully compatible and complementary; but

some truths can be known only through revelation which is needed to reach the highest truths such as on God, angels, heaven and other spiritual matters.

His thoughts were the basis of his *Summa Theologica* written in 1265-1273 with three parts (*On God, On the Moral Life, and On Christ*). And Saint Thomas Aquinas’ Scholastic theological-philosophical writings, founded on natural human reason and natural law, were the basis of Pope Leo XIII’s Encyclical Letter *Aeterni Patris (Of the Eternal Father, 1879)* and his Encyclical Letter *Rerum Novarum (On New Things, 1891)*; and of the other popes’, especially the social encyclicals of Pope Pius XI (1922-1939), Pope Pius XII (1939-1958), Pope John XXIII (1958-1963), Pope Paul VI (1963-1978) and Pope John Paul II (1978-2005).

Thus during the past millennia, these social principles, teachings and policies of the Church, the Roman Catholic Church in particular, were developed neither as pre-conceived beliefs and *a priori* views from a social vacuum, nor as abstract spiritual allegories divorced from historical events. These, of course, were fostered by popes and well-known Catholic philosophers and theologians whose thoughts and ideas were shaped within the context of social events, concrete realities, situations, milieus and developments of peoples in their actual historical stages.

Through the social sciences (such as anthropology, sociology, political science, economics, law, psychology, criminology) that have advanced and explained scientifically the origin and development of human society, five historical stages have been acknowledged as the universal timeline of the history of the human race wherein the primitive communal life was the **earliest stage** of the development of humankind; but this stopped little by little upon the emergence of private property. Through the full-blown development of private property, the **second stage**, the epoch of slavery, was established by kings and other slave owners who continued the system of slavery up to the periods of feudalism and even capitalism. However, the continuous rebellions of slaves hastened the collapse of slavery that resulted in the abolition of slavery as a social crime against humanity. Upon the downfall of slavery, the **third historical stage**, the era of feudalism, began to develop through private landownership of vast tracts of land by few big landlords who put up the blooming feudal societies and dynasties in many parts of the world, and in particular the feudal-monarchical

kingdoms in Europe. During this period in Europe, there already existed the great cooperation between the Roman Catholic Church and the feudal states, between popes and kings/emperors. This kind of feudal-monarchical rule was demonstrated during the period of the Inquisition, a judicial institution established by the papacy in the Middle Ages (AD 350 to the 1450 in European history) to seek out, try to sentence persons guilty of heresy. Those guilty were excommunicated.

The nastiest feudal acts of the Inquisition happened in 1252 when Pope Innocent IV officially sanctioned the use of torture to extract the truth from suspects, a procedure alien to the Christian tradition. The great cooperation between the popes and the emperors was also exemplified during the Christian Crusades from 1096 to the late 13th century, which were wars of the Christian Europe against Muslims and pagans in order to expand the European feudal-monarchical states to various countries.

Note: It was also during the height of feudalism in Europe when Martin Luther, a Catholic Augustinian monk wrote in 1517 his *Ninety-Five Theses*, that started the Reformation Period and Protestantism. Luther attacked the indiscriminate sale of indulgences (i.e., giving of financial aid to the “St. Peter’s pence” to support the papal state and finance the construction of Saint Peter’s Basilica with the belief that such financial support would fully or partially remit before God temporal punishment for sins to be forgiven). But during the Peasants’ War in Germany from 1524 to 1526, Luther angrily denounced the violence of the peasants; and he fully supported the princes to restore the feudal-monarchical order.

Thus, the feudalism, which was fully developed in Europe, flourished rapidly to other parts of the world through colonialism by means of armed invasions. Clearly, what really happened was that Catholicism and Christianity became a tool of colonialist powers, like what the Spaniards did in the Philippines for more than 300 years since 1521; but Spanish colonialism was replaced by US imperialism that forcibly snatched the victory of the Filipino people in the 1896 Philippine revolution against the Spanish colonialists.

With the development and spread of feudalism was at the same time the period of the growth of the process of accumulation and the concentration of monetary wealth in the hands of the thriving capitalists who formed themselves as the bourgeoisie. These blossoming bourgeoisie

wanted to get rid of feudalism because they were restricted by the feudal empires and were prevented from assuming a dominating role in the existing feudal kingdoms. By this time, the Peasants’ War, that started in Germany, spread to other countries of Europe such as Austria, and the like. The peasantry and the lower classes rose up against the feudal overlords, the nobles and clergy who subjected the peasant population to growing economic exploitation, and religious and judicial oppression. The peasants and lower classes wanted the abolition of serfdom and the many kinds of feudal dues. The Peasants’ War was successful in some areas in Germany wherein, after overthrowing a feudal rule, a community of peasants was maintained for only a short time in which all properties were commonly owned. However, the ferocious oppositions of the peasantry and lower classes, that rapidly reached many countries of Europe, were actually enhanced, maximized and directed by the thriving bourgeoisie who had accumulated much financial wealth at this stage. The peasants’ violent oppositions, amplified and guided by the prosperous bourgeoisie, steered the collapse of feudalism and resulted in the establishment of the **fourth historical stage**, that of capitalism. Thus, the feudal economies were transformed radically into capitalist ones. Nonetheless, the historical development of human society did not end in capitalism. Rather, capitalism gave birth to the **fifth historical stage**, the period of socialism, through the revolutionary mass movement of workers who were armed with scientific socialism, developed by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.

Such were the historical reasons and overall contexts why the Catholic Church hierarchy, the Catholic thinkers and their worldviews sided with the landed aristocracy during the establishment and height of feudalism, and later identified themselves with the bourgeois and capitalist class when feudalism was overturned by capitalism. As explained briefly and in passing in the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, it was during the reign of Pope Leo XIII that the so-called Industrial Revolution began in Britain in the 18th century and spread to France, Germany, Belgium, Italy and other European countries. The Industrial Revolution extensively replaced manual labor with machines. However, though superior to the socio-economic system of feudalism, capitalism was unjust and meant the exploitation and oppression of the laboring masses. It exploited workers, degraded them, transformed them into beasts or machines. Cap-

italism enabled the rich to get richer; while the workers faced misery. And the bourgeois states defended the capitalist system and policies of private and individual ownership of the means of production and all kinds of private rights at the expense of the welfare of society as a whole, whose majority population were the propertyless workers living in poverty and working in a profound inequality. The workers daily experienced the control over the economic development of society by the capitalists who appropriated for themselves not simply wealth but also political power. The capitalists became the rulers and controllers of the bourgeois states which they themselves established.

Thus, inspired and motivated by the *Communist Manifesto*, written by Karl Marx in collaboration with Friedrich Engels, and published in London, England in 1848, countless numbers of the working class and other poor people joined the revolutionary mass movement that aspired to overthrow the capitalist system and the bourgeois states for the establishment of a socialist state with a socialist economic system for a common ownership of the means of production. Such revolutionary mass movement by the working class led to the formation of the Paris Commune in 1871. Though the Paris Commune was short-lived due to the mass slaughter of the industrial workers by the French bourgeois government troops, the revolutionary working class movement all the more spread to other European countries like Russia.

The rapid rise of the revolutionary working class movement to overthrow the capitalist system and the bourgeois states in many countries of Europe meant that the Roman Catholic Church lost membership among the working class. This forced Pope Leo XIII to write the Encyclical Letter *Rerum Novarum* (*On New Things*, 1891), twenty years after the short-lived Paris Commune. While Pope Leo XIII earned the title of “the workers’ pope” due to his exposition of the abuses of capitalism and his advocacy of just wages and trade unions, he, nevertheless, excluded Marxism, socialism and Communism as a correct remedy to the social ills of the working class. Instead, the *Compendium* explains that Pope Leo XIII expounded

the Catholic doctrine on work, the right to property, the principle of collaboration instead of class struggle as the fundamental means for social change, the rights of the weak, the

dignity of the poor and the obligations of the rich, the perfecting of justice through charity, on the right to form professional associations.⁷

Nevertheless after 130 years (1891 to 2021) since the reign of Pope Leo XIII, the social ills of the workers due to the system of capitalism have not been resolved and the industrial workers of the world today continue to suffer “in inhumane misery” because all the Catholic Church’s teachings (e.g. the principle of collaboration between the capitalists and the workers, etc.), expounded on in *Rerum Novarum* (*On New Things*, 1891), have been rejected totally, not in word but in concrete practice, by the system of monopoly capitalism that carries on the exploitation and oppression of the working class in the global economy, politics and culture, which is being dominated today solely by imperialism, especially led by US imperialism.

Atheism As a Plain Justification of the Christian Churches’ Partiality for Capitalism

Moreover, Pope Leo XIII made papal condemnation of the *Communist Manifesto*, not mainly because of its atheistic orientation but primarily due to the fact that the Roman Catholic Church from that time onward was already deeply imbedded in the capitalist system under the feudal-bourgeois states in Europe. Pope Leo XIII brought out other denunciations of a whole range of modern ideas which he considered objectionable by the Catholic Church, like his stands against freedom of the press, conscience and worship, and against the separation of Church and state. Pope Leo XIII was strong in favor of the traditional doctrine of the Christian state (*sic* Catholic state which began in 313 AD during the reign of Constantine the Great, the first Roman ruler from 306 to 337 who was converted to Christianity and the founder of Constantinople, now Istanbul, Turkey) as an ideal state in human society. This traditional doctrine resulted to the political recognition of the Vatican City as an independent state within Rome, Italy, that had been reigned in the past and is being ruled up to the present day by the pope as hereditary chief of state, administering the Vatican City as a monarchical-papal state, the world headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church, the smallest country (only 44 hectares) in the

⁷ *Compendium*, p. 45.

world today, and one of the members of the United Nations (UN) with a permanent observer status. [And take note that though Christianity and the Roman Catholic Church became a state religion/church in 313 AD; yet no pope had ever made a social encyclical denouncing slavery and feudalism as evil. It was only after 1,578 years (from 313 to 1891) of its existence as a state religion/church that the first social Encyclical Letter *Rerum Novarum* was formulated and issued by Pope Leo XIII in 1891 because of the enormous and uncontrollable social pressure from the revolutionary mass movement of the working class.]

Nonetheless, Pope Leo XIII's Encyclical Letter *Rerum Novarum* (*On New Things*, 1891) was unable to stop the advance of the revolutionary working class movement for the overthrow of capitalism and the bourgeois states. The victory of the revolution in Russia in 1917 and in China in 1949 led to the establishment of the socialist economy and socialist states in these countries, and later in other nations of Eastern Europe, reaching out to as far as other Asian countries like Korea and Vietnam, and even up to Latin American nations such as Cuba and the like.

And forty years after Pope Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum* (*On New Things*, 1891), Pope Pius XI, commemorating the 40th anniversary of Pope Leo XIII's encyclical letter, published his Encyclical Letter *Quadragesimo Anno* (*On the 40th Year*, 1931). As the *Compendium* puts it, this encyclical letter expresses Pope Pius XI's view of the need for "arriving at a new social order." But as a whole, Pope Pius XI's encyclical letter favors in the main the system of capitalism. As the *Compendium* puts it in Chapter Two on "The Church's Mission and Social Doctrine," Pope Pius XI's "Encyclical rejects liberalism, understood as unlimited competition between economic forces" in the capitalist free-market system. The *Compendium* makes it clear the call of Pope Pius XI's encyclical letter that the "unlimited competition" in the free-market economy of capitalism could be regulated by means of the "principle of subsidiarity" and "cooperation" between the capitalists and the toiling masses of workers. To quote the *Compendium*: "The relationships between capital and labor must be characterized by cooperation... The State, in its relations with the private sector, should apply the principle of subsidiarity, a principle that will become a permanent element of the Church's social doc-

trine.”⁸ Nonetheless in the history of the working class movement, there has never been a genuine cooperation between labor and capital that has favored the working class; and the principle of subsidiarity has never been applied in the relationship between the capitalists and workers because of the exploitative and oppressive nature of capitalism through superprofits and unlimited competition in the free-market economy of the capitalist system.

The Roman Catholic Church’s one-sided preference of capitalism is more defined by Pope Pius XI in his Encyclical Letter *Divini Redemptoris* (*On Divine Redemption*, 1937). By directly attacking communism, he has confirmed his and the Catholic Church’s partiality of the system of capitalism. This encyclical letter, the *Compendium* explains, is a “*systematic criticism of communism*,” describing it as “*intrinsically perverse*,” perpetuating evil, and instructs the Catholic Christians that “*the principal means for correcting evils perpetrated by it could be found in the renewal of Christian life, the practice of evangelical charity, the fulfillment of the duties of justice at both the interpersonal and social levels in relation to the common good, and the institutionalization of professional and interprofessional groups*.”⁹ In this encyclical, the professional and business classes are called to work together in a special way for the attainment of the common good.” Of course, scientific analysis would show that because the Catholic Church’s teachings are deeply rooted in the bourgeois ideas of capitalism, the Catholic Church hierarchy still lacks the ability to recognize that the exploitation and oppression of the capitalist system vis-à-vis the billions of toiling masses around the globe today is in itself evil. And because the Catholic Church’s doctrine as a whole is profoundly entrenched in the ideology of capitalism and the bourgeoisie, the Catholic Church leaders have yet to discern that the common good of the people can be attained through the socialist economic systems and socialist political structures which are based on the socialist principles of the collective ownership of the means of production wherein businesses are collectively owned and managed by a socialist state with the direct and democratic participation of the toiling masses for the good of society as a whole. Thus, CNL’s question is: Would these basic socialist principles be considered as “*intrinsically perverse*” that perpetuate evils? From the point

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 46-47.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

of view of the billions of poor and toiling masses around the world, such basic socialist principles do not perpetuate evils in the economic, political, and cultural fields. In fact, the poor and toiling masses consider these socialist principles as their true guidelines to liberate themselves from the greed, exploitation, and oppression of monopoly capitalism.

Due to his Encyclical Letter *Divini Redemptoris* (*On Divine Redemption*, 1937), historians inside and outside of Vatican City have considered Pope Pius XI as “*the most outspoken enemy of communism.*” In this regard, CNL collectives wish to raise two crucial questions, which have to be answered. **First**, what were the evils that were perpetuated by communism before 1937 or in 1937 that might have led Pope Pius XI to issue his encyclical letter and his anti-communist verdict that defined communism as “*intrinsically perverse*” that perpetuates evils? **Second**, during his 17 years as pope from 1922 to 1939, what were the significant events that made Pope Pius XI “*the most outspoken enemy of communism*”?

As regard the answers to the **first** question posed above, CNL collectives have page by page read the *Compendium*, but have not found any “*evil*” that is directly associated by the encyclical letters to communism or socialism or Marxism. But in their research, CNL collectives have found out—though this would still be expounded on below—that Pope Pius XI signed in 1933 a concordant with Adolf Hitler, the head of the National Socialist German Workers’ Party (Nazi Party), who ruled Germany as a dictator from 1925 to 1945. However, the evil fascist acts were not done by the communists in Germany who, in fact, opposed Hitler’s fascism and his National Socialist German Workers’ Party (Nazi Party). Hitler made use of the term “*socialist*” just to dupe the Germans and get the support of the German toiling masses. In reality, it was not due to scientific socialism what the German dictator did; the exploitation, oppression, imperialist war, the Warsaw Ghetto, the Holocaust, genocide and other countless deaths were brought about by the Nazi fascists to Germany, the Jews and peoples of Europe and the world.

As background to the **second** question about the significant events that made Pope Pius XI “*the most outspoken enemy of communism,*” it was on December 1922 when Vladimir Ilich Lenin founded the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), five years after the victorious Russian revolution of 1917. And when Lenin died on January 1924 due to a fourth

and fatal stroke, Joseph Stalin took over as general secretary of the Community Party of the USSR. And since the establishment of the USSR in 1922, the influence of the Communist movement spread all over Europe; such that labor unions in countries like Italy, Germany, Spain, France, and other European nations were established and led by communists. It was exactly during this period that Pope Pius XI manifested himself as “*the most outspoken enemy of communism*” because he publicly opposed the communist movement particularly in Italy, Germany and Spain by signing agreements with Benito Mussolini, the founder of fascism and dictator of Italy, and Adolf Hitler, the dictator of Germany, and by supporting Francisco Franco, the dictator of Spain, during the Spanish Civil War. Details of these significant events are expounded on in the following paragraphs.

Benito Mussolini, founder of fascism and prime minister and dictator of Italy from 1922 to 1943, centralized political power in Italy and bound the nation to himself. His vast personal power, strong-arm methods, and extreme fascist nationalism made him a model for leaders of like-minded authoritarian movements in the 1920s and 1930s. German dictator Adolf Hitler saw Mussolini as a precursor, and many similarities existed between the Italian fascist and German Nazi movements. Allied with Hitler from 1938 to 1943, Mussolini helped plunge Europe into World War II (1939-1945).

Led by communists in 1920 and 1921, widespread labor strikes, riots over high food prices, and peasant land occupations and tax revolts swept Italy. Taking advantage of the chaos, Mussolini offered eager industrialists and landlords the services of his armed squads of Black Shirts as strikebreakers. Acting with the complicity of the government, his fascist gangs set about destroying communist/socialist groups and left-wing (communist-influenced) Catholic trade unions. In this way, Mussolini operated within parliamentary channels, transforming his movement into the National Fascist Party, getting support from the influential Nationalist movement, business groups and the landlord class, threatening to overthrow the parliamentary government if it sought to suppress his fascist groups, and cracking down on communist/socialist and left-leaning activities. All these brought the National Fascist Party leaders like Mussolini and 35 other fascists into parliament during the 1921 elections.

Exploiting the Great Depression of 1929, Mussolini reached out to the Catholic Church by concluding the Lateran Treaty with Pope Pius XI on February 1929. Under the treaty, Italy recognized the independent sovereignty of the Vatican, paid reparations for the loss of autonomy the Vatican suffered in the 19th century, and made Roman Catholicism the official state religion. The once-anticlerical dictator thereby broke with the western liberal tendency to separate church and state. In turn, the Catholic Church supported Mussolini's regime. Pope Pius XI and the Catholic hierarchy were especially enthusiastic about Mussolini's attempts to raise Italian birthrates and his antifeminist acts, including laws that made abortion a heavily punishable crime against the state and regulations discouraging women from working.

Looking back, Pope Pius XI through the Lateran Treaty made the Roman Catholic Church a defender of fascism, which monopoly capitalists used to resolve the worst economic crisis of their evil system, the Great Depression of 1929, that led to World War II. Thus, the Roman Catholic Church has been used covertly by the monopoly capitalists and their fascist protectors for fifty-five years from 1929 to 1984. For it was only in 1984 that a revised treaty was signed that ended the status of Roman Catholicism as the state-supported religion of Italy.

Another significant event of Pope Pius XI was his concordat with Adolf Hitler, who was already the dictator of Germany starting in 1930. Hitler learned a lot from Mussolini's fascism. On December 1924, Hitler strengthened his National Socialist German Workers' Party (Nazi Party) and waited for the prospect to regain national influence. Like Mussolini, Hitler made use of the Great Depression of 1929. Addressing the 13,000,000 Germans, he promised jobs to the unemployed and a return to national prosperity. Thus, the elections of 1930 restored him to power. Hitler was appointed as Chancellor; and he immediately established himself as the dictator of Germany. He institutionalized terror under the Third Reich, his Nazi regime in Germany from 1930 to 1945.

It was in 1933 when Pope Pius XI signed a concordat with Adolf Hitler with the papal aim to protect the rights of the Catholic Church in Germany under the Third Reich. The pope did not even bother first to consult the forces, communists, and even Catholic Church leaders in Germany, who were opposed to Hitler. Thus after the signing of the con-

cordat, the opposition forces, within and outside Germany against Hitler, were disarmed and weakened. In actual practice, Hitler never respected the concordat as his Nazi fascist forces massacred millions of the Jewish people, i.e., the Holocaust, during World War II.

Another significant event of Pope Pius XI as “the most outspoken enemy of communism” was his support of Francisco Franco during the Spanish Civil War. Pope Pius XI’s support was maximized by Franco, who rose to power during the Spanish Civil War from 1936 to 1939. And Franco went on to rule Spain as dictator from 1939 to 1975. As a despotic ruler of Spain for nearly 40 years, Franco was an opponent of democracy, a comrade of German Nazi dictator Adolf Hitler and Italian fascist dictator Benito Mussolini during World War II from 1939 to 1945.

As a whole and up to 1938, Pope Pius XI maintained friendly relations with the fascist government of Mussolini and did not retract his concordant with Hitler. He also did not withdraw his support to dictator Franco. Later, the offenses of Mussolini and the Third Reich were repeatedly protested by Pope Pius XI; but such protestations were not heeded by the two dictators and their fascist forces. Pope Pius XI later also issued pleas against anti-Semitism and war. But his oppositions and pleas were very late as the whole European nations were plunged into World War II, which was an inter-imperialist war between imperialist countries that grouped themselves into Axis Powers (Italy, Germany and Japan) and Allied Powers (US, UK, etc.). In 1938, Pope Pius XI asked American Jesuit John LaFarge to write an encyclical, *Humani Generis Unitas (On the Unity of Mankind, 1938)*, condemning fascism, anti-Semitism, and communism. This papal encyclical proclaimed that “Communism is the enemy of the Church;” and it threatened to excommunicate bishops, priests, and sisters who would join the communists. The pope died on February 10, 1939; but the encyclical was not shared to his successor, Pope Pius XII. The encyclical disappeared and its existence remained a mystery until the early 1990s, when a microfilm of *Humani Generis Unitas (On the Unity of Mankind, 1938)* was discovered in Father LaFarge’s archives. The document was published in France in 1995.¹⁰

¹⁰ It was translated and published in English in 1998. See Georges Passelecq, *The Hidden Encyclical of Pius XI*, HarperOne, 1998. —Ed.

The facts above that show Pope Pius XI as “the most outspoken enemy of communism”—through his public opposition against the communist movement that spread particularly in Italy, Germany and Spain by signing agreements with dictators Mussolini and Hitler and supporting dictator Franco—are seemingly hidden by the *Compendium’s* explanations. In Chapter Two which concerns “The Church’s Mission and Social Doctrine,” particularly on “The Church’s Social Doctrine in Our Time: Historical Notes,” the *Compendium* clarifies:

Pope Pius XI did not fail to raise his voice against the totalitarian regimes that were being imposed in Europe during his pontificate. Already on June 29, 1931 he had protested against the abuse of power by the totalitarian fascist regime in Italy with the Encyclical Non Abbino Bisogno. He published the Encyclical Mit Brennender Sorge [With Burning Concern], on the situation of the Catholic Church under the German Reich, on 14 March 1937. The text of Mit Brenender Sorge was read from the pulpit of every Catholic Church in Germany, after having been distributed in the greatest of secrecy.¹¹

The *Compendium’s* clarifications only hide the Catholic Church’s partiality for capitalism—an exploitative and oppressive system that has been globalized in the past millennium by monopoly capitalists who continue up to the present day such monstrous and evil system through fascism and imperialist wars—by condemning communism as an enemy of the Church and Christianity merely due to the atheistic nature of the former which, in fact, is neither exploitative nor oppressive against the billions of toiling masses in the world. And by proclaiming Communism as an enemy of the Church and Christianity, Pope Pius XI made a positive affirmation that Christianity and the Church (*sic Roman Catholic Church*) have been and are being used as a cloak of the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism.

¹¹ *Compendium*, p. 47.

Christian Churches Must Be Vigilant So That the Two Aspects of the Church’s Social Doctrine Would Not Become the Spiritual Cloak for Capitalism.

In short, the above historical contexts and stages of humankind have greatly influenced the Roman Catholic popes, philosophers and theologians to reflect upon and interpret the faith in God and the messages in the Bible according to the concrete settings and conditions of peoples and nations at different historical stages, especially during the stages of the forward movement of feudalism to capitalism, and of capitalism then to socialism. Such **philosophical and theological reflections and interpretations** of the faith in God and of the Biblical messages on the one side, **and the historical and social contexts, processes and epochs** of the human existence and persuasions on the other side have become the **two aspects** upon which the papal encyclical letters as well as the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* have been articulated in the past millennia, which have resulted to the formulation of the present Catholic Church’s social doctrine. This **dual feature or aspect** of the Roman Catholic Church’s social doctrine is actually the whole guiding methodology of the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*.

The **first feature or aspect** of the Roman Catholic Church’s social doctrine—i.e., the theological dimension of the reflections and interpretations of the Magisterium, the teaching authority of the Roman Catholic Church, on the complex realities of human existence at different historical stages on the basis of the Christian faith and biblical messages—is summarized in the quotation from Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus (In the Hundredth Year, 1991)* as a byline of the *Compendium’s* Part One: “The theological dimension is needed both for interpreting and for solving present day problems in human society.”¹²

Said **first feature or aspect** is clearly explained on pages 42 and 44-45 of the *Compendium*. Deliberating on Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis (On Social Concern, 1988)*, the *Compendium* says:

¹² Ibid., p. 11.

The Church does not intervene in technical questions with her social doctrine, nor does she propose or establish systems or models of social organization. This is not part of the mission entrusted to her by Christ. The Church's competence comes from the Gospel: from the message that sets man free, the message proclaimed and borne witness by the Son of God made man.¹³

And since theology is the appropriate locus of the Church's social doctrine and to explain further the theological basis of Pope John Paul's Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (*On Social Concern*, 1988), the *Compendium* further asserts that:

The Church's social doctrine "belongs to the field not of *ideology*, but of *theology* and particularly of moral theology."¹⁴ It cannot be defined according to socio-economic parameters. It is not an ideological or pragmatic system intended to define and generate economic, political and social relationships, but is a *category unto itself*. It is "the accurate formulation of the results of a careful reflection on the complex realities of human existence, in society and in the international order, in the light of faith and of the Church's tradition. Its main aim is to interpret these realities, determining their conformity with or divergence from the lines of the Gospel teaching on man and his vocation, a vocation which is at once earthly and transcendent; its aim is thus to guide Christian behavior."¹⁵

But, Pope John Paul II's thinking of the limiting and dichotomist role of theology, the Catholic Church and the Church's social doctrine—such as

The Church does not intervene in technical questions with her social doctrine... The Church's social doctrine "belongs to the field not of *ideology*, but of *theology* and particularly of

¹³ Ibid., p. 34.

¹⁴ John Paul II, *Encyclical Letter Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 41: AAS 80, 1988, p. 571.

¹⁵ Ibid.

moral theology. It cannot be defined according to socio-economic parameters. It is not an ideological or pragmatic system intended to define and generate economic, political and social relationships...”

—entirely contradicts the spirit of the **Second Vatican Ecumenical Council** (October 1962—December 1965) and its documents especially the Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (1966) which started church reform and movement for change in the modern world and opened the Roman Catholic Church for the advancement of Christian unity and ecumenical movement in order to respond to the problems and struggles of the modern world. Pope John Paul II’s thinking, that limits and dichotomizes the role of theology, the Church and the Church’s social doctrine, is also contrary to Pope John XXIII’s Encyclical Letters *Mater et Magistra* (1961) and *Pacem in Terris* (1963) as well as Pope Paul VI’s Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* (1967) which all emphasize the mission and concern of the Church for humanity to resolve problems like inequality and poverty and bring about worldwide peace and progress of the human race. It was, in fact, Pope John XXIII and Pope Paul VI that convinced, together with the Latin American and African bishops during the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council deliberations, the Roman Catholic Church to mellow down its anti-communist attitude and stop condemning communism. What they did was all for the purpose of strengthening the unity of the human race in order to effectively respond to the problems and struggles of humanity.

As a whole, Pope John Paul II’s *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (*On Social Concern*, 1988) brings out the abuses of capitalist and Communist societies. Nevertheless, this encyclical letter and all other papal encyclical documents show the strong partiality of the Roman Catholic Church in favor of capitalism, as the *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (*On Social Concern*, 1988) declares Pope John Paul II’s conviction that “Christianity, not Communism, is the true protector of the poor and oppressed.”¹⁶ Needless to say, the Christian Churches, the Roman Catholic Church in particular, have yet to show

¹⁶ John Paul II (1920-2005), born Karol Józef Wojtyła, was made a cardinal in June 1967. As cardinal archbishop of Kraków, he worked closely with Poland’s powerful primate cardinal, Stefan Wyszyński, archbishop of Warsaw, who declared that Christianity, not communism, was the true protector of the poor and oppressed.

in concrete terms to all of mankind how they would be able to protect the billions of poor, exploited and oppressed peoples, who compose the majority of the global population, against the onslaughts of monopoly capitalism in both the industrialized countries and the underdeveloped Third World nations.

The deep-seated partiality of the Catholic Church (also true to other Protestant and Orthodox Churches, and the most awful are the fundamentalist and Neo-Pentecostalist Christians in the US who preach about the “Prosperity Gospel”) in favor of capitalism is not because of the atheistic dimension of scientific socialism/communism but is due primarily to the fact that these Christian Churches and fundamentalist Christians have inculcated into their faith, mentality, thinking, preaching, teachings and doctrines the strong influences and the bourgeois-capitalist ideology of imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism, which is also atheistic to its very core. Of course, no capitalists have ever declared their system is atheistic because their imperialist masters, headed by those from the US through the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) forces, utilize religion, including Christianity and the Christian Churches, to attack, distort and denigrate scientific socialism and communism, directly spread the wrong line of modern revisionism, justify their global wars of aggression against countries of the world, and dominate the whole world economically, politically and culturally.

It is then the prayer of CNL that may the Christian Churches be more open-minded to understand that Marx’s maxim, “religion is the opium of the people,” should not be taken literally as to questioning and denying the existence of God or preventing people to believe in the supernatural. Marx’s maxim is neither a negative view of religion. Immediately preceding “religion is the opium of the people” is Marx’s assertion that

Religious distress is at the same time the *expression* of real distress and also the *protest* against real distress. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of spiritless conditions. It is the *opium* of the people.¹⁷

¹⁷ K. Marx, “Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Law” in *Collected Works*, Vol. III, Lawrence & Wishart, 2010, p. 175.

This is Marx’s recognition of religion as an active moral agency, especially for the poor, deprived and oppressed (PDO). For Marx, religion is a protest against real suffering, not illusory sufferings in hell because of original sin, but against the realities of exploitation and degradation in human society. Of course, this means that religion, particularly Christianity, had been used in the history of the human race by exploiters and oppressors, as experienced by peoples during the period of slavery, feudalism and capitalism, and up to the present era of imperialism and proletarian revolution. And there is no denial that Christianity has been used by Christian Churches as a spiritual cloak of exploitative and oppressive systems of slavery, feudalism and capitalism, and is continually being used by imperialism, primarily by US imperialism and the CIA to distort the true history and situation of human societies and hide the truth that the global reality of exploitation and oppression of the billions of poor, deprived and powerless toiling masses is caused by the few monopoly capitalists, the privileged and powerful who control the global economy, the bourgeois states and legal machineries, cultural institutions, the army and police for their selfish interests and greed.

The **second aspect or feature** of the Roman Catholic Church’s social doctrine—i.e., the social dimension wherein the Church’s social doctrine “comes also from human sciences and the social sciences”—has its source from Pope John Paul II’s other Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (*The Hundredth Year*, 1991), which commemorated the 100th anniversary of the *Rerum Novarum* (*On New Things*, 1891). This is lucidly elucidated on pages 46-47 of the *Compendium* with a quotation from *Centesimus Annus* (*The Hundredth Year*, 1991):

In order better to incarnate the one truth about man in different and constantly changing social, economic and political contexts, this teaching enters into dialogue with the various disciplines concerned with man. It assimilates what these disciplines have to contribute.¹⁸

To explain further the **second aspect** of the Roman Catholic Church’s social doctrine, the *Compendium* asserts that

¹⁸ *Compendium*, pp. 37-38.

A significant contribution to the Church's social doctrine comes also from human sciences and the social sciences. In view of that particular part of the truth that it may reveal, no branch of knowledge is excluded. The Church recognizes and receives everything that contributes to the understanding of man in the ever broader, more fluid and more complex network of his social relationships. She is aware of the fact that a profound understanding of man does not come from theology alone, without the contribution of many branches of knowledge to which theology itself refers.¹⁹

On the basis of this same **second dimension**, Pope John Paul II founded the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences in 1994. And in the *Motu Proprio (Papal Decree)* of establishing the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, Pope John Paul II declares:

Social science research can effectively contribute to improving human relations, as has been shown by the progress achieved in various sectors of society especially during the century now drawing to a close. This is why the Church, ever concerned for man's true good, has turned with growing interest to this field of scientific research in order to obtain concrete information for fulfilling the duties of her Magisterium.²⁰

It is the aforementioned **second aspect** of the Roman Catholic Church's social doctrine which CNL upholds as the basis of its sincere advice that the Christian Churches must be very vigilant so that the aspects of the Church's social doctrine would not be used as a spiritual cloak for monopoly capitalism. The Christian Churches must use "*scientific research*" so as not to be deceived by imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism, most especially by US imperialism. In world history, the Christian Churches' anti-communist standpoint, coupled with the anti-communist position of imperialism, has strengthened and continually reinforces the global dominance of US imperialism since 1991 when capitalism was peacefully restored by the Russian modern revisionists in

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 38.

²⁰ Ibid.

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the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), which shall still be clarified below.

In the context of Philippine history, Christian Churches must continue to be aware that, since after World War II (the inter-imperialist war) and up to the present day, US imperialism has used and continues to employ the CIA as the US imperialism’s clandestine apparatus for its economic, political, cultural and military interventions in the Philippines in order to maintain the Philippines as a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society ruled by US imperialism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism, and to undermine the Philippine National-Democratic Revolution (NDR) for national sovereignty, genuine people’s democracy and socialism. As undercover contraption for US imperialism’s economic, political, cultural and military interventions in the Philippines, the CIA, created by the US Congress in 1947, has established various CIA fronts and conduits such as the Catherwood Foundation, Ford Foundation, Asia Foundation [formerly called Committee for a Free Asia (CFA)], the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), US big business interests (like Coca-Cola, Ford, Citicorp, United Fruit, Nike, etc.), and others. The CIA in the Philippines had been engaged in countless covert operations for intervention and dirty tricks, particularly in the domestic politics of the country.

CIA concealments in the Philippines were diversified, used by CIA operatives assigned in various CIA-created programs and organizations for “*democracy promotion*” such the Freedom Company of the Philippines, Eastern Construction Co. and Operation Brotherhood (which have provided a CIA mechanism to permit the deployment of Filipino personnel in other Asian countries, for unconventional operations covertly supported by the Philippines); the National Movement for Free Elections’ (Namfrel) community centers; the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM) and a rural development project called “Committee for Philippine Action in Development, Reconstruction and Education” (COMPADRE), Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP); the Women’s Movement for the Nurturing of Democracy (KABATID); and the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI). Funds (example, a total of \$9 million from 1984 to 1990) from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for these programs and organizations have been channeled thru NED. In fact, USAID even temporarily set up an agrarian

reform office at TUCP offices. The CIA and the USAID have manipulated the Philippine trade union movement through the Asian-American Free Labor Institute (AAFLI); and the result of this is the TUCP's economic program that is anchored on "the partnership between labor and capital." The CIA and USAID have always wanted the Philippine puppet government to design the agrarian reform program that would not disrupt the agro-export sector, one which could be synchronized with the US counter-insurgency program, and one which could defuse the workers' aspiration for Philippine national industrialization and the peasants' struggle against feudalism for genuine agrarian reform.

More on the cultural field, the CIA and its conduits have used and continue to employ the Christian religion to disrupt and distort the progressive aspect of Christianity and the victory of the Filipino people against Spanish colonialism that made use of Catholicism in order to subjugate the Philippines for more than 300 years. It can even be construed that the CIA backed up financially the Iglesia ni Kristo (INK), founded by Felix Y. Manalo in 1914, which attracted a significant membership and started to build big I.N.K. churches after World War II. The CIA could have done this covertly in order to make the I.N.K. the Filipino opposite church of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente (IFI), founded on August 3, 1902 by Filipino Katipunan revolutionary priest Gregorio Labayan Aglipay with Union Obrera Democratica (UOD) labor leader Isabelo de los Reyes, Sr., popularly known as Don Belong. In fact, the US imperialists were very much displeased when they came to know that Obispo Maximo or Supreme Bishop Aglipay secretly gave support when the Socialist and Communist Parties of the Philippines merged in 1938 and when he expressed interest and enthusiasm in the universal theory of Marxism-Leninism after he read Marxist classics in Spanish sent by his friend, James S. Allen of the Communist Party US, as the bishop said in 1939:

The first one I read has already confirmed me in my convictions about communism and that the salvation of mankind lies only in its hands. I have always declared that we must concentrate all our efforts in making this a better world, without wasting anything in vain delusions about what lies beyond this life. And it gives me a thrill discovering that Lenin, Marx,

Stalin and all the friends of the Proletariat are one with me in this.²¹

The openness of Filipino Christians to struggle for national liberation, as shown by the Filipino Catholic clergy who joined the revolution against Spanish colonialism, and even to Marxism as manifested by Bishop Aglipay in his statement mentioned above, had led US imperialism to continue commissioning the CIA to persist in utilizing the Christian religion to hide the exploitation and oppression of US imperialism in the Philippines. For instance, the CIA initiated the entry of Christian “socialism,” which became the ideological foundation of the Christian Social Movement (CSM) headed by Manglapus and Manahan among pro-US imperialist politicians to counter Filipino nationalist politicians, led by the late Senator Claro M. Recto. Senator C. M. Recto was a staunch anti-US imperialist critic and was believed to have been a victim of the CIA, as he died mysteriously of heart attack, though he had no known heart ailment, in Rome, Italy after an appointment with two Caucasians in business suits in 1958. During the 1960s to the 1970s, the CIA established the Campus Crusaders for Christ (CCC) in various universities and colleges throughout the Philippines; the New Tribes Mission (NTM) stations and the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) centers were formed by the CIA in the mountainous areas of the national minorities throughout the Philippines. And since the 1980s up to the present period, all sorts of CIA-backed charismatic congregations, the Dating Daan of Eli Soriano, the Sonship Kingdom of Pastor Apollo Quiboloy (a megalomaniac and self-appointed Son of God in Davao and a friend of tyrant Duterte; has expropriated Lumad lands; owns Son Shine Radio with 16 transmitters stationed strategically throughout the country, fully supports tyrant Duterte’s Build, Build, Build projects; and actively participates in the surrender campaign of the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict or NTF-ELCAC), “praise the Lord” groups, “Christ to the Orient” and “free believers” have proliferated. And usually, the use of the Bible and Christianity for the CIA-backed evangelists is to attack the mainline Christian Churches that adhere to human rights in Philippine society.

²¹ See James Allen, *The Philippine Left on the Eve of World War II*, 1993, p. 137.

Currently in this 3rd millennium of Christianity, the newest “church,” that may have been introduced by the CIA in the Philippines, is the “Christ the Way of Salvation: Divine Covenant International Church.” It projects itself as a global church and claims to have many congregations of worshipers in the US, Spain, the Philippines, and other countries. Based on the findings of the CNL research team, this newest “international Church” has worshipping centers in various places in the Philippines such as in Manabo and Pilar, Abra; Nueva Era, Ilocos Norte; Rosales, Pangasinan; Romblon; and other areas of the country. This “*International church*” sees itself as very different from the mainline Christian Churches (RC, UCCP, IFI, UMC, ECP, LCP), though almost all its members come from the mainline Christian Churches.

Some may question the veracity if the “*Christ the Way of Salvation: Divine Covenant International Church*” is, indeed, a CIA-created and -inspired one. For one thing, the CIA makes use of various international fronts and conduits to conceal its mission to maintain US imperialist global hegemony. But one may conclude that it may have been established by the CIA: **first**, when such a Christian church is “*international*” in scope and is very well-funded; **second**, though biblically based, a so-called “*International Church*” limits itself to only a few New Testament passages and does not mention the prophets of the Old Testament and the various denunciations by Jesus Christ addressed to the rich and powerful; **third**, it does not recognize as “apostolic” the traditions of the mainline Christian Churches (particularly the Roman Catholic and Orthodox in other countries); **fourth**, it considers itself as very different from the mainline Christian churches and does not worry itself about ecumenical concerns; **fifth**, it does not bother itself as regards the global problems of wars, poverty and inequalities among peoples and nations; and, **sixth**, it merely stresses spiritual conversion and salvation of individual persons. One example of this is defined and found in *The Way of Salvation*. It states:

There are differences within Christian churches that have created various denominations... These denominations have differences regarding their beliefs in God and salvation... [But] the church that preaches the true gospel today is the true one that continues the teachings of Jesus Christ and the apostles...

There are three integral phases in the complete Christian conversion and salvation...: (1) Confess Jesus As Lord; (2) Receive the Life of Christ... by accepting the **three sacraments**: baptism, **footwashing** [CNL], and Holy Communion; [and] (3) Live by the Spirit.

Some Church leaders and CNL cadres in Northern Luzon, Philippines even suspect that CIA elements may also be using the International Criminal Police Organization or Interpol in order to spy on the activities of the progressive Church people. The basis of this is the fact that the CNL research team found out in 2019 that some ordained priests and ministers in Northern Luzon were issued Interpol badges at ₱500 per badge. One priest was, in fact, given an Interpol badge, ranking him as a brigadier general! Those given Interpol badges were told to submit regularly their findings on people involved in various criminalities, including those engaged in the communist insurgency. Such suspicion by some Church leaders and CNL cadres may have been based on the fact that even the United Nations’ Security Council is under the direct control of US imperialism and other imperialist powers. Therefore, it is easy to assume the great possibility that the CIA forces currently at work in the Philippines are already using the Interpol in order to spy on the CNL, even though the Interpol clearly states in its international policy that it “is strictly non-political and is forbidden to undertake any activities of a religious, racial, or military nature; and only government-approved police bodies may hold Interpol membership.”²²

It must, therefore, be very clear to all Christians—the ordained, the religious, the laity—that US imperialism and the CIA provocateurs go on using the Christian religion and the anti-communist propaganda to thwart the participation of Christians—the ordained, the religious and the laity—in the Philippine NDR which has a socialist perspective. And although it would be expounded on in the CNL’s 8th topic, *CNL’s Concluding Remarks: God’s Kingdom as the Reign of Truth, Justice, Peace, Love, Equality and Liberation*, all CNL members further pray that all Filipino Christians relegate the Church’s more than two-century old partiality to capitalism, be open to dialogue with Marxists, and be inspired by Pope Francis who said in his

²² <https://www.interpol.int/en/Who-we-are/Legal-framework/Legal-documents>

November 11, 2016 interview at the Vatican City: “*It’s the communists who think like Christians.*”

Rise of Modern Revisionism for the Restoration of Capitalism in Socialist Societies

Going back to the Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (*The Hundredth Year*, 1991), while Pope John Paul II articulates the “need to reconcile capitalism with social justice” and the importance of the “principle of solidarity as the Christian view of social and political organization,” the basic undercurrent of the whole encyclical letter is the Catholic Church’s bias for capitalism, as the *Compendium* states that *Centesimus Annus* (*The Hundredth Year*, 1991) is:

The articulate and in-depth analysis of the “new things,” and particularly of the great breakthrough of 1989 with the collapse of the Soviet system, shows appreciation for democracy and the free economy, in the context of an indispensable solidarity.²³

Many political analysts observe that this particular social encyclical is actually a proclamation of Pope John Paul II that, after 100 years since the time of Pope Leo XIII’s Encyclical Letter *Rerum Novarum* (*On New Things*, 1891), the papacy has achieved final victory in its “opposition to Marxism, socialism and communism which collapsed when the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) was dissolved on December 1991.” For the Vatican City, the monarchical-papal state, the dissolution of the USSR was a victory “for democracy and the free economy”²⁴ in the market system of capitalism. In line with this, President George Bush of US imperialism made a speech, which was broadcasted on Christmas Day in 1991, just before the complete disintegration of the modern revisionist Gorbachev Regime (1985-1991), saying:

For over 40 years, the United States led the West in the struggle against communism and the threat it posed to our most precious values.... During these last few months, you

²³ *Compendium*, pp. 53-54

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

and I have witnessed one of the greatest dramas of the 20th century—the historic and revolutionary transformation of a totalitarian dictatorship, the Soviet Union, and the liberation of its peoples.²⁵

To understand better the context of the statement that after 100 years the papacy has won final victory in its “opposition to Marxism, socialism and communism which collapsed when the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) was dissolved on December 1991” and before answering the question if this was really true, it is necessary first to present a general background on who is Pope John Paul II, especially because his encyclical and apostolic letters, besides the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and the documents of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, are the main references of the book, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*.

On October 16, 1978, after the very brief reign of Pope John Paul I, Polish Cardinal Karol Wojtyła was elected pope, taking the name John Paul II. He was enthroned as the 264th pope on October 22, 1978. His election as the first non-Italian pope in 455 years symbolized the “globalization” of the Roman Catholic Church’s central administration.

Openly and secretly from 1979 to 1989, Pope John Paul II gave strong support to the Solidarity, an anti-communist labor union in Poland, led by Lech Wałęsa. The pope’s strong support to the anti-communist labor union is openly articulated in his Apostolic Letter *Slavorum Apostoli* (*Apostles of Slavs*, 1985). Moreover, Solidarity, backed by the powerful Roman Catholic Church in Poland, was strengthened by Pope John Paul II’s visits in 1983 and 1987. And prompted by the industrial unrest of the Polish toiling masses in 1988, the Polish modern revisionist regime that masqueraded as Communist and Wałęsa’s anti-communist Civic Committee negotiated an agreement in early 1989 which led to the “fall of communism in Poland.” After which, Poland’s rapid transition to a free-market economy and private ownership of the Polish government’s enterprises accelerated the deregulation and privatization of all state-owned industries and the decentralization of government power. Hence, Vatican City analysts were

²⁵ <https://www.nytimes.com/1991/12/26/world/end-soviet-union-text-bush-s-address-nation-gorbachev-s-resignation.html>

one with the conclusion that Pope John Paul II's staunch support to Solidarity "finally led to the downfall of Communist governments in Poland and across Eastern Europe in 1989" and the "total collapse of socialism in the USSR in 1991."

Nevertheless, the present day Filipino revolutionaries, including CNL cadres and activists, are united in the analysis that what collapsed in the USSR and in eastern European countries like Poland was not socialism nor communism but the various modern revisionist regimes that controlled the Communist Parties for 37 years from 1954 to 1991. On the other hand, what is true is that scientific socialism in the USSR fully functioned for 36 years from 1917 to 1953 (time of Vladimir Lenin and continued by Joseph Stalin) that led to the fast development of the USSR that benefited the toiling masses, specially the workers, peasants, national minorities and other democratic sectors—economically, politically and culturally. But after the death of Stalin in 1953, the modern revisionist leaders of the USSR—Khrushchev Regime (1954-1964), Brezhnev Regime (1964-1985) and finally Gorbachev Regime (1985-1991), including President Nikolay V. Podgorny of the Soviet Union and President Tito of Yugoslavia—systematically revised the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism by denying the continuing existence of the exploiting classes, class struggle, and the proletarian character of the party and the state in socialist society. They proceeded to destroy the proletarian party and the socialist state from within. They masqueraded themselves as "communists" even though they gave up the Marxist-Leninist principles. They attacked Stalin and called him a dictator in order to replace the principles of Lenin with the discredited fallacies of Stalin's "social democratic" (sic modern revisionist) opponents who hideously claimed to make a "creative application" of Marxism-Leninism. Henceforth, the truth is that the modern revisionists were the ones who restored capitalism in the former socialist republics. They became the new bureaucrat capitalists in the ruling Communist Parties in the USSR and other eastern European nations. But because of the massive social discontent and unrest of the toiling masses, the modern revisionists, turned bureaucrat capitalists, were forced to unmask themselves by dissolving finally the USSR and the Communist parties. Then, the modern revisionists in the former USSR and the imperialists, led by those from the US, proclaimed in chorus that Marxism-Leninism, socialism and com-

munism collapsed in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe. But what, in fact, happened was the gradual and peaceful return of capitalism in the former socialist states that began in 1954 during the modern revisionist Khrushchev Regime; and social imperialist Gorbachev continued during his regime the restoration of capitalism in the former USSR, which he fully disintegrated in 1991.

To summarize, the modern revisionist regimes that controlled the USSR after the death of Stalin for 37 years from 1954 to 1991 were no longer socialists/communists but had become “social imperialists,” the term Mao Zedong used to describe them, who wanted to rival US imperialism in dominating the world through the Cold War which was created by the contradiction among the imperialists themselves in their struggle for the redivision of the world. Thus, the modern revisionists within the former USSR were no longer fighting for and with the toiling masses of the world against imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism, but promoted the Cold War, an inter-imperialist war for world domination. And it was under No. 1 modern revisionist Mikhail Gorbachev, when he formally dissolved the former USSR in 1991, that the Cold War ended, making US imperialism and its imperialist allies as the sole global power that continue to rule and dominate the toiling masses and the peoples of the whole world. Meaning, the termination of the former USSR under the modern revisionist Gorbachev Regime in 1991 was also the start of the imposition by imperialism, primarily led by US imperialism, of the capitalist globalization to the former USSR, whose former socialist states were then forced to discontinue their socialist economic systems and socialist political structures by following the globalization policies of monopoly capitalism, namely, that of liberalization, deregulation and privatization.

As to Pope John Paul II’s ideological line of the “need to reconcile capitalism with social justice,”²⁶ Filipino revolutionaries nowadays, including CNL cadres and activists, would like to question this as illogical for how can there be genuine social justice in capitalism that exploits and oppresses the toiling masses. Furthermore, Filipino revolutionaries declare that US imperialist President George Bush has lied to the whole world and has entirely misrepresented the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist moral prin-

²⁶ See John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, 1991.

ciples when he broadcasted that what happened in the USSR in 1991 was “the historic and revolutionary transformation of a totalitarian dictatorship, the Soviet Union, and the liberation of its peoples.” US imperialism wants to conceal and erase the fact that, when socialism was fully at work in the USSR for *36 years* from 1917 to 1953 (Lenin—1917-1923, Stalin—1924-1953), there were great socialist achievements, especially due to Stalin’s leadership, such as:

1. the socialist construction;
2. the defense of the Soviet Union against imperialism, especially during World War II from 1939 to 1945;
3. the strong support of the USSR as a member of the Allied forces against Japan and Germany during the Second World War;
4. the high rate of growth of the entire Soviet socialist economy in the industrial and agricultural businesses that were collectively owned and managed by the socialist states with the active participation of the socialist states’ forces, especially the workers, peasants and the democratic classes from the intelligentsia;
5. the social guarantees for all in education, health and other social services of the socialist states for the entire socialist societies;
6. the socialist support for national liberation movements;
7. the treaty of friendship, alliance and mutual assistance among socialist governments, in particular between Stalin and Mao since 1950 (“*war against one would be war against both*”), and strong solidarity with socialist China (that has one-fifth of the world’s population) for China’s industrialization program.

All these positive achievements under socialism, which continued for a considerable period, benefitted all the peoples, especially the workers and peasants, of the USSR’s member socialist nations, and other nations for national liberation and socialist construction. And when socialism was fully at work in the USSR for *36 years* from 1917 to 1953, poverty, inflation, unemployment and other social ills—which were and are the continuing social problems in monopoly capitalism—had never been experienced by the masses in the former socialist states.

However, these positive socialist achievements were little by little discontinued by the modern revisionist regimes after the death of Stalin for

37 years, which started in 1954 until 1991 when capitalism was restored in the former Soviet socialist states. Of course, there were weaknesses of Stalin; but these were exaggerated by the modern revisionist regimes that started the peaceful restoration of capitalism in the Soviet Union and eastern Europe by means of:

1. bureaucratism that little by little destroyed the people’s democracies and ended the democratic participation of the toiling masses of workers and peasants and the socialist intelligentsia;
2. privatization of the publicly owned means of production, denationalization of the nationalized industries, and elimination of the collectivized farms which were given to private owners;
3. the division of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) into parallel industrial and agricultural hierarchies which were all headed by the modern revisionist leaders and bureaucrat capitalists;
4. the rapid acceptance and establishment of the capitalist-oriented free-market economy; and
5. the overzealous arms race during the Cold War which neglected the overall security of the peoples of the world against the assaults of imperialism, especially US imperialism, and the social welfare and guarantees of the Soviet Union population, especially the proletariat, peasants and the intelligentsia.

All the above processes for the peaceful restoration of capitalism in the former USSR were fully and are still being supported financially by the UN’s World Bank (WB or International Bank for Reconstruction and Development) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), that have pressured and continue to compel socialist-oriented leaders to give in for the full implementation of mass privatization and the rapid establishment of the capitalist free-market economy in nations of the former USSR.

But what now are the effects of the restoration of capitalism in former USSR that have greatly affected and continue to distress the people, especially the toiling masses of workers and peasants in the former socialist nations? The privatization of the publicly owned means of production, denationalization of the nationalized industries, elimination of the collectivized farm, and establishment of the capitalist free-market economy have caused the severe drop in national outputs of all the former socialist

nations; and these factors are the root causes of the continuing economic and political deteriorations that strongly hit hard the toiling masses and other democratic classes of the people. The particular negative effects of the restoration of capitalism (mass privatization of formerly public-owned and collectively managed means of production and the establishment of the capitalist free-market economy) to the toiling masses (that compose the majority of the population) and to the democratic classes of the intelligentsia are the following, which continue in the former socialist states up to the present day:

First, the wealth and profits that come from the formerly state-owned and collectively managed businesses, enterprises and other facilities are concentrated in the hands of the few private owners. Majority of the few private owners come from the modern revisionists who have enriched themselves when they were in the leadership of the past revisionist regimes. They have become and are the few rich capitalists in the new capitalist societies they have created since 1991. They are the new business oligarchs who control the whole economy. And the most top rich among them have formed large conglomerates by acquiring and establishing other industrial firms.

Second, the new business oligarchs not only control the whole economy but also the whole politics by positioning themselves and their cronies in the government bureaucracies. In fact, through state machineries they have made use of and continue to use authoritarianism to impose the globalization policies of monopoly capitalism, whose programs are those of liberalization, deregulation and privatization so that all the former socialist states would become active actors and promoters of the free-market economy of monopoly capitalism. This is the reason why labor leaders who reject the globalization policies have been and are fired from their work in the privately owned enterprises, without any legal assistance from the state. Thus, numerous workers have to find jobs in the “shadow” or “underground economy.” And usually the business oligarchs, who are private owners of industrial firms, reject state intervention in the economy because this would undermine the capitalist free-market economy. This is one of the reasons why many state rules to “regulate” supposedly the economy are evaded and there are a lot of tax evasions. All of the above are also

the reasons why state bureaucrats enrich themselves through corruption and bribery.

Third, the overall living standards of the toiling masses of workers and peasants were and are still being hit hard by the privatization of the means of production and the establishment of the capitalist free-market economy, which has replaced the socialist economic systems. The cost of living soared and continue to rise as the governments removed and continue to reduce price controls; and the rising inflation, which was unknown when socialism was functioning effectively, had made and continue to cause basic necessities to be unaffordable for the majority of the people. Those most vulnerable to the effects of inflation were and are the toiling masses of workers and peasants; and their hardship and suffering was and is worsened by the frequent delays of paying wages. Thus, the majority of the population had and remains to have a living standard below the officially defined poverty line, except those who live in states that have continued the socialist economic systems and the socialist structures in politics.

Fourth, the three aforementioned negative effects have caused and remain to be the root causes of the tremendous increase in economic inequality and the continuing disregard of people’s freedoms, basic human rights and democracy. The economic exploitation and the political oppression by the new capitalist oligarchs and the new bureaucratic capitalists have led to the spread and the worsening of impoverishment of the toiling masses, and have resulted to inequality and the widening gap between the few rich and the many poor workers and peasants who compose the majority of the population.

Fifth, the social problem of the continuing unemployment, which has never been experienced when the economic systems and the political structures of socialism were still in place, is one of the particular negative effects of the restoration of capitalism in the former USSR. However, the rate of unemployment in states that have fully implemented privatization and the establishment of the capitalist free-market economy is very high, with the exception of Azerbaijan, whose unemployment rate is still low.

Of the 12 independent republics that were under the former USSR and have formed themselves as the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) in 1991 with a total population of 277,841,036 in 2008 and a total number of 136,898,308 workers in 2006, the four republics of Belarus,

Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and Ukraine have retained the economic and political legacies of socialism in varying degrees up to the present day. The Republic of Belarus has continued the state ownership of the means of production. The republic has a centrally planned economy dominated by state-controlled heavy industry; and the collective and state farms, established during the USSR period, remain the dominant forms of agricultural production in Belarus. Since 1992 the Republic of Belarus is a member of about 50 international organizations, most especially the United Nations (UN) and other UN organizations and specialized agencies like the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Bank (WB), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Thus, since 1992, the Republic of Belarus has been financially aided by the WB and the IMF. But in 1996, the WB and the IMF suspended aid to the Republic of Belarus because of the socialist government's decision to halt privatization reforms. Of course, the suspension was due to the pressure of US imperialism. On the side of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Republic of Turkmenistan, both have retained dominantly the socialist structures and are very cautious to implement privatization and the capitalist free-market economy. As to the Republic of Ukraine, only the agricultural collectives or communes and state farms have still been retained to this day; and all the state-owned industries have been privatized but under the state's strong control. Thus, due to their continuing socialist legacies, the four republics have a relatively low unemployment rate, as shown in the following chart.

CIS Members	Population²⁷	# of workers²⁸	Unemployment rate
Belarus	9,685,768	4,766,704	3 percent (2002)
Uzbekistan	28,268,440	11,631,985	0.4 percent (1997)
Turkmenistan	5,179,571	2,257,462	2 percent (1991)
Ukraine	45,994,287	22,493,030	8.6 percent (2004)
Kyrgyzstan	5,356,869	2,331,179	9.9 percent (2003)

²⁷ Estimations from 2008.

²⁸ Estimations from 2006.

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Kazakhstan	15,340,533	8,121,887	7.8 percent (2006)
Tajikistan	7,211,884	2,199,027	2.7 percent (1997)
Armenia	2,968,586	1,283,107	9.4 percent (2002)
Azerbaijan	8,177,717	4,287,387	1.3 percent (2002)
Moldova	4,324,450	1,860,802	8.1 percent (2004)
Georgia	4,630,841	2,236,809	12.6 percent (2004)
Russia	140,702,090	73,528,949	7.9 percent (2004)

Based on the above data, we can, therefore, say that scientific socialism was not entirely discontinued in the former Soviet socialist republics. What might be needed now is the development of Marxist-Leninist-Maoist cadres who could help in strengthening the materialist viewpoint, the dialectical method and the proletarian standpoint of each of the 12 CIS member republics. The materialist viewpoint, dialectical method and the proletarian standpoint are revolutionary processes, which Mao Zedong fully developed even when modern revisionism was starting in the USSR in 1954. China, through the leadership of Mao, carried out socialist construction that started upon the victory of the Chinese revolution in 1949. Through the guidance and the concrete praxis of Mao’s anti-modern revisionist line and theory of continuing revolution, the establishment of the Chinese socialist economy and the socialist People’s Republic of China (PRC) advanced vigorously to greater heights for **27 years** up to 1976. Also through Mao’s proletarian leadership, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and the PRC maintained strong support for the national liberation movement and socialist revolution of the people of Korea and Vietnam. Nevertheless, like what happened in the USSR, socialism in China was also discontinued after the death of Mao in 1976 when No. 1 modern revisionist and capitalist-roader Deng Xiaoping seized political power by means of a coup d’état in 1977, and when he began to establish capitalism in China, which he called “socialism with Chinese characteristics.”²⁹

Nevertheless and despite the peaceful restoration of capitalism in Russia and eastern European countries and the establishment of capital-

²⁹ Expression coined by Deng Xiaoping in a 1984 article “Building Socialism with a Specifically Chinese Character,” published in the *People’s Daily*, Beijing.

ism in China, the socialist economy and socialist states go on in Asia, particularly in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), even up to Latin American nations like Cuba, Venezuela, Bolivia, and also in the Middle East such as Iran, Syria, and the like. Moreover as already stated above, the economic and political legacies of scientific socialism are still maintained in varying degrees in eastern Europe by the republics of Belarus and Ukraine, and in Central Asia by the republics of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. And the socialist economy and socialist states are still being established in other parts of the world, especially in countries like India, the Philippines and other Third World nations that struggle for national-democratic revolution with a socialist perspective through the leadership of the working class by way of its unwavering alliance with the peasantry.

Thus, human history has not stopped in capitalism; instead, capitalism has ushered humankind to the historical epoch of socialism. And with the continuing global crisis of monopoly capitalism and the ongoing destructive proxy wars of aggression by imperialism, especially by US imperialism in its desperate efforts to preserve the crisis-laden, exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism, many other countries both in the developed and the underdeveloped nations will definitely join the revolution for national liberation, democracy and socialism in order to establish socialist economies and socialist states in many parts of the world in the upcoming generations.

CNL's Contextualized Reinterpretations Towards the Socialist Path

All of the aforementioned points have served as the historical and social contexts of the **dual aspect or feature** of the Roman Catholic Church's social doctrine, particularly the above-mentioned encyclical letters of the papacy. And going back to the *dual aspect or feature* of the Roman Catholic Church's social doctrine, already described in the afore-said paragraphs, this is also the framework of the CNL commentary on the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*. However, the CNL comments shall focus more, as this has already been started above, on the **second feature** of the Roman Catholic Church's social doctrine and its historical context because its **first feature**, which has already been discussed in the above paragraphs, has been comprehensively presented in the

Compendium itself. This is so due to the fact that the CNL does not want to enter into an endless controversy on the level of *ideology* as a body of beliefs, values, principles, morals, ethics and so on. This is also because, on the one hand, the CNL respects all the theological reflections and interpretations in the *Compendium* about the faith in God and the messages and events in the Bible. On the other hand, CNL wants to see how these theological reflections and interpretations about Christian beliefs, values, principles, morals and ethics are being promoted or suppressed in actual practice by social systems and structures of human beings in the context of their society’s economic, political, cultural and even military affairs, and whether or not such theological reflections and interpretations concretely help in the redemption, not only spiritual but also physical and comprehensive, liberation of the billions of the exploited and oppressed population of the world.

Another important reason why the CNL commentary shall give more emphasis on the **second dimension** of the Roman Catholic Church’s social doctrine is because of the overall observation that the analysis and interpretations of the social encyclicals about concrete human realities and problems are actually the offshoots of the **first dimension** of the social doctrine, i.e., its theological reflections and interpretations of the Christian faith and the Biblical events and messages, which **unintentionally** limit any genuine struggle by the toiling masses and other democratic classes for radical change. Based on the **second aspect** of the Roman Catholic Church’s social doctrine, the CNL commentary, therefore, shall make use of the results of scientific research and scientific analysis in order to contextualize and reinterpret the social issues and concerns expounded on in the *Compendium* according to the actual, concrete and contemporary situations, concerns and problems of peoples and nations, in particular according to the Filipino people’s actual conditions here in the Philippines as a semi-colonial and a semi-feudal society, which can motivate the Filipino Christians to follow the path of radical change.

However, the CNL comments on the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* shall also be based on the social teachings of the prophets in the Old Testament, and of Jesus Christ and his Apostles in the New Testament about the Kingdom of God which is the Reign of love, freedom, liberation, justice, equality, peace, and salvation as redemption from greed,

poverty and other evil acts. These social teachings of the prophets and of Jesus Christ, though some Biblical passages on these are already quoted in the *Compendium*, are not well discussed as to their connections and implications on how social issues and problems would be confronted concretely to liberate human societies from social problems towards radical change. Thus, the CNL commentary on the *Compendium* shall focus more on reinterpreting and contextualizing the prophets' and Jesus Christ's teachings and mission—to defend the rights of the poor and needy, declare the favorable year of the Lord for justice and liberty to the captives, set free the exploited and oppressed, criticize the powerful and their status quo that violate the people's rights, build communities where people live in common and share goods according to the need of everyone (Isaiah 61:1-2; Ecclesiastes 7:32-36; Proverbs 31:8-9; Matthew 25:31-36; Mark 7:1-23; Luke 4:16-19; Acts 2:44-45, 4:32-37)—in relation to the concrete situations of people today. These reinterpretations and contextualization are indispensable in order to: (1) recreate among Filipino Christians their faith in God, the meanings of the Biblical messages, Church concepts, theories, principles, including encyclical letters and other papal documents; (2) see the validity and relevance of the Roman Catholic Church's social doctrine in the context of the Filipino people's contemporary state of social affairs; and (3) invigorate the Filipino Christians of today and their upcoming generations for them to find effective solutions to the Filipino people's basic problems, work and struggle for real change, and collectively attain their common good, development and progress in the economic, political, social, and cultural fields for their betterment, happiness, and redemption/salvation towards a much higher and better stage in Philippine society.

Such reinterpretations and contextualization processes shall serve as the overall spirit of this CNL commentary. There are a lot of significant insights in the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, which, if well reinterpreted and recreated in the context of Philippine realities and experiences, can inspire the Filipino people to understand their history, root out the basic problems in Philippine society, and unite on how such basic problems could be resolved in order to bring about genuine and radical change, especially among Christian believers who compose 94 percent of the Philippine population, 84% of which is affiliated to the Roman Catholic Church and 10% to other denominations of the Christian Churches.

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Understandably, CNL comments shall be based on and within the context of the revolutionary analysis of the people’s history and current situations here and now in the Philippines which is presently under the rule of the big landlords and the big comprador bourgeoisie who themselves are the bureaucrat capitalist puppets that make use of fascism against the people to uphold their class selfish interests and adhere to the monopoly capitalist dictates of US imperialism. The CNL commentary shall be substantiated by the past 50-year revolutionary experiences of progressive Christians and Church people in the ongoing National Democratic Revolution (NDR), which has a socialist perspective.

On the basis of the praxis of the Christian faith and revolution in the Philippines, the CNL commentary, consequently, shall grasp the Roman Catholic Church’s social doctrine on the Christian principles and on crucial social issues within the framework and analysis of the Filipino masses’ concrete situations, especially within the context of Christ’s least brethren of workers, the numerous semi-proletariat (urban poor in street-communities and slum areas, vendors, handicraftsmen, carpenters and masons, small photographers, ambulant repairmen and poor fishermen, peddlers and small stallkeepers, provincial dock porters, city market cargadores, shop assistants, apprentices in sweatshops, pedicab drivers, tricycle drivers, jeepney drivers, house servants, restaurant helpers, odd job seekers, janitors, other informal employees, seasonal farm workers, etc.), the peasants, fisherfolk, and the sectors of women, youth and national minorities, especially those who belong to the families of Christ’s least brethren. It shall try to elucidate how vital societal problems, expounded on in the *Compendium*, have affected adversely and continue to have harmful effects on the lives of the Filipino people, what are the root causes of such social problems, and how can these be resolved with the desire of encouraging Filipino Christians, especially those from the intelligentsia (cardinals, bishops, priests, pastors, deacons, deaconesses, brothers, sisters, seminarians, lay leaders in the various Christian organizations, etc.), to practice their faith in God by their active participation in the social transformation of Philippine society for the love, freedom, social justice, lasting peace and the overall common good of the Filipino people in their struggle for national liberation and democracy.

CNL and all its members nationwide pray and would, hence, wish that this commentary be construed neither as attacks nor acts of persecution against Pope Francis and past popes, cardinals, bishops, priests, nuns, seminarians, and the lay Christians of the Catholic Church. In fact, many CNL members, both ordained and lay, are from the Roman Catholic Church, and all CNL members give full respect to the Christian hierarchies of both the Catholic and Protestant and even the Orthodox Churches (in other countries). CNL in this commentary intends to give great appreciation to the Roman Catholic Church leaders who have come up with the *Compendium*. Moreover, the CNL comments have soundly been based on the spirit of Christian dialogue, solidarity and cooperation, which are often mentioned and explained clearly in the *Compendium* itself, and by Pope John Paul II and Pope Francis in their various papal encyclical and apostolic letters.

It is further the hope of CNL that the comments expounded on here would serve as reflection and study materials for a lively, principled and Continuing Christian-Marxist Dialogues (CCMD) that CNL plans to develop during the whole decades of the NDR here in the Philippines. So that upon the final victory of the Filipino people's democratic revolution some decades from now, it would be expected that CNL (Christians for National Liberation) as a revolutionary organization of Christian believers would be able to transform itself as Christians for Socialist Revolution (CSR) in order to continuously arouse, organize and mobilize the Church people and lay Christians, and for them to vigorously uphold and participate with their increasing number in the impending new epoch of continuing the *socialist construction* in the upcoming generations among the workers, the various semi-proletariat, the peasants, fisherfolk, and the sectors of women, youth and national minorities, as well as other democratic classes, particularly the various sectors of the petit-bourgeoisie, in Philippine society.

Part 2

On Poverty And Inequality, and What Can Be Done

The *Compendium* begins *Part One* by quoting Pope John Paul II's Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (1991), “*The theological dimension is needed both for interpreting and for solving present-day problems in human society.*”³⁰ And the *Compendium* already brings out in Chapter One, that deals with “God’s Plan of Love for Humanity,” one of the biggest problems of the majority of the human population today, i.e., the social issue of *poverty*. Actually, all the 12 chapters of the *Compendium* mention the issue of poverty, the gap between the rich and the poor and the global inequality between the developed countries and the underdeveloped nations, especially in the Third World. However, this 2nd topic of CNL shall only serve as an introduction on poverty. The other CNL topics from the 3rd to the last 8th topic shall expound on more on this same global problem of poverty, its root causes, its connections to the economic, political, social and cultural systems of human societies, and the basic resolutions on how to eliminate this global problem of poverty.

The Social Pyramid and Poverty

Specifically in *Chapter One* of the *Compendium*, there is a reflection on the Decalogue, the Ten Commandments as the precepts of the people of Israel in the Old Testament, that “concern not only fidelity to Yahweh, but also as principles of social relations” among people. The Decalogue is within the context of the two important principles that would serve as essential guidelines for people and their society, namely: “the right of the poor” in Deut. 15:7-8; and “the law of the sabbatical year (celebrated every seven years) and of the jubilee year (celebrated every 50 years)” which also gives stress to the poor, and its Biblical texts are found in Ex. 23, Deut. 15 and Lev. 25. The *Compendium* further reflects that these two principles in the Old Testament have become the substance of the Messianic mission and ministry of Jesus Christ, which he himself describes as:

³⁰ *Compendium*, p. 292.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord (Lk 4:18-19; cf. Is 61:1-2).³¹

The overall context of the two principles (right of the poor, and the law of the sabbatical year and of the jubilee year) is the prophetic message that the people (Israelites) were *freed from slavery and captivity by foreign powers in Egypt by Yahweh, their god*. And the *Compendium* explains that the two principles are important guidelines to promote Christian social relations for the betterment of “the social, political and economic life of people” in society. Thus, Christians in their social relations could apply these two principles by putting into practice specific rules that have various textual sources in the Old Testament, such as:

1. Sufficient provisions should be afforded by the rich people for the needs of poor people;
2. All debts of the poor have to be canceled;
3. All slaves and prisoners should be released;
4. All accumulated goods by the rich should be distributed to the poor;
5. All people should be freed from any kind of exploitation and oppression; and
6. Everyone is free to return to his/her family and to regain possession.

Said principles and specific rules had two objectives in Biblical times: to implement justice that favors the poor, and to thwart inequality among people and prevent the widening of the gap between the rich and the poor. And such could already be adopted by the Philippine Catholic social action centers in their anti-feudal program to alleviate feudal exploitation and directly help the farm workers, tenants, and lower-middle peasants. But let us not put aside what the aforesaid principles and specific rules imply. These indicate that even in Biblical times the situation of poverty—due to the existence of the gap and inequality between the rich and the powerful who exploit and oppress on the one hand, and on the other hand the poor and the powerless who are exploited and oppressed—has already

³¹ Ibid., pp. 15-16.

been existing. However, it would be very impossible to put these principles and specific rules into actual practice if the contradiction between the rich and the poor and between the powerful and the powerless continues, and if there is no concrete resolution to end such contradiction in order to solve the social problem of poverty and inequalities.

The aforementioned existence and situation of poverty and inequalities, as portrayed in the Bible, could also be pictured here in the Philippines, which was occupied and ruled by foreign powers under Spanish colonialism and US imperialism for more than three and a half centuries. Up to the present day, the country remains to be a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society, and has a clear social pyramid of inequalities wherein the majority of the total population (of 110 million as of January 2021) are exploited and oppressed.

The top most of the Philippine social pyramid are the ruling classes of big landlords and big comprador bourgeoisie, who continue to position themselves in government and are themselves the bureaucrat capitalists. These are the ruling classes in Philippine society that compose only one percent of the national population. Being the bureaucrat capitalists in government, they expand and consolidate their economic and political power, which is safeguarded by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) that serve as state security forces. The ruling classes and their state security forces are functioning as puppets of and are dictated by US imperialism. Since the 2016 national elections, these ruling classes with their state security forces are under the ruling class dictatorship of the US-Duterte Regime (USDR) that makes use of state fascism to preserve and maintain the dominance of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism, which are the three basic problems of the Filipino people and the root causes of the prevalence of poverty and inequalities in Philippine society. Such basic problems maintain the Philippines as semi-colonial and semi-feudal, and make the whole Philippine society as an underdeveloped country with a backward agricultural economy.

At the bottom of the social pyramid are Christ's least Filipino brethren of workers, the numerous semi-proletariat (urban poor in street-communities and slum areas, vendors, handicraftsmen, carpenters and masons, small photographers, ambulant repairmen and poor fishermen, peddlers

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and small stallkeepers, provincial dock porters, city market cargadores, shop assistants, apprentices in sweatshops, pedicab drivers, tricycle drivers, jeepney drivers, house servants, restaurant helpers, odd job seekers, janitors, other informal employees, seasonal farm workers, etc.), the peasants, fisherfolk, and their families from the sectors of women, youth and national minorities. They compose 90% of the population wherein 15% are workers and 75% are peasants. Thus, about 99 million are poor, wherein the majority of them are landless, tenants, unemployed, underemployed, informal workforces, without stable homes, starving, malnourished, and sickly. They are victims of the economic exploitation, political oppression, and state fascism of the ruling classes, and of the foreign impositions, especially by US imperialism.

About 9% of the population is in the middle of the Philippine social pyramid wherein 7.5% belongs to the petit-bourgeoisie and about 1.5% to the national bourgeoisie. Most of the Church people from both the Catholic and Protestant Churches belong to the petit-bourgeoisie. Though to a much lesser degree as compared to the sufferings and predicaments of the toiling masses of workers and peasants, the so-called petit-bourgeoisie, too, are very much affected by the three basic problems of Philippine society; and they, too, are victims of state fascism that impedes their economic interests and democratic rights. As to the national bourgeoisie, their participation and involvement in the national industrialization of Philippine society is very much hampered by the big landlords and big comprador bourgeoisie, the feudal-bourgeois puppets and their US imperialist masters.

At the international level, global poverty and inequalities can also be seen with the concrete existence of the rich and developed countries on the one hand, and on the other hand the poor and underdeveloped nations, including the Philippines, that are found mostly in the Third World countries such as those in Latin America, Africa and Asia. But even within the developed countries, poverty and inequalities do exist also; as this is the result of the basic contradiction between the few capitalists and the toiling masses who compose the majority of the population in these rich countries. In industrialized nations, the few capitalists privately own the means of production and enormous properties, continue to become richer and richer because of the superprofits they accumulate from the labor power of

the toiling masses and from their multi-national firms they establish in the Third World countries. On the other hand, there exist the millions of the industrial toiling masses, who are propertyless, low paid labor force, and unable to solve the miserable situation of their families.

The Contradiction Between Rich and Poor and the Issue of Poverty and Human Rights

Chapter Two of the *Compendium*, that deals with “The Church’s Mission and Social Doctrine,” does not mention directly the social problem of poverty and inequalities. However, it gives a summary of Pope Pius XI’s Encyclical Letter *Quadragesimo Anno* (*On the 40th Year*, 1931), which is a clear rejection of “unlimited competition”³² in capitalism. Said encyclical letter brings out implicitly the point that poverty is caused by the “unlimited competition between economic forces” that are involved in the free-market economy of the capitalist system. It gives a specific guideline that poverty can be resolved by establishing the “subsidiarity and cooperation” between the capitalists and the workers and by raising the laborers’ salaries which “should be proportional not only to the needs of the workers but also to those of the workers’ family.” Furthermore, the *Compendium* would seem to imply that the poverty of the working class (sic, the poor) could be resolved with the participation of the rich (sic, capitalists), wherein through subsidiarity and cooperation “the poor would work for the rich and the rich would use their private property to give enough sustenance to the poor.”

But what CNL would like to put forward immediately—though this would still be discussed in the CNL 3rd topic *On the Contradiction between Labor and Capital, and How Could It Be Resolved*—is the point that with the nature of the capitalist system as exploitative, oppressive and full of greed, there can never be a genuine “subsidiarity and cooperation” between labor and capital; and that poverty would forever be unresolvable among the toiling masses if one would insist on first establishing a “subsidiarity and cooperation” without resolving the basic contradiction between labor and capital. For the only form of “subsidiarity and cooperation” that seems to be existing today between labor and capital is the reality of the various “yellow labor unions” which have been established in the Philip-

³² Ibid., p. 47.

pires and in various parts of the world; but these are bogus as they only favor the few capitalists (sic the few rich) and discard the rights, interests and welfare of the workers who are afflicted daily by poverty and misery. And regarding the idea that “the poor would work for the rich and the rich would use their private property to give enough sustenance to the poor,” this is part of Christian charity, which every Christian should preach daily especially to the ruling classes of big landlords, big comprador bourgeoisie and the bureaucrat capitalists in government. But Christian charity in itself has limits; for it does not correct the exploitative and oppressive nature of capitalism as well as feudalism. Moreover, Christian charity—if it is divorced from the rights, demands and struggles of the working class and peasantry—only eases but will never solve the social issue of poverty because poverty is the result of inequalities due to the existence of the widening gap between the rich and the poor, particularly between the few capitalists and the propertyless workers, and between the few big landlords and the landless peasants.

Thus, in the context of the labor movement in the Philippines, it is only through the establishment and consolidation of genuine labor unions, the building and strengthening of the working class movement that uphold and promote the rights, demands and struggles of the workers, and the implementation of national industrialization, which includes the nationalization of foreign firms and privately owned industries of the big landlords, big comprador bourgeoisie and bureaucrat capitalists, that can liberate from poverty the Filipino working class and the entire Filipino people. And the contradiction between the big landlords and the poor and landless peasants can only be resolved through genuine agrarian reform which has a minimum program (lowering land rent and loan interests, raising the price of farm products and the wage of farm workers, lowering the price of farm inputs, government subsidy for peasants, etc.) and a maximum program (confiscation of the lands of big landlords, land distribution to landless peasants, establishing communal and state farms, etc.) which would be achieved by building and consolidating the peasants’ revolutionary associations and the people’s revolutionary democratic government at the barangay up to the municipal and provincial levels.

Chapter Three of the *Compendium* regarding “*The Human Person and Human Rights*” does not also mention exactly the social problem of

poverty. However, based on the Filipino people's experiences, disrespect and the non-recognition of human rights is one of the fundamental causes of poverty. In particular, the state fascism and human rights violations of the USDR breed poverty amongst the people, especially amidst Christ's least brethren of workers, the numerous semi-proletariat (urban poor in street-communities and slum areas, vendors, handicraftsmen, carpenters and masons, small photographers, ambulant repairmen and poor fishermen, peddlers and small stallkeepers, provincial dock porters, city market cargadores, shop assistants, apprentices in sweatshops, pedicab drivers, tricycle drivers, jeepney drivers, house servants, restaurant helpers, odd job seekers, janitors, other informal employees, seasonal farm workers, etc.), the peasants, fisherfolk, and their families from the sectors of women, youth and national minorities.

At the international level, imperialism, especially US imperialism, and its puppet regimes in semi-colonial and semi-feudal countries—by means of their proxy wars of aggression and armed interventions, unequal economic and trade agreements and economic embargo imposed upon the Third World countries, especially upon socialist states and countries that are aspiring for national liberation—force and nail the global toiling masses of workers and peasants to widespread poverty and to boundless global inequalities between the rich/developed and the poor/underdeveloped nations. Thus, reflecting on Pope John Paul II's Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (*The Hundredth Year*, 1991), the *Compendium* laments that

The solemn proclamation of human rights is contradicted by a painful reality of violations, wars and violence of every kind, in the first place, genocides and mass deportations, the spreading on a virtual worldwide dimension of ever new forms of slavery such as trafficking of human beings, child soldiers, the exploitation of workers, illegal drug trafficking, prostitution. “Even in countries with democratic forms of government, these rights are not always fully respected.”³³

³³ Ibid., pp. 79-80.

Commenting on this part of Chapter Three of the *Compendium*, CNL would like—though this would still be fully taken up in CNL’s 6th topic *On Terrorism, War, Violence, and Worldwide Peace*—to make initial clarifications about the kinds of human rights violations (HRVs) mentioned here because of the fact that these HRVs are very much related to the problem of poverty and inequalities. In human history, wars, genocides and mass deportations, slavery and its new forms are HRVs and evil acts that have always been caused by contending imperialist powers. And such monstrous HRVs have resulted in poverty of billions of peoples and to global inequalities between the developed and the underdeveloped countries. Take, for instance, World War I (1914-1918) and World War II (1939-1945); these were inter-imperialist wars among monopoly capitalist countries like Japan, US, Germany, other European countries (Russian Empire and Ottoman Empire particularly during World War I) for the division and redivision of the world among the imperialist powers. During these inter-imperialist wars, millions of peoples in many countries became victims of slavery, genocides and mass deportations. Well-known examples of these cases during the two inter-imperialist wars were the Armenian Genocide by the Ottoman Empire in World War I, and the Warsaw Ghetto and the Holocaust by imperialist Nazi Germany in World War II. And scientific analysis would correctly convey the fact that slavery, genocides and mass deportations, that happened during the inter-imperialist wars, are basically founded on racism, a chauvinistic concoction designed by the colonialists and imperialists who have declared their color, race and country superior and powerful in order to dominate others and monopolize the economy, politics and culture of other colors, peoples and nations. The *Compendium*’s Chapter Nine on “The International Community” mentions the issue of racism, which is “unacceptable” to the teaching; but it is only seen in terms of its effects in the global relationship among nations at the international level.

As a whole, US imperialism is the No. 1 racist power in the world today. Racism in America was already well established long before by the system of slavery of the Black/African people that began in the 16th century. And even though slavery was abolished on January 1865 because of the various slave rebellions by Black Americans from 1526 to 1864, systemic racism still continues in America up to this day. Why? Because

the monopoly capitalists who are themselves the imperialists in America have inculcated into the American culture the most racist attitudes and the denial of equal rights between Black/Colored and White Americans. Thus, White Americans easily imprison, attack and murder Black Americans. The very recent case was when George Floyd, 46, was killed by a White Minneapolis policeman last May 23, 2020. This episode has triggered the movement against systemic racism; and the “Black Lives Matter” is revived and active again; it has launched various violent protests that started in Minneapolis, Minnesota and have escalated to more than 40 major cities across America. Mass protests in support of “Black Lives Matter” have also been launched in France, UK, Australia and other countries. The “Black Lives Matter” is an international activist movement, originating from the African-American campaigns against violence and systemic racism towards black people. Since January 2015 to May 2020, 1,343 Black Americans have been killed; this includes Floyd and 82 others killed from January-May 2020 alone. Surely, those in “Black Lives Matter” have come to know by now the very connection between racism and monopoly capitalism in the US. That racism is one of the tools of the monopoly capitalists to divide the American people, especially the working class and the semi-proletariat, and to hide the fact that inequalities, overproduction, depression, recession, unemployment, inflation, poverty, and other social issues are deeply rooted in the system of monopoly capitalism. In this way, the “Black Lives Matter” would have to struggle not only against racism and violence against black people *per se* but more so against US imperialism. It behooves that all members of the “Black Lives Matter” ought to join the worldwide anti-imperialist struggle, and work for the establishment and the strengthening of the working class movement as the necessary foundation of building the socialist future of the American people.

Going back to the *Compendium*, it further reflects also in the same Chapter Three that human rights is violated when there is “injustice, aggression, exploitation and oppression” in the “economic, social, juridical, political and cultural order.” It clarifies further that there is also human rights violations when “the rights of peoples and nations to self-determination and democracy” are disregarded and not respected. And contemplating on the terms “social sins” and “structures of sin,” used by Pope John Paul II in his Apostolic Exhortation *Reconciliatio et Paenitentia* (*On Recon-*

ciliation and Repentance, 1985), the *Compendium* further explains that the acts of injustice, aggression, exploitation and oppression are “social sins” and “the consequences of social sins perpetuate the structures of sin” in the economic, political and cultural life of human society. These “social sins” are human rights violations, which are perpetuated by those who have the capacity to exploit and oppress, the rich and the powerful in particular, who unceasingly coerce the toiling masses to suffer in pervasive poverty. And so, the Filipino people’s basic problems of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism are considered by revolutionary Christians in the Philippines as mortal “social sins,” as these are the root causes of poverty that afflict Christ’s least brethren of workers, the semi-proletariat, the peasants, fisherfolks, and their families from the sectors of women, youth and national minorities. In this connection, the USDR and all its economic, political and cultural machineries and the armed military and police forces are then counted by CNL cadres and activists as evil and “structures of sin.”

The “structures of sin” in the Philippines under the tyrant Duterte’s regime have led to more than a million victims of human rights violations committed since June 2016 when tyrant Duterte was elected as president. Such HRVs includes crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes; and most of the victims are poor people from the toiling masses of workers, urban poor, peasants, fisherfolk, national minorities, human rights defenders and activists. Thus, the Filipino people are imploring that autocrat Duterte and his pro-US imperialist AFP-PNP commanders must be tried and punished by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for their serious crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. Taken from the Philippine Revolution Web Center (PRWC) and *Ang Bayan*, the bi-monthly publication of the CPP, the partial data of human rights violations (HRVs) committed by tyrant Duterte and his pro-US imperialist AFP-PNP top commanders in just the past four-and-a-half years of the autocrat USDR show that there are a total of 1,020,013 human rights victims in the following HRVs perpetuated from June 2016 to December 3, 2020, as follows: 337 political and extra-judicial killings; 11 murders in violation of the rights of hors de combat; 11 abductions and enforced disappearances; 428 frustrated killings; 90,964 threat, harassment, and intimidations; 369,688 victims of aerial bombing; 487,475 evacuation

and displacements; 42,823 victims of illegal occupation; 165 destruction of property; 124 illegal search and seizure; 150 tortures; 46 physical assault and injuries; 3,168 demolitions; 15,947 food and economic blockades; 195 coercions; and 8,581 curfew and COVID-19 militarist restrictions.

Counted in the above total of 337 victims of political and extra-judicial killing were 61 lawyers murdered under killer Duterte's regime. Not included in the aforementioned partial data were the 34 activists massacred in various parts of the country from December 15, 2020 to February 5, 2021. Also not included in the above list of violation of the rights of hors de combat was the brutal killing of retired and unarmed CPP leader Comrade Antonio "Ka Susing" Cabanatan, 74 and his wife Comrade Florenda "Ka Osang," 65 whose bodies were found in Barangay Botong, Oton, Iloilo on December 26, 2020. Similarly not listed above were the victims of more than 30,000 Filipino masses murdered by tyrant Duterte's Oplan Tokhang in his fake war on drugs. Also not counted in the afore-said data were the victims of more than 350,000 displaced Maranaos from 115,000 families during Duterte's bombardment of Marawi City that totally destroyed 11,000 houses of 27,000 families.

Going back to the *Compendium*, which quotes Pope John Paul II's Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus (The Hundredth Year, 1991)* and the 1975 article "The Church and Human Rights" of the Pontifical Commission of Justice and Peace, it states stalwartly that

The Church, aware that her essentially religious mission, includes the defense and promotion of human rights... The pastoral commitment of the Church develops in a twofold direction: in the proclamation of the christian foundations of human rights and in the denunciation of the violations of these rights.³⁴

However, CNL would want to add that the promotion and proclamation of human rights and the denunciation of human rights violations (HRVs) in the Philippines must not only be in words but must also be manifested primarily by means of establishing people's organizations and

³⁴ Ibid., p. 80.

structures that aim to eradicate the social problem of poverty and its three root causes (US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism).

Oftentimes, the proclamation of human rights by the Christian Churches for the poor, deprived and oppressed (PDO) in the Philippines is just being done on the level of simple charitable acts. However, such charitable acts, though these must be implemented, are, in the final analysis, very inadequate because these do not resolve the root causes of the countless HRVs and do not concretely liberate the PDO from the exploitative and oppressive system of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. It is very necessary to raise to higher levels the forms of charitable acts to the work of arousing, organizing and mobilizing the PDO and other victims of HRVs to continuously struggle for their liberation from exploitation and oppression. In Philippine history, one concrete help of the Christian Churches in the struggle of the Filipino people against the US-Marcos Dictatorship (USMD) was when Church leaders, steered by his Eminence Jaime Cardinal Sin, called all Christians to participate actively in the EDSA People Power Revolution that finally ousted dictator Marcos on February 1986.

The Conservative and Radicalized Christian Faith in Relation to Poverty

Chapter Four of the *Compendium*, that deliberates on the “Principles of the Church’s Social Doctrine,” also cites the social ill of poverty. Here, all Christians, both the ordained, the religious and the laity, in their human societies are called to carry out appropriate actions to solve the problem of poverty as this is an important part of promoting and advancing particularly the principle of the “Common Good” among people in their communities. However, the *Compendium* and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #1033, which is again quoted, have a very naive and mediocre explanation of how the social ill of poverty would be eliminated:

Jesus says: “You always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me.” (Mt. 26:11; Mk 14:7; Jn 12:8) He makes this statement not to contrast the attention due to him with service to the poor. Christian realism, while appreciating on the one hand the praiseworthy efforts being made to defeat

poverty, is cautious on the other hand regarding ideological positions and Messianic beliefs that sustain the illusion that it is possible to eliminate the problem of poverty completely from this world. This will happen only upon Christ's return, when he will be with us once more, forever. In the meantime, *the poor remain entrusted to us and it is this responsibility upon which we shall be judged at the end of time* (cf. Mt. 25:31-46): "Our Lord warns us that we shall be separated from him if we fail to meet the serious needs of the poor and the little ones who are his brethren."³⁵

The above exposition is from the viewpoint of a conservative faith and a conformist/middle-of-the-road theology which is far from the radical transformation in Jesus' mission and ministry that is focused on justice for the poor, well expressed in the four Gospels. It is a wholistic redemptive act which initiates the process of total liberation, including being free from conservative faith and conformist theology, and the overall development of people towards the fulfilment of their basic and human needs, and which as a whole is liberation from poverty. And all these are essential, integral and interrelated components of the realization of God's Reign not merely or simply in an empty future in heaven or after death but here and now on earth with living people, as expressed very well in Lord Jesus' prayer, "Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth [i.e. starting here on earth] as it is in heaven."

In the first place and based on concrete human experiences, poverty, in fact, is the creation of humankind and not of God. Poverty, therefore, can and ought to be eliminated by people themselves, particularly by the poor, especially the workers and peasants and other exploited and oppressed classes and sectors, who struggle and must pursue the concrete praxis of liberation from poverty. So why wait for Christ's return to eliminate poverty? When the exploited and oppressed are truly assisted to analyze the root causes of their poverty, they themselves would become the main actors in the elimination of poverty. And when the poor begin to liberate themselves from poverty, this should never be interpreted as "ideological positions and Messianic beliefs that sustain the illusion that it is possible

³⁵ Ibid., p. 92.

to eliminate the problem of poverty completely from this world,” which has already been criticized in the CNL’s Preliminary Overview above. This particular line of thinking, CNL thinks, must be corrected as this seems to be the remaining tail of the nihilist (and anti-poor) philosophy, which does not believe in the power of the toiling masses. This thinking is entirely contradictory to the concrete experiences of the poor themselves who are able to analyze the root causes of their poverty and come up to appropriate resolutions that they themselves implement to concretely free themselves from poverty and eliminate its root causes. And this era has already been reached actually by the working class revolutionaries through the establishment of thriving socialist economic systems, as well as the socialist political and cultural structures in various parts of the world, especially before the spread of modern revisionism.

At this point, CNL would want to denounce the monopoly capitalist interpretations of the Christian faith as regard wealth and poverty, which is being promoted by fundamentalist and Neo-Pentecostalist Christians in the US. Such interpretations are “faith” assurances of the “Prosperity Gospel” which wants Christians to believe that: “To be poor is to be a slave of the devil; poverty is the devil’s slavery; and it is a curse. To be free and blessed by God is to be rich; wealth is a sign of salvation; and it is a blessing from God.” Thus, many neighborhood Christian churches in the USA perform “entrepreneurs worship services” to combat poverty and become rich. The “Prosperity Gospel” even reached the Philippines in the 1990s. Such interpretations of poverty and wealth only serve the interests of monopoly capitalism that is being promoted by US imperialism around the globe. These are smokescreens that hide US imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism, as the “structural sin” that crucifies the whole of humanity to pervasive poverty and huge inequalities. It should be clear to all Christians that imperialism, particularly US imperialism, is the root cause of global poverty in the industrialized countries and especially among peoples in the Third World nations, like the Philippines.

Particularly here in the Philippines, there should also be a radical change in the expression of the Christian faith. Take, for instance, the annual celebration of the Black Nazarene whose 8-10 million devotees join a whole day procession from early morning to midnight of every January 9 of the year; with the exception last January 9, 2021 wherein the Black

Nazarene icon was not paraded due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the de facto martial law of the tyrant US-Duterte Regime, although about half a million devotees were still able to attend the series of liturgical worships and eucharistic celebrations held the whole day with time intervals at the Quiapo Catholic Church. However, in normal situations the 8-10 million Catholic devotees follow the centuries-old, life-size and dark-colored image of Christ bent under the weight of a heavy cross, which is put in a carriage and is moved by Catholic marshals along the major thoroughfares of the National Capital Region (NCR). Along the way, barefoot men and women make a mad dash to the carriage in order to be among the first to touch or have their towels dab on the image, which, devotees believe, has miraculous powers. As thousands of people clamber over others in a bid to make contact with the icon and win its healing favor and other miraculous kindness, other thousands of devotees try to wade into the throng of Catholic pilgrims; and still other thousands more shout to make way as others await their turn.

Such a multitude of humanity could be transformed into a powerful force for a radical change in Philippine society if only such a Christian faith expressed in the procession of the Black Nazarene could also be thoroughly converted into a liberating and salvific act. But such a radical transformation and fundamental conversion of the Christian faith to turn into a powerful (miraculous) force in order to radically change Philippine society can happen *only* when Christians themselves know and understand the history behind the Black Nazarene and arrive at progressive meanings and interpretations of the Black Nazarene, as the same Jesus narrated in the four Gospel, whose mission and ministry is focused on justice for the poor and on redemptive actions for the total liberation of people.

A brief class analysis might show that the 8-10 million devotees of the Black Nazarene come mostly from the cities of the NCR and from adjoining provinces like Bulacan and others; and most of them belong to Christ's least brethren of workers, the numerous semi-proletariat (especially the urban poor in street-communities and slum areas, vendors, handicraftsmen, carpenters and masons, small photographers, ambulant repairmen and poor fishermen, peddlers and small stallkeepers, provincial dock porters, city market cargadores, shop assistants, apprentices in sweatshops, pedicab drivers, tricycle drivers, jeepney drivers, house servants, restaurant

helpers, odd job seekers, janitors, other informal employees, seasonal farm workers from the haciendas of Central Luzon, etc.), fishermen, peasants. Thus, these devotees, we can conclude, are poor who want to join the annual procession to get some favor and kindness to be cured from sickness, to be lifted from poverty, to be raised from misery, and so on.

We might say that the radicalization of the devotion to the Black Nazarene has initially started. If we remember the homily of Luis Antonio Cardinal Tagle, the then Manila Archbishop who has been recently assigned at the Vatican City state by Pope Francis, he told the faithful in the morning of January 9, 2012 before the start of the Black Nazarene procession that...

Filipinos continue to be pulled down by the sins of adultery, hatred and worship of false gods like money, power, fame and vanity; but like Jesus Christ, Filipinos should stand up as a nation to combat such sins for the betterment of Philippine society.

But the radicalization of such a devotion has to be raised to higher levels. For *if only* these 8-10 millions of Catholic pilgrims would be taught: that the Black Nazarene was from Mexico, brought to Manila on May 31, 1606 by Spanish friars who taught the early Filipino Catholics that such an icon holds miraculous powers and could give miraculous favors and all types of kindness to the devotees; that such devotion to the Black Nazarene was encouraged by Pope Innocent X (1644-1655) who issued a papal bull (document by the pope) in 1650; and that in the 19th century, Pope Pius VII (1800-1823) granted indulgence to Catholics who prayed devoutly to the Black Nazarene, *then and only then* the millions of Catholic devotees today might be able to realize that such an icon of Jesus Christ was used by Spanish colonialists as part of their religious methods to fully colonize the Philippines. And *if only* these devotees are conscientized so that they would be able to understand that poverty in the Philippines is due to US imperialism, feudalism, bureaucrat capitalism and state fascism, *then and only then* they would be able to join the “Oust Duterte Movement” so that, like the overthrow of dictator Marcos in 1986 and corrupt Estrada in 2001, tyrant Duterte would be changed by a Filipino president who is

really for genuine sovereignty, patrimony, democracy and the common good of the Filipino people.

The same process of radicalization as described above could also be done among the Christian believers in the various charismatic movements in the country so that the faithful Christians would be able to transform their charisma and their Christian gatherings into a powerful force. This powerful force could become their Christian contribution towards radical change and total liberation of the Filipino people from US imperialism, domestic feudalism, bureaucrat capitalism and fascism for the realization of national emancipation, people's democracy and socialism in Philippine society.

Now after a brief presentation of the two contradictory orientations (conservative and radicalized) of what it means to believe in Jesus Christ, let us go back to the *Compendium*. Oftentimes, conservative faith leads to passivity, for instance a passive kind of fraternal charity. And it seems the passive understanding of fraternal charity and justice as part of the naïve and mediocre presentation of the problem of poverty is expressed again in Chapter Four of *Compendium* by the following statements whose sources of religious inspirations come from the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, *Decree Apostolicam Actuositatem* (1966) and also from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2445:

Giving alms to the poor is one of the chief witnesses to fraternal charity: it is also a work of justice pleasing to God, even if the practice of charity is not limited to almsgiving but implies addressing the social and political dimensions of the problem of poverty... In her teaching the Church constantly returns to the relationship between charity and justice: "When we attend to the needs of those in want, we give them what is theirs, not ours. More than performing works of mercy, we are paying a debt of justice..." Love for the poor is certainly "incompatible with immoderate love of riches or their selfish use."³⁶

On the other hand, the progressive interpretation of fraternal charity and justice in the concrete practice of addressing the social, political

³⁶ Ibid., pp. 92-93.

and economic dimensions of the problem of poverty is to assist the poor to arouse, organize and mobilize themselves in their struggle to know why they are poor and how they would be able to liberate themselves from poverty. This is the progressive understanding of Christians: Fraternal charity and justice is liberating; it does neither exploit nor oppress. In this context, Christian charity and justice is definitely against monopoly capitalism because of its exploitative and oppressive nature through superprofits and unlimited competition in the free-market economy and through the exploitative and oppressive principles of liberalization, deregulation and privatization, being continually imposed globally by imperialism, by US imperialism in particular.

Thus, the progressive Christian intelligentsia, both ordained, religious and lay who are willing to become members of CNL and dedicate their lives for the total liberation of the poor, must never be condemned as atheists or communist ideologues. In the first place, it is very unchristian to condemn and excommunicate atheists or communists. This is contrary to the spirit of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council. Instead, the right Christian attitude is *religious freedom* (not anti-communism) which should be practiced as the guiding principle for the promotion of the “Common Good” of human societies. Also within this context, the progressive Christian intelligentsia has with itself the responsibility to put into practice: the prophetic view that Christian charity, love and justice liberates; the prophetic tradition that considers poverty of the exploited and oppressed, the weak and the indigent, as evil; the prophetic tradition that condemns fraud, usury, and gross injustice as causes of poverty (cf. Isaiah 58:3-11; Jeremiah 7:4-7; Hosea 4:1-2; Amos 2:6-7; Micah 2:1-2).

The Globalization of Poverty and Its Root Cause

Reflecting on Pope John XXIII’s Encyclical Letter *Pacem in Terris* (*Peace on Earth*, 1963), the *Compendium* states, in Chapter Four which deals with the “Principles of the Church’s Social Doctrine,” that there is no peace because “Inequalities, that in the past were experienced within nations, are now becoming international and make the dramatic situation of the Third World ever more evident.” Moreover, the *Compendium* declares that

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*in the presence of this phenomenon of interdependence and its constant expansion, there persist in every part of the world stark inequalities between developed and developing countries, inequalities stoked also by various forms of exploitation, oppression and corruption that have a negative influence on the national and international life of many States... perpetuating injustice on a global scale.*³⁷

Also in Chapter Six which is about “Human Work,” the *Compendium* reiterates that there is inequality because of the “exploitation of millions of child labor in the workplace in conditions of veritable slavery,” due to millions of people who are “unemployed and underemployed” and also because of the “rising and continuing problem of immigration due to the continuing and increasing global inequalities and gap between rich and poor countries.” The only thing that is very much lacking here is the answer to the basic question: What is the root cause of the inequalities between the developed and underdeveloped countries at the global level? For the Filipino revolutionaries, including CNL cadres and activists, it is imperialism, most especially US imperialism.

Chapter Five of the *Compendium*, that deals with “The Family, The Vital Cell of Society,” does not directly mention the social problem of poverty that afflicts the majority of the global families. However, it is emphatic as regards respecting “the dignity and the rights of children,” pointing out that

the situation of a vast number of the world’s children is [very] far from being satisfactory due to the lack of favorable conditions for their integral development despite the existence of a specific international juridical instrument for protecting their rights.³⁸

What is referred to here as “the existence of a specific international juridical instrument for protecting their rights” is the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, which came into force supposedly in 1990 after it was ratified by all members of the United Nations, including the Vatican City

³⁷ Ibid., p. 98.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 129.

state (Holy See) as a UN permanent observer. One organization of the United Nations, though not specifically mentioned in the *Compendium*, is the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) that works evidently to prevent child abuse, child labor, sexual exploitation of children, and the use of children as soldiers.

In the same chapter, the *Compendium* declares further that

the dignity and rights of children [are far from being respected because of the] conditions connected with the lack of health care, or adequate food supply, little or no possibility of receiving a minimum of academic formation or inadequate shelter. Moreover, some serious problems remain unsolved [such as the continuing criminal acts of] trafficking in children, child labor, the phenomenon of “street children,” the use of children in armed conflicts, child marriage and the use of children for commerce in pornographic material.³⁹

Though not mentioned in the *Compendium*, there is also the occurrence of child abuse and maltreatment in many countries of the world.

Child abuse or child maltreatment is recognized as a major social problem, especially in industrialized nations. It is more common in families that are below the poverty line. For instance in the US in 2005, more than 1 million children were victims of maltreatment who were inadequately supported by the government of the US monopoly capitalists.

With regards to child labor, the UNICEF studies carried out in 1979, the International Year of the Child, show that more than 50 million children below the age of 15 were working in various jobs, often under hazardous conditions. Many of these children live in underdeveloped countries in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and eastern Europe; they come from poor families that lack the basic necessities of life, such as adequate food, decent clothing and shelter, clean water, health services and education.

Child-labor problems are not, of course, limited to underdeveloped nations. They occur wherever poverty exists, even in developed countries, like the United States and those in Europe. The International Labor Organizations (ILO), a UN special agency, has included to the list since the late

³⁹ Ibid.

20th century the worst forms of child labor such as slavery, prostitution, debt bondage wherein children work to pay loans made by their parents, and forced military service. The ILO has introduced several child-labor conventions for the elimination of child-labor; however, it does not have the power to enforce these conventions, and depends only on voluntary compliance of the UN-ILO member nations.

What is again wanting in the expositions of the *Compendium* is the answer to the basic question: What system at the global level is the root cause that promotes the criminal acts against the vast number of the world's poor children? Again, for Filipino revolutionaries, including CNL cadres and activists, it is the free-market economy of monopoly capitalism, which US imperialism continues to globalize.

All the aforementioned unfavorable conditions of children and the criminal acts against them are due to the problem of poverty that afflicts millions of families in both the developed and underdeveloped countries. Particularly here in the Philippines, the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) has come up with a comprehensive analysis of the various criminal acts against the Filipino children as a result of the three basic problems in Philippine society. Based on this analysis, the NDFP has a program to defend the rights of the Filipino children, which is an essential part of advancing the National Democratic Revolution (NDR). The Filipino children have to be safeguarded from the onslaughts of US imperialism, domestic feudalism, bureaucrat capitalism and their fascist acts, which forcefully and continually drive the country to remain a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society, wallowing in the continuing poverty and inequalities. In this connection, the Military Commission of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) has issued a statement already in 1999 that the New People's Army (NPA) does not recruit "child guerillas" as alleged by the reactionary army and police, and that only persons aging 18 and above are accepted in the Red Army.

Although in industrialized countries such as the US, Canada and others in western Europe, there is also poverty and its effects include poor nutrition, mental illness, drug dependence, high rates of disease, crime, random violence and gang warfare and useless killings (which often occur in the US), poverty is much worse in the underdeveloped Third World nations. This is due to the fact that the developed countries continue to

practice neo-colonialism which accounts for much of the unequal distribution of resources in the world economy and for the widespread underdevelopment because these countries remain as semi-colonial and semi-feudal societies, like the Philippines, due to the dictate and dominance of imperialism. And poverty in the Third World countries are exacerbated by industrialized countries by implementing the monopoly capitalism’s free-market economy that extracts inexpensive natural resources from poorer countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, including oil for power, ores and minerals for manufacturing durable goods, and manufactured goods made by low-wage workers in factories operated by multinational corporations within the territories of these underdeveloped countries.

As a result of the widespread global poverty, there is the big gap between the developed and underdeveloped countries, and between the few rich and the poor majority in both developed and underdeveloped nations wherein the few rich families control and own the biggest part of the national economies and of the international markets; and only a small part of the national wealth goes to poor families who belong to the majority of the population at the national and international level. And what is the root cause of these global catastrophes? And the answer of Filipino revolutionaries, including the CNL cadres and activists, is: It is imperialism, especially US imperialism, that imposes the system of monopoly capitalism through preemptive wars of aggression and armed interventions against various Third World countries. It further employs the imperialist line of “bringing back freedom and democracy” to conceal its terrorism in countries that uphold socialist economic systems and socialist political structures, and in nations that fight for national liberation against imperialist intrusions.

Other chapters of the *Compendium*—Chapter Six on “Human Work,” Chapter Seven on “Economic Life, Chapter Eight on “Political Community,” and Chapter Nine on “The International Community”—also bring out the social problem of poverty. However, the CNL comments about the contents of these chapters shall be dealt with in the succeeding deliberations under the remaining topics of the CNL commentary. Particularly on the social ill of poverty in the *Compendium*’s four chapters, from Chapter Six to Chapter Nine, it would suffice to summarize this as follows: that poverty is very prevalent among billions of peasants in the agricul-

tural productions, as well as among billions of workers in the industrial businesses in both the developed and underdeveloped countries; and that the continuing problem of unemployment and underemployment worsens widespread poverty among the landless peasants and the propertyless workers with meager wages who are casually or contractually employed in the world's monopoly capitalist economy. Aggravating the situation of the toiling masses are the high rates of feudal exploitation by big landlords and the superprofits of capitalists that lead billions of peasants and workers to extreme poverty due to global inequalities. And particularly here in the Philippines as semi-colonial and semi-feudal society, the social problem of poverty among workers and peasants is more severe due to government negligence of food security, basic health care and education for the poor families, and because of fascism and corruption of past and present puppet regimes, especially now under tyrant Duterte, his cronies and his top AFP-PNP commanders, who are all dictated by US imperialism, which unceasingly affect the democratic classes and sectors at the middle of the Philippine social pyramid.

Can Globalized Poverty Be Resolved Within the Auspices of Monopoly Capitalism?

The last part of the *Compendium's* Chapter Six about "Human Work" deliberates on "The 'New Things' of the World of Work." What is referred here as the "New Things" is the processes of "globalization." Though the social issue on globalization will be discussed thoroughly in the CNL's 5th topic *On Monopoly Capitalist Globalization; Quo Vadis Humankind*, it would be better to bring out some comments here which are very much related to the CNL's 2nd topic, "On Poverty and Inequality, and What Can Be Done," which is still presently under deliberation.

The *Compendium* hypothesizes in Chapter Six that

If it is true that globalization is neither good or bad in itself, but depends on how it is used, it must be affirmed that a globalization of safeguards, minimum essential rights and equity is necessary. [Further, it assumes that] The globalization of the economy, with the liberalization of markets, the stiffening of competition, the increase of specialized businesses in provid-

ing goods and services, requires greater flexibility in the labor market and in organizing and managing production processes.⁴⁰

This hypothesis and assumption conceals the negative effects of monopoly capitalism which is continually being globalized by imperialism, especially by US imperialism, by means of the policies of liberalization, deregulation and privatization being imposed both on the developed and developing nations through the UN’s World Trade Organization (WTO). The results of such monopoly capitalist policies are the unequal trade and economic agreements, and even economic blockades, which exacerbate poverty and inequalities especially among the underdeveloped Third World countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia, which contain two-thirds of the world’s population.

Chapter Seven of the *Compendium* on “Economic Life” mentions the many “opportunities” of the “New Things,” i.e. “globalization in the economic sector.” However, it also cites

the risks connected with the new dimensions of commercial and financial relations [in globalization which include] the trend of *increasing inequalities*, both between advanced countries and developing countries, and within industrialized countries” which are “accompanied by an increase in relative *poverty* [CNL].”⁴¹

Facts about poverty, inequality and the wide gap between the rich and the poor in the world today are very clear. In 2018, 2,200 billionaires owned what was equivalent to what was owned by the 3.8 billion people of the world. This inequality worsened in 2019, wherein the number of billionaires became fewer to 2,153, but owned the equivalent of what was owned by 4.6 billion people or 60% of the world population. And as of August 2020, the 1% richest people in the world own 44% of the world’s wealth; while the 56.6% poorest people only own much lower that 2% of the global wealth.

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 159-160.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 183.

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Another concrete example, which has been created by the exploitative and oppressive of monopoly capitalism, is America's richest 0.1 percent, which controls more wealth than any other time since 1929. This top 0.1 percent is comprised of fewer than 200,000 families, but own as much as the bottom 90 percent, including 110 million households. The top 0.1 percent consist of 25 wealthiest dynasties on the planet that control about USD\$1.4 trillion. One of America's richest is the Walmart family dynasty; yet the average hourly rate for a full-time Walmart employee is only \$14.26. This translates to less than \$30,000 per year—or the equivalent of about 25 seconds of Walton “work.” Thus, CNL sees here that the root cause of the global poverty and inequalities is the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism.

In the same Chapter Seven, the *Compendium* recommends that inequality and poverty could be resolved by

looking after the common good [which] means making use of the new opportunities for the redistribution of wealth among the different areas of the planet, to the benefit of the underprivileged that until now have been excluded or cast to the sidelines of social and economic progress. The challenge, in short, is to ensure a globalization in solidarity, a globalization without marginalization.⁴²

The *Compendium* seems to imply that under monopoly capitalism it would be easy to redistribute wealth in order to “decrease the inequalities between countries in terms of economic and social development” and “close the gap between developing and the more advanced countries.” However, these expositions are divorced from the concrete reality of monopoly capitalism, which is very exploitative and oppressive because of its principles of private property ownership, unlimited capitalist free-market competition and superprofits. These monopoly capitalist principles are continuously being globalized by imperialist imposition of the policies of liberalization, deregulation and privatization to all countries of the world. On the other hand, socialist countries that do not adhere to the principles and policies of monopoly capitalism are punished through economic and

⁴² Ibid.

trade embargo by US imperialism and through other means like denying WB-IMF assistance to such countries. And other countries have been chastised by the preemptive and proxy wars of aggression by US imperialism. US imperialism has enforced penalties against “axis of evil” countries (referring to North Korea, Iran and Iraq) and continues to censure other nations by imposing sanctions and/or launching preemptive and proxy wars of aggression against countries (Syria, Afghanistan, Libya).

The kind of gobbledygook in the *Compendium* does not offer any definition nor provide operational social apparatuses which could be used concretely for the building of effective instruments of “a globalization in solidarity, a globalization without marginalization” that would be able to “close the gap between developing countries and the more advanced countries.” But the reality remains that there is, in fact, global marginalization that affects mostly the Third World countries because of the impositions and manipulations of imperialism, particularly US imperialism, which makes use of its veto power in the UN Security Council to impose globally the system of monopoly capitalism through preemptive and proxy wars of aggression and armed interventions. That is why only when the impositions and manipulations of imperialism, principally US imperialism, and the veto power of the imperialist members in the United Nations (UN) Security Council are exposed, opposed and removed by the toiling masses and democratic classes of the world, only then the UN and those organizations and agencies under its auspices such as the WB, IMF, ILO, UNICEF, WHO, UNESCO, the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the UN International Court of Justice (ICJ) can, indeed, become real “new opportunities for the redistribution of wealth among the different areas of the planet, to the benefit of the underprivileged that until now have been excluded or cast to the sidelines of social and economic progress.”

In Chapter Nine, that deals with “The International Community,” the *Compendium* enumerates the causes of poverty and underdevelopment, as well as how to fight poverty at the global level. Concerning this, CNL would want to comment regarding these in the following paragraphs, though these will be tackled again in the 5th topic of the CNL commentary, *On Monopoly Capitalist Globalization; Quo Vadis Humankind*. In said chapter, the following are counted by the *Compendium* as

among the causes of underdevelopment and poverty at the international level: impossibility of acceding to the international market; illiteracy; lack of food security; the absence of structures and services; inadequate measures for guaranteeing basic health care; the lack of safe drinking water and sanitation; corruption; and the instability of political institutions and of political life itself. The *Compendium* adds “there is a connection between poverty and, in many countries, the lack of liberty.”

The problem in Chapter Nine is that not all those listed are the causes of poverty and underdevelopment. What can be accepted as real causes of poverty and underdevelopment are: corruption, instability of political institutions and political life itself, and the lack of liberty. Meaning, corruption, political instability and state fascism exacerbate poverty and underdevelopment; and the fascist acts of a corrupt state against the people create political instability, and both can cause poverty and underdevelopment. All the others listed above are not in themselves the causes, but are actually the effects and/or the manifestations of underdevelopment and poverty of a certain country. Meaning, because a country is poor and underdeveloped, it has no capacity to match the capitalist competition in the international free-market economy of capitalism; its many citizens are illiterate; it lacks food security; it has no structures and services to alleviate poverty and implement development projects; it is inadequate for guaranteeing basic health care; and it lacks safe drinking water and sanitation; and so on and so forth.

In the same Chapter Nine, the *Compendium* mentions foreign debts; but it does not state that foreign debt worsens poverty and underdevelopment. In reality, foreign debts, especially of those from the underdeveloped Third World countries, exacerbate poverty and underdevelopment in these nations. What the *Compendium* enumerates as the

complex causes... of the debt crisis... at the international level [are the following:] fluctuation of exchange rates, financial speculation and economic neo-colonialism; within individual debtor countries there is corruption, poor administration of public monies or the improper utilization of loans received.⁴³

⁴³ Ibid., p. 227.

But actually, the “complex causes of the debt crisis” mentioned here are not really the root causes of the debt crisis but are the actual devices and strategies of monopoly capitalism to implement its exploitative “theory of supply and demand” by giving foreign aids and loans with high interests to the underdeveloped debtor countries, which are forced to follow the monopoly capitalism’s principles of neo-liberalization, deregulation and privatization, and other foreign capitalist impositions like lowering or repealing of tariffs, devaluation of national currencies, increase of taxes and other austerity measures. And because debtor countries are underdeveloped, they have no capacity to pay their debts; and so they are overburdened by huge foreign debts, which worsen poverty, inequalities and underdevelopment in these already poor countries of the Third World and also eastern Europe. Moreover, imperialist countries use the foreign debt trap as a vehicle to shift the burden of economic crises to the debtor countries, with the help of international trade and financial institutions such as the World Bank (WB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) which are all under the monopoly of the imperialists, primarily headed by US imperialism. International financial institutions (IFIs), controlled by global monopoly capital and imperialist nations, have used debt as an instrument to force the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) on many underdeveloped countries. Through the SAP, the IFIs have been able to dictate these countries’ internal economic and political affairs. And the result is that foreign multinationals and transnationals of imperialist nations take over the economies of debtor countries, including manufacturing, communication, transportation, finance, and banking. Thus, many debtor countries in the Third World, like the Philippines, remain as semicolonial and semifeudal societies, very far from being the so-called “NICs” (newly industrializing countries—the US-Ramos regime’s pipedream for the Philippines during the 1990s).

As to the solutions of the “causes” of poverty and underdevelopment that are identified in Chapter Nine, the Compendium recommends the following, which are based on Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter Sollicitudo Rei Socialis (1988), on Pope Paul VI’s Apostolic Letter Octogesima Adveniens (1971), on Pope Paul VI’s Encyclical Letter Populorum Progressio (1967), and on Pope John XXIII’s Encyclical Letter Mater et Magistra (1961):

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1. Cooperation, understanding and collaboration among individual political communities so that countries would condition one another and each one will succeed in its development by contributing to the development of others;
2. the elimination of economic, financial and social *mechanisms* and “structures of sin” that prevent the full development of men and peoples;
3. building the forms of cooperation that are capable of facilitating access to the international market on the part of countries that are suffering from poverty and underdevelopment;
4. implementation of the right to development that is based on the following principles: shared destiny of the human family, equality between every person and between every community based on human dignity, the universal destination of the goods of the earth and the notion of development in its entirety, and the centrality of the human person and solidarity.⁴⁴

As regards the particular fight against poverty which is also mentioned in the same Chapter Nine, the *Compendium* has taken the following from Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1988) and from Pope Paul VI’s Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* (1967): The fight against poverty finds a strong motivation in the option or preferential love of the Church for the poor with emphasis on the following fundamental principles:

1. First and foremost is the promotion of the universal destination of goods;
2. Reaffirming the principle of solidarity, the Church’s social doctrine demands action to promote the good of all and of each individual;
3. The principle of solidarity must always be accompanied by that of subsidiarity to foster the spirit of initiative, the fundamental basis of all social and economic development in poor countries; and
4. The poor should be seen not as a problem, but as people who can become the principal builders of a new and more human future for everyone.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 225-226.

⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 226-227.

However, Christian realism would consider that all the above recommendations and Church’s principles for the resolution of global poverty and the underdevelopment of the Third World countries cannot be implemented and can never be achieved under the auspices of monopoly capitalism and the dominance of imperialism, particularly US imperialism, in the global capitalist economy and politics. To put it bluntly, such recommendations and principles can be put into concrete practice and can, indeed, be of great help to resolve the social problem of poverty, inequalities and underdevelopment, IF—AND ONLY IF—there are enough determined people in each country, especially the toiling masses of workers and peasants and the enlightened intelligentsia, who would follow the socialist path for radical change. In other words, CNL proposes for both the Catholic and Protestant Churches to disregard supporting monopoly capitalism, and strongly believes that the socialist path is the correct “challenge... to ensure a globalization in solidarity, a globalization without marginalization” among nations, especially the Third World nations in Asia, Latin America and Africa, and even eastern Europe in the coming decades.

The Filipino People’s Present Poverty and Inequality Situation

As a particularization, let us now scrutinize briefly the present situation of the Filipino people as regards the social ill of poverty and inequalities which the present tyrant USDR unleashes throughout the whole country. After which, we shall explore what the toiling masses of workers, semi-proletariat the fisherfolk, peasants, and their families from the sectors of women, youth and national minorities, and the progressive intelligentsia from among the petit-bourgeoisie class, which includes most of the Catholic and Protestant Church people, can perform to help in the Filipino people’s struggle against impoverishment and inequity towards national freedom, democracy and socialism.

Based on the SWS survey on September 2020, about 1/3 of Filipino families, or 7.6 million families, do not have sufficient food. Included here are the 2.2 million families who experience extreme hunger. Also based on the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (UN-FAO), about 59 million Filipinos experience lack of food security between 2017 to 2019; this is, in fact, the highest in Southeast Asia. The present social problem of poverty and inequity, that afflicts the Filipino people, the toil-

ing masses and even the middle strata of the Philippine population, is very much is rooted in the exploitation and domination of imperialist countries and the feudal-bourgeois rule of big landlords, big comprador bourgeoisie and bureaucrat capitalists in the country. Today, US and China are the main contending imperialist countries that continue to shift the burden of the crisis of the world capitalist system to the Philippines, one of their reactionary client states in the Third World and eastern Europe. As a reactionary client state, the Philippines since the 2016 national elections has been and is ruled up to the present by puppet Duterte and his cronies, who head and lead the imperialist lackeys of big landlords, big comprador bourgeoisie, big bureaucrat capitalists, and the corrupt and reactionary top military and police commanders. All these are the root causes of poverty, inequalities and underdevelopment in the country today. They jointly preserve the country as a semi-colonial and non-industrial, a semi-feudal and backward agricultural, and underdeveloped society, which is maintained and worsened by the USDR's bloody war of suppression against the Filipino people and their democratic mass organizations.

Autocrat Duterte has liberalized and continues to liberalize trade and investment policies to favor foreign big capitalists to the detriment of the local production. The country remains to be ever dependent on imports, foreign debt and investments, resulting in chronic trade deficit. It does not own any independent steel industry, and has no machine-building industry; and it does not have the capacity to produce computers, machine tools, vehicles, medicines and other major manufactures. Local manufacturing remains dependent on imported machines and raw material inputs. Industrial activity is engaged in semi-processing and assembly in the economic zones, which are privately owned by foreign capitalists and are mere appendages of the international assembly line of multinational companies in the country. One specific law to support the liberalization of trade and investment is the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) Act. The outcome of all of these is the continuing Filipino people's sufferings due to high rates of unemployment, insecure work, low wages, rising prices of food and basic commodities, and destitution.

On the other hand, because the autocrat Duterte regime has continued to implement neoliberal economic policies, the country's agricultural production remains largely backward, non-mechanized, mostly non-irri-

gated, and with low output. Large-scale agricultural production is carried out only in foreign-owned plantations devoted to crops for exports. The liberalization of rice importation through the Rice Tarification Law in 2019 continues to destroy local rice production and dislocate more 350,000 rice farmers whose number will surely rise in the coming years if the USDR would still remain in power. Besides the importation of vegetables, sugar is being smuggled in and is targeted for liberalization. Widespread conversion of agricultural land to real estate, tourism, mining and energy projects continue unabated and is causing the displacement of millions of peasants and farm workers who continue to go to urban centers, like the NCR, in search for jobs but in the end only to be added to the millions of unemployed and underemployed workforces.

In a study by the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) in 2019, about 25 percent of Filipino farmers have abandoned their farming jobs and migrated to the cities to find better-paying jobs as tricycle drivers, construction workers and domestic helpers over the last seven years. NEDA says that “From the labor workforce of 12.25 million in 2010, the number of Filipinos involved in agriculture has plummeted by 25 percent to 9.07 million in 2017.” The study also states that even young and educated workers in agriculture have

permanently migrated to jobs in construction, information technology, business processing management, transportation [as tricycle drivers], retail and food establishments [as salespersons or food attendants], manufacturing [factory workers], tourism-related services, or as domestic work.⁴⁶

This makes the Senate Resolution of Duterte’s No. 1 crony Senator Bong Go on “Balik Probinsya Program” very ridiculous because this does not have any component that should resolve the causes of rural out-migration to the NCR. On the other hand, peasant leaders from Unyon ng mga Manggagawa sa Agrikultura (UMA), Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) and the Samahang Industriya ng Agrikultura (SIA) have cited high land rent and interest on loan, low wage, rising production input costs (pesticides, insecticides, fertilizers, seeds, etc.), low farm-gate

⁴⁶ NEDA, *Rural Labor Migration: An Analysis of the Loss of the Labor in the Agriculture Sector in the Philippines*, 2018.

prices of peasant products, limited access to credit and output markets, poor management of irrigation systems, widespread conversion of farmlands to commercial use, and problem of landlessness among majority of the peasants as causes of the peasant migration to urban areas. Particularly in terms of wage, at ₱280.37 a day, the current daily average pay for agricultural workers is only half the minimum daily wage of Metro Manila employees. The lack of policy direction and agricultural subsidies from the government are also mentioned by progressive peasant organizations as also the causes of the peasant out-migration. Of course, the basic issue here is that past and present puppet regimes have not made any genuine agrarian program that favors the peasantry, but have maintained the country as semi-colonial and semi-feudal.

The country's export-oriented economy continues to stumble in the face of global economic slowdown. The Philippine Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth in 2019 slowed to 5.9%, the lowest in eight years. This is marked by an 8.6% drop in factory output volume of the local manufacturing, and a slow 0.7% agricultural growth. Overseas remittances of the OFWs and Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) operations (through call centers), which have kept the economy afloat over the past years, have slowed down since the first quarter of 2020. The Duterte government's budget deficit ballooned to ₱660.2 billion in 2019, 18.27% higher than the previous year.

Duterte has been wasting and continues to squander billions of pesos to feed the corruption of the military and big bureaucrats, to favor graft-laden contracts with business cronies and to finance debt servicing. For 2020 debt payment, autocrat Duterte allocated around ₱450 billion. Billions have been spent on corruption-ridden infrastructure projects under the Chinese-funded Build, Build, Build (BBB) program including the unnecessary expansion of provincial roads and bridges, seaports and airports, as well as dam projects that would displace thousands and destroy lowland agricultural production. To finance its spending, the Duterte government has accelerated borrowing to ₱43 billion a month, more than twice as fast as the previous regimes, bringing the country's total outstanding debt to ₱7.7 trillion. The country's total foreign debt shot up to \$83.6 billion in 2020 from \$78.96 billion in 2019, more than half of which was

government debt, which stood at \$42.8 billion in 2020, 7.8% higher than in 2019.

Around 10.6 million Filipino workers (nearly 24% of the total labor force of 45 million) were unemployed or underemployed in 2020. Official unemployment figures were understated and unreliable. In addition, there are around 12 million OFWs who have gone abroad for employment because of a lack of domestic job opportunities. Under Duterte, export of cheap labor remains a key employment strategy. Annual job creation has dropped to decades low, failing to keep up with the growth of the labor force. The grave state of joblessness is obscured by autocrat Duterte’s economic managers who claim during the first quarter of 2020 a grossly incredible 5.1% unemployment rate by changing the definition of unemployment and removing millions from the total labor force count through statistical fiat.

The Duterte regime masks the real state of poverty in the country by setting a ridiculously low threshold of ₱75 per person a day, and claiming that 5.9 million Filipinos were lifted out of poverty since 2015. In reality, the daily cost of living in the Philippines is now around ₱205 per person to cover for food, transportation, housing, medicines and other necessities. At least 12.4 million Filipino families survive on ₱132 per person a day. The current minimum wage of ₱537/day set for the NCR is less than half of the ₱1,025 family living wage for a family of five. Millions of Filipinos suffer from homelessness and are forced to live in urban slums, sidewalks and under bridges. They lack access to clean water and electricity, sanitation, as well as public health facilities, schools and other social services.

Since March 2020, the Filipino people have been and are facing more economic hardships in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic because of the oppressive measures adapted by the Duterte regime. The military lockdown denied people of their right to travel, to work, make a living or seek employment. On the other hand from April-May 2020, corrupt Duterte used his emergency powers under the Bayanihan Act to realign hundreds of billions of public funds to the pockets of big bureaucrats, amend fiscal policies, and make special purchases under the guise of COVID-19 response, all without the benefit of public bidding, transparency or accountability. With Duterte’s imprimatur, Health Sec. Francisco Duque III ordered the procurement of grossly overpriced medical equip-

ment, personal protective equipment (PPE) and COVID-19 testing kits. Among those purchased were nucleic acid extraction machines for ₱4 M which can be bought for less than half the cost at ₱1.75 M, as well as PPE (₱1,800 per set) and swabbing kits (₱1,600 each) which are priced at ₱400-₱1,000 and ₱600 respectively. Having imported from China at least 11 million PPE sets at ₱21.8 B since March 2020, Duterte and his officials would have pocketed at least ₱10.8 B (with PPE priced at ₱1,000 per set) to ₱17 B (at ₱400 per set).

The assignation of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) last May 2020 as the lead force in the distribution of social subsidies for families affected by the Duterte regime's military lockdown led to more corruption and abuses. The social subsidy distribution was used by the AFP as an additional tool for the wholesale violations of human rights. Hundreds of thousands of people, especially in rural areas, were denied of their social subsidies because they were accused of being supporters of the NPA. Those masses, who were given social subsidies under the Social Amelioration Program (SAP), had to "cooperate" with the AFP and were reported as "NPA surrenderees." Thus, billions of pesos of social amelioration funds that Duterte downloaded to the AFP's coffers went to the pockets of Duterte's favorite military officers to further deepen their loyalty to the tyrant. Corruption is rampant in the AFP whose commander-in-chief, officers and men keep silent on corruption. The AFP is the dirtiest institutions in the country whose generals pocket billions of pesos in overpriced arms purchases and padded budgets of field operations.

Duterte has further instilled fear among the people to push fascist dictatorship. He pre-empted and stifled any complaints of corruption and bureaucratic red tape by appointing the AFP as lead in the distribution of subsidies. He has consolidated his fascist machinery down to the barangay level for everyone to abide by his armed authority. Under the "whole-of-nation" dogma, he wants society placed under the control of the military and his counterinsurgency aims. He wants things run under the military's fascist mode of thinking and methods of operation, where one is presumed to be "an NPA supporter" unless they take part or subsume their activities in the AFP's programs. Acting like dictator Marcos who put under martial law the whole country from 1972 to 1986, Duterte has made the military and police invade all aspects of civilian society in order to establish a "new

normal” wherein the AFP-PNP forces control every aspect of social and civic life. His whole scheme is very similar to the “new society” of dictator Marcos. He has even started his aim to rehabilitate the Marcos progenies for a comeback in Malacañang; and part of Duterte’s aim is changing the name of NAIA through House Bill No. 7031, filed by his son Paolo, Lord Allan Velasco and Eric Go Yap who propose to rename it to “Paliparang Pandaigdig ng Pilipinas” to erase from the minds of the Filipino people the memory of Ninoy Aquino who was assassinated at the airport in 1983, the beginning of the end of the Marcos dictatorship.

The militarist measures adopted by Duterte have been and are still underscored by the appointment of former military generals to lead his COVID-19 inter-agency task force (IATF). The regime continues to address the COVID-19 pandemic as a matter of “peace and order” and security, more than a public health issue. Indeed, as months pass, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to spread in the country, millions are becoming increasingly hungry and restive. The Filipino people are bound to explode in protests, especially in the face of the regime’s failure to address the daily socio-economic needs of the people, and protection of health workers, while its officials enjoy economic and medical entitlements. They are indignant over the health budget cuts ordered by Duterte to favor increases in military spending. Left with insufficient funds, the public health system is being stretched beyond its limits, with public hospitals lacking in supplies to handle the mass testing and treatment of patients, and to protect health workers from being infected with the virus. Because of the criminal neglect of the tyrant Duterte regime, the need to conduct countrywide mass testing and contract-tracing has been ignored. Due to this, the Department of Health (DOH) cannot determine the extent and direction of the spread of the pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic has and continues to have a severe impact on the local economy and dragging it deeper into crisis. Duterte’s economic planning officials are already anticipating a contraction of the economy, with hundreds of billions of pesos of losses in production, transportation and tourism; as well as in overseas remittances. The number of job losses are set to shoot up. Tyrant Duterte has exploited the COVID-19 pandemic to railroad the enactment of neoliberal reforms. It repackaged the said measures under the PH-PROGRESO (Philippine Program for

Recovery with Equity and Solidarity), a proposed program which purportedly aims to boost the economy which has been gravely devastated by the lockdown. The program primarily covers the old scheme to cut the corporate income tax and the implementation of infrastructure projects under the BBB program. Even before the onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic, the economic growth in the Philippines has been slowing down for three years already. The economy nosedived as a result of the lockdown and the implementation of restrictions on production and service activities. In Metro Manila alone, 53% of enterprises in the service sector were forced to close due to the lockdown. Approximately 73% of manufacturing operations in the national capital, Calabarzon and Central Luzon were also stopped. The import-export and transportation sectors were put to a halt. Because of this, nearly 23.7 million workers are in danger of losing their jobs. More than 400,000 small and medium enterprises also lost their incomes and are in danger of closing due to bankruptcy. The economic managers of the Duterte regime recently admitted in 2020 that the local economy shrank by 0.2% during the first quarter of 2020, the worst in more than two decades.

In response, the WB-trained economic managers of the regime announced the PH-PROGRESO proposal on May 14, 2020, and several associated bills filed in Congress, whose aim is to railroad the lowering down of taxes on corporations as an incentive to foreign capitalists who wish to invest in government programs. This was originally proposed under the Tax Reform for Attracting Better and Higher Quality Opportunities (TRABAHO) Bill that became the Corporate Income Tax and Incentives Rationalization Act (CITIRA). This is the second tax reform package which foreign businesses, particularly US companies, have long lobbied for. Under the new Corporate Recovery and Tax Incentives for Enterprises (CREATE) Bill, the corporate income tax has been lowered down from 30% to 25%. It has also given the president the authority to tailor-fit tax incentives and exemptions for big companies. The regime implemented the reform as early as July 2020 by railroading the passage of the said bill before the Congress closed its session on June 5, 2020.

Based on conservative estimates of NEDA, the reactionary state will lose about ₱259 billion in corporate taxes until 2022 should the tax cuts be implemented. Multinationals and companies that rake in billions of

profits in the country will primarily benefit from this reform. Related, Duterte ordered the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) to issue an order to provide tax exemptions and incentives to big companies that responded to his call for donations amid the pandemic. Under the said regulations issued on April 6, 2020, the total amount of financial and material donations given by corporations would be fully deducted from their gross incomes. While cutting corporate taxes, it imposed heavier taxes on the poor. Invoking his emergency powers, Duterte issued an executive order in 2019 which implemented a 10% tax increase on imported crude oil and petroleum products. The expected result of this is the continuing oil price hikes, which are being shouldered by the people.

To give a new push to the slow implementation of the BBB program, the regime repackaged its infrastructure projects under the PH-PROGRESO as a strategy to purportedly create new jobs to address the massive unemployment crisis. In line with this recommendation, Duterte’s minion filed the COVID-19 Unemployment Reduction Economic Stimulus (CURES) Bill in Congress. Through this, the regime would ensure that the ₱1-trillion funds appropriated for BBB would remain untouched, while allocating an additional ₱500 billion that would be sourced from loans and funds to be collected by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas. The ₱1.5 trillion fund, which will be disbursed in three stages (₱500 billion per year from 2021 to 2023), will be apportioned by autocrat Duterte and his supermajority in Congress.

The BBB projects have not generated and will not create sufficient and long-term employment opportunities. In the past, the much touted program has only contributed one-fourth of the total employment in the construction sector. Corrupt government officials are competing over the implementation of these infrastructure projects, as this is where they source their massive kickbacks. Even amid the pandemic and intense hardships experienced by the people, the ruling classes continue to prioritize profiteering to further their self-serving interests.

The ruling Duterte clique further consolidated its power in 2019 by placing key Duterte minions in the Senate and House of Representatives through manipulation of the electronic counting system. The Philippine congress is now a Duterte rubber-stamp and willing accomplice of the Duterte authoritarian regime. The elite opposition forces have been effec-

tively disenfranchised. The Duterte ruling clique has taken advantage of the COVID-19 crisis to further advance its scheme to impose authoritarian rule. The emergency powers granted to Duterte gave him billions of pesos to squander, and the power to take over private companies in the guise of public health response. These extend Duterte's previous maneuvers to undermine the Lopezes, Ayalas and Pangilins and other "oligarchs" in favor of the "Dutertegarchs."

Piqued Duterte sent the US a notice terminating the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) in February 2020, styling it as an act of patriotism. By itself, the VFA termination, however, does not comprise a change in the unequal military relations between the US and the Philippines. The 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) and the 2014 Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) remain in place. Both agreements give the US extraterritorial rights in the country to continue its dominance in the Philippines and conduct military interventionism. In fact, the Duterte regime is secretly pleading with the US for minor amendments in the VFA or negotiate a new agreement with assurances of political support and increased military aid. The Balikatan war exercises, though not conducted on April 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, will still continue as part of US military interventionism. The US will also continue to supply the reactionary AFP with ₱45 million worth of surplus war matériel⁴⁷ under the Foreign Military Financing program of the Department of State. Under the Operation Pacific Eagle-Philippines, the US also carries out military operations in the guise of anti-terrorism. The AFP in its ELCAC military offensives nationwide is assisted by the US military in establishing and training new combat units such as the Light Reaction Regiment, the 1st Brigade Combat Team and the 2nd Brigade Combat Team which are all based in Fort Magsaysay, Palayan City, Nueva Ecija, where the US maintains facilities under the EDCA.

Since 2017, the Duterte regime has shed its peace pretensions, when it imposed martial law in Mindanao and ended negotiations with the NDFP through Proclamation 360. It further issued Proclamation 374 which declared the CPP, NPA and NDFP Chief Political Consultant Prof.

⁴⁷ In a military context, the term *materiel*, or *matériel*, refers either to the specific needs (excluding manpower) of a force to complete a specific mission, or the general sense of the needs (excluding manpower) of a functioning army.

Jose Ma. Sison as terrorists and filed a case to formally proscribe the aforementioned under the Human Security Act. Hoping to repair his reputation as an international pariah and under pressure from the international and national peace community, Duterte reopened peace channels with the NDFP recently in the hope of establishing his “peace legacy.” Keeping its peace doors always open, the NDFP has welcomed the overtures but made clear that the impediments put up by Duterte must be done away with. These include the previous proclamations and executive orders which have served to propel his brutal war.

Under the “Whole-of-Nation Approach,” which created the NTF-ELCAC in December 2018, Duterte has put under de facto martial law the entire country and has required all government agencies and local government units to cooperate with the NTF and focus their efforts to counterinsurgency. He has even prepared his former AFP generals—DND Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, DILG Secretary Eduardo Año and Presidential Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon—to form a junta to continue the de facto martial law in case anything would happen to tyrant Duterte before or after the 2022 National Elections. He has spent billions of money for the AFP-PNP and their anti-people military operations. He has stolen public funds and donations to fight the COVID-19 pandemic to sustain his de facto martial law and the needs of his corrupt regime. Using public money, the regime has been conducting a heavily funded campaign of disinformation and manipulation of public opinion using paid surveys, social media trolls, paid columnists and PR specialists.

In line with the aims of the NTF, Duterte has successfully sought to reinforce further his tyranny and state terrorism by amending the Human Security Act. More HRVs would be committed by the fascist USDR due to the fact that the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020 (ATA 2020), Republic Act No. 11479, has already been approved by tyrant Duterte on July 3, 2020. The ATA 2020 targets all progressive legal organizations, political oppositionists and other critics as terrorists to be apprehended and eliminated. It broadens the definition of “terrorism” to cover all forms of dissent and which gives the state the right to arrest anyone without a warrant, detain terror suspects for up to 24 days without charges or evidence, and remove police and military liability for wrongful detention. ATA 2020 has put into law the Duterte’s red-tagging of activists and their legitimate organi-

zations as communist and/or NPA fronts, therefore, as “terrorist organizations.” Senate Pres. Vicente Sotto III and red-tagging Senators Panfilo Lacson and Bato de la Rosa proclaimed that there would be no need to declare martial law because ATA 2020 itself is serving as an instrument for martial law of the USDR to implement fascist dictatorship throughout the country. It is being opposed by the National Union of People’s Lawyers (NUPL), Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP), Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines (AMRSP), the Ecumenical Bishops’ Forum (EBF), and the Association of Women in Theology (AWIT). Even business groups have also objected due to the fact that fear, being created by ATA 2020, would surely affect the business sector. 250 people’s organizations have petitioned Duterte to veto the ATA 2020, but have not been heard. The Makabayan bloc, legal organizations and personalities have petitioned the Supreme Court to declare anti-democratic and unconstitutional and to nullify ATA 2020 as Sections 4, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 25, 26, 27, 29, and 34 violate basic human rights and the rights protected by the Constitution.

Units of the AFP conduct so-called “community support programs” (previously called Peace and Development Operations) under which fascist troops are deployed in the communities. The armed presence of military troops disrupts the people’s lives and livelihood. They intimidate the peasant masses, arbitrarily accuse them of being “NPA supporters” to force them to cooperate. The AFP mount fake surrenders, put up checkpoints and impose population control measures. They conscript people to become paramilitary forces, force civilians to render unpaid labor, and other violations of democratic and civil rights. They carry out artillery shelling and aerial bombings in the vicinity of communities, terrorizing and traumatizing the civilians, especially children, and forcing people to flee their homes and farms.

At the same time, they carry out psywar operations such as “community integration programs” and “delivery of service,” which are riddled with corruption. These programs aim to conceal the fascist fangs of Duterte’s fascist troops. Under “Enhanced Comprehensive Local Integration Program (E-CLIP),” “surrenderdees” are promised ₱60,000, which more often than not is pocketed by brigade and battalion officers of the AFP. To

fool the masses, Duterte has gone on a publicity campaign styling himself as land reform advocate in a hopeless attempt to persuade the peasant masses to follow his tyrannical command: “You do not need the NPA.”

Duterte has conducted his campaign of suppression against the peasant masses with utter violence. The onslaught has been most vicious in areas where the people have actively resisted the entry of mining, plantations, tourism, energy and other big corporate projects. Full-scale terrorism has been employed to force the masses to surrender their democratic rights and their struggles to defend their land and economic well-being. To enforce the suppression, the AFP has frenziedly constructed military, paramilitary, and police detachments in and around rural communities. The terrorist methods used by the AFP in their base denial operations, however, are counterproductive as peasant and minority masses are roused to resist the regime’s fascist cruelty, and seek the NPA to defend their rights and lives.

So, what now is the summary of the Filipino people’s present poverty and inequality situation? The present poverty and inequality situation in the Philippines today is due to the fact that the country is semi-feudal and semi-colonial. As such, it is underdeveloped because it remains to be a backward agricultural and a non-industrial nation, that is maintained by the combined feudal-bourgeois rule of big landlords, big comprador bourgeoisie and corrupt bureaucrat capitalists, who make use of the fascist AFP-PNP and are dictated by contending imperialist powers, principally by US imperialism. Under the USDR, the poverty situation has exacerbated. Tyrant Duterte has bankrupted the economy and the government with his extreme overspending on the military and police, fascist operations and rampant corruptions.

With the kind of chronic poverty situation in the country, *quo vadis* toiling masses of the Philippines in order to live? No other way but for the millions of Filipino farmers to abandon their farming jobs and migrate to the cities to find better-paying jobs only to be counted as unemployed or underemployed workforces! No other way but for the millions of Filipinos to leave their families and become OFWs, wherein 60 percent of the 10.4 million Filipinos (June 2020 data) working abroad are women. Many of them have died and are being repatriated due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To what classes in Philippine society do the most vulnerable victims of poverty and inequality belong? They comprise the workers, semi-proletariat (urban poor in street-communities and slum areas, vendors, drivers, construction workers, odd job seekers, sales employees in malls and department stores, service employees, janitors, other informal employees, seasonal farm workers, etc.), the peasants, fisherfolk, and their families from the sectors of women, youth and national minorities. However, the petit-bourgeoisie class and the democratic sectors from this class, especially the middle section, are also very much affected by the economic and political crisis being unleashed by the fascist regime.

But how would the Filipino people liberate themselves from such chronic poverty situation? They must be united in order to fight and oust the fascist regime. Fascism must be stopped so that the Filipino people could put up a government that serves the economic, political and cultural interests of the masses. This must be so for Filipinos to be free in order to plan and implement genuine agrarian reform and national industrialization throughout the country.

CNL Proposes Four Inter-Related Mass Movements Against Poverty and Inequality in the Philippines

Based on the aforementioned present situation of the social ill of poverty and inequalities which the present tyrant USDR unleashes against the Filipino people throughout the whole country, the big question now is: *what can be done by the combined efforts*—of workers, semi-proletariat (urban poor in street-communities and slum areas, vendors, handicraftsmen, carpenters and masons, small photographers, ambulant repairmen and poor fishermen, peddlers and small stallkeepers, provincial dock porters, city market cargadores, shop assistants, apprentices in sweatshops, pedicab drivers, tricycle drivers, jeepney drivers, house servants, restaurant helpers, odd job seekers, janitors, other informal employees, seasonal farm workers, etc.), the fisherfolk, peasants, and their families from the sectors of women, youth and national minorities, and of the progressive intelligentsia among petit-bourgeoisie class, which includes the Catholic and Protestant Church people—*as necessary steps* in the struggle of the Filipino people against poverty and inequalities and for the achievement of national freedom, democracy and socialism?

Especially for Christians from among the petit-bourgeoisie class and even the national bourgeoisie class, who include the Catholic and Protestant Church leaders and workers, CNL strongly proposes four mass movements, which would be implemented through the collective efforts of the aforementioned forces, and would serve as essential measures that would support the Filipino people’s struggle against poverty and inequalities and for the attainment of national freedom, democracy and socialism some decades from now. These four mass movements have already been started some decades ago by the workers, the peasants, the national minorities, and other democratic classes and sectors of Philippine society. These four mass movements are inter-connected. What shall be needed would be to hold regular assessments and planning sessions at the national, regional and provincial levels, and to be attended by cadres and activists from the existing sectoral and multi-sectoral organizations, institutions and programs, including those from the Catholic and Protestant Churches. The regular assessments and planning sessions shall also become venues for building and strengthening coordination, networking, support, alliance, cooperation and solidarity for the fast advancement of the four mass movements. Leaders, cadres and activists of the various sectoral organizations, institutions and programs must consciously get the formal support of both the Catholic and Protestant Churches’ bodies, conferences, organizations, institutions and programs for the realization and advancement of the four mass movements.

The four mass movements, whose main components shall be discussed in the following paragraphs, are as follows. **First**, expand and consolidate the working class mass movement in the urban and industrial areas and the peasant mass movement in the countryside. **Second**, expand and consolidate boldly the anti-fascist and anti-imperialist mass movement, and the movement for the implementation of the Comprehensive Agreement for the Respect of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL). This includes oust Duterte movement in order to facilitate the full implementation of CARHRIHL. **Third**, support the establishment and the strengthening of the People’s Choice Movement (PCM) as a national-democratic machinery of the Christian laity for the election of pro-peasant, pro-worker and national-democratic party lists and political candidates. If the USDR would not be ousted before

2022 and if the 2022 national elections would push through, PCM is expected not to support candidates who have been involved during the tyrannical rule of the USDR. And **fourth**, join the mass movement to strongly urge the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) to resume the genuine national peace talks in order to finalize and approve the three remaining substantive agendas.

The Working Class and the Peasant Mass Movement

The progressive intelligentsia from the urban petit-bourgeoisie together with the Catholic and Protestant Church people must know the situation of the working class and must also confer the organizations of the workers on what can be done in order to be of help in the expansion and consolidation of the working class mass movement in the urban and industrial areas. In the same way also in the countryside, the progressive intelligentsia from among the petit-bourgeoisie, including Catholic and Protestant Church people in the parishes and local churches, must also know the peasant and national minority situation and must also ask the peasant leaders and their organizations on what to do in order to be of help in expanding and consolidating the peasant mass movement at the barangay, municipal and provincial level.

As already mentioned above, basic tasks to be considered in the context of the labor mass movement in the Philippines are the establishment, expansion and consolidation of genuine labor unions in order for the toiling masses of workers to uphold and promote their rights, demands and struggles, and prepare essential steps needed in the implementation of national industrialization when the right moment would come. Very important part of this is the nationalization of foreign firms and private-owned industries of the big landlords, big comprador bourgeoisie and bureaucrat capitalists). This is very necessary to liberate from poverty the Filipino working class and the entire Filipino people.

Also stated earlier above, the basic tasks in resolving the contradiction between the big landlords and the poor and landless peasants are: the establishment, expansion and consolidation of peasant associations from the barangay to the provincial level; the launching of the minimum program of the genuine agrarian reform in order to lower land rent and

loan interests, raise the price of farm products and wage of farm workers, lower the price of farm inputs; and preparation for the implementation of the maximum program (confiscation of the lands of big landlords, land distribution to landless peasants, establishing communal and state farms, etc.), which would be achieved by building and consolidating the people’s revolutionary democratic government at the barangay up to the municipal and provincial levels.

The above tasks of building, expanding and consolidating the Working Class and the Peasant Mass Movement are particularized in the NDFP draft of the Comprehensive Agreement on Socio-Economic Reforms (CASER). Even though it is not yet finalized and approved by the GRP and the NDFP, this NDFP draft of the CASER could already be used as a guide in the building, expansion and consolidation of the labor mass movement and the mass movement of the peasantry. The six key strategies of CASER are: (1) Reject neoliberal economics; (2) Break imperialist-comprador-landlord domination of the economy; (3) Uphold responsible state intervention for strategic economic development and in the interest of the people; (4) Put the people’s organizations at the center of decisions about the economy; (5) Build foundations of national economy with agrarian reform, rural development, and national industrialization; and (6) Ensure that the economy serves the people and rigorously upholds their rights and welfare.

And in order to fully implement the six key strategies, CASER has identified three main areas as foremost doable priorities of the Filipino people in order to achieve a comprehensive national development of Philippine society: (1) Develop the national economy through: (a) Agrarian reform and rural development; (b) National industrialization and economic development; and (c) Environmental protection, rehabilitation and compensation; (2) Uphold the people’s rights: (a) Advancing the rights of the working people; (b) Promoting patriotic, progressive and pro-people culture; and (c) Recognition of ancestral lands and territories of national minorities; and (3) Defend and sustain economic sovereignty for national development: (a) Foreign economic and trade relations; and (b) Monetary and fiscal policies.

The Anti-Fascist and Anti-Imperialist Mass Movement and CARHRIHL

The working class and peasant mass movement must be complemented by a strong anti-fascist and anti-imperialist mass movement and by a mass movement for the implementation of CARHRIHL. The mass movement of workers and peasants can achieve successive victories in so far as the anti-fascist and anti-imperialist mass movement is sustained. This includes the “Oust Duterte Movement” in order to facilitate the full implementation of CARHRIHL. This must be so because tyrant Duterte, the commander-in-chief of the fascist AFP-PNP and the No. 1 killer of the Filipino people’s democracy and human rights, must be put to an end in order to fully restore democracy and human rights to the Filipino people.

The anti-fascist mass campaign must continue to expose and oppose the fascist acts of tyrant Duterte and his reactionary AFP and PNP commanders. These fascist acts were and continue to be committed in the implementation of the series of massive military operation plans (Oplans) devised by USDR. In 2016 right after the national elections, Duterte commanded his fascist AFP-PNP to launch Oplan Bayanihan, which was unleashed nationwide through combat, intelligence and civil-military Peace and Development Teams (PDT) operations. Then from 2017 to 2018, tyrant Duterte launched his three wars of suppression, namely, Oplan Tokhang “war against drugs,” Oplan Kapayapaan, and anti-Moro war and martial law and anti-Moro war in Mindanao that led to the total destruction of Marawi City and the dislocation of the Moro city inhabitants. And since December 2018 to the present, autocrat Duterte continues to unleash his de facto Martial Law throughout the country through his Oplan Kapangatagan and “Whole-of-Nation Approach” by means of the “12 Pillars” and the NTF against the Filipino people in the guise to ELCAC. Part of tyrant’s de facto Martial Law Oplan is Duterte’s command compelling all national government agencies and local government units (LGUs) to declare maliciously the CPP-NPA as “persona non grata,” push forward the “localized peace talks,” fully support the corruption-laden E-CLIP of the fascist AFP for fake NPA surrenderees, and red-tag activists, human rights defenders, justice and peace advocates, people’s organizations and progressive Partylists as “communist supporters and fronts.”

As a result, all of tyrant Duterte’s massive military Oplans, since he was elected as President in May 2016, have resulted in countless human rights violations that have to be continually exposed and condemned in launching massive anti-fascist mass campaigns. Tens of thousands of drug war victims were extra-judicially killed by the USDR. In their focused military operations (FMOs), tyrant Duterte and his fascist military commanders have launched aerial bombings and artillery shellings on rural communities, especially in Mindanao, to grab the land from the peasants and indigenous people and deliver it to mining, logging, plantation and real estate corporations. And thousands of peasants, national minorities and their families have been forced to evacuate to town centers. Up to now, the USDR has not yet rehabilitated the people of Marawi City, who were totally dislocated due to the total destruction of the city. Moreover, there are the countless fascist acts of surveillance, intimidations, harassments and slanderous propaganda against the Filipino people. Countless Filipinos have been and continue to be vilified and red-tagged, including their progressive organizations, institutions, and programs. Thousands of the civilian population have been declared by the AFP-PNP as “NPA surrenderees.” Many have been illegally arrested with trumped-up charges based on planted evidence with impunity and detained for years in prison. There are now more than 600 political prisoners, most of whom were arrested under Duterte. Thousands have been victims of murders, massacres, assassinations and extra-judicial killings. In November 2019, human rights organizations have listed 27,450 civilian who are victims of extra-judicial killings. Most of these victims are peasants, workers, urban poor, national minorities, women and youth. More than 50 of them are from the enlightened intelligentsia of human rights workers, lawyers, a judge, priests and pastors. And political analysts conclude that the number of extra-judicial killings during tyrant Duterte have more than triplicated the political killings of dictator Marcos’ Martial Law regime. (The above are besides the 46,581 victims of human rights violations from January-December 3, 2020 alone, already mentioned earlier.)

All the aforementioned HRVs committed by the USDR are violations of the CARHRIHL, signed by both the GRP and the NDFP Negotiating Panels and their Principals in 1998. In relation to the Philippine revolutionary movement, there are other human rights breaches of the USDR

that have violated the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) by detaining nine NDFP consultants who are still in jail up to this day, and have also contravened the international humanitarian law as stipulated in CARHRIHL by the series of assassinations of unarmed NDFP consultants and Party leaders such as Randy Felix Malayao in Nueva Vizcaya on January 30, 2019; Julius “Ka Goyo” Marquez, Ennabel “Ka Leah” Balunos and Ma. Finela “Ka Ricky” Mejia in Namatican, Sta. Lucia, Ilocos Sur on February 13, 2020; Julius “Ka Nars” Soriano Giron, his attending physician Dr. Ma Lourdes “Ka Mori” Denero Tangco, and their aide Arvie Alarcon Reyes in Baguio City on March 13, 2020; Randall “Ka Randy” Echanis in Novaliches, Quezon City on August 17, 2020; the couple Eugenia “Ka Bes” Magpantay and Agaton “Ka Sibot” Topacio in Angono, Rizal on November 25, 2020; Antonio “Ka Susing” Cabanatan and his wife Florenda “Ka Osang” Yap in Barangay Botong, Oton, Iloilo on December 26, 2020; and scores of other comrades in Negros, Samar, Bukidnon, Masbate and Sorsogon. All these butcheries should be added to the crimes against humanity, which have already been filed to the International Criminal Court (ICC) against Duterte and his lawless and pro-US imperialist army and police commanders.

The anti-fascist mass movement must, therefore, launch militant and sustained mass campaign activities which shall have one or all of the following four objectives: (1) to expose, denounce and oppose all human right violations and all oppressive laws such ATA 2020 and those enacted by dictator Marcos; (2) to seek justice and indemnification of all the victims, and punish the most fascist violators; (3) to commensurate all the victims of human rights violations and strengthen the anti-tyranny movement; and (4) to agitate for the “Oust Duterte Movement” up to the greatest moment of a powerful convergence of all anti-Duterte forces for the tyrant’s final overthrow.

The militant and sustained mass campaign activities of the anti-fascist mass movement can have various forms that have specific targets. March rallies, prayer rallies, religious processions, caravans, demonstrations, delegations, and other forms in places where the specific targets are located. Streamers, banners, leaflets, calls written on placards, and other propaganda materials must all be prepared for every anti-fascist mass cam-

paign activity. Main targets can include Malacañang; Batasang Pambasa; national, regional and provincial HQs of the AFP and PNP.

Simultaneous with the anti-fascist mass campaigns, as already enumerated and defined above, should also be the launching of the mass campaign for the implementation of CARHRIHL and of the anti-US imperialist mass campaign, particularly against the armed intervention of US imperialism in the Philippines. These two inter-related mass campaigns—implementation of CARHRIHL and anti-US imperialist armed intervention—are essential parts of the anti-fascist mass movement that must support the working class and peasant mass movement. The targets of thesetwomass campaigns could be Malacañang, Batasang Pambasa, the national GHQs of the AFP and PNP, and the US Embassy.

As regards CARHRIHL, there are a lot of specific agreements that are not yet implemented, or are only partially executed. Particular examples are: the prevention of the most serious human rights violations in term of civil and political rights, the protection and promotion of the full scope of human rights, fundamental freedoms, and the basic collective and individual rights of workers, peasants, fisherfolk, urban poor, migrant workers, ethnic minorities, women, youth, children; the settlements and compensations of the victims of human rights violations during the Marcos dictatorial regime. Another is the fact that the subsisting Marcos repressive laws and decrees have not yet been repealed. Even the generally accepted principles and standards of international humanitarian law in relation to the armed conflict have not been respected by the puppet regime and its reactionary armed forces.

In relation to the anti-US imperialist mass campaign, particularly against the armed intervention of US imperialism in the Philippines, this must be focused on the termination and abrogation of all unequal US-Philippines military treaties and agreements like the MDT, the VFA, the EDCA, and the Mutual Logistics Support Agreement (MLSA). Also part of the anti-US imperialist mass campaign should be the full stop of the annual joint US-Philippine Balikatan war exercises as these are an essential portion of the US imperialist armed intervention in the country.

The People's Choice Movement (PCM)

As CNL affirms the correctness of the separation of church and state, the Catholic and Protestant Church people (Cardinals, bishops, priests, pastors, sisters and Church workers) are invited to fully support the establishment and the strengthening of the People's Choice Movement (PCM), which is a national-democratic machinery of the CHRISTIAN LAITY for the election of pro-peasant, pro-worker and national-democratic political candidates and party lists. So that if the USDR would not be ousted before 2022, millions of PCM activists and members are expected not to support and elect those candidates who have been involved in the tyrannical rule of the USDR, and to actively join the "Oust Duterte Movement" if the 2022 national elections would not push through or if the outcome of the 2022 national elections would be rigged by the USDR.

Thus, it behooves that all lay Christians and Church people must study very well the primer of the PCM. There is already a prepared PCM primer that defines: (1) Why PCM is needed; (2) Who are those in the PCM; (3) The vision, mission and objectives of PCM; (4) How PCM will be established; and (5) What are the functions of a PCM chapter. The PCM primer is inspired by what Pope Francis has said that: "We cannot be good Christians without being good citizens. When injustice and untruth are involved, not to be involved is to participate in the injustice and lies—a sin of omission"; and also by the CBCP March 2019 Statement that declared,

Participation in politics for Christian lay people is not just to be limited to non-partisan involvement. Christians are also encouraged to engage in principled partisan politics. This means that they can campaign for good candidates as an exercise of their Christian faith.⁴⁸

Last March 2019 a PCM organizing group was formed and the principles of PCM were initially put into practice during the May 2019 National Elections. The PCM organizing group circulated a proposal that 2020-2021 should be dedicated to establish a Council of Leaders at the city, municipal, provincial and national levels. The PCM organizing

⁴⁸ <https://cbcnews.net/cbcnews/seek-the-common-good/>

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group proposal further added that: PCM chapters, with a minimum of 20 members who would elect their own officers, could already be established within or outside of parishes or local churches, schools and mission areas in communities; the established chapters in close proximity to each other can be merged and they could a Council of Leaders at the diocesan, vicariate, district, and conference levels that could assist in establishing and strengthening the city, municipal and provincial Councils of Leaders. The PCM organizing group has advised all Christians not to fear because organizing “Peoples Councils” at the barangay, municipal, city and provincial levels is mandated by The Local Government Code RA 7160.

Depending on the sufficient number of PCM chapters/members and the establishment of the PCM Council of Leaders at the city, municipal and provincial levels, it was also proposed by the PCM organizing group that a PCM National Assembly would be convened within the last quarter of 2021 in order to elect the PCM National Council of Leaders. It would also be during the PCM National Assembly that a national plan would be discussed and approved as regards what to do for the 2022 National Elections.

Mass Movement for the Continuation of a Genuine National Peace Talk

Also simultaneous with the three aforementioned mass movements is the mass campaign to strongly urge the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) to resume genuine national peace talks in order to finalize and approve the Comprehensive Agreement on Socio-Economic Reforms (CASER), start and finish the drafting, finalization and approval of the two remaining substantive agenda on Political and Constitutional Reforms, and End of Hostilities and Disposition of Forces. The successes and victories of the inter-connected three mass movements (the working class and peasant mass movement; the anti-fascist and anti-US imperialist mass movement, and the mass movement for the implementation of CARHRIHL; and the PCM, especially for the 2022 National Elections) would serve as the foundation that will ascertain the resumption of the National Peace Talks between the GRP and the NDFP. Certainly, the resumption of the national peace talks would depend on the openness and

sincerity of the President of the GRP, who would lead the reorganization of the GRP Peace Negotiating Panel, which was dissolved by tyrant Duterte in 2018. Surely, no resumption of genuine national peace talks if tyrant Duterte would still be in power, or if another of Duterte's and/or Marcos' ilk would become President of the Philippines by 2022.

Of course, before the resumption, there would be a need to restrengthen the Philippine Ecumenical Peace Platform (PEPP) whose members are from the CBCP, NCCP, the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches (PCEC), EBF and AMRSP. It is suggested that the PEPP would have to launch and facilitate a PEPP National Convention to assess the past and present situation of the GRP-NDFP Peace Negotiations, evaluate how the PEPP implemented its Program Thrust which was formulated during the November 7, 2007 founding Conference of the PEPP, and make resolutions and recommendations as to what concrete steps can the PEPP accomplish in the coming year/s to push forward the peace process between the GRP and the NDFP, and resume formal peace talks. The PEPP must also consolidate its network with the Norwegian Ecumenical Peace Platform (NEPP) for a continuing spiritual, moral, financial and human support to the PEPP in assisting through various ways the GRP-NDFP National Peace Negotiation.

Part 3

On the Common Good, the Universal Destination of Goods, and Private Property

In the following paragraphs, CNL shall first present the concepts, including their implications, of the Roman Catholic Church's doctrine on the principles of the common good and the universal destination of goods, and on private property. After which, CNL shall, then, tender its comments on such concepts. Except in *Chapter One* of the *Compendium* regarding *God's Plan of Love for Humanity*, the "common good" or "common welfare," being one of the fundamental principles of the Roman Catholic's social doctrines, is found in all the remaining eleven Chapters of the book.

According to the Catholic Church's doctrine, the common good stems from the dignity, unity and equality of all people, and is the sum total of social conditions for people to reach their fulfilment more fully and more easily.

In the same Chapter Two, the *Compendium* in its historical notes on Pope Pius XI's Encyclical Letter *Divini Redemptoris* (1937) mentions again the "common good" and states that in this encyclical, "the professional and business classes are called to work together in a special way for the attainment of the common good."⁴⁹ The *Compendium's* historical notes on Pope John XXIII's Encyclical Letter *Pacem in Terris* (1963) also states the Encyclical Letter *Divini Redemptoris* (1937) "dwells on the public authority of the world community, called to tackle and solve problems of an economic, social, political or cultural character which are posed by the universal common good."⁵⁰ Reflecting on Pope John Paul II's "Letter on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Second World War" in September 1989, the *Compendium* in Chapter Three on "The Human Person and Human Rights" mentions again the "common good" and says that "The Magisterium points out that international law rests upon the principle of equal

⁴⁹ *Compendium*, p. 48.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 49-50.

respect for States, for each people’s right to self-determination and for their free cooperation in view of the higher common good of humanity.”⁵¹

The definition of “the principle of the common good” is found in Chapter Four of the *Compendium* regarding the “Principles of the Church’s Social Doctrine.” Basing the definitions of the principle of the common good on Pius XI’s Encyclical Letter *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931), the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council’s *Gaudium et Spes* (1966), the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #1905-1912, Pope John XXIII’s Encyclical Letter *Mater et Magistra* (1961) and his other Encyclical Letter *Pacem in Terris* (1963), and Pope Paul VI’s Apostolic Letter *Octogesima Adveniens* (1971), the *Compendium* explains the meaning and primary implications of the principle of the common good. It states that the principle of the common good “stems from the dignity, unity and equality of all people.”⁵² The common good “indicates the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily.”⁵³

Still basing its explanations on Pope John XXIII’s Encyclical Letter *Pacem in Terris* (1963), the *Compendium* further expounds that

The common good... belonging to everyone and to each person... is and remains “common” because it is indivisible and because only together is it possible to attain it, increase it and safeguard its effectiveness, with regard also to the future.⁵⁴

The common good is, therefore the responsibility of everyone, especially the states, for

A society that wishes and intends to remain at the service of the human being at every level is a society that has the common good—the good of all people and of the whole person—its primary goal... No expression of social life—from the family to intermediate social groups, associations, enterprises of an

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 79.

⁵² Ibid., p. 83.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 83.

economic nature, cities, regions, States, up to the community of peoples and nations—can escape the issue of its own common good, in that this is a constitutive element of its significance and the authentic reason for its very existence.⁵⁵

The *Compendium* further elucidates that every nation has the responsibility to contribute towards the promotion of “a true worldwide cooperation for the common good of the whole humanity and for future generations also.”⁵⁶ This means that the state and the people of each country have to stimulate the “demands of the common good” which concern the following:

The commitment to peace...; a sound juridical system; the protection of the environment; the provision of essential services to all, some of which are at the same time human rights [such as] food, housing, work, education and access to culture, transportation, basic health care, the freedom of communication and expression, and the protection of religious freedom.⁵⁷

To further elucidate the responsibility for everyone to work for social justice in the quest for the common good, the *Compendium* quotes a very important point in Pius XI’s Encyclical Letter *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931):

The distribution of created goods, which, as every discerning person knows, is laboring today under the gravest evils due to the huge disparity between the few exceedingly rich and the unnumbered propertyless, must be effectively called back to and brought into conformity with the norms of the common good, that is, social justice.⁵⁸

This means there has to be equity and equality in the economic field as a manifestation that, indeed, the common good of all, especially of the

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 84.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 84-85.

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“unnumbered propertyless” of workers and peasants, is being attained in human society.

In the other parts of Chapter Four, the *Compendium* expounds on the need for the principle of subsidiarity and solidarity in the promotion and attainment of the common good. It states that the principle of subsidiarity encourages

The private initiative [of] every social entity... [and strikes] a balance between the public and private spheres, with resulting recognition of the *social* function of the private sphere... [that] remains at the service of the common good, each with its own distinctive characteristics.⁵⁹

It further clarifies that

the characteristic implication of subsidiarity is participation, which is expressed essentially in a series of activities by means of which the citizen, either as individual or in association with others, whether directly or through representation, contributes to the cultural, economic, political and social life of the civil community to which he belongs. Participation is a duty to be fulfilled consciously by all, with responsibility and with a view to the common good... given its importance for growth... in areas such as the world of work and economic activity, especially in their internal dynamics; the sectors of information and culture, and... [the] fields of social and political life even at the highest levels.⁶⁰

And the *Compendium* stresses that

it becomes absolutely necessary to encourage participation above all of the most disadvantaged, as well as the occasional rotation of political leaders in order to forestall the establishment of hidden privileges [and this must be so because] participation in community life is not only one of the greatest aspirations of the citizen, called to exercise freely and responsi-

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 95.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 96.

bly his civic role with and for others, but also one of the pillars of all democratic [systems].⁶¹

Regarding the need of the principle of solidarity in promoting and attaining the common good, the *Compendium* bases its reflections on the Pope John Paul II's three encyclical letters, namely, Encyclical Letter *Laborem Exercens* (1981), Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1988), and Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (1991). It says that

solidarity is [a] virtue directed... to the common good, and [committed] to the good of one's neighbor with readiness..., "to lose oneself for the sake of the other instead of exploiting him, and to 'serve him' instead of oppressing him for one's own advantage" (cf. Mt. 10:40-42, 20:25; Mk 10:42-45; Lk 22:25-27).⁶²

It makes clear that

the message of the Church's social doctrine regarding solidarity clearly shows that there exists an intimate bond between solidarity and the common good, between solidarity and the universal destination of goods, between solidarity and equality among men and peoples, between solidarity and peace in the world.⁶³

In Chapter Five concerning "The Family, the Vital Cell of Society" and specifically on *procreation*, the *Compendium*, reflecting on Pope John Paul II's Letter to Families *Gratissimam Sane* (1994), says:

It necessary to rediscover the social value of that *portion* of the common good inherent in each new human being. Every child "becomes a gift to its brothers, sisters, parents and entire family. *Its life becomes a gift for the very people who were givers of life* and who cannot help but feel its presence, its sharing in

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid., p. 99.

⁶³ Ibid.

their life and its contribution to their common good and to that of the community of the family.”⁶⁴

In terms of educating children, the *Compendium*, having the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council’s Declaration *Gravissimum Educastiones* (1966) as its source of reference, states: “By exercising its mission to educate, the family contributes to the common good and constitutes the first school of social virtue, which all societies need.”⁶⁵

The *Compendium* in Chapter Six regarding the “Human Work” relates the common good to the right and duty to work. It says that

work is a fundamental right and a good for mankind, a useful good, worthy of man because it is an appropriate way for him to give expression to and enhance his human dignity... It is a good belonging to all people and must be made available to all who are capable of engaging in it. [It stresses that] full employment therefore remains a mandatory objective for every economic system oriented towards justice and the common good... The planning capacity of a society oriented towards the common good and looking to the future is measured also and above all on the basis of the employment prospects that it is able to offer.⁶⁶

In Chapter Seven of the *Compendium* regarding “Economic Life,” there is a controversial statement here which states that “when the free market carries out [the means and ends] it becomes a service to the common good and to integral human development.”⁶⁷ We shall go back to this in the CNL’s sub-topics below. It would suffice to add here two specific points about the connection of tax revenues and public spending and the redistribution of wealth to the common good. The *Compendium* emphasizes that

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 121.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 126.

⁶⁶ Ibid., pp. 148-149.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 177.

public spending is directed to the common good when certain fundamental principles are observed: the payment of taxes as part of the duty of solidarity, a reasonable and fair application of taxes; precision and integrity in administering and distributing public resources.⁶⁸

As to the redistribution of wealth, the *Compendium* says that “in the redistribution of resources, public spending must observe the principles of solidarity, equality and making use of talents.”⁶⁹ And it adds

looking after the common good means making use of the new opportunities for the redistribution of wealth among the different areas of the planet, to the benefit of the underprivileged that until now have been excluded or cast to the sidelines of social and economic progress.⁷⁰

Meaning, in the pursuit of the common good and the universal destination of goods, the lowly and the downtrodden masses of workers and peasants must be uplifted.

Chapter Eight of the *Compendium* on “The Political Community,” i.e. the state, clearly explains that

[the] purpose of the political community is in the first place to recognize and respect human dignity through defending and promoting fundamental and inalienable human rights: In our time the common good is chiefly guaranteed when personal rights and duties are maintained. [This means that the state] pursues the common good when it seeks to create a human environment that offers citizens the possibility of truly exercising their human rights and of fulfilling completely their corresponding duties. [And the *Compendium* reiterates that] the full attainment of the common good requires that the politi-

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 180.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 183.

cal community develop a twofold and complementary action that defends and promotes human rights.⁷¹

And pondering on Saint Thomas Aquinas’ *Summa Theologiae* (1265-1273), the *Compendium* states that the political

community has solid foundations when it tends toward the integral phenomenon of the person and of the common good. In such cases, law is defined, respected and lived according to the manner of solidarity and dedication towards one’s neighbor. Justice requires that everyone should be able to enjoy [his/her] own goods and rights; this can be considered the minimum measure of love.⁷²

Moreover, basing its explanation on Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (1991), the *Compendium* elucidates that in an “authentic democracy” of a state that respects human rights, “commitment to the common good as the purpose and guiding criterion for political life”; and the kind of “a democracy without values,” i.e. human rights, “easily turns into open or thinly disguised totalitarianism.”⁷³

Basing it on the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #1911, the *Compendium*, in Chapter Nine regarding “The International Community,” states that

the centrality of the human person and the natural inclinations of persons and peoples to establish relationships among themselves are the fundamental elements for building a true international community, the ordering of which must aim at guaranteeing the effective universal common good. [It further states that] international law becomes the guarantor of the international order, that is of coexistence among political communities that seek individually to promote the common

⁷¹ Ibid., pp. 196-197.

⁷² Ibid., pp. 197-198.

⁷³ Ibid., pp. 205-206.

good of their citizens and strive collectively to guarantee that of all peoples.⁷⁴

However, CNL's subtopics below shall comment about the "materialistic and nationalistic ideologies" which presumably obstruct the common good at the international level and also about the statement that "National sovereignty is not, however, absolute. Nations can freely renounce the exercise of some of their rights in view of a common goal."⁷⁵

In Chapter Ten concerning "Safeguarding The Environment," the *Compendium*, taking point from Pope John Paul II's *October 8, 1988 Address to the European Commission and Court of Human Rights* and his *Message for the 1990 World Day of Peace*, declares that "care for the environment... is a matter of a common and universal duty, that of respecting a common good..." and "disciplining the use of created goods according to the demands of the common good and a common desire to punish those who pollute."⁷⁶

The *Compendium* in Chapter Eleven on "The Promotion of Peace" stresses that "it is necessary... to promote respect for the right to peace... [that] encourages the building of a society in which structures of power give way to structures of cooperation, with a view to the common good."⁷⁷ And finally in Chapter Twelve on the "Social Doctrine and Ecclesial Action," the *Compendium* addresses the laity to "serve in politics" in order to direct temporal affairs "according to God's will and the common good." And acknowledging the points in the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council's Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (1966) and Pope John Paul II's Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (1991), the *Compendium* adds further that

the criteria that must inspire the Christian laity in their political activity [are the following guiding principles in] the pursuit of the common good in a spirit of service [:] The exercise of authority must take on the character of service to be carried out always in the context of moral law for the attainment

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 218.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 219.

⁷⁶ Ibid., pp. 235-237.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 260.

of the common good. Those who exercise political authority must see to it that the energies of all citizens are directed towards the common good; and they are to do so not in an authoritarian style but by making use of moral power sustained in freedom.⁷⁸

The Catholic Church’s doctrine states that the common good has to be manifested by the principle of the universal destination of goods.

In the same Chapter Four regarding the “Principles of the Church’s Social Doctrine” where the principle of the common good or common welfare is defined, after which, it is also found here the definition, origin and meaning of the principle of the universal destination of goods, which includes private property. Let us draw out the main points of the *Compendium* about this subject matter.

Primarily, the *Compendium* declares that “among the numerous implications of the common good, immediate significance is taken on by the principle of the universal destination of goods.”⁷⁹ Reflecting on Gen. 1:28-29, on the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council’s Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (1966) and on Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (1991), it clarifies that

God destined the earth and all it contains for all men and all peoples so that all created things would be shared... by all mankind under the guidance of justice tempered by charity... God gave the earth to the whole human race for the sustenance of all its members, without excluding or favoring anyone. This is the foundation of the universal destination of the earth’s goods. The earth, by reason of its fruitfulness and its capacity to satisfy human needs, is God’s first gift for the sustenance of human life.⁸⁰

Basing its reflections on Pope Pius XII’s 1941 Radio Message for the 50th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum* (1891), on Pope Paul VI’s Encyclical

⁷⁸ Ibid., pp. 283-285.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 86.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 86.

Letter *Populorum Progressio* (1967) and on Pope John Paul II's two Encyclical Letters *Laborem Exercens* (1981) and *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1988), the *Compendium* brings out five guiding principles to explain further the implications of the universal destination of goods.

First, “the universal right to use the goods of the earth is based on the principle of the universal destination of goods.”⁸¹ This means the universal right to use the goods of the earth is a natural and an innate right. It is a natural and innate right in individual persons; and it

has priority with regard to any human intervention concerning goods, to any legal system concerning the same, to any economic or social system or method: All other rights whatever they are, including property rights and the right of free trade must be subordinated to this norm [the universal destination of goods]; they must not hinder it, but must rather expedite its application.⁸²

Second, “Putting the principle of the universal destination of goods into concrete practice, according to the different cultural and social contexts, means that methods, limits and objects must be precisely defined.”⁸³ The *Compendium* explains that the universal destination and utilization of goods do not mean that everything is at the disposal of each person or of all people, or that the same object may be useful or belong to each person or all people.

To ensure that this right is exercised in an equitable and orderly fashion, regulated interventions are necessary, interventions that are the result of national and international agreements, and a juridical order that adjudicates and specifies the exercise of this right.⁸⁴

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid., p. 87.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

Third,

The principle of the universal destination of goods is an invitation to develop an economic vision inspired by moral values that permit people not to lose sight of the origin or purpose of these goods, so as to bring about a world of fairness and solidarity.⁸⁵

What the *Compendium* wants to stress is that, guided by this guiding principle, the creation of wealth can take on a positive function wherein wealth would be created in many different forms... as a result of the process of production that works with the available technological and economic resources, both natural and derived. “This result is guided by resourcefulness, planning and labor, and used as a means for promoting the well-being of all men and all peoples and for preventing their exclusion and exploitation.”⁸⁶

Fourth,

The universal destination of goods requires a common effort to obtain for every person and for all peoples the conditions necessary for integral development, so that everyone can contribute to making a more human world.⁸⁷

Quoting the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith’s *Libertatis Conscientia* (1987), the *Compendium* expounds that making a more human world means that “each individual can give and receive, and... the progress of some will no longer be an obstacle to the development of others, nor a pretext for their enslavement.”⁸⁸ Further it says that this principle corresponds to the

call made unceasingly by the Gospel to people and societies of all times, tempted as they always are by the desire to possess, temptations which the Lord Jesus chose to undergo

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 88.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

(cf. Mk 1:12-13; Mt 4:1-11; Lk 4:1-13) in order to teach us how to overcome them with his grace.⁸⁹

Fifth, “The principle of the universal destination of goods requires that the poor, the marginalized and in all cases those whose living conditions interfere with their proper growth should be the focus of particular concern.”⁹⁰ Reflecting on Pope John Paul II’s January 28, 1979 Address to the 3rd General Conference of Latin American Bishops in Puebla, Mexico, on his two Encyclical Letters *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1988) and *Evangelium Vitae* (1995), and on his two Apostolic Letters *Tertio Millennia Adveniente* (1995) and *Novo Millennio Ineunte* (2001), the *Compendium* further explains the preferential option for the poor

is an option, or a special form of primacy in the exercise of Christian charity, to which the whole tradition of the Church bears witness. It affects the life of each Christian inasmuch as he or she seeks to imitate the life of Christ, but it applies equally to our social responsibilities and hence to our manner of living, and to the logical decisions to be made concerning the ownership and use of goods. Today, furthermore, given the worldwide dimension which the social question has assumed, this love of preference for the poor, and the decisions which it inspires in us, cannot but embrace the immense multitudes of the hungry, the needy, the homeless, those without health care and, above all, those without hope of a better future.⁹¹

The Catholic Church’s doctrine asserts that private property, if subordinated to the principles of the common good and the universal destination of goods, is valid and appropriate.

The Magisterium, which is the teaching authority of the Roman Catholic Church, proclaims that private property, if it is compliant to the principles of the common good and the universal destination of goods, is legitimate. This concretely means that owning a private property and

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 91.

⁹¹ Ibid.

using it is a valid and appropriate right of individual persons only if this right is subordinated to the common good or common welfare and to the universal destination of goods.

In explaining the above point, the *Compendium* starts by tracing the origin of individual property or private property. Having as its references Pope Leo XIII’s Encyclical Letter *Rerum et Novarum* (1891), Pope Pius XII’s 1941 Radio Message for the 50th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum* (1891), Pope John XXIII’s Encyclical Letter *Mater et Magistra* (1961), the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council’s Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (1966), and Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (1991), the *Compendium* clarifies

By means of work and making use of the gift of intelligence, people are able to exercise dominion over the earth and make it a fitting home: “In this way, he makes part of the earth his own, precisely the part which he has acquired through work; this is the origin of individual property.”⁹²

The *Compendium* gives three important points to understand the essence of private property: (1) Private property and other forms of private ownership of goods “assure a person a highly necessary sphere for the exercise of his personal and family autonomy... stimulating exercise of responsibility, it constitutes one of the conditions for civil liberty”⁹³; (2) Private property is an essential element of “an authentically social and democratic economic policy, and it is the guarantee of a correct social order”⁹⁴; and (3) “The Church’s social doctrine requires that ownership of goods be equally accessible to all, so that all may become, at least in some measure, owners, and it excludes... forms of ‘common and promiscuous dominion’.”⁹⁵

Furthermore, the *Compendium* has expounded on five other considerations in relation to private property. There are eleven Catholic Church’s documents that have served as references of the *Compendium* to explain the five considerations, namely: Pope Leo XIII’s Encyclical Letter *Rerum Novarum* (1891), Pope Pius XI’s Encyclical Letter *Quadragesimo Anno*

⁹² Ibid., p. 88.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

(1931), the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2402-2406, Pope John XXIII's Encyclical Letter *Mater et Magistra* (1961), the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council's Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (1966), Pope Paul VI's Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* (1967), Pope John Paul II's January 28, 1979 Address to the 3rd General Conference of Latin American Bishops, Puebla in Mexico, Pope John Paul II's three Encyclical Letters *Laborem Exercens* (1981), *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1988) and *Centesimus Annus* (1991), and the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace's *Towards a Better Distribution of Land. The Challenge of Agrarian Reform* (November 23, 1997). The following are the five considerations in relation to private property.

The **first** consideration, the *Compendium* says, is:

Christian tradition has never recognized the right to private property as absolute and untouchable: "On the contrary, it has always understood this right within the broader context of the right common to all to use the goods of the whole of creation: the right to private property is subordinated to the right to the common use, to the fact that goods are meant for everyone."⁹⁶

The *Compendium* explains that

the principle of the universal destination of goods is an affirmation... that the goods of [God's] creation remain ever destined to the development of the whole person and of all humanity; [but] this principle is not opposed to the right to private property but indicates the need to regulate it.⁹⁷

It further adds:

Private property, in fact, regardless of the concrete forms of the regulations and juridical norms relative to it, is in its essence only an instrument for respecting the principle of the

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 88-89.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

universal destination of goods; in the final analysis, therefore, it is not an end but a means.⁹⁸

The **second** consideration is the social function of private ownership. The *Compendium* states that

The Church’s social teaching calls for the recognition of the social function of any form of private ownership that clearly refers to the necessary relation to the common good. Man “should regard the external things that he legitimately possesses not only as his own but also as common in the sense that they should be able to benefit not only him but also others.”⁹⁹

It further explains that individual legitimate owners “may not use their resources without considering the effects that this use will have, rather they must act in a way that benefits not only themselves and their family but also the common good.”¹⁰⁰

The **third** consideration is the disposal of the “new goods” (i.e., not created by God), that were completely unknown in the past, but have been brought about by economic and technological progress. The *Compendium* explains that

The present historical period has placed at the disposal of society new goods that were completely unknown until recent times. This calls for a fresh reading of the principle of the universal destination of the goods of the earth and makes it necessary to extend this principle so that it includes the latest developments brought about by economic and technological progress.¹⁰¹

It further states that

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

the ownership of these new goods—the results of knowledge, technology and know-how—becomes ever more decisive, because “the wealth of the industrialized nations is based much more on this kind of ownership than on natural resources.”¹⁰²

The *Compendium* calls the owners of these “new goods” that “new technological and scientific knowledge must be placed at the service of mankind’s primary needs, gradually increasing humanity’s common patrimony.”¹⁰³ It appeals to all nations to put into full effect the universal destination of goods:

Putting the principle of the universal destination of goods into full effect therefore requires action at the international level and planned programs on the part of all countries. “It is necessary to break down the barriers and monopolies which leave so many countries on the margins of development, and to provide all individuals and nations with the basic conditions which will enable them to share in development.”¹⁰⁴

The **fourth** consideration are the other “forms of property unknown in the past” (example the “traditional forms of property” of the national minorities and “community property” found even in advanced countries) and the “equitable distribution of land”¹⁰⁵ in the underdeveloped countries. The *Compendium* explains that

If forms of property unknown in the past take on significant importance in the process of economic and social development, nonetheless, traditional forms of property must not be forgotten. Individual property is not the only legitimate form of ownership. The ancient form of community property also has a particular importance; though it can be found in eco-

¹⁰² Ibid., pp. 89-90.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 90.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 90.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

nomically advanced countries, it is particularly characteristic of the social structure of many indigenous peoples.¹⁰⁶

It recognizes that “this form of property... has such a profound impact on the economic, cultural and political life of these peoples that it constitutes a fundamental element of their survival and well-being.”¹⁰⁷ However, the *Compendium* states that while helping the IPs to defend their traditional form of property, it should not be excluded that such is destined to evolve, and preserving it would be trying it to the past and in this way compromising it.

As part of the **fourth** consideration, the *Compendium* brings out the necessity that “an equitable distribution of land remains very critical, especially in developing countries and in countries that have recently changed from systems based on collectivities or colonization.”¹⁰⁸ It further states that “in rural areas, the possibility of acquiring land through opportunities offered by labor and credit markets is a necessary condition for access to other goods and services.”¹⁰⁹ CNL notes here that the terms “based on collectivities” is alluded to the former USSR communal and state farms that were privatized by the modern revisionist supporters of monopoly capitalism after revisionist Gorbachev dismantled the USSR in 1991.

And finally, the **fifth** consideration is for owners not “to absolutize the role of property” and not to “idolize their goods”; instead, the responsibility of owners is to direct the use of properties to the common good so that material goods become “useful tools for the growth of individuals and peoples.”¹¹⁰ The *Compendium* explains such in this way:

To the subjects, whether individuals or communities, that exercise ownership of various types of property accrue a series of objective advantages: better living conditions, security for the future, and a greater number of options from which to

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 91.

choose. On the other hand, property may also bring a series of deceptive promises that are a source of temptation.¹¹¹

Thus, the *Compendium* has this admonition to owners of properties:

Those people and societies that go so far as to absolutize the role of property end up experiencing the bitterest type of slavery... Owners who heedlessly idolize their goods (cf. Mt 6:24, 19:21-16; Lk 16:13) become owned and enslaved by them.¹¹²

The principle of the common good is totally unacceptable ever since to the economic systems and political structures of monopoly capitalism.

CNL members, who have fully studied scientifically the nature of monopoly capitalism or imperialism (the highest stage of capitalism), are united in the conclusion that the Roman Catholic Church's doctrine on the principle of the common good is totally unacceptable ever since to the economic systems and political structures of monopoly capitalism. The internal essences and characteristics of monopoly capitalism, that entirely reject the principle of the common good, shall still be deepened in CNL's 4th topics *On the Contradiction Between Labor and Capital, and How Could It Be Resolved*, and in CNL's 5th *On Monopoly Capitalist Globalization; Quo Vadis Humankind*. What CNL would do in the following paragraphs is to show that the current global economic and political actions of monopoly capitalism really contradict and even reject in actual practice the principle of the common good, and that the current global inequality, which has already been discussed in the CNL's previous topic, is caused by monopoly capitalism that exploits economically and oppresses politically the toiling masses of workers, semi-proletariats, peasants and other lower classes, who compose the majority of the world population.

In the first place, the attainment of the common good or the common welfare of humanity is not the objective or aim of imperialism or

¹¹¹ Ibid., pp. 90-91.

¹¹² Ibid., p. 91.

monopoly capitalism. The main aims and features of imperialism, primarily headed by US imperialism, are:

1. Superprofits that are extracted from the toiling masses of the billions of propertyless workers and from the multinational firms established by monopoly capitalists in the Third World countries of Asia, Latin America and Africa, and even in eastern Europe;
2. World domination by imposing, especially to the Third World and eastern European countries, the monopoly capitalist policies of liberalization, deregulation and privatization;
3. Monopoly capitalist control of the global free-market economy in the guise of free competition as if the underdeveloped nations have the capability to contend with US imperialism and with other industrialized countries;
4. Directing and running the global monetary and banking system through legitimate international banks like the WB and IMF, which dictate regional banks, and wherein the whole monetary and banking system of the world is controlled by imperialist powers for their economic, political, cultural and military objectives through the powerful UN Security Council which is composed primarily of the G8, the eight most industrialized nations in the world, comprising the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, Japan, France, Canada, Italy and Russia;
5. Launching worldwide economic and trade embargo, pre-emptive proxy wars of aggression and armed interventions (e.g., the annual joint US-Philippine Balikatan war exercises), primarily led by US imperialism, against existing socialist countries and against nations that are struggling for national liberation and democracy with a socialist perspective, like the Philippines, India and other nations.

The concrete reality, therefore, is that the whole world economy is under the sole control of the imperialist powers, primarily led by US imperialism, whose interest is not the common good of humanity nor the universal destination of goods for all peoples of the world. In reality, the imperialist powers, principally headed by US imperialism, have created a totalitarian economy at the global level.

Part 3: On the Common Good and Private Property

With the dominance of imperialism, led especially by US imperialism, underdeveloped nations of the world, especially the Third World countries, that are members of the UN, cannot be expected to tackle and solve problems of an economic, social, political or cultural character, which are posed supposedly by the universal common good. The UN Security Council, which is the most powerful international organization of the UN and has the sole authority to decide on what to do about problems at the international level, is in reality a global inter-imperialist council. And even though it might be clear that international law of the United Nations rests upon the principle of equal respect for States, for each people's right to self-determination and for their cooperation in view of the higher common good of humanity, in actual practice this is very much relegated because of the imperialist dominance and impositions at the international level. Thus, the imperialist powers in the most advanced and industrialized countries impede underdeveloped nations of the Third World and eastern Europe to contribute towards the promotion of a true worldwide cooperation for the common good of humanity and future generations.

The present global inequality, manifested in the huge disparity between the few exceedingly rich and the billions of propertyless, is the result of the global dominance of monopoly capitalism, primarily led by US imperialism, which has no norms of the common good and of social justice for the whole of humankind. Due to this, the common good of all peoples, especially of the billions of propertyless workers and peasants, has not been and will never be attained. Thus, unless monopoly capitalism is not replaced, inequity, inequality, poverty and misery in the economic field among peoples will remain forever at the international level, and is being and shall be maintained forever through fascist acts of the bourgeois and puppet states and governments in both the developed and underdeveloped nations. And in this kind of world situation,

the message of the Church's social doctrine regarding solidarity... that there [should exist] an intimate bond between solidarity and the common good, between solidarity and the universal destination of goods, between solidarity and equal-

ity among men and peoples, between solidarity and peace in the world¹¹³

will never be achieved if the people of the world won't work together to radically change the exploitative and oppressive systems of monopoly capitalism.

Even the correct Catholic Church's doctrine on the people's fundamental right and duty to work is not fully respected by the system of monopoly capitalism. Why? Because monopoly capitalists exploit and oppress the working class through wage laws and other anti-labor acts that do not provide healthful conditions, that hide the surplus value of the work of the toiling masses, and that maintain poverty among the propertyless, who compose the majority of the world population. Today's various states of the world, which the Church expects to provide full employment to peoples, are composed of bourgeois and puppet rulers that primarily serve the economic and political interests of the monopoly capitalists. This means that the bourgeois states in the world today do not have the “planning capacity [that is] oriented towards justice and the common good.”¹¹⁴ Consequently, there is a high rate of unemployment and underemployment in both the developed and underdeveloped countries.

The statement of the *Compendium* in Chapter Seven about “Economic Life”—that “when the free market carries out the [means and ends] it becomes a service to the common good and to integral human development”¹¹⁵—is very controversial and questionable. For what is true is the reality that the “*free market*” economy of the monopoly capitalist systems, described in the above paragraphs, does not and will never serve the common good and the integral human development of peoples and the underdeveloped countries. The same is true to tax revenues and public spending, which, the *Compendium* emphasizes, should be used for and be directed to the common good. Tax revenues and public spending are actually used for the high salaries of the bourgeois bureaucrats who are most often corrupt puppets and spend much of the people's coffers for the operations of their fascist military and police who primarily protect the capi-

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 148-149.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 177.

talist-bourgeois rulers and businesses and who launch fascism against the struggle of toiling masses. And the worst case is that bourgeois-capitalist governments, like the US government, spend the people's taxes and coffers to bailout bankrupt monopoly capitalist corporations whose bankruptcy is usually caused by overproduction which exacerbates other social problems of inflation, depression, recession, poverty, inequality, and so forth. These facts hurt the Christians and Church leaders; but these are concrete realities that daily happen throughout the world, which is dominated by the system of monopoly capitalism and the imperialist powers, principally by US imperialism.

Even the strong counsel of the Catholic Church leaders—that for the common good of peoples “redistribution of wealth” is greatly needed in order to “[redistribute] wealth among the different areas of the planet, to the benefit of the underprivileged that until now have been excluded or cast to the sidelines of social and economic progress”¹¹⁶—cannot and will never happen in countries that are governed by bourgeois rulers who are puppets of the monopoly capitalists and dictated by imperialism, primarily by US imperialism. This means the redistribution of wealth, that has been accumulated by the monopoly capitalists, will only happen when the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism shall be replaced by the socialist system, which shall be led by the organized solidarity and participation of the lowly and the downtrodden masses of workers and peasants in order to uplift themselves, their families and other exploited and oppressed classes and sectors. But this would imply that the toiling masses would be able to do such a mission only when they shall also change the bourgeois state of their own country into an authentic democracy that shall defend and promote their human rights in the economic, political, cultural and even the military fields to protect themselves and their political power against any scheme by the capitalist bourgeoisie to bring back totalitarianism and monopoly capitalism.

Though it shall still be expounded on in the other CNL's topics, it would be fitting to mention here that there is no authentic democracy in the US due to the totalitarian impositions of the monopoly capitalists on the American people. US imperialism has proselytized the American peo-

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 183.

ple that “their government is democratic and is much admired by other countries of the world.” But in actual practice, the US government is based on *bourgeois democracy* whose main objective is to preserve the system of monopoly capitalism in the US at the expenses of the toiling American masses, a system that creates and maintains the big gap between the few rich and the majority poor; a system that brings about periodic economic recession due to overproduction, which affects millions of Americans who live in poverty, homelessness, rising unemployment (for instance, 4.6 percent of the 157 million plus workers in 2007 were unemployed), inflation and other social ills; a system that is exploitative and oppressive and has little concern for the common good of the American people, especially the colored and toiling masses.

The above points are also the same bases of CNL in commenting that the *Compendium’s* declaration—in Chapter Nine regarding “The International Community,” which states that “international law becomes the guarantee of the international order, that is of coexistence among political communities that seek individually to promote the common good of their citizens and strive collectively to guarantee that of all peoples”¹¹⁷—cannot and will never materialize at the international level under the auspices of monopoly capitalism. And CNL adds that the *Compendium’s* statement in the same Chapter Nine—that “National sovereignty is not, however, absolute. Nations can freely renounce the exercise of some of their rights in view of a common goal”¹¹⁸—is very questionable and objectionable. For CNL, the principle of national sovereignty and all rights within its contexts are very much needed for each nation to comprehensively develop and advance itself economically, politically, culturally and even militarily in terms of defense for the common good of all its citizens, especially the workers, peasants, and their families from the sector of women, youth and national minorities. The advancement of national sovereignty, patrimony and security in each nation, especially in the underdeveloped countries, is the fundamental foundation that each nation would have the capacity not “to renounce the exercise of some of their rights”¹¹⁹ but to enter into mutual agreements with other countries in order to strengthen mutual

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p 218.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 219.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

cooperation, solidarity and peaceful co-existence among nations for the attainment of the global common good. And the CNL's comments on the need of exercising national sovereignty fully, instead of renounce some rights, are very much supportive to the declaration of the *Compendium* in Chapter Eleven on "The Promotion of Peace," which stresses that for each nation "it is necessary to promote respect for the right to peace... that encourages the building of a society in which structures of power give way to structures of cooperation, with a view to the common good."¹²⁰

Finally, CNL would want to give its affirmation and support to the *Compendium's* declarations, found in Chapter Twelve on the "Social Doctrine and Ecclesial Action," that call the laity to serve in politics in order to direct temporal affairs according to God's will and the common good,

[and the following guiding principles] must inspire Christian laity in their political activity... in the pursuit of the common good in a spirit of service [:] The exercise of authority must take on the character of service to be carried out always in the context of moral law for the attainment of the common good; those who exercise political authority must see to it that the energies of all citizens are directed towards the common good; and they are to do so not in an authoritarian style but by making use of moral power sustained in freedom.¹²¹

However, CNL would want to add other important tasks of Church people and their leaders in educating, organizing and mobilizing the Christian laity in line with the above declarations of the Magisterium: The laity have the right and duty to know the two existing economic and political systems of the world today—the system of monopoly capitalism and imperialism on the one hand that exploits and oppresses the whole of humanity especially the toiling masses, and the socialist system on the other hand that liberates the whole of humanity, especially the toiling masses, from class exploitation and oppression. Because most education today, that has been and is being imparted through schools, media and other cultural institutions on the Christian laity, is founded on monopoly

¹²⁰ Ibid., p. 260.

¹²¹ Ibid., pp. 283-285.

capitalist and imperialist thinking, worldview, outlook and scheme, it is part of Christian responsibility to let the laity also understand the socialist viewpoint, standpoint and method. In this way, the Christian laity would be capable of discerning which of the two systems can really promote and be complementary with the common good of peoples and nations.

The principle of the universal destination of goods, except private property ownership, is also unacceptable to the economic systems and political structures of monopoly capitalism.

The definition of the *Compendium* about the Catholic Church’s doctrine on the principle of the universal destination of goods, found in *Chapter Four* regarding the *Principles of the Church’s Social Doctrine*, is very much acceptable to the CNL, except the Church hierarchy’s stand on private property ownership. The CNL is united with the *Compendium’s* clarification that

the foundation of the universal destination of the earth’s goods [is that] God destined the earth and all it contains for all men and all peoples so that all created things would be shared by all mankind under the guidance of justice tempered by charity [and that] the earth, by reason of its fruitfulness and its capacity to satisfy human needs, is God’s first gift for the sustenance of human life.¹²²

On the other hand, CNL would immediately declare that the Catholic Church’s principle of the universal destination of goods is entirely unacceptable to and contradicted by the economic and political systems of monopoly capitalism.

Since the establishment and development of monopoly capitalism in human history, the monopoly capitalist system has not agreed in actual practice and will forever reject the concept that “the earth and all it contains” are “destined for all men and all peoples so that all created things would be shared by all mankind under the guidance of justice tempered by charity.” Maybe some individual capitalists might agree to such a principle but that would be only on the basis of very limited Christian charitable

¹²² *Ibid.*, p 86.

actions, which shall never transform the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism into serving the principle of the universal destination of goods. Why? Because of the five essential aims and features of monopoly capitalism, which have already been mentioned above, but it is necessary to restate these in this deliberation. To summarize the five aims and features of imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism, which entirely rejects the principle of the universal declaration of good, we have the following:

1. Superprofits;
2. World domination and imposition of the policies of liberalization, deregulation and privatization;
3. Monopoly capitalist control of the global free-market economy under the rule of global free competition wherein the small and medium ones are subsumed under the power and ownership of the top most competitors, the imperialist powers, primarily headed today by US imperialism;
4. Directing and running the global monetary and banking system in order to export capital as distinguished from the export of commodities and to expand the formation of international monopoly capitalist conglomerates which share the world among the imperialist powers (G8) with US imperialism owning the top most combines;
5. Punishing socialist countries through economic and trade embargo, threatening other countries that oppose imperialist dictates through preemptive proxy wars of aggression in the guise of fighting the “axis of evil” and bringing back “democracy” to such countries, and launching armed interventions against other nations, like India, the Philippines (an example is the annual joint US-Philippine Balikatan war exercises), and other countries, that struggle for national liberation and democracy with a socialist perspective.

However, there is now a new world situation which continually contradicts the principle of the universal destination of goods; this is the struggle between the US and China as contending imperialist powers for dominance in the world’s monopoly capitalist economy and over territorial disputes that affect countries of Asia such as Japan, India, Vietnam and the Philippines.

In particular, the economic systems and political structures of monopoly capitalism do not at all respect the guiding norms of the principle of the universal destination of goods that the individual persons have “the universal right to use the goods of the earth”¹²³ and that “all other rights..., including property rights and the right of free trade must be subordinated to the universal destination of goods.”¹²⁴ In actual practice, monopoly capitalism hinders the concrete application of the principle and guiding norms of the universal destination of goods. For the monopoly capitalist system, the universal destination and utilization of the earth and all the goods that the earth contains is at the disposal of the individual capitalists who do not have any consideration of the goods that belong to peoples and that are useful for the common good of all. Thus, the result of such monopoly capitalist actuations is the continuing impoverishment of the toiling masses of the workers and peasants, who are the majority of the world population, and the destruction of the environment due to climate change caused by monopoly capitalist pollution in the world.

CNL is also united in the promotion of the Catholic Church’s call that the rights of individual persons and peoples to utilize the resources and goods of the earth have to be ensured so that such rights ought to be “exercised in an equitable and orderly fashion”¹²⁵ and that “regulated interventions are necessary, interventions that are the result of national and international agreements, and a juridical order that adjudicates and specifies the exercise of this right.”¹²⁶ However, if we look back into international agreements—like the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) founded in 1989, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) both established in 1994, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) that existed since 1948, and now the World Trade Organization (WTO) that has replaced GATT and has taken over the functions of GATT since 1995—all of these have been primarily initiated by monopoly capitalists from the developed and industrialized countries, especially the G8, that primarily ensure in an “orderly fashion” the interests of monopoly capitalists in the

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p 87.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

ownership and utilization of the earthly goods and in the administration of economic and trade laws that are dictated by the monopoly capitalists from the developed countries and are imposed especially to the underdeveloped countries in the Third World and eastern Europe. And because of the monopoly capitalist dictates and impositions, such international agreements and organizations, that direct and administer the ownership and utilization of earthly goods and resources, are very much less beneficial and advantageous to the underdeveloped nations, and exacerbate the continuing exploitation and oppression of the toiling masses of workers in both the industrialized and underdeveloped countries. Consequently, inequitable ownership, distribution and utilization of earthly goods and resources, underdevelopment in the Third World and eastern European countries, widening gap between rich and poor countries, widening gap between rich and poor people and widespread poverty and misery among the toiling masses of workers and peasants in both the developed and underdeveloped nations continue unabatedly throughout the world today.

All the above expositions of the concrete actuations of monopoly capitalism and/or imperialism point to the fact that the monopoly capitalists and their exploitative and oppressive system have no intention to put into practice the principle of the universal destination of goods for the development of “an economic vision inspired by moral values that permit people not to lose sight of the origin or purpose of these goods, so as to bring about a world of fairness and solidarity.”¹²⁷ This reality leads to the conclusion that monopoly capitalism is not “a means for promoting the well-being of all men and all peoples and for preventing their exclusion and exploitation.”¹²⁸ Monopoly capitalism is not “a common effort to obtain for every person and for all peoples the conditions necessary for integral development, so that everyone can contribute to making a more human world.”¹²⁹ It is actually a system for “the progress of some” (i.e., the monopoly capitalists, the bourgeoisie and puppets and their imperialist masters) and a scheme which is “an obstacle to the development of oth-

¹²⁷ Ibid., p 87.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid., p. 88.

ers,... a pretext for enslavement”¹³⁰ of the toiling masses, the majority of the world’s population.

Under the system of monopoly capitalism and the rule of imperialism, especially US imperialism, the social guidance of the papacy and the whole Catholic Church—that “the principle of the universal destination of goods requires that the poor, the marginalized and in all cases those whose living conditions interfere with their proper growth should be the focus of particular concern”¹³¹—will never be realized. Why? Because monopoly capitalism as a system does not help Christians and Church leaders in strengthening the actual practice of “*the preferential option for the poor.*” The strong influences of the monopoly capitalist thinking and scheme, that might have been deeply imbedded unconsciously into the minds and attitudes of the majority of Church leaders, might have been the cause that few Church people in the Philippines and around the globe have deeply committed themselves in embracing the problems and struggles of “the immense multitudes of the hungry, the needy, the homeless, those without health care and, above all, those without hope of a better future.”¹³²

Egalitarian ownership was the first form of ownership in the Bible, and private property ownership by the ruling classes was condemned by the prophets, Jesus Christ and the Early Christian Churches.

Biblical scholars, Ulrich Duchrow and Franz J. Hinkelammert (DH 2002), have found out in their research that egalitarian ownership was the first form of ownership in the Old Testament. But before expounding the points of DH (2002), it would be better first to point that CNL has found nowhere in the *Compendium* a presentation of the types of ownership in Holy Scriptures and what the *Compendium* has only emphasized is the Church’s doctrine that private ownership, if this is subordinated to the common good and the universal destination of goods, is the legitimate and appropriate form of ownership of the earthly goods. This seems to imply that the Catholic Church does not recognize egalitarian ownership, the first form of ownership in the Old Testament, as also legitimate and appropriate not only during the time of the Israelites but also even today. Or is

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid., p. 91.

¹³² Ibid.

it because of the history of the papacy that has long been imbedded in the feudal-monarchical and capitalist-bourgeois systems in Europe, coupled with the Church's anti-Marxist/-communist/-socialist orientation, that the types of ownership found in Holy Scriptures are intentionally skipped out and not mentioned in the *Compendium*? Answers to this question shall be delved into further in the other CNL's sub-topics below.

Let us now encapsulate the findings of Biblical scholars, DH (2002), on the egalitarian ownership among the Israelites in the Old Testament. DH (2002) have proven that private property ownership was not the first form of ownership. They have traced that the first form of ownership was the egalitarian clan ownership, which the Hebrews/Israelites developed after their liberation from slavery of the Egyptian empire. Through the leadership of Moises, the Hebrews were liberated from slavery of the Egyptian empire at around 1250 BCE (Before Christ Existed). The freed slaves had settled on the Palestinian mountains and organized themselves into independent families and clans. Their kind of property ownership, which they established, could be described as egalitarian clan ownership, a primitive form of collective ownership, wherein the land and other means of production were owned by all the members of the clans. The members of the clans organized their common affairs in egalitarian fashion with explicit reference to Yahweh, the God to whom they owed their liberation from the Egyptian empire. And even when defense was needed to be organized against enemy attacks from the outside, the members of the clans did this with charismatic leaders chosen by Yahweh, as described in the Book of Judges. Under this egalitarian system of clan ownership, there was no private property that was owned individually; there were no classes; and there was no class exploitation and no class oppression. This further means that under the egalitarian system of clan ownership, there was no poverty, debt, and slavery among all the members of the clans. All properties were communally owned by the clan members; and all the clan members shared in common the properties of the clan, worked together in an egalitarian and collective method to enhance their properties, and distributed the fruits of their labor according to the needs of everyone.

This egalitarian ownership of the means of production in the clan society of the Israelites is very similar to the clan commune of the American Indians, which the American scholar Lewis H. Morgan has described

in his book, *Ancient Society* (1877). Morgan states: “*All the members... were personally free, and they were bound to defend each other’s freedom; they were equal in privileges and in personal rights, the sachem and chiefs claiming no superiority; and they were a brotherhood bound together by the ties of kin.*”¹³³ This superstructure of the clan was instrumental in consolidating and developing the clan economic and cultural substructures, and in advancing the productive forces of the clan commune. It is noteworthy to mention that Morgan’s *Ancient Society* (1877) was the main reference of Friedrich Engels in his book, *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (1884), which was also one of the bases that Marx and Engels used to develop the revolutionary theory of scientific socialism or communism, specifically on the forms of the socialist ownership of the means of production.

Both the scholarly findings of DH (2002) and Morgan are historical facts which tell us that primitive communal society had no concept of private property because it had no classes, no class exploitation, and no class oppression. And because there was no private property, no classes, no class exploitation and no oppression, class contradiction and class struggle were non-existent in primitive society. All these historical facts strongly refute the fallacy that private property and classes have been with humankind since time immemorial. And these historical facts have been and remain the bases of the correctness of scientific socialism which supports the assertion that class exploitation and class oppression among human beings could be eliminated by human beings themselves, especially the toiling masses of workers and peasants and other democratic classes and sectors, through communal and state ownership of the major means of production, which would be enhanced collectively by a socialist state for the common good of the socialist society, up to the era of classless societies wherein exploitation and oppression among peoples and nations would be non-existent. Of course, this is not utopian because, as expounded on in the CNL’s *A Preliminary Overview*, socialist economies and states were established in Russia from 1917 to 1953 and in China from 1949 to 1976. As also mentioned in the CNL’s *A Preliminary Overview*, socialist economies and states are still existing and being developed today in countries

¹³³ Lewis H. Morgan, *Ancient Society*, Charles H. Kerr & Company, Chicago, 1907, p. 85.

like the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Cuba, Venezuela, Bolivia, Iran, Syria, Belarus, Ukraine, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. And the responsibility of proletarian revolutionaries today is to put into actual practice Mao's continuing revolution and the line of anti-modern revisionism, and to advance an international anti-imperialist movement.

But let us go back to egalitarian property as the first form of property ownership in the Bible and ask the questions: How did the first form of property ownership, the egalitarian property ownership or the primitive communal ownership, disappear? And what were the political events that led to the creation of the private/absolute property ownership? To answer these, let us go back to the findings of the two Biblical scholars, DH (2002), in order to understand that class exploitation and class oppression arose when classes began to exist which were mainly due to the practice of private property ownership that created inequalities between the exploiters and oppressors and the exploited and oppressed.

DH (2002) state that around 1000-700 BCE, the first forms of private property came to existence among the Israelites due to the building of the kingdom of Judah, which later split into two kingdoms. The former egalitarian clan ownership was discontinued when the kingdom of Judah was established. And private property ownership fully developed when the kingdom of Judah fragmented into two kingdoms, the southern kingdom and the northern kingdom. This new policy of private property ownership led to the unequal distribution of wealth. Small parcels of land and other means of production were owned individually by each family; while the biggest part of the wealth and resources of Judah and the two kingdoms were owned by the kings, their officials, and their military men. And the consequence of the established kingdoms was the increasing oppression and exploitation of the peasant people by the king's court, his officials and the military (as described in Sam. 8). In fact, King Solomon behaved like an Egyptian emperor, who enslaved his own people, the Israelites that suffered slavery for decades in Egypt. The exploitation and oppression of the peasants went even to the point of arbitrary confiscation of the peasant lands by the king himself (as described in 1 Kings 21). And despite the resistance of the peasants and the prophetic groups, and the violent Jehu revolution (2 Kings 9:1-10:36), exploitation and oppression of the peas-

antry, that resulted in inequalities, remained a dominant trend right into the 700 BCE.

Meaning, when private property developed in the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, that was also the beginning of the existence of classes, class exploitation, and class oppression. The peasant class had to labor and pay taxes to the king and to the temple in order to maintain the luxury of the aristocratic class. And the continuing exploitation and oppression by the aristocratic class led many peasants to poverty, debts, landlessness, and slavery. Meaning, debts caused the peasants to lose their land; and because they and their families were deprived of their freedom and self-reliance, the increasing landless peasants had to work as debt slaves for large landowners in order to survive. Those who exploited and oppressed the peasants had the political and economic power and even the temple in their hands. As a result, the exploiters and oppressors could easily manipulate the very law that, according to Israelite understanding, was supposed to protect the vulnerable and the poor.

To summarize, the root of the exploitation and oppression in the kingdoms of Judah and Israel was when the egalitarian clan ownership was changed to private ownership of the land and the means of production, which resulted to the formation of classes: the peasant class, the landlords and the aristocratic class in the king’s court, his officials and military men. The landlords and the aristocratic class, who owned privately the biggest portion of wealth, exploited and oppressed the peasants. And this exploitation and oppression was the cause of the class struggle between the peasants, who were supported by the prophetic groups and the Jehu revolution, on the one hand and the landlord and aristocratic classes on the other hand who controlled the kingdoms of Judah and who had the military to protect them and their economic and political power.

The private or absolute property ownership that replaced the egalitarian form of property ownership was condemned by the prophets, Jesus Christ, and the early Christian churches. The protests and condemnations by the prophets led to some legal reforms. But even when the legal reforms existed, exploitation and oppression continued. And so, too, protests and condemnations were sustained, which all alluded for the return of the egalitarian form of ownership that was never re-established due to the combined authoritarianism of the king and aristocrats of the Roman empire,

who were supported by false prophets and corrupt religious leaders, crucified Jesus Christ to death and persecuted the early Christian churches. In the following paragraphs, let us grasp further the points of DH (2002) and give some specific examples of the prophetic protest movements that led to some legal reforms and that hoped for the return of the egalitarian form of ownership. After which, we shall see how these protest movements and hope for the return of the egalitarian form of ownership were continued by Jesus Christ, the Messiah, and by the early Christian churches.

The prophetic groups protested the change of the egalitarian clan ownership to private property ownership. The great prophets in the eighth and the seventh centuries denounced the exploitation and oppression of the landlords and the aristocrats. From 722 BCE to 586 BCE, prophets Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Habakkuk and Ezekiel called and stood for *mispat* (law) and *sedaqa* (justice), which had been lost through the new property law. All the prophets proclaimed that repudiating justice and the rights of the poor meant rejecting the God of Israel.

For instance, the prophet Amos in the northern kingdom denounced the threats of exploiters and oppressors to the small farmers. The farmers had lost their possessions through seizures; they had been sold into slavery for excessive debts, the women were being abused as debt slaves, the small holders were deceived in credit deals and were required to pay levies and fines. And the exploiters and oppressors were threatened by Amos with doom and downfall because they had broken the *mispat* (law) that was supposed to protect the poor. On the other hand, Amos proclaimed that the peasants and poor people would enjoy the fruits of their own labor.

The prophet Micah in the southern kingdom of Judah also condemned the same mechanism of property interest-seizure-debt slavery of peasants and their families by the landlords and aristocrats. He criticized the exploiters and oppressors who devised wickedness and evil deeds because they were in power to perform them. Because of such wickedness and evil deeds, the farmers not only lost their lands, houses and freedoms but also that their children had to go into debt slavery not just for a limited period but forever. And Micah called the rich thieves and condemned them to doom.

In the seventh century BCE, the prophet Isaiah also criticized in sharp terms the expropriation of farming families and the accumulation

of land by big landowners. He called the greedy landowners thieves and condemned them for seizing the lands of indebted farmers and taking the spoil of the poor. He foretold that the greedy landlords and tyrants would perish and would be exterminated. Like Amos and Micah, Isaiah proclaimed that the meek and needy would have great fruitfulness:

They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat. The chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands (Is. 65:21-22).

The condemnations of the prophets against the exploitation and oppression of peasants by the landlords, the aristocrats, and the tyrants led to some legal reforms in Israelite society. A concrete example of the legal reforms was the *Decalogue*, the *Ten Commandments* as the precepts of the *people of Israel in the Old Testament*, which served as the context of the two important laws, namely, “the right of the poor” in Deut. 15:7-8; and “the law of the sabbatical year [celebrated every seven years] and of the jubilee year [celebrated every 50 years],” found in Ex. 23, Deut. 15 and Lev. 25. These two laws mean the following regulations: Sufficient provisions should be afforded by the rich people for the needs of poor people; every 7 years and 50 years—all debts of the poor have to be canceled, all slaves and prisoners must be released, all accumulated goods by the rich must be distributed to the poor, all people must be freed from any kind of exploitation and oppression, and everyone is free to return to his/her family and to regain possession.

These legal reforms were preventive and corrective laws against the exploitation of big property owners, the kings and aristocrats. These even included the law of “*no interest and no usury*” (Deut. 23:20). The banning of interest and usury was to prevent land loss and enslavement on grounds of over-indebtedness. But if (debt) slavery would occur, there would be a period of cancelling the debt and liberating the slave (through the law of every 7 years and 50 years). Clearly, the legal forms included freedom from oppression and exploitation. These laws, therefore, were intended to prevent the inequality between the small class of wealthy people and the many who would become completely impoverished and enslaved people. Part of the legal reforms was that the slaves, who would be released in the

seventh year, must be given starting capital for their new beginning as small holders free from their masters who exploited and oppressed them.

As a summary, we see here that the prophetic protests and condemnations of exploitation and oppression were the prophets' rejection of private property ownership or the absoluteness of property and the hope of the prophets for the return of the egalitarian form of ownership. And these prophetic preaching was continued by Jesus Christ and his disciples, who formed the early Christian churches. But before delving on this, let us first add to the findings of the two Biblical scholars, DH (2002), some more historical facts from Flavius Josephus, a Jewish historian, about the Essenes and the Zealots.

According to Jewish historian Flavius Josephus, who lived from about AD 37 to AD 101, the Essenes practiced the egalitarian ownership that existed during the time of the prophets in the Old Testament. He also mentioned the Zealots who wanted to overthrow the Roman rule in Jewish territories. And Jesus Christ, who might have lived between 4 BC to 29 AD, knew the Essenes and, of course, the Zealots because one of his disciples was a Zealot revolutionary.

The egalitarian or communal ownership, which was practiced during the period of the Old Testament prophets, was continued by the Essenes, who were still surviving during the time of Jesus. The Essenes—though not mentioned in the Bible—composed the 4,000 members of the Jewish religious brotherhood that existed in Palestine and Syria from the 2nd century BC to the 2nd century AD. They organized themselves on a communal basis wherein properties were communally owned and distributed according to the need of each of the membership of brotherhood.

The Zealots, on the other hand, were a Jewish religious-political force that sustained the general Jewish uprising with the aim of overthrowing the Roman rule in Palestine and Judea from the 1st century to the 13th century AD. They rebelled against the Roman imperial authorities that enforced taxation to the Jewish people and that ordered them to acknowledge the authority of the pagan Roman emperor. The Zealots armed rebellion called the Jewish people to repudiate the authority of the Roman emperor, not to pay taxes, not to submit to Roman slavery, and to strengthen their faith in God who freed the Israelites, otherwise known as

the Jewish people, from the slavery of Egypt. One of Jesus’ disciples, whom he recruited, was, in fact, a Zealot, known as Simon (cf. Luke 6:15).

Jesus’ knowledge about the Essenes and the Zealots might have further inspired him to continue the prophetic rejection of private property and the prophetic hope for the return of the egalitarian form of property ownership. This might have been the background of Jesus Christ in describing his Messianic mission and ministry as:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord (Luke 4:18-19; cf. Isaiah 61:1-2).

To continue DH (2002) findings, these two Biblical scholars assert that one particular prophetic preaching that Jesus Christ has emphasized and attacked often is the system of property-interest-seizure-debt slavery, which he has denounced as a systemic theft or robbery. Meaning, the enormous wealth, which is owned individually by the rich, is stolen from the poor who have become slaves. This is what Jesus wants to tell in the story of “the rich young ruler with many possessions,” who asks how he can obtain eternal life (Mark 10:17-22). Claiming that he has kept all laws (*mispat*) since his youth, Jesus tells him to sell his (stolen) goods and give the proceeds to the poor. Usually, Church people understand this as an appeal to give charitable alms. But no, the meaning of this is to give back what has been stolen not simply by individual wickedness but with the aid of the economic and political systems that promote exploitation and oppression in society. On the other hand, the conversion of the rich tax-collector, Zaccheus (Luke 19:1-10) is a positive counter-story of Jesus’ denunciation of systemic theft or robbery. Following his meeting with Jesus, Zaccheus, the rich tax-collector, gives up not only a worthy part of his wealth to the poor, but also returns a fourfold sum to those whom he has robbed through the taxation system. This clearly implies that a state, whose citizens are poor and deprived, is a political machinery of exploiters and oppressors.

Denunciation of systemic theft or robbery is again demonstrated in Jesus’s prophetic confrontation with the temple, the den of thieves (Mark

11:15-19). This is about the central question: Which God rules? The God who legitimizes impoverishment through exploitative structures? Or the biblical God who protects and frees the poor, and calls for justice, not sacrifice? The clear message of this prophetic confrontation is that systemic theft permits priests to earn a profit with the exchange system of the market (the doves they trade in the temple are the sacrificial birds of the poor). This systemic robbery has allowed the priestly aristocracy, that has collaborated with the Roman occupying power, to accumulate their temple treasure.

Often, Church people merely call the narrative accounts in Mark 1:12-13, Matthew 4:1-11 and Luke 4:1-13 as “Jesus’ temptations” or the “devil’s temptations of Jesus Christ.” No, it is not that simple. The narrative accounts are allegories of the contradiction between the egalitarian form of ownership and private property ownership. Jesus Christ—seeing the exploitation and oppression of people under the Roman empire, and the temple ruled by corrupt high priests, levites and pharisees—represents the hope for the return of egalitarian ownership, and rejects Satan’s offer, which represents private property ownership. Throughout the four gospels, we see that Jesus always stands for the poor, the sick, the widow, the least of his brethren. Meaning, the Reign of God is present among people when exploitation and oppression would disappear.

Acts 2:43-45 and Acts 4:32-35 reflect the preference of the Apostles and the early Christian churches for an egalitarian form of living as the spirit of Christian fellowship and life: the early Christians sold their private properties, lived a communal life, and each one was given according to the need of each one.

The believers were with one heart and spirit. No one considered his/her property as only his/her own, instead they all shared what they had to one another... Not one of them was in want. Those who had fields or houses sold their properties and gave all their sales to the Apostles. All sales were distributed according to the need of each one.

This means that the early Christians believed in the goodness of primitive communalism by owning properties in common and distributing the proceeds of human labor to everyone according to one’s needs.

However in the history of the Roman Catholic Church, this early Christian belief seemed to have been buried when Constantine the Great proclaimed in 313 AD the Catholic Church and Christianity as a state church and a state religion under the Roman empire.

However, Christian theologians from the Church of England or the Anglican Church—the first national Christian Church in the world that separated from the Roman Catholic Church papacy and founded in 1536 by King Henry VIII who was vexed at the refusal of Pope Clement VII to annul his marriage to Catherine of Aragón—were influenced and inspired by Marx and Engels, whose teachings were clearly stated in the *Communist Manifesto* (1848). The Anglican theologians, who wanted to connect Marx’s teachings to the doctrine of the early Christian communities in the spirit of communalism by owning properties in common and distributing the proceeds of work to everyone in need, started to develop in 1848 the concept of Christian “socialism” by reasoning that “socialism is a direct development and outcome of Christianity and, to be effective, it must be based on Christian principles.”¹³⁴ And so Christian “socialism” brought out strong criticism of the system of private property ownership that was already fully developed during the period of feudalism and continued by the capitalists in the various European countries. This concept of Christian “socialism” were brought by the Anglican missionaries, who went with their co-English colonizers, to Episcopal churches established in Canada, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, western and central Africa, the Republic of South Africa, India, West Indies, Japan and even China. In the United States, the teaching on Christian “socialism” led to the founding of the Socialist Labor Party in 1901. But because of the pressure of the thriving capitalists in the English colonies, advocates of the Christian “socialism” and the Socialist Labor Party were united to the reformist line of “*achieving socialism through peaceful, democratic methods.*” This reformist line spread to other countries of the world through the continuing proselytization of US imperialism in defense of capitalism to preserve and prevent it from being overthrown by Marxist/communist revolutionaries.

¹³⁴ Frederick Denison Maurice, one of the main founders of Christian socialism, wrote in the *Eclectic Review* in 1851: “Christianity is the only foundation of Socialism, and that a true Socialism is the necessary result of a sound Christianity.” —*Ed.*

Of course, Christian “socialism” advocated by reformists was utopian and unscientific, very much contradictory to Marx’s revolutionary theory of communism or scientific socialism. Christian “socialism” being utopian and unscientific was proven by the fact that since the 19th century to the 20th century, there had never been a Christian “socialist” economy or a Christian “socialist” state that had been established in any part of the world. Why was this so? Because Christian “socialism” deviated from the principles of Marxism. It had no objective to change but merely to maintain the exploitative and oppressive system of capitalism. And what the promoters of Christian “socialism” had achieved so far was the strengthening of the anti-Marxist or anti-communist attitude among Christians in both the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches around the world.

In the history of Christianity in the Philippines which entered the country in March 1521, the biblical concept on the egalitarian ownership of the means of production had been understood by the founders of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente (IFI) or Philippine Independent Church (PIC), namely, Filipino revolutionary clergy Bishop Aglipay and Isabelo de los Reyes, the labor leader and founder of the Union Obrera Democratica (UOD). Their perception of egalitarian ownership was written into the IFI’s 1904 “Constitution and Canons” in Part II, Chapter 2, Article 1 in the following terms:

One of the manifest evidences of the divinity of Jesus was his prodigious ability to foresee the future and his inimitable self-denial. Twenty centuries ago the divine Rabbi proclaimed that the Kingdom of God would come with the triumph of the poor, that is, with the abolition of private property and the common ownership of goods, and it causes no little surprise to observe that humanity, starting from the dawn of Christianity, has been moving with slow but sure steps along the course marked out by the Redeemer, up to the present century in which modern society is now marching with giant strides toward this beautiful ideal which the Son of God proclaimed. The Philippine Independent Church cannot deviate from this holy doctrine of Jesus Christ and his apostles; therefore it announces its supreme aspiration in matters of temporal

economy to be the common ownership of goods, and the truth that all modern systems of government, some more and some less, tend toward the same end.

Of course, because of the nature of Philippine society as semicolonial and semifeudal, preserved and maintained by US imperialism and its puppet ruling classes up to the present day, “the abolition of private property” and “matters of temporal economy to be the common ownership of goods” has been entirely deleted in the IFI’s “Constitution and Canons” after the death of Supreme Bishop Aglipay. In fact, the “Constitution and Canons of Iglesia Filipina Independiente,” approved and ratified by the IFI General Assembly on October 3, 1977, only mentions in Article VIII on the “Temporalities of the Church” that “All properties acquired by the Church... shall be registered in the name of the ‘Iglesia Filipina Independiente,’ City of Manila, the Church’s official domicile, as a Religious Corporate Sole.”¹³⁵

Private ownership is the root and means of the exploitative and oppressive system of slavery, feudalism and capitalism; while socialist forms of ownership can be complementary, but not necessarily compatible in terms of beliefs, with the principles of the common good and the universal destination of goods.

In the context of class exploitation and class oppression, private property is legitimate and appropriate ONLY from the point of view of the slave owners, the big landlords and monopoly capitalists and their imperialist puppets, and ONLY for the economic and political interests of these same exploiters and oppressors. Also in this context, CNL would want to reformulate the questions raised above: What are the reasons that the *Compendium* has not presented the types of ownership in Holy Scriptures, namely, the egalitarian form of ownership as the first form of ownership and the succeeding the private/absolute property ownership that replaced the former? Why it is that in the *Compendium* private property is much emphasized as the legitimate and appropriate form of property ownership if this is subordinated to the common good and the universal destination

¹³⁵ Iglesia Filipina Independiente, *Constitution and Canons*, Article VIII, Section 1, Paragraph D.

of goods, which has been shown above as contradictory in terms? Does this imply that the papacy does not recognize the egalitarian ownership, the first form of property ownership, as also legitimate and appropriate? If so, why?

CNL has two hypotheses that would answer the “whys” raised above. **First**, primarily because of the history of the papacy that has long been rooted in the feudal-monarchical and capitalist-bourgeois systems in Europe from the fourth century onward. When Emperor Constantine the Great recognized Christianity and the Roman Catholic Church in 313 AD as a state religion and a state church under the Roman empire, the economic system of the whole empire was feudalism wherein private property ownership was the only legitimate form of ownership. This thinking on private ownership as the only legitimate form of property ownership continued during the period of mercantilism from the 16th to the 18th century, and was fully developed during the era of capitalism that started in the 19th century onward. Such historical facts could have surely influenced greatly the thinking and consciousness of the papacy to stress in its doctrine that private property, though “not absolute,” is the only legitimate and appropriate form of property ownership, seemingly skipping out and not recognizing the egalitarian form of ownership, the first form of property ownership, as also valid and appropriate. **Second**, because of the anti-Marxist/-Communist orientation of the Church. Secondarily, because the Catholic Church’s anti-Marxist orientation is just a cover-up of the long history of the Church being entrenched for 1,708 years (from 313 to 2021) in the feudal-monarchical and capitalist-bourgeois systems which were and are still the material basis that the Church has not been and is not open to dialogue with Marxists, and has, in fact, condemned Marxism and/or Communism since 1891 up to the reign of Pope John Paul II.

Let us now delve into the Roman Catholic Church’s doctrine that private property, if subordinated to the principles of the common good and the universal destination of goods, is valid and appropriate. At the personal and family level, there is not much problem about the Church’s concept of private property and other forms of private ownership of goods that “assure a person a highly necessary sphere for the exercise of his personal and family autonomy... stimulating exercise of responsibility, it constitutes one of

the conditions for civil liberty.”¹³⁶ A socialist society can easily understand and grant this kind of private property ownership for the well-being of the members of families, especially for the welfare and happiness of the toiling masses of workers and peasants and their families. However, big problems arise when private property ownership becomes the foundation of an economic system for the whole of society at the national and international level. The history of humankind has proven that private property ownership has created the systems of slavery, feudalism and capitalism, which have, in fact, resulted to inequality and the pervasive gap between the big owners of slaves, big owners of extensive tracts of land and big owners of huge amount of accumulated capital on the one hand and on the other hand the common people who have become slaves, poor peasants and propertyless workers. In this case, when private property has become the foundation of the economic system for the whole society at the national and international level, this has resulted in the creation of exploitative and oppressive classes of slave owners, landlords, comprador bourgeoisie and capitalists. And under this kind of economic systems, private property has not become “an essential element of an authentically social and democratic economic policy,”¹³⁷ and has not at all guaranteed “a correct social order”¹³⁸ that would have promoted the principles of the common good and the universal destination of goods. Thus, in the end, as history has shown, slave owners, landlords, comprador bourgeoisie and capitalists have not upheld the Catholic Church’s guiding norm that earthly goods and all resources ought to “be equally accessible to all.”

As to the consideration that “the right to private property [is not] absolute and untouchable... on the contrary, this right has to be understood within the broader context of the right common to all to use the goods of the whole of creation,”¹³⁹ this means that “the right to private property” must be all the time “subordinated to the right to the common use, to the fact that goods are meant for everyone.”¹⁴⁰ CNL states that “the right to private property” being at all the time “subordinated to the right

¹³⁶ *Compendium*, p. 88.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 88-89.

to the common use” and common good can be done at the national and international level ONLY when monopoly capitalism is radically changed by another system that would liberate from economic exploitation and political oppression the toiling masses of workers and peasants and other democratic sectors of the petit-bourgeoisie, the enlightened landlords and the open-minded national bourgeoisie. And such a system is offered by the socialist way of administering and managing the economic, political and cultural spheres with the active and democratic participation of the toiling masses that would work together to promote the common good of society. This socialist way can also be applied to the third consideration on the “disposal of... [the] new goods”¹⁴¹ [goods not created by God, e.g., computer technology, etc.] but brought about by economic and technological progress. The socialist way can direct the “disposal of... [the] new goods,” including the distribution/redistribution of income, in order to serve the common good of society and at the same time promote the rights of persons and peoples for the utilization of earthly goods and resources for their happiness.

As regards the consideration on the other forms of property, such as the traditional forms of property of the national minorities and community property in other nations, these have never been respected by the system of feudalism and monopoly capitalism. Monopoly capitalist and bourgeois firms in cahoots with the domestic big landlords, comprador bourgeoisie and puppets of US imperialism have often times expropriated the rich ancestral territories of the indigenous peoples in many parts of the world; and the “community properties” of several socialist nations in the former USSR have been privatized by monopoly capitalist multi-national corporations. A very specific example here in the Philippines is the non-recognition of the ancestral lands of national minorities by multi-national firms and by the local ruling classes that has always been and is still happening. This has led to the continuing national oppression of the indigenous peoples all over the country up to the present day. As to the other related consideration that the need for “an equitable distribution of land... especially in developing countries,”¹⁴² this has been and continues to be hampered by big landlords and domestic and foreign capitalists. On the other hand, the

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p. 89.

¹⁴² Ibid., p. 90.

socialist way can help in the further development and advancement of the ancestral territories and resources of the national minorities for their common good with other exploited and oppressed classes; and genuine agrarian reform to break feudalism is always an essential part for the socialist development in countries, like the Philippines, that struggle for national liberation and democracy with a socialist perspective.

Another CNL comment is on the statement quoted by the *Compendium* from Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (1991), that says:

By means of work and making use of the gift of intelligence, people are able to exercise dominion over the earth and make it a fitting home: “In this way, he makes part of the earth his own, precisely the part which he has acquired through work; *this is the origin of individual property.*”¹⁴³

Historical facts prove that the origin of individual property was not the individual work *per se*. Individual property arose due to the rise of exploiters and oppressors, who began owning individually the means of production, including slaves, tenants and workers, whom they obliged to work for their individual economic and political interests at the expense of others (i.e., slaves, tenants and workers). Meaning, the concept of private property has been created, developed and used by exploiters and oppressors to advance their economic and political power. This further means that private property has become and is the root and the continuing means to exploit and oppress others, especially the propertyless, the poor and the downtrodden. This can be shown in history: During the period of slavery, the slave owners exploited and oppressed the slaves; the big landlords, the owners of vast lands during the era of feudalism, exploited and oppressed the tenants and lower-middle peasants; and now in this stage of capitalism, the capitalist owners of the means of production are exploiting and oppressing the toiling masses of laborers.

To summarize, private property or absolute property consolidates the economic power of owners at the expense of the majority. And once private owners have consolidated their economic power, they seize and

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. 88.

dominate the state/government and make use of the government to consolidate their political power and preserve their economic power by controlling the whole society through their totalitarian rule at the national and international level. It is within this context that CNL is willing fervently to support the *Compendium's* appeal and call in Chapter Four regarding the "Principles of the Church's Social Doctrine," addressed to all nations to put into full effect the universal destination of goods:

Putting the principle of the universal destination of goods into full effect therefore requires action at the international level and planned programs on the part of all countries. "It is necessary to break down the barriers and monopolies which leave so many countries on the margins of development, and to provide all individuals and nations with the basic conditions which will enable them to share in development."¹⁴⁴

The global barriers that have to be broken down are the few conglomerative bourgeoisie, who are themselves the monopoly capitalists that are primarily based in the developed countries, that are the private owners of the means of production in both the developed and underdeveloped nations, that exploit the oppress the billions of the toiling masses of workers and peasants, and that consist of the industrial capitalists, the commercial capitalists, the banking capitalists, and the landed class. They are the root causes of the poverty and inequity of the workers and peasants; and they are also the root causes of the wide gap between rich and poor peoples and between rich and poor nations. The industrial profits, commercial profits, banking profits, interests, and land rents are all extracted by these few greedy bourgeois suckers from the toiling masses of the world. CNL believes that the Church's appeal and call "to break down the barriers and monopolies" can be achieved through the practice of the socialist method and standpoint to be led by the toiling masses themselves for the common good of all, especially for the workers, semi-proletariat, peasants, national minorities and their families, and other democratic classes and sectors. CNL's basis for this optimistic belief is that the socialist forms of ownership can be complementary, though not necessarily compatible ideologi-

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 90.

cally in philosophical terms and beliefs, with the principles of the common good and the universal destination of goods. With their organizations, institutions and programs that are established in both the developed and underdeveloped countries, both the Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox Churches could form a global Christian solidarity in order to respond to the call: “Break down the barriers and monopolies which leave so many countries on the margins of development, and provide all individuals and nations with the basic conditions which will enable them to share in development.”

Part 4

On the Contradiction Between Capital and Labor, and How Could It Be Resolved

Deliberations on “the conflict between capital and labor” are found mostly in the *Compendium’s* Chapter Two which is on “The Church’s Mission and Social Doctrine,” in Chapter Three which is about “The Human Person and Human Rights,” in Chapter Four that deals with “The Principles of the Church’s Social Doctrine,” in Chapter Six that concerns “Human Work,” and in Chapter Seven which is on “Economic Life.” In the course of presenting the *Compendium’s* views on “the conflict between capital and labor,” sub-topics shall be developed by the CNL in the following pages in order to explain the concrete reality of the contradiction between capital and labor, i.e., between the capitalists and the toiling masses within the auspices of the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism.

“The conflict between capital and labor” can never be resolved by the encyclicals’ “appropriate solutions,” which only favor monopoly capitalism vis-à-vis the working class; and while the abuses proper to monopoly capitalism are not stated as such, the papal encyclicals explicitly “exclude socialism as remedy to social ills” and even accuse it as something “intrinsically perverse” that “perpetrates evil.”

In Chapter Two concerning “The Church’s Mission and Social Doctrine,” the *Compendium* gives some “historical notes” and introduces the encyclical letters that deal with the “social question,” particularly “the conflict between capital and labor.” It also presents the encyclical letters’ “appropriate solutions” that would supposedly resolve “the conflict between capital and labor.”¹⁴⁵

The *Compendium* describes Pope Leo XIII’s Encyclical Letter *Rerum Novarum* (*On New Things*, 1891) as

the first social encyclical... in response to the first great social question..., a new discernment [of new things, referring to

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 45.

the events] in the 19th century, events of an economic nature [that] produced a dramatic social, political and cultural impact..., events connected with the Industrial Revolution profoundly changed centuries-old societal structures, raising serious problems of justice and posing the first great social question—the labor question—prompted by the conflict between capital and labor.¹⁴⁶

Further, the *Compendium* states that this first social encyclical letter is “a discernment capable of finding appropriate solutions to unfamiliar and unexplored problems... on the condition of salaried workers, which was particularly distressing for industrial laborers who languished in inhumane misery.”

And what are the “appropriate solutions,” which *Rerum Novarum* (*On New Things*, 1891) offers to solve the miserable “condition of salaried workers, which was particularly distressing for industrial laborers who languished in inhumane misery?”¹⁴⁷ The *Compendium* says that

Rerum Novarum (*On New Things*, 1891)... excludes socialism as a remedy [to social ills] and expounds with precision and in contemporary terms “the Catholic doctrine on work, the right to property, the principle of collaboration instead of class struggle as the fundamental means for social change, the rights of the weak, the dignity of the poor and the obligations of the rich, the perfecting of justice through charity, on the right to form professional associations.”¹⁴⁸

The *Compendium* adds that what *Rerum Novarum* (*On New Things*, 1891) emphasizes is that “serious social problems could be solved only by cooperation between all forces.”¹⁴⁹

CNL’s comments on Pope Leo XIII’s Encyclical Letter have already been initially expounded on in CNL’s 1st topic, “A Preliminary Overview,” and in CNL’s 3rd topic, “On the Common Good, the Universal Desti-

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 45.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 46.

nation of Goods, and Private Property.” And CNL’s particular commentary on the “appropriate solutions” of *Rerum Novarum* (*On New Things*, 1891) to the contradiction between the capitalists and the toiling masses of workers shall still be presented in the CNL’s comments below. Suffice to state here that the “appropriate solutions,” offered by the encyclical, is very inadequate to resolve “the conflict between capital and labor” due to the nature of capitalism which is exploitative and oppressive wherein the capitalists get superprofits from the labor power of the toiling masses in the industrial, manufacturing, commercial and financial firms which are solely owned privately by the few capitalists, who compete with one another for more profits in the free-market economy of monopoly capitalism.

As regards Pope Pius XI’s Encyclical Letter *Quadragesimo Anno* (*On the 40th Year*, 1931), the *Compendium* explains the background of Pope Pius XI’s encyclical letter, i.e., the economic and political situation in Europe at that time:

The grave economic crisis of 1929... in the light of the economic and social situation in which the expansion of the financial groups, both nationally and internationally, was added to the effects of industrialization... during which totalitarian regimes were being imposed in Europe even as the class struggle was becoming more bitter.¹⁵⁰

What the *Compendium* refers to as “the grave economic crisis of 1929” was the Great Depression of 1929, which was the worst and longest economic crisis of monopoly capitalism wherein the economic collapse lasted for a decade from the end of 1929 until the early 1940s. This economic collapse was due to the unresolvable periodic economic weaknesses of monopoly capitalism, namely, the drawback of overproduction in all industrial and manufacturing firms and the downside of the overaccumulation of capital through capital export or “the expansion of the financial groups, both nationally and internationally.” Starting in the US in 1929, said economic collapse spread to most of the world’s developed and industrialized countries wherein there were rapid declines in the production and sale of goods, and a sudden and severe rise in unemployment. Businesses

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

and banks closed their doors, people lost their jobs, homes, and savings, and many depended on charity to survive. There was widespread hunger and poverty in the industrialized countries as well as in the Third World nations of Asia, Latin America and Africa. In the US, 1933 was the worst point of the economic collapse wherein more than 15 million American toiling masses—one-quarter of the nation’s workforce at that time—were unemployed.

The totalitarian regimes alluded in Pope Pius XI’s Encyclical Letter *Quadragesimo Anno* (*On the 40th Year*, 1931) were the fascist regimes of dictator Benito Mussolini of Italy from 1922 to 1943 and of dictator Adolf Hitler of Germany from 1933 to 1945. The Great Depression of 2019—the economic collapse/economic crisis due to monopoly capitalism—was resolved by the two dictators by means of fascism which helped plunge the entire European nations into World War II (1939-1945). Though this particular point will still be expounded on in the CNL’s 6th topic, “On Terrorism, War, Violence, and Worldwide Peace,” CNL would want in this section to point out that World War I (1914-1918) and World War II (1939-1945) were inter-imperialist wars for the division and redivision of the world in order to resolve the global economic crisis of monopoly capitalism. However, these inter-imperialist wars have exacerbated further the exploitation and oppression of the toiling masses of workers, peasants and peoples not only in the developed countries but also and most especially in the underdeveloped nations of the Third World.

And what are the “appropriate solutions” to the social ills of labor and to the conflict between capital and labor, which Pope Pius XI has specified in his Encyclical Letter *Quadragesimo Anno* (*On the 40th Year*, 1931)? The *Compendium* presents five points of Pope Pius XI’s encyclical as “appropriate solutions.” **First**, the encyclical letter calls political leaders “to respect the freedom to form associations... and the State, in its relations with the private sector, should apply the principle of subsidiarity.”¹⁵¹ **Second**, the encyclical letter “stresses the principles of solidarity and cooperation in order to overcome social contradictions”¹⁵² and “the relationships between capital and labor must be characterized by cooperation.”¹⁵³

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 46.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

Third, it “confirms the principle that salaries should be proportional not only to the needs of the worker but also to those of the worker’s family.”¹⁵⁴ **Fourth**, it “rejects liberalism, understood as unlimited competition between economic forces, and reconfirms the value of private property, recalling its social function.”¹⁵⁵ And **fifth**, the encyclical letter emphasizes that “the intent of overcoming the conflict between classes [is by] arriving at a new social order based on justice and charity.”¹⁵⁶ This seems to mean that through principles of subsidiarity, solidarity and cooperation between the capitalists and the working class, the contradiction between these classes is overcome, which would result in “a new social order based on justice and charity.”

Of course, the aforementioned five “appropriate solutions” of Pope Pius XI are undeniably within the context of preserving the system of monopoly capitalism. Meaning, the pope’s encyclical letter is strongly predisposed for the continuation of the capitalist system, which is the very reason why his encyclical letter emphasizes that there should be subsidiarity, solidarity and cooperation between the capitalists and the toiling masses, and that “the value of private property” ownership of the means of production should be reconfirmed. But such “appropriate solutions” won’t actually lead to “a new social order based on justice and charity” but to higher levels of exploitation and oppression of the toiling masses by the capitalists who would accumulate more new superprofits in the processes of production and in the free-market economy of monopoly capitalism. Meaning, Pope Pius XI’s “appropriate solutions” only show the evident partiality of the Catholic Church’s social doctrine for monopoly capitalism, a point that has been pointed out in the previous CNL’s 1st topic, “A Preliminary Overview,” and 3rd topic, “On the Common Good and Universal Destination of Goods, and Private Property,” and shall be explained further in the CNL’s sub-topic below. In reality, Pope Pius XI in his 1931 encyclical only reiterated the principles of solidarity and cooperation which had already been stressed by Pope Leo XIII in his 1891 encyclical letter as an “appropriate solution,” but had not resolved “the conflict between capital and labor” up to the present day. Thus, CNL asserts that

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., p.47.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

such principles are not only inadequate as a solution to the contradiction between workers and capitalists, but also serve the system of monopoly capitalism, an absolute disservice to the toiling masses.

However, the condemnation of totalitarianism, the respect of the toiling masses’ freedom to form associations, the increase of the workers’ salaries that should be proportional to the needs of the workers and their families, which are mentioned in Pope Pius XI’s Encyclical Letter *Quadragesimo Anno* (*On the 40th Year*, 1931), could become part of the genuine “appropriate solutions” to resolve the contradiction between labor and capital, and arrive “at a new social order based on justice and charity” *only* within the context and aim to reject the system of monopoly capitalism and establish a socialist economy and a socialist state in a certain country. But within the Philippine current setting, such objective of building a socialist economy and a socialist state could only commence upon the final victory of the present National Democratic Revolution, which would ultimately be achieved by advancing the revolutionary people’s just war to the strategic offensive stage. This point shall still be expounded on in the CNL’s 6th topic “On Terrorism, War, Violence, and Worldwide Peace” in order to clearly differentiate what is reactionary and what is revolutionary, and to distinguish the imperialist unjust wars from the people’s just war for liberation, democracy and socialism.

The *Compendium*’s historical notes on Pope Pius XI’s Encyclical Letter *Divini Redemptoris* (*On Divine Redemption*, 1937) state that this encyclical letter has “offered a systematic criticism of communism.” It has described communism as something “intrinsically perverse” that “perpetrates evil.” It has clearly

indicated that the principal means for correcting the evils perpetrated by it could be found in the renewal of Christian life, the practice of evangelical charity, the fulfillment of the duties of justice at both the interpersonal and social levels in relation to the common good, and the institutionalization of professional and interprofessional groups.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

The encyclical has further emphasized that “the professional and business classes [are] called to work together in a special way for the attainment of the common good.”¹⁵⁸ As explained in the CNL’s 1st topic, *A Preliminary Overview*, and in CNL’s 3rd topic, “On the Common Good, the Universal Destination of Goods, and Privately Property,” it is very clear that Pope Pius XI’s 1937 encyclical letter is biased for monopoly capitalism and blames communism as the cause of the evils in the conflict between capital and labor. It does not see that “the attainment of the common good”¹⁵⁹ cannot be achieved within the auspices of monopoly capitalism. It does not accept that communism or scientific socialism is a revolutionary theory of and for the subjugated and plagued peoples to liberate themselves from class exploitation and oppression. It does not seem to consider that the exploitation and oppression of monopoly capitalism is evil. Or even if Pope Pius XI’s Encyclical Letter *Divini Redemptoris* (*On Divine Redemption*, 1937) would consider the capitalist exploitation and oppression as evil, its “principal means” or “appropriate solutions” will neither rectify the evils of capitalism nor resolve “the conflict between capital and labor.” Pope Pius XI’s call for “the professional and business classes... to work together in a special way for the attainment of the common good” will never be achieved and surely will fail because of the exploitative and oppressive nature of monopoly capitalism, which shall still be elaborated in CNL’s sub-topics below.

In reality, therefore, Pope Pius XI’s Encyclical Letter *Divini Redemptoris* (*On Divine Redemption*, 1937)—as already expounded on clearly in the CNL’s 1st topic, “A Preliminary Overview”—is definitely a Church document whose partiality is for monopoly capitalism. Nevertheless for CNL and other revolutionaries and contrary to Pope Pius XI’s anti-communist verdict, it is monopoly capitalism that is, in fact, “intrinsically perverse” and that “perpetrates evil” such as injustices, all kinds of human rights violations, deprivation, poverty, inequality and the wide gap between poor and rich peoples and nations by continuously exploiting and oppressing the toiling masses of workers and peasants. Monopoly capitalism is, in fact, godless as it exploits and oppresses the least of Christ’s brethren. And unless the Christian Churches maintain their theology and social doctrine

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

as the spiritual cloak of their bias for monopoly capitalism, they will never be able to put effectively into concrete practice their “preferential option for the poor and oppressed,”¹⁶⁰ as often mentioned in the chapters of the *Compendium*.

CNL, therefore, is calling the Church people to liberate themselves from the anti-people ideology of imperialism and get rid of their bias for monopoly capitalism. They have to understand correctly Marx’s maxim that “religion is the opium of the people.”¹⁶¹ As a reiteration, CNL clarifies that this proverb should be interpreted to mean that Marx’s *primary* concern was *not* to question and deny the existence of God *nor* to prevent people to believe in a supernatural being but to stress the point that *religion or faith should not be used to close the minds and hearts of the masses from the truth that ought to liberate them*. In human history, religion had been and is still being used by exploiters and oppressors as a spiritual cloak to maintain and strengthen the exploitative and oppressive system of slavery, feudalism and capitalism. It has been historically proven that the imperialists—especially the US imperialists, their CIA forces and the Pentagon as their Department of War—continue to use religion and the Christian faith to distort the true history and situation of human society, and to hide the truth about monopoly capitalism that exploits and oppresses billions of poor, deprived, oppressed and powerless toiling masses of Americans and peoples of the world for the happiness of just the few rich, privileged and powerful who control the economy, the states and legal machineries, the political and cultural institutions, the army and police for their selfish and greedy economic interests and unlimited political and military power at the national and international levels.

According to the *Compendium*, Pope John Paul II’s

Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1988) commemorates the 20th anniversary of Pope Paul VI’s Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* (1967) and deals once more with the theme of development along two fundamental lines: “on one hand, the dramatic situation of the modern world, under the

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

¹⁶¹ K. Marx, “A Contribution to a Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right. Introduction,” in *Collected Works*, Vol.III, Lawrence & Wishart, 2010.

aspect of the failed development of the Third World, and on the other, the meaning of, conditions and requirements for the development worthy of man.”¹⁶²

The *Compendium* further states that

the encyclical presents differences between progress and development, and insists that “true development cannot be limited to the multiplication of goods and service—to what one possesses—but must contribute to the fullness of the ‘being’ of man” ... Pope John Paul II, alluding to the motto of the pontificate of Pope Pius XII, “*opus iustitiae pax*” (peace is the fruit of justice), comments: “Today, one could say, with the same exactness and the same power of biblical inspiration (confer Isaiah 32:17; James 3:18), *opus solidaritatis pax* (peace is the fruit of solidarity).”¹⁶³

The previous comments of the CNL on Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (*On Social Concern*, 1988)—that are initially expounded on in the aforementioned CNL’s 1st three topics (“A Preliminary Overview”; “On Poverty and Inequality, and What Can Be Done”; and “On the Common Good and the Universal Destination of Goods, and Private Property”)—can further help in grasping the essence of this encyclical letter.

Within the context of the “true development worthy of man” that “must contribute to the fullness of the ‘being’ of man,” the *Compendium* states that Pope John Paul II’s *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (*On Social Concern*, 1988) brings out the “abuses of capitalist and Communist societies,” and declares Pope John Paul II’s conviction that “Christianity, not Communism, is the true protector of the poor and oppressed.” But what is entirely wrong in Pope John Paul’s pronouncement is the fact that it does not at all lead Christians to know the basic root cause of poverty and oppression; it totally hides the historical reality that poverty and oppression in the world today is caused by monopoly capitalism, which is primarily headed by US imperialism. What CNL can impart is that Pope John Paul II’s statement

¹⁶² *Compendium*, p. 53.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

is what is strongly criticized by Brazil’s famous “brother of the poor” Archbishop Dom Helder Camara, a staunch advocate of liberation theology, whose condemnation of capitalism is well expressed in one of his popular quotations that says, “When I give food to the poor, they call me a Saint. But when I ask why the poor have no food, they call me a Communist.”¹⁶⁴

One great difficulty is that the *Compendium* has not put into one page or section what really are the “abuses of capitalist and Communist societies” and what are the facts that would concretely show that “Christianity, not Communism, is the true protector of the poor and oppressed.” Because of this difficulty, what CNL collectives have done is to search the pages of the *Compendium* where the *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (*On Social Concern*, 1988) would present the “abuses of capitalist and Communist societies” and the facts that would display that “Christianity, not Communism, is the true protector of the poor and oppressed.” The findings of CNL are in the following paragraphs.

In Chapter Three concerning “The Human Person and Human Right’s particularly on “the tragedy of sin,” the *Compendium*, quoting from Pope John Paul II’s *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (*On Social Concern*, 1988), states that

the actions and attitudes opposed to the will of God and the good of neighbor, as well as the structures arising from such behavior, appear to fall into two categories today: “on the one hand, the all-consuming desire for profit, and on the other, the thirst for power, with the intention of imposing one’s will upon others.”¹⁶⁵

On this regard, CNL bluntly states that it is the monopoly capitalists who have “the all-consuming desire for profit” and “the thirst for power” which they impose through the imperialists, especially the US imperialists, to the American toiling masses and other peoples particularly in the underdeveloped Third World countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America,

¹⁶⁴ Dom Helder Camara (1909-1999) was a Brazilian Catholic Archbishop and self-identified socialist. The above quotation can be found in Zildo Rocha, *Helder, O Dom: uma vida que marcou os rumos da Igreja no Brasil* (*Helder, the Gift: A Life that Marked the Course of the Church in Brazil*), Editora Vozes, 2000, p. 53.

¹⁶⁵ *Compendium*, p. 61.

which contain two-thirds of the world's population. What is called "the all-consuming desire for profit" and "the thirst for power" is never the aim of socialism because its fundamental aim is to liberate humankind from exploitation and oppression by human beings (slave owners, feudal lords, capitalists/imperialists) against the vast population of humanity.

Also found in *Chapter Three* particularly on the "rights of peoples and nations," the *Compendium* quotes *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis (On Social Concern, 1988)*, saying

the field of human rights has expanded to include rights of peoples and nations: in fact, "what is true for the individual is also true for peoples." The Magisterium points out that international law "rests upon the principle of equal respect for States, for each people's right to self-determination and for their free cooperation in view of the higher common good of humanity." Peace is founded not only on respect for human rights but also on respect for the rights of peoples, in particular the right to independence.¹⁶⁶

Again CNL firmly asserts that it is once more the monopoly capitalists who are abusive and violating the "rights of peoples and nations." For profit and world domination, they transfer their multinational corporations to the Third World countries for cheap labor and raw materials, plundering the environment and territories of peoples, particularly the national minorities found in many countries of the world.

Quotations from Pope John Paul II's *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis (On Social Concern, 1988)* are also found in Chapter Four that deals with "The Principles of the Church's Social Doctrine" specifically on "the universal destination of goods, private property, and preferential option for the poor." The *Compendium* states

those people and societies that go so far as to absolutize the role of property end up experiencing the bitterest type of slavery... Owners who heedlessly idolize their goods (cf. Mt

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 79.

6:24, 19:21-26; Lk 16:13) become owned and enslaved by them.¹⁶⁷

This is the worst kind of abuse and violation by monopoly capitalists who privately own the biggest part of properties of various kinds from goods, machineries, monies and so forth resulting to the wide gap between the few rich and the majority poor and between the developed and underdeveloped countries. This kind of abuse and violation is due to the exploitative and oppressive nature of monopoly capitalism. This encourages and leads the toiling masses of workers and peasants of the world to follow the socialist path in order to liberate themselves fully from economic exploitation and political oppression of monopoly capitalism.

In the same Chapter Four particularly on “participation and democracy,” the *Compendium*, basing its reflections on the two encyclical letters of Pope John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (*On Social Concern*, 1988) and *Centesimus Annus* (*The Hundredth Year*, 1991), states:

In the area of participation, a further source of concern is found in those countries ruled by totalitarian or dictatorial regimes, where the fundamental right to participate in public life is denied... In still other countries the burgeoning of bureaucracy *de facto* denies citizens the possibility of taking active part in social and political life.¹⁶⁸

Regarding this, CNL maintains that it is monopoly capitalism through imperialist impositions, armed aggressions and interventions, primarily by US imperialism, that has created the current economic and political totalitarianism at the global level. Also the modern revisionists or the Russian social imperialists have also established this kind especially in the eastern European countries and have destroyed the people’s democracies which were established when socialism was still functioning very well in the former USSR from 1917 to 1953. Such economic and political totalitarianism is presently being maintained in the Philippines by US imperialism through the autocrat Duterte fascist regime, which is immaturely playing with social imperialist China that wants to own the West

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 91.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 97.

Philippine Sea and impels the Filipino people into continuing backward and underdeveloped economy by lending capital export for the tyrant's BBB projects.

On “the principle of solidarity” which is also found in Chapter Four, the *Compendium* again quotes Pope John Paul II's Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (*On Social Concern*, 1988) and says:

In the presence of the phenomenon of interdependence and its constant expansion, however, there persist in every part of the world stark inequalities between developed and developing countries, inequalities stoked also by various forms of exploitation, oppression and corruption that have a negative influence on the internal and international life of many States.¹⁶⁹

As already mentioned above, “the world stark inequalities” are primarily caused by monopoly capitalism wherein imperialism, principally US imperialism, makes use of the UN institutions and organizations to impose to countries, especially those in the Third World, the totalitarian economy and politics through all kinds of unequal economic, trade and security agreements at the expense of poor peoples and nations of the world.

One particular abuse—mentioned by the *Compendium* in Chapter Seven, that concerns “Economic Life” particularly on “wealth exists to be shared”—is “improper accumulation.” The *Compendium* states: “Goods, even when legitimately owned, always have a universal destination; any type of improper accumulation is immoral, because it openly contradicts the universal destination assigned to all goods by the Creator.”¹⁷⁰ Though it is not clear in the *Compendium* whose abuse is it, CNL declares that “improper accumulation” is an economic abuse of monopoly capitalism. By means of their privately owned industrial, manufacturing, commercial and financial multi-national corporations, monopoly capitalists accumulate huge superprofits by exploiting, oppressing and plundering peoples

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 98.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 167.

A Commentary on the “Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church” and their natural resources in both the developed and underdeveloped countries.

Also in Chapter Seven specifically on “morality and the economy,” the *Compendium* has the following expositions, which are based on Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (*On Social Concern*, 1988), that state:

it would not be acceptable to achieve economic growth at the expense of human beings, entire populations or social groups, condemning them to indigence. The growth of wealth, seen in the availability of goods and services, and the moral demands of an equitable distribution of these must inspire man and society as a whole to practice the essential virtue of solidarity, in order to combat, in a spirit of justice and charity, those “structures of sins” wherever they may be found and which generate and perpetuate poverty, underdevelopment and degradation. These structures are built and strengthened by numerous concrete acts of human selfishness.¹⁷¹

Once more, CNL strongly affirms that the monopoly capitalist policies of global liberalization, deregulation and privatization are real abuses and “concrete acts of human selfishness” which in concrete terms “generate and perpetuate poverty, underdevelopment and degradation” at the global level. Like what has already been expounded on in CNL’s 3rd topic, “On the Common Good, the Universal Destination of Goods, and Private Property,” “the moral demands of an equitable distribution... of goods and services” can never be accomplished within the auspices of the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism. Thus, CNL reiterates that the Church’s call “to practice the essential virtue of solidarity, in order to combat, in a spirit of justice and charity, those ‘structures of sins’... which generate and perpetuate poverty, underdevelopment and degradation” can never be achieved without the involvement of the billions of toiling masses to fight and radically change the system of monopoly capitalism that exploits and oppresses them.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., pp. 169-170.

The aberrations in the system of international trade and protectionist policies, which the *Compendium* mentions in the same Chapter Seven but does not state whose abuses are these, are also considered by CNL as clear abuses of monopoly capitalism. Citing again Pope John Paul II's Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (*On Social Concern*, 1988) as well as Pope Paul VI's Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* (*On the Progress of Peoples*, 1967), the *Compendium* states:

The Church's social doctrine has time and again called attention to aberrations in the system of international trade, which often, owing to protectionist policies, discriminates against products coming from poorer countries and hinders the growth of industrial activity in and the transfer of technology to these countries.¹⁷²

Thus, CNL once again states that such abuses by monopoly capitalism at the global level can never be corrected by the aforementioned "appropriate solutions" offered by the Church's social doctrine to resolve the contradiction between capitalist exploiters and oppressors and the billions of exploited and oppressed toiling masses of workers and peasants around the world.

Other abuses are mentioned in other chapters of the *Compendium*; but such shall be expounded on in CNL's other remaining topics, especially in CNL's 5th topic "On Monopoly Capitalist Globalization; Quo Vadis Humankind." The difficulty in the *Compendium* is that it does not mention definitively which are the abuses of capitalism and those of communism. And it seems that what it refers as the abuses of communism are actually the fascist acts, exploitation and oppression, done by the modern revisionists or the Russian social imperialists in the former USSR that fully restored capitalism peacefully through denationalization and privatization in the former socialist states in 1991 up to the present day. Meaning, nothing is found in the 12 Chapters of the *Compendium* about the definitive abuses of communism. Also facts to show that "Christianity, not Communism, is the true protector of the poor and oppressed" have not been presented by the *Compendium*.

¹⁷² Ibid., p. 184.

Therefore, the crucial question now is: What then is the basis of Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (*On Social Concern*, 1988) to proclaim that “Christianity, not Communism, is the true protector of the poor and oppressed?” In theory, this may be true with the Christian Churches’ “preferential option for the poor”; but it is hardly shown in the actual Christian life of the majority of Church people who are mostly confined in the four corners of their convents and large church buildings. For how can the Christian Churches put their “preferential option for the poor” in concrete practice when, in fact, their partiality for monopoly capitalism is so strong and has become a sin of omission that hideously allows capitalist exploitation and oppression to continue victimizing billions of toiling masses around the world? Even the “appropriate solutions” offered by the encyclical letters, that have already been presented above, do not qualify in resolving effectively the basic “conflict between capital and labor” or in efficiently settling the contradiction that should favor and benefit the billions of exploited and oppressed toiling masses of workers and peasants who are the victims of the monopoly capitalist exploiters and oppressors.

So, why then has Pope John Paul II decreed his strong conviction that “Christianity, not Communism, is the true protector of the poor and oppressed?” Besides the points that have already been presented above and in the CNL’s previous topics, CNL is one with the Latin American theologians to deduce that Pope John Paul II’s conservative faith and conformist/middle-of-the-road theology may seem to be one of the basic reasons why he declared such an anti-communist judgment. Such a statement has served as the smokescreen of Church people in their continuing bias for capitalism and in their non-acceptance of the socialist path, which has already been proven in world history as an effective remedy to resolve “the conflict between capital and labor.”

Latin American progressive theologians have this kind of assessment that for twenty-seven (27) years as head of the Vatican City state from 1978 to 2005, Pope John Paul II’s message was decidedly conservative and strongly opposed to secularization that left little room for religious authority in the modern world. Pope John Paul II maintained a hard line against theological advances which he saw as dangerous. Thus, he repeatedly attacked liberation theology, a predominantly Latin American

standpoint that views the liberation, even by revolutionary means, of the poor, deprived and oppressed from economic exploitation and socio-political oppression. Pope John Paul II even silenced Catholic priest Rev. Fr. Leonardo Boff, a great Brazilian theologian and a distinguished proponent of liberation theology. Such anti-liberation theology attitude might have been the reason why Pope John Paul II decreed his strong conviction that “Christianity, not Communism, is the true protector of the poor and oppressed.”

As a summary, unless Christian Churches rectify and depart from their partiality for monopoly capitalism, they would never be able to follow Jesus Christ, whose clear bias is for the poor, disadvantaged and destitute masses. Without doing away with the Church’s social doctrine that unknowingly serves as the spiritual cloak of feudalism, capitalism and imperialism, especially US imperialism, the Christian Churches won’t be able to concretize into liberating actions their “preferential options for the poor.”

It is *only* by fully acknowledging that Jesus is on the side of the poor, deprived and oppressed (PDO) and by concretely practicing the “preferential option for the poor” that the Christian Churches would start to discover various progressive forms of Christian charity, which could be complementary, but not necessarily compatible in terms of beliefs, with socialist principles as basic remedy to “the conflict between capital and labor” towards radical social change.

The encyclical letters of Pope Leo XIII, Pope Pius XI and Pope John Paul II have clearly rejected and excluded socialism as a remedy to resolve the contradiction between the toiling masses and the capitalists. Inversely, this rejection and exclusion has led Christians to believe that capitalism is the correct system that is compatible with Christianity and that imperialist America is “*the founder, savior and bringer of democracy*” (*sic* bourgeois democracy) in the world. For the past centuries up to the present day, this has created the kind of faith that serves as the spiritual cloak of the exploitative and oppressive nature and system of monopoly capitalism or imperialism—a faith that imposes on all Christian believers the backward Church’s social doctrine of “the principle of collaboration instead of class struggle as the fundamental means for social change.”

However, in the history of the labor movement in both the developed and the underdeveloped nations, it has been proven that the principle of cooperation and collaboration between capital and labor greatly restricts the workers to demand social justice and struggle for their basic rights and human dignity, and prominently favors the capitalists who profit most from the work of the toiling masses. But what right have the Christian Churches to tell the workers to fight for social justice by using “collaboration and cooperation instead of class struggle as means for social change?” How can the workers, who are weak and propertyless, be expected to become strong, demand social justice and fight for their human rights and dignity by collaborating and cooperating with the capitalists/imperialists that exploit and oppress them? For CNL, it is very un-Christian and it is a grave sin of omission to impose on the toiling masses to circumvent the importance of class struggle and to tell them to cooperate and collaborate with their exploiters and oppressors “as means for social change.”

Historically, it has been confirmed by the labor movement throughout the world that class struggle is the only fundamental means of the workers to achieve social change that would benefit them economically, politically and culturally. For instance, the struggle of the working people to shorten the length of the workday, which was routinely ten hours or longer, started in the US already in the 1850s and was victorious because of the principle of class struggle that united and guided the working class in their struggle against the exploitative and oppressive system of capitalism in the US. Due to class struggle in the form of massive pickets and strikes, which the labor movement continuously launched for more than eight years and which were oftentimes violent because of the fascist attacks of the capitalist armed minions and the bourgeois state’s reactionary armed security forces, the first eight-hour law was approved by the US Congress and took effect on May 1, 1867. Without class struggle, the billions of toiling masses remain to be defenseless in effectively resisting the attacks of the exploitative and oppressive capitalists and their bourgeois states.

It is undeniably clear in human history that only through class struggle that great victories were achieved by the working, exploited and oppressed classes and sectors such as the emancipation of women, the abolition of slavery, the increase of the workers’ salaries, and so on. For countries like Russia, China, and other nations in eastern Europe, Asia and

Latin America, the greatest victories through class struggle were achieved wherein the toiling masses of workers, peasants, the intelligentsia and other democratic classes and sectors, guided by the viewpoint, method and standpoint of scientific socialism as radical remedy to class exploitation and oppression, were victorious and successful in establishing socialist economies and socialist states in their nations. And it was the discontinuation of class struggle in the socialist states of the USSR and China that weakened scientific socialism and led back these former socialist states to the peaceful restoration of capitalism.

Christian Churches have to accept the reality that when there is class exploitation and oppression, class struggle ensues as a necessity for the exploited and oppressed to demand social justice, liberate themselves, and defend their human rights and dignity. A labor union that does not appreciate class struggle as the fundamental means of workers for social change is a “yellow union” that is toothless and is led by those elitist-bourgeois leaders who conceal themselves as “union activists” but are, in fact, well paid by the capitalists and the bourgeois state besides what these opportunists get from the workers’ union dues. The rejection of the Church against class struggle as the basic means of the working class for social change was actually the background of the words of the song, “Which Side Are You On?,”¹⁷³ composed by Florence Reece, a wife of a US veteran union activist, to the tune of an old Christian Baptist hymn. This song was sung daily in 1932 during a coal miners’ strike in Harlan, County, Kentucky, USA in order to get the support of the clergy in strengthening the labor union against the exploitative and oppressive capitalist owners of the coal mining company at that time.

This song, “Which Side Are You On?,” must again be popularized to correct the mistake of the Church people in imposing to workers and other exploited and oppressed classes and sectors the capitalist and bourgeois call to abandon their right of class struggle in order to collaborate and cooperate with the capitalists that exploit and oppress them. Today, this song should still be addressed to the Church people of the world: “Which Side Are You On?” Are you for the capitalists or are you serious with your preferential option for the billions of poor people around the world, who include the

¹⁷³ “Which Side Are You On?” is a song written in 1931 by activist, poet, and folksong writer Florence Reece (1900-1986). —*Ed.*

propertyless workers? In fact, the Christian Churches’ preferential option for the poor and the principle of class struggle, a basic and important socialist principle, could easily complement each other to support the toiling masses in their labor mass movement towards the achievement of a qualitative social justice and a radical social change for the common good of society, especially for the billions of poor and oppressed, at the national and international levels. Church people have to admit the historical fact that without class struggle the billions of exploited and oppressed peoples of the world would not be able to liberate themselves from the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism, which is continually being imposed globally by imperialism, primarily by US imperialism, especially on the poor peoples of the underdeveloped Third World countries.

Other questions that CNL would want to pose are the following: Is the Church’s doctrine on “the rights of the weak, the dignity of the poor and the obligations of the rich, the perfecting of justice through charity” as “appropriate solutions,” offered by the *Rerum Novarum* (*On New Things*, 1891), really adequate as a remedy to resolve “the conflict between capital and labor?” But since historical facts have proven, as presented in the previous CNLs 1st three topics above, that such “appropriate solutions” of the Church’s social doctrine are absolutely inadequate in settling the contradiction between the capitalists and the toiling masses, what then could be the reasons for this shortfall?

After 130 years (1891 to 2021) since Pope Leo XIII proclaimed his Encyclical Letter *Rerum Novarum* (*On New Things*, 1891), sad to say that his call and the Christian Churches’ preaching to the rich and powerful to respect the rights of the weak and the dignity of the poor and to put into practice their obligations to give enough sustenance to the poor has not resolved “the conflict between capital and labor” up to this day. Some “Christian” capitalists might have decided to raise the wages of their workers or give Christmas bonuses to laborers as well as big amount of Christmas gifts to the Christian Churches. However, such Christian charitable acts have not lessened the wide continuing gap between the few capitalists and the billions of toiling masses around the world. Why? Because of the exploitative and oppressive nature of the system of monopoly capitalism that has created the vast inequality between the rich and poor peoples and between the developed and the underdeveloped countries.

Thus, unless the Christian Churches would recognize the global reality that monopoly capitalism, which is maintained and protected by the imperialists led by those from the US, is the root cause of the ongoing worldwide exploitation, oppression, poverty and inequality, they would neither find other effective and adequate forms of Christian charity for social justice that could become a great inspiration for the billions of toiling masses in their struggle for radical change, nor would they (the Christian Churches) be able to acknowledge that the socialist path is the fundamental and only remedy to resolve the contradiction between capital and labor, and for the toiling masses of workers and peasants and other democratic classes and sectors to fully liberate themselves from class exploitation and oppression, and establish socialist economies and socialist states for the promotion and the advance of socialist politics and culture in each of the countries of the world. And when Christians, Church leaders, their organizations and institutions would be able to reach that kind of understanding and acceptance, they would easily agree that believing in Jesus the Redeemer who is on the side of the poor, deprived and oppressed (PDO) and the practice of “preferential option for the poor” could really be complementary, but not necessarily compatible in terms of beliefs, with the socialist principles as wholistic guides towards radical social change wherein the toiling masses would be able to free themselves from capitalist exploitation and oppression and build new economic, political and cultural structures founded on socialist values, morals, tenets and ethics.

And once the above kind of understanding and acceptance is reached, then Christians, Church leaders, their organizations and institutions could easily discover various progressive forms of Christian charity to inspire the toiling masses and other democratic classes and sectors of society to courageously and continuously struggle against class exploitation, class oppression, fascism, terrorism, war and violence launched by capitalists, bourgeois states and their imperialist masters towards the total liberation of peoples in both the underdeveloped and the developed nations. Below are the three examples of the progressive forms of Christian charity/love that CNL recommends and which could be complementary, but not necessarily compatible in terms of beliefs, with socialist principles. But before expounding these three recommended progressive forms of Christian charity, CNL would need to clarify first the meaning of “believing in Jesus

as one on the side of the PDO, the preferential option for the poor and the various progressive forms of Christian love as being complementary, but not necessarily compatible in terms of beliefs and philosophies, with the Marxist/socialist principles.” This means that these two elements can help each other in advancing the economic, political and cultural aspirations of the PDO, even though there is a great difference in terms of believing or not believing in the supernatural. Because of this great dissimilarity, the two elements are not united with each other. However, their being not necessarily compatible could easily be resolved by applying without coercion, condemnation and arbitrariness from any side the correct policy of *religious freedom*. Almost all programs of Communist Parties, including the CPP, clearly state the importance of the policies of religious freedom and the separation of Church and State in the building of the united front, which could also be applied in the building of a socialist society. However, Christians should reject the wrong political line of fascist and reactionary states that, because of the policy of the separation of Church and State, the Church people should not be involved in the affairs of the State. They have to clarify and challenge the fascist and reactionary state that they (Church people and Christians) are also compatriots who should be involved in the affairs of the State to promote the economic, political and cultural interests of the PDO.

In its *Program for a People’s Democratic Revolution*, the CPP states:

In the cultural field, the Party must promote among the people a national, scientific and mass system of culture and education, and combat all counterrevolutionary trends of thought through campaigns of education and information and with due respect to freedom of thought and belief.¹⁷⁴

It calls all revolutionaries to “respect the freedom of thought and belief, use patient persuasion in gathering support for the people’s democratic revolution and promote the united front of proletarian revolutionaries and progressive liberals in the intellectual field.” It further invites revolutionaries to

¹⁷⁴ CPP, *Constitution and Program*, 2016, p. 73.

Encourage the development of progressives within the religious institutions, prevent such institutions (especially the dominant church) from becoming an effective tool of US imperialism and big comprador-landlord interests and combat Christian chauvinism against the Bangsamoro and other national minorities.¹⁷⁵

Such correct policies have to rectify the bitter experiences of the Christian Orthodox Churches as regards the former USSR anti-religious propaganda that continuously characterized the episodes of the decades during the modern revisionist regimes in the former USSR from 1954 to 1991. Such correct policies have to avoid what the *Compendium* cited in Pope John Paul II's Apostolic Exhortation *Catechesi Tradendae* (1979), which states: "The right to religious freedom... is being violated by many States, even to the point that imparting catechesis, having it imparted, and receiving it become punishable offenses."¹⁷⁶ Through the correct application of religious freedom, separation of Church and State, and in the spirit of the united front work, the three recommended progressive forms of Christian charity/love in the succeeding paragraphs could be implemented. It would be in this way that the following three recommended progressive forms—which are interrelated, wherein the development and the advance of one form contributes to the improvement and progress of the other—could become a venue to develop a principled Christian-Marxist dialogue, which is upheld by the CNL's Constitution.

The **first progressive form of Christian charity is liberating theology**. It is a theology that is founded on Jesus Christ's mission and ministry which focuses on justice for the poor, deprived and oppressed (PDO), and that liberates Christians—ordained, religious and lay—from a conservative faith and from a conformist and middle-of-the-road theology, that in the end favors the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism. It is a contextualized theology that interprets the Bible and Christian Churches' doctrine and documents within the context of the struggles and aspirations of the PDO, Christ's least brethren, who compose the toiling masses of workers, the semi-proletariat (urban poor in street-commu-

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 94.

¹⁷⁶ *Compendium*, p. 213.

nities and slum areas, vendors, handicraftsmen, carpenters and masons, small photographers, ambulant repairmen and poor fishermen, peddlers and small stallkeepers, provincial dock porters, city market cargadores, shop assistants, apprentices in sweatshops, pedicab drivers, tricycle drivers, jeepney drivers, house servants, restaurant helpers, odd job seekers, janitors, other informal employees, seasonal farm workers, etc.), fisherfolk, peasants, and other democratic classes and sectors of the intelligentsia, the women, the youth, and national minorities.

It is, therefore, a theology that champions the rights of the PDO to struggle in order to liberate themselves from economic exploitation, political oppression and fascism, and from cultural deterioration by class exploiters and class oppressors. It should make progressive theological courses and statements to express the Christian Churches’ viewpoint, method and standpoint that should clearly favor the PDO. It is a theology that sees Christ’s bias for the PDO and the Christian preferential option for the poor as complementary, but not necessarily compatible in terms of beliefs, with the principles and aims of the socialist path, as explained above.

The **second progressive form of Christian charity is liberating worship and Eucharistic reenactment.** Carrying out liberating worship and Eucharistic celebrations should grow and intensify from small to big, which should be actively participated upon by the PDO and the Christians (ordained, religious and lay). Preferably, it is better to launch liberating worship and Eucharistic reenactment in the provinces, cities and urban centers of any nation, especially during the mass campaign activities of the PDO and in places where exploitation, oppression and HRVs happen. It is by means of the liberating worship and Eucharistic reenactment that Christian believers recreate in actual practice Jesus’ footsteps by knowing the concrete situations of the suffering masses and immersing themselves into the life-and-death struggles of the PDO in order to concretely express in their liberating worship and Eucharistic reenactment the PDO’s basic problems, issues, struggles, aspirations and victories.

In the context of the current Philippine realities, especially among the workers, semi-proletariat, the peasants, fisherfolks, national minorities, women, youth, and also among the democratic classes and sectors of the intelligentsia, the activities—that are planned and implemented in

launching the four mass movements, presented and proposed by CNL in its 2nd topic, “On Poverty and Inequality, and What Can Be Done”—could serve as enough venues and contexts of the Christians and the PDO in accomplishing genuine liberating worship and Eucharistic reenactment. In the form of progressive sermons, speeches and statements, the Christian Churches’ viewpoint, method and standpoint for the PDO is articulated during events where liberating worships and Eucharistic reenactments are launched.

One concrete example of the above point was the two-page “Statement of the Archdiocese of Manila Against the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020,” which was issued on July 6, 2020 by Catholic Bishop Broderick Pabillo, the Apostolic Administrator of the Archdiocese of Manila and the *ad interim* replacement of Cardinal Vidal (now in Vatican City). The statement was read during masses for liturgical worships and Eucharistic celebrations in the various dioceses and parishes of the Archdiocese of Manila. A part of it, which is a strong castigation of the tyrant Duterte regime, declares in clear terms:

So, while we agree that the government is responsible for the protection of its citizens from any form of harm or terror, it shall do so within the bounds of existing democratic principles and processes. The government should not make as an excuse the upholding of national security while undermining human rights and civil liberties. To do so makes the government terrorist against its own people.¹⁷⁷

Another example is the statement of Catholic Bishop Jose Elmer Mangalino of the Diocese of Bayombong, who also condemns all forms of terrorism, but does not support the ATA of 2020 “that will endanger the Filipino people’s freedom and rights.”¹⁷⁸ He said strongly,

¹⁷⁷ Clergy of the Archdiocese of Manila, “Statement of the Archdiocese of Manila against the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020,” CBCP News, June 25, 2020 (<https://cbcpnews.net/cbcpnews/statement-of-the-archdiocese-of-manila-against-the-anti-terrorism-act-of-2020/>).

¹⁷⁸ Bishop Jose Elmer Mangalino, “Bishop decries enactment of Anti-Terrorism Law, Northern Dispatch,” July 16, 2020 (<https://nordis.net/2020/07/16/article/news/northern-luzon/bishop-decries-enactment-of-anti-terrorism-law/>).

I, together with the clergy of the Diocese of Bayombong, decry this law as it is prone to abuse and will threaten our undeniable rights and freedom of expression, of speech, and due process of law... Let us continue to be vigilant in the face of these threats to our democracy. Silence and indifference have no place right now. We need to speak up and be heard!¹⁷⁹

The bishop is a known environmental advocate. He, along with some members of the diocese, are vocal critics of the mining operation of Oceana Gold Philippines, Inc. (OGPI) in Brgy. Didipio, Kasibu in the province of Nueva Vizcaya.

NCCP Secretary-General Bishop Reuel Marigza also denounced the ATA of 2020 (RA 11479).

With its implementation, Church people vocal on social issues are in greater peril. Even without the law, rights violations and red-tagging are already happening. That is why Church people who speak against bad policies and standing for human rights are more at risk now.¹⁸⁰

Citing the case of United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) Pastor Marcelino Mariano, his wife and his daughter, Bishop Marigza stated

The military accuses them of being rebels because of their involvement with people’s organizations and issues in the region. They [the army] have been visiting the pastor in his church assignment and talking to church council members to pressure him to leave the organization and advocacy.¹⁸¹

Also as the Cordillera Movement Against Tyranny (CMAT) convenor in a press conference last July 17, 2020, the UCCP Bishop urged

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

¹⁸⁰ Bishop Reuel Marigza, “Anti-terror law perilous for church people–protestant bishop,” July 21, 2020 (<https://nordis.net/2020/07/21/article/news/nation/anti-terror-law-perilous-for-church-people-protestant-bishop/>).

¹⁸¹ Bishop Reuel Marigza, “Protestant bishop warns against Philippines’ new anti-terror law,” LiCAS News Philippines, July 26, 2020 (<https://philippines.licas.news/2020/07/26/protestant-bishop-warns-against-against-philippines-new-anti-terror-law/>).

the public to “stand for the people, defend human rights, and not remain silent,”¹⁸² as attacks against government dissenters and critics intensify. He questioned the militarist approach of the Duterte administration on the health and economic crisis brought by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Soldiers and police are ordered to enforce repression rather than provide humanitarian assistance. The military budget is bigger than what should be allotted to secure food for the hungry, medicines and logistics for the sick and economic aid to those who bear the most severe impact of this crisis, [the bishop said].¹⁸³

The CBCP statement, “A Pastoral Letter and a Call to Prayer,” issued on July 16, 2020 by Most Rev. Pablo Virgilio S. David, DD, Catholic Bishop of Kalookan and CBCP Acting President, was firmly strong in condemning the ATA of 2020. The statement said:

We are still in disbelief about the manner in which the contentious Anti-Terror Bill was fast-tracked and approved in both Houses of Congress while the whole country’s attention was focused on the COVID-19 pandemic. They did not even seem to care that many of the people they represent were against it—lawyers’ associations, the academe, the business sector, labor groups, youth organizations, NGO’s, political movements, faith-based communities, and even the Bangsamoro government.¹⁸⁴

Further, the CBCP stated:

In particular, the legal experts and constitutionalists in our country are seriously concerned that this newly signed law has many elements that are “oppressive and inconsistent with our

¹⁸² Bishop Reuel Marigza, “Cordillera groups call for unity amid attacks, anti-terror law implementation,” Northern Dispatch, July 22, 2020 (<https://nordis.net/2020/07/22/topic/rights-and-welfare/cordillera-groups-call-for-unity-amid-attacks-anti-terror-law-implementation/>).

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Bishop Pablo Virgilio S. David, “A Pastoral Letter and a Call to Prayer,” CBCP News, 16 July, 2020 (<https://cbcnews.net/cbcnews/a-pastoral-letter-and-a-call-to-prayer/>).

Constitution.” They have pointed out convincingly how this new law poses a “serious threat to the fundamental freedoms of all peaceful Filipinos.” And yet, the people in government and their allies have dismissed these fears as unfounded. The assurance that they give sounds strangely parallel to that which the Chinese government gave to the people of Hongkong: “Activism is not terrorism. You have no reason to be afraid if you are not terrorists.” We know full well that it is one thing to be actually involved in a crime and another thing to be merely suspected or accused of committing a crime.¹⁸⁵

The CBCP enumerated particular crimes committed by tyrant Duterte since 2016 after he was elected as president:

Have we not heard of people active in social advocacies who are accused of being communists? Have we forgotten the bishops, priests, and religious who were included among those falsely charged by the Philippine National Police with crimes of sedition and inciting to sedition? Are we not aware of the thousands of people who have been killed in police operations on the basis of mere suspicion of involvement in criminality and illegal drugs? Have we not followed the news about Senator Leila de Lima, who continues to languish in jail, also on the basis of mere allegations? Have we not heard of media personalities being harassed by a multitude of criminal charges? Have we not felt the chilling effect of the closure of the country’s biggest broadcast network, the ABS-CBN, after being denied renewal of its franchise? Is it not evident to us how this pattern of intimidation creates an atmosphere detrimental to the freedom of expression in our country?¹⁸⁶

Seeing the similarity of dictator Marcos’ ASSOs and the warrantless detentions through ATA of 2020 by the tyrant Duterte, the CBCP added:

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

The return of “warrantless detentions” through this new law cannot but remind us of the initial moves in 1972 that eventually led to the fall of democracy and the rise of a dictatorial regime that terrorized the country for fourteen years. It all began when an elected president also legalized the “ASSOs” [arrest, search and seizure orders]. It was from there that we gradually sank into the mire of authoritarian rule. Knowing how, in just the recent past, the law has been used too many times as a weapon to suppress legitimate dissent and opposition, we cannot but share in the apprehensions expressed by the lawyers and ordinary citizens that filed the petition against the said infamous law before the Supreme Court.¹⁸⁷

During the State of the Nation Address (SONA) of autocrat Duterte, Catholic Bishop Broderick Pabillo, the Apostolic Administration of Manila Archdiocese, issued a statement which was read during the “Mass for Justice and Peace” at the Quiapo Church. The bishop called on Filipinos not to be afraid to speak out and act against social injustices in the country. “[Bishop Broderick Pabillo said that] biblical justice demands transformation of unjust systems. ‘So let us not be afraid to speak and act. We must tell the truth. Justice must prevail.’”¹⁸⁸

The Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines (AMRSP) also issued a statement on the occasion of autocrat Duterte’s SONA last July 27, 2020. The strong statement was signed by the AMRSP Co-Chairpersons, Fr. Cielito R. Almazan, OFM and Sr. Marilyn A. Java, RC.

The AMRSP statement specified and denounced the fascist acts of the Duterte regime:

Is it *tampang* to kill unarmed, helpless, poor people in the name of a “war on drugs?” Is it not fundamentally wrong from any point of view, moral or legal, to take a life without regard for due process and rule of law? Reports say it has reached 27,000 victims whose families lost a mother, a father, a wife or hus-

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ “Bishop: Don’t be afraid to act against injustices,” CBCP News, July 27, 2020 (<https://cbcpcnews.net/cbcpcnews/bishop-dont-be-afraid-to-act-against-injustices/>).

band, an uncle or aunt, a daughter or son, a brother or a sister, a *lolo* or *lola*.... It is *tapang* to bombard us repeatedly and incessantly with chauvinistic, misogynistic words, as if women were mere chattel? As we accord the highest respect for our Queen, Mother Mary, so too must we give the higher respect for women and all vulnerable persons... Is it *tapang* to refuse to stand up and claim what is rightfully ours in the West Philippine Sea? Is it *tapang* that drives us to treat our fellow Filipinos as second-class citizens while all the time bowing to the wishes of an imperial power? We stand in solidarity with all of the oppressed peoples of this world but never at the cost of the dignity of the Filipino nor the sovereignty of our nation... Is it *tapang* to launch a never-ending assault on perceived personal enemies with such viciousness, especially towards women—Senator Leila de Lima, Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno, Senator Risa Hontiveros, Sr. Mary John Mananzan OSB and Vice-President Leni Robredo, to name a few. We will never be able to build a truly caring, loving and compassionate nation without our women... Is it *malasakit* to arrest and jail more than 90,000 Filipinos while on the longest of lockdowns? Instead of treating the pandemic as a public health issue it has been reduced to a peace and order problem with Filipinos being charged as pasaway. Is this not to hide the inadequacy of government action to the health crisis and its slow response? ... Is it *malasakit* to relentlessly attack human rights and human rights defenders? Red tagging them, killing them, arresting them and having them disappear? They who have given all for our poor and exploited must be allowed the space to do their work. They are the apostles of our time—giving their lives for our fellow women and men... Is it *tapang* and *malasakit* to curtail our fundamental rights and freedoms enshrined in our Constitution—right to life, freedom of expression and of the press, right to peaceably assemble in redress of grievances among others? We are witness to the steady erosion of our democratic institutions and processes. The law has been weaponized to hunt down perceived enemies. The law has been

practiced selectively with the poor whipped with injustice while the powerful swagger with impunity... Is it *tapang* and *malasakit* to foist an Anti-Terror Law upon our people that only instills terror and fear? Is it not wickedness to prioritize a law that curtails basic rights and freedoms? Should we not put all our efforts at containing the pandemic, which continues to spread uncontrolled? ...Is it *tapang* and *malasakit* to close a media outfit and muzzle journalists? Is it not the work of the wicked to silence the press?¹⁸⁹

Another concrete instance was the sermon of Bishop Broderick Pabillo in a liturgical and Eucharistic celebration in January 2021 when the bureaucrat capitalist minions of tyrant Duterte were pushing for charter change and to revise the economic provisions of the reactionary constitution. The nationalist bishop strongly declared: “Real change in Philippine society is not by means of changing the constitution or allowing foreign business corporations to enter freely in our country. Real transformation in Philippine society has to start from personal and structural changes.”¹⁹⁰

All the aforementioned statements, which serve as examples, are essential part of the liberating worship and Eucharistic reenactment of the Christian faith. For this kind of progressive form of Christian charity, it is very much needed for theologians and Christian activists to form a committee to prepare and ensure that liberating worship and Eucharistic reenactment will be done, especially during major activities of the four proposed mass movements expounded on in the CNL’s 2nd topic, “On Poverty and Inequality, and What Can Be Done.” Such knowledge and experiences, achieved in the course of carrying out liberating worships and Eucharistic reenactments, would enrich the development and the advance of more liberating theological discourses to raise the partiality of the Christian Churches for the forward movement of the NDR and the armed struggle towards total victory; and upon nationwide victory, socialist construction in the Philippine society would then commence.

¹⁸⁹ “AMRSP statement on the occasion of President Duterte’s SONA,” LiCAS News Philippines, July 27, 2020 (<https://philippines.licas.news/2020/07/27/amrsp-statement-on-the-occasion-of-president-rodrigo-dutertes-sona/>).

¹⁹⁰ A recording of the sermon is available online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tX-MZuqrHD-A> —*Ed.*

The **third progressive form of Christian charity is liberating social action.** It is a social action for social justice and liberation of the PDO. It focuses its work on arousing, organizing and mobilizing (AOM) the PDO. Although the words “arousing,” “organizing” and “mobilizing” are never used in the Scripture, the whole of Jesus’ mission and ministry is actually an AOM work. The terms mentioned in the four Gospels refer to Jesus as “preacher,” “teacher,” “healer,” “caster of demons”; such labels are equivalent to or have the same meaning with “arouse” and which also include Jesus’ ways of “organizing” and “mobilizing” or “rallying” people for their “salvation” and “metanoia” or “total change.” Thus, in the four Gospels, we observe that Jesus’ mission and ministry consists of three steps of a continuing process: He arouses people in order to organize them as apostles and disciples; he arouses and organizes people in order to mobilize them as apostles and followers; and he mobilizes people by sending them as apostles and disciples in order to build new communities for the creation of the “Kingdom of God,” which is concretely manifested in the “Reign” of justice, equality, freedom, love and peace among human beings.

However, as Jesus Christ did arousing, organizing and mobilizing work in the context of the social environment during his time, the Christian social activists (both ordained, religious and lay) must also do AOM work within the framework of the PDO’s present problems, struggles and demands for justice and total liberation for them to achieve their wholistic well-being and happiness in the economic, political and cultural fields. In the context of the present Philippine realities, the focus of the Christian social activists’ AOM work are among the workers, the semi-proletariat, the peasants, the fisherfolk, the women, youth and national minorities, and also the democratic classes and sectors of the Filipino intelligentsia. Moreover, the content, forms of struggle and organizational expressions of the Christian activists’ AOM work have to be based on the NDR program for building the revolutionary mass movement in both cities and the countryside.

The progressive forms of Christian charity are not limited to the three forms that have been expounded on in the above paragraphs. Other forms could still be developed that are necessary for the advancement of the entire NDR in the countryside and in the urban centers of the country. These other forms of Christian charity could be based on the seven revo-

lutionary tasks, expounded on in the CNL's 8th topic, CNL's Concluding Remarks: "God's Reign As the Reign of Truth, Justice, Peace, Love, Equality and Liberation." Still other progressive forms could be established in other countries with the objective of organizing linkages at the international level that could greatly strengthen the international anti-imperialist mass movement and could motivate leaders and lay people from Christian Churches abroad to form their own organizations and join international organizations such as the International League of People's Struggles (ILPS). The development and advancement of such progressive forms at the national and international levels would serve as appropriate solutions which the Christian Churches could contribute to resolving the basic contradiction between capital and labor.

It is very much recommended that professors in seminaries, teachers in schools of the Christian Churches, leaders and personnel of the Christian Churches' institutions, programs and organizations should be encouraged to undergo a series of trainings and seminars to learn the progressive forms of Christian love/charity and to share experiences of the Christian Churches in the life-and-death struggles of the PDO. The continuing actual praxis of developing and advancing the various kinds of the progressive forms of Christian charity within the context of the current Philippine realities would definitely strengthen the commitment of Christians to be always with Jesus Christ on the side of the PDO in order to increase the number of revolutionary forces and heighten their dedication to fully and continuously support the NDR. It would be in this way and through the aforementioned processes that the liberating and progressive forms of Christian love would be complementary, but not necessarily compatible in terms of beliefs, with the socialist principles up to the NDR's final victory. Upon the final victory of the NDR through the people's war, CNL would then be transformed to become the Christians for Socialist Revolution (CSR) through which Christians—both ordained, religious and lay—could greatly contribute to the Filipino people's urgent task in building and consolidating socialist structures in the economy, politics and culture of the entire Philippine society.

The basic contradiction between capital and labor is defined by their relationships in production wherein the capitalists—the sole owners of the means of production but do not participate in manual labor—get huge superprofits by exploiting and oppressing the toiling masses of workers, who are propertyless and the recipients of low wages.

In human history, there are two kinds of work or labor that have been developed in the process of production, i.e., manual and mental labor. In Chapter Six which is about “Human Work,” the *Compendium* also mentions these two types of work as it brings out the Biblical basis of work. In explaining Jesus as a man of work, it brings out the two kinds of work that Jesus did. Quoting from Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Laborem Exercens* (1981), the *Compendium* states that “Jesus... ‘devoted most of the years of his life on earth to **manual work** at the carpenter’s bench’ in the workshop of Joseph (cf. Mt. 13:55; Mk 6:3), to whom he was obedient (cf. Lk 2:51).”¹⁹¹ In the Gospels, it seems that Jesus started assisting Joseph in carpentry work at the age of 12, which seems to imply that Jesus was a carpenter for 21 years because he transferred to another kind of work at the age of 33. For the next three years, besides manual labor, mental labor is another kind of work that Jesus did, which he started at the age of 33. The *Compendium* defines this kind of *mental labor*, that Jesus did, and states:

Jesus... describes his own mission as that of working: “My Father is working still, and I am working” (Jn 5:17), and his disciples as workers in the harvest of the Lord, which is the evangelization of humanity (cf. Mt 9:37-38).¹⁹²

This implies that Jesus’ apostles and disciples continued this kind of work (mental labor), “evangelization of humanity,” after the death of Jesus.

Also in the same Chapter Six, other Biblical teachings on work, wage and profit are mentioned by the *Compendium*. In Jesus’ preaching,

he teaches that we should appreciate work... He condemns the behavior of the useless servant, who hides his talent in the

¹⁹¹ *Compendium*, pp. 135-136.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 136.

ground (cf. Mt 25:14-30) and praises the faithful and prudent servant whom the master finds hard at work at the duties entrusted to him (cf. Mt 24:46).¹⁹³

Jesus also taught that “the laborer deserves his wages’ (Lk 10:7).”¹⁹⁴ He admonished that “man should not be enslaved by profit” because “gaining the whole world is not the purpose of life (Mk 8:36).”

After the death and resurrection of Jesus, the *Compendium* expounds that Jesus’ apostles and disciples continued Jesus’ preaching on work by teaching about “the duty to work”¹⁹⁵ and “the purpose of work”¹⁹⁶ such as the sharing of the fruits of labor, appropriate wages to be given to laborers. It states that

work... is an integral part of the human condition, although not the only purpose of life. No Christian, in light of the fact that he belongs to a united and fraternal community, should feel that he has the right not to work and to live at the expense of others (cf. 2 Thes 3:6-12).¹⁹⁷

The *Compendium* further explains that

all are charged by the Apostle Paul to make it a point of honor to work with their own hands, so as to “be dependent on nobody” (1 Thes 4:12), and to practice a solidarity which is also material by sharing the fruits of their labor with “those in need” (Eph 4:28).¹⁹⁸

It even mentions the condemnation of Saint James to landlords who cheat and do not pay their laborers:

Saint James defends the trampled rights of workers: “Woe to you, listen to the claims of the laborers. The wages of the labor-

¹⁹³ Ibid., pp. 135-136.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 136.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 137.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 141.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 137.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., pp. 137-138.

ers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts” (Jas 5:4).¹⁹⁹

From the Biblical teachings on work, let us backtrack to Chapter Five concerning “The Family, the Vital Cell Of Society” and understand the *Compendium*’s expositions on “the relationship between the family and work.”²⁰⁰ Basing its reflections on Pope Leo XIII’s *Rerum Novarum* (*On New Things*, 1891), Pope Pius XI’s Encyclical Letter *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931), Second Vatican Ecumenical Council’s Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes* (1966), Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Laborem Exercens* (1981) and Holy See’s *Charter of the Rights of the Family* (1983), the *Compendium* states:

The relationship existing between the family and economic life is particularly significant. On one hand, in fact, the economy (“*oiko-nomia*,” household management) was born from domestic work. The home has been for a long time—and in many regions still is—a place of production and the center of life. The dynamism of economic life, on the other hand, develops with the initiative of people and is carried out in the manner of concentric circles, in ever broader networks of production and exchange of goods and services that involves families in continuously increasing measure. The family, therefore, must rightfully be seen as an essential agent of economic life, guided not by the market mentality but by the logic of sharing and solidarity among generations.²⁰¹

“The relationship between the family and work” is further explained by the *Compendium* in the same Chapter Six that deals with “Human Work” particularly on “The Right to Work” and which explains that one of the basic rights of the family, which is the core of any society, is *the right to work*. Citing Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Laborem Exercens* (1981)

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 138.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 131.

and also Pope John Paul II's Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* (1982), the *Compendium* reflects:

Work is “a foundation for the formation of family life, which is a natural right and something that man is called to.” It ensures a means of subsistence and serves as a guarantee for raising children. Family and work, so closely interdependent in the experience of the vast majority of people, deserve finally to be considered in a more realistic light, with an attention that seeks to understand them together, without the limits of a strictly private conception of the family or a strictly economic view of work. In this regard, it is necessary that businesses, professional organizations, labor unions and the State promote policies that, from an employment point of view, do not penalize but rather support the family nucleus. In fact, family life and work mutually affect one another in different ways. Travelling great distances to the workplace, working two jobs, physical and psychological fatigue all reduce the time devoted to the family. Situations of unemployment have material and spiritual repercussions on families, just as tensions and family crises have negative influences on attitudes and productivity in the area of work.²⁰²

Nevertheless, all of the above Biblical teachings on work or labor and the expositions of the encyclical letters on the relationship of the family and work as well as on the family's basic right to work would only remain on the level of much gobbledygook if these are not expounded on in the context of the actual economic systems that have been developed and are still existing today, i.e., the systems of feudalism, capitalism and socialism. Thus, CNL is calling all Christians—both the ordained, the religious and the laity—to honestly ask and sincerely answer the following questions: Which one of these systems, feudalism or capitalism or socialism, promotes the Biblical teachings on work and the Church's social doctrine on the interrelationship of the family and work and on the basic right of the family to work? Which one of these systems is the “appropriate solution”

²⁰² Ibid., p. 151.

that would finally resolve the basic contradiction between capital and labor wherein the toiling masses and their families would be free from economic exploitation, political oppression and cultural degeneration?

The system of feudalism is mostly found in the underdeveloped Third World countries. However in semi-colonial and semi-feudal nations, like the Philippines, that are also located in the Third World, the systems of feudalism and imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism, are at work wherein feudalism is the handmaid of imperialism, especially US imperialism. On the other hand, the system of capitalism or better monopoly capitalism is typically located in the developed and industrialized nations that have established capitalist firms not only in their own countries but also abroad, especially in the Third World countries. And there is the system of socialism that is established in socialist nations, as initially expounded on in the CNL's 1st topic, “A Preliminary Overview.” The system of feudalism shall be explained briefly below; while the systems of capitalism and socialism shall be expounded on in the CNL's sub-topics below and in the four other remaining topics of the CNL commentary.

In the system of feudalism, the basic contradiction is between the few big landlords and the many landless peasants and tenants and their families. Their relationship in production is very exploitative because the big landlords, who privately own vast tracts of land and other means of production, do not participate in manual labor. Most of the time of the big landlords is spent in mental labor, managing their immense properties, commanding their tenants and hired farm workers, extravagant ways of living and all sorts of vices. They get superprofits by taking the bigger part of the harvest (usually 75-25), through high land rent, low wage, high interest on loans, unpaid labor, etc. On the other hand are the tenants and hired farm workers, who are propertyless or own little and do all the manual labor. Because of low wage, their families cannot afford a decent living, are malnourished due to lack of food, have fewer clothes, cannot send their children to school, cannot afford to bring to the hospital a sick member of their families, homeless or live in shanties, and so on. And usually, the states in feudal societies are controlled by big landlords who make use of government, the courts, the army and police to maintain, protect and increase their economic and political power. And in semi-colonial and semi-feudal societies, like the Philippines, the basic contradiction in feu-

dalism is exacerbated by imperialism, primarily by US imperialism, and by bureaucrat capitalism.

Let us now go back to the other sections of the *Compendium* to understand more the contradiction between labor and capital. In the same Chapter Six which is about “Human Work,” particularly on “the dignity of work” and most specifically on “the relationship between labor and capital,” the *Compendium* explains the priority of labor over capital. Quoting Pope Leo XIII’s *Rerum Novarum* (*On New Things*, 1891) and Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Laborem Exercens* (1981), the *Compendium* states that

Labor has an intrinsic priority over capital. “This principle directly concerns the process of production: in this process, labor is always a primary efficient cause, while capital, the whole collection of means of production, remains a mere instrument or instrumental cause. This principle is an evident truth that emerges from the whole of man’s historical experience.”²⁰³

Yes, this is an evident truth; but in the context of the system of capitalism, “labor is always a primary efficient cause” for the superprofits of monopoly capitalists, who are private owners of the means of production which they use to gain more profits. Meaning, the labor power of the toiling masses is exploited and oppressed by the monopoly capitalists to get superprofits.

However, in the same Chapter Six on the same “the relationship between labor and capital,” the *Compendium* stresses that labor and capital are complementary and further explains that

There must exist between work and capital a relationship of complementarities: the very logic inherent within the process of production shows that the two must mutually permeate one another and that there is an urgent need to create economic systems in which the opposition between capital and labor is overcome.²⁰⁴

²⁰³ Ibid., p. 143.

²⁰⁴ Ibid.

This point is very confusing and it must be clarified. In the system of monopoly capitalism, the “relationship of complementarities,” which may exist if ever between the worker and the capitalist, is one of great inequality and injustice. The capitalist, on the one hand, is the sole owner of the means of production and does not do any manual labor, but get superprofits from the work of the laborer; and on the other hand is the propertyless laborer, who does all the manual labor but is lowly paid because most part of the value of his work is “stolen,” to make use of terms of prophets Amos and Isaiah, by the capitalist. This inequality is the real “opposition between capital and labor.” Now the question is: What kind of “economic systems” that should be created so that the great inequality and injustice between capitalist and the laborer is overcome? In various parts of the Compendium, the building of cooperatives is mentioned. But cooperatives cannot serve as “economic systems” that would be able to overcome the “opposition” or the great inequality and injustice between the capitalist and the worker. For, in actual practice, cooperatives are usually established by people who are *not opposed* to one another, and are characterized by the absence of the profit motive that is only for certain individuals; and whatever profit of the cooperative has, is equitably shared by members of the cooperatives. This is the very reason that there has never been a cooperative that has been established, which is owned by the capitalists and the working class. For how can a cooperative unite the capitalists, who are the exploiters and oppressors, and the toiling masses who are exploited and oppressed by the capitalists? But if such a cooperative exists, that is certainly a reformist one which becomes the partner and handmaid of state fascism against the toiling and struggling masses of workers and peasants.

As regards the “urgent need to create economic systems in which the opposition between capital and labor is overcome,” CNL would declare again that it is scientific socialism that has been able to create economic systems that would free the toiling masses from the exploitation and oppression of the capitalists, the big landlords and the comprador bourgeoisie, wherein “the opposition between capital and labor is overcome,” ending the exploitation and oppression that economically and politically victimizes the working and the peasant masses. In fact, in the system of monopoly capitalism, the “relationship of complementarities... between labor and capital,” that the Church social doctrine upholds, is an unjust

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relationship because the capitalist, who owns the means of production and focuses on mental labor on how to exploit and does not perform any manual labor, gains huge superprofits by extracting the surplus value from the work of the laborer, who is propertyless but does all the manual work for the capitalist and is lowly paid by the latter.

In the same Chapter Six and on same point of “the relationship between labor and capital,” the strong partiality of the Church and its social doctrine for the capitalists is again shown. Quoting again Pope Leo XIII’s *Rerum Novarum* (*On New Things*, 1891), Pope Pius XI’s Encyclical Letter *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931) and Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Laborem Exercens* (1981), the *Compendium* states that

In times when “capital” and “hired labor”... [were identified as]... not only two elements of production but also and above all two concrete social classes, the Church affirmed that both were in themselves legitimate: “Capital cannot stand without labor, nor labor without capital.” This is a truth that applies also today, because “it is altogether false to ascribe either to capital alone or to labor alone what is achieved by the joint work of both; and it is utterly unjust that the one should arrogate unto itself what is being done, denying the effectiveness of the other.”²⁰⁵

Once more, CNL proclaims that this Church’s social doctrine totally helps the capitalists and conceals the exploitation and oppression done by the capitalists to the toiling masses in the developed nations; and by the imperialists, notably the US imperialists, from the industrialized countries that go on exploiting, oppressing and plundering the poor peoples in the poor and underdeveloped countries of the Third World.

But while the encyclical letters and the Church continue their strong bias for capitalism, they also point out truthfully the new forms of antagonism in the relationship between labor and capital. This is explained by the *Compendium* in the same Chapter Six on the same point of “the relationship between labor and capital.” Quoting Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Laborem Exercens* (1981) and his Address to the Pontifical Academy

²⁰⁵ Ibid., pp. 143-144.

A Commentary on the “Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church” of Social sciences in Vatican City on March 6, 1999, the *Compendium* states:

The relationship between labor and capital often shows *traits of antagonism* that take on new forms with the changing of social and economic contexts. In the past, the origin of the conflict between capital and labor was found above all “in the fact that the workers put their powers at the disposal of the entrepreneurs, and these, following the principle of maximum profit, tried to establish the lowest possible wages for the work done by the employees.” In our present day, this conflict shows aspects that are new and perhaps more disquieting: scientific and technological progress and the globalization of markets, of themselves a source of development and progress, expose workers to the risk of being exploited by the mechanisms of the economy and by the unrestrained quest for productivity [CNL].²⁰⁶

The above statement seems to imply that the pope and his Vatican staff do not know that “*traits of antagonism*” done in the past wherein “*the workers put their powers at the disposal of the entrepreneurs, the principle of maximum profit*” and “*the lowest possible wages for the work done by the employees,*” have not been stopped but are continued and even exacerbated by the monopoly capitalists up to the present day. The essence of capitalism is maximum profit/superprofits for the capitalists and lowest wages for the laborers; and this essence makes capitalism go on exploiting and oppressing the toiling masses up to the next millennium and will never stop if capitalism will not be replaced by scientific socialism. Actually, the capitalist traits of “maximum profit” and “the lowest possible wages for the work done by the employees” have been exacerbated by “scientific and technological progress and the globalization of markets” which is “a source of development and progress” only for the greedy monopoly capitalists but not for the hungry toiling masses. By means of the “scientific and technological progress and the globalization of markets,” the monopoly capitalists all the more extract superprofits from the toiling masses of workers.

²⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 144.

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We have to link the aforementioned point with another truth, which is quoted by the *Compendium* from Pope John Paul II's Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (1991), which says that "scientific and technological progress and the globalization of markets" can result to "relationships marked by destructive competitiveness and estrangement."²⁰⁷ This is very true; the globalized free-market economy of monopoly capitalism is a system of "destructive competitiveness and estrangement" because the sole aim of the individual monopoly capitalists is to have more superprofits from their interlocking multinational firms (industrial, commercial, financial) around the world. The global economic reality is that the capitalist traits of "maximum profit" and "the lowest possible wages for the work done by the employees" are worsened by "scientific and technological progress and the globalization of markets." And such mechanisms of the monopoly capitalist economy, which have been advanced by "scientific and technological progress and the globalization of markets," have resulted, on the one hand, to overproduction, shortened hours of labor and increasing unemployment of workers for long periods (months to years), but on the other hand, have made the monopoly capitalists to get richer and richer through the continuous accumulation of superprofits/maximum profits from their multinational firms. And the monopoly capitalist exploitation and oppression goes on and on unless the whole system is replaced by scientific socialism.

Another important point that the *Compendium* has expounded on in the same Chapter Six concerning "Human Work" is *the participation of workers in "ownership, management and profit."* *Understanding this can also help in comprehending deeply "the basic contradiction between capital and labor."* Reflecting on the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council's Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes* (1966) and on Pope John Paul II's Encyclical Letter *Laborem Exercens* (1981), the *Compendium* states:

The relationship between labor and capital also finds expression when workers participate in ownership, management and profits. This is an all-too-often overlooked requirement and it should be given greater consideration. On the basis of

²⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 145.

his work each person is fully entitled to consider himself a part-owner of the great workbench where he is working with everyone else. A way towards that goal could be found by associating labor with the ownership of capital, as far as possible, and by producing a wide range of intermediate bodies with economic, social and cultural purposes. These would be bodies enjoying real autonomy with regard to public authorities, pursuing their specific aims in honest collaboration with each other and in subordination to the demands of the common good.²⁰⁸

The basic question here is: In the context of monopoly capitalism, can the workers really have the rights “to participate in ownership, management and profit?”

CNL’s answer to the above question is, of course, NO. Why? Because in the system of monopoly capitalism, the means of production such as factories, tools, machines, equipment, buildings, capital, land and natural resources, raw materials, services (communication, transportation, water, electricity) and enterprises (industrial, commercial and financial), etc. that employ the workers and even the superprofits extracted from the labor power of the toiling masses are all privately owned and managed by the monopoly capitalists. On the other hand, the workers, who are mostly propertyless and employed by the capitalists, do all the manual labor or some mental labor and services needed by the monopoly capitalist firms, and are lowly paid; but they, the toiling masses, do not participate at all in the ownership, management and profit of the monopoly capitalist businesses.

As initially explained above, workers can have the rights “to participate in ownership, management and profit” only through the system of cooperativism in which they are themselves the producers and consumers, they are themselves the members of a cooperative which they have established wherein they work together, own the means of production and properties of the cooperative, manage the operation of the cooperative, make together needed decisions for the advancement of the cooperative, and share together equitably the profits of the cooperative.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., pp. 145-146.

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For instance, the workers, who are consumers themselves, can establish a consumers cooperative that unites them on the basis of their mutual interest in reducing living expenses and benefiting from the ownership and control/management of production facilities and of accommodations shared by all members. Or a producers' cooperative can serve the interests of its members functioning as producers and can become an association of workers who cooperatively own and operate factories or farms for the purposes of economically purchasing supplies and of profitably marketing their produce. Within the limited context of cooperativism, exploitation and oppression are seemingly absent; but the system of exploitation and oppression, created by the monopoly capitalists and bourgeois states, at the national and international levels, remain and affect the cooperatives created by the masses at the local level. This only means that cooperatives as types of economic systems have no capacity and will never resolve the basic contradiction created by the system of capitalism between the toiling masses of workers and the capitalists.

The most advanced types of cooperativism are developed and found in socialist states wherein a new type of production relations exists in which the capitalist private ownership is replaced by the system of socialist ownership by the whole people, which is a system of public ownership in which both the means of production and products of labor are possessed by the socialist state that must represent the whole laboring people. It is the socialist state ownership by the whole people that would finally resolve the basic contradiction between capital and labor, a contradiction which is the cause of the exploitation and oppression of the toiling masses. And once the contradiction is gone, that would be the time wherein the whole laboring people through their socialist state machineries would then be able to “participate in the ownership, management and profit” of their economic enterprises.

Another Church's doctrine expounded on by the *Compendium* is on “*the relationship between labor and private property.*” We have to understand this in order to deeply comprehend more the basic “*conflict between capital and labor*” or the contradiction between the capitalists and the laboring masses. Reflecting on Pope John Paul II's Encyclical Letter *Laborem Exercens* (1981) and his another Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (1991), the *Compendium* states:

The Church’s social Magisterium sees an expression of the relationship between labor and capital also in the institution of private property, in the right to and the use of private property. The right to private property is subordinated to the principle of the universal destination of goods and must not constitute a reason for impeding the work or development of others. Property, which is acquired in the first place through work, must be placed at the service of work. This is particularly true regarding the possession of the means of production, but the same principle also concerns the goods proper to the world of finance, technology, knowledge, and personnel.²⁰⁹

Still pondering on the aforementioned Pope John Paul II’s two encyclical letters, the *Compendium* further asserts:

It becomes illegitimate to possess [the means of production] when property is not utilized or when it serves to *impede the work of others*, in an effort to gain a profit which is not the result of the overall expansion of work and the wealth of society, but rather is the result of curbing them or of illicit exploitation, speculation or the breaking of solidarity among working people [CNL].²¹⁰

CNL affirms that there is, indeed, “the relationship between labor and private property” in a rural agricultural economy of small peasant tillers or laborers who own small-sized farms and cultivate them for consumption and their remaining harvest they would sell to buy other basic commodities (sugar, salt, etc.) for the use of their families. But in the context of monopoly capitalism wherein there is the intense contradiction between the capitalists and the toiling masses, there is no “relationship between labor and private property” because the workers do not own the means of production (including finance and technological goods); and their relationship with the capitalist owners of the means of production, which is an unjust and unequal relation, is selling their labor power to the capitalists who exploit and oppress their workers by paying them low

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*

wages and letting the bourgeois state, which the capitalists control, decree unfair laws in order to get “the maximum profit” or superprofits from the work of the laborers. And in the end during busting period of monopoly capitalism, depression and recession, the economic crisis of monopoly capitalism, which is due to overproduction of commodities and overaccumulation of capital, greatly *impedes* the whole economy and all the more impoverishes the toiling masses at the national and international levels.

Still basing its reflections on Pope John Paul II’s two encyclical letters mentioned above, the *Compendium* moreover clarifies and asserts the following:

Private and public property, as well as the various mechanisms of the economic system, must be oriented to *an economy of service to mankind*, so that they contribute to putting into effect the principle of the universal destination of goods. The issue of ownership and use of new technologies and knowledge... becomes significant in this perspective. These resources... must be placed in a context of legal norms and social rules that guarantee that they will be used according to the criteria of justice, equity and respect of human rights. The new discoveries and technologies, thanks to their enormous potential, can make a decisive contribution to the promotion of social progress; but if they remain concentrated in the wealthier countries or in the hands of a small number of powerful groups, they risk becoming sources of unemployment and increasing the gap between developed and underdeveloped areas [CNL].²¹¹

A lot of the points in this quotation have already been expounded on in CNL’s 2nd topic, “On Poverty and Inequality, and What Can Be Done,” and also in CNL’s 3rd topic, “On the Common Good, the Universal Destination of Goods, and Private Property.” The quotation only confirms what CNL has been stressing that the monopoly capitalist economy is neither “oriented to an economy of service to mankind” nor contributes “to putting into effect the principle of the universal destination of

²¹¹ Ibid., pp. 146-147.

goods” because its exploitative and oppressive nature is the primary cause of and exacerbates the contradiction between capital and labor, that further results to widening and continuing gap between the few rich and the many poor and between the developed and underdeveloped countries. In reality, monopoly capitalism is the economic system that is totally harmful to humanity. This serves as a summary of what the CNL has been aspiring to explain that the relationships of the capitalists and the workers in production define the nature of the contradiction between the two opposing forces wherein on the one side are the few capitalist owners of the means of production who do not participate in manual labor but get huge super-profits by exploiting and oppressing the toiling masses of workers; and on the other side are the many propertyless laborers who are exploited and oppressed and the recipients of low wages.

At this juncture of the CNL commentary, it is hope that all the aforementioned expositions would be of great help to Christians—both the ordained, the religious and the laity—in further strengthening their faith in Jesus Christ who is always on the side of the PDO, and solidifying their commitment to concretely practice the Christian Churches’ doctrine of “preferential option for the poor” in order for them to discover various progressive forms of Christian charity. It is moreover the hope of CNL that a continuing growth of the number of Christians would be able to reformulate Pope John Paul II’s strong conviction from “Christianity, not Communism, is the true protector of the poor and oppressed” to a more progressive Christian articulation, which can be stated in this way: “In order to follow Jesus Christ as always one on the side of the PDO, Christians ought to consider Christianity as complementary, though not necessarily compatible in terms of beliefs, with the principles of scientific socialism.”

Because of the exploitative and oppressive nature of the contradiction between capital and labor, the right to work and the rights of workers, as defined by the encyclical letters and the Church’s social doctrine in the *Compendium*, are always, in reality, trampled upon by the monopoly capitalists.

In the same Chapter Six that concerns “Human Work,” specifically on “The Right to Work” and “The Rights of Workers,” the *Compendium*

has brought out various subject matters, which the CNL has arranged according to the following sequences: (1) the rights of workers; (2) the world of agriculture and the right to work; (3) women and the right to work; (4) child labor; (5) immigration and work; and (6) the role of the state. In the following paragraphs, CNL shall comment on these subject matters as expounded on by the *Compendium* with the aim of deepening more insights on the nature of the contradiction between the capitalists and the laboring masses within the auspices of the system of monopoly capitalism.

Reflecting on Pope Leo XIII's Encyclical Letter *Rerum Novarum* (1891), Pope Pius XI's Encyclical Letter *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931), Pope Pius XII's Encyclical Letter *Sertum Laititiae* (1939), Pope John XXIII's Encyclical Letter *Pacem in Terris* (1963), Second Vatican Ecumenical Council's Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes* (1966), Pope John Paul II's Encyclical Letter *Laborem Exercens* (1981) and his other Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (1991), the *Compendium* enumerates eight points of "the rights of workers." It states:

The rights of workers, like all other rights, are based on the nature of the human person and on his transcendent dignity. The Church's social Magisterium has seen fit to list some of these rights, in the hope that they will be recognized in juridical systems: the right to a just wage; the right to rest; the right "to a working environment and to manufacturing processes which are not harmful to the workers' physical health or to their moral integrity"; the right that one's personality in the workplace should be safeguarded "without suffering any affront to one's conscience or personal dignity"; the right to appropriate subsidies that are necessary for the subsistence of unemployed workers and their families; the right to a pension and to insurance for old age, sickness, and in case of work-related accidents; the right to social security connected with maternity; the right to assemble and form associations. These rights are often infringed, as is confirmed by the sad fact of workers who are underpaid and without protection or adequate representation. It often happens that work conditions

for men, women and children, especially in developing countries, are so inhuman that they are an offense to their dignity and compromise their health.²¹²

“The right to strike” is not listed by the papal encyclicals in the above eight points; but the *Compendium* has recognized it as an essential component of the rights of workers. Quoting *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2430 & 2435, Second Vatican Ecumenical Council’s Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes* (1966), Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Laborem Exercens* (1981), the *Compendium* clarifies and declares:

The Church’s social doctrine recognizes the legitimacy of striking “when it cannot be avoided, or at least when it is necessary to obtain a proportionate benefit,” when every other method for the resolution of disputes has been ineffectual. Striking, one of the most difficult victories won by labor union associations, may be defined as the collective and concerted refusal on the part of workers to continue rendering their services, for the purpose of obtaining by means of such pressure exerted on their employers, the State or on public opinion either better working conditions or an improvement in their social status. Striking “as a kind of ultimatum” must always be a peaceful method for making demands and fighting for one’s rights; it becomes morally unacceptable when accompanied by violence, or when objectives are included that are not directly linked to working conditions or are contrary to the common good.²¹³

One point that CNL asks to be recognized by the Church’s social doctrine for the security and interest of the striking workers is *workers must have the right to defend themselves* as an essential part of their right to strike. Oftentimes, the strikes of workers become violent when the armed minions of the capitalists and the security forces of the bourgeois state forcibly disperse the striking workers by shooting at and by other fascist acts against

²¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 154-155.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 156-157.

the workers on strike. The Church's social doctrine—that strike “becomes morally unacceptable when accompanied by violence, or when objectives are included that are not directly linked to working conditions”—disarms entirely the working class and supports the unjust violence of the monopoly capitalists whose exploitative and oppressive actuations “are contrary to the common good.”

There are three other rights of workers which the CNL would expect to be recognized by the Church's social doctrine, namely, the right to education and training to upgrade the knowledge and skills of the toiling masses, the right to regular employment, and the right to mobilize and campaign against oppressive laws of the capitalists that are usually sanctioned by the bourgeois state which is under the control of capitalists. Here in the Philippines, one example of the oppressive law is “contractualization” which is against the right of workers for regular and full employment. In the workers' mass campaign, these three other rights of workers and the nine rights of workers listed above should be demanded to the capitalists and their bourgeois states to be respected and for the capitalists and bourgeois states to indemnify the workers whenever their rights are violated.

As already stated above by the *Compendium*, almost all the rights of workers “are often infringed” by the bourgeois state authorities and their monopoly capitalist masters. Why? What causes the infringement of the rights of workers? The violations of the rights of workers are caused by the exploitative and oppressive nature of the contradiction between capital and labor wherein in their relationships in production the capitalists, who own solely and privately the means of production but do not participate in production, get the “maximum profit” by stealing the surplus value of the labor power of the toiling masses of workers who are most often propertyless and lowly paid.

Let us give an example of the infringement of the rights of workers that is oftentimes done by monopoly capitalists and their bourgeois states. This is the violation against the right of workers “to a just wage.” But before delving on this, let us first listen to the elaborations of the *Compendium* regarding the Church's social doctrine on “family wage” and also on “the workers' right to fair remuneration and income distribution.”

In relation to the Church’s social doctrine on “family wage,” the *Compendium* quotes Pope Pius XI’s Encyclical Letter *Quadragesimo Anno* (*On the 40th Year*, 1931) and states: “the principle that salaries should be proportional not only to the needs of the worker but also to those of the worker’s family.”²¹⁴ This is expounded on further by the *Compendium* in Chapter Five that concerns “The Family, the Vital Cell of Society” particularly on “family wage.” Basing its reflections on Pope Leo XIII’s *Rerum Novarum* (*On New Things*, 1891), Pope Pius XI’s Encyclical Letter *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931), Second Vatican Ecumenical Council’s Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes* (1966), Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Laborem Exercens* (1981) and Holy See’s *Charter of the Rights of the Family* (1983), the *Compendium* says:

In order to protect this relationship between family and work, an element that must be appreciated and safeguarded is that of a **family wage**, a wage sufficient to maintain a family and allow it to live decently. [It further emphasizes that] such a wage must also allow for savings that will permit the acquisition of property as a guarantee of freedom. The right to property is closely connected with the existence of families, which protect themselves from need thanks also to savings and to the building up of family property. [It suggests other] forms of important social provisions... to make a family wage a concrete reality [such as] family subsidies and other contributions for dependent family members, and also remuneration for the domestic work done in the home by one of the parents.²¹⁵

Let us now relate the Church’s doctrine on “family wage” to another Church’s doctrine on “the right to fair remuneration and income distribution,”²¹⁶ found in the *Compendium*’s Chapter Six that deals with “Human Work,” particularly on “The Rights of Workers.” Reflecting again on Pope Leo XIII’s *Rerum Novarum* (*On New Things*, 1891), Pope Pius XI’s Encyc-

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 131-132.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

lical Letter *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931), Second Vatican Ecumenical Council's Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes* (1966), Pope John Paul II's Encyclical Letter *Laborem Exercens* (1981) and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2434, the *Compendium* asserts:

Remuneration is the most important means for achieving justice in work relationships. The “just wage is the legitimate fruit of work.” They commit grave injustice who refuse to pay a just wage or who do not give it in due time and in proportion to the work done (cf. Lv 19:13; Dt 24:14-15; Jas 5:4)... “Remuneration for labor is to be such that man may be furnished the means to cultivate worthily his own material, social, cultural, and spiritual life and that of his dependents...” The simple agreement between employee and employer with regard to the amount of pay to be received is not sufficient... to qualify as a “just wage,” because a just wage “must not be below the level of subsistence” of the worker: natural justice precedes and is above the freedom of the contract.²¹⁷

And with regards to income distribution, the *Compendium* further asserts that

an equitable distribution of income is to be sought on the basis of criteria not merely of commutative justice but also of social justice that is, considering, beyond the objective value of the work rendered, the human dignity of the subjects who perform it. Authentic economic well-being is pursued also by means of suitable social policies for the redistribution of income which, taking general conditions into account, look at merit as well as at the need of each citizen.²¹⁸

Now, let us ask the basic question: Do monopoly capitalists recognize and put into actual practice the Church's doctrines on “family wage” and “the right to fair remuneration and income distribution?” CNL researchers have found out that no capitalist-controlled and bourgeois state has a

²¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 155-156.

²¹⁸ Ibid., p. 156.

law on “family wage.” In both capitalist countries and semi-colonial and semi-feudal nations, like the Philippines, what they have is a law on “minimum wage.” And the rate of pay in minimum wage is fixed either by a collective bargaining agreement or by governmental enactment as the lowest wage payable to specified categories of employees. However, based on the experiences of the labor mass movement, the method of establishing a minimum wage by collective bargaining agreement (CBA) suffers from a serious limitation because the agreement reached covers only the workers in a specific industry or local area.

Of course, the minimum wage of a laborer is just a small part of the value of the goods produced by the worker, wherein the surplus value of his labor goes to the capitalist’s superprofits. Particularly here in the Philippines, the minimum wage of ₱537/day²¹⁹ set for the NCR (2020 data) is less than half of the ₱1,025 family living wage/day for a family of five. Thus, usually minimum wage is not enough for a decent living of the families of the toiling masses, especially during inflation that is habitually dictated by monopoly capitalists in order to gain more profits. In the final analysis, minimum wage is just to conceal the exploitative nature of capitalism and the oppressive laws of bourgeois and puppet states that primarily favor the interests of the monopoly capitalists and their bourgeois and puppet rulers. For, in the system of capitalism, wage is an unjust instrument to make the working class hired slaves of the capitalists forever. Thus, it is just building castles in the air to hope that the “family wage,” as defined by the encyclical letters, would be enacted into law by the bourgeois states of the monopoly capitalists or the puppet states of the imperialists.

In the US, the Church’s doctrines on “family wage” and “the right to fair remuneration and income distribution” have never been recognized by the monopoly capitalists and the bourgeoisie in the US imperialist government. As regards minimum wage, US Congress passed a legislation in 1996 to raise the minimum wage from \$4.25 to \$5.15 an hour by 1997. There might have been an increase in the minimum wage today; but surely such an increase would not be enough as the standard of living of the American people rises year after year. And even though minimum wage is increased year after year through the US Congress, the toiling masses of

²¹⁹ Meaning around 10 USD (₱50 = \$1) —*Ed.*

the American people remain poorer and poorer, while the monopoly capitalists and bourgeoisie become richer and richer each year. This is shown in the distribution of the American family income which shows how income is divided among families in different economic classes. And based on the wage system of the capitalist states in the US, the family income is categorized into five economic groups depending on the wages received by members of families: (1) lowest income, (2) lower-middle income, (3) middle income, (4) upper-middle income and (5) highest income. For instance, the family that has the lowest income means the laboring members of that family receive the lowest wages; and the family that has the highest income means the working members of the family receive the highest wages where they are employed. From here, one can already see the actual inequality even among the American toiling people, which is definitely created by the exploitative system of monopoly capitalism and the oppressive bourgeois states of the US imperialist government. And an added injustice is imposed on the American toiling masses through the income tax wherein even the minimum-wage toiling employees are taxed by the US bourgeois government as income tax is one of the sources of government revenues. In 2000, for instance, income tax from individuals is much higher compared to that from corporations: US\$1 trillion and only US\$200 billion, respectively. Meaning, the monopoly capitalist corporations, that extract huge superprofits by exploiting and oppressing the toiling masses and that are bailed out from bankruptcy by means of public funds during the periodic economic crisis of monopoly capitalism, contribute very little to the US national income that ought to be distributed for public use.

The above facts only show that the US has a totalitarian economy which is under the sole control of the US monopoly capitalists and financial oligarchs that direct state fascism and authoritarianism of the US bourgeois government and violently trample the basic interests and rights of millions of the toiling American people who compose the majority of the national population (whose total estimate in 2008 was 303,824,650). This kind of totalitarian economy in the US has been clearly manifested in the end of 2020 wherein the wealth of 644 US billionaires grew by US\$931 billion to US\$3.9 trillion since March that year, which is equivalent to the total wealth of the bottom half or 165 million Americans. Thus even

inside their own country, the US imperialists have created a great divide and inequality among Americans.

Among capitalist states and semi-colonial and semi-feudal nations, like the Philippines and others in the Third World, income distribution of the national income and wealth on the one hand is divided among the members of society as individuals and on the other hand is apportioned according to the value of the output of goods among the factors or agents of production, namely, labor, land, capital, and management. The capitalist and bourgeois division or apportionment of this value takes the form of monetary payments, consisting of wages and salaries, rent, interest, and profit. And according to capitalist and bourgeois definitions, wages and salaries are paid to workers and managers, and government bureaucrats; rent is paid for the use of land and for certain kinds of physical objects; interest is paid for the use of capital; and profit is realized by the owners of business enterprises as a reward for risk taking. With this kind of income distribution, the capitalists and the bourgeois bureaucrats—who are the minority of the national population, the exploiters and oppressors of the toiling masses—are, in fact, the ones who are most benefited by the national income and wealth. In times of the periodic economic crisis, i.e., depression and recession, due to their exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism, their bankrupt multinational corporations are bailed out by their bourgeois states by using the public coffers, the national income and wealth that have come from the sweat and blood of the toiling masses.

Income redistribution, that should shift wealth from a rich minority to a poor majority, has been a goal of social reformers (example, Martin Luther King, Jr., etc.) and some international development efforts (example, US Civil Rights Movement), but this has never been resolved because their analysis and resolutions are always within the auspices of the global system of monopoly capitalism. This shall be resolved in the US only if the toiling American masses become revolutionaries, expand and strengthen their revolutionary forces in order to establish a new type of production relations wherein the monopoly capitalist private ownership is overthrown and entirely changed by the system of socialist ownership by the whole people, in which both the means of production and products of labor are

publicly owned by the socialist state that must be founded by the laboring American people themselves.

The eleven rights of workers mentioned above should be the calls of the labor mass movement in the Philippines today in order to win over the support of the Christian Churches to develop Christian liberating social actions for the toiling masses of workers. But the mass campaigns to demand the 11 rights of workers have to be done within the context of the four inter-related mass movements, particularly “The Working Class and the Peasant Mass Movement,” that CNL has proposed in the previous CNL’s 2nd topic, On Poverty and Inequality, And What Can Be Done. These four inter-related mass movements are very essential to advance the agrarian revolution and national industrialization that would become the foundations of a Philippine socialist society that shall commence upon the victory of the national-democratic revolution.

In connection to the CNL’s proposal on “The Working Class and the Peasant Mass Movement,” let us now turn to the subject matter on “the world of agriculture and the right to work,” which the Compendium expounds in the same Chapter Six that concerns “Human Work,” specifically on “The Right to Work” and “The Rights of Workers.” Basing again its reflections on Pope Paul VI’s Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* (1967), Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Laborem Exercens* (1981), and on the article of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace on November 23, 1997, namely, *Towards Better Distribution of Land: The Challenge of Agrarian Reform*, the *Compendium* states:

Agricultural labor merits special attention, given the important social, cultural and economic role that it continues to play in the economic systems of many countries, and also considering the many problems that need to be met in the context of an ever more globalized economy as well as its growing significance in safeguarding the natural environment. Radical and urgent changes are therefore needed in order to restore to agriculture—and to rural people—their just value as the basis for a healthy economy, within the social community’s development as a whole.²²⁰

²²⁰ *Compendium*, pp. 153-154.

Further, the *Compendium* continues:

In some countries a redistribution of land as part of sound policies of agrarian reform is indispensable, in order to overcome the obstacles that an unproductive system of latifundium—condemned by the Church’s social doctrine—places on the path of genuine economic development. “Developing countries can effectively counter the present process under which land ownership is being concentrated in a few hands if they face up to certain situations that constitute real structural problems, for example legislative deficiencies and delays regarding both recognition of land titles and in relation to the credit market, a lack of concern over agricultural research and training, and neglect of social services and infrastructures in rural areas.” Agrarian reform therefore becomes a moral obligation more than a political necessity, since the failure to enact such reform is a hindrance in these countries to the benefits arising from the opening of markets and, generally, from the abundant growth opportunities offered by the current process of globalization.²²¹

CNL appreciates very much the Church’s doctrine that condemns *latifundium*. In the Philippines, *latifundium* or feudalism is the handmaid of imperialism, particularly US imperialism. And because of the basic problems of imperialism and feudalism, both of which are exacerbated by another basic problem of bureaucrat capitalism, presently headed by tyrant puppet Duterte, the entire country is a semi-colonial and non-industrial, a semi-feudal and backward agricultural, and underdeveloped society.

Within the context of the NDR in the Philippines, mass campaigns against feudalism (*latifundium*) and the agrarian reform building have been ongoing since the start of the two-stage Philippine revolution. The problem is that very few Christians (particularly the ordained and religious) are really involved even at the legal level. But their number would multiply once program against latifundium and for agrarian reform building would be the priority of the present day Christian Churches’ social action centers.

²²¹ Ibid., p. 154.

In this regard, it is the hope of CNL that the Christian Churches' social action centers would base their liberating social action plans on how to particularize the four interrelated mass movements, proposed by CNL in its 2nd topic as mentioned above.

As regards the issue on “women and the right to work” and reflecting on Pope John Paul II's Encyclical Letter *Laborem Exercens* (1981), his Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* (1982) and his *Letter to Women* (1995), the *Compendium* says:

The recognition and defense of women's rights in the context of work generally depend on the organization of work, which must take into account the dignity and vocation of women, whose “true advancement... requires that labor should be structured in such a way that women do not have to pay for their advancement by abandoning what is specific to them.” This issue is the measure of the quality of society and its effective defense of women's right to work.²²²

Furthermore, the *Compendium* explains the forms of discrimination against women and the specific aspects of the women's rights, and says:

The persistence of many forms of discrimination offensive to the dignity and vocation of women in the area of work is due to a long series of conditioning that penalizes women, who have seen “their prerogatives misrepresented” and themselves “relegated to the margins of society and even reduced to servitude.” These difficulties, unfortunately, have not been overcome, as is demonstrated wherever there are situations that demoralize women, making them objects of a very real exploitation. An urgent need to recognize effectively the rights of women in the workplace is seen, especially under the aspects of pay, insurance and social security.²²³

Arousing, organizing and mobilizing the women is one of the important tasks of the NDR in the Philippines. This is essential not only for the

²²² Ibid., pp. 151-152.

²²³ Ibid., p. 152.

material benefits of women, but more so for their liberation. Women compose about one-half of the Philippine population and they cut through classes. The vast majority of Filipino women, therefore, belong to the oppressed and exploited classes. But in addition to class oppression, they suffer male oppression. Therefore, their liberation is a great contribution to the victory of the Philippine NDR, which has a socialist perspective.

On the issue of “child labor,” the *Compendium* reflects on Pope Leo XIII’s Encyclical Letter *Rerum Novarum* (1891), Pope John Paul II’s *Message to the Secretary General of the United Nations on the occasion of the World Summit for Children* (22 September 1990), his *Message for the 1996 World Day of Peace* (1996) and his *Message for the 1998 World Day of Peace* (1998). It states:

Child labor, in its intolerable forms, constitutes a kind of violence that is less obvious than others but it is not for this reason any less terrible. This is a violence that, beyond all political, economic and legal implications, remains essentially a moral problem. Pope Leo XIII issued the warning: “in regard to children, great care should be taken not to place them in workshops and factories until their bodies and minds are sufficiently developed. For, just as very rough weather destroys the buds of spring, so does too early experience of life’s hard toil blight the young promise of a child’s faculties, and render any true education impossible.” After more than a hundred years, the blight of child labor has not yet been overcome.²²⁴

The *Compendium* further declares:

The Church’s social doctrine condemns the increase in “the exploitation of children in the workplace in conditions of veritable slavery.” This exploitation represents a serious violation of human dignity, with which every person, “no matter how small or how seemingly unimportant in utilitarian terms,” is endowed.²²⁵

²²⁴ Ibid.

²²⁵ Ibid.

Part 4: On the Contradiction Between Capital and Labor

Child labor, as a social problem, began when young children were being employed in capitalist factories. Today, child labor remains a serious problem in many parts of the world. In 1979, the International Year of the Child, data show that more than 50 million children below the age of 15 were working in various jobs often under hazardous conditions. Many of these children live in underdeveloped countries in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. They are minimally educated; they are malnourished due to the fact that they come from poor families, that lack the basic necessities of life such as adequate food, decent clothing and shelter, and even water for bathing.

In the Philippines, child rights are violated daily due to the basic problems in the country. Thus, one of the urgent tasks of the NDR is to defend the rights of children. “The NDFP’s Defense of the Rights of the Filipino Child,” a special article of Prof. Jose Maria Sison, the NDFP Chief Political Consultant, defines the comprehensive NDFP position on child rights, which addresses

The root causes of the violations of the rights of the child in the rotten ruling system of oppression and exploitation, of extreme wealth for a few and extreme poverty for so many. In the concrete, the NDFP defends the children from the assaults on their rights by the three evils in semicolonial and semifeudal Philippine society: foreign monopoly capitalism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.²²⁶

The article further states:

The NDFP upholds, defends and promotes the rights of the child in accordance with its own principles, policies and regulations as well as with the international norms and standards set forth directly and indirectly in conventions and treaties. It has a program for the Filipino people to work and fight for national liberation and democracy against the foreign and local oppressors and exploiters. It aims to uphold national sovereignty and empower the working people, to carry out land

²²⁶ Jose Maria Sison, “The NDFP’s Defense of the Rights of the Filipino Child” in *Crisis of Imperialism and People’s Resistance*, Aklat ng Bayan, 2009, p. 209.

reform and national industrialization, to foster a patriotic, scientific and democratic culture and to pursue an independent foreign policy for world peace and development.²²⁷

Regarding the issue of “immigration and work,” this is expounded on by the *Compendium* in the same Chapter Six which is concerning “Human Work” and particularly on “The Right to Work.” Reflecting on the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2241, Second Vatican Ecumenical Council’s Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes* (1966), Pope John Paul II’s Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* (1982), Holy See’s *Charter of the Rights of the Family* (1983), Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People’s *Refugees: A Challenge to Solidarity* (1992), Pope John Paul II’s *Message for the 1993 World Day of Peace* (1993) and his *Message for the 2001 World Day of Peace* (2001), the *Compendium* states:

Immigration can be a resource for development rather than an obstacle to it. In the modern world, where there are still grave inequalities between rich countries and poor countries, and where advances in communications quickly reduce distances, the immigration of people looking for a better life is on the increase. These people come from less privileged area of the earth and their arrival in developed countries is often perceived as a threat to the high levels of well-being achieved thanks to decades of economic growth. In most cases, however, immigrants fill a labor need which would otherwise remain unfilled in sectors and territories where the local workforce is insufficient or unwilling to engage in the work in question.²²⁸

Still on the same issue of “immigration and work,” the *Compendium* further asserts:

Institutions in host countries must keep careful watch to prevent the spread of the temptation to exploit foreign laborers, denying them the same rights enjoyed by nationals, rights that

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ *Compendium*, p. 153.

are to be guaranteed to all without discrimination. Regulating immigration according to criteria of equity and balance is one of the indispensable conditions for ensuring that immigrants are integrated into society with the guarantees required by recognition of their human dignity. Immigrants are to be received as persons and helped, together with their families, to become a part of societal life. In this context, the right of reuniting families should be respected and promoted. At the same time, conditions that foster increased work opportunities in people's place of origin are to be promoted as much as possible.²²⁹

The encyclical letters' calls to prevent the exploitation and discrimination of immigrants and for immigrants to have the same rights enjoyed by nationals have always been violated by the monopoly capitalists/imperialists. Historically, the problem of immigration has been and is the creation of the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism, a problem that continues in the world even today. First, monopoly capitalists launched forced migration of the African people that had become labor-force slaves in the capitalist industries and businesses of the First World. Second, to fight the spread of communism and national liberation movements and to continue to make monopoly capitalism the dominant economic system in the world, the imperialists, notably US imperialists, have created anti-communist refugees and exiles from many countries in Europe, Asia (Korea, Vietnam), Latin America (Cuba, Nicaragua, etc.) and even Africa (e.g., Angola) wherein most of the refugees and exiles were brought to the US as political anti-communist immigrants. And third, due to the wide gap and the "grave inequalities between rich countries and poor countries," which are the results of the exploitation and oppression of monopoly capitalism, immigration from the underdeveloped Third World countries continues in order to find jobs in the developed countries, especially in the US, only to be exploited and discriminated.

Particularly in the US, capitalist economic needs have made American capitalists and bourgeois state officials to seek immigrants as slave laborers and settlers who have always been discriminated, looked down

²²⁹ Ibid.

and targets of inhuman criticism especially by racist Americans. Almost all immigrants typically work in menial, labor-intensive, low-paying and dangerous jobs, occupations that most White American people shun. Until now, Asian Americans and Mexican Americans are the prime victims of prejudice, discrimination and violence by racist Americans. Reviewing American history, the present exploitation, oppression (violence against the colored people and immigrants) and discrimination is founded on racism, which is a chauvinistic attitude designed by US colonialists and imperialists who have declared the White color and the US as superior and powerful in order to dominate others and monopolize the economy, politics and culture of the country. Meaning, monopoly capitalists, who are themselves the imperialists in America, have inculcated into the American culture the most racist arrogances and the denial of equal rights between White and Black/Colored Americans.

As regards the creation of anti-communist refugees and exiles by US imperialism, Cuba remains one of the victims up to the present day. However, when capitalism was fully restored by modern revisionists in the former USSR and the Cold War between US imperialism and Russian social imperialism ended in 1991, the creation of anti-communist refugees and exiles by US imperialism gradually stopped and US immigration laws began to exclude many refugees and exiles to enter the USA. Through the US Patriot Act of 2001, the US immigration policy has become more strict in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 attacks. And in 2002 when the federal government focused on immigration as a national security issue, US Congress passed the Homeland Security Act that created Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The DHS charged the Bureau of Border Security with border patrol and enforcement of immigration laws, and the Bureau of Citizenship and the Immigration Services were given the responsibility for handling applications for visas, citizenship, asylum, and refugee status. US Congress authorized \$1.2 billion to build a fence stretching 1,120 km (700 mi) along the US-Mexico border to keep out illegal immigrants. Thus in early 2006, massive protests erupted throughout the United States in response to new immigration bills under consideration in Congress, which made illegal immigration a felony and criminalized humanitarian support for illegal immigrants. A one-day work stoppage on May 1, International Workers’ Day, dramatized opposition to

the legislation and the important economic role played by the estimated 11 million illegal immigrants in the United States.

On the basis of the current problems and situation of immigrants in the US, all immigrant and Black Americans have the right to unite with all the American toiling masses, including Whites, in order to fight racism, violence, exploitation and oppression, and strengthen the US working class movement. For Filipino immigrants, they can use the *International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families* for them to link up with other migrant workers, build and strengthen a US chapter of the Migrante International as their legitimate organization together with other migrant workers, especially those from Mexico, Cuba, India, Vietnam, and China. It would be very desirable if the Migrante International chapter in the US would be able to register as one of the member organizations in the ILPS. It would certainly be of a great help to the immigrant and toiling Americans if American Christians—ordained, the religious and lay—would heed the call of Church’s social doctrine to respect and defend the rights of immigrants, fight against racism, discrimination, exploitation and oppression of immigrants, and assist them and their families to live in human dignity, justice and equity in the US.

One important and last section, that the *Compendium* expounds in the same Chapter Six that deals with “Human Work,” specifically on “The Right to Work” and “The Rights of Workers,” is about “the role of the State and civil society in promoting the right to work.” Basing its reflections on Pope Paul IV’s *Address to the International Labor Organization* (June 10, 1969), Pope John Paul II’s *Address to the International Labor Organization* (June 15, 1982), and his Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (1991), the *Compendium* mentions the three “roles of the State and civil society in promoting the right to work.”

The **first** “role of the state and civil society to stimulate the right to work”²³⁰ is “to promote active employment policies.” The *Compendium* states:

Employment problems challenge the responsibility of the State, whose duty it is to promote active employment policies,

²³⁰ Ibid., p. 150.

that is, policies that will encourage the creation of employment opportunities within the national territory, providing the production sector with incentives to this end. The duty of the State does not consist so much in directly guaranteeing the right to work of every citizen, making the whole of economic life very rigid and restricting individual free initiative, as much as in the duty to “sustain business activities by creating conditions which will ensure job opportunities, by stimulating those activities where they are lacking or by supporting them in moments of crisis.”²³¹

The above quotations only show that the Church does not seem to understand that all states and societies that are controlled, ruled and dictated by the monopoly capitalists or imperialists and their fascist puppets are incapable of solving the problem of unemployment because this is the result of the cyclic and periodic boom-and-bust economic crisis of monopoly capitalism due to overproduction and the over-accumulation of capital, both of which cause an economic depression that would also result to widespread unemployment among nations. Meaning, in capitalist societies ruled by bourgeois states, unemployment remains forever a problem of the working class as a result of the exploitation and oppression of the monopoly capitalists in both the developed and underdeveloped countries. In the US, for instance, with more than 20 million businesses, the rate of unemployment among 157,023,420 workers in 2006 was 4.6 percent; while in the Philippines in the same year, the rate of unemployment among 38,370,577 workers was 10.9 percent. And as described in CNL’s 2nd topic, especially on “The Filipino People’s Present Poverty and Inequality Situation,” the rate of unemployment in the Philippines increases year after year.

However in human history, the problem of unemployment in monopoly capitalist societies was completely resolved in the era of socialism. As initially discussed in CNL’s 1st topic, “A Preliminary Overview,” no one is unemployed or underemployed in socialist states/societies. The socialist state/society sees to it that all citizens of legal age, who are mentally and physically capable, have appropriate employment in the socialist

²³¹ Ibid.

agrarian and industrial economies and in social services and other institutions that are established by the socialist state for the well-being of the masses, and for the economic, political and cultural development of the whole socialist society.

The **second** “role of the State and civil society in promoting the right to work,” as defined by the *Compendium* in the same Chapter Six concerning “Human Work,” is “to promote an effective international cooperation.” Quoting Pope Paul VI’s *Address to the International Labor Organization* (1969) and Pope John Paul II’s *Address to the International Labor Organization* (1982), the *Compendium* asserts:

Given the quickly developing global dimensions of economic-financial relationships and of the labor market, there is a need to promote an effective international cooperation among States by means of treaties, agreements and common plans of action that safeguard the right to work, even in the most critical phases of the economic cycle, at the national and international levels. It is necessary to be aware of the fact that human work is a right upon which the promotion of social justice and civil peace directly depend. Important tasks in this regard fall to international organizations and to labor unions. Joining forces in the most suitable ways, they must strive first of all to create an ever more tightly knit fabric of juridical norms that protect the work of men, women and youth, ensuring its proper remuneration.²³²

In CNL’s 3rd topic, “On the Common Good, the Universal Destination of Goods, and Private Property,” we have already mentioned international treaties and agreements such as 1948 GATT, 1989 APEC, 1994 NAFTA, 1994 EFTA, and 1995 WTO which has replaced GATT and has taken over GATT’s functions. Recalling CNL’s conclusions, these economic and trade treaties and agreements, because these have been primarily initiated by the monopoly capitalists from the developed and industrialized countries, especially the G8 (US, UK, Canada, Germany, Italy, France, Russia, and Japan), have imposed economic and trade laws to the

²³² Ibid.

underdeveloped countries in the Third World and eastern Europe, exacerbated the continuing exploitation and oppression of the toiling masses of workers in both the developed and underdeveloped nations, worsened the gap between rich and poor peoples and countries, and widespread poverty and misery among the toiling masses in both developed and underdeveloped nations. Meaning, these treaties and agreements have promoted the interests of monopoly capitalists vis-à-vis the billions of toiling masses in both the developed and underdeveloped countries. Moreover, these treaties and agreements have become and continue to serve as tools of the monopoly capitalists in imposing globally their policies of liberalization, deregulation and privatization.

The UN International Labor Organization (ILO) is not really a genuine labor organization of the working class. It is, in fact, a pseudo labor organization, a front of monopoly capitalists and bourgeois states. Why? Because it is composed of representatives of employers (*sic*, monopoly capitalists), workers (*sic*, elitists) and government officials (*sic*, bourgeois) from the 177 member nations. Its principal organ, the International Labor Conference, meets annually in Geneva, Switzerland, to hold conventions that would define and ratify international labor standards, but which are subject to voluntary ratification by member nations. The 56 members of the ILO’s governing body are composed of 28 government (*sic*, bourgeois) representatives (10 of whom hold permanent seats as states of chief industrial importance), 14 employers (*sic*, monopoly capitalists), and 14 workers (*sic*, elitist). Such a pseudo labor organization will not be able to “promote social justice and civil peace” among the toiling masses and in the Third world countries; it will not be able to resolve the contradiction between labor and capital.

The **third** “role of the State and civil society in promoting the right to work,” as defined by the *Compendium* in the same Chapter Six concerning “Human Work,” is “the special attention given to the relational components of goods produced and of the services rendered.”²³³ Quoting Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (1991), the *Compendium* states:

²³³ Ibid., p. 151.

These are offered to the market as a multifaceted sector of work activity whose mark of distinction is the special attention given to the relational components of the goods produced and of the services rendered in many areas: instruction, health care, basic social services and culture. The initiatives of this so-called “third sector” represent an ever more important opportunity for the development of labor and the economy.²³⁴

In capitalist states with bourgeois governments, social welfare such as education, health care, sewage disposal, other welfare institutions, utility services like water, electricity, communication, land and air transportation, railways, and other social services are most often privatized and commercialized for individual profits of capitalists and bureaucrats. Especially during and after the financial crisis of monopoly capitalism in 1991 due to overaccumulation of finance capital, many countries were forced to privatize their public institutions and business due to the WTO policy on deregulation imposed by monopoly capitalists. For instance even in the US, companies, institutions, industries like the land and air transport industry, electric companies and others which were formerly owned by the public by the bourgeois states were deregulated and were sold to private capitalist companies. Another example is India, compelled by the financial crisis of 1991 and confronted by a serious balance-of-payments problem, had to agree to adopt reforms aimed at liberalizing its economy in order to obtain emergency loans from international economic organizations, controlled by the G8. These reforms removed many government regulations on investment, including foreign investment, and eliminated quota and tariff system that had kept trade at a low level. The reforms also began a gradual process of deregulating industries and privatizing public enterprises and public sector, and permitting private investment in all infrastructure industries, including power, telecommunications, and civil aviation, as well as in the financial sector.

Almost all countries now, even the semi-colonies in the Third World like the Philippines, have deregulated legal and governmental restrictions on the operation of businesses, including the social services which are now

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 150-151.

under private companies and institutions. Also when the former socialist states formally restored capitalism in the former USSR, all of them, except the four republics as already mentioned in the CNL’s 1st topic, “A Preliminary Overview,” had to dismantle publicly owned industries and firms due to the WTO policy on privatization. Thus, the policies of deregulation and privatization together with liberalization are global tools that are imposed by monopoly capitalists, who are themselves the imperialists, primarily headed by those from the US. These policies are then implemented by bourgeois and puppet states of the imperialists, which are the political machineries of monopoly capitalism in order to continue to dominate the global economy, oppress and exploit the toiling masses of the world.

Let us take health care, as a concrete example, which ought to be the responsibility of the state to safeguard and promote the health maintenance and needs of its citizens. We see here the great difference between the capitalist-bourgeois and semi-colonial states, on the one hand, and the socialist societies, on the other hand. Let us take in particular, for instance, the COVID-19 pandemic that has affected almost all countries and see how the two contending states manage the COVID-19 and health care in general in their countries.

At the international level, most pharmaceutical establishments are possessed and supervised by the big multinational capitalist corporations. In capitalist countries like and US and in semi-colonial countries, like the Philippines, most health care and medical institutions such as hospitals, clinics and the like are privately owned and managed by private capitalist and bourgeois businessmen. Particularly in capitalist societies, like in the United States, as far as medical care conditions are concerned, the usual policy is: “the front doors of the hospital are wide open, but there is no entry for the sick who cannot afford to pay.” Predominantly here in the Philippines, the few public health care establishments lack facilities, budget, and health professionals and personnel are lowly paid, especially the nurses.

Within the above context, the Department of Health (DOH) was terribly unprepared when the COVID-19 pandemic hit the Philippines because tyrant Duterte welcomed, as tourism industry is one from which the government collects its revenue, 500,000 tourists from mainland China with 14,000 from Wuhan City, the source of COVID-19, to visit the Phil-

ippines in January 2020, the month that other countries announced and started the travel ban. And instead of establishing a strong humanitarian united front organization of health professionals and scientists that would assist the DOH in systematically and adequately addressing the COVID-19 pandemic and in doing systematically contract tracing, mass testing, and treating COVID-19 patients, tyrant Duterte created the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF), which has been and is still led by former military generals that look at the pandemic as a matter of “peace and order” and security and continue to use AFP-PNP checkpoints as a disguise of preventing the spread of the pandemic while concealing their real purpose of tracing the whereabouts of Duterte’s critics and activists, and red-tagging individuals and organizations as supporters and front of the CPP-NPA-NDFP. And instead of raising the budget to fund people’s mass campaigns for the preventing the spread of the pandemic, Duterte has continued allotting billions of the people’s money for his fascist AFP-PNP forces and for their combat, civil-military/psywar and intelligence operations all over the country. Instead of buying enough supplies of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) and swabbing kits enough to be used for organized widespread mass testing, and other medical needs for the prevention of the pandemic, dictator Duterte and his minions corrupted huge cash in the amount of ₱10.8 B to ₱17 B when DOH Sec. Francisco Duque III procured from China PPE sets and swabbing kits. And because of their fascist orientation, the USDR regime and their bureaucrat capitalist minions have neglected and continue to neglect the economic livelihood of the workers, peasants, national minorities, fisherfolks, urban poor, drivers, and other numerous semi-proletariat. Also, the tyrant USDR regime continues to disregard the needs and the repatriation of thousands of OFWs who are sick and unemployed because of the COVID-19 in various countries of the world, especially in the Middle East.

As a summary, CNL can now declare that tyrant and corrupt Duterte, a psychopathic puppet navigating and dangerously vending the Philippines to two contending imperialist powers, the US and China, has totally failed in scientifically, thoroughly and satisfactorily addressing the COVID-19. Why? Because addressing the COVID-19 pandemic for the Filipino people is not, in the first place, his aim. Instead, he has been launching fascism and continues to intensify it for him, for his landlord-comprador

bourgeois minions and for his reactionary AFP-PNP commanders to stay in political and military power in order to serve the interests of their two competing imperialist masters. And the failure of dictator Duterte and his landlord-comprador and fascist administration in effectively tackling the pandemic only reflects the malfunction of imperialist President Donald Trump and the US bourgeois states in efficiently helping the American people fight the COVID-19 pandemic. Why? Because their primary imperialist concern is not to serve the American toiling masses but to save monopoly capitalism from total collapse due to its own global economic crisis that arises periodically as the result of the exploitation and oppression of the world by imperialism, primarily by US imperialism.

The above points are more than enough to show the total failure of the tyrant USDR. But how then did other countries such as Vietnam, Venezuela, Cuba and the like—that have socialist orientation—address and manage the COVID-19 and the health care of their citizens? These countries have shown how to effectively control and manage the COVID-19 pandemic. Why? Because these countries have valued public services for their citizens; and health care, from the very beginning of the socialist construction in these countries, has been the priority up to the present to be given resources and recourses in order to serve the health needs of their compatriots. And while effectively addressing and managing the health care of their citizens and the treatment of the COVID-19, these countries go on strengthening the economic needs of their compatriots, especially the workers and peasants in their countries.

In Vietnam, even before anyone would be infected with COVID-19, sufficient preparations started and travel ban was immediately imposed on tourists and businessmen from Wuhan City. When COVID-19 infection started, rapid contact tracing and mass testing also started, and quarantine places were simultaneously identified to where groups with COVID-19 were sent. And additional health workers were sent to the communities identified as infected by the pandemic. As regards swab examination, about 110,000 individuals were tested daily not by the military or police but by trained community health workers.

In Venezuela, 13,000 doctors were mobilized and visited each family in their community residences. 2 million were mass tested. Besides health considerations, livelihood support was given by the state to every commu-

nity in need. Boxes of food supplies were distributed to 7 million Venezuelans. The state gave salaries as well as government bonuses to the workers. The state immediately suspended the payment of house rent and loan interest for six months and decreed to all employers not to remove anyone of their employees. The Venezuelan government could have done more in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic if the US\$7 billion fund would not have been prevented by US imperialism to be withdrawn from the bank.

But why is the Venezuelan government so prepared in their health care work? Because of the nationalist and socialist movement led by Hugo Chavez, who graduated in 1975 as a 2nd lieutenant from the Military Academy of Venezuela and became a colonel of a paratrooper regiment in 1991. But before becoming a colonel, he founded the secret national movement, the Revolutionary Bolivarian Movement (MBR), to restore Venezuela to its former revolutionary prominence. He was elected president of Venezuela in 1999, and proclaimed himself a self-styled socialist who won the allegiance of Venezuela's poor and working class while alienating the upper class and some sections of the middle class. He continued as president and cultivated close relations with the leftist governments of Bolivia, Cuba and Nicaragua and defied the United States on many foreign policy issues, including developing closer ties with the anti-US government of Iran. Since he became Venezuelan president, he dedicated most of his time planning and implementing aid literacy and health programs for Venezuela's slum dwellers, funneling millions of government revenues from oil profits to such programs for shanty town residents.

Re-elected in 2000, President Chavez continued his policies of redistributing the country's oil revenues, especially to benefit the poor and the working class, by fully building nationwide health care establishments patterned to that of Cuba. In January 2007, the National Assembly unanimously approved four measures that gave Chavez the power to rule by decree for 18 months in 11 areas such as the economy, energy and defense in order to implement his program to move Venezuela toward socialism without delay. Then in July 2007 following the passage of the legislation, Chavez nationalized the telecommunications, electrical power, and oil industries in order to advance the socialist economy of Venezuela with strong socialist welfare services such as health care and education for the Venezuelan toiling masses. This is the whole background of why the

Venezuelan government continues to effectively address the COVID-19 pandemic.

As regards Cuba, the whole Cuban health care establishments and the barrio doctors immediately responded to the call of the WHO to address the COVID-19 pandemic. Health hearing sessions were launched in communities and factories to give sufficient information to the masses about the COVID-19 and instructions on what to do to address the pandemic. It was Cuba, first nation, that brought out a medicine against COVID-19, Interferon Alpha 2B. This is a kind that is very rich in protein to strengthen body resistance in order to repel the pandemic. This is being manufactured now in China which has been using it since January 2020. According to scientists, this medicine is effect if given during the early state of the virus infection or as preventive measure. Interferon Alpha 2-B is one of the 30 medicines being studied now by the WHO.

Cuba is now the torch-bearer of global unity and medical service. Cuba, a small country in Latin America which US imperialism continues to intimidate, is the number one country that is leading global unity and giving medical services to the people of the world in the fight against COVID-19 pandemic. It has quickly sent medical brigades in order to help countries that are heavily infected by the pandemic. Last March 18, 2020, Cuba allowed to port and helped MS Braemar, a British ship, after this was not accepted by other countries as the ship has patients infected with COVID-19 pandemic.

The shooting of the Cuban embassy building in Washington DC, US last April 30, 2020 was condemned by the Cuban government officials. Cuba interpreted this as an attack to the Cuban medical workers who are helping poor countries in the combat against COVID-19. This kind of crime by the US imperialists is spreading simultaneously with the aggressive policy of US imperialism against Cuba and its economic blockade against the Cuban people that has started during the Cold War but continues up to the present day.

As a conclusion of all the points expounded on above, CNL ends by reiterating that the right to work, the rights of workers and their families, the rights of women, the rights of the child, the rights of immigrants, and the role of the state in promoting the right to work and the rights of workers by establishing effective machineries in the service of the toil-

ing masses—as defined by the papal encyclical letters and by the Church’s social doctrine—are always trampled upon by the monopoly capitalists. Why is this so? Because monopoly capitalism continuously exploits and oppresses the toiling masses. It is the exploitation and oppression of the few monopoly capitalists against the majority population of the toiling masses; and this kind of exploitation and oppression defines exactly the nature of the contradiction between capital and labor.

To resolve, therefore, the contradiction between labor and capital and to be free from the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism, there is a need for the working class and the revolutionary movement in each country not only to engage in economic struggles but also to plan to seize political power in order to demolish the capitalist system and establish a socialist state for the construction and development of a socialist economy. In a socialist society, the socialist economy (industry, manufacture, agriculture, commerce, finance, other means of production, etc.) is managed through the system of socialist ownership by the whole people (people’s collectives and communes at all levels) that are centrally guided by the socialist state. In such a socialist economy, the national income, that comes from the toiling masses, is centralized in the socialist state, which should ascertain that it is really spent for the common good of the people in such a socialist society. Through the help of the people’s collectives and communes, it would be the role of the socialist state to distribute the national income in order to comply with the basic economic, political and cultural interests and needs of the laboring people in both manual and mental labor. It would also be the role of the socialist state to distribute consumer goods in accordance with the socialist principle of “from each according to one’s ability, to each according to one’s work,” and to make available basic and enough social services according to the needs of all the compatriots of the socialist society.

In the context of the Philippine revolution, socialist construction would commence upon the final nationwide victory of the national-democratic revolution. But even before final victory, the revolutionary mass movement and the various revolutionary mass organizations have to develop the agrarian economy and national industrialization because these two aspects would become the seed and foundation of the socialist economy. At this stage of the Philippine revolution, it shall be expected that the

CNL shall have established CNL chapters at the municipal, provincial and regional levels for the full activation of the Christians—the ordained, the religious and the laity—to participate in the development of the agrarian economy and national industrialization. Also at this period, all CNL chapters shall be expected to continue vigorously their three progressive forms of Christian love for the PDO, as described above in this current CNL’s 4th topic above, such as liberating theology, liberating worship and Eucharistic reenactment, and liberating social action, and heighten their involvement in other revolutionary forms of struggle to contribute for the advancement of the NDR towards final victory.

To summarize: The contradiction between capital and labor is manifested in how the monopoly capitalists and the entire bourgeoisie exploit and oppress the toiling masses of the world; and the only way to end this contradiction is to intensify economic and political struggles in each country in order to defeat imperialism and start the socialist construction.

Exploitation is the nature of the contradiction between the capitalists and the toiling masses of workers. This exploitation begins with the fact that all means of production are privately owned by the capitalists. Then the exploitation continues when the workers produce commodities which all go to the capitalists, and the value of the commodities produced by the workers are hidden from the knowledge of the workers. In exchange for the labor power of the workers, only minimum wages are given to them by the capitalists. These minimum wages are an important part of the exploitation done by the capitalists. In concrete terms, minimum wages are just equivalent to onion skin of the real value of the commodities which are the products of the workers’ labor power. The real value of the commodities produced by the workers is what is called surplus value, which all goes to the capitalists. To use the term of the prophets and Jesus Christ, this surplus value of the products of the workers is “stolen by the greedy” monopoly capitalists.

Thus, we see that the capitalist mode of production is “to produce surplus value and to make money.” The surplus value, that is expropriated by the capitalists, comes from the exploitation of the toiling masses. This law of surplus value, which is hidden and is the secret of the exploitation

of workers by the capitalists, is the basic economic law of capitalism. This means that there would be no capitalist production without the production of surplus value. This is the essence and nature of capitalism; all the activities of the capitalists are aimed at squeezing the sweat and blood of the workers for capitalist profit. The capitalists' greed for money is never satisfied and their thirst for surplus value is never quenched. For the capitalists, the purpose of capital is not to satisfy needs, but to produce profit. Therefore, the whole capitalist system is based on the cruel exploitation of the workers by the capitalists. Capitalism is the evil system in which human beings (capitalists) exploit human beings (the toiling masses). And human beings can end this evil system by establishing and consolidating socialist societies, as proven by various nations that have opted for socialism.

Another nature of capitalist exploitation is that the capitalists never work in manual labor for the production of commodities. The capitalists lead extravagant and evil life. On the other hand, the workers suffer because most of the products they produce are expropriated by the capitalists. In short, the poverty of the working class and the wealth of the capitalists arise from the same source. This is the capitalist exploitative system that is based on the capitalists' private ownership of the means of production in the industrial, commercial and financial corporations of monopoly capitalism.

Other social ills that are created by the capitalist exploitative system are the problems of poverty and unemployment. In capitalist societies, like in the US, there is the reality of the widening gap between the rich and the poor. This is due to the capitalist exploitative system where the big bulk of capital is accumulated in the hands of the few capitalists; while the working masses, who only depend on minimum wages and who comprise the majority, are in the deep mud of impoverishment. The poverty of the working class becomes worst when capitalists expand production by using the capital they have accumulated in which the workers build new machines and other equipment. But sooner because of the new machines and equipment they produce, many workers would be unemployed and those who are employed have shortened hours of work. Thus, we see here that unemployment, which worsens the poverty of the toiling masses, is the result of capital accumulation by the capitalists. Meaning, capital accu-

mulation by the capitalists leads to the impoverishment of the working masses. And the impoverishment of the toiling masses is exacerbated by unemployment and the steady deterioration of labor and living conditions of the toiling masses.

And when we say that the capitalist system is exploitative and oppressive, we do not only mean the exploitation and oppression by individual capitalists but also by the whole bourgeoisie—consisting of the four global groups of capitalists, namely, the industrial-manufacturing capitalists, the commercial capitalists, the banking capitalists, and the landed capitalists—who exploit and oppress the billions of toiling masses all over the world. Included in the four global groups of capitalists are the big comprador bourgeoisie in semi-colonial and semi-feudal societies in the Third World countries. Particularly in the Philippines as a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society, the ruling classes—that serve as handmaids of the imperialists/foreign capitalists, and that exploit and oppress the Filipino people—are the big comprador bourgeoisie, the big landlords and the big bureaucrat capitalists, who control the reactionary state and are the handmaid puppets of imperialism, primarily of US imperialism.

In the capitalist countries, like the US, the toiling masses are subject to the exploitation and oppression not only of the capitalists of the enterprises to which the workers belong, but also to the whole bourgeoisie, consisting of the four global groups of capitalists mentioned above. Industrial-manufacturing profits through commodity productions, commercial profits through commodity transactions, banking profits and interests through loans and borrowings within the nation and to other countries, and land rents through monopoly capitalist operations of lands are all extracted from the workers and are all transformed as surplus value which the capitalists get as capital accumulation. And there is intense competition among these capitalist groups in the free-market economy of monopoly capitalism; but their being competitive against each other is just their tool for more profits that they privately accumulate.

At the national level in capitalist countries, it is the exploitation and oppression of the system of monopoly capitalism that creates the gap between the few rich of capitalists and bourgeoisie and the majority population that consists the toiling masses. At the international level, it is the same exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism, which

is advanced by imperialism, primarily US imperialism, throughout the world that has created the continuing gap between the rich and developed countries and the poor and underdeveloped nations in the Third World. As a whole in each country, it is the process of capital accumulation by which the ruling classes get richer and richer, and the toiling masses get poorer and poorer. It is also this same process in which the contradictions between the production relations and productive forces of capitalism are increasingly more acute. Thus, for the toiling masses of workers and peasants to reach an ultimate solution of the contradiction between labor and capital, the laboring people in both the developed and underdeveloped countries should not only address poverty by means of economic struggles that target the capitalists and the bourgeois states, but must also extend from economic struggles to heightening political struggles against imperialism, primarily against US imperialism which is the No. 1 leading imperialist power in the current world hegemony under the globalized exploitation and oppression of the system of monopoly capitalism. Decisively, this means that organizations of the working class, the peasantry and the intelligentsia must build in their own country strong anti-imperialist alliances, launch together with other countries a formidable anti-imperialist mass movement at the national and international levels, and start establishing people's organizations to build in each country the people's economy, political power and cultural institutions along socialist principles.

Particularly in the Philippines, revolutionaries must continue to realize the broad and formidable anti-fascist, anti-feudal and anti-imperialist united front to fully win over the urban petit bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie to the ranks of the basic alliance of workers and peasants, strengthen the ILPS to continue relating the Philippine revolution to the world revolution in recognition of the internationalist character of the struggle of the Filipino people and proletariat. All these would be to overthrow the reactionary rule and start the socialist construction upon the final victory of the NDR.

Part 5

On Monopoly Capitalist Globalization; *Quo Vadis* Humankind

As “The Industrial Revolution” is referred to as the “New Things” in Pope Leo XIII’s Encyclical Letter *Rerum Novarum* (*On New Things*, 1891), what is insinuated as “The ‘New Things’ of the World of Work” by the *Compendium* in its Chapter Seven concerning “Economic Work” is the “globalization of the economy” or “economic globalization” or “globalized economy.” The first mention of these terms is in the Introduction of the *Compendium*. After which, these terms are often cited in Chapter Six that concerns “Human Work,” Chapter Seven on “Economic Life,” Chapter Nine regarding “The International Community,” and finally Chapter Twelve about “Social Doctrine and Ecclesial Action.”

Though these are not exactly defined by the *Compendium* within the framework of monopoly capitalism, all the terms such as “globalization of the economy,” “economic globalization,” “globalized economy” are used essentially by the *Compendium* in the context of the system of monopoly capitalism at the international level. In the entire CNL commentary, “monopoly capitalism” and “imperialism” have been used interchangeably on the basis that imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism, has been monopolizing and continues to dominate the whole world since, after the Cold War (1946-1991) when capitalism was peacefully restored in the former USSR in 1991 by the modern revisionist Gorbachev Regime (1985-1991), and up to the present day. This is, henceforth, the basis of the title of this current CNL’s 5th topic. In the following pages, CNL’s sub-topics shall be developed wherein all the expositions of the *Compendium* on the above terms shall be presented first. Afterwards, CNL comments shall follow to explain the whole topic on monopoly capitalist globalization, and where would humankind go.

Monopoly capitalist globalization is the globalization of exploitation and oppression that victimizes the toiling masses of workers in the industrialized countries and peoples in the underdeveloped Third World countries, like the Philippines.

In the Introduction, after mentioning the “first challenge... facing humanity today” which is about “the truth itself of the being who is man” and the “second challenge” which is “the understanding and management of pluralism and differences at ²³⁵every level... in ways of thinking, moral choices, culture, religious affiliation, philosophy...,” the *Compendium* brings out “globalization” as the “third challenge.” It states: “the third challenge is globalization, the significance of which is much wider and more profound than simple economic globalization, since history has witnessed the opening of a new era that concerns humanity’s destiny.”²³⁶ What is being alluded by the *Compendium* here about the “much wider and more profound than simple economic globalization” is the fast advancement in the fields of technology, communication and transportation. This is further clarified by the *Compendium* in Chapter Six, which is about “Human Work” and particularly on “The ‘New Things’ of the World of Work” that states:

The phenomenon of globalization is one of the most important causes of the current change in the organization of work. This phenomenon brings about new forms of production where plants are located away from where strategies are decided and far from the markets where the goods are consumed. There are two primary factors driving this phenomenon: the extraordinary speed of communication no longer limited by space or time, and the relative ease with which merchandise and people are transported from one part of the world to another.... On the other hand, if it is true that globalization is neither good nor bad in itself, but depends on how it is used, it must be affirmed that a globalization of safeguards, minimum essential rights and equity is necessary.²³⁷

²³⁵ Ibid., p. 8.

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ Ibid., p. 159.

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It must be stated without more ado that the globalized economy of the monopoly capitalists is *not good* and is *very bad* for the toiling peoples of the world; and it has no “globalization of safeguards” and it does not at all promote “minimum essential rights and equity” or the “globalization in solidarity, a globalization without marginalization”²³⁸ as mentioned by the *Compendium* in Chapter Seven concerning the “Economic Life.” In the context of the global system of monopoly capitalism, imperialism, which is primarily led by US imperialism, has been and is using the rapid development of technology and communication to continue its global domination and control of the world economy through the monopoly capitalists’ multi-national and transnational corporations such as those in the industrial-manufacturing, commercial, agricultural and financial businesses in both the developed countries and the underdeveloped nations of the Third World in Asia, Latin America and Africa. Meaning, through the fast progress of technology, transportation and communication, the monopoly capitalists have globalized the economy by means of their multinational companies in their industrialized country of origin and most especially by means of their transnational corporations that have operations and investments as essential components of the global free-market economy in many countries, especially in the Third World nations for cheap raw materials and low-cost labor. And it is from these whole interconnected multinational and transnational businesses that imperialist countries, primarily led by the US, get huge superprofits extracted from the surplus value of the labor power of the toiling masses who are exploited and oppressed in the industrial-manufacturing, commercial, agricultural and financial businesses of the monopoly capitalists everywhere in the world.

Regarding globalized exploitation and oppression by the monopoly capitalists’ multinational and transnational businesses that victimize primarily the toiling masses of workers in the industrialized countries, much of this has already been expounded on in CNL’s 4th topic, “On the Contradiction Between Capital and Labor, and How Could It Be Resolved.” The following paragraphs of the current CNL’s sub-topic shall, therefore, focus on the globalization of exploitation and oppression by the imperialists’

²³⁸ Ibid., p. 183.

multinational and transnational corporations among the majority of peoples in the underdeveloped Third World Countries, like the Philippines.

In Chapter Six, which deals with “Human Work,” the *Compendium* expounds the connection between agricultural work and globalized economy. Reflecting on Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Laborem Exercens* (1981), it states:

Agricultural labor merits special attention, given the important social, cultural and economic role that it continues to play in the economic systems of many countries, and also considering the many problems that need to be met in the context of an ever more globalized economy as well as its growing significance in safeguarding the natural environment. “Radical and urgent changes are therefore needed in order to restore to agriculture—and to rural people—their just value as the basis for healthy economy, within the social community’s development as a whole.”²³⁹

Also in the same Chapter Six concerning “Human Work,” the *Compendium* likewise explains the issues of feudalism (*latifundium*), agrarian reform and globalization. Citing Pope Paul VI’s Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* (1967) and the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace’s *Towards a Better Distribution of Land: The Challenge of Agrarian Reform* (November 23, 1997), the *Compendium* states:

“Developing countries can effectively counter the present process under which land ownership is being concentrated in a few hands if they face up to certain situations that constitute real structural problems, for example legislative deficiencies and delays regarding both recognition of land titles and in relation to the credit market, a lack of concern over agricultural research and training, and neglect of social services and infrastructures in rural areas.” Agrarian reform therefore becomes a moral obligation more than a political necessity, since the failure to enact such reform is a hindrance in these countries to the benefits arising from the opening of markets and, gen-

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 153-154.

erally, from the abundant growth opportunities offered by the current process of globalization.²⁴⁰

Serving as comments to the above two paragraphs on agricultural work and globalized economy and on the issues of feudalism (*latifundium*), agrarian reform and globalization, CNL explains the following points below to elucidate that semi-colonial countries in the Third World remain to be victimized by the exploitation and oppression under the globalized free-market economy of monopoly capitalism. In particular, let us take the Philippines as an example, which US imperialism is maintaining through its puppet rulers as a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society.

The first basic issue to mention is the lingering problem of feudalism in the semi-colonial Philippines under US imperialism. The country remains to be semi-feudal and non-industrialized with a backward agricultural economy because of the continuing presence of US imperialism, which has made feudalism as its handmaid and continues to prevent national industrialization. Meaning, the US monopoly capitalists do not have any concern to solve the problem of feudalism because they want the country to remain non-industrialized in order for them to exploit and plunder the rich agricultural and natural resources of the country. This further means that the US monopoly capitalists dictate to their puppet regime, which is presently under tyrant Duterte, not to enact laws for genuine agrarian reform that ought to dismantle the monopoly of land in the hands of the few ruling classes of big landlords, big comprador bourgeoisie and bureaucrat capitalists.

In fact, US foreign monopoly capitalists continue to get the connivance of the big landlords, the big comprador bourgeoisie and bureaucrat capitalists to continue and expand the foreign capitalist plantations for the production of agricultural crops in the Philippines while preserving the country as semi-feudal. They have participated in the seizure of land from the people by establishing their own capitalist plantations like those of Del Monte, Dole, Stanfilco, Firestone Rubber and several others. From the capitalist agricultural plantations, US monopoly capitalists extract huge profits in the export of these products. They too get superprofits from low land rents and cheap labor. They have appropriated lands by opening mines

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 154.

like those of Benguet Consolidated, Lepanto, Atlas Consolidated and so many others. These mines involve the direct seizure of land from the peasants and national minorities and also the destruction of wide expanses of agricultural fields as a result of the flow of mineral and chemical wastes in rivers. More mines are now feverishly being opened all over the Philippines by US imperialists and other foreign capitalists.

Agricultural agreements such as the lowering of tariffs of agricultural products like the rice tariffication law are imposed on the Philippines through the free-market economy of monopoly capitalism. The lowering of tariffs for agricultural products and other economic and trade agreements is, in the end, for the superprofits of the US monopoly capitalists. There are other agricultural commodities agreements that are governed by US Public Law 480, otherwise known as Agricultural Trade and Development and Assistance Act. Through these agreements, the US monopoly capitalists dispose of their surplus agricultural products by dumping them on the Philippines.

The US monopoly capitalist control of the Philippines is not only limited by unequal agricultural agreements and the seizure of land. Capital export or surplus capital has been invested by US imperialists in the Philippine economy. Since then and up to the present, the US monopoly capitalists and their local subsidiaries own or control such businesses involving petroleum, tire and rubber, drugs, insecticides, fertilizers, chemicals, mining, heavy equipment, marketing, transport facilities and others. The majority of the biggest corporations in the Philippines today are American. They control at least 50 percent of the total business assets in the country. Of the total foreign private investments in the Philippines, US investments constitute 80 percent. The magnitude of US investments is not the only thing that weighs down heavily on the Filipino people. It is also their strategic position. For instance, petroleum (supplied by Esso, Caltex, Mobil, Filoil and Getty Oil) is overwhelmingly under the control of the US oil monopolies. By this commodity alone, US monopoly capitalism controls every other commodity transported or processed in the Philippines. The US oil monopolies supply more than 90 percent of the country's energy requirements. Tire production, trade in construction materials, import-export and the wholesale trade are also controlled by foreign firms, chiefly American. They control bulk sales to end-consumers

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like big utility plants. Though US capitalists appear to have withdrawn from the field of public utilities, they sold a great portion of their shares in the Meralco (electricity) and PLDT (telephone) only after burdening these firms with US loans and after securing guarantees from government financing institutions. These enterprises remain as sources of huge interest payments and are increasingly subject to being retaken over through bonds floated on Wall Street.

The US imperialists own the largest commercial banks, insurance companies and other financing institutions in the country. They, therefore, control the Philippine banking system. They grab the domestic savings of the people and utilize these to support US enterprises here. In this regard, an oft-cited case of US imperialist cleverness is the original capitalization of the Philippine-American Life Insurance Company at less than a million pesos and its rapid growth into a billion-peso corporation in a matter of two decades after World War II. US firms secure credit not only from local US banks but also from Philippine-owned banks. Another flagrant case of US rapaciousness can be seen in gold production. For a long period of time under the Gold Subsidy Law, the Central Bank bought gold from Benguet Consolidated and other US mining companies at \$57 to \$67 per ounce, that is to say, \$22 to \$32 above what was then the world price of \$35 per ounce.

In the past and up to the present, foreign investors, principally American, borrow billions from local credit sources in the Philippines in order to help ease the US balance of payments crisis. A study of 108 US firms supposedly accounting for 70 percent of US investments in the Philippines, reveals that 84 percent of their capital and operational funds came from Philippine sources and only 16 percent (including reinvested profits made in the Philippines) came from the United States in the period of 1956-1965. During the same period, these 108 US firms in the Philippines remitted home more than \$386 million, close to seven times the actual total of new investments (\$58.5million) that they brought into the Philippines. The increase in paid-up capital of these firms was only \$28 million from a base of \$74 million in 1956 to a new level of \$102.5 million in 1965 while their remitted superprofits was more than 1,300 percent of such measly increase in paid-up capital. And Central Bank statistics show that during the period of 1960-69, foreign investors, mostly Ameri-

can, brought in \$160 million in the form of new capital investments and brought out at least \$482 million in the form of capital withdrawals and profit remittances. US statistics easily admit that the rate of profit from US investments in the Philippines is more than 25 percent higher than the average rate of profit from US overseas investments in general.

Also in the past and up to the present, a clever method of profit remittance by overseas US firms is the purchase of commodities and services from their mother or sister companies in the United States at an overprice. The US firms engaged in export and re-export business in the Philippines underprice their goods only to get the real prices and the real profits in America. A variation of this involves the export by US mining companies of copper concentrates and iron ores with substantial gold, silver, nickel and other components which are not fully accounted for in the country.

Because of the colonial and feudal character of its economy, the Philippines is highly dependent on a colonial pattern of trade, that is to say, the exchange of local raw materials and foreign finished products, especially American. In a vicious cycle, the colonial pattern of trade which has been developed for a long period by US imperialism through preferential trade and quota system has in turn served to perpetuate the colonial and agrarian character of the Philippine economy. At first glance, it looks as if free trade has been favorable to the Philippines; but on examination of the accounts, it is clear only the US imperialists and the comprador-landlord cliques have been favored. For example, at the height of free trade under the Bell Trade Act from 1946 to 1954, the US exported to the Philippines \$2.0 billion worth of goods duty-free and the latter exported to the former only \$889 million worth of goods duty-free.

By the nature of its exports the bulk of which comprises sugar, logs, lumber, coconut products, abaca, tobacco and unprocessed minerals, the Philippines cannot earn enough US dollars to pay for the importation of foreign manufactures coming principally from the United States which command higher prices. As of 1968, only 8.3 percent of Philippine exports could be categorized as manufactured goods. The Philippine economy is so uneven and lopsided that it has to import even such agricultural products as poultry and dairy products, cereals and cereal preparations which are still in the bracket of the ten top imports. In the world capitalist market,

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the foreign monopolies consistently jack up the price of their manufactures and other products and force down the price of raw materials that they purchase from the colonies and semicolonies like the Philippines. The result is a chronic deficit in the foreign trade of the Philippines. The annual foreign trade deficit rose from \$147.1 million in 1955 to \$249.7 million in 1967 and to \$301.9 million in 1968. The rapid rate of increase in deficit is due to the effects of US imperialism and all other imperialist powers to squeeze out more profits from their foreign trade as a measure of facing up to their own balance-of-payments problem. They are now viciously trying to pass on the burden of their general crisis to their colonies and semicolonies by stepping up their own exports, by exporting inflation, by forcing weaker countries to devalue their currencies and by practicing usury.

Because of US imperialism that prevents national industrialization, the Philippine economy has no capital-goods industry and the structure of local manufacturing has not changed at all. Much of the manufacturing output goes into non-durables like food, beverages, cigarettes and cigars, textiles, footwear, paper, rubber, chemicals and the like. Very little goes into the manufacture of such durables as furniture and fixtures and mere reassembly of machinery, metal products, appliances, motor vehicles and the like. Year after year, the Philippine reactionary government makes heavy dollar expenditures because it imports mainly machinery, transport equipment, fuel and raw materials for domestic processing. These imports are not for the industrialization of the country but have been mainly for public works projects, construction of office buildings and sugar mills, mineral extraction, spare parts, motor vehicle and home appliance reassembly and other such so-called intermediate industries as textile, flour and steel mills that rely on imported yarn, wheat and steel sheets.

In the past and up to the present, the Philippine reactionary government continues to loan from international banks that are controlled by the monopoly capitalists, especially those from America. It has now incurred a total outstanding debt of ₱7.7 trillion as of April 2020 in order to maintain the semi-colonial and semi-feudal economy. These debts have resulted in a steep inflation and devaluation. As a semi-colony, the Philippines cannot continue to operate without an adequate supply of US dollars. And yet, as it tries to acquire such, it is bogged deeper in colonial exploitation and crisis. Because of the chronically inadequate dollar earnings of Philippine

raw materials, the reactionary government has to beg the US monopoly banks and the international financial institutions under US control for more loans at increasingly onerous terms. Tyrant Duterte continues to get new loans on more onerous terms from China and other banks controlled by US monopoly capitalists in order to feed its corrupt government, the fascist military and police, his business cronies and big bureaucrats and to be able to import the finished goods which the Philippine semi-colonial economy does not produce.

The Philippine reactionary government under the autocrat Duterte regime religiously obeys all the conditions for loans that are imposed by the IMF and WB, which are controlled by the monopoly capitalists from the G8, primarily led by the US imperialists. Thesetwomonopoly capitalist international financial institutions require what are called structural adjustment programs from borrowers. The programs imposed on borrowers are based on the monopoly capitalist neoliberalism which promotes free markets and imposes on countries the policies of privatization, deregulation and trade liberalization.

The Philippine reactionary state has privatized government enterprises by selling these to the private capitalists. One example of this is Republic Act No. 9136 known as the “Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001” or EPIRA of 2001. This act has provided the framework for the restructuring of the electric power industry, including the privatization of the assets of the National Power Corporation, which was formerly a public corporation of the Philippine government. And the role of the present Department of Energy (DOE) is to supervise the restructuring of the electricity industry in pursuance of the EPIRA of 2001. In particular, the DOE encourages the private sector investments in the electricity sector and undertakes coordination and educates the public on the restructuring of the electricity sector and on the privatization of the NPC and its assets. The Philippine reactionary state has also deregulated by means of removing government rules that restrict companies, e.g., oil corporations, etc., and has dutifully followed the policy of trade liberalization by opening the Philippine markets to foreign goods by removing barriers to exports and imports. Concrete examples of these are the Rice Tariffication Law and the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) Act; they all serve the interests of the monopoly capitalists.

It is, therefore, the task of the Philippine National Democratic Revolution to struggle against the monopoly capitalists, primarily those from the US and also from China, by launching the agrarian revolution and freeing the country from these imperialists in order to achieve national industrialization. And the success of NDR’s program for agrarian reform and national industrialization shall serve as the basic foundation for socialist construction that shall commence upon the nationwide victory of the NDR through the revolutionary people’s war.

The globalized exploitation and oppression is manifested by the monopoly capitalists’ industrial, manufacturing, commercial and financial firms that control and dominate the world’s economy, trade, market and financial system.

Sections on “economic and financial globalization” and on “international trade”—both of which are instruments of monopoly capitalist globalization—are found in the *Compendium*’s Chapter Seven which deals with “Economic Life.” Other apparatuses of monopoly capitalist globalization—like the “international market,” the “role of the free market,” and the “international financial system”—are also located in the *Compendium*’s Chapter Seven on “Economic Life” and Chapter Nine regarding “The International Community.”

On “economic and financial globalization,” the *Compendium* describes the multi-layered reality of the economic and financial connections in several countries. It states:

Our modern era is marked by the complex phenomenon of economic and financial globalization, a process that progressively integrates national economies at the level of the exchange of goods and services and of financial transactions. In this process, an ever-growing number of those involved in the economic sector is prompted to adopt a more global perspective concerning the choices that they must make with regard to future growth and profits. The new perspective of global society does not simply consist in the presence of economic and financial bonds between national forces at work in different countries, which have moreover always been present,

but in the pervasiveness and the absolutely unprecedented nature of the system of relations that is developing. The role of financial markets is becoming even more decisive and central. Following the liberalization of capital exchange and circulation, these market dimensions have increased enormously and with incredible speed, to the point that agents can “in real time,” transfer large quantities of capital from one part of the globe to another. This is a multifaceted reality that is difficult to decipher, since it expands at different levels and is in continuous evolution along paths that cannot easily be predicted.²⁴¹

The above is the *Compendium's* summary of the interlocking firms that are privately owned by the individual monopoly capitalists who are usually based in the industrialized and developed countries but whose industrial, manufacturing, commercial and financial firms have been established in both the developed and underdeveloped countries. Through the developed technology of communication and transportation, the monopoly capitalists manage “in real time” their interlocking businesses, the exchange of goods and services and financial transactions. But what is very much lacking, not mentioned, and hidden in the above summary of the *Compendium* is the prevalence of exploitative and oppressive relations at the national and international levels between the few monopoly capitalists, who privately own the means of production and get all the super-profits from the surplus value of the labor power of the toiling masses, and the suffering workers, whom the monopoly capitalists employ under low wages and inhuman conditions in their multinational and transnational corporations.

The globalized exploitation and oppression is systematically done by the monopoly capitalists through their global corporations. Currently, an estimated 50,000 corporations have operations that are primarily global in scope; and many of these are owned by the US monopoly capitalists. Their predecessors were multinational corporations, with sales and manufacturing branches abroad, but with all major functions, including international branches, run from headquarters back home in their country of

²⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 182-183.

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origin. Some examples of these global corporations include Ford Motor Company, General Motors Corporation, Royal Dutch/Shell Group, BP Amoco PLC, Siemens AG, Nestle S.A., and Zenith Electronics Corporation, among many others.

Moreover, the superprofits, that the individual monopoly capitalists get from their interlocking businesses in the underdeveloped countries of the Third World in Asia, Latin America and Africa, are more enormous and higher than the profits they get from their firms in industrialized countries they come from. Why? Because more intensified exploitation, oppression, and plunder are employed by the monopoly capitalists in the Third World countries with the help of their puppet states and at the expense of the toiling masses, especially in terms of cheap labor and low-priced raw materials.

Reflecting on Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (1991), the *Compendium* explains “the role of the free market” in the multinational and transnational businesses of the individual monopoly capitalists. The *Compendium* asserts:

The free market is an institution of social importance because of its capacity to guarantee effective results in the production of goods and services. Historically, it has shown itself able to initiate and sustain economic development over long periods. There are good reasons to hold that, in many circumstances, “the free market is the most efficient instrument for utilizing resources and effectively responding to need.”²⁴²

Further, the *Compendium* explains:

A truly competitive market is an effective instrument for attaining important objectives of justice: moderating the excessive profits of individual businesses, responding to consumers’ demands, bringing about a more efficient use and conservation of resources, rewarding entrepreneurship and innovation, making information available so that it is really

²⁴² Ibid., p. 176.

possible to compare and purchase products in an atmosphere of healthy competition.²⁴³

“Free market,” “truly competitive market,” “moderating excessive profits,” “atmosphere of healthy competition,” “responding to consumers’ demands,” other terms like “theory of supply and demand,” and so forth obviously conceal the exploitative and oppressive nature of monopoly capitalism which is based on private property ownership, extraction of surplus value from the labor power of the toiling masses, capital accumulation and capital export for more superprofits. For all monopoly capitalists, the free-competitive market economy is their tool to exploit and oppress all the more the toiling masses in order to get more superprofits wherein the weaker and small firms of weaker and small capitalist owners are subsumed in the process under the control of the stronger and more powerful monopoly capitalists who own the stronger and larger multinational and transnational companies. This intense “free competition” for ownership and profit is the very reason that other capitalist businesses at the national and international levels become bankrupt. With that kind of an exploitative and oppressive nature of monopoly capitalism, how can “important objectives of justice” be attained that would benefit the billions of exploited and oppressed toiling masses at the national and international levels in the developed countries and most especially in the underdeveloped nations of the Third World?

Still basing its reflections on Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (1991), the *Compendium* continues to describe “the free market” and brings out the impression that the “means” of “the free market” seem to be free from exploitation and oppression of the monopoly capitalists and that its “ends” are for “social usefulness” and “the common good.” Consider the following declarations of the *Compendium*:

The free market cannot be judged apart from the ends that it seeks to accomplish and from the values that it transmits on a societal level. Indeed, the market cannot find in itself the principles for its legitimization; it belongs to the consciences of individuals and to public responsibility to establish a just

²⁴³ Ibid., p. 177.

relationship between means and ends. The individual profit of an economic enterprise, although legitimate, must never become the sole objective. Together with this objective there is another, equally fundamental but of a higher order: social usefulness which must be brought about not in contrast to but in keeping with the logic of the market. When the free market carries out the important functions mentioned above it becomes a service to the common good and to integral human development. The inversion of the relationship between means and ends, however, can make it degenerate into an inhuman and alienating institution, with uncontrollable repercussions.²⁴⁴

Let us not hide the result of scientific research and analysis of the monopoly capitalists’ **means** and **ends**, which have been globalized through imperialist impositions (liberalization, deregulation and privatization) and wars of aggressions. The monopoly capitalists’ *means* is exploitative and oppressive because it is based on private ownership of the means of production and their *ends* are also exploitative and oppressive because of the superprofits they extract from the surplus value of the labor power of the toiling masses; and still part of their *ends*, which is also exploitative and oppressive, is the accumulation of huge finance capital wherein they use another *means*, i.e., capital export, in order to get more superprofits, their *ends*, for more accumulation of capital, their *means*. In short, *both the means and ends* of the monopoly capitalists are exploitative and oppressive to promote and maintain not for “the common good” but their sole unlimited economic greediness and political power of dominating and ruling the whole world. Thus, “the inversion of the relationship between means and ends” and the inter-connection of “means and ends” as both exploitative and oppressive is the actual system of monopoly capitalism, which has led to and maintains the global social ills, and is, in fact, “an inhuman and alienating institution, with uncontrollable repercussions.”

Nonetheless, before deliberating on the inhuman effects of monopoly capitalist globalization, let us continue our discussion on the presenta-

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

tion of the *Compendium* regarding the “international financial system” as an imperialist tool of monopoly capitalism.

Financial markets are certainly not an innovation of our day: for a long time now, in different forms, they have been seeking to meet the financial needs of the productivity sector. The experience of history teaches that without adequate financial systems, economic growth would not have taken place, [says the *Compendium*. It further states:] Large-scale investments typical of modern market economies would have been impossible without the fundamental role of mediation played by financial markets, which among other things brought about an appreciation of the positive functions of savings in the overall development of the economic and social system. If the creation of what is called the “global capital market” has brought benefits, thanks to the fact that the greater mobility of capital allows the productivity sector easier access to resources, on the other hand it has also increased the risk of financial crises. The financial sector, which has seen the volume of financial transactions far surpass that of real transactions, runs the risk of developing to a mentality that has only itself as a point of reference, without being connected to the real foundations of the economy.²⁴⁵

As regards “the risk of financial crises” stated above which is actually the result of “the greater mobility of capital,” this will be taken up in the CNL’s sub-topic below on the various global social problems—such as global poverty of majority of the world’s population, the continuing gap between the few rich and the many poor, the inequalities between the rich/developed and the poor/underdeveloped countries—that have been created by the exploitative and oppressive system of the monopoly capitalists, primarily led by the US imperialists. The focus of the following paragraphs shall be on the “international financial system” of monopoly capitalism with the objective of analyzing the negative and “uncontrollable repercussions” of the system of monopoly capitalism or imperialism at the

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 186.

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national as well as the international levels. We shall see that it is through the “international financial system” that the monopoly capitalists are able to control and dominate the world.

Under the system of the imperialism, the concentration of industrial production and capital has fully developed and has created a full-blown financial capital which has become an omnipotent monopoly under the hands of the few largest capitalists. This is the first economic attribute of imperialism as a system of the monopoly capitalists. This means in the “international financial system” financial capital is the instrument of the monopoly capitalists’ multinational corporations to monopolize the national economy, and of their transnational conglomerates to dominate the global economy and trade.

The second characteristic of imperialism is the formation of the financial oligarchs who monopolize the industrial-manufacturing capital, the commercial capital and the banking capital. With the emergence of monopoly in manufacturing, monopoly also appears in the banking industry. When free competition is dominant, the banking system serves as a middleman by pooling idle funds in society for the use of the manufacturing and commercial capitalists through short-term loans. But with imperialism, the bank is transformed from being a middleman into an all-powerful monopolist. And the monopoly in the banking industry leads to a fundamental change in the relation between the bank and the manufacturing industry. Big banks infiltrate the manufacturing industry by purchasing manufacturing stocks. Manufacturing monopoly organizations infiltrate the banks by purchasing banking stocks. As a result, monopoly banking capital and monopoly manufacturing capital gradually merge to form financial capital. Thus, financial capital finds its origins from the concentration of capital, the development of monopoly from the concentration of capital, and the merger between the banks and the manufacturing industry or their mixed growth. The few largest capitalists, who control a large amount of financial capital for the manufacturing, commercial and banking industries, are called financial oligarchs, who also control the state/government and the whole national economy of a society/country.

The chief means of the financial oligarchs by which financial capital controls the national economy is through the “participation system” or the creation of “mother” and “sister/son” companies. Through a major

joint-stock company (“mother company”) which the financial capitalists control, stocks of other joint-stock companies are purchased. Once their stocks are under control, they become “sister/son companies.” These “sister/son companies” use the same method to control more “grandson companies.” In this way, a relatively small amount of capital can control and manipulate financial capital many times the amount of the original capital. This is the way that the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism is done, which is hidden from the eyes of the toiling masses. This is the way that the whole national economy and most of the wealth created by the laboring people is under the control of a few financial oligarchs. An example of this whole process of exploitation and oppression was the 18 financial groups in America in 1968 that controlled capital assets worth 678.4 billion dollars.

Of the 18 financial groups, the Morgan and Rockefeller groups were the two biggest monopoly financial organizations. They had the most economic power and their influence covered the whole capitalist world. As of 1970, these two financial groups controlled capital assets totaling 330.4 billion dollars, representing about half of the capital asset (i.e., 678.4 billion dollars) controlled by the 18 US financial monopoly organizations and exceeding all the capital assets controlled by the financial monopoly organizations of England, France, Japan, and West Germany combined. Enterprises controlled by the Morgan group covered various departments of the national economy of America, especially basic industries such as iron and steel, electricity and gas, electronics, and chemicals. In public utilities and transportation, the Morgan group’s position was even stronger, playing a vital role in the US economy. Enterprises controlled by the Rockefeller group were more concentrated. Its five major oil companies controlled 94.1 percent of the oil extraction in the United States in 1967. The two groups exercise a decisive influence in the US economy even up to the present day.

Thus, we see here that to further exploit and oppress the laboring people for high monopoly profit, the financial oligarchs or financial capitalists, who are themselves the monopoly capitalists, directly control not only the national economy of the state and society but also the state political power, the military and police, and other superstructures. They not only monopolize the whole economy and politics of the state but also

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pursue the policy of containing communism throughout the world. An example of this kind of state control in the US was during the administration of Dwight D. Eisenhower who was a military leader of the Allies in Europe during World War II (1939-1945) and the first supreme commander of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and 34th US president from 1953 to 1961. Eisenhower came to power with the support of the Rockefeller and Morgan groups. Of the 272 high-level officials in the administration of Eisenhower, 150 were big capitalists. Among them, Secretary of State Dulles was a trustee of the Rockefeller Foundation; Defense Secretary Wilson was a general manager of the General Motors Company; Gates, another defense secretary, was an important person in the Morgan group and served as the director of the Morgan Guaranty Trust Company in 1965; and Secretary of the Treasury Humphrey was a responsible official of the Han-na Mining Company, which was a major enterprise of the Cleveland group. The Eisenhower’s administration kept the industrial peace while pursuing the anti-communist policy throughout the world. The whole financial oligarchs and Eisenhower’s administration controlled not only state political power but also various spheres of the superstructure. The newspaper, publishing, broadcasting, television, and movie industries, foundations, hospitals, welfare organizations, cultural centers and other aspects of social life in America were all under the control of the monopoly capitalists and financial oligarchs.

The same financial oligarchic control of US imperialism that had happened during the Bush administrations is still happening up to the present day in the US under the administration of US imperialist President Donald Trump. For the past two centuries, US imperialism has been proselytizing and continues to cajole the American people that their government is democratic, that it is against monarchy, aristocracy, fascism, “communism” and anarchism. The continuing proselytization of US imperialism is further done by teaching the American people that the main characteristics of the US democratic government are as follows:

1. It is a government that exists to serve the American people and that the American people are the source of the US governmental authority;

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2. The American people have the right to change the government if it does not serve them justly;
3. The American people are sovereign;
4. The US government is committed to the following complementary principles:
5. Commitment to majority rule;
6. Protection of the rights of the minority;
7. Acceptance of a rule of law;
8. Equality of all citizens before the law;
9. Safeguarding liberties such as the free exchange of ideas and opinions, freedom of religion, freedom to assemble, and the right to be tried by a jury of one’s peers.

But while the above main characteristics of the US government are a description of a democracy, which are pleasing to the ears of the American people and to the people of the world, these are actually the inventions of US imperialism as smokescreen to hide that *the US government is a state monopoly capitalism*, which is based on capitalist private ownership and the merger of monopoly financial capital with the state political power. All the above are mere terminologies of *bourgeois democracy*, which US imperialism uses to conceal and achieve the following imperialist objectives:

1. To preserve monopoly capitalism, which is actually the main objective of the imperialist-controlled US government;
2. To ensure capitalist and bourgeois rule over the American people, especially the toiling American masses who consist the majority of the US population;
3. To justify state fascism and authoritarianism of the bourgeoisie, and the totalitarian economy which is solely under the control of multinational corporations that are absolutely directed by the US financial oligarchs vis-à-vis the basic interests and rights of millions of the toiling American people who compose the majority of the national population (whose total estimate in 2008 was 303,824,650);
4. To dominate other peoples and nations in the guise of building or bringing back democracy in these countries, in the pretext of leading all nations to build a global democracy against communism;

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5. To justify the US imperialist impositions on all nations to adhere to the monopoly capitalist policies of liberalization, deregulation and privatization;
6. To vindicate the US imperialist interventions to enforce to other countries, especially the Third World countries, its monopoly capitalist objectives of global exploitation and oppression; and
7. To rationalize the preemptive and proxy wars of aggression of US imperialism against countries whom US imperialism considers as “axis of evil” or threats to US world hegemony.

In short, US imperialism uses the terminologies of bourgeois democracy in order to conceal to the American toiling masses and all the peoples of the world the exploitative and oppressive system of US imperialism, i.e., monopoly capitalism that is based on capitalist private ownership and the merger of monopoly financial capital with the state political power in America. Thus, US imperialism is neither a developer nor a bringer of genuine democracy for the people, especially for the toiling masses of workers and peasants. And the US government under the control of the US imperialists assures the monopoly capitalist groups of high and more monopoly superprofits from the surplus value of the labor power of the American toiling masses by:

1. Using federal treasury funds and the people’s taxes to subsidize and bail out the monopoly capitalists when they undertake the risks of investment or when they are bankrupt during periodic economic crises, i.e., depression, recession, etc., embedded in the system of monopoly capitalism;
2. Redistributing a large part of the national income in favor of the monopoly capitalist organizations through state legislation and budgets;
3. Creating facilities conducive to the monopoly capitalists’ concentration and accumulation of capital and absorbing the medium and small enterprises; and
4. Strengthening capitalist enslavement of the US proletariat and the other toiling masses of the world.

One important exposition of the *Compendium*, related to the “international financial system” of monopoly capitalism, is found on Chapter

Seven that deals with the “Economic Life,” particularly regarding “the gradual loss of effectiveness of nation-states in directing the dynamics of national economic-financial systems.”²⁴⁶ The *Compendium* states:

An important consequence of the process of globalization consists in the gradual loss of effectiveness of nation-states in directing the dynamics of national economic-financial systems. The governments of individual countries find their actions in the economic and social spheres ever more strongly conditioned by the expectations of international capital markets and by the ever more pressing requests for credibility coming from the financial world. Because of the new bonds of interdependence among global operators, the traditional defensive measures of new areas of competition, the very notion of a national market recedes into the background.²⁴⁷

Actually, “the gradual loss of effectiveness of nation-states in directing” their own “national economic-financial systems,” that just withdraw “into the background,” is due to *capital export*, the third characteristic or feature of imperialism, in the “international financial system” of monopoly capitalism. The export of capital, as distinguished from the export of commodities, obtains an exceptional importance in the global control of the world economy by monopoly capitalism. Among the imperialists in the world today, it is US imperialism that ranks as the No. 1 in promoting capital export in order to dominate the world by exporting financial capital. Since the US monopoly capitalists get huge profits from their industrial, commercial and financial businesses of their US multinational corporations, a large amount of accumulated capital becomes “surplus capital.” And the profitable outlets of this “surplus capital” are found in the underdeveloped countries of the Third World where capital is scarce, wages are low, land and raw materials are cheap, and high profit is obtained by US monopoly capitalists. We have already expounded on above the particular example of US capital export in the Philippines that has put the whole national economy of the country under the dictate of US imperial-

²⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 187.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

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ism. Meaning, capital export is an imperialist tool to exploit and oppress the people of various countries, most especially those of the Third World nations in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

Another instance was that after the World War II, there was a large increase of capital export from the capitalist countries, and the US became the largest capital-exporting country. In 1914, the United States exported only 3.5 billion dollars of capital; but in 1970, it rapidly rose to 155.5 billion dollars, an increase of more than forty-three times in fifty-six years (1914-1970). With the rapid increase in capital export, there were also large increases in the high monopoly profits of the US monopoly capitalists. From 1950 to 1970, the profit from US private direct investment in foreign countries amounted to 88.77 billion dollars, or *14 percent higher* than the total US private direct investment in foreign countries up to the end of 1970. This meant that profit from investments made by imperialism in Asia, Africa, and Latin America was astonishingly high. For example, in 1970 United States direct investment in Asia, Africa and Latin America accounted for 43.5 percent of the total profit from all foreign direct investment. At the present time, imperialism has become the greediest blood-sucker of the peoples over a large area and population of the world.

Also after World War II, the imperialist countries paid increasing attention to state capital export. The major form of this state capital export was foreign “aid.” From mid-1945 to mid-1971, the total amount of US foreign aid reached 149.6 billion dollars. This foreign “aid” was classified into so-called “grants” and “loans.” “Grants” were nominally free; but in fact, they were the strings by which the grantee countries were controlled. In recent years, the proportion of loans from the imperialist countries is increasing, and the proportion of “grants” is correspondingly decreasing. And these so-called loans all have interest rates exceeding 5 percent per annum. The highest rate, in fact, reached 8 percent per annum. In addition, many political, economic, and military strings are attached in such US foreign “aid.” Thus, foreign “aid” (either as “grants” or “loans” or both) is not only a bloodsucking straw but is also an important tool for the implementation of the aggressive and expansionary policies of imperialism, primarily of US imperialism, and the fight for world hegemony.

Thus, the main objective of imperialism, primarily US imperialism in advancing the capital export in the “international financial system,” is

in order to preserve monopoly capitalism and monopolize the global economy, politics and culture, covering various states in both the developed and underdeveloped countries. This is exactly the global system of monopoly capitalism that is well preserved and safeguarded by the armed reactionary forces of the imperialist countries, headed by the US military commanders from Pentagon and the CIA. The imperialists also dominate and direct the UN Security Council to preserve the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism in the world. And even after the end of the Cold War, the imperialist countries, primarily led by US imperialists, continue to use the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) not only to attack socialist nations and national liberation movements, but also to expand the transnational conglomerates of the monopoly capitalists in other parts of the world. All these facts ought to unite the toiling masses of workers and peasants and other democratic classes to work towards radical change for the common good of peoples, especially toiling masses of workers in industrialized countries and the poor peoples in the Third World underdeveloped countries of Asia, Latin America and Africa, as well as those in eastern Europe.

The monopoly capitalists’ globalized exploitation and oppression through their multinational and transnational corporations has led to global social problems such as poverty, the widening gap between the few rich and the many poor, the global inequalities between and within the developed and underdeveloped countries, and the devastation of the environment.

This CNL’s sub-topic shall expound on the global social ills and the inhuman effects of monopoly capitalist globalization. Of course, the *Compendium* has not pointed out the root cause of these global social problems; it has never mentioned the issue of monopoly capitalism. (Is it because of the intention of the Christian Churches not to hurt the feelings of their capitalist benefactors?) However, in analyzing the overall context of the global social ills such as poverty and inequality, the reality of “inhuman and alienating institution... with uncontrollable repercussions,” “aberrations in the system of international trade,” “foreign debt,” “the risk of financial crises,” it is the assertion of CNL that these and other economic problems at the international level are caused by the system of monop-

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oly capitalism, which has been clearly expounded on in the two previous sub-topics of CNL above. Meaning, it is the globalized exploitation and oppression of monopoly capitalism or imperialism that has been and continues victimizing the toiling masses of workers in the industrialized countries and the majority peoples in the underdeveloped Third World countries. The monopoly capitalists have multinational and transnational corporations that have controlled and continue to dominate the world’s economy, trade, market, financial system as well as the politics and cultures of various states of the world. All the global economic, political, cultural and military undertakings of the monopoly capitalists or imperialists have led to the global social ills (poverty, gap between the few rich and the many poor, and inequalities between and within the developed and underdeveloped countries). These global social problems are expounded on in the following paragraphs.

In Chapter Seven that concerns the “Economic Life,” the *Compendium* presents the social ill of the “gap and inequality between rich and poor countries.” Citing Pope John Paul II’s Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in America* (1999), the *Compendium*—while acknowledging on the one hand the “new hopes,” “beneficial effects,” “reduction in the costs of communication and new communication technologies” and “opportunities” in globalization and the global economy—also mentions “troubling questions,” “risks” and “increasing inequalities,” and states:

Globalization gives rise to new hopes while at the same time it poses troubling questions. Globalization is able to produce potentially beneficial effects for the whole of humanity... the growth of the system of economic and financial relations has brought about simultaneously a significant reduction in the costs of communications and new communication technologies... In analyzing the present context, besides identifying the opportunities now opening up in the era of the global economy, one also comes to see the risks connected with the new dimensions of commercial and financial relations. In fact, there are indications aplenty that point to a trend of increasing inequalities, both between advanced countries and developing countries, and within industrialized countries.

The growing economic wealth made possible by the processes described above is accompanied by an increase in relative poverty.²⁴⁸

The above quotation seems to show the lack of comprehensive and scientific analysis which might have been the very reason why the Church’s doctrine is incapable of scrutinizing the root causes of the “increasing inequalities, both between advanced countries and developing countries, and within industrialized countries” and the “increase in relative poverty.” As it has already been pointed out in the previous CNLs 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th topics, the primary root of the “increasing inequalities, both between advanced countries and developing countries, and within industrialized countries” and the current global poverty, which are continuing up to the present stage, is no other than the exploitative and oppressive nature and system of monopoly capitalism.

Also in Chapter Seven that concerns the “Economic Life,” the *Compendium* presents another social ill such as the “aberrations in the system of international trade” due to “protectionist policies,” “the continuing deterioration in terms of the exchange of raw materials and the widening of the gap between rich and poor countries”²⁴⁹ wherein “the poor nations remains ever poor while the rich ones become still richer.” Referring to Pope Paul VI’s Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* (1967) and Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1988), the *Compendium* says:

Trade represents a fundamental component of international economic relations, making a decisive contribution to the specialization in certain types of production and to the economic growth of different countries. Today more than ever, international trade—if properly oriented—promotes development and can create new employment possibilities and provide useful resources.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 183.

²⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 184.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

Still basing its reflections on the above encyclical letters, the *Compendium* further adds:

The Church’s social doctrine has time and again called attention to aberrations in the system of international trade, which often, owing to protectionist policies, discriminates against products coming from poorer countries and hinders the growth of industrial activity in and the transfer of technology to these countries. The continuing deterioration in terms of the exchange of raw materials and the widening of the gap between rich and poor countries has prompted the social Magisterium to point out the importance of ethical criteria that should form the basis of international economic relations: the pursuit of the common good and the universal destination of goods; equity in trade relationships; and attention to the rights and needs of the poor in policies concerning trade and international cooperation. Otherwise, “the poor nations remain ever poor while the rich ones become still richer.”²⁵¹

What is good in this quotation is that the *Compendium* has identified the social problems on the “aberrations in the system of international trade,” “protectionist policies... against poorer countries,” “deterioration... of the exchange of raw materials and the widening of the gap between rich and poor countries”; and it presents three “ethical criteria” as “the basis of international economic relations” in order to resolve “the widening of the gap between rich and poor countries.” But what remains to be lacking is the answer to the question of what really is the root cause of the identified social problems.

In CNL’s previous topics from 1st to the 4th topic, CNL has expounded on that it is the exploitative and oppressive nature and system of monopoly capitalism that is the root cause of the social problems at the national and international levels, which shall be reiterated in the summary below of this current CNL’s sub-topic. As regards the three “ethical criteria” as “the basis of international economic relations” in order to resolve “the widening of the gap between rich and poor countries,” it has already been clearly stated

²⁵¹ Ibid.

in CNL’s 3rd topic, “On the Principle of the Common Good, the Universal Destination of Goods, and Private Property,” that the three “ethical criteria,” i.e., “the pursuit of the common good and the universal destination of goods; equity in trade relationships; and attention to the rights and needs of the poor in policies concerning trade and international cooperation,” cannot at all be achieved under the auspices of the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism but can be attained once the Christian Churches would do away with their partiality for monopoly capitalism and be open as regards putting into concrete praxis the guiding principle that Christianity and Marxism/scientific socialism can complement, though not necessarily compatible in terms of beliefs, with each other in finding ways and means to resolve the social problems that have been brought about by the system of monopoly capitalism or imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism.

Again in Chapter Seven that deals with the “Economic Life,” the *Compendium* presents additional but inter-related social problems concerning “wealth and poverty in developed and developing countries” and “social inequalities.” Quoting again Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1988), the *Compendium* says:

Rich countries have shown the ability to create material well-being, but often at the expense of man and the weaker social classes. “One cannot ignore the fact that the frontiers of wealth and poverty intersect within societies themselves, whether developed or developing. In fact, just as social inequalities—even to the point of lives of misery and poverty—exist in rich countries, so, in parallel fashion, in the less developed countries one often sees manifestations of selfishness and a flaunting of wealth which is as disconcerting as it is scandalous.”²⁵²

Once more in the above quotation, the Church leaders see the problem that even in rich countries there is poverty, and inequalities exist. But the problem remains that the Church leaders have no capacity to really root out the basic cause of such poverty and inequalities. Based on such

²⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 189.

limited observation, CNL is enticed to deduce that the reason for the Church leaders’ incapacity to really root out the basic cause is the fact that they have ever since and up to now been very strong in their partiality for monopoly capitalism. And this might have hindered them (popes, cardinals and bishops) to declare that the root cause of the global poverty and inequalities in the developed and underdeveloped countries and at the national and international levels is the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism or imperialism, primarily led by US imperialism. This observation is the fundamental reason why CNL strongly prays that Christians—the ordained including those in the hierarchies of the Christian Churches, the religions and the laity—may become open-minded spiritually to the basic principle that Christianity could be complementary, but not necessarily compatible in terms of beliefs, with Marxism/scientific socialism/communism to liberate humankind from the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism or imperialism that has caused the current global social problems.

Another global problem, which is mentioned in the *Compendium’s* Chapter Nine which is about “The International Community,” is the global issue on “foreign debt.” Citing the Pontifical Commission for Justice and Peace’s document *At the Service of the Human Community: An Ethical Approach to the International Debt Question* (December 27, 1986), Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (1991), his Apostolic Letter *Tertio Millennio Adveniente* (1995), his *Message for the 1998 World Day of Peace* (1998), his *Address to the Conference of the Inter-Parliamentarian Union* (November 30, 1998), his *Message for the 1999 World Day of Peace* (1999), and his *Message for the 2000 World Day of Peace* (2000), the *Compendium* states:

The right to development must be taken into account when considering questions related to the debt crisis of many poor countries. Complex causes of various types lie at the origin of the debt crisis. At the international level there are the fluctuation of exchange rates, financial speculation and economic neo-colonialism; within individual debtor countries there is corruption, poor administration of public monies or the improper utilization of loans received. The greatest sufferings,

which can be traced back both to structural questions as well as personal behavior, strike the people of poor and indebted countries who are not responsible for this situation. “The International Community” cannot ignore this fact; while reaffirming the principle that debts must be repaid, ways must be found that do not compromise the “fundamental right of peoples to subsistence and progress.”²⁵³

In the CNL’s sub-topic above on “The globalized exploitation and oppression is manifested by the monopoly capitalists’ industrial, manufacturing, commercial and financial firms that control and dominate the world’s economy, trade, market and financial system,” it has been explained that **capital export** is an imperialist tool to dominate the world and to exploit and oppress peoples of various countries by exporting financial capital. Imperialist countries export financial capital by means of foreign “aid” (either “grants” or “loans”) but the imperialist main aim to export financial capital is to get huge profits because these so-called foreign “aids” have interest rates exceeding 5-8 percent per annum; and many political, economic, and military strings are attached to such foreign “aids.” All these aims and strings attached make the poor countries, especially in the Third World nations of Asia, Latin America and African, incapable of developing their national economies because of paying their foreign debts; and though corruption can add to the poverty of countries, this is secondary as the main cause of why poor countries remain poorer and poorer is due to foreign debts with huge interests that have to be paid. In 2002, for instance, the scale of debt in the poorest countries has so crippled their economies that development has become impossible because much of the limited resources is being deflected to debt servicing. The level of debt of the poorest countries was almost 21 times its size in 1970. The international usury perpetrated by the international financial institutions (WB, IMF, other IFIs) has siphoned off US\$550 billion in interest and principal payments for US\$540 billion of loans, yet the poorest countries still owe foreign creditors US\$523 billion as of 2002. Most often the G8 (US, UK, Canada, France, Italy, Germany, Japan and Russia), the principal cabal of imperialist powers, have merely legitimized the odious and illegitimate

²⁵³ Ibid., pp. 227-228.

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debt incurred by the puppet regimes of these poor countries and debt which facilitated their economic plunder by imperialist corporations and banks.

CNL is united with the Church in its call to find ways that “do not compromise the fundamental right of peoples to subsistence and progress” in debtor countries that are poor. But CNL does not agree with the Church’s stand that “debts must be repaid.” Poor countries have the right to cancel their foreign debts because they have already repaid their debts through the huge superprofits that have already been extracted by the imperialists, the monopoly capitalists, who have gained so much from cheap labor and low-cost raw materials and from the plunder of the natural resources of poor-borrower countries, especially those in the Third World. The imperialists have not only acquired profit from capital export but also from the profits of their transnational corporations that are in the manufacturing, commercial and financial businesses located in the borrower countries. The points above are more than enough reasons for indebted poor countries not to pay their foreign debts, and for them to struggle in order to liberate their countries from imperialist domination.

To summarize this current sub-topic, CNL can now assert that the global social problems—discussed in the aforementioned paragraphs such as the increasing inequalities, both between advanced countries and developing countries, and within industrialized countries; the increase in relative poverty; the various aberrations in the system of international trade due to protectionist policies; the continuing deterioration in terms of the exchange of raw materials and the widening of the gap between rich and poor countries wherein the poor nations remain ever-poor while the rich ones become still richer; the existence of wealth and poverty and social inequalities in both developed and developing countries—have their common root cause. As it has already been pointed out in the previous CNL’s 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th topics, the primary root cause of these social ills at the national and international levels is the exploitative and oppressive nature and system of monopoly capitalism. CNL has clarified in the aforementioned topics the main features of the exploitative and oppressive system of the monopoly capitalists or imperialists, primarily led by the US imperialists. The exploitative and oppressive nature of monopoly capitalism, which

is the common root cause of the above global social problems, is based on six exploitative and oppressive principles of monopoly capitalism, namely:

1. The capitalist private ownership of the means of production;
2. The capitalist wage system which is insufficient to meet the basic needs of the toiling masses and their families;
3. The extraction of superprofits from the surplus value of the labor power of the workers who are exploited and oppressed in the multinational and transnational companies of the monopoly capitalists in both the developed and underdeveloped countries;
4. The monopoly capitalist control of the financial capital and capital export in order to accumulate more superprofits from the surplus value of the toiling masses in the monopoly capitalists’ multinational and transnational corporations;
5. The monopoly capitalist or imperialist domination at the global level of the whole economy and the various states in both the developed countries but more especially in the Third World nations; and
6. The division and redivision of the world through wars of imperialist aggression and global terrorism, which shall still be expounded on in CNL’s 6th topic, *On Terrorism, War, Violence, and Worldwide Peace*.

What solutions does the Church offer to curb the global social problems of poverty, the widening gap between the few rich and the many poor, and the global inequalities among nations? Is there hope that the UN and its international organizations would be able to address such global social problems? And would these international organizations be amendable to implement the Church’s solutions?

As to what solutions does the Church offer to curb the global social problems, that have been caused primarily by monopoly capitalism or imperialism, such as the poverty of billions of people, the widening gap between the few rich and the many poor, and the global inequalities among nations, the *Compendium* expounds four Church’s solutions. These are the following:

1. Rethinking of the economy and globalization;
2. Creation of a vision of the economy that, on the international level, guarantees an equitable distribution of resources;

3. Revision of international organizations for the attainment of the common good and equality in the process of full development; and
4. The defense of human rights. In the following paragraphs, we shall present these four Church’s solutions.

After expounding each solution, we shall also see if there is any hope that the UN and its international organizations would be able to address such global social problems and if these are amendable to implement the Church’s solutions.

On the first solution of the Church. In Chapter Twelve, which deals with Social Doctrine and Ecclesial Action, the *Compendium* sees the urgency of “rethinking the economy” and globalization.²⁵⁴ Citing Pope John Paul II’s *Message for the 2000 World Day of Peace* (2000) as reference, the *Compendium* states:

Economists, those working in this field and political leaders must sense the urgency of rethinking the economy, considering, on the one hand, the dramatic material poverty of billions of people and, on the other, the fact that “present economic, social and cultural structures are ill-equipped to meet the demands of genuine development.” The legitimate requirements of economic efficiency need to be better harmonized with those of political participation and social justice. Consequently, this means that solidarity must be made an integral part of networks of economic, political and social interdependence that the current process of globalization tends to consolidate. In this effort of rethinking, well organized and destined to have an effect on the way economic realities are seen, associations of Christian inspiration active in the economic field—organizations of workers, business leaders and economists—have a precious role to play.²⁵⁵

As it has already been stated so often in CNL’s 2nd topic, “On Poverty and Inequality, and What Can Be Done,” in CNL’s 3rd topic, “On the Common Good, the Universal Destination of Goods, and Private

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 283.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

Property,” in CNL’s 4th topic, “On the Contradiction Between Capital and Labor, and How Could It Be Resolved,” and in this current CNL’s 5th topic, “On Monopoly Capitalist Globalization, and *Quo Vadis* Humankind?” what the *Compendium* calls “the dramatic material poverty of billions of people” in the world has been caused and is being continually produced by the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism, whose main characteristics have already been expounded on also in the CNL’s previous topics and various sub-topics. And the “present economic, social and cultural structures are” *not only* “ill-equipped to meet the demands of genuine development” but also have to be radically changed in order to pursue people’s genuine development because these structures have been established within the framework of the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism or imperialism. That is why CNL upholds that the effort of “rethinking the economy” in order to resolve the global social problems of poverty, gap and inequalities between the few rich and the billions of poor people and between and within the developed and underdeveloped countries cannot be done within the auspices of the monopoly capitalist globalization. Why? For the mere reason that monopoly capitalist globalization itself is the main cause of the global problems of poverty and inequalities. This means that for an effective “rethinking of the economy” and globalization, there is a great need for a radical reorientation wherein Christianity and Marxism can complement, though not necessarily compatible in terms of philosophies and beliefs, with each other so that such “effort of rethinking” and reorientation, especially if such would be guided by socialist principles, would really “have an effect on the way economic realities are seen” for the common good of people, most specifically of the billions of the poor toiling masses of workers, peasants and national minorities especially in the underdeveloped Third World countries of Asia, Latin America and Africa, and even in the eastern Europe.

Let us now see the three UN international organizations, i.e., the World Bank (WB), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) if they ever recognize the reality of “*the dramatic material poverty of billions of people,*” if they ever sense the urgency of rethinking the economy and see “*the legitimate requirements of economic efficiency*” which “*need to be better harmonized with those of political participation and social justice.*”

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The WB and the IMF were created at the same at the Bretton Woods Conference in England in 1944. The objectives of the WB are

to assist in the reconstruction and development of territories of members by facilitating the investment of capital for productive purposes [and] to promote private foreign investment by means of guarantees or participation in loans [and] to supplement private investment by providing, on suitable conditions, finance for productive purposes out of its own capital.²⁵⁶

The purpose of the IMF, on the other hand, is to promote international monetary cooperation to facilitate the expansion of international trade, consider issues of international payments, maintain an orderly pattern of exchange rates, and to avoid restrictive exchange practices. The WTO, created in 1994 to replace the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), promotes and enforces the provisions of trade laws and regulations by administering and policing new and existing free trade agreements, overseeing world trade practices and settling trade disputes among member states.

Surely, these three UN international organizations must have known the increase in trade and the movement of *capital* (stocks, bonds, currencies, and other investments) at the international level. From 1950 to 2001 the volume of world exports rose by 20 times. By 2001 world trade amounted to a quarter of all the goods and services produced in the world. As for capital, in the early 1970s only \$10 billion to \$20 billion in national currencies were exchanged daily. By the early part of the 21st century, more than \$1.5 trillion worth of yen, euros, dollars, and other currencies were traded daily to support the expanded levels of trade and investment. But such large volumes of currency trades have not at all mitigated the global poverty, the gap between the few rich and the many poor peoples, and the inequalities between and within the developed and underdeveloped

²⁵⁶ International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, *IBRD Articles of Agreement*, as amended effective June 27, 2012 (<https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/722361541184234501-0330022018/original/IBRDArticlesOfAgreementEnglish.pdf>).

countries, especially in the Third World nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Based on the above expositions on the three UN international organizations—the WB, IMF and WTO, the CNL can safely conclude that the Church’s call of the urgency of “rethinking the economy” and globalization is, indeed, very valid with the aim to effectively resolve “the dramatic material poverty of billions of people.” However, CNL further clarifies that such “rethinking the economy” and globalization should not be done within the context of the orientations and objectives of the WB, IMF and the WTO because the orientations and aims of these UN international organizations serve primarily the economic and political interests of the monopoly capitalists or imperialists, primarily the US imperialists, to dominate the world economy, politics and culture at the expense of the billions of toiling masses who remain in poverty. Church leaders must be aware that the “present economic, social and cultural structures” such as the WB, IMF, WTO and other UN international organizations are NOT ONLY “ill-equipped to meet the demands of genuine development” for the common good especially of the billions of toiling masses BUT MORE SO these global structures are the global instruments of the exploitative and oppressive system of imperialism or monopoly capitalism. This means that the radical reorientation and restructuring of the present economic, political and cultural structures would have to be done within the context of the complementariness of Christianity and Marxism/scientific socialism/communism, though these are not necessarily compatible with each other in terms of philosophies and beliefs, so that:

the legitimate requirements of economic efficiency [would] be better harmonized with those of political participation and social justice; solidarity [would] be made an integral part of networks of economic, political and social interdependence; and in this effort of rethinking the economy [and radical reorientation and restructuring,] associations of Christian [and Marxist] inspiration active in the economic field—organizations of workers, business leaders and economists—have a precious role to play.²⁵⁷

²⁵⁷ *Compendium*, p. 283.

On the second solution of the Church. Another need that the *Compendium* has presented in Chapter Seven which concerns the “Economic Life” is the demand of the billions of poor people for the creation of “a vision of the economy that, on the international level, guarantees an equitable distribution of resources.” Basing its thoughts on the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2437-2438, Pope Paul VI’s Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* (1967), Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (1991), and his *Message for the 2000 World Day of Peace* (2000), the *Compendium* states:

One of the fundamental tasks of those actively involved in international economic matters is to achieve for mankind an integral development in solidarity, that is to say, “it has to promote the good of every person and of the whole person.” To achieve this task requires a vision of the economy that, on the international level, guarantees an equitable distribution of resources and that is responsive to awareness of the interdependence—economic, political and cultural—that today unites people definitively among themselves and makes them feel linked by a sole destiny.²⁵⁸

The *Compendium* further says:

Social problems increasingly take on a global dimension. No State can face these alone and find a solution. The present generations have direct experience of the need for solidarity and are concretely aware of the necessity to move beyond an individualistic culture. There is an ever wider awareness of the need for models of development that seek to take on the task not only “of raising all peoples to the level currently enjoyed by the richer countries, but rather of building up a more decent life through united labor, of concretely enhancing every individual’s dignity and creativity, as well as his capacity to respond to his personal vocation, and thus to God’s call.”²⁵⁹

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

²⁵⁹ Ibid.

Let us again scrutinize the three UN international organizations—the WB, IMF and WTO—as these are the main global institutions that are “actively involved in international economic matters.” Let us inspect these organizations if they have an *economic vision* that guarantees the equitable distribution of resources in order to resolve “social problems” that “increasingly take on a global dimension” such as the global poverty, the gap between the few rich and the many poor peoples, and the inequalities between and within the developed and the underdeveloped countries, especially those in the Third World nations.

After the establishment of the WB and the IMF in 1944, US imperialism founded on June 1947 the European Recovery Program (ERP), commonly called the Marshall Plan. The ERP was based on the plan of US Secretary of State George Catlett Marshall, which had four objectives, namely:

1. To help the European countries to become economically prosperous so that these would become great markets for American goods in order for the US to prevent in its national economy another severe economic depression, a periodic economic crisis due to the system of monopoly capitalism that happened in 1939 which led to World War II;
2. To neutralize and win over the USSR, which had strong influence in Europe and might rebuild Western Europe according to socialist or communist methods; meaning, US imperialism must help the European nations devastated by World War II (1939-1945) to be rebuilt and become prosperous nations according to the system of monopoly capitalism or imperialism; and
3. To make West Germany (now part of the united Federal Republic of Germany) a strong buffer against the expansion of the USSR, which at that time had East Germany as one of its member nations. The 4th objective of the Marshall Plan or the ERP was to facilitate and make sure that the WB and IMF policies of liberalization, deregulation and privatization would be implemented by member countries.

Thus, the Congress of the United States appropriated more than \$13 billion in aid to implement the ERP/Marshall Plan. 70 percent was spent on the production of goods in the United States; and only 30 percent

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was distributed to the European countries. The Economic Cooperation Administration distributed the money, and the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC) spent it. The OEEC was established in 1948 to implement the Marshall Plan or the ERP. The member nations of the OEEC were the US, the UK, France, Italy, and West Germany. The USSR was invited, but backed out when their delegates learned that the United States insisted on the cooperation of the USSR with the capitalist societies of Western Europe and an open accounting of how funds were used, they left Paris and established their own plan to integrate Communist states in Eastern Europe. However in 1961, the OEEC became Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) that added four more member countries such as Canada, Japan, South Korea and Australia. The reason for this was because the economic vision of US imperialism of consolidating the system of monopoly capitalism in Western Europe had been achieved and because the Cold War, the global struggle between US imperialism and the modern revisionist and socialist imperialist USSR, was becoming intense. Thus, US monopoly capitalism broadened its imperialist scope to prevent the socialist/communist expansion by China, Cuba, Vietnam, and North Korea in other countries of Asia, Latin America and Africa.

Based on the Marshall Plan, both the WB, the IMF and the GATT (founded in 1948 but replaced by the WTO in 1995) added to their mission in 1952 the task of helping underdeveloped countries “grow faster and provide a higher living standard for people” (i.e., not to curb poverty) in the underdeveloped nations, especially in the Third World countries of Asia, Latin America and Africa. These UN international financial institutions made loans to the underdeveloped countries for dams and other electrical-generating plants, harbor facilities, and other large projects. (Examples of the dams built during this period were the Ambuklao and Binga dams in the Cordillera, Northern Luzon, Philippines.) These projects were intended to lower costs for private businesses and to attract investors. All such projects were all intended for the superprofits of the monopoly capitalists, especially headed by the US imperialists. All these resulted to the increase of foreign debts in the underdeveloped nations.

The points above show that the objective of the three UN international organizations—the WB, IMF and WTO—is the expansion, spread

and consolidation of monopoly capitalism or imperialism at the international level. Of course, their economic vision does not give any guarantee for “the equitable distribution of resources” in order to resolve “social problems” that “increasingly take on a global dimension” like global poverty, gap and inequalities among peoples of the whole world.

Because of the nature of monopoly capitalism or imperialism as an exploitative economic system as well as an oppressive political system that dominates the global economy, politics and culture, inequalities go on unabated around the world. The labor rights, health and environmental issues are not addressed properly at the expense, and not for the benefit, of the poor toiling masses of workers and peasants at the national and international levels. And the culture, sovereignty, civil and democratic rights of peoples, especially in the Third World countries, are trampled upon by imperialist powers. In the following paragraphs, we shall expound on all these (global inequalities, labor and health rights issues, environmental issues, cultures and national sovereignty of peoples) to show that the imperialist and their UN international organizations (except maybe the WHO?) have no objective to address these issues.

Take, in particular, the *global problem of inequalities* that has been brought about by monopoly capitalism and continues to exist up to the present day because of imperialism. By the late 1990s the 20 percent of the world’s people living in the highest-income countries had 86 percent of the world’s income; the bottom 20 percent had only 1 percent of the world’s income. An estimated 1.3 billion people, or about one-sixth of the world’s population, have incomes of less than a dollar a day. Global inequality is growing worse, rather than better. More than 80 countries had lower *per capita income* (income per person) at the end of the 1990s than they had at the end of the 1980s. In 1960 the top 20 percent had 30 times the income of the poorest 20 percent. This grew to 32 times in 1970, 45 times in 1980, and 60 times in 1990. By the end of the 20th century, the top 20 percent received 75 times the income of the bottom 20 percent. And those, who suffer in miseries, belong to 80 percent of the world’s population, that include not only those in the underdeveloped nations of the Third World, but also the poor toiling masses in the rich countries, and have only 14 percent of the world’s income; while the world’s 20 percent population—who consist of the families of the imperialists, the bour-

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geoisie, the puppet rulers, the landed elites, the owners of multinational and transnational corporations—have the 86 percent of the world’s total income. This type of global inequality is the product of the monopoly capitalists or imperialists, primarily led by the US imperialists, through the WB, IMF, and WTO that are all under their absolute hegemony.

All over the world, the US-controlled multilateral agencies like the IMF, World Bank and WTO have directly and indirectly put all states under pressure to abandon social responsibilities or pretenses for the working people and to go for the policy of liberalization, privatization, and deregulation to dismantle national, social and environmental restraints in order to allow the greed of monopoly capitalist firms to prevail. The policy stress on “free market” globalization has thereby accelerated the accumulation and concentration of productive and finance-capital in the hands of the monopoly bourgeoisie in a few imperialist countries, chiefly the US. But the inevitable result is the contraction of the income and purchasing power of the working people the world over, especially in the Third World and in retrogressive countries formerly ruled by revisionist cliques. This has led to the fact that the income disparity between the rich and the poor has rapidly widened. The richest 20 percent of the world grab more than 85 percent of income. The three wealthiest people in the world have combined assets greater than the combined gross national product (GNP) of the 48 poorest countries with a combined population of 600 million. The majority of humanity subsists on less than 2\$ daily and a quarter or 1.2 billion people on less than 1\$ daily.

Another great source of global inequalities and poverty is not only the monopoly capitalists’ extraction of the surplus value of the labor power of the toiling masses who are low paid in their own industrialized countries but also the establishment of free-trade zones in the underdeveloped countries of the Third World where capitalist investors are given special benefits such as low or no taxes, low-priced raw materials, labor unions are discouraged or not allowed, unequal economic and trade agreements, etc. Such special benefits have led to various violations of labor and human rights like defilements of the child labor laws, intimidation of workers seeking to have their grievances addressed, sexual harassments, and allowing harsher working conditions to attract foreign investment and job creation.

The UN’s International Labor Organization (ILO) has tried to raise the level of **labor rights** by endorsing five widely accepted core labor standards and provisions, which are elaborated in the ILO’s 1998 Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work such as the following: **First**, freedom of association and workers should be able to join together and form organizations of their own choosing; **second**, the right of workers’ organizations, including trade unions, to bargain collectively with employers and governments; **third**, the elimination of all forms of coerced or compulsory labor; **fourth**, the effective abolition of child labor and the protection of child rights; and **fifth**, the elimination of discrimination in employment based on race, sex, religion, political opinion, or national or social origin. But these labor standards and provisions have not been achieved not only because the ILO has no enforcement powers but most especially because almost all the members of the ILO’s governing body do not really represent the toiling masses of workers. Consider the following: Of the 56 members of the ILO’s governing body, 28 are representatives of governments from the industrialized countries 10 of whom hold permanent seats as nation-states of chief industrial importance, 14 representatives of capitalists employers, and 14 representatives of workers who often are anti-socialist and elitist-labor leaders again from the developed countries. Meaning, the bourgeois democracy of imperialism, similar to the bourgeois democracy of the US imperialist government described above, has successfully been inculcated into the ILO making it a toothless international organization that does not really fight for the rights of the toiling masses to be liberated from the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism, which is internationally promoted by the UN international organizations—the WB, the IMF and the WTO—that do not have the aim of curbing the global problems of poverty, gap between rich and poor peoples, and inequalities between the developed and under-developed countries.

As regards *health issues* at the international level, life-threatening diseases represent another facet of the monopoly capitalist globalization. Progress in the capitalist transportation that helped usher in the monopoly capitalist globalization also made it possible for infectious diseases to spread rapidly around the globe. In 2003, for instance, the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), a deadly form of pneumonia that originated

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in China, quickly posed a worldwide health threat as airline passengers infected with the virus spread the illness. Another infectious disease is the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). Of the 20 million people who have died of AIDS most lived in poorer countries. In some underdeveloped countries, the infection rate is above 30 or even 40 percent of the adult population. Today the worst affected countries are in Africa; and the disease is also spreading rapidly in countries such as India, China, and Indonesia. Another killer disease, found mostly in poorer countries, is tuberculosis (TB). Although it affects a small percentage of the population in rich countries, more than one-third of the world's population was infected with tuberculosis in 2000. There are 8 million new cases of TB and 2 million deaths a year from this disease, and these numbers are climbing. More than 1.5 million people die each year from malaria, another disease that mostly affects underdeveloped countries. Diseases spread by unclean drinking water and contaminated food kill nearly 2 million people a year, mostly small children, and among the 1.5 billion people in the world who do not have access to potable water.

The newest very dangerous killer-disease now is the corona virus disease (COVID-19), which is by far the biggest global trigger event of our generation. It is a combination of natural disaster and economic collapse happening at the same time at the national and international levels. It is the biggest global public health crisis. It first appeared in Wuhan City, China and was reported to the World Health Organization (WTO) on December 31, 2019. Due to the progress of transportation and the monopoly capitalist multinational and transnational corporations established around the global, COVID-19 rapidly spread.

COVID-19 has seriously hit and continues to strike the global centers of monopoly capitalism. Most of the infected and deaths are from the US where 366,906 were infected and 10,868 died as of the April 6, 2020 data. The center of the outbreak was New York City where 4,758 died and 131,239 infected. On March 13, 2020, Trump declared a national emergency and appropriated \$50 billion to address the effects of the deadly COVID-19 pandemic on public health and the socioeconomic arena. In Europe, Italy, Spain, France, Germany and the United Kingdom were struck most with a total of 626,140 infected; and 33,498 deaths as of April 6, 2020: 16,523 in Italy, 13,341 in Spain, 1,824 in the UK and 1,810 in

Germany. In China, 81,708 infected and 3,331 died. Those infected in Iran, Turkey and Canada were also high. By April 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic, that started in Brazil, also worsened. By Sunday of June 28, 2020, the death toll from the pandemic exceeded half a million people. While the overall rate of death has flattened in recent weeks, health experts have expressed concern about record numbers of new cases in countries like the United States, India and Brazil, as well as new outbreaks in parts of Asia. More than 4,700 people worldwide are dying every 24 hours due to the COVID-19 pandemic (June 28, 2020 data).

The COVID-19 pandemic is not only a global health crisis but also a primary crisis in the global economy and labor. Based on the study of the ILO, about 25 million workers in the world would have no work for the whole year of 2020 due to the pandemic. The ILO has compared this current global health crisis to the international financial crisis in 2008-2009 which resulted in 22 million jobless workers. It is even estimated that the number of underemployed would escalate. Workers would have no earnings estimated to a total of about \$3.4 trillion at the end of 2020 due to joblessness. This means consumption in services and commodities would slacken, weakening businesses and the whole global economy.

But though the deadly COVID-19 pandemic infects both the rich and poor, it would be the toiling masses of poor people in both the developed and underdeveloped countries who would suffer more miserably due to no earnings to sustain their families' basic needs, expensive hospitalization and high prices of medicines which destitute people cannot afford. This is so because in non-socialist states and societies that are dominated by the system of monopoly capitalism, medicines and hospitals have become businesses for the superprofits of the monopoly capitalists. Take for instance the research, manufacture, distribution and pricing of medicines and vaccines, done by the **15 competing big pharmaceutical industries** that belong to the Big Pharma and are owned and controlled by monopoly capitalists from six countries, namely: **5 from the United States**—Johnson & Johnson, Pfizer, Merck & Co., AbbVie, and Moderna; **3 from the United Kingdom**—GlaxoSmithKline, Oxford, and AstraZeneca Plc; **2 from Germany**—Bayer, and BioNTech; **1 from France**—Sanofi; **2 from Switzerland**—Roche, and Novartis; and **2 from China**—Sinopharm, and Sinovac. In 2019, a total of \$512 billion was the combined net income

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of these monopoly capitalist companies. These 15 Big Pharma are now in the race of developing vaccines for COVID-19, not due to humanitarian purpose but due to their individual objectives to control the market and get superprofits. For example, an estimate of \$2 billion has been the profit of Pfizer (US) during the first three months of the COVID-19 pandemic; this is added to the \$16-billion profit the company had in 2019. Johnson & Johnson (US), on the other hand, would be expecting to get an annual worth of \$5-billion profit. Thus, the pandemic would certainly be utilized by the monopoly capitalist owners of the Big Pharma to become richer and richer while the billions of toiling masses would continue to suffer in misery amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

The best ways and remedies to address life-threatening diseases like inexpensive generic medicines, etc., often conflict with the WTO’s stand on intellectual property rights, in particular the patent laws that protect high-priced medicines made by pharmaceutical companies that are privately owned and controlled by the monopoly capitalists. This issue has been a major struggle regarding AIDS treatment over whether patent laws would continue to require that people pay high prices for life-saving drugs or whether lower-cost generic medicines can be provided, which is the main debate over the WTO’s Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs), approved and signed in 1994, primarily led by the United States and Canada. Based on this agreement, pharmaceutical companies of the monopoly capitalists, that do the researches and development, insist that TRIPs protect their investments and argue that without such property rights protection (i.e., patent, trademark and trade secrets laws) less will be spent to develop new life-saving drugs. Of course, this is an absolute lie because the monopoly capitalists who privately own the pharmaceutical companies have already gotten huge superprofits from the surplus value of the labor power of workers in the production and up to the marketing of pharmaceutical products; and such superprofits would be more than enough to be spent for more researches to produce new inexpensive medicines that could be affordable to the toiling masses of peoples, whose poverty and the inequalities in the societies they live in are, in fact, the products of the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism. According to the WHO, of the 20 million people who have died of AIDS, most have come from poor families from the

underdeveloped and poor countries. Meaning, many lives of poor people infected with AIDS could have been saved if inexpensive medicines were made available to them.

Let us take another matter, the *environmental issue*, and scrutinize what have the UN international organizations done to address such particular problem. As early as the 1960s up to the 1970s, numerous grassroots environmental organizations in the United States—such as the Environmental Defense Fund (now known as Environmental Defense), Friends of the Earth, the Natural Resources Defense Council, the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, and others—were established to work for political change to protect the environment. Due to the fact that the US government continued to be heedless to call of the environmentalists, approximately 20 million Americans gathered at various sites of the country on April 22, 1970, the first Earth Day, to protest corporate and governmental abuse of the environment that has caused the global warming or climate change. After more than two decades of yearly mass mobilizations that continued to denounce the continuing destruction of the environment, only then that the United Nations was forced to set up in 1988 the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), an international group made up of the world’s leading climate scientists and experts, to investigate the global warming and assess the scientific, technical and socioeconomic information relating to human-induced climate change. Based on their assessment of the global warming, these climate scientists and experts have predicted that by year 2100 the temperature of the planet could rise by as much as 1.4 to 5.8 Celsius degrees (2.5 to 10.4 Fahrenheit degrees). They have proven that global warming is because of the burning of fossil fuels, which occurs mainly in the developed/industrialized countries due to the multinational firms of the monopoly capitalists, and also because of the destruction of rain forests, which occurs mainly in the underdeveloped world due to plunder by the multinational and transnational corporations of the monopoly capitalists. (More discussions on the global environmental problem shall be done in the CNL’s 7th topic, “Only When Monopoly Capitalism, the Ideology of Imperialism, Would Be Replaced By Scientific Socialism Could the Global Environment Fully Recover and Be Safeguarded.”)

Industrial air pollution from the multinational and transnational corporations of the monopoly capitalists and automobile transportation pollution from the commercial businesses and military enterprises of the imperialist countries have been identified as the main causes of global warming. Contaminants pouring from industrial smokestacks, such as carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide, are greenhouse gases. Once in the atmosphere, these gases act to retain the long-wave radiation (heat) emitted by earth in a process known as the greenhouse effect. Other environmental problems stemming from smokestack emissions include respiratory diseases, poisoned lakes and streams, and damaged forests and crops. On the other hand, automobile exhaust contains unburned hydrocarbons, particulates, carbon dioxide, and nitrous and sulphur oxides that contribute to acid rain, smog, and global warming. Smog, a mixture of smoke (particulates) and fog, irritates the eyes, throat, and lungs and also damages plants. The nitrous and sulphuric oxides combine with water vapor in the air to form acids, which return to the ground as acid rain. Because of its being dangerously acidic, acid rain chemically burns the leaves of plants and poisons lake water, which kills most if not all of the aquatic inhabitants.

Besides the negative effects of carbon dioxide, and nitrous and sulphur oxides to the health of human beings, to the forests, plants, crops and aquatic inhabitants, all of which are the causes of global warming, climate scientists and experts further declare that if global warming continues, deserts will surely to advance particularly across West Africa, which will cause the melting of small glaciers and sheets of Greenland and Antarctica, which will in turn cause the eustatic increase (i.e., a worldwide change of sea level) and the rise of sea level that will certainly flood the coastal areas and submerge a number of Pacific Ocean island states. They predict that *one-third of the world's most populous countries would be flooded* by even a small rise in sea level. While developed countries such as The Netherlands can cope, underdeveloped countries such as Bangladesh cannot afford to pay for the kind of dike system that currently protects The Netherlands.

Because of such negative effects and dire forecasts mentioned above, 160 nations, in the conference held in Kyōto, Japan in 1997, agreed to the first-ever binding pact to limit the emissions of carbon dioxide and other so-called greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming. Known as the Kyōto Protocol, the pact represented a modest step in limiting and

rolling back harmful greenhouse gas emissions. The Kyōto Protocol contains provisos of climate scientists and environmentalists that uphold sustainable development which should be based on the pattern of living that favors the preservation of habitat, the conservation of non-renewable resources, and the increased use of renewable energy sources so that Earth's ecosystems are not harmed beyond repair. Added to such provisos, the environmentalists approve the principles that: (1) polluters should pay for the right to pollute; (2) careful study before new genetically engineered plants or animals are introduced into ecosystems; and (3) genetically modified plants should not be introduced unless it is clear that no damage will be done.

The monopoly capitalists, primarily headed by the US imperialists, and their minions in the global politics, have objected international treaties that limit the emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases that cause to global warming. Why? Because such would limit their super-profits and their domination of the global economy. Mainly in the United States, the pro-monopoly capitalist politicians argue that international treaties such as the Kyōto Protocol would slow growth unnecessarily, lower living standards, and result in greater costs for businesses and consumers. This kind of argument is just to conceal their defense in favor of the super-profits that the monopoly capitalists get, as well as the global poverty and inequalities that have been caused by their exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism or imperialism. More particularly, this kind of defense was what happened in the US Congress in the 1990s wherein the conservatives, i.e. those for the monopoly capitalists, won in legislating that much public money spent in the past years on the environment must be stopped and the federal government should play a much reduced role in environmental regulation.

Among the past US presidents, it was during the presidency of Democrat Bill Clinton (1993-2001) that the federal government took a more active role in protecting the environment. During Clinton's administration, the US participated in the development of international agreements targeting global warming, logging and mining were prohibited in areas that had no roads, and the US and Canada signed an agreement to clean up toxic substances in the Great Lakes (a group of five large freshwater lakes in central North America, interconnected by natural and artificial

channels). But Clinton’s stance for the protection of the environment was never upheld by the US imperialist representatives in international conferences on the environment. For instance in 1992, the UN Conference on Environment and Development was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Popularly known as the Earth Summit, the conference produced two major treaties. The first was an agreement between nations to voluntarily reduce emission of gases leading to global warming, and the second was a pact on biodiversity requiring countries to develop plans to protect endangered species and habitats. At the insistence of the United States (of course, representing US imperialism), the final version of the global warming treaty was dramatically scaled back. The US was also one of the very few countries that refused to sign the biodiversity treaty. The US imperialist representatives objected to a part of the treaty that specified that money to come from the use of natural resources from protected ecosystems, such as rain forests, should be shared equally between the source country and the corporation or institution removing the materials.

During the conference held in Kyōto, Japan in 1997 and attended by representatives from 160 nations, the delegates assessed the 1992 agreement on global warming that limited each industrialized nation to emissions in the year 2000, which were equal to or below 1990 emission. The conclusion of the assessment stated that since the limits were voluntary and with no enforcement provisions included in the 1992 agreement, the goals of the agreement were never met. Thus, the representatives in said Kyōto conference signed the 1997 Kyōto Protocol. This agreement called for industrialized nations to reduce emissions to an average of about 5 percent below 1990 emission levels and to reach this goal between the years 2008 and 2012. But for the accord to become international law, it had to be ratified by at least 55 countries. The imperialist representatives from the United States refused to ratify the accord, and 16 countries (Japan and 15 countries that make up the European Union) ratified it. And so, the 1997 Kyōto Protocol has not become an international law. Climate scientists, however, declare that even if the 1997 Kyōto Protocol does become international law, its emission requirements are too minimal to be effective. Climate scientists and experts predict that a 60 percent reduction in emissions will be necessary to stabilize the world’s climate.

The refusal of the US imperialists in endorsing the 1997 Kyōto Protocol was continued by US imperialist President George W. Bush when he was elected in 2001. He firmly stood in defense of the conservatives in Congress. Meaning, US imperialist President Bush safeguarded 100 percent the monopoly capitalists whose multinational and transnational corporations that continue to plunder the planet’s environment and have caused global warming. For the interests of the monopoly capitalists, primarily the US imperialists, Bush advocated that the US government should be less involved in environmental protection and that environmental restrictions that stymie business (*sic monopoly capitalist business*) are bad for the economy (i.e., the monopoly capitalist economy). Thus, to ease environmental restrictions placed on the monopoly capitalist industries, Bush relaxed air quality and fuel efficiency standards, and he took steps to open roadless areas to logging and mining. The Bush energy policy promoted the construction of new power plants while encouraging oil exploration, often in environmentally sensitive areas. Bush declined to approve the 1997 Kyōto Protocol. He argued that the emissions reductions called for by the 1997 Kyōto Protocol are unfair because they do not affect nations, especially China and India, that are also major producers of gas emissions. Bush also argued that the emissions reductions would be too costly and would adversely affect the US monopoly capitalist economy. This all means that by not ratifying reduction of emissions, imperialists, primarily led by those from the US, want to destroy and kill the environment including peoples, plants, animals, fishes, and other organisms living on planet earth.

Lastly, let us take another *important matter on cultures and national sovereignty of peoples*. Let us make a general evaluation whether or not peoples’ cultures and national sovereignty, especially in the Third World countries, are respected by, or are being lost and disoriented due to, a kind of cultural hegemony that has been created by monopoly capitalist globalization, principally led by US imperialism. We shall first see this very briefly in the context of the Philippine experience, and also at the global level.

In Philippine history especially during the US colonial regime, the US imperialists launched a series of counter-insurgency campaigns from 1899 to 1913 against the Filipino people through benevolent assimilation and armed pacification in order to fully colonize and make the Philippines totally subservient to US imperialism. The US imperialists formed and

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trained “native” constabulary units, which led to the “hamleting of communities” (i.e., tightly controlled zones serving as concentration camps) and the massacres of civilians in their thousands as what happened in Samar and Mindanao (Bud Dajo massacre), and other unreported massacres and killings by US armed pacification units in other parts of the country like the massacre of a dozen of *Igorots* from the *Mainit* tribe in Bontoc, Mt. Province, Cordillera. Indeed, such US imperialist COIN campaigns continued through the reactionary Philippine armed forces in the war against the *Huks* after World War II. With regards to the US imperialist counter-insurgency against the national minorities during American colonial regime in the 1900s, this led to the creation of national oppression against the national minorities through the non-recognition of the ancestral territories of the national minorities, logging and building of dams and mines that displaced the national minorities, militarization, the misrepresentation of the national minorities’ indigenous sociopolitical system, all forms of discrimination, commercialization as well as bastardization of the cultural practices, and Christian chauvinism by American Protestant and Catholic missionaries.

Through American education and proselytization, strong US colonial mentality has been created wherein many Filipinos admire anything that is American. Especially when the NDR with a socialist perspective was just starting in the 1960s, it was a common belief in the Philippines that America is the true liberator and the bringer of true democracy in the Philippines. Particularly during the Korean and Vietnam wars (wars between US imperialists and Korean and Vietnamese revolutionaries), pupils in public schools and students in Catholic schools were told to pray the Holy Rosary so that America would be able to save Korea and Vietnam from the communists, and so that the communists would not be able to enter the Philippines. Up to now, US imperialism remains to be dominant in Philippine economy and politics. Even during national elections, it is US imperialism that primarily dictates on who should be elected by the Filipino people as president.

At the global level, peoples in the Third World countries fear a loss of their cultural identity and national sovereignty as US media companies have become and continue to be dominant. Such US media companies, that are owned and controlled by the US monopoly capitalists, package

their products so that a bestseller movie, for example, is promoted internationally by selling soundtracks, books, video games, and other products. These cultural products are distributed worldwide, and along with reruns of US television shows, have a tendency to replace local choices. Through the use of computers and satellite communications, the monopoly capitalists have changed the nature of culture and cultural exchanges. And the bourgeois governments and monopoly capitalist corporations, primarily led by the US imperialists, have gained vast amounts of political power at the global level through military might and economic dominance. They have created a global culture that is based on worldwide commercial markets, and local cultures and social structures are shaped by powerful commercial interests.

Examples of this global culture, that is shaped by the powerful US commercial businesses, is the advertisement of mass-produced US foods and beverages such as McDonald’s, Coca-Cola (remember *The Gods Must Be Crazy?*), etc. These are global symbols of the US imperialist culture! A culture of racism! A culture of individual profit at the expense of the majority of the global population! A culture of the rich and the powerful! A culture of war and terrorism that totally neglects worldwide peace! This kind of cultural hegemony at the international level, that has been created by monopoly capitalist globalization, principally led by the US imperialists, suppresses globally the peoples’ cultures and national sovereignty of nations especially in the Third World, and has abetted in the propagation of racism, religious bigotry, discrimination, poverty and inequalities among peoples of the world.

In appraising now the **first and second solutions of the Church** presented above, i.e., the urgency of “rethinking the economy” and globalization and the creation of “a vision of the economy that, on the international level, guarantees an equitable distribution of resources,” CNL proclaims that these two solutions are inter-related and could *only* be effective—in resolving the global social problems of poverty, widening gap between the few rich and the many poor peoples, and the mammoth inequalities between the rich/developed countries and the poor/underdeveloped nations, which are all caused by the exploitative and oppressive system of the monopoly capitalists and their imperialist instrumentalities (especially the WB, the IMF and the WTO) that continue to neglect the

labor and health rights of the toiling masses, destroy the environment, and suppress the cultures and national sovereignty of peoples—if *such* solutions are guided by socialist principles, viewpoint, method and standpoint. However, this would entail a certain kind of spiritual liberation of the Christian Churches and leaders from their partiality of monopoly capitalism, which is promoted globally by imperialist powers, primarily led by US imperialism. This would also further means that Christian leaders from the ordained, the religious and the laity ought to be friendly and open-minded spiritually to put into praxis the basic principle that Christianity can, indeed, be complementary, though not necessarily compatible in terms of beliefs and philosophies, with Marxism/scientific socialism/communism.

On the third solution of the Church. In Chapter Nine, which concerns “The International Community,” the *Compendium* also recognizes the need for the “revision of international organizations” for “the attainment of the common good” and “equality... in the process of full development.”²⁶⁰ This third solution, that the Church offers, has to be evaluated if this would, indeed, help to curb the global social problems that make the billions of toiling masses suffer miserably and endlessly. Referring to Pope Paul VI’s Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* (1967), Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1988), his other Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (1991), and his *Message for the 2004 World Day of Peace* (2004), the *Compendium* declares:

Because of the globalization of problems, it has become more urgent than ever to stimulate international political action that pursues the goals of peace and development through the adoption of coordinated measures. The Magisterium recognizes that the interdependence among men and nations takes on a moral dimension and is the determining factor for relations in the modern world in the economic, cultural, political and religious sense. In this context it is hoped that there will be a revision of international organizations, a process that “presupposes the overcoming of political rivalries and the renouncing of all desire to manipulate these organizations,

²⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 223.

which exist solely for the common good,” for the purpose of achieving “a greater degree of international ordering.”²⁶¹

Furthermore, the *Compendium* asserts:

In particular, intergovernmental structures must effectively perform their functions of control and guidance in the economic field because the attainment of the common good has become a goal that is beyond the reach of individual States, even if they are dominant in terms of power, wealth, and political strength. International agencies must moreover guarantee the attainment of that equality, which is the basis of the right of all to participate in the process of full development, duly respecting legitimate differences.²⁶²

The current international situation is, on the one hand, characterized by the prevalence of the globalized social problems of poverty and inequalities, the widening gap between rich and poor peoples, and the broadening disparity between the developed nations in the First World and the underdeveloped countries in the Third World, and also in eastern Europe. As it has been repeatedly expounded on in the CNL’s previous and current topics, these globalized problems are due primarily to the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism. On the other hand, there is the monopoly capitalists’ world hegemony in the economy, politics and culture, safeguarded globally by the imperialist powers, headed by the US imperialists, through their imperialist military establishments. To maintain world hegemony under their sole control, the imperialist powers launch preemptive wars of aggression and imperialist interventions to take possession of the wealth of various nations (e.g., oil in the 21 Middle East/Muslim countries which are the targets of the US imperialist aggression and intervention up to now), terrorize and implement massive counter-insurgency campaigns against various nations that oppose imperialist interventions, follow the path of socialism, and struggle (like the Philippines, India, and other countries) for national liberation and democracy with the perspective of building socialist societies.

²⁶¹ Ibid., pp. 222-223.

²⁶² Ibid., p. 223.

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To protect and strengthen their control of world hegemony in the global economy and politics, the imperialist powers, chiefly led by the US imperialists, manipulate the United Nations, directly command the UN Security Council, oversee completely the WB, the IMF and the WTO, and dominate other UN international organizations such as the ILO, and even the WHO. As we have already stated many times in the previous CNLs topics, these UN international organizations do not have the aim of curbing the global social problems of poverty, gap between rich and poor peoples, and inequalities between the developed and underdeveloped countries because they are the economic tools of the imperialist powers in implementing the monopoly capitalist policies of liberalization, deregulation and privatization and in maintaining the world hegemony of imperialism.

With the current international situation and the imperialist control of the UN and its international organizations as briefly described above, the “revision of international organizations” for “the attainment of the common good” and “equality... in the process of full development,” as the Church’s third solution to curb the current global social problems that have been caused by the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism, can and will never be achieved because such will be blocked by the imperialist powers from the G8 countries, primarily led by US imperialism. And even if there will be some sort of revision that shall be allowed by the imperialist powers, such revision will certainly not be able to resolve the current global social problems of poverty, the widening gap between the few rich and the many poor peoples, and the colossal inequalities between and within the developed and underdeveloped countries.

Meaning, such current global social problems can only be resolved when the toiling masses and the progressive intelligentsia in the industrialized and developed countries as well as the exploited and oppressed workers, peasants, national minorities and the other democratic classes in the Third World countries of Asia, Latin America, Africa, including those nations in Eastern Europe and the Middle East, would actively join the anti-imperialist mass movement and struggle for national liberation, social justice and peace, which the ILPS is striving to advance worldwide. As already pointed out in the CNLs 4th topic, “On the Contradiction Between Capital and Labor, and How Could It Be Resolved,” such global social

problems can only be ended when the toiling masses of workers and peasants as well as the intelligentsia from the other democratic classes build in their own country revolutionary organizations as well as strong anti-imperialist alliances, launch with other countries a formidable anti-imperialist movement at the national and international levels, and start establishing people’s revolutionary organizations which would construct in each country the people’s economy, political power and cultural institutions along the socialist principles, viewpoint, method and standpoint. And Christians can certainly contribute a lot in the advance of the anti-imperialist movement for “the attainment of the common good” and “equality... in the process of full development”²⁶³ for “the billions of people,”²⁶⁴ especially the poor toiling masses of workers and peasants, when they (Christians) would be able to acknowledge the basic principle that Christianity can really be complementary, though not necessarily compatible, with Marxism/scientific socialism.

On the fourth solution of the Church. In Chapter Seven concerning “Economic Life,” the *Compendium* brings out the fact that “in the era of globalization,” the defense of human rights “has not been entirely achieved.”²⁶⁵ Quoting Pope John Paul II’s *Message for the 2003 World Day of Peace* (2003), the *Compendium* declares:

An adequate solidarity in the era of globalization requires that human rights be defended. In this respect, the Magisterium points out that not only the “vision of an effective international public authority at the service of human rights, freedom and peace has not yet been entirely achieved, but there is still in fact much hesitation in the international community about the obligation to respect and implement human rights. This duty touches all fundamental rights, excluding that arbitrary picking and choosing which can lead to rationalizing forms of discrimination and injustice. Likewise, we are witnessing the emergence of an alarming gap between a series of new ‘rights’ being promoted in advanced societies—the result

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 283.

²⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 184.

of new prosperity and new technologies—and other more basic human still not being met, especially in situations of underdevelopment. I am thinking here for example about the right to food and drinkable water, to housing and security, to self-determination and independence—which are still far from being guaranteed and realized.”²⁶⁶

The above quotation contains the general assessment of Pope John Paul II, which he did during the World Day of Peace in 2003, on the situation of the international community with regards to the obligation for the respect and defense of human rights which is embodied in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, adopted by the United Nations (UN) on December 10, 1948 based on the principles expressed in the UN Charter. The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* is an international treaty which is binding to all the members of the UN. It has 30 articles which are concerned with civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR), created in 1993 and based in Geneva, Switzerland, is responsible for directing the UN’s international human rights movement and efforts. But an international assessment, done in 1998 of the last 50 years since 1948, states that millions of people around the world still suffer from human rights violations. And what global system has violated and continues to infringe the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of peoples in both the developed and underdeveloped countries? There is no other but the system of the monopoly capitalists or imperialists, chiefly headed by the US imperialists.

The 1998 international assessment of the human rights work may seem to be the basis of Pope John II’s general assessment in 2003 when he declared that “not only the vision of an effective international public authority at the service of human rights, freedom and peace has not yet been entirely achieved, but there is still in fact much hesitation in the international community about the obligation to respect and implement human rights,” and that all “forms of discrimination and injustice” still exist worldwide. Even up to the present day, we can claim that billions of people around the globe continue to suffer daily from various forms of

²⁶⁶ Ibid., pp. 184-185.

HRVs by the imperialists, primarily led by those from the US, and by their puppet states and fascist minions, especially in the Third World countries, like the Philippines which is presently ruled by the tyrant USDR and its pro-CIA/US imperialist AFP-PNP.

In particular, Pope John Paul II criticizes the “series of new ‘rights’ being promoted in advanced societies” that disregard “the right to food and drinkable water, to housing and security, to self-determination and independence—which are still far from being guaranteed and realized” in the underdeveloped countries of the world. One concrete example of the “series of new rights being promoted in advanced societies” is the animal rights movement in the US. There are three nationwide organizations in the United States concerned with the protection of animals, namely, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), the Humane Society of the United States, and People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA). These organizations love animals more than people; and maybe they can even invent the belief that “animals are created in the image of God.” They strongly advocate “the moral right of animals to be treated with respect and without exploitation.” They believe animals have rights just as human beings do. To the extreme, they advocate “total animal liberation.” The racist American imperialists may even claim that their pets have souls, which should go with them to heaven when they die. Nevertheless and in the final analysis, these US animal rights organizations are a cover-up of the countless human rights violations of US imperialism committed against the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the American toiling masses and the peoples of the world, especially in the underdeveloped Third World countries of Asia, African and Latin America.

Essential part of the anti-imperialist movement that revolutionaries and progressives must sustain is the international HR movement directed against imperialism. As it has already been explained, the international HR movement has twofold aspects: proclamation or promotion, and denunciation or condemnation. Quoting Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus (The Hundredth Year, 1991)* and the 1975 article “*The Church and Human Rights*” of the Pontifical Commission of Justice and Peace, the *Compendium* states:

The Church, aware that her essentially religious mission, includes the defense and promotion of human rights... This pastoral commitment of the Church develops in a twofold direction: in the proclamation of human rights and in the denunciation of the violations of these rights.²⁶⁷

The aforementioned point would mean that Catholic Bishops’ Conferences and the National Councils of the Protestant Churches in both the developed and underdeveloped countries have to plan the development of the twofold aspects of the human rights movement. The promotion and proclamation of human rights is by effectively defending the economic, political, civil, cultural and social rights of peoples, especially the billions of toiling masses of workers, peasants and national minorities in the world. And the condemnation and denunciation aspect is by means of castigating at the national and international levels the imperialist HRVs against the economic, political, civil, cultural and social rights of the billions of peoples victimized by the imperialists, especially the US imperialists. For instance, there should be condemnation at the national and international levels of the HRVs done by the imperialists and their fascist puppet rulers in countries like the Philippines, especially their HRVs of extra-judicial killings or summary executions, arbitrary arrest and detention, torture, massacres. And HR violators must be tried and punished by the International Criminal Court (ICC). What a great victory of the peoples of the world if the US imperialist Presidents and military commanders would be tried and punished for the US aggression and genocide in Vietnam in the 1960s and 1970s, the US military interventions in Nicaragua and El Salvador in the 1980s, and the US invasion in Iraq in 2002. It would also be a glorious victory of the international HR movement if tyrant Duterte and his AFP-PNP commanders would be tried and punished by the ICC in bombing Marawi City and murdering 40,000 people in Duterte’s war on drugs.

In attaining the active participation of Christians in the human rights movement and the struggle against imperialism, Christian activists must give their best efforts in helping their co-Christians (both among the ordained, the religious and the laity) to liberate themselves from conserva-

²⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 80.

tism which is the result of the imperialist propaganda and use of religion against communism and in favor of monopoly capitalism. This is the very reason why even today many Christians consider the struggle and defense of human rights as the work of communists and Christians should not participate in such work. That is why their consciousness must be raised in such a manner that they have to regard the struggle and defense of human rights and task of liberating the PDO from exploitation and oppression as responsibilities not only of the communists but also of Christians. This entails the duty of Christians to liberate their consciousness from being partial to monopoly capitalism to acknowledging and putting into praxis the basic principle that Christianity ought to be complementary, though not necessarily compatible, with Marxism/scientific socialism/communism. Christians and Marxists can co-exist together in the human rights and anti-imperialist movement for the economic, political, civil, cultural and social rights of peoples, especially the billions of toiling masses of workers, peasants and national minorities in the world.

Can the Church’s call to globalize “a humanism of work”²⁶⁸ be developed and achieved within the framework of monopoly capitalism? CNL answers NO but asserts the possibility of building a genuine “humanism of work” in each country that aspires to be free from imperialism, that shall be guided by socialist principles, and shall serve as a foundation in the formation of “a generation of new men [and women], the molders of a new humanity”²⁶⁹ at the global level.

This is now the last sub-topic of this still ongoing CNL’s 5th topic, “On Monopoly Capitalist Globalization; *Quo Vadis* Humankind?” But before proceeding to expound on this last sub-topic, let us first review the first, second, third and fourth sub-topics of this current CNL’s 5th topic, and relate these four sub-topics to the previous CNL’s 2nd, 3rd, and 4th topics.

The first and second sub-topics have expounded on the main characteristics of monopoly capitalist globalization; and the third sub-topic has elucidated the global social problems of poverty, the widening gap between the few rich and the many poor people, and the inequalities between and

²⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 164.

²⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 10.

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within the developed and underdeveloped countries—which have all been caused by monopoly capitalism, primarily led by the US imperialists. These first, second and third sub-topics of the current CNL’s 5th topic have summarized the points on the exploitative and oppressive nature and system of monopoly capitalism at the global level, that have been clarified in the CNL’s 2nd, 3rd and 4th topics. In particular, the CNL’s 2nd topic, “On Poverty and Inequality, and What Can Be Done,” has elaborated that monopoly capitalism or imperialism is the root cause of the global poverty and inequalities. It has also been expounded on in detail in CNL’s 3rd topic, “On the Common Good, the Universal Destination of Goods, and Private Property,” that the exploitative and oppressive nature and system of monopoly capitalism or imperialism is totally opposed to the Church’s principles of the common good and the universal destination of goods, is deeply based on the principle of the private property ownership of the means of production, and fully makes use of this principle of private property ownership together with the extraction of the surplus value of the labor power of the working class and the accumulation of superprofits and capital for the continuation of the endless exploitation and oppression by the monopoly capitalists of the toiling masses who wallow in poverty and inequalities in both the developed and underdeveloped countries. And finally, in the CNL’s 4th topic, “On the Contradiction Between Capital and Labor, and How Could It Be Resolved,” it has been clearly explained that this same exploitative and oppressive nature and system of monopoly capitalism or imperialism is the underlying source and cause of the basic contradiction between labor and capital.

And the fourth sub-topic of the ongoing CNL’s 5th topic, “On Monopoly Capitalist Globalization; *Quo Vadis* Humankind?” which has just been presented above, has answered the questions if the Church’s four solutions could curb the global social problems (i.e., global poverty, widening gap between the few rich and the many poor peoples, and the inequalities between and within the developed and underdeveloped countries) that have all been caused by monopoly capitalism or imperialism. This fourth sub-topic of the ongoing CNL’s 5th topic has also presented the CNL’s stand that such global social problems cannot and will never be addressed by the UN and its international organizations because these are imperialist instruments of monopoly capitalism which has caused the

various global social ills of humankind; and that the four Church’s solutions could curb the global social problems if Christians together with the toiling masses in each country would be guided by the basic principle that Christianity ought to be complementary, though not necessarily compatible, with Marxism/scientific socialism/communism.

Now in this **fifth and last sub-topic** of the current CNL’s 5th topic, “On Monopoly Capitalist Globalization; *Quo Vadis* Humankind?” we shall try to understand first the Church’s call to globalize “a humanism of work” for the formation of “a generation of new men [and women], the molders of a new humanity” at the global level. Afterwards, we shall try to answer the question, can this Church’s call be developed and achieved within the framework of monopoly capitalism? But as it has already been stated in the title of this fifth and last sub-topic of the ongoing CNL’s 5th topic, the answer of CNL is that the Church’s call to globalize “a humanism of work” cannot be advanced and attained within the framework of monopoly capitalism; and what CNL asserts is the great possibility of building a genuine “humanism of work” in each country that aspires to be liberated from imperialism and guided by socialist principles. This response of the CNL to said question shall be developed in the following paragraph.

Already in the Introduction, the *Compendium* mentions “an integral and shared humanism.” Inspired by Pope John Paul II’s Apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte* (2001), the *Compendium* states:

Christian love leads to denunciation, proposals and a commitment to cultural and social projects; it prompts positive activity that inspires all who sincerely have the good of man at heart to make their contribution. Humanity is coming to understand ever more clearly that it is linked by one sole destiny that requires joint acceptance of responsibility, a responsibility inspired by an integral and shared humanism. It sees that this mutual destiny is often conditioned and even imposed by technological and economic factors, and it senses the need for a greater moral awareness that will guide its common journey. Marveling at the many innovations of technology, the men and women of our day strongly desire that progress be

directed towards the true good of the humanity, both of today and tomorrow.²⁷⁰

And reflecting on Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1988), the *Compendium* further says:

The Christian knows that in the social doctrine of the Church can be found the principles for reflection, the criteria for judgment and the directives for action which are the starting point for the promotion of an integral and solidary humanism. Making this doctrine known constitutes, therefore, a genuine pastoral priority, so that men and women will be enlightened by it and will be thus enabled to interpret today’s reality and seek appropriate paths of action: “The teaching and spreading of her social doctrine are part of the Church’s evangelization mission.”²⁷¹

In Chapter Six that deals with “Human Work” particularly on “The ‘New Things’ of the World of Work,” the *Compendium* presents its expositions on “globalization and a humanism of work on a planetary level.” It states:

There is an ever greater need for a careful consideration of the new situation of work in the present-day context of globalization, in a perspective that values people’s natural tendency to establish relationships. In this regard it must be affirmed that universality is a dimension of human beings, not of things. Technology may be the instrumental cause of globalization, but the universality of the human family is its ultimate cause. For this reason, work too has a universal dimension, insofar as it is based on the relational nature of human beings. Technology, especially electronics, has allowed the relational aspect of work to spread throughout the world, giving to globalization a particularly rapid rhythm. The ultimate foundation of this dynamism is the working person, who is always the subjec-

²⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 4.

²⁷¹ Ibid.

tive—and never objective—element. Therefore, globalized work too originates in the anthropological foundation of the inherent relational dimension of work. The negative aspects of the globalization of work must not damage the possibility opening up for all people: that of giving expression to a humanism of work on a planetary scale, to solidarity in the world of work on this same level, so that working in similar contexts, spread throughout the world and interconnected, people will understand ever better their one, shared vocation.²⁷²

The context of “a humanism of work on a planetary scale” is based on “an integral and solidary humanism capable of creating a new social, economic and political order, founded on the dignity and freedom of every human person, to be brought about in peace, justice and solidarity,”²⁷³ which is stated in the Introduction of the *Compendium*. Quoting the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council’s Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (1966), the *Compendium* adds:

This humanism can become a reality if individual men and women and their communities are able to cultivate moral and social virtues in themselves and spread them in society. “Then, under the necessary help of divine grace, there will arise a generation of new men [and women], the molders of a new humanity.”²⁷⁴

The Church’s call to globalize “a humanism of work” and form “a generation of new men [and women], the molders of a new humanity” is also grounded on the “morality of complete humanism,” that the *Compendium* has expounded on in Chapter Two which concerns “The Church’s Mission and Social Doctrine.” Reflecting on Pope Pius XI’s Encyclical Letter *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931), the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council’s Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (1966), Pope Paul VI’s Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* (1967) and his Apostolic Exhortation *Evan-*

²⁷² Ibid., p. 164.

²⁷³ Ibid., p. 9.

²⁷⁴ Ibid.

gelii Nuntiandi (1976), Pope John Paul II’s *Address to the Third General Conference of Latin American Bishops* (January 28, 1979) and his Encyclical Letter *Redemptor Hominis* (1979), the *Compendium* states:

The intent of the Church’s social doctrine is of the religious and moral order. Religious because the Church’s evangelizing and salvific mission embraces man “in the full truth of his existence, of his personal being and also of his community and social being.” Moral because the Church aims at a “complete form of humanism,” that is to say, at the “liberation from everything that oppresses man” and “development of the whole man and of all men.” The Church’s social doctrine indicates the path to follow for a society reconciled and in harmony through justice and love, a society that anticipates in history, in a preparatory and prefigurative manner, the “new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells” (2 Pet 3:13).²⁷⁵

Also in Chapter Two which concerns “The Church’s Mission and Social Doctrine,” the *Compendium* presents “an integral development of man and of a development in solidarity with all humanity” as the way “to achieve a ‘complete humanism.’” Reflecting again on the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council’s Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (1966) and Pope Paul VI’s Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* (1967), the *Compendium* states:

“Development is the new name for peace,” ... a development... on economic and social life..., an integral development of man and of a development in solidarity with all humanity..., “the transition from less humane conditions to those which are more humane”... This transition is not limited to merely economic or technological dimensions, but implies for each person the acquisition of culture, the respect of the dignity of others... Development that benefits everyone responds to the demands of justice on a global scale that guarantees

²⁷⁵ Ibid., pp. 41-42.

worldwide peace and makes it possible to achieve a “complete humanism” guided by spiritual values.²⁷⁶

Also “globalization and a humanism of work on a planetary level” is very much related to the *Compendium’s* stress in Chapter Six regarding “Human Work” particularly on the need to “restore the human dignity of workers” and respect “the freedom and democracy of peoples.” Citing Pope John Paul II’s *Greeting after the Mass for the Jubilee of Workers* (May 1, 2000), the *Compendium* says:

Economic and social imbalances in the world of work must be addressed by restoring a just hierarchy of values and placing the human dignity of workers before all else. “The new realities that are having such a powerful impact on the productive process, such as the globalization of finance, economics, trade and labor, must never violate the dignity and centrality of the human person, nor the freedom and democracy of peoples.”²⁷⁷

Another essential point of the *Compendium* is about poverty, which is a hindrance to “full humanism.” Referring to Pope Paul VI’s Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* (1967), Pope John Paul II’s *Address to the Third General Conference of Latin American Bishops* (January 28, 1979) and his Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1988), the *Compendium* asserts:

Poverty poses a dramatic problem of justice; in its various forms and with its various effects, it is characterized by an unequal growth that does not recognize the “equal right of all people....” Such poverty makes it impossible to bring about that full humanism which the Church hopes for and pursues so that persons and peoples may “be more” and live in conditions that are more human.²⁷⁸

As it has already been expounded on above, the global poverty has been caused by the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly cap-

²⁷⁶ Ibid., pp. 51-52.

²⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 164.

²⁷⁸ Ibid., pp. 226-227.

italism or imperialism. And if the Catholic Church and other Christian Churches are really serious in its call for the promotion of “full humanism,” the Christian leaders from the ordained, the religious and the laity have to fully dedicate themselves in the anti-imperialist movement at the national and international levels.

The *Compendium* also presents “war” as another immense hindrance to “a true humanism.” Although this will be expounded on more in the CNL’s 6th topic, “On War, Terrorism, Violence, And Worldwide Peace,” the *Compendium* categorically proclaims that “war is ‘the failure of all true humanism’.” Having as references Pope Leo XIII’s *Address to the College of Cardinals* (1899), Pope Benedict XV’s *Appeal to the Leaders of the Warring Nations* (August 1, 1917), Pope John XXIII’s Encyclical Letter *Pacem in Terris* (1963), Pope Paul VI’s *Address to Cardinals* (June 24, 1965) and his *Address to the General Assembly of the United Nations* (October 4, 1965), the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council’s Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (1966), Pope John Paul II’s *Meeting of the Officials of the Roman Vicariate* (January 17, 1991), his *Message for the 1999 World Day of Peace* (1999) and his *Address to the Diplomatic Corps* (January 13, 2003), the *Compendium* declares:

The Magisterium condemns “the savagery of war” and asks that war be considered in a new way. In fact, it is hardly possible to imagine that in an atomic era, war could be used as an “instrument of justice.” War is a “scourge” and is never an appropriate way to resolve problems that arise between nations, “it has never been and it will never be,” because it creates new and still more complicated conflicts. When it erupts, war becomes an “unnecessary massacre,” an “adventure without return” that compromises humanity’s present and future. “Nothing is lost by peace, everything may be lost by war.” The damage caused by an armed conflict is not only material but also moral. In the end, war is “the failure of all true humanism.”²⁷⁹

Surely, the monopoly capitalists and their imperialist military powers, which will certainly be led by the US imperialists, will not heed but

²⁷⁹ Ibid., pp. 249-250.

impede the Church’s call and any movement to globalize “a humanism of work” for the formation of “a generation of new men [and women], the molders of a new humanity.” Why? Because the globalization of “a humanism of work” for the formation of “a generation of new men [and women], the molders of a new humanity” would first of all entail “liberation from everything that oppresses” and exploits especially the billions of the toiling masses; liberation from all kinds of HRVs that infringe the economic, political, cultural and social rights, freedom and democracy of the peoples, which also means liberation from global poverty and inequalities; liberation from wars of aggression and imperialist military interventions. In short, to globalize “a humanism of work” and form “a generation of new men [and women], the molders of a new humanity” would mean liberation from the monopoly capitalists or imperialists whose world hegemony has put under their total control the world economy, politics and culture at the expenses of the exploited and oppressed billions of toiling masses of workers, peasants and national minorities, which also have affected the democratic classes and sectors of the intelligentsia, including the Church people, in the developed countries but most especially in the Third world nations, and even those states in Eastern Europe and the Middle East.

On the other hand and along the revolutionary principle of the united front, the CNL and other NDFP revolutionary organizations of the progressive intelligentsia in the Philippines would be willing to support the Church’s call to globalize “a humanism of work” and form “a generation of new men [and women], the molders of a new humanity” at the global level. But CNL would assert that it would be better to build a genuine “humanism of work” in each country that aspires to be free from imperialism, that shall be guided by socialist principles, and shall serve as the foundation in forming “a generation of new men [and women], the molders of a new humanity” at the global level and at a later period of the international anti-imperialist movement. In the context of the ongoing Philippine revolution, building a genuine “humanism of work” must be done within the context of the NDR program that has a socialist perspective.

Building a genuine “humanism of work” in each country—that aspires to be free from imperialism, that shall be guided by socialist principles, and shall serve as the foundation in forming a generation of new

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men [and women], the molders of a new humanity” at the global level and at a later period of the international anti-imperialist movement—would concretely mean that each country must confront monopoly capitalism or imperialism, especially US imperialism. Of course, there will be variances of the forms of confrontation that could be appropriate and done in the developed countries where the monopoly capitalists are based, and those forms of confrontation that would be suitable and applicable in the underdeveloped countries in the Third World. But these variances shall both be necessary for effectively exposing and opposing the monopoly capitalists.

Very necessary in the building of “a humanism of work” towards the creation of “a complete humanism” is the necessity to launch the anti-imperialist movement. There should be a sustained and broad anti-imperialist mass movement by the toiling masses and the democratic classes of the intelligentsia in the industrialized and developed countries, where the monopoly capitalists and their bourgeoisie partners reside. The anti-imperialist movement can include in their anti-imperialist calls the anti-racism demands and the Church’s calls for justice, equal rights, freedom and democracy against the bourgeois democracy of the imperialists, and the liberation of the working class from economic exploitation and political oppression of the monopoly capitalists and the bourgeoisie. There should be big mobilizations of the working class and the democratic classes of the intelligentsia in order to launch nationwide pickets, strikes, rallies that would storm the centers of the monopoly capitalists and the congress of the bourgeois minions of the imperialists. For the American toiling masses and intelligentsia, it would be a great victory of the anti-imperialist movement to occupy Wall Street and Pentagon!

For the peoples of the Third World countries in Asia, Latin America and Africa, they, too, must launch anti-imperialist movements, especially against US imperialism. The Christian leaders must join the peoples in launching the anti-imperialist movements, banner the Churches’ call for justice, equal rights, freedom, democracy and liberation from economic exploitation and political oppression of the ruling classes and imperialism in their own countries. And for semi-colonial and semi-feudal countries in the Third World, like the Philippines, revolutionaries must realize broad and formidable anti-fascist, anti-feudal and anti-imperialist movement and united front to fully win over the urban petit bourgeoisie and the

national bourgeoisie to the basic alliance of workers and peasants, build and strengthen international anti-imperialist formations like the ILPS to relate the national anti-fascist, anti-feudal and anti-imperialist movement to the world anti-imperialist movement that must strike the global centers of imperialism.

For those countries that are prepared or have already started can launch and continue their struggle for a national liberation movement and armed revolution for freedom, democracy and socialism in order to be liberated from the ruling classes and the imperialist forces. These are very essential to defeat imperialism at the international level in the coming epoch of the world revolutionary process. Whatever victories—no matter how small, that various peoples would achieve in the developed and underdeveloped countries—would serve as a foundation for globalizing “a humanism of work” and generating “an integral and solidary humanism capable of creating a new social, economic and political order, founded on the dignity and freedom of every human person, to be brought about in peace, justice and solidarity.” From such victories that each country would contribute, “there will arise a generation of new men, the molders of a new humanity” at the global level in the coming era of human history.

It might be good for the Holy See to evaluate what it can do for the various nations. The question, for instance, of what specific roles that the “juridical personality of the Holy See” can do in sending Vatican state legates in various countries and in being a permanent observer status in the UN in order to support various states, especially the poor and underdeveloped Third World countries. These roles of the “juridical personality of the Holy See” can be based on those that are expounded on by the Compendium in Chapter Nine that concerns “The International Community” particularly on “The Fundamental Rules of The International Community,” “The Organization of “The International Community” and “International Cooperation for Development.” Citing the *Code of Canon Law*, #361, Pope John XXIII’s Encyclical Letter *Pacem in Terris* (1963), Pope Paul VI’s *Address to the United Nations* (October 4, 1965), the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council’s Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (1966), and Pope John Paul II’s *Address to the Fiftieth General Assembly of the United Nations* (October 5, 1995), the *Compendium* states:

The Church is a companion on the journey towards an authentic international “community,” which has taken a specific direction with the founding of the United Nations Organization in 1945. The United Nations “has made a notable contribution to the promotion of respect for human dignity, the freedom of peoples and the requirements of development, thus preparing the cultural and institutional soil for the building of peace....” However [the Church] has reservations when [intergovernmental organizations] address problems incorrectly. The Magisterium recommends that the activity of international agencies respond to human needs in social life and in areas of particular importance for the peace and ordered coexistence of nations and peoples... Concern for an ordered and peaceful coexistence within the human family prompts the Magisterium to insist on the need to establish some universal public authority acknowledged as such by all and endowed with effective power to safeguard, on the behalf of all, security, regard for justice, and respect for rights.²⁸⁰

The *Compendium* also explains “*the diplomatic service of the Holy See*” which could help various nations in need. Citing Pope Paul IV’s Apostolic Letter *Sollicitudo Omnium Ecclesiarum* (1969), it states:

The diplomatic service of the Holy See, the product of an ancient and proven practice, is an instrument that works not only for the defense of the Church (“*libertas Ecclesiae*”) but also for the defense and promotion of human dignity, as well as for a social order based on the values of justice, truth, freedom and love. “By an innate right inherent within our spiritual mission itself and advanced by development of historical events over the centuries, we also send our legates to the Supreme Authorities of States in which the Catholic Church has taken root or in which she is present in some way. It is of course true that the purposes of the Church and the State are of different orders... But it is also true that both the one and

²⁸⁰ Ibid., pp. 221-222.

the other undertake to serve the good of the same common subject, man...” The good of people and human communities is served by a structured dialogue between the Church and civil authorities, which also finds expression in the stipulation of mutual agreements. This dialogue tends to establish or strengthen relations of mutual understanding and cooperation and also serves to prevent or resolve eventual disputes. Its goal is to contribute to the progress of every people and all humanity in justice and peace.²⁸¹

Basing on the same Church’s documents and encyclical letters mentioned above, the *Compendium* further states:

The coexistence among nations is based on the same values that should guide relations among human beings: truth, justice, active solidarity and freedom. The Church’s teaching, with regard to the constitutive principles of the international community, requires that relations among peoples and political communities be justly regulated according to the principles of reason, equity, law and negotiation, excluding recourse to violence and war, as well as forms of discrimination. Intimidation and deceit... International law becomes the guarantor of the international order, that is of coexistence among political communities that seek individually to promote the common good of their citizens and strive collectively to guarantee that of all peoples... The international community is a juridical community founded on the sovereignty of each member State, without bonds of subordination that deny or limit its independence.²⁸²

The *Compendium* adds:

The Holy See, or Apostolic See, enjoys full international subjectivity as a sovereign authority that performs acts which are juridically its own... The international activity of the Holy

²⁸¹ Ibid., p. 224.

²⁸² Ibid., p. 218.

See is manifested objectively under different aspects: the right to active and passive delegation; the exercise of “*ius contrahendi*” in stipulating treaties; participation in intergovernmental organizations, such as those under the auspices of the United Nations; and mediation initiatives in situations of conflict.²⁸³

However, as an essential part of ending this current CNL’s 5th topic, “On Monopoly Capitalist Globalization; *Quo Vadis* Humankind,” CNL would want to question the section of the *Compendium* on “the laity and characteristics of actions proper to atheistic humanism.” Citing as its source of inspiration Pope John Paul II’s Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christi Fideles Laici* (1989), the *Compendium* asserts:

The witness of the lay faithful is born from the gift of grace, recognized, nurtured and brought to maturity. This motivation makes their commitment in the world significant and is opposed to the characteristics of action that are proper to atheistic humanism, which lack an ultimate basis and are circumscribed within purely temporal limits. The eschatological perspective is the key that allows a correct understanding of human realities. From the standpoint of definitive goods, the lay faithful are able to engage in earthly activity according to the criteria of authenticity.²⁸⁴

The above quotation is very dangerous as it could easily be misinterpreted to mean Christians should oppose Marxism or scientific socialism or communism because it is an “atheistic humanism,” and can wrongly imply that monopoly capitalism or imperialism should be supported by Christians because it is a “theistic humanism” but when, in fact, imperialism is very atheistic and anti-humanist to its very core. This kind of an *a priori* belief would again make the whole of Christianity and even the Christian Churches totally serve as cloaks of imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism, which is currently and primarily headed by the US imperialists. This *a priori* belief, that has been propagated by the Roman

²⁸³ Ibid.

²⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 273.

Catholic popes since the 1800, has been and is being continued to be maximized by imperialism, especially by US imperialism, which has made use of and continues to employ religion, theism and the Roman Catholic Church to conceal its very nature of being exploitative and oppressive global system that rules the whole world economy, politics and culture. It is really very unnecessary for the *Compendium* to bring out this issue on “atheistic humanism” because of the great possibility that it could easily be understood to mean that Christians should be anti-Marxist/anti-socialist/anti-communist, and this would certainly strengthen the long-standing love and partiality of Christians for the exploitative and oppressive system of imperialism. And all possible misinterpretations regarding “atheistic humanism” would surely weaken, defuse, neutralize and appease the Church’s call to the people of the world for the globalization of “a humanism of work” and the future formation of “an integral and solidary humanism capable of creating a new social, economic and political order... to be brought about in peace, justice and solidarity” wherein “a generation of new men, the molders of a new humanity” would commence.

CNL reiterates once more that the Church’s call to globalize “a humanism of work” and form “a generation of new men [and women], the molders of a new humanity” at the global level will never be promoted by imperialism due to its nature and system of exploiting and oppressing rapaciously and ceaselessly the toiling masses and poor peoples of the world. CNL would restate its strong support to the Church’s call to globalize “a humanism of work” and mold “a new humanity” but this ought to be done within the context of the CNL’s assertion of the complementarity of Christianity, though not necessarily compatible in terms of beliefs, with Marxism or scientific socialism or communism. This basic principle—which has been clearly elucidated in the CNL’s Foreword, in the CNL’s 3rd topic, “On the Common Good, the Universal Destination of Goods, and Private Property,” and in the CNL’s 4th topic, “On the Contradiction Between Capital and Labor, and How Could It Be Resolved”—can also be applied in the promotion and building of “a humanism” that “can become a reality if individual men and women and their communities are able to cultivate moral and social virtues in themselves and spread them in society.” Meaning, the Church’s call for the globalization of “a humanism of work” and for the formation of “an integral and solidary humanism”

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can be complementary, though not compatible in terms of believing or not believing in the supernatural, with the socialist objective of liberating the toiling masses of workers and peasants of the world from the exploitation and oppression of monopoly capitalism. Nonetheless, this can ONLY be done IF Christians in the process of their cultural and spiritual maturity would be able to overcome their anti-Marxist/anti-socialist/anti-communist *a priori* belief and verdict, and concretely relegate their strong partiality for monopoly capitalism/imperialism. In this way, Christians and Marxists can live, discourse and work together; they can enjoy in common the freedom of thought and belief, and can coexist without giving up their distinctive philosophies and beliefs as they are united for the people’s common good, especially that of the billions of workers and peasants, leading to “a generation of new men [and women], the molders of a new humanity” in the world.

Finally, though this would still be expounded on further in the 8th last topic, CNL’s “Concluding Remarks: God’s Kingdom as the Reign of Truth, Justice, Peace, Love, Equality and Liberation,” CNL would want to reflect at this point that the Beast of the Apocalypse mentioned in the Book of Revelation is the present day monopoly capitalism or imperialism, a satanic global power that is sucking the sweat and blood of the laborers and is being served by the “false prophets” (Rev. 19:20) of today who induce the toiling masses to adore monopoly capitalism/imperialism, especially US imperialism. However, as Saint John offers a hope that “in the name of Christ the Victorious Lamb” the satanic power would be defeated and would lead to a new epoch of “the new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells” (2 Pet 3:13), CNL believes staunchly that all evils, wars, terrorism, poverty and inequalities would finally end and humankind would be free from global exploitation and oppression *only when the mighty power* of the whole world’s toiling masses in each country would overthrow monopoly capitalism and all its imperialist structures as well as its puppet states; build socialist states in every nation for the development of the whole of humanity and the common good of all in the economic, political and cultural fields; constantly launch among socialist countries the anti-modern revisionist struggle at the national and international levels to thwart the return of imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism; and unwaveringly uphold the theory of continuing revolution

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up to the worldwide triumph of scientific socialism or communism over
imperialism and all forms of reaction.

Part 6

On Terrorism, War, Violence, and Worldwide Peace

In the five previous topics, CNL has shown the global poverty of the billions of toiling masses and the inequalities in the developed as well as underdeveloped nations due to the bankruptcy, the chronic crisis and rotteness of the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism or imperialism, primarily led by US imperialism. At the same time, CNL has also expounded on in said previous topics the necessity for Christianity and Marxism/scientific socialism/communism to complement, though the two may not necessarily compatible in terms of beliefs with, each other by struggling against imperialism or monopoly capitalism for the total liberation of the toiling masses in each country of the world and for the establishment of a “new humanity” amidst prosperity, equality, justice, peace and love on the basis of genuine democratic and socialist principles.

However, the struggle of the toiling masses and peoples of the world against imperialism will still take a long epoch as imperialism will still continue to use terrorism, war and violence to maintain its world domination and continue global exploitation, oppression and plunder. And so in this context, CNL in this current 6th topic shall develop appropriate sub-topics that shall be based on passages cited by the *Compendium*, and shall expose the outlooks and standpoints of the imperialists or monopoly capitalists, especially from the US on terrorism, war, violence, worldwide peace and safeguarding the environment. Subsequently, CNL shall explain the effects of these issues on billions of exploited and oppressed classes and peoples of the world who must continue to struggle against imperialism and its terrorism, war and violence in order to attain liberation and worldwide peace, and establish people’s democracy and socialist societies.

Though not specified by the *Compendium*, the papal condemnation of terrorism is addressed to the imperialist powers, their puppet states and dictatorial regimes that promote terrorism and enact anti-terrorism laws in order to continue exploiting and oppressing the billions of toiling masses and peoples of the world; in fact, US imperialism is the No. 1 and biggest terrorist in the world today.

The *Compendium* in Chapter Eleven on “The Promotion of Peace” cites as references the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2297, the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council’s Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (1966), Pope John Paul II’s *Message for the 2002 World Day of Peace* (2002) and his *Message for the 2004 World Day of Peace* (2004), and other passages, clearly affirming that terrorism is condemned by the Church. However, the *Compendium* has never delved into the question of what system—is it imperialism or socialism/communism—that has caused and continues to instigate terrorism in the world today. The *Compendium* says:

Terrorism is one of the most brutal forms of violence traumatizing the international community today; it sows hatred, death, and an urge for revenge and reprisal. From being a subversive strategy typical of certain extremist organizations aimed at destruction of material goods or the killing of people, terrorism has now become a shadowy network of political collusion. It can also make use of sophisticated technology, often has immense financial resources at its disposal and is involved in large-scale planning, striking completely innocent people who become chance victims of terrorist actions. The targets of terrorist attacks are generally places of daily and not military objectives in the context of a declared war. Terrorism acts and strikes under the veil of darkness, with no regard for any of the rules by which men have always sought to set limits to conflicts, for example through international humanitarian law; “in many cases, terrorist methods are regarded as new strategies of war.” Nor must we overlook the causes that can lead to such unacceptable forms of making demands. The fight against terrorism presupposes the moral duty to help

create conditions that will prevent it from arising or developing.²⁸⁵

And quoting Pope Paul II's "*Decalogue of Assisi for Peace*," *Address to Heads of State and Government* (February 24, 2002), the *Compendium* further adds: "No religion may tolerate terrorism and much less preach it. Rather, religions must work together to remove the causes of terrorism and promote friendship among peoples."²⁸⁶

To understand better the above quotation, let us present some historical background on how did terrorism develop. Terrorism had come into being through despotic rulers who maintained a reign of terror against the civilian populace and against people who opposed their repressive rule. Despotic rulers terrorized the civilian population so that nobody would resist their tyrannical regime. Examples of despotic rulers were fascist Mussolini of Italy and Nazi fascist Hitler of Germany. Their terrorism/fascism curtailed the fundamental democratic rights of the people and repressed the civilian population with the brute force of their fascist states. They massacred millions of civilians and committed genocide of the Jews in the Warsaw Ghetto and the Holocaust during World War II.

After World War II, US imperialism continued to hide the exploitative and oppressive nature and system of monopoly capitalism by cleverly reasoning (though not publicly) that capitalism is the best economic system which the "democratic" (*sic bourgeois democratic*) and state-monopoly capitalist government of the United States has chosen and which should be promoted by governments that desire democracy to rule in their societies. For the past centuries, the US imperialists and their imperialist allies have used and continue to explain "democracy" (*sic bourgeois democracy*) to conceal their global exploitation and oppression as monopoly capitalists. They have never elucidated people's democracy wherein the rights and interests of the toiling masses, that compose the majority of the world population, are promoted, and in which the billions of workers and peasants in the world actively participate in governments that should serve the common good of the entire global community.

²⁸⁵ Ibid., pp. 257-258.

²⁸⁶ Ibid., pp. 258-259.

Along the above kind of shrewd reasoning of the imperialists, led by those from America, were their anti-communist propaganda that continue even today against socialist states which the US imperialists in their smear propaganda consider as “undemocratic,” “fascistic like Stalin,” “totalitarian,” “dictatorial,” etc. And together with their anti-communist propaganda that went on during the Cold War (the inter-imperialist propaganda war between US imperialism and Russian social imperialism led by the modern revisionists in the USSR), the US imperialists projected themselves to nations of the world as defenders of freedom, democracy, peace and security and hurled the label of “terrorism” at the national liberation movements engaged in armed revolution. Today, the US imperialists have fully developed and promoted the term “terrorism” as an ideological and political category for stigmatizing all revolutionary opponents of imperialism, justifying their wars of aggression which are, in fact, worst forms of terrorism in order to maintain and promote the global interests of monopoly capitalism.

The main objective of the US imperialists in continuing the promotion of the term “terrorism” is not only to stigmatize all revolutionary opponents of imperialism or monopoly capitalism, but also to conceal themselves as the real terrorists in the world today. In fact, more than 150 countries have been victimized with millions of civilian casualties by US imperialist terrorism by means of US military and CIA interventions launched since World War II up to the present day. To hide their being the real terrorists, the US imperialists have even exaggerated as examples of “terrorism” the cross-border acts of violence like plane hijackings and hostageing of civilians by certain groups in retaliation to the unbridled and far larger acts of terrorism and violence (especially massacres) by the US-Zionist alliance against the Palestinian people inside and outside of Palestine.

Another example of the US imperialists as promoters of global terrorism is the establishment of terrorist groups. In particular, special operatives of the US imperialists (especially the CIA) have systematically built the anti-communist Islamic fundamentalist groups in the course of the Cold War. They have formed terrorist groups that would eventually run out of control and become Al Qaida in several countries, and Abu Sayyaf in the Philippines in particular. And even though these US instigated terrorist groups are no longer under direct US orders, US imperialism, the

CIA and puppet states still manipulate and induce terrorist groups to act in certain ways and take advantage of their outrageous criminal acts as pretext for the undertaking of the largest and worst acts of terrorism.

Thus, Bush has been able to use 9/11 to whip up war hysteria in the US and the whole world, launch wars of aggression in Iraq and Afghanistan and military intervention, and push the adoption of fascist executive and legislative acts in the name of anti-terrorism on a global scale. The 9/11 bombings were instantly used by the imperialist Bush regime to conjure and hype the “global terrorist” menace and persuade the American public and the US Congress to support a worldwide, borderless, permanent and preemptive “war against terrorism.” The invasion and occupation of these countries provided the US with access to and control of strategic resources, vital supply lines, and strategic forward positions for military aggression. The US has long coveted Afghanistan for access to and control of the rich sources of oil and natural gas reserves in the Caspian region and Central Asia and for securing a foothold on the western flank of China. It has even more coveted Iraq for its huge oil reserves next only to Saudi Arabia, which has the largest, but of a quality inferior, to Iraqi oil. Iraq has the added advantage of being centrally located, suitable for building US military bases and controlling the sources of oil in the Middle East.

Soon after launching its war of aggression against Afghanistan in October 2001, the US imperialists in January 2002 declared Southeast Asia as the “second front in the war against terrorism” and drastically increased its forward presence in the Philippines under the guise of “joint military training exercises” purportedly to enhance cooperation and interoperability in operations against the small bandit group of the Abu Sayyaf. But the US imperialist government is really interested in Southeast Asia, including the Philippines, Indonesia, Brunei and Malaysia, because of the region’s rich oil, natural gas and other mineral resources, strategic basing locations, and sea-lanes through which half of US and non-US world merchandise trade pass. It has even arrogantly announced to the world that US special operations forces would undertake combat operations against the Abu Sayyaf group in Sulu, southern Philippines, in flagrant violation of Philippine sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The reactionary Philippine government has military agreements with the US and has been willing and eager accomplices in the “war on

terror.” The military agreements and arrangements between the US and the Philippines include the Military Assistance Agreement (MAA), the Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT), the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) and the Mutual Logistics Support Arrangement (MLSA). The Philippine reactionary government immediately declared full support for the US “war on terror” shortly after 9/11, offering Philippine troops, medical personnel, contract workers, and opening its airspace and the use of Philippine territory and facilities as refueling stations, storage, prepositioning and staging areas for US troops. And in 2018, tyrant Duterte made use of Abu Sayyaf as his justification to attack and totally destroy Marawi City.

Properly used, “terrorism” is a political term to refer to systematic and deliberate violence used solely or mainly against civilians or entire communities of people. Based on this definition, the No. 1 and biggest terrorists in the world today are no others but the US imperialists and their imperialist allies. And the largest and worst kind of terrorism is the imperialist wars of aggression launched by imperialist states. The number of less than 3,000 civilian death casualties in 9/11 is so small in comparison to the 1.5 million Iraqi death casualties in the US-UK war of aggression and sanctions against Iraq and the more than 650,000 Iraqi civilian death casualties in the second war of aggression and occupation of Iraq. State terrorism or the rule of open terror within particular states has become another big form of terrorism, taught by imperialists, especially the US imperialists, the CIA and their puppet states. It usually entails the repression of the entire people through massacres, assassinations, illegal detention and torture and the displacement of people from their homes and land with the use of armed force.

What then is the correct answer to the question on the “causes of terrorism,” which the *Compendium* and the papal encyclicals intend “to remove” in order to “promote friendship among peoples?” The main causes of terrorism are the imperialists and their puppet states that are, in fact, the worst terrorists in the world today. Thus, to remove the causes of terrorism is for the Christian Churches and all exploited and oppressed peoples to struggle against the imperialists, primarily the US imperialists and their puppet states. Through the use of state power, the terrorism of the imperialists and their anti-terrorism laws preserve and aggravate the monopoly

capitalists' system of exploitation, oppression and plunder in the world, especially in the Third World countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

To deflect the condemnation of their terrorist character which is on the grand scale, the imperialists preemptively apply the label of “terrorists” on private groups and individuals that engage in small-scale terrorism and more importantly on those movements, organizations and leaders that stand and fight for national and social liberation. They have generated massive confusion, arbitrariness and errors in legal systems by using “terrorism” as a legal term to refer to the supposed crimes committed exclusively by private groups and individuals purportedly against civilians and communities, even as the US imperialists sometimes accuse certain states of being “rogue states” allegedly sponsoring “terrorist” groups.

The anti-terrorism laws enacted by the imperialists and their puppet states violate the basic human rights of the people; these are actually terrorist decrees against the people, legalizing the imperialists and their fascist puppets to use terrorism that tramples people's rights and propagates injustices and abuses in society. Though the *Compendium* does not specify, it is the terrorism of the imperialists and fascist puppet regimes that is condemned by the Church's social doctrine, which declares that people have the right to defend themselves from terrorism. Citing again the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council's Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (1966), Pope John Paul II's *Message for the 2002 World Day of Peace* (2002) and his *Message for the 2004 World Day of Peace* (2004), the *Compendium* in Chapter Eleven expounds the “right to defend oneself from terrorism.” It asserts:

Terrorism is to be condemned in the most absolute terms... Acts of terrorism strike at the heart of human dignity and are an offence against all humanity; “there exists, therefore, a right to defend oneself from terrorism.” However, this right cannot be exercised in the absence of moral and legal norms, because the struggle against terrorists must be carried out with respect for human rights and for the principles of a State ruled by law. The identification of the guilty party must be duly proven, because criminal responsibility is always personal, and therefore cannot be extended to the religions, nations or ethnic

groups to which the terrorists belong. International cooperation in the fight against terrorist activity “cannot be limited solely to repressive and punitive operations. It is essential that the use of force, even when necessary, be accompanied by a courageous and lucid analysis of the reasons behind terrorist attacks,” ...the problems that in certain dramatic circumstances can foster terrorism: “the recruitment of terrorists in fact is easier in situations where rights are trampled and injustices are tolerated over a long period of time.”²⁸⁷

The anti-terrorism laws of the imperialists and their fascist puppets have caused considerable misperception, uncertainty and blunders in the legal systems. By inventing “terrorism” as a super-crime that is too vague and too broad, the imperialists and their puppet states have messed up the clear distinction between common crimes and political offenses. These are sufficiently encompassed by the internationally accepted criminal code which defines and punishes common crimes such as murder, kidnapping, robbery and the like, and likewise political crimes such as rebellion, sedition and the like. The punishment for political crimes is usually lighter than common crimes because the former are considered socially motivated rather than driven by self-interest and may be open to political solution through negotiations and satisfaction of social demands. But the US imperialists have made it a point to define terrorism as the threat or use of violence against persons and property to “advance social and political objectives.” They are hell-bent on criminalizing as “terrorism” the people’s struggle for national and social liberation to preserve and maintain the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism.

The US imperialist government continues to use the September 11 attacks as a license to misrepresent as “terrorist” the countries assertive of national independence, national liberation movements and progressive leaders, to whip up the hysteria of a “permanent and borderless war on terrorism,” to push the doctrine of preemptive war, strike and repression of the people, to re-channel resources to US military forces, homeland security, war preparations and war production and to use a policy of aggressive war and threats in order to enlarge US economic territory. In the wake

²⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 258.

of the September 11 attacks, the US has been able to further penetrate Central Asia and South Asia and gain further access to the oil and gas resources in the Caspian Sea and Central Asia. It has based itself on a previous investment of US\$ 20 billion in the region. It has also cleared the way for an oil pipeline to the Indian Ocean via Afghanistan and Pakistan, under the pretext of seeking to destroy Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan.

The anti-terror laws that have been enacted since 9/11 are not only dangerous surplusage but are outrageous outright violations of the basic civil and political rights of the people and their organizations. They follow the example and signals of the *US Patriot Act* and the Military Commissions Act of 2006 and certain anti-terror resolutions that US imperialism has succeeded in pushing in the UN Security Council. They presume that only private individuals and organizations are capable of terrorism, ranging from sowing of fear among the people by the most limited means to wielding imagined weapons of mass destruction for threatening or destroying the people. But this is only to conceal the fact that the US imperialists and their fascist puppet states are the real state terrorists of the world. All anti-terror laws of puppet states are principally serving as legal cover for the US imperialist government to intervene in the domestic affairs of other states; and such laws legally allow the US imperialist government in conducting its “war on terror” to extend its police activities to all parts of the globe.

Following the US imperialist anti-terrorism laws, various governments define “terrorism” in their anti-terror laws, like the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020 (ATA 2020) of the tyrannical US-Duterte Regime (USDR), as worse than murder for seeking to realize social and political objectives through the use of threats or violence against persons and property, exaggerating the element of sowing of fear and enumerating certain crimes that have existed in the internationally accepted criminal code and the laws of war and making extremely vague, broad and loose the scope of criminal acts (including writings, speeches, strikes and protest actions, activism, oppositions) and ways of acting criminally (committing, conceiving, planning, facilitating, supporting, etc.). In any case, private groups and individuals are deprived of their basic democratic rights; and the overwhelming powers of the fascist state and the dictatorial and militarist acts of the

feudal-bourgeois rulers are immensely increased in the name of national security and combating terrorism.

The anti-terror laws attack and violate the right to freedom of thought and belief. The presumption is that “terrorism” is heinous and obnoxious supposedly because it is destructive to life and property by having an ideological, political, or religious motive. Thus, before any crime has materially occurred and before there can be any criminal suspect, there is already a highly emotional political bias and preemptive criminalization of the Marxism-Leninist ideology, the political line of national liberation and the Islamic faith. Islamic fundamentalism and jihadism are conveniently invoked most often to justify the attack on the freedom of thought and belief. In this way, there is indeed a retrogression to the times of medieval inquisition by the Catholic Church and the fascism of Hitler and Mussolini, rolled into one.

Particularly in the Philippines, the ATA of 2020 has legalized the terrorism of autocrat Duterte; his war on drugs that murders suspected drug addicts; the extra-judicial killings of activists and suspected CPP-NPA-NDFP revolutionaries; the indigenous people-centric approach of the fascist military and police that has slain thousands of national minorities; the slaying of lawyers, Church people, youth and women who are human rights defenders of workers, peasants, urban poor, fisherfolks and indigenous people. In the final analysis, the ATA of 2020 has concealed the state terrorism and tyranny of Duterte and has criminalized as terrorists the CPP-NPA-NDFP and other revolutionary organizations that fight for national liberation, democracy and socialism. Meaning to say, tyrant Duterte’s ATA of 2020 has legalized state fascism in order to preserve and strengthen the system of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism that daily exploits and oppresses the Filipino people.

Through anti-terror laws, US imperialism and fascist puppet states cast away the time-tested democratic principle won by the people in the advance of constitutionalism that their rights must be guaranteed in a bill of rights against the high potential of state rulers doing a lot of mischief and damage with the concentrated and absolute power of the state. They presume that the state is incapable of terrorism and they serve to strengthen the state in the name of national security to combat terrorism. They allow the state to disregard the writ of habeas corpus, to torture and even to kill

prisoners and suspects, to arrest without judicial warrant and detain people indefinitely on the basis of mere intelligence reports, to prevent access to lawyers and evidence, to intrude into privacy and family life, to deprive people of their means of existence and to subject them to grave threats and damage to personal integrity, honor and reputation through defamation and stigmatization as “terrorists.”

With their anti-terrorism laws, the imperialists, primarily led by those from the US, and their puppet states, have become the biggest terrorists in the world. Through them, fascism is a growing monster in the world under the guise of anti-terrorism. They have, in fact, violated other people’s rights such as: the right to life and to enjoy one’s possessions, the right to the presumption of innocence, the right to due process, the right against inhuman and degrading treatment, the right to private and family life, the right to the equal protection of the law and against discrimination, and the right to one’s physical and moral integrity against physical threats and defamation—all found in the 30 articles of the United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

On the side of the Christian Churches, there must also be a clear definition and understanding between the difference of “terrorism” and “armed struggle” in the case of nations and minorities that fight for liberation, democracy and socialism against the imperialists and fascist/terrorist states. In Chapter Eight, which deals with “The Political Community,” the *Compendium* explains the rights of minorities. However, the papal advice to national minorities that “*recourse to terrorism is unjustifiable*” must be clarified, as this might easily be misinterpreted as siding with the anti-terrorism laws of the imperialists and fascists. Citing Pope John XXIII’s Encyclical Letter *Pacem in Terris* (1963) and Pope John Paul II’s *Message for the 1989 World Day of Peace* (1989), the *Compendium* states:

For every people there is in general a corresponding nation, but for various reasons national boundaries do not always coincide with ethnic boundaries. Thus the question of minorities arises, which has historically been the cause of more than just a few conflicts. The Magisterium affirms that minorities constitute groups with precise rights and duties, most of all, the right to exist, which “can be ignored in many ways, including

such extreme cases as its denial through overt or indirect forms of genocide.” Moreover, minorities have the right to maintain their culture, including their language, and to maintain their religious beliefs, including worship services. In the legitimate quest to have their rights respected, minorities may be driven to seek greater autonomy or even independence; in such delicate circumstances, dialogue and negotiation are the path for attaining peace. In every case, recourse to terrorism is unjustifiable and damages the cause that is being sought. Minorities are also bound by duties, among which, above all, is working for the common good of the State in which they live.²⁸⁸

The *Compendium* seems to imply in the above quotation that it is terrorism when nations and national minorities launch armed struggle to liberate themselves from exploitation and oppression and defend themselves against terrorist attacks and the anti-terrorism laws of the imperialists and their fascist puppet states. This indicates the ongoing strong partiality of the Church for the monopoly capitalists or imperialists and their fascist puppet states, which are actually the real terrorists in the world. The Church must see, therefore, the great difference between “terrorism” and people’s armed struggle for liberation, democracy and socialism. For instance in the Philippine context, Church people must recognize that it is not terrorism but it is, in fact, an essential part of the right of national minorities to participate in the armed struggle against US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism in order to secede from the present reactionary state of the big landlords and big comprador bourgeoisie, and attain genuine autonomy within the context of building the people’s revolutionary government. The Church must realize that the struggle of national minorities for genuine autonomy in the Philippines is within the framework of the Filipino people’s aspiration to establish a sovereign, democratic and socialist society in the country.

As regards the whole revolutionary movement in the Philippines, it is US imperialism that has pressured other nations and the Philippine reactionary government since the time of the US-Macapagal Arroyo regime to name the CPP and NPA as an “international terrorist organizations,”

²⁸⁸ Ibid., pp. 195-196.

including Professor Jose Maria Sison, the chief political consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), as a “terrorist” personality. Through Proclamation No. 374, Executive Order 70 and especially with the current ATA of 2020, tyrant Duterte and his AFP-PNP top commanders parrot the same line of the US imperialists that the CPP and the NPA are “designated terrorist organizations” by “the United States, the European Union, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the Philippines.” However, as of July 2020 the CPP and the NPA, including Professor Sison, are not counted in the “United Nations Security Council Consolidated List.” The list comprises 710 individuals and 305 entities, which includes only the Abu Sayyaf Group and the Rajah Solaiman Movement and 13 affiliated individuals, as among those that are based in the Philippines. It should further be pointed out that the CPP and NPA are also not included in the most recent updated list of “designated terrorists” of Australia, Canada or the United Kingdom, contrary to the repeated claims of the Philippine reactionary government and its anti-Filipino media mouthpiece, the Philippine News Agency (PNA). As still to be expounded on below, it must also be stated that the NDFP submitted on July 5, 1996 the “NDFP Declaration of Undertaking to Apply the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Protocol I of 1977” to the Federal Council of the Swiss Government as official depositary of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the 1977 Protocol I. The CPP, NPA and the NDFP, therefore, are not terrorist organizations because they struggle for national liberation and democracy of the Filipino people and adhere to the international law on human rights and humanitarian conduct in the civil war and the *Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL)*. Also significant is the fact that these revolutionary organizations have always been willing to engage in peace negotiations in accordance with *The Hague Joint Declaration of 1992*. Upon the ouster of tyrant Duterte, these organizations will resume the national peace talks with a future regime that will reject state terrorism and seek peace negotiations for the resolution of the root causes of the armed conflict.

Thus in summary, terrorism and anti-terrorism laws are imperialist inventions to conceal US imperialism and its puppet fascist states as the real and biggest terrorists in the world today. The main objective of this is for

US imperialism to maintain and widen its world hegemony at the expense of the toiling masses of the world and the underdeveloped nations, especially in the Third World countries of Asia, Latin America, and Africa. The international mass movement for human rights must, therefore, heighten the struggle against the anti-terrorism laws of the imperialists and their fascist puppets, and fight for the implementation of existing international laws. To deal with war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide in time of war and in the aftermath, there are the Geneva Conventions and its protocols and related laws of war which set the norms for humanitarian conduct and require respect for human rights. These prohibit and punish crimes against the civilian population and against soldiers who have surrendered or have become incapacitated to fight. It is entirely wrong and criminal for the US imperialists and its camp followers to deprive prisoners and “terrorist” suspects of their rights enshrined in the International Humanitarian Law and the International Bill of Rights. The practice of torture, murder and other gross human rights violations by US military personnel and puppets in Iraqi homes and streets and in such US prisons as Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo are utterly condemnable and outrageous. The anti-imperialist mass movement must exert efforts to denounce the imperialists, especially the US imperialists, their fascist puppets, their anti-terrorism laws and their wars of aggression and military interventions, and launch big anti-imperialist protest actions at the United Nations headquarters in Manhattan, New City, USA. CNL is calling the Christian Churches and their leaders as well as the American people, including the Black Lives Matter and other anti-racist organizations, to join in their big numbers and actively participate in these anti-imperialist protest actions in their own country. The victorious successes of such anti-imperialist protest actions will be of great help to the worldwide billions of toiling masses in their fight against terrorism and imperialist wars and their struggle for people’s liberation, democracy and socialism.

Imperialist wars are unjust instruments to momentarily solve the periodic worldwide economic crisis of monopoly capitalism, settle the division and redivision of the world among contending imperialist powers, sustain imperialist global domination, and oppose the expansion of socialist societies; since the Cold War ended in 1991, US imperialism has maintained global dominance up to the present day through wars of aggression against countries considered as threat to US worldwide hegemony.

In Chapter Two, which concerns “The Church’s Mission and Social Doctrine,” the *Compendium* mentions that Pope Pius XII, whose papal reign was from 1939 to 1958, was respected especially for his efforts during the World War II to persuade the contending nations to settle their differences peacefully. He merely viewed World War II as simply a war of competing countries when in fact it was a war among imperialist contending powers. The Church has yet to understand that World War II (1939-1945) was actually an inter-imperialist war between imperialist and fascist countries, namely: Japan, Germany under Nazi fascist Hitler and Italy under fascist Mussolini of the “Axis powers” versus the United States and the United Kingdom of the “Allied powers” for the redivision of the world in order to change the old division of the world among imperialists created by the first inter-imperialist war during World War I (1914-1918).

The Church must also take note of the stand of the USSR as regards inter-imperialist wars during the time of Lenin and Stalin and during the modern revisionist regimes from Khrushchev to Gorbachev. In particular, because Stalin and the USSR leaders at that time saw that the Great Depression (1929-1939) and the global conflict between the imperialist powers would lead to World War II, which truly happened as an inter-imperialist war, Stalin decided, therefore, not to involve the USSR in the inter-imperialist war and instead aimed at consolidating the socialist states. This was the reason why Stalin signed in August 1939 a non-aggression pact with German dictator Adolf Hitler wherein Germany and the USSR would not attack one another and agreed to divide the territory that lay between the German and Soviet spheres of influence. However, Hitler betrayed the agreement. This led the USSR to join tactically the “Grand Alliance”

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(American-British-Soviet coalition) of the “Allied Powers” in 1941 in order to end the imperialist war by the “Axis Powers” in Western Europe.

However, after World War II, US imperialism under the commonly called the Marshall Plan founded on July 1947 the European Recovery Program which was a monopoly capitalist agenda as well as an anti-communist economic program to stop the expansion and influence of communism/USSR in Western Europe. This led to the so-called Cold War, a propaganda and economic war between US imperialism and communism/USSR, that started in 1948. However, after the death of Joseph Stalin in 1953, the Cold War turned to be an inter-imperialist war between US imperialism and Russian Soviet “social imperialism,” as Mao termed it. The former socialist USSR had become a full-blown social imperialist due to modern revisionism that started during the regimes of the modern revisionists who masqueraded themselves as “communists” from the Khrushchev Regime (1954-1964) to the Brezhnev Regime (1964-1985) and finally to the Gorbachev Regime (1985-1991) when capitalism was peacefully restored in the USSR.

Going back to World War II (1939-1945), it was during this period that Pope Pius XII (1939-1958) started to reign. For his efforts to persuade the World War II contending imperialist nations to settle their differences peacefully, the pope, in his *Christmas Radio Messages: on peace and the international order* (1939-1948), repeatedly issued pleas for peace and justice and against totalitarianism/fascism, and protested many actions of Nazi fascist Hitler of Germany and fascist Mussolini of Italy. However, following the footsteps of Pope Pius XI, who was “the most outspoken enemy of communism,” made concordats with Nazi fascist Hitler and fascist Mussolini and supported dictator Franco of Spain, Pope Pius XII issued in 1949 a historic proclamation declaring that any Roman Catholic rendering support of any kind or degree to communism would automatically incur the penalty of excommunication. In reality, Pope Pius XII’s historic proclamation against communism only continued to strengthen the Roman Catholic Church’s partiality for imperialism and monopoly capitalism.

For CNL, it is very clear that the greatest sin of the Roman Catholic Church against the people of the world, especially against the billions of workers and peasants, is its partiality for imperialism, the highest stage of

capitalism, that has monopolized the world and globalized the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism up to the present day. By attacking and condemning Marxism, scientific socialism or communism, Christian Churches are actually manifesting their full support and partiality for imperialism, and are committing sins against humanity, especially against the billions of toiling masses who are the most exploited and oppressed in the world today by monopoly capitalism. Nevertheless, it is not yet late for the Christian Churches to stop their sins of omission by condemning imperialism, especially US imperialism as the No. 1 promoter of the global disorder and the absence of peace, and the root cause of injustices and wars in the world. They have yet to understand that World War I, World War II and the Cold War are all inter-imperialist wars for the division and redivision of the world among contending imperialist powers. They have yet to grasp that the wars of aggression and military interventions by imperialism, primarily by US imperialism, against the countries that fight for national liberation, democracy and socialism are unjust means to gain more monopoly capitalist profits and continue imperialist global dominance at the expense of the billions of exploited and oppressed peoples in both the developed nations in the First World and the underdeveloped countries in the Third World. The Christian Churches have yet to comprehend and recognize that US imperialism, the mightiest among the imperialist powers, continues to create and engage in wars of aggression and military interventions for the division and redivision of world territories, and to hold world hegemony; and that through wars, US imperialism maintains colonies around the world and gets high monopoly capitalist profits.

In particular, the Christian Churches must understand that US imperialism has prospered through wars. In the two world wars, the US monopoly organizations engaged in large-scale rearmament transactions and obtained windfall gains from wars. In the First World War, United States monopoly capitalists obtained 38 billion dollars as dividend profit; in the Second World War, they obtained 117 billion dollars as handout profit and became the dominant power in the capitalist world. From then on, the US monopoly bourgeoisie looked to wars as shortcuts to super-profits. According to statistics during the Cold War, in the aggressive war in Korea (1949-1953) the United States monopoly capitalists obtained

115.4 billion dollars as a windfall profit. In the aggressive war in Vietnam (1959-1975), the bonanza profit of the US amounted to 76 billion dollars in 1964 and 1965 alone. Thus for 16 years that US imperialism was directly involved in the Vietnam War, US\$608 billion was profited by the US monopoly capitalists. And the reactionary Philippine government had fully supported the US monopoly capitalist profiteers by dispatching the PHILCAG (Philippine Civic Action Group) to South Vietnam.

Also in Chapter Two which is on “The Church’s Mission and Social Doctrine,” the *Compendium* mentions about the Cold War. Citing Pope John XXIII’s Encyclical Letter *Pacem in Terris* (1963), the *Compendium* states:

The 1960s bring promising prospects: recovery after the devastation of the war, the beginning of decolonization, and the first timid signs of a “thaw” in the relations between the American and Soviet blocs. This is the context within which Blessed Pope John XXIII reads deeply into the “signs of the times.” The social question is becoming universal and involves all countries: together with the labor question and the Industrial Revolution, there come to the fore problems of agriculture, of developing regions, of increasing populations, and those concerning the need for global economic cooperation. Inequalities that in the past were experienced within nations are now becoming international and make the dramatic situation of the Third World ever more evident.²⁸⁹

It must be clarified for all Christian Churches to know that the Cold War, as an inter-imperialist propaganda war primarily between US imperialism and Soviet/Russian “social imperialism” due to modern revisionism, was started by the US imperialist government in 1948 based on its Marshall Plan, and ended in 1991 when the former USSR took the path of modern revisionism, deserted socialism, and returned peacefully to capitalism. Nevertheless as the Cold War raged on between the two imperialist superpowers, US imperialist government at the same time conducted anti-communist campaigns of suppression in Asia, Africa and Latin America from

²⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 49.

the late 1940s onward and instigated massacres, of which the biggest was of more than one million people in Indonesia in 1965. It launched wars of aggression and military interventions against the Korean people during the Korean War (1949-1953), against the Vietnamese people during the Vietnam War (1959-1975) and the rest of Indochina where the death toll for the people ran into many millions. After the Vietnam War, the Vietnamese people were victimized by the US imperialist economic and trade embargo from 1976 to 1994. The US and other imperialist powers were behind the massacre of more than three million Indonesians during the 33 years of military fascist dictatorship of Suharto from 1965 to 1998.

In the 1970s and 1980s, the US imperialist government systematically carried out counter-revolutionary wars under the doctrine of low-intensity conflict in Angola, Mozambique, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Afghanistan. Particularly in El Salvador, this low-intensity conflict by the US imperialist government targeted the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN). At least 75,000 Salvadorans died in this low-intensity conflict, including some priests, nuns, and Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero. Archbishop Romero, the staunch critic of the El Salvadoran military government that was directly supported by US imperialism and the most prominent spokesman for human rights, was murdered when he was saying a funeral mass for his mother on March 24, 1980.

The total death toll in the Cold War ran into millions, comparable in magnitude to a world war. Also during the Cold War, the Cuban people suffered in misery also due to US imperialist embargo that started in the 1960s but continued up to the present day despite the fact that the Cold War ended in 1991. The Cold War, as an inter-imperialist war between the two imperialist superpowers, was characterized by the arms race, “*Cuban crisis*” and détente negotiations; it actually enriched all the imperialist superpowers, but more so the US monopoly capitalists through superprofits from the arms race. Thus, the Cold War—as an inter-imperialist war between the US and Soviet Russia—was practically World War III.

As regards the embargo and other economic and trade sanctions mentioned above, the Magisterium, the teaching authority of the Church, is ambivalent as it does not condemn embargo and other sanctions imposed by a nation to another nation as immoral. This is shown in Chapter Eleven concerning “The Promotion of Peace” wherein the *Compendium*, citing

Pope John Paul II’s *Address to the Diplomatic Corps* (January 9, 1995), states:

Sanctions, in the forms prescribed by the contemporary international order, seek to correct the behavior of the government of a country that violates the rules of peaceful and ordered international coexistence or that practices serious forms of oppression with regard to its population. The purpose of these sanctions must be clearly defined and the measures adopted must from time to time be objectively evaluated by the competent bodies of the international community as to their effectiveness and their real impact on the civilian population. The true objective of such measures is open to the way to negotiation and dialogue. Sanctions must never be used as a means for the direct punishment of an entire population: it is not licit that entire populations, and above all their most vulnerable members, be made to suffer because of such sanctions. Economic sanctions in particular are an instrument to be used with great discernment and must be subjected to strict legal and ethical criteria. An economic embargo must be of limited duration and cannot be justified when the resulting effects are indiscriminate.²⁹⁰

The quotation above is ambivalent as it tries to conceal the fact that in the history of humankind it is imperialism, primarily US imperialism, that has been imposing and continues to inflict embargo and other sanctions on other nations that oppose its world hegemony. Meaning, embargo and other sanctions have always been parts of the instrument of US imperialism in its wars of aggression and military interventions against other nations, especially against socialist states and countries that fight for national liberation. In particular, the aforementioned quotation from Pope John Paul II himself contradicts “the importance of national sovereignty” which the pope has always been stressing in other documents he has written, which shall still be expounded on below, such as his *Address to UNESCO* (June 2, 1980), his Encyclical *Letter Sollicitudo Rei Socia-*

²⁹⁰ Ibid., pp. 254-255.

lis (1988), and his *Address to the Fiftieth General Assembly of the United Nations* (October 5, 1995). In these documents, Pope John Paul II asserts that: “The Magisterium recognizes the importance of national sovereignty, understood above all as an expression of the freedom that must govern relations between States.”²⁹¹ Meaning, it is the sovereignty of nations that has been violated by US imperialism that has been imposing embargo and other sanctions against these nations.

It was due to the aforementioned ambivalence that Pope John Paul II during his five-day papal visit to Cuba in January 1998 did not at all castigate the US imperialist government that imposed US trade embargo on Cuba since 1960. And despite the fact that the former USSR, which supported Cuba’s economic development, had returned to capitalism in 1991, the US imperialist government tightened the trade embargo against Cuba through the US Congress’ 1992 Cuba Democracy Act and the 1996 Helms-Burton Act which were the severe obstacles to the continuing economic development of the Cuban people and to Cuba’s recovery when in 1989 social-imperialist leader Gorbachev withdrew subsidies to Cuba which were formerly provided by the USSR. All these were concealed by the pope during his visit to Cuba; he obscured the fact that the trade embargo imposed by the US imperialist government to Cuba is and continues up to now as a direct punishment for the entire population of Cuba. In nice words and general statement, the pope just lamented “the emergence of a form of capitalist neo-liberalism that subordinates the human person and conditions the development of people to the blind forces of the market,” causing “the rich to get richer and the poor to grow ever more poor,” just mentioning on the sideline the issue of the US trade embargo. In fact, forgetting the fact that the Cuban people had already been Christianized through Spanish colonialism and masking and cloaking the evil of imperialist ideology, Pope John Paul II “addressed the Cuban people to spread Christianity, challenged the Marxist ideology, and preached that the salvation of the people of Cuba lay in Jesus Christ, and no ideology can replace Christ’s infinite wisdom and power.” Thus, the welfare of the Cuban nation and the care for the Cuban people were just put aside during

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 218-219.

the whole five-day papal visit because of the pope’s partiality towards monopoly capitalism and the US imperialist power.

Christian Churches must, therefore, recognize that embargo and other sanctions imposed against other nations are tools of the imperialists in their wars of aggression and military interventions to maintain their world hegemony at the expense of the billions of toiling masses around the globe. And what the *Compendium* mentions in Chapter Nine concerning “The International Community” particularly about “the idea that the effort to destroy the enemy, confrontation and war itself are factors of progress and historical advancement” is a summary description of the essence of imperialist wars as tools for the “progress and historical advancement” of the monopoly capitalists at the expense of the exploited and oppressed toiling masses and peoples of the world who have been victimized miserably by the inter-imperialist wars since World War I up to the current imperialist wars of aggression and military interventions. These imperialist wars, which manifest the infidelity of the imperialists for the promotion of world peace, have been condemned by the Church. In Chapter Nine about “The International Community” and citing Pope Pius XII’s *Christmas Radio Message* (December 24, 1941), the *Charter of the United Nations* (June 26, 1945), Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (1991) and his *Message for the 2004 World Day of Peace* (2004), the *Compendium* says:

To resolve the tensions that arise among different political communities and can compromise the stability of nations and international security, it is indispensable to make use of common rules in a commitment to negotiation and to reject definitively the idea that justice can be sought through the recourse to war. “If war can end without winners or losers in a suicide of humanity, then we must repudiate the logic which leads to it: the idea that the effort to destroy the enemy, confrontation and war itself are factors of progress and historical advancement.” Not only does the Charter of the United Nations ban recourse to force, but it rejects even the threat to use force. This provision arose from the tragic experience of the Second World War. During that conflict the Magisterium

did not fail to identify certain indispensable factors for building a renewed international order: the freedom and territorial integrity of each nation, defense of the rights of minorities, an equitable sharing of the earth's resources, the rejection of war and an effective plan of disarmament, fidelity to agreements undertaken and an end to religious persecution.²⁹²

The aforementioned quotation on the UN provision and the Church's social teaching as regards the "indispensable factors for building a renewed international order" would remain as a gobbledygook or as merely a wordy and an unintelligible jargon, if there is no recognition among Church people and Christian leaders that imperialism is the root cause of the past two world wars and of the present wars of aggression and military interventions against various nations of the world. Only when imperialism, especially US imperialism, is acknowledged as the source, the root cause and the No. 1 promoter of wars, only then can the Christian Churches and the member nations of the UN General Assembly, especially those from the Third World countries, be able to reject imperialism and war, and struggle for "the freedom and territorial integrity of each nation, defense of the rights of minorities, and an equitable sharing of the earth's resources."

That is why CNL strongly appeals to the Christian Churches to explain to all peoples and nations that the war, that is condemned, is the unjust war of the imperialists, primarily the US imperialists, as bringers of world disorder and chaos. In Chapter Eleven concerning "The Promotion of Peace," the *Compendium* summarizes that "*war is the failure of peace*" for the peoples of the world, especially the billions of workers and peasants. And citing Leo XIII's *Address to the College of Cardinals* (1899), Pope Benedict XV's *Appeal to the Leaders of the Warring Nations* (August 1, 1917), Pope John XXIII's Encyclical Letter *Pacem in Terris* (1963), Pope Paul VI's *Address to Cardinals* (June 24, 1965) and his *Address to the General Assembly of the United Nations* (October 4, 1965), the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council's Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (1966), Pope John Paul II's *Meeting with Officials of the Roman Vicariate* (January 17, 1991), his

²⁹² Ibid., pp. 220-221.

Message for the 1999 World Day of Peace (1999) and his *Address to the Diplomatic Corps* (January 13, 2003), the *Compendium* states:

The Magisterium condemns “the savage of war” and asks that war be considered in a new way. In fact, “it is hardly possible to imagine that in an atomic era, war could be used as an instrument of justice.” War is a “scourge” and is never an appropriate way to resolve problems that arise between nations, “it has never been and it will never be,” because it creates new and still more complicated conflicts. When it erupts, war becomes an “unnecessary massacre,” an “adventure without return” that compromises humanity’s present and threatens its future. “Nothing is lost by peace; everything may be lost by war.” The damage caused by an armed conflict is not only material but also moral. In the end, war is “the failure of all true humanism,” “it is always a defeat for humanity”: “never again some peoples against others, never again! ...no more war, no more war!”²⁹³

In Chapter Eleven concerning “The Promotion of Peace” and citing Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (1991), the *Compendium* brings out the causes of war and states:

Seeking alternative solutions for resolving international conflicts has taken on tremendous urgency today, since “the terrifying power of the means of destruction—to which even medium and small-sized countries have access—and the ever closer links between the peoples of the whole world make it very difficult or practically impossible to limit the consequences of a conflict.” It is therefore essential to seek out the causes underlying bellicose conflicts, especially those connected with structural situations of injustice, poverty and exploitation, which require intervention so that they may be removed. “For this reason, another name for peace is development. Just as there is a collective responsibility for avoiding

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 249-250.

war, so too there is a collective responsibility for promoting development.”²⁹⁴

The *Compendium* mentions “structural situations of injustice, poverty and exploitation” as the causes of war; but it does not clearly point out what economic and political system instigates and triggers these causes of war in the world. Being very cautious not to hurt the Catholic Church’s deeply imbedded partiality for monopoly capitalism or imperialism, Pope John Paul II’s encyclicals never mention imperialism as the global promoter and defender of the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism that continually instigates and triggers “structural situations of injustice, poverty and exploitation” which all lead to wars that victimize the billions of toiling masses in the world. Nonetheless, concrete and scientific analysis of wars in human history points to the fact that it is imperialism, primarily headed by US imperialism, that has been the root cause of wars in the world since World War I up to the present wars of aggression and pre-emptive wars against nations, especially those which US imperialism considers as a threat to its world hegemony. Based on this analysis, the aforementioned call of Pope Paul VI in his address to the General Assembly of the United Nations: never again some peoples against others, never again! ...no more war, no more war!”—should be —“war is the failure of all true humanism, it is always a defeat for humanity specified as strong denunciation of the Catholic Church in opposition to imperialism as the source and root cause of wars.

In the peoples’ struggle against imperialist wars of aggression and against fascist acts of puppet states, Christian Churches ought to be motivated by the papal teaching on “the right to use force for purposes of legitimate defense” of civilian population. Citing Pope John Paul II’s *Sunday Angelus* (March 7, 1993), the *Compendium* states:

The right to use force for purposes of legitimate defense is associated with the duty to protect and help innocent victims who are not able to defend themselves from acts of aggression. In modern conflicts, which are often within a State, the precepts of international humanitarian law must be fully

²⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 250.

respected. For too often, the civilian population is hit and at times even becomes a target of war. In some cases, they are brutally massacred or taken from their homes and land by forced transfers, under the guise of “ethnic cleansing,” which is always unacceptable. In such tragic circumstances, humanitarian aid must reach the civilian population and must never be used to influence those receiving it; the good of the human person must take precedence over the interests of the parties to the conflict.²⁹⁵

An essential part of the legitimate defense of civilian population is to protect war victims as such the refugees, and guarantee their human rights. Quoting Pope John Paul II’s *Message for Lent* (February 12, 1990) and his *Address at General Audience* (August 11, 1999), the *Compendium* says:

“That minimum protection of the dignity of every person, guaranteed by international humanitarian law, is all too often violated in the name of military or political demands... Today we are aware of the need to find a new consensus on humanitarian principles and to reinforce their foundation to prevent the recurrence of atrocities and abuse.” A particular category of war victim is formed by refugees, forced by combat to flee the places where they habitually live and to seek refuge in foreign countries. The Church is close to them not only with her pastoral presence and material support but also with her commitment to defend their human dignity: “Concern for refugees must lead us to reaffirm and highlight universally recognized human rights, and to ask that the effective recognition of these rights be guaranteed to refugees.”²⁹⁶

As imperialist wars are “crimes against God and humanity,” the international community is called by the Catholic Church to disarm and punish aggressors who commit crime against God and humanity. Referring to Pope Pius XII’s *Address at the Sixth International Congress of Criminal Law* (October 3, 1953), Pope John Paul II’s *Address to the International*

²⁹⁵ Ibid., pp. 252-253.

²⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 253.

Conference on Nutrition Sponsored by FAO and WHO (December 5, 1992), his *Address to the Diplomatic Corps* (January 16, 1993), his *Address at the Regina Coeli* (April 18, 1993), his *Message for the 1999 World Day of Peace* (1999), his *Message for the 2000 World Day of Peace* (2000), and his *Message for the 2004 World Day of Peace* (2004), the *Compendium* says:

Attempts to eliminate entire national, ethnic, religious or linguistic groups are crimes against God and humanity itself, and those responsible for such crimes must answer before justice. The twentieth century bears the tragic mark of different genocides: from that of the Armenians to that of the Ukrainians, from that of the Cambodians to those perpetuated in Africa and in the Balkans. Among these, the Holocaust of the Jewish people, the Shoah, stands out: “the days of the Shoah marked a true night of history, with unimaginable crimes against God and humanity.”²⁹⁷

The *Compendium* further states:

The International Community as a whole has the moral obligation to intervene on behalf of those groups whose very survival is threatened or whose basic human rights are seriously violated. As members of an international community, States cannot remain indifferent; on the contrary, if all other available means should prove ineffective, *it is “legitimate and even obligatory to take concrete measures to disarm the aggressor”* [CNL]. The principle of national sovereignty cannot be claimed as a motive for preventing an intervention in defense of innocent victims. The measures adopted must be carried out in full respect of international law and the fundamental principle of equality among States.²⁹⁸

And the *Compendium* stresses that aggressors who cause crimes against humanity must be punished, and states:

²⁹⁷ Ibid., pp. 253-254.

²⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 254.

There is also present within the international community an International Criminal Court to punish those responsible for particularly serious acts such as genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and crimes of aggression. The Magisterium has not failed to encourage this initiative time and again.²⁹⁹

And to strengthen the commitment of peoples and nations of the world to respond to the global call for the elimination of imperialism as the root cause of wars, very much needed to be done by Christians and their Churches is to study the international policies and petition all nations to implement these policies such as on disarmament and deterrence, the arms race, arms of mass destruction, the banning of weapons that inflict excessively traumatic injury or that strike indiscriminately, and the control of production, sale, importation and exportation of small arms and light weapons that are used by imperialists, primarily headed by those from the US, in their inter-imperialist wars. These international policies are mentioned by the *Compendium* in Chapter Eleven concerning “The Promotion of Peace,” citing the following as references: *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2315-2316, the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council’s *Gaudium et Spes*, Pope John Paul II’s *Message for the Fortieth Anniversary of the United Nations* (October 14, 1985), his *Message for the 1986 World Day of Peace* (1986), his *Address to the World of Work, Verona, Italy* (April 17, 1988), the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace’s *The International Arms Trade: An Ethical Reflection* (May 1, 1994), Pope John Paul II’s *Address to the Diplomatic Corps* (January 13, 1996), and his *Message for the 1999 World Day of Peace* (1999).

On disarmament, deterrence and the arms race, the *Compendium* states:

The enormous increase in arms represents a grave threat to stability and peace. The principle of sufficiency, by virtue of which each State may possess only the means necessary for its legitimate defense, must be applied both by States that buy arms and by those that produce and furnish them. Any stock-

²⁹⁹ Ibid.

piling or indiscriminate trading in arms cannot be morally justified. Such phenomenon must also be evaluated in light of international norms regarding the non-proliferation, production, trade and use of different types of arms. Arms can never be treated like other goods exchanged on international or domestic markets.³⁰⁰

The *Compendium* further asserts:

Moreover, the Magisterium has made a moral evaluation of the phenomenon of deterrence. “The accumulation of arms strikes many as a paradoxically suitable way of deterring potential adversaries from war. They see it as the most effective means of ensuring peace among nations. This method of deterrence gives rise to strong moral reservations. The arms race does not ensure peace. Far from eliminating the causes of war, it risks aggravating them.” Policies of nuclear deterrence, typical of the Cold War period, must be replaced with concrete measures of disarmament based on dialogue and multi-lateral negotiations.³⁰¹

As regard the arms of mass destruction and the non-proliferation of nuclear arms, the *Compendium* cites Pope John Paul II’s *Message for the 1999 World Day of Peace* (1999) and asserts:

Arms of mass destruction—whether biological, chemical or nuclear—represent a particularly serious threat. Those who possess them have an enormous responsibility before God and all of humanity. The principle of non-proliferation of nuclear arms, together with measures of nuclear disarmament and the prohibition of nuclear tests, are intimately interconnected objectives that must be met as soon as possible by means of effective control at the international level. The ban on the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical and biological weapons as well as the provisions that require

³⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 255.

³⁰¹ Ibid.

their destruction, complete the international regulatory norms aimed at banning such baleful weapons, the use of which is explicitly condemned by the Magisterium: “Any act of war aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of entire cities or extensive areas along with their population is a crime against God and man himself. It merits unequivocal and unhesitating condemnation.”³⁰²

Concerning the production, sale, importation and exportation of armaments, the *Compendium* considers these as serious threats to peace. It cites again Pope John Paul II’s *Message for the 1999 World Day of Peace* (1999) and says:

Appropriate measures are needed to control the production, sale, importation and exportation of small arms and light weapons, armaments that facilitate many outbreaks of violence to occur. The sale and trafficking of such weapons constitute serious threat to peace: these arms kill and are used for the most part in internal and regional conflicts; their ready availability increases both the risk of new conflicts and the intensity of those already underway. The position of States that apply severe controls on the international transfer of heavy arms while they never, or only very rarely, restrict the sale and trafficking of small arms and light weapons is an unacceptable contradiction. It is indispensable and urgent that Governments adopt appropriate measures to control the production, stockpiling, sale and trafficking of such arms in order to stop their growing proliferation, in large part among groups of combatants that are not part of the military forces of a State.³⁰³

Regarding the banning of weapons that inflict excessively traumatic injury or that strike indiscriminately, the *Compendium* in Chapter Eleven, which is about “The Promotion of Peace” asserts that this must be included

³⁰² Ibid., pp. 255-256.

³⁰³ Ibid., pp. 256-257.

in the international policy of disarmament. Referring to Pope John Paul II's *Message for the 1999 World Day of Peace* (1999), the *Compendium* declares:

Disarmament must include the banning of weapons that inflict excessively traumatic injury or that strike indiscriminately. This includes anti-personnel landmines, a type of small arm that is inhumanly insidious because it continues to cause harm even long after cessation of hostilities. States that produce them, sell them and continue to use them are responsible for seriously delaying the total elimination of these death-dealing weapons. The international community must continue its committed efforts aimed at mine-clearance, fostering effective cooperation—including education and technical training—with those countries that do not have adequate means to clear their territory of mines with all due urgency and that are not able to offer the necessary assistance to victims of mines.³⁰⁴

Nonetheless in the history of humankind, it was US imperialism that first produced and used weapons of mass destruction. During World War II on August 6, 1945, the US dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima. The blast also destroyed more than 10 sq. km. of the city, completely destroying 68 percent of Hiroshima's buildings; another 24 percent were damaged. On August 9, 1945, a US Army Air Force plane released another atomic bomb on Nagasaki. About one-third of the city was destroyed. The immediate death toll in the two atom bombings came to nearly two hundred thousand (200,000). Tens of thousands more died later, after suffering excruciating pain due to the effects of radiation. Without doubt, these atom bombings are among the most dastardly war crimes and crimes against humanity ever committed in history. These atrocities are all the more condemnable, as they were absolutely unnecessary in terms of winning the war. The war in Europe had ended and Japan was already defeated and was negotiating surrender. The US and its apologists have given such cynical rationalizations as that the atom bombings were meant to preempt the Soviet invasion of Japan and to save American and Japanese

³⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 256.

lives. Clearly, by these bombings the US meant to demonstrate its absolute military superiority over all other countries—allies and enemies alike—in the whole world—and to establish itself as the preeminent and unrivaled post-war superpower. The bombings were also a “live experiment” to measure the actual devastating power of the atomic bomb, with the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki chosen as guinea pigs. They were special targets because supposedly they had been unscathed by previous allied bombings.

The US imperialist government has produced some 70,000 nuclear warheads since 1945. It has used these in its wars of aggression and military intervention worldwide to expand and consolidate global hegemony. Even before the US imperialist forces invasion on Iraq in 2003 under the pretext of destroying mythical weapons of mass destruction allegedly possessed by the Saddam regime, the US imperialist government has the largest stockpile of weapons of mass destruction, biological, chemical and nuclear. The US has nuclear weapons with no less than 10,600 nuclear warheads intact, 8,000 of which are considered active or operational and 3,000 ready to deploy from its “Enduring Stockpile.”

The US imperialist government has used 320 tons of depleted uranium artillery in the 1990 Gulf war. This has accounted for the eventual illness and death of tens of thousands of US troops after the war. Depleted uranium has also been used in the US wars of aggression against Yugoslavia. It has been used in the US aggression and occupation of Iraq despite the deadly effects and numerous health risks to soldiers and civilians. US imperialism has long been the top World Merchant of Death. It has amassed immense profits from selling armaments to both sides in the two world wars of the 20th century before joining the fray and collecting further spoils. Since 1990, the US monopoly capitalists/imperialist have exported US\$ 152B worth of weapons in the form of sales and assistance. In 2001, they exported war material to no less than 170 nations, and have earned US\$ 13.1B in that year alone, under the aegis of the “war on terror.”

Despite widespread global opposition and in contravention of international norms, treaties and laws, the US imperialist government has been going ahead with plans to build an anti-ballistic missile defense system and produce tactical nuclear weapons. In particular, the US Senate in July 2005 allocated US\$ 100M for research and production of a tactical nuclear

weapon, the first of its kind, for use against underground bunkers. Plans for this “bunker buster” will be pursued despite thorough studies showing the immense danger and harm to the civilian population as a result of the radioactive fallout. Up to now, the US imperialist government is feverishly pushing on with plans to secure military control over outer space and develop space-based and space-launched weapons systems. These include projects such as “Global Strike” with a space vehicle that could strike in 45 minutes from halfway around the world, carrying precision-guided weapons with the capability to destroy command centers or missile bases “anywhere in the world,” and “Rods From God” venture which aims to hurl cylinders of tungsten, titanium or uranium from the edge of space to destroy targets on the ground, striking at speeds of about 7,200 miles an hour with the force of a small nuclear weapon. These plans only show the insanity and evil of US imperialism that destroys humankind.

In 2018, the US imperialist Trump administration allocated the \$28.9 billion budget for the Pentagon’s nuclear modernization program, along with the additional \$15.6 billion for the Department of Energy National Nuclear Security Administration’s efforts to revamp the US nuclear warhead arsenal. Among the weapons being developed and deployed is the W76-2, a nuclear warhead with lower yields which could be more readily available in the event of a conflict between the US and Russia. This W76-2 nuclear warhead is perhaps less destructive but still extremely more powerful than even the most earth-shattering conventional munitions. The five-to-seven-kiloton W76-2 may produce a third of the detonation force of the relatively primitive atom bomb dropped by the US imperialist government on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, but explodes with up to 500 times the strength of the Massive Ordnance Air Blast, or “Mother of All Bombs (MOAB).”

In 2019, the Pentagon, the headquarters of the US imperialist Department of Defense, announced the nuclear-armed sea-launched cruise missile (SLCM-N) had been developed. And in January 2020, Pentagon has declared that the

nuclear-related portion of its \$705 billion budget for 2021 includes funds devoted to revamping nuclear command, control and communications, the new Columbia-class ballis-

tic missile submarine, the B-21 Long-Range Strike Bomber, Long-Range Stand-off Missile and the Ground-Based Strategic Deterrent.³⁰⁵

The reason of the US imperialist government in the production of the W76-2 and the SLCM-N and in revamping its war arsenals is that all these “are measured responses to close gaps in regional deterrence that have emerged in recent years”³⁰⁶ between the US and Russia. Meaning, the imperialist government of the monopoly capitalist bourgeoisie in the US has made Russia its top adversary, like during the Cold War, the reason in the production of the W76-2 and the SLCM-N in order to discourage Russia and other nations from attacking the USA. This is a US imperialist strategy known as “deterrence,” the US imperialist policy of discouraging the hostile action by Russia which the US imperialist government has aimed as the potential aggressor. The US imperialists think that “this strategy of deterrence allows the US to negotiate from a position of strength, and brings an enhanced assurance element to our allies.” In reality, this is just to hide and maintain the world hegemony of US imperialism.

Agreements to restrict or eliminate the production and use of biological, chemical and nuclear weapons date back to the Geneva Convention of 1925. But one of the most important agreements on arms control was the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1968. Signatories pledged to restrict the development, deployment, and testing of nuclear weapons to ensure that weapons, materials, or technology would not be transferred outside the five countries that then had nuclear weapons: the United States, Great Britain, France, China, and the USSR. The 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) entered into force in 1970, ratified by 187 non-nuclear weapon states.

In 1972 the United States, the USSR, and most other nations signed a convention prohibiting development, production, and stockpiling of biological and chemical weapons. US-Soviet arms negotiations resumed in 1985. At a summit meeting in Washington, D.C., in December 1987, US imperialist President Reagan and Soviet social imperialist leader Mikhail

³⁰⁵ “Russia Says New U.S. Weapon Makes Nuclear War More Likely—But May Have 2,000 of Its Own,” *Newsweek*, March 6, 2020 (<https://www.newsweek.com/russia-trump-budget-likely-nuclear-war-1491002>).

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

Gorbachev signed the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF), which eliminated many nuclear-tipped ballistic missiles that had been deployed throughout Europe and the western Soviet Union. The treaty called for the destruction of all US and Soviet missiles with ranges of about 500 to 5,500 km (about 300 to 3,400 mi) and established a 13-year program to verify compliance. The INF treaty was ratified by the US Senate and the Soviet Presidium in May 1988.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, Iraq's use of chemical weapons against Iran during the Iran-Iraq War, and in subsequent attacks on its own Kurdish population, prompted renewed international efforts to ban the use of such weapons. In 1993 representatives from 160 nations approved the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). This agreement banned production, use, sale, and storage of all chemical weapons. It also mandated destruction of existing stocks of weapons by the year 2005. The United States ratified this convention in 1997; however, the US had never been verified if it had complied with this and with other earlier agreements on the non-proliferation and the destruction of weapons of mass destruction. This prompted Libya, Syria, Iraq and North Korea not to sign the CWC agreement.

The non-signing of the CWC by Libya, Syria, Iraq and North Korea was one of the flimsiest justifications of the US imperialist government to launch wars of aggression and impose sanctions and embargo against these nations. In particular, the US imperialist government launched wars of aggression and sanctions against Libya from 1986 to 2003 with the objective to control oil resources of the Libyan people. Similarly and starting also in 1986, the US imperialist government imposed sanctions on Syria; then in 2003, it falsely singled out Syria as a threat to global security for its alleged support to terrorist groups, and deceptively accused the Syrian people as involved in various assassinations in 2005. Another was when the US imperialist government led the UN General Assembly to impose a trade embargo on Iraq that started in 1991 up to 1996 as Iraq was accused by US imperialism as producer of chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction (WMD). But despite the fact that there was no proof that Iraq was in possession of WMD and though US imperialist President George W. Bush was not successful to obtain UN Security Council approval for military measures against Iraq, he commanded his US imperialist forces,

with the support of his imperialist allies like Britain, and started to invade Iraq from March up to December 2003 with the objective to capture Saddam Hussein and control Iraq’s oil resources.

The US imperialist wars of aggression against the Korean people had been manifested during the Korean War (1949-1954) that forcibly divided the Korean people into North and South up to the present day. The US wars of aggression resulted in the death of 951,400 people (800,000 Koreans, 115,000 Chinese and 36,400 US military personnel). Up to the present day, the US imperialist government remains to be aggressive by imposing economic sanctions against the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) that started during the Korean War. In 2005, US imperialist President George W. Bush accused the DPRK as one of the countries supporting terrorism and characterized the socialist country as being part of an “axis of evil.” Then in 2006, the US imperialist government led the UN Security Council to impose financial and weapons sanctions on the DPRK. The US imperialist government imposes disarmament on the DPRK; but it remains as the No. 1 imperialist power in the world today that possesses huge numbers of weapons of mass destruction, produces and trades internationally all kinds of weapons and armaments.

In September 1996, leaders of the five major nuclear imperialist powers—the United States, Russia, China, France, and Britain—and dozens of other countries signed the landmark Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), which banned most types of nuclear weapons testing. In order to take effect, however, the treaty must be formally approved, or ratified, by all nations believed to be capable of producing nuclear arms. In 1999, the US Senate rejected the treaty. This rejection has prompted other known nuclear powers like China, Israel, Pakistan, and India not to have ratified the treaty.

In 1997 representatives from more than 120 nations met in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, and signed an accord to ban the manufacture and use of landmines. The treaty resulted from the efforts of several governmental and private groups, including the Red Cross and the International Campaign to ban the use, production, transfer, and stockpiling of landmines. But the United States, Russia, China, and most Middle Eastern nations refused to sign the accord on the grounds that a need for land mines remains.

Today, the United States and seven other countries have openly declared that they possess nuclear weapons and have conducted one or more nuclear test explosions to demonstrate this capability. The countries and the dates of their first nuclear test are:

1. The United States (atomic bombs as first nuclear weapons of mass destruction developed, tested and used through the fission of uranium by the US imperialist government in its top secret Manhattan Project in 1942);
2. Russia (first test conducted by the former USSR, 1949);
3. Britain (1952);
4. France (1960);
5. China (1964);
6. India (peaceful nuclear explosion in 1974; nuclear weapons test in 1998);
7. Pakistan (1998); and
8. North Korea (2006).

These facts only show that it is US imperialism that has led the production and use of nuclear weapons of mass destruction. It is understandable for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) to possess nuclear weapons as deterrence for US imperialist attacks against the Korean people.

Israel is generally believed to possess nuclear weapons, although it has not acknowledged this and is not known to have conducted a nuclear test. Including Israel, the total number of countries generally recognized as possessing nuclear weapons is nine. When the Soviet Union broke apart and capitalism was peacefully restored in 1991, three of the 15 newly independent countries, in addition to Russia, had nuclear weapons on their territory. But by the mid-1990s, the three countries—Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine—had transferred all of these nuclear weapons to Russia. Thus, presently 10 countries remain to be in possession of nuclear weapons of mass destruction: (1) the United States; (2) Great Britain; (3) France; (4) Israel; (5) Pakistan; (6) China; (7) India; (8) Russia; (9) Iran; and (10) North Korea.

The US imperialist government has unilaterally rejected the Biological Weapons and Toxins Convention (BWTC) treaty and its proto-

cols in 2001 on the grounds that inspections of facilities would jeopardize US national security. Since then, it has engaged in developing small weapons delivery devices for biological and chemical weapons as well as bio-defense research activities. The Pentagon now considers bio-weapons work acceptable as long as “non-lethal” is appended to its activities. In late 2003 the United States began funding a research program that could lead to a new type of nuclear weapon known as a mini-nuke. The mini-nuke would be the equivalent of 5 kilotons, or 5,000 tons of TNT. By comparison, the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima, Japan, had an explosive power equivalent to 15 kilotons. The purpose of the mini-nuke is to destroy underground command-and-control bunkers, underground arms depots, and other underground facilities. The research is aimed at developing a nuclear weapon that could penetrate the layers of steel and concrete designed to protect such bunkers without exploding on impact. Arms control advocates have objected to the research, saying it would lead to a new type of nuclear weapon, which would violate the intent of the 1996 Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. As a whole, therefore, US imperialism continues to disobey international policies on disarmament and non-proliferation of all kinds of weapons. It is US imperialism that increasingly proliferates, produces, trades and uses various types of arms, including nuclear arms, bombs and missiles. It does all this to have superprofits from arms production and international trade of deadly weapons, and to maintain its imperialist world dominance. It discourages, dissuades, prevents, restricts, and limits the production of nuclear arms in other countries such as those in the Middle East, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and other nations that aspire for national liberation and socialism in order to continue US imperialist global supremacy. It deploys and maintains thousands of US troops in various countries of the world like in South Korea and other nations in Asia, Latin America, Africa, Middle East to sustain its imperialist hegemony of the whole world. It uses its nuclear arms, bombs and missiles to terrorize nations by launching US imperialist wars of aggression against countries to maintain world dominance.

After World War II and as part of the Marshall Plan, US imperialism initiated the creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1949 in order to attach communist states, particularly the USSR, in the guise of defending the North Atlantic countries against terrorist attacks.

Member nations of the Warsaw Pact, which ended when the former USSR disintegrated in 1991, have become members of NATO, which has its headquarters in Brussels, Belgium. Up to the present day, US imperialism fully uses and maximizes NATO in launching wars of aggression and military interventions against nations that it sees as a threat to US world hegemony (examples, Bosnia, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Afghanistan). It continues to use all kinds of deadly weapons and arms in its wars of aggression in several countries in the world to maintain US imperialist world hegemony. US imperialism has also a strong control over the UN Security Council and manipulates it for global supremacy.

Through US imperialist President George W. Bush, US imperialism committed the American people in 2003 to a policy of preemptive wars of aggression against countries in the Middle East and Eastern Europe in order to maintain US world dominance and have direct control over the oil resources of these nations. In particular, the main objective of the US imperialist invasion on Iraq from March to December 2003 was to control the 112 billion barrels of proven oil reserves and over 250 billion of potential reserves in Iraq. The US imperialist government's war of aggression on Iraq gained for the US monopoly capitalists' tight control of the Middle East and a bonanza of benefits such as the introduction of permanent US imperialist military bases (now more than 80 overseas), facilities and forces, the preemption of the oil income of Saudi Arabia and the emirates with US military sales, and the squeeze on the Palestinian nation. Though this tight control, the US imperialist government has completely dominated and rendered impotent the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), and has now unquestioned hegemony over the oil resources in all parts of the world. Because of its acute interest in oil, US imperialism is trying to tighten its stranglehold on the Philippines, Indonesia, Colombia and Venezuela. It is also maneuvering to control the oil resources of Angola, Nigeria, Congo, Gabon, Cameroon and the Equatorial Guinea. It expects these countries to supply 25 percent of US oil.

Iran is another country that has been the target of the US imperialist wars of aggression and military interventions because the US monopoly capitalists have always wanted to control the rich oil resources of the Islamic Republic of the Iranian people. Iran has 155.6 billion barrels of oil reserves, the fourth biggest in the whole world. This is about 10%

of the whole world reserve of oil. In 1951, US imperialist intervention in Iran, supported by Britain, by launching Operation Ajax to oust Iran Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh who established the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) and nationalized the oil industry which was monopolized by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC) of Britain. The US imperialist government deployed CIA forces in Iran from 1951 to 1953 to destabilize the Iranian government under Mossadegh. The CIA forces, who disguised themselves as communist supporters of Mossadegh, launched attacks and bombings against the Muslims in Iran. Then, the US and the British governments spread anti-communist sentiments to justify their military interventions against Iran. In 1953, the US and British imperialists initiated a coup d'état that ousted Mossadegh. Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, the puppet shah of Iran, supported the coup d'état to broaden his dictatorship and get the support of the US and British imperialists. Following imperialist dictates, Pahlavi liberalized the oil industry and founded the Iranian Oil Participants Ltd., owned by: British Petroleum (40%); the US “Big Five,” namely Gulf Oil, Socal, Esso, Socony and Texaco (40%); British-Dutch Royal Dutch Shell (14%); and Compagnie française des pétroles, today known as TotalEnergies (6%). The foreign companies were allowed by Pahlavi to manage the operation of the Iranian Oil Participants Ltd. for a period of 25 years.

But due to intensifying economic crises and to fight Pahlavi, the imperialist puppet, the Iranian Revolution was launched in 1979. The massive demonstrations and people's strikes ousted and exiled Pahlavi from the country on January 17, 1979. And Ayatollah Khomeini, after being chosen as the leader of Iran, founded through a referendum the Islamic Republic of Iran on April 1, 1979. When the contract of the Iranian Oil Participants Ltd. ended in 1979, Khomeini nationalized the oil industry of Iran. This angered the US imperialist government and attempted a coup d'état against the revolutionary government of Khomeini. But this was foiled by Muslim students who attacked the US embassy on November 4, 1979 and held as captives 52 US personnel to force the US government to stop its military and political interventions and economic impositions and sanctions against Iran.

The US imperialist government had an active role in the Iran-Iraq War from 1980 to 1988, which resulted in more than 1 million civilian

casualties from the two countries. In this war, the US government instigated Saddam Hussein to occupy Iran. It extended billions of dollars as aid and intelligence support to Hussein in order to crush Iran. It gave Iraq arms and instruments to produce chemical weapons prohibited by international laws of war. And in 2002, the US imperialist government revived the imposition of economic and trade sanctions against Iran, accusing Iran as a threat to international security due to Iran's production of nuclear arms. Sanctions were lifted in 2015 when Iran signed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), an agreement also signed by US, France, Germany, Russia and China to limit nuclear production. But, in 2018, the US imperialist government unilaterally scrapped this agreement.

Up to the present day, the US imperialist war of aggression against Iran has now taken the form of preemptive war. According to US Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, the main purpose of preemptive war is to stop the imminent attacks of Iran. Preempting such threats was the reason why on January 3, 2020 the US drone strike killed General Qasem Soleimani, the commander of the Revolutionary Guards' Quds Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran, but whom the US imperialist government considered as the "commander of Iran's elite foreign espionage force." In reality, it is the US imperialist armed forces, which are based on the military bases of Iraq, that do espionage against Iran and implement preemptive war of aggression against the Iranian people. US imperialist President Donald Trump has turned the US preemptive war of aggression into "*re-establishing real deterrence*" against Iran and other nations, which the US imperialist government considers as threats to international security. The killing of General Soleimani has prompted the Islamic Republic of Iran to issue arrest warrants for Trump and 35 others on June 29, 2020 and ask the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) for help.

The US preemptive war of aggression against other nations is a violation of the international laws of war among sovereign nations. And take note that in the US imperialist wars of aggression against nations, such as what has been done against Afghanistan, Yugoslavia and Iraq, the US imperialist government has avoided combat casualties by pursuing the cowardly strategy and tactics of using high-tech weapons of mass destruction to pulverize fixed structures of every kind and wipe out as "collateral damage" entire civilian populations and of bribing the puppet states to

take power when the incumbent authorities can no longer manage the ruined economy. It also avoids casualties by funding and directing surrogate armed forces from local military, paramilitary, bandit and other assorted mercenary forces.

By now, Christian Churches all over the world ought to have realized that the imperialist wars of aggression and military interventions are morally unjust and reactionary; these exacerbate the monopoly capitalist oppression and exploitation against the weaker countries in the Third World and against the billions of the toiling masses of workers and peasants in both the developed and underdeveloped nations of the world. Consequently, Christians and their Churches’ leaders have to accede that pacifism only promotes imperialism and war, and to deny or obfuscate the aggressive nature of imperialism and the corresponding need for revolution against monopoly capitalism is to condone imperialist wars of aggression and the terrorist acts of puppet states. CNL asserts, therefore, that the aggressive acts of imperialism and the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism should precisely serve as the basic reasons for all Christians and the Churches’ leaders throughout the world to put forward the global call: No more war! No more imperialism! Reject war and end imperialism! This means that war can only be eliminated when imperialism, the source and root cause of war and terrorism, is finally ended.

Together with the aforesaid global call, it behooves that leaders of the Christian Churches in the world call the political community of each nation to demand the UN General Assembly to review the crimes committed by imperialism, primarily by US imperialism, during World War II (1939-1945), the Cold War from 1948 to 1990, and the preemptive wars of aggression and military interventions from 1991 to the present. In particular, the UN General Assembly and its member nations must not only castigate but submit to the International Criminal Court (ICC) criminalities such as genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and crimes of aggression, perpetuated by the US imperialist rulers and commanders in the countries of Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East in the past one and a half century to the present day.

The fight against imperialist wars can become an effective venue for Christians and Marxists to complement each other; for the main objective of scientific socialism/communism is the end of exploitation, oppression

and war for the peaceful coexistence among peoples and nations. Along such global call—No more war! No more imperialism! Reject war and end imperialism!—there is the great need for people of the world to launch continuing anti-imperialist mass movement that is primarily directed against US imperialism as the main source and root cause of imperialist wars in the world today. It is in this context that CNL is calling the Christian Churches in the United States together with the toiling American masses to launch massive anti-US imperialist mass movement to stop the imperialist-led US government's proliferation and trade of all kinds of armaments, and the wars of aggression and military interventions that the imperialist Pentagon does against nations of the world. The Christian Churches in the world ought to recognize now the urgent need that the anti-imperialist mass movement must outrightly condemn imperialist wars as morally unjust and reactionary against the whole of humanity. On the other hand, they must never obfuscate the need for revolution—which includes the right of the exploited and oppressed people and nations to launch just wars against US imperialism and puppet states especially in the Third World countries, and the right of the toiling masses in the industrialized nations to instigate armed insurrections in the global centers of imperialism—in order for the billions of the world toiling masses to attain justice and freedom, promote global peace among nations, and establish people's democracy and scientific socialism in each country of the entire world in this epoch of national-democratic and socialist revolutions.

The five strict conditions set by the Church legitimize the use of violence by the toiling masses against the unjust violence of imperialism and reactionary states, and reasonably justify the armed struggle and the people's war against the unjust wars of the imperialists and fascist states for national liberation from exploitation, oppression and enslavement towards people's democracy and socialism.

In Chapter Eight, which is about “The Political Community,” the *Compendium* clearly declares that unjust laws become acts of violence. Citing Saint Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae* (1265-1273), the *Compendium* asserts:

Authority must enact laws, that is, laws that correspond to the dignity of the human person and to what is required by right reason. “Human law is law insofar as it corresponds to right reason and therefore is derived from the eternal law. When, however, a law is contrary to reason, it is called an unjust law; in such a case it ceases to be law and becomes instead an act of violence.”³⁰⁷

If we have to apply the above quotation in the economic field, the widespread poverty of the toiling masses of workers and peasants and the enormous inequalities between the rich and poor peoples and nations are created by the unjust laws and system of exploitative and oppressive monopoly capitalists who get huge superprofits from the surplus value of labor, and only a meagre of it goes to the toiling masses. Thus, the global poverty and inequalities are the result of unjust laws and become economic acts of violence of the monopoly capitalists against billions of the toiling masses of workers and peasants. Also the world hegemony of imperialism, the imperialist wars of aggression and military interventions against the helpless nations, and the economic and trade embargo as well as the financial sanctions imposed by the US imperialist government against socialist states such as Cuba, DPRK and the like are all acts of violence. In particular, the economic and political control and the military interventions of US imperialism in the Philippines, and the bourgeois-feudal and fascist rule of the big landlords, the big comprador bourgeoisie and the big bureaucrat capitalists and the dictates of their US imperialist masters, who have maintained the whole country as a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society, are all acts of violence against the sovereign, democratic and human rights of the Filipino people.

Nonetheless, there is a great need to clarify the Church’s concept of violence. The *Compendium*, in Chapter Eleven concerning “The Promotion of Peace,” presents the need of “the witness of unarmed prophets” as it asserts that “violence is never a proper response.” Quoting *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2306, Pope Paul VI’s Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (November 12, 1976), Pope John Paul II’s *Address at Drogheda*,

³⁰⁷ *Compendium*, p. 201.

Ireland (September 29, 1979), and his *Address to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences* (November 12, 1983), the *Compendium* asserts:

Violence is never a proper response. With the conviction of her faith in Christ and with the awareness of her mission, the Church proclaims “that violence is evil, that violence is unacceptable as a solution to problems, that violence is unworthy of man. Violence is a lie, for it goes against the truth of our faith, the truth of our humanity. Violence destroys what it claims to defend: the dignity, the life, the freedom of human beings...” The contemporary world too needs the witness of unarmed prophets, who are often the objects of ridicule. “Those who renounce violence and bloodshed and, in order to safeguard human rights, make use of those means of defense available to the weakest, bear witness to evangelical charity, provided they do so without harming the rights and obligations of other men and societies. They bear legitimate witness to the gravity of the physical and moral risk of recourse to violence, with all its destruction and death.”³⁰⁸

The above quotation shows the ambivalence of the Catholic Church as regards the reality of violence. This kind of ambivalence can lead to pacifism, which condones the **unjust violence** of exploiters and oppressors who victimize the toiling masses. It is a disrespect to the exploited and oppressed masses who ought to use **just violence** to defend themselves from the violent attacks of exploiters and oppressors. On this basis, CNL is entreating that Christian Churches ought to make a clear distinction between the unjust violence (economic, political, cultural and physical) of oppressors and exploiters against the toiling masses and the just violence of the oppressed and exploited who, through natural law and right reason, as Saint Thomas has put it, have all the right to resist oppression and exploitation in order to defend and liberate themselves. Such distinction can truly lead the Christian Churches to assert that the violence of exploiters and oppressors is immoral and unjust; and the violence of the exploited and oppressed in order to struggle against exploitation and oppression is

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 248-249.

morally warranted and just. With this kind of clear distinction, Christianity and Marxism or scientific socialism can complement, though in terms of beliefs may not necessarily be compatible with, each other to eliminate unjust violence for truth, justice and freedom to reign in people’s societies. This distinction of unjust and just violence should also apply to unjust war and just war, as already expounded on above. Meaning, the wars of the imperialists against weaker nations are unjust and reactionary; while the wars of the exploited and oppressed classes and nations against imperialism and all kinds of reactions are just and revolutionary.

For CNL and other revolutionaries in the Philippines, the two kinds of violence and war are clear enough. The violence and fascism/war of the exploiters and oppressors, i.e., the big landlords, the big comprador bourgeoisie, the big bureaucrat capitalists and their US imperialist masters against the Filipino people is unjust and reactionary. The exploitative and oppressive classes make use of state fascism to continue their reactionary violence in order to maintain Philippine society as semi-colonial and semi-feudal, and heighten their exploitation, oppression and enslavement of the people, especially the workers, peasants, fisherfolk, national minorities, urban poor, the women and the youth. On the other hand, the people’s violence through armed struggle is just and revolutionary for radical change in order to establish the people’s revolutionary government, work for a comprehensive agrarian reform and nationalization of industries as basic conditions to establish socialist structures in the economic, political and cultural fields. And such shall serve as concrete foundations of a sovereign, democratic and socialist state, which shall have foreign relations with other countries that respect the sovereignty of the Filipino people as they shall aspire for mutual benefits and peaceful coexistence with other nations.

In Chapter Nine, which is about “The International Community,” *Compendium* brings out the importance of the principle of coexistence among nations that should be based on truth, justice, active solidarity and freedom. Citing Pope John XXIII’s Encyclical Letter *Pacem in Terris* (1963) and Pope Paul VI’s *Address to the United Nations* (October 4, 1965), the *Compendium* says:

The coexistence among nations is based on the same values that should guide relations among human beings: truth, justice, active solidarity and freedom. The Church's teaching with regard to the constitutive principles of the international community requires that relations among peoples and political communities be justly regulated according to the principles of reason, equity, law and negotiation, excluding recourse to violence and war, as well as to forms of discrimination, intimidation and deceit.³⁰⁹

The above statement—particularly the declaration “excluding recourse to violence and war”—totally denies the aggressive nature of imperialism and totally condones the unjust wars of the imperialists against weaker nations, and the terrorism and unjust violence of puppet states against the toiling masses of workers and peasants. For how can there be “coexistence among nations” that is based on truth, justice, active solidarity and freedom when imperialism imposes its global dominance to all countries of the world, especially those in the Third World? And would it not be much better for the Catholic Church to denounce imperialism and its fascist puppets and categorically evangelize them to totally stop their wars of aggression and military interventions and the fascist acts of their puppet states, rather than to preach to the exploited and oppressed peoples and nations of the world to outrightly exclude just violence and just war which they can launch in order to defend and liberate themselves from the aggressive and armed attacks of the imperialists and their puppet states?

Furthermore, CNL would aspire that Church people and the lay faithful in the Philippines and Christians in the Third World nations as well as in countries of the imperialist powers would regard the Catholic Church's social teaching on the principle of “coexistence among nations is based on the same values that should guide relations among human beings: truth, justice, active solidarity and freedom,” as complementary with the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence which Filipino revolutionaries would want to uphold in foreign relations once the People's Democratic Republic of the Philippines (PDRP) would be established upon the victory of the national-democratic revolution (NDR). These five principles,

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

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as bases of diplomatic and trade relations with all countries that respect the Filipino people’s sovereignty, are as follows:

1. Mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty;
2. Mutual non-aggression;
3. Non-interference in each other’s internal affairs;
4. Equality and mutual support; and
5. Peaceful coexistence. As these are anti-US imperialist and anti-monopoly capitalists, all unequal treaties must be abrogated.

The *Compendium* also in Chapter Eleven concerning “The Promotion of Peace” undoubtedly declares that “war of aggression is intrinsically immoral” and clarifies the principle of “legitimate defense” and “just war doctrine.” Quoting the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2265 & 2309, Second Vatican Ecumenical Council’s Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (1966) and the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace’s *The International Arms Race: An Ethical Reflection* (May 1, 1994), the *Compendium* says:

A war of aggression is intrinsically immoral. In the tragic case where such a war breaks out, leaders of the State that has been attacked have the right and the duty to organize a defense even using the force of arms. To be licit, the use of force must correspond to certain strict conditions: ‘the damage inflicted by the aggressor on the nation or community of nations must be lasting, grave and certain; all other means of putting an end to it must have been shown to be impractical or ineffective; there must be serious prospects of success; the use of arms must not produce evils and disorders graver than the evil to be eliminated. The power of modern means of destruction weighs very heavily in evaluating this condition. These are the traditional elements enumerated in what is called the “just war” doctrine. The evaluation of these conditions for moral legitimacy belongs to the prudential judgment of those who have responsibility for the common good.’³¹⁰

³¹⁰ Ibid., p. 251.

The four aforementioned “strict conditions/traditional elements enumerated in what is called the ‘just war’ doctrine” are again reiterated by the *Compendium* in the same Chapter Eight concerning “The Political Community” in expounding “the right to resistance” even up to the intent “to fight for a radical change in the situation.” Quoting as reference Saint Thomas Aquinas’ *Summa Theologiae* (1265-1273), the *Compendium* categorically affirms:

Recognizing that natural law is the basis for and places limits on positive law means admitting that it is legitimate to resist authority should it violate in a serious or repeated manner the essential principles of natural law. Saint Thomas Aquinas writes that “one is obliged to obey... insofar as it is required by the order of justice.” Natural law is therefore the basis of the right to resistance. There can be many different concrete ways this right may be exercised; there are also many different ends that may be pursued. Resistance to authority is meant to attest to the validity of a different way of looking at things, whether the intent is to achieve partial change, for example, modifying certain laws, or to fight for a radical change in the situation.³¹¹

“Legitimate defense” and “just war” in the above two quotations is furthermore elucidated clearly by *Compendium* in the following expositions on “*the right to armed resistance*” that must be based on five “strict conditions,” which is found also in Chapter Eight which is on “The Political Community.” Citing *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2243, Pope Paul VI’s Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* (1967), and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith’s *Instruction Libertatis Conscientia* (1987), the *Compendium* asserts:

The Church’s social doctrine indicates the criteria for exercising the right to resistance: “Armed resistance to oppression by political authority is not legitimate, unless all the following conditions are met: 1) there is certain, grave and prolonged violation of fundamental rights; 2) all other means of redress

³¹¹ Ibid., p. 202.

have been exhausted; 3) such resistance will not provoke worse disorders; 4) there is well-founded hope of success; and 5) it is impossible reasonably to foresee any better solution.” Recourse to arms is seen as an extreme remedy for putting an end to a “manifest, long-standing tyranny which would do great damage to fundamental personal rights and dangerous harm to the common good of the country.” The gravity of the danger that recourse to violence entails today makes it preferable in any case that passive resistance be practiced, which is “a way more conformable to moral principles and having no less prospects for success.”³¹²

In the context of the ongoing people’s war in the Philippines—that has started in 1969, is being waged by the Filipino people and led by the New People’s Army (NPA) in order to advance the national-democratic revolution (NDR), attain final victory, and start socialist construction upon final victory of the NDR—the CNL would want to clarify that there is no place of a “passive resistance” because this simply reduces the importance, validity and legitimacy of armed resistance that is fully founded on the aforesaid five conditions. Nevertheless, CNL asserts that while the armed resistance or the people’s war is the primary form of struggle, there is a great need for a militant resistance by the unarmed democratic mass movement that is anti-imperialist, anti-feudal and anti-fascist to enhance the economic, political and cultural aspirations of the Filipino people. This component of a militant and unarmed resistance is very much necessary in order to denounce unceasingly US imperialism, feudalism and state fascism, and promote in the legal and parliamentary arena the Filipino people’s economic interests, their political and civil liberties, and their sovereign, democratic, human and cultural rights, especially of the workers, peasants, fisherfolk, national minorities, the urban poor, the women and the youth.

For all Filipino revolutionaries, the people’s war is a “legitimate defense” and a “just war” that fully meets the Catholic Church’s five strict conditions in fostering the right of the Filipino people to “armed resistance” to advance the NDR up to final victory when socialist construction

³¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 202-203.

would commence. This “right to armed resistance” is very much related to the “right to wage war of self-defense,” very well mentioned by the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council’s Pastoral Constitution’s *Gaudium et Spes* (1966) in Chapter Eleven concerning “The Promotion of Peace.” The ongoing people’s war in the Philippines is just and legitimate. It is a war of self-defense and an armed resistance against the economic exploitation, political oppression and cultural enslavement of the Filipino people by US imperialism and its fascist state puppetry in the Philippines. It is legitimate and aims to meet all the five strict conditions as defined by the Catholic Church for launching an armed resistance.

The first of the five strict conditions of the Church for a legitimate armed resistance or a just people’s war: “There is certain, grave and prolonged violation of fundamental rights.” The three basic problems of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism in Philippine society since the 1900 up to the present day have violated undeniably, gravely and persistently the fundamental, democratic, sovereign and human rights of the Filipino people, especially the most exploited and oppressed classes and sectors such as the workers, peasants, fisherfolk, national minorities, urban poor, women and the youth. For more than a century now, the ruling classes of aggressors are the big landlords, the big comprador bourgeoisie, the big bureaucrat capitalists and their US imperialist masters.

The economic exploitation, political oppression and cultural enslavement inflicted by ruling classes of aggressors on the Filipino people through state fascism and the dictates of US imperialism have been grave and continue to be graver every year. And through state fascism and the US imperialist dictates, these ruling classes maintain the country as a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society with a backward agricultural and non-industrialized economy. They wield both the coercive and persuasive apparatuses to maintain their class rule by unleashing the full force of state violence against the Filipino people. In other words, the said three basic problems have been and continue to be the root causes of the ongoing exploitation, oppression and plunder in Philippine society. And these same three basic problems are also the basic root cause of the ongoing people’s war in the country. These, in fact, serve as the basis of the justness and legitimacy of the people’s war that advances the NDR with a socialist perspective in Philippine society.

Surely, the basic problems in the Philippines may also exist in most of the Third World countries of Asia, Latin America and Africa, whose societies may also be characterized generally as semi-colonial and semi-feudal. In such case, these other Third World nations have also the right to instigate armed revolution through people’s war. Revolutionaries in each of these countries can learn from one another on how to build and develop a people’s war to advance the struggle for national liberation and the establishment of democracy and socialism in their particular societies.

The second of the five strict conditions of the Church for a legitimate armed resistance or a just people’s war: “All other means of redress have been exhausted; and all other means of putting an end to damage done by the aggressor have been shown to be impractical or ineffective.” Since the early 1960s under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, young Filipino revolutionaries, who have studied Philippine history and society as well as the revolutionary experiences of the Filipino people’s struggle against US imperialism since the 1900s, have come up to the conclusion that there is no other means to put an end to the three basic problems of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism but for the Filipino people to wage a National-Democratic Revolution (NDR) through protracted people’s war. It is an armed revolution, which is the continuation of the Philippine Revolution of 1896 and the resumption of the Filipino war against US imperialism in order to liberate the people from foreign and feudal oppression and exploitation. It is a national-democratic revolution of a new type because unlike the 1896 Revolution, which was led and ultimately betrayed by the *ilustrados*, the Filipino liberal bourgeoisie, the present people’s revolutionary movement must be led by the most advanced class in the era of imperialist and capitalist decline, the Filipino working class. For only the proletarian leadership, founded on the basic alliance of the working class and the peasant masses, which serves as a stable foundation of the national united front, can the struggle for national liberation, democracy and socialism be won.

Learning golden lessons from the victory of the Philippine revolution of 1896 against Spanish colonialism, the defeat of Filipino people in the war against US imperialism during the Filipino-American war that started in February 1899 to 1902, and the revolutionary movement that developed from the 1930s to the 1950s, Filipino revolutionaries have

adopted since 1968 the strategic line of protracted people's war to encircle the cities from the countryside, and accumulate strength until conditions are ripe for seizing the cities. This strategic line of the protracted people's war are based on two reasons. First, it gives full play to the role of the peasants as the main force of the democratic revolution. Second, it is the way to enable the people's army to grow from small to big and from weak to strong, and avoid being decisively destroyed in one uprising or one battle by a far superior enemy military force. These two reasons of the strategic line of the protracted people's war and the correctness and justness of the NDR with a socialist perspective are perfect explanations why even after half a century the people's war goes on and intensifies year after year. The NDR through people's war will never be crushed and defeated by the people's enemy despite the use of superior arms, extreme brutality and deception against the Filipino people, but will continue to intensify up to final victory upon which socialist construction shall commence.

Revolutionaries in semicolonial and semifeudal countries of Asia, Latin America and Africa could also develop protracted people's war as the strategic form of struggle for the national liberation and the establishment of people's democracy and socialism in their societies. They can identify specific characteristics of the people's war in order to adopt and suit the armed revolution on the basis of the particularities of their own country. They can create guerrilla fronts and bases in the vast countryside of their country to force the people's enemy to disperse its forces and prevent it from concentrating them on one area. They can realize that only by waging a people's war can the peasantry achieve agrarian revolution in their nation, and that the protracted people's war is the answer of the masses to the fascist brutality unleashed by imperialism, primarily by US imperialism, and puppet states against the people. The concerted efforts of revolutionaries in waging people's war, that encircles the cities from the countryside, especially in the Third World nations would be able to arouse, organize and mobilize exploited and oppressed peoples in their big number to rise up and make revolution the main trend which would finally force US imperialism, a huge monster but in essence a paper tiger, to rapidly head to its total collapse, including its local allies of big bourgeoisie, big landlords and bureaucrat capitalists.

The third of the five strict conditions of the Church for a legitimate armed resistance or a just people’s war: “Such resistance will not provoke worse disorders; and the use of arms must not produce evils and disorders graver than the evil to be eliminated.” In the context of the ongoing NDR through people’s war in the Philippines, the revolutionary resistance and armed struggle of the Filipino people has started and continue to resolve the current disorders in the economic, political and cultural life of the masses that have been created by the big landlords, big comprador bourgeoisie, bureaucrat capitalist and their US imperialist masters. The NDR through the protracted people’s war has started the struggle against the three evils of US imperialism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism for the liberation of the Filipino people and the establishment of people’s democracy and socialism in Philippine society. The elimination of the three evils is the overall objective of the Philippine revolution’s *Program for a People’s Democratic Revolution (PPDR)* which is to accomplish national liberation and democracy and pave the way for a bright socialist future. The PPDR is determinedly being implemented in the political, military, economic and cultural fields, and in foreign relations by the Filipino people through their revolutionary mass organizations.

In the political field, the national-democratic revolutionary movement of the Filipino people ceaselessly builds the revolutionary political power of the masses by establishing people’s democratic government in revolutionary bases. Revolutionary committees are continually being set up in barrios, factories, schools, offices and other areas as the embryo or actual organs of political power all over the country. In the military field, the NPA formations are continually strengthened in order to serve the people by tirelessly building and expanding guerrilla bases and zones, doing with the peasant masses revolutionary land reform, and launching tactical offensives to defend the masses from their enemies. The NPA commands at all levels persistently build and consolidate formations of the regular mobile forces, the people’s guerrillas and the people’s militia to strengthen the Red Army in advancing wave upon wave over a protracted period of time its principal task of seizing political power and consolidating it.

In the economic field, confiscation of the property of the imperialists, the exploiting classes and traitors have to be done in order to benefit the workers, semi-workers and peasant masses. All enterprises which have

a monopolistic character shall be nationalized. While the national bourgeoisie shall be allowed to develop capitalist production which does not dominate or hamper the livelihood of the Filipino people, the state sector of the economy shall have a socialist character and shall constitute the leading force of the whole national economy. The lands of the landlords shall be distributed at no cost to the peasants who have little or no land. The principle of equalizing landownership shall be implemented. Cooperative enterprises shall be initiated among owner-cultivators and other petty producers as the first step towards socialism. A rich peasant economy will be allowed within a reasonable period of time. Even landlords who have not committed public crimes shall be afforded the opportunity of earning a living, although they shall not be put in any position to decide or influence decisions.

In the cultural field, the Philippine Revolution cannot advance at all without the general awakening of the broad masses of the people. The concept of people's democracy or national democracy of a new type must pervade the cultural activities of the revolutionary mass movement. A national, scientific and mass culture must overwhelm and overthrow the imperialist, feudal and anti-people culture that now prevails. The educational system from the lowest to the highest levels shall be so democratic that it shall charge no fees whatsoever from students. A revolutionary national culture must be propagated in order to oppose imperialist oppression and uphold the dignity and independence of the Filipino nation. It must repudiate the decadent culture of colonialism, imperialism and neocolonialism. It must link up with the socialist and new-democratic cultures of other nations. What is progressive in foreign cultures should be assimilated and adapted to national conditions. At the same time, due respect must be accorded to the culture and customs of national minorities. A scientific culture must be propagated in order to oppose the reactionary idealism dished out by imperialism and feudalism and also the superstitions that still persist. At all times, the theory of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism must be the leading core of this scientific culture. A culture that truly belongs to the broad masses of people, because it is anti-imperialist and anti-feudal, should be propagated. It should be a revolutionary and democratic culture, expressive of the heroic struggles and aspirations of the toiling masses.

In the field of foreign relations, CPP is highly conscious of fighting US imperialism and all reaction under the great principle of proletarian internationalism and under the great policy of the international united front. Whenever possible, direct relations with fraternal parties, with revolutionary movements and with socialist countries. When the People’s Democratic Republic of the Philippines shall have been established, it shall open and maintain diplomatic and trade relations with all countries which respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Filipino people and which engage in such relations for mutual benefit. It shall abide by the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, as already mentioned above. All unequal treaties and arrangements with the international bourgeoisie led by US imperialism must be immediately abrogated. The closest and warmest relations shall be fostered with fraternal socialist states, parties and all revolutionary movements fighting imperialism, modern revisionism and all reaction.

The fourth of the five strict conditions of the Church for a legitimate armed resistance or a just people’s war: “There is well-founded hope of success; there must be serious prospects of success.” Under the guidance of the revolutionary theory of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and through solid proletarian leadership and the united front, the ongoing NDR through protracted people’s war in the Philippines has a bright future of success up to victory. Of course, this bright future of the Philippine revolution is founded on the victories of earlier revolutions in Russia, China, Vietnam, Cuba and other socialist countries, and of the national liberation movements among nations of the world towards the establishment of people’s democracy and socialism.

This well-founded hope of success of the NDR through the people’s war in the Philippines is also based on the achievements that have been attained by the Filipino people’s revolutionary movement. The Philippine revolutionary movement has established the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) as the most consolidated underground united front organization which is composed of eighteen (18) basic revolutionary organizations, explicitly under working class leadership of the CPP and for armed struggle primarily led by the NPA along the general line of national democratic revolution. In the course of the revolutionary struggle, the current 18 basic revolutionary organizations have been established

by the workers; semi-proletariat; peasants; national minorities; health professionals and personnel; women; youth and students; teachers; scientists, inventors and environmentalists; government employees; artists, journalists and writers; overseas Filipinos and their families; lawyers, judges and law students; Christians and Church workers. The CNL, one of the 18 allied underground revolutionary organizations and founded on February 17, 1972, was a founding member of the NDFP, which was established on April 24, 1973.

The NDFP is a distinct and integral united front organization. It is characterized by its essential tasks of helping forge national unity, strengthening its component organizations, winning over other forces to become either components or cooperators and paving the way for the establishment of organs of the people's democratic power, especially at levels higher than that of the barrio. Organs of the people's democratic power are now operating in more than 110 guerrilla fronts that cover 73 of the 81 provinces across the country. Agrarian reform is determinedly continuing in all guerrilla fronts; and widespread anti-feudal, anti-fascist and anti-imperialist movements are intensifying throughout the country.

At the same time since 1992, the NDFP has begun to engage in national peace negotiations with the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP). Under the joint GRP-NDFP declaration on September 1, 1992, called "The Hague Joint Declaration," both Negotiating Panels stipulated that the holding of peace negotiations must be in accordance with mutually acceptable principles, including national sovereignty, democracy and social justice and no precondition shall be made to negate the inherent character and purpose of the peace negotiations. Said joint declaration identified four substantive agendas of the formal peace negotiations, namely, (1) human rights and international humanitarian law; (2) socio-economic reforms; (3) political and constitutional reforms; and (4) end of hostilities and disposition of forces.

On July 5, 1996, the NDFP submitted the "NDFP Declaration of Undertaking to Apply the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Protocol I of 1977" to the Federal Council of the Swiss Government as official depository of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the 1977 Protocol I. This declaration states that the NDFP, as a party to the armed conflict, civil war or war of national liberation, represents the revolutionary people and

forces in diplomatic and other international relations and in the ongoing peace negotiations with the GRP to apply the Geneva Conventions and Protocol I to the armed conflict in the Philippines in accordance with Article 96, paragraph in relation to Article 1, paragraph four of Protocol I. By virtue of this unilateral declaration of the NDFP, the GRP is bound by the Geneva Conventions and henceforth by Protocol I in accordance with Article 96, paragraph 3 (c) of Protocol I.

With the NDFP invoking and exercising the people’s right of self-determination, both the GRP and the NDFP are likewise bound by international customary law pertaining to humanitarian principles, norms, and rules in armed conflict. The NDFP undertakes to respect the provisions of the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Protocol I of 1977, regarding the conduct of hostilities and the protection of the civilian population and the combatants *hors de combat* in the armed conflict with the GRP and to regard its obligations under the aforesaid instruments of international humanitarian law as having the force of law among its forces and in the areas under its control.

Also in the declaration of undertaking, the NDFP regards as legitimate targets of military attacks the units, personnel and facilities belonging to the (a) The Armed Forces of the Philippines; (b) The Philippine National Police; (c) The paramilitary forces; and (d) The intelligence personnel of the AFP and PNP. And it is clearly stated that civil servants of the GRP are not subject to military attack, unless in specific cases they belong to any of the four stated categories. The declaration of undertaking also states that any captured personnel of the military, police and paramilitary forces of the GRP shall be treated as prisoners of war, and the NDFP demands that the GRP likewise treat as prisoners of war any captured personnel of the NPA and other forces represented by the NDFP. The NDFP has also asked for the assistance and services of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and called upon all Contracting Parties to the Geneva Conventions and Protocol I to ensure the GRP and NDFP respect their obligations.

Despite the unbroken offensive and counter-offensive clashes between the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the New People’s Army (NPA) from 1992 to 1998, peace negotiations between the GRP and the NDFP Negotiating Panels persevered and resulted to the com-

pletion of the first of the four substantive agenda, i.e., on human rights and international humanitarian law. Both Negotiating Panels signed the *Comprehensive Agreement on the Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL)* on March 16, 1998. The corresponding principles of both Negotiating Panels, NDFP Chairperson Marino Orosa and GRP President Joseph E. Estrada, approved and signed the crucial document on April 10, 1998 and August 7, 1998, respectively.

On January 14, 1999, the European Parliament, the representative assembly of the European Union (EU) and the sole EU body directly elected by the citizens of its member states, formulated “The 1999 European Parliament Resolution on the Philippines.” The EU Parliament resolution expresses full support to the GRP-NDFP peace negotiation, congratulates both Negotiation Panels for the success of forging the CARHRIHL which both Panels ought to implement and apply the International Bill of Rights and International Humanitarian Law, and pave the way for a just and lasting peace in the Philippines.

However, the peace negotiations between the GRP and the NDFP stalled all throughout the US-Macapagal Arroyo Regime (USMAR) because of three things. **First**, Arroyo implemented *Oplan Bantay Laya (OBL) I and II*, firmly based once again on the global US *Counter-Insurgency (COIN) Guide*. This resulted in more than a thousand extra-judicial killings and enforced disappearances, perpetuated by Gen. Jovito Palparan and other AFP generals. USMAR did not want any peace talks with the aim of resolving the root causes of the civil war, but required instead the CPP-NPA-NDFP to surrender to the GRP. **Second**, the US imperialist government officially designated in 2002 that the CPP and the NPA are foreign terrorist organizations. **Third**, the European Union and the Dutch government, hard-pressed by the US imperialist government and by the Arroyo regime, labelled Professor Jose Maria Sison as a terrorist. Accordingly, the Dutch government arrested Professor Sison on August 28, 2007 on charges of participation of or incitement to the commission of the murders of Romulo Kintanar and Arturo Tabara. And fascist puppet Arroyo proclaimed that “Sison’s arrest is a boost to peace in the Philippines,” which totally negated the efforts of Professor Sison as one of the prime movers of the GRP-NDFP peace process.

Under the US-Aquino II Regime (USAIIR) and directed by the global *US COIN Guide*, the AFP-PNP commanders with their para-military CAFGUs (Civilian Armed Force Geographical Units) launched another Operation Plan (Oplan), called *Oplan Bayanihan* and *Peace-and-Development Team (PDT) Operations* against the CPP-NPA throughout the country. The military and the police also continued former President Arroyo’s policy of militarizing the progressive mass movements of the Filipino people, that resulted in additional extra-judicial killings, enforced disappearances and other human rights violations against the civilian populace. Thus, no qualitative development on the GRP-NDFP national peace talks occurred during the whole term of the Aquino II regime. The GRP officials and the AFP-PNP officers were pushing the establishment of “peace zones” and “localized peace talks,” which were, of course, rejected entirely by the CPP-NPA and the NDFP; as these would never resolve the root causes of the armed conflict.

There was an atmosphere of great hope among the Filipino people for a just and lasting peace when Rodrigo Roa Duterte won as president during the 2016 national elections. He called himself the first “socialist” and first “leftist” President. He began to appoint some leaders of the progressive mass movement to some key positions in his cabinet. He freed political prisoners, including members of the NDFP consultants like Benito Tiamson and his wife, Wilma Austria Tiamson.

There arose an awe-inspiring appreciation of the Filipino people to the Duterte administration for the resumption of the formal talks in the peace negotiations between the GRP and the NDFP, facilitated by the Royal Norwegian Government in Oslo, Norway, that started on August 2016, continued in the second round of the peace talks on October 2016, and followed by a third round of peace negotiations in Rome, Italy on January 2017. These rounds of peace talks reaffirmed all past agreements, notably the six agreements signed and approved during the presidency of Fidel V. Ramos and of Joseph E. Estrada, and drafted the second substantive agenda of the peace process on socioeconomic reforms.

According to the Joint Statement of the GRP-NDFP Negotiating Panels in closing the third round of talks, the first four parts of the draft on *Comprehensive Agreement on Socio-Economic Reforms (CASER)* had been done, which both Panels agreed to finish within 2017. Both Panels also

exchanged their drafts of the agreement on political and constitutional reforms, the third of the four agreed substantive agenda in the 1992 “The Hague Joint Declaration” of the GRP and NDFP Negotiating Panels. Both Panels agreed to set the fourth and fifth round of talks on February 22-24 and April 2-6, 2017. They also signed *Supplemental Guidelines* on social and economic reforms which would hasten the fast implementation of CARHRIHL, especially the investigation of the countless human rights violations during the regimes of Estrada, specially Arroyo, and Aquino II, and the indemnification of the victims of extra-judicial killings, enforced disappearances, illegal detentions and violations of the international humanitarian laws due to military operations done by state forces. In the Joint Statement, there was also a reminder of releasing the 400 political detainees as a concrete manifestation of implementing the CARHRIHL. The release of all political detainees, which President Duterte assured in August 2016, would have served as one of the GRP’s confidence-building measures in response to the unilateral declaration of the revolutionary movement of an indefinite ceasefire. But President Duterte never fulfilled his promise.

On February 1, 2017, the joint decision of the Central Committee of the CPP and the National Operations Command of the NPA announced the end of the unilateral ceasefire which would expire at 12 midnight on February 10, 2017 for three main reasons: **First**, the Duterte regime failed to comply to free all political prisoners even though 160 days had already gone after this was discussed on August 2016. **Second**, the GRP was cunning in using the ceasefire of the CPP/NPA in order to barge into the territories of the people’s democratic government. **Third**, the revolutionary movement is against an indefinite ceasefire that does not benefit the Filipino people. Thus, after midnight of February 10, the NPA resumed their tactical offensives against the AFP and PNP to defend the territories of the people’s government and punish the para-military groups and Duterte’s death squads, including armed, abusive and rapacious businessmen and syndicates. Nevertheless, though the CPP and the NPA ended the unilateral ceasefire, they made it clear that they continue to support the peace negotiations of the GRP and the NDFP.

On the other side, while there was no information yet from the GRP Negotiating Panel of the termination of the GRP’s unilateral ceasefire dec-

laration, the NDFP Negotiating Panel was waiting for the next round of talks, scheduled on February 22-24 and April 2-6, 2017. But on the part of autocrat Duterte, while he was expected to follow the agreed process of first informing 10 days before the actual termination of the GRP’s unilateral ceasefire declaration, the Filipino people were shocked when on February 4, 2017 he unilaterally declared instead the termination of the whole peace negotiation between the GRP and the NDFP, the cancellation of the passports of the NDFP negotiators and consultants, and their arrest and detention without bail, which were outright violations against the *Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG)*, which were reaffirmed earlier by both Negotiating Panels. On February 6, 2017, NDFP Consultant Ariel Arbitrario and one of his staff were arrested in Sirawan, Toril, Davao City.

Nonetheless, tyrant Duterte might have listened to the GRP Negotiating Panel as the fourth round of talks was held on March 10-11, 2017 in Utrecht, The Netherlands. Both Negotiating Panels continued the drafting of the *CASER (Comprehensive Agreement on Socio-Economic Reforms)* and *CAPCR (Comprehensive Agreement on Political and Constitutional Reforms)*. As their appreciation to the determination of both the Negotiating Panels, the CPP and the NPA declared after the March 10-11, 2017 round of peace talks that they were prepared to issue a unilateral declaration to bring back the ceasefire to support the continuation and completion of the drafting of *CASER* and *CAPCR*.

But the impending collapse of the peace negotiations gradually worsened because of autocrat Duterte’s Oplan Tokhang “war against drugs,” Oplan Kapayapaan war of suppression and martial law and anti-Moro war in Mindanao. The anti-Moro war brought about the total destruction of Marawi City in Mindanao, untold hardships to hundreds of thousands of Maranaos, countless killings and the complete abandon for the respect of human rights. The AFP’s airborne bombings have boundless and indiscriminate effects on the civilians, their communities, and the environment.

In summary, the peace negotiations between the GRP and the NDFP has totally collapsed because tyrant Duterte and his top AFP and PNP commanders have refused to resolve the root cause of the armed conflict and have terminated the GRP-NDFP peace talks for six counts by issuing executive proclamations and orders, which have been and are

now being implemented by the Duterte regime and by the AFP and PNP throughout the whole country and even abroad.

First count: *Proclamation No. 360.* After meeting with US imperialist President Trump on November 12-13, 2017 at the ASEAN summit in Manila, tyrant Duterte issued Proclamation No. 360 on November 23, 2017 that formally terminated the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations.

Second count: *Proclamation No. 374.* On December 5, 2017, Duterte issued Proclamation No. 374, listing the CPP-NPA as a terrorist organization. Since then and up to now, the AFP generals, especially under Maj. Gen. Antonio Parlade, the military's deputy chief of staff for civil-military operations, have been spreading in the Philippines and abroad that: "The CPP-NPA is listed as a terrorist organization by the United States, the European Union, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the Philippines."

Third count: *Executive Order No. 10.* In this executive order issued in June 2018, President Duterte and the AFP-PNP were calling for "localized peace talks with insurgents to be held at the local level in their respective areas of responsibility." Instead of peace negotiations at the national level by the duly authorized panels of the GRP and the NDFP, what tyrant Duterte wants is fake localized peace negotiation staged and controlled by the military and the Office of the Presidential Adviser for the Peace Negotiations (OPAPP). In these fake negotiations, people are gathered by local officials and misrepresented as surrenderers and the military officers collect reward money for the fake surrenderers. The revolutionary mass organizations of the NDFP have declared that localized peace talks will neither solve the root causes of the armed conflict, nor respond to the Filipino people's aspiration for a just and lasting peace; and the whole revolutionary movement and the NPA's operations commands at all levels throughout the country reject any localized peace talks. And they clearly see the inter-connections of the fake localized peace negotiations, the Enhanced-Comprehensive Local Integration Program (E-CLIP) and the fake surrenderers as smokescreen avenues of autocrat Duterte for the fast promotion of military and police officers, as well as cover-up for widespread corruption inside the bureaucratic structures of the AFP and the PNP.

Fourth count: *Executive Order No. 70.* On December 4, 2018, tyrant Duterte issued Executive Order No. 70 that formed “National Task Force” to End the Local Communist Armed Conflict (ELCAC) by 2022 through the “Whole-of-Nation Approach” and the “12 Pillars.” Of course, this is just a daydream of tyrant Duterte and the US imperialists, for the protracted people’s war cannot be stopped, not until the root causes of the armed revolution will be dismantled. As already explained above, the root causes of the armed conflict in the Philippines are US imperialism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism, being imposed upon the Filipino people with impunity and tyranny by the big landlords, the big comprador bourgeoisie and the big bureaucrat capitalists under the dictate of their US imperialist masters.

Fifth count: *Arresting and detaining NDFP consultants, and killing NDFP consultants.* This is outright violation of the GRP-NDFP agreements on *Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG)*. Since 2018 to the present, there are six NDFP consultants who have been illegally arrested and are now under detention, namely: Renante Gamara, Edilberto Silva, Vicente Ladlad, Rafael Baylosis, Rey Casambre and Frank Fernandez. As of now, three NDFP consultants have been killed by tyrant Duterte’s fascist forces: Randy Felix Malayao was shot dead by an assailant inside a bus in Aritao, Nueva Vizcaya at 2:00 on January 30, 2019; Julius “Ka Nars” Soriano Giron, his attending physician and his aide were viciously murdered inside an apartment in Baguio City on March 13, 2020; and Randall Echanis was brutally tortured and stabbed to death inside his apartment in Metro Manila on August 10, 2020.

Sixth count: *Extra-judicial killings and red-tagging.* Besides politically motivated extra-judicially killings, lawyers and human rights defenders and their organizations have documented numerous extra-judicial killings that are connected to President Duterte’s *Oplan Tokhang* “war against drugs.” In the 2½-year presidency of Duterte, more than 30,000 Filipinos as of June 2020—from the urban poor, workers, peasants, Lumads, Moro people, other national minorities, the women and the youth, human rights advocates and defenders, lawyers and judges (46), 4 Church people, (3 Catholic priests—Fr. Mark Ventura of Cagayan, Fr. Tito Paez and Fr. Richmond Nilo of Nueva Ecija and 1 from UCCP, Pastor Ernesto Javier Estrella in Antipas, Cotabato), media people, and some political opposi-

tionists (10 mayors, 6 vice mayors)—have been slain by the army and the police. Such cases of extra-judicial killings have already been filed in the International Criminal Court (ICC) by Philippine organizations of lawyers and human rights defenders.

President Duterte and his top AFP and PNP officers have instituted in the Philippine government the current policy of red-tagging. This policy of red-tagging is an essential part of the implementation of ELCAC. All personalities and their organizations—who support the peace talks, human rights advocates and defenders who are against tyranny, and even the political oppositionists of President Duterte’s charter change and Federalism—are included in the red-tagging list. Tyrant Duterte’s administration and military and police commanders are in one voice in claiming that all those in the list are supporters of the CPP-NPA-NDFP. At the international level, Maj. Gen. Antonio Parlade, the military’s deputy chief of staff for civil-military operations, is the commanding officer who is in-charge of seeking the cooperation of various nations to fight the “wide international network” of the organizations “infiltrated” by the CPP. So it is not surprising that found in the red-tagging list of Maj. Gen. Parlade are personalities and their organizations like IBON, Karapatan, National Union of People’s Lawyers (NUPL), Gabriela, Association of Concerned Teachers (ACT), and Rural Missionaries of the Philippines (RMP). The Philippine Ecumenical Peace Platform (PEPP) and its five member Churches—such as the CBCP, PCEC, EBF and AMRSP—are red-tagged by Duterte’s military and police. Even three bishops of the seven bishops—who were part of the 110 delegates in the founding assembly of the One Faith, One Nation, One Voice Cordillera Chapter last February 2020—were red-tagged focusing on Bishop Rex Valor Reyes, Bishop Ruel Marigza and Bishop Victor Bendico.

All of the above are the bases of the NDFP and the entire Philippine revolutionary movement to declare that there would be no more peace negotiations between the GRP and the NDFP as long as tyrant Duterte remains in power. All the 18 basic revolutionary organizations under the NDFP are calling for the ouster of Duterte before the 2022 national elections. Thus on October 1, 2020, the CNL National Executive Committee issued a memorandum for all regional and provincial CNL councils/chapters on the “campaign to further isolate the tyrant US-Duterte Regime

and contribute to his ouster.” It is the hope of the entire revolutionary movement that the removal of tyrant Duterte can pave the way for a new president who would side with the people by abrogating all fascist laws, upholding and implementing all approved peace agreements between the GRP, continuing and completing the drafting of *CASER* (*Comprehensive Agreement on Socio-Economic Reforms*) and *CAPCR* (*Comprehensive Agreement on Political and Constitutional Reforms*) until these would be signed by the GRP and NDFP Negotiation Panels, and finally by their respective principals. It would only be then that the Negotiation Panels could proceed to the drafting of the last substantive agenda of the GRP-NDFP national peace talks, the end of hostilities and disposition of forces.

The fifth of the five strict conditions of the Church for a legitimate armed resistance or a just people’s war: “It is impossible reasonably to foresee any better solution.” As already expounded on and in the context of Philippine society as semicolonial and semifeudal that is maintained by the dictates of US imperialism and the class rule of the big feudal lords, the big comprador bourgeoisie, who are themselves the bureaucrat capitalists that control the fascist puppet state, there is no other better solution to end this exploitative and oppressive situation that miserably affects the Filipino people, especially the toiling masses, but to determinedly pursue the NDR through people’s war for the people’s liberation and the establishment of people’s democracy and socialism.

The road to people’s war for national liberation and the founding of people’s democracy and socialism can also be the foreseeable solution to the basic problems besetting other semicolonial and semifeudal societies in most of the Third World nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Spreading and strengthening people’s war in these nations will surely lead to the defeat and end of US imperialism which is the No. 1 international instrument of infidelity to worldwide peace to reign on earth.

The building and establishment of worldwide peace, one of the greatest concerns of the Church’s social doctrine, is the objective of Marxism, scientific socialism and communism to free human societies from any form of class exploitation, oppression and enslavement.

Peace in each country of the world could be attained when there would be concerted efforts among revolutionary compatriots in the strug-

gle against imperialism and all forms of reaction and when people's liberation, democracy and socialism would be accomplished and established in various countries of the world. And worldwide peace could be achieved only when imperialism and all forms of reaction shall have been eliminated in most of the industrialized and the underdeveloped nations of the world. Such worldwide peace cannot be reached impetuously and but only through the sustained efforts and the uninterrupted increase of full-pledged revolutionaries to encompass considerable millennial epochs, maybe similar to the thousand years mentioned in Revelation 20, until the attained of a worldwide peace, a period of great happiness and perfection of humankind.

In the history of the Roman Catholic Church, it was Pope John XXIII who instigated the call for worldwide peace. This was due to his own personal background and experiences during World War I, World War II and the period of the Cold War. Born Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli *with peasant origins* in Sotto il Monte, Italy, on November 25, 1881, he was educated in Bergamo and Rome and was ordained priest in 1904. During World War I (August 1914 to November 1918), he served as a medical sergeant and then as a chaplain. He was sent as papal representative to Bulgaria in 1925, a period wherein the agrarian and communist movement was strong in Bulgaria. He then served (1933-1944) as apostolic delegate to both Greece and Turkey. It was during this period of World War II that German Nazi fascist forces occupied Greece from 1939 to 1945; while Turkey kept neutral during almost all of World War II, but on February 1945, Turkey declared war on Germany and Japan. It was also during World War II that Father Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli played a great role in rescuing Jews from Nazi-controlled Hungary. In 1944 he was appointed papal nuncio to France. He was made a cardinal in 1953. He was elected pope on October 28, 1958, at the age of 77, and took the name Pope John XXIII. He died at the Vatican City on June 30, 1963.

It was during the four years and six months papacy of Pope John XXIII that the Roman Catholic Church began to respond to the needs of the modern world. Historians have recognized that Pope John XXIII was the one who initiated a new era in the history of the Roman Catholic Church through his receptivity to church reform and movement for change towards worldwide peace, and through his openness for promoting

Christian unity and the ecumenical movement with the Orthodox and Protestant Churches in order that Christians and their Churches would be united to act effectively in response to the problems and struggles of peoples and nations in the modern world towards worldwide peace.

Pope John XXIII’s greatest accomplishment was calling the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council that started church reform and movement for change and opened the Roman Catholic Church for the advancement of Christian unity and the ecumenical movement so that the entire Christian Churches (Catholics, Orthodox and Protestants) would be able to respond to the problems and struggles of the human race. Thus, the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council became the symbol of the Roman Catholic Church’s openness to the modern world. The council was announced by Pope John XXIII on January 25, 1959, and held 178 meetings in the autumn of each of the four successive years. The first gathering was on October 11, 1962, and the last was on December 8, 1965, two years after Pope John XXIII’s death.

Participation in the **Second Ecumenical Vatican Council**, whose main objective was the unification of Christians and of all humanity, was in a radical departure from past practice because of its being ecumenical wherein Orthodox and Protestant Churches were invited to send official delegate-observers. Catholic cardinals and official delegates from “Communist” countries were invited in the council; but because of government pressures of the imperialist powers, especially US imperialism, “Communist” nations were sparsely represented during the council meetings. (*Note*: Communist in open-and-close quotation marks here refers to the revisionist regimes in the USSR that started in 1957 onward, as expounded on in the CNL’s 1st topic, “A Preliminary Overview.”) The average attendance at the council meetings was 2,200. Pope John XXIII’s interventions in the council supported the movement for change favored by the majority of the delegates. Topics discussed included modern communications, media, relations between Christians and Jews, religious freedom, and the role and education of priests and bishops. In particular, the tone of the *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* was set in its opening words, which declared that the “Church shares the joy and hope, the

grief and anguish of contemporary humanity, particularly of the poor and afflicted.”³¹³

Other documents sought common ground in dealings with Orthodox and Protestant Christians and with those who are not Christians, both theists and atheists. Due to the strong influence of Pope John XXIII, almost all the documents of the **Second Vatican Ecumenical Council** held its deliberate policy of avoiding condemnation of Marxism/communism. Nevertheless, the council did not fail to condemn Hitler’s Nazi imperialist fascism that committed genocide of 5.9 million of the Jewish people murdered during the Warsaw Ghetto and the Holocaust episodes.

It was in between the meetings of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council that Pope John XXIII wrote his two Encyclical Letters: *Mater et Magistra* (1961) and *Pacem in Terris* (1963). Both encyclicals urge international cooperation for world peace and justice, committing the Roman Catholic Church to a concern for all human problems. It was, in fact, during the reign of Pope John XXIII that condemnations against Marxism/Communism, and the anti-Communist attitude of the Roman Catholic Church started to mellow down.

In Chapter Two about “The Church’s Mission and Social Doctrine,” the *Compendium* explains that Pope John XXIII’s Encyclical Letter *Mater et Magistra* (1961) “*aims at updating the already known documents, and at taking a further step forward in the process of involving the whole Christian community.*” It explains further that

the key words in the Encyclical are community and socialization: the Church is called in truth, justice, peace and love to cooperate in building with all men and women an authentic communion. In this way economic growth will not be limited to satisfying men’s needs, but it will also promote their dignity.³¹⁴

In the same Chapter Two, the *Compendium* expounds Pope John XXIII’s Encyclical Letter *Pacem in Terris* (1963), and states:

³¹³ Pope Paul VI, *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, Gaudium et Spes*, December 7, 1965.

³¹⁴ *Compendium*, p. 49.

With the Encyclical *Pacem in Terris*, Blessed Pope John XXIII brings to the forefront the problem of peace in an era marked by nuclear proliferation. Moreover, *Pacem in Terris* contains one of the first in-depth reflections on rights on the part of the Church; it is the Encyclical of peace and human dignity. It continues and completes the discussion presented in *Mater et Magistra*, and continuing in the direction indicated by Pope Leo XIII, it emphasizes the importance of the cooperation of all men and women. It is the first time that a Church document is addressed also to “all men of good will,” who are called to a great task: “to establish with truth, justice, peace, love and freedom new methods of relationships in human society.” *Pacem in Terris* dwells on the public authority of the world community, called to “tackle and solve problems of an economic, social, political or cultural character which are posed by the universal common good.”³¹⁵

Pope John XXIII’s Encyclical Letter *Pacem in Terris* (*Peace on Earth*, 1963) embodies the aspiration of the whole world for the establishment of a worldwide peace on earth. The immediate background when the pope wrote this encyclical was the “Cuban crisis” during the Cold War, an inter-imperialist war between US imperialism and Russian social imperialism. Being inspired by Pope John XXIII, Christian Churches in the world ought to unite and join the billions of toiling masses—victimized by imperialism in the struggle for the advancement of a worldwide peace. Nevertheless, worldwide peace can only advance when the anti-imperialist mass movement focused against US imperialism, the No. 1 leading and primary source of the current global disorder and chaos, would move steadily forward in both the underdeveloped Third World nations and the centers of the monopoly capitalist governments of the imperialist powers in the industrialized countries of the world. Towards this path for a worldwide peace, Christians and Marxists can effectively complement each other.

During his reign, Pope Paul VI (1963-1978) continued the promotion of Pope John XXIII’s vision for a worldwide peace, which should always be guaranteed by a “development [that] responds to the demands of

³¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 49-50.

justice on the global scale.”³¹⁶ In Chapter Two concerning “The Church’s Mission and Social Doctrine” and citing Pope Paul VI’s Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* (1967) as reference, the *Compendium* says:

In particular, the Encyclical *Populorum Progressio* presents the outlines of an integral development of man and of a development in solidarity with all humanity: “These two topics are to be considered the axes around which the Encyclical is structured. In wishing to convince its receivers of the urgent need for action in solidarity, the Pope presents development as the transition from less humane conditions to those which are more humane and indicates its characteristics....” Development that benefits everyone responds to the demands of justice on the global scale that guarantees worldwide peace and makes it possible to achieve a ‘complete humanism’ guided by spiritual values.

And in order to continue the advancement of Pope John XXIII’s vision for a worldwide peace, the *Compendium* also in Chapter Two about “The Church’s Mission and Social Doctrine” states that:

in 1967, Pope Paul VI [established] the Pontifical Commission [for Justice and Peace], thus fulfilling the wishes of the Council Fathers who considered it “most opportune that an organism of the Universal Church be set up in order that both the justice and love of Christ toward the poor might be developed everywhere. The role of such an organism would be to stimulate the Catholic community to promote progress in needy regions and international social justice.” *By initiative of Pope Paul VI, beginning in 1968, the Church celebrates the first day of the year as the World Day of Peace* [CNL]. This same Pontiff started the tradition of writing annual Messages that deal with the theme chosen for each *World Day of Peace*. These Messages expand and enrich the corpus of the Church’s social doctrine.³¹⁷

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

To extend the concern of the Roman Catholic Church for a world-wide peace, which is the primary matter in Pope John XXIII’s Encyclical Letter *Pacem in Terris* (*Peace on Earth*, 1963) and Pope Paul VI’s Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* (1967), Pope Paul VI himself traveled to various countries and visited “Communist” leaders. Several of the countries that the pope visited in Latin America, Africa and Asia were under dictatorial regimes like Uganda in 1969, and had armed guerrillas for national liberation movements such as Colombia in 1968 and the Philippines in 1970.

Pope Paul VI’s travels to other nations for the promotion of world-wide peace included his visits to “Communist” leaders. He met “Communist” leaders such as President Nikolay V. Podgorny of the Soviet Union in 1967 and President Tito of Yugoslavia in 1971. In 1974, Pope Paul VI went to negotiate with the “Communist” regime in Hungary under János Kádár, the head of the Hungarian Socialist Workers’ Party (HSWP). One of the topics discussed by Pope Paul VI and “Communist” leader János Kádár was the anti-communist József Cardinal Mindszenty. Since the 1950, Cardinal Mindszenty, a rabid anti-communist, supported anti-communist insurgents in Hungary. For fear that he would be arrested by the “Communist” regime, Cardinal Mindszenty took refuge in the US legation (now the US Embassy) in Budapest, the capital and largest city of Hungary, where he remained until he was permitted to leave the country in 1971. After the negotiation between Pope Paul VI and “Communist” leader János Kádár, the former required the resignation of József Cardinal Mindszenty in 1974.

Particularly in Italy, the Lateran Treaty, which was concluded by Mussolini and Pope Pius XI in 1929, was still upheld during the reign of Pope Paul VI (as this treaty was only ended in 1984). As explained earlier in the CNL’s 1st topic, *A Preliminary Overview*, under the Lateran Treaty Italy recognized the independent sovereignty of the Vatican and paid reparations for the loss of autonomy the Vatican suffered in the 19th century, and made Roman Catholicism the official state religion. In January 1977, the Italian Communist Party pressed demands for the entry of “communists” into the government; but the Italian bishops objected and strongly reiterated their convictions regarding the “incompatibility” of Marxism and Christianity. But in June 1977, Pope Paul VI scored the trials and

convictions of prominent “Communist” dissidents in Italy, saying their alleged crimes were but “ideological infractions” and their sentences much too severe. This position of Pope Paul VI allowed Italian “Communists” to run in government.

Under the leadership of Pope Paul VI, the Vatican state continued to pursue further the policy of accommodation with “Communist” regimes. Thus in March 1977, the Vatican reached agreement with the Hungarian “Communist” government on the transfers and appointments of several bishops; and Deputy Premier Gyorgy Aczel expressed the desire for the effective use of the talents and professional training of Hungarian Jesuits.

On December 1, 1977, Pope Paul VI held an unprecedented meeting with Edward Gierek, Poland’s “Communist” leader, strengthening the bilateral relations of Poland and the Vatican State. Then, in January 1978, Pope Paul VI visited Czechoslovakia and announced the appointment of Cardinal Frantisek Tomasek as Archbishop of Prague. Czechoslovakia had been without a primate since Cardinal Josef Beran died in exile in Rome in 1969 during the period when the repressive attitude of “Communist” regimes towards the Church was still ongoing.

Pope Paul VI’s policy of accommodating Communists started the cordial relationship between Catholics and Communists. This amiable attitude of Pope Paul VI might have encouraged the College of Cardinals on August 26, 1978 to elect Cardinal Albino Luciani, the patriarch of Venice, as the 263rd Italian pope. Immediately after his election, Cardinal Luciani took the double name of John Paul I, a choice that indicated his desire to sustain the ideological and theological continuity with his two immediate predecessors, Pope John XXII and Pope Paul VI, especially with regards to the accommodation of Communists. His pro-communist aspiration led some observers to label and declare Pope John Paul I as the first “working-class” pope, also because his father was an Italian laborer and a socialist. After his death in Rome on September 28, 1978, after only 34 days in office, Pope John Paul I was replaced by Pope John Paul II. However, as has already been explained in CNL’s 1st topic, *A Preliminary Overview*, Pope John Paul II did not continue the spirit of accommodating Communists; instead, he resumed the traditional anti-communist stance of Popes Leo XIII and Pius XI.

Going back to the concern of the Roman Catholic Church for a worldwide peace, both Pope John XXIII’s Encyclical Letter *Pacem in Terris* (*Peace on Earth*, 1963) and Pope Paul VI’s Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* (1967) stress the need to promote human rights at the international level for the attainment of world peace. In almost every chapter of the *Compendium*, human rights are mentioned. In *Chapter Three* which is about *The Human Person and Human Rights*, the *Compendium* stresses the point that to attain worldwide peace, human rights must be promoted at the international level, which must include the respect of the rights of peoples and nations. Citing Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1988), his *Address to the Diplomatic Corps* (January 9, 1988), his *Letter on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War* (September 4, 1989), his Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (1991), and his *Address to the Fiftieth General Assembly of the United Nations* (October 5, 1995), the *Compendium* asserts:

The field of human rights has expanded to include the rights of peoples and nations. In fact, “what is true for the individual is also true for peoples.” The Magisterium points out that international law “rests upon the principle of equal respect for States, for each people’s right to self-determination and for their free cooperation in view of the higher common good of humanity.” Peace is founded not only on respect for human rights but also on respect for the rights of peoples, in particular the right to independence.³¹⁸

Particularly quoting Pope John Paul II’s *Address to the Fiftieth General Assembly of the United Nations* (October 5, 1995), the *Compendium* further states:

The rights of nations are nothing but “‘human rights’ fostered at the specific level of community life.” A nation has a “fundamental right to existence,” to “its own language and culture, through which a people expresses and promotes... its fundamental spiritual sovereignty,” to “shape its life according to its own traditions, excluding, of course, every abuse of basic

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

human rights and in particular the oppression of minorities,” to “build its future by providing an appropriate education for the younger generation.” The international order requires a balance between particularity and universality, which all nations are called to bring about, for their primary duty to live in a posture of peace, respect and solidarity with other nations.³¹⁹

At the international level, there is, of course, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) adopted by the United Nations in 1948. The UDHR in its 30 articles is concerned with civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. In particular, these articles include the right to life, liberty, and security of person; to freedom of conscience, religion, opinion, expression, association, and assembly; to freedom from arbitrary arrest; to a fair and impartial trial; to be presumed innocent until proven guilty; etc. Nevertheless, since 1948 up to the present day, the imperialist powers, primarily led by US imperialism, that have globalized the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism through wars of aggression, terrorism and violence against weaker nations, socialist states and countries that fight for national liberation, have violated the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of peoples and nations. Specifically, US imperialism and all its allies have violated even the basic rights of people “to essential services” and impede worldwide peace and “worldwide cooperation for the common good of the whole of humanity and for future generations,” clearly mentioned in the *Compendium’s* Chapter Four concerning the “Principles of the Church’s Social Doctrine.” Citing the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #1907, Pope John XXIII’s Encyclical Letter *Mater et Magistra* (1961), and the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council’s Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (1966), the *Compendium* says:

The demands of the common good are dependent on the social conditions of each historical period and are strictly connected to respect for and the integral promotion of the person and his fundamental rights. These demands concern above all the

³¹⁹ Ibid.

commitment to peace, the organization of the State’s powers, a sound juridical system, the protection of the environment, and the provision of essential services to all, some of which are at the same time human rights: food, housing, work, education and access to culture, transportation, basic health care, the freedom of communication and expression, and the protection of religious freedom. Nor must one forget the contribution that every nation is required in duty to make towards a true worldwide cooperation for the common good of the whole of humanity and for future generations also.³²⁰

Another important point for the promotion of worldwide peace—which US imperialism and its imperialist allies have consistently debilitated—is the advancement of “solidarity,” “the common good,” “the universal destination of goods” and “equality among men and people,” which the Compendium has mentioned also in Chapter Four which is about the “Principles of the Church’s Social Doctrine.” Citing the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith’s Instruction *Libertatis Conscientia* (1987), Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1988), and the Congregation for Catholic Education’s *Guidelines for the Study and Teaching of the Church’s Social Doctrine in the Formation of Priests* (1988), the *Compendium* elucidates:

The message of the Church’s social doctrine regarding solidarity clearly shows that there exists an intimate bond between solidarity and the common good, between solidarity and the universal destination of goods, between solidarity and equality among men and peoples, between solidarity and peace in the world. The term “solidarity,” widely used by the Magisterium, expresses in summary fashion the need to recognize in the composite ties that unite men and social groups among themselves, the space given to human freedom for common growth in which all share and in which they participate. The commitment to this goal is translated into the positive contribution of seeing that nothing is lacking in the common

³²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

cause and also of seeking points of possible agreement where attitudes of separation and fragmentation prevail. It translates into the willingness to give oneself for the good of one's neighbor, beyond any individual or particular interest.³²¹

To attain international justice and worldwide peace, the Magisterium, the teaching authority of the Church, not only insists on “the importance of national sovereignty” but also on the need of an “international agreement that adequately addresses ‘the rights of nations’.” In Chapter Nine that deals with “The International Community” and citing Pope John Paul II’s *Address to UNESCO* (June 2, 1980), his *Encyclical Letter Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1988), and his *Address to the Fiftieth General Assembly of the United Nations* (October 5, 1995), the *Compendium* states:

The Magisterium recognizes the importance of national sovereignty, understood above all as an expression of the freedom that must govern relations between States. Sovereignty represents the subjectivity of a nation, in the political, economic, social and even cultural sense. The cultural dimension takes on particular importance as a source of strength in resisting acts of aggression or forms of domination that have repercussions on a country’s freedom. Culture constitutes the guarantee for the preservation of the identity of a people and expresses and promotes its spiritual sovereignty.³²²

The *Compendium* further asserts and clarifies:

National sovereignty is not, however, absolute. Nations can freely renounce the exercise of some of their rights in view of a common good, in the awareness that they form a “family of nations” where mutual trust, support and respect must prevail. In this perspective, special attention should be given to the fact that there is still no international agreement that adequately addresses “the rights of nations,” the preparation of

³²¹ Ibid., pp. 99-100.

³²² Ibid., 218- 219.

which could profitably deal with questions concerning justice and freedom in today’s world.³²³

Again, “the importance of national sovereignty,” the need of an “international agreement that adequately addresses ‘the rights of nations’” and the whole quotation above is in contradistinction to the generation orientation of the United Nations wherein policy- and decision-making processes even in the General Assembly, the UN Security Council, the WB, IMF and WTO are always under the strong manipulation of the imperialist powers, primarily led by US imperialism. This is affirmed in the *Compendium*’s Chapter Nine about “The International Community” which clearly mentions the need of “a revision of international organizations, a process that ‘presupposes the overcoming of political rivalries and the renouncing of all desire to manipulate these organizations’.” Citing Paul VI’s Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* (1967), Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1988), his Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (1991) and his *Message for the 2004 World Day of Peace* (2004), the *Compendium* affirms and states:

Because of the globalization of problems, it has become more urgent than ever to stimulate international political action that pursues the goals of peace and development through the adoption of coordinated measures. The Magisterium recognizes that the interdependence among men and nations takes on a moral dimension and is the determining factor for relations in the modern world in the economic, cultural, political and religious sense. In this context it is hoped that there will be a revision of international organizations, a process that “presupposes the overcoming of political rivalries and the renouncing of all desire to manipulate these organizations, which exist solely for the common good,” for the purpose of achieving “a greater degree of international ordering.”³²⁴

The *Compendium* further states:

³²³ Ibid., p. 219.

³²⁴ Ibid., pp. 222-223.

In particular, intergovernmental structures must effectively perform functions of control and guidance in the economic field because the attainment of the common good has become a goal that is beyond the reach of individual States, even if they are dominant in terms of power, wealth, and political strength. International agencies must moreover guarantee the attainment of that equality which is the basis of the right of all to participate in the process of full development, duly respecting legitimate differences.³²⁵

For the attainment of worldwide peace, the *Compendium*, in the same Chapter Nine concerning “The International Community,” mentions that “the diplomatic service of the Holy See... [can] contribute to the progress of every people and all humanity in justice and peace,” especially if the Catholic Church’s diplomatic service would also include socialist states. Quoting Pope Paul VI’s Apostolic Letter *Sollicitudo Omnium Ecclesiarum* (1969), the *Compendium* states:

The diplomatic service of the Holy See, the product of an ancient and proven practice, is an instrument that works not only for the freedom of the Church (“*libertas Ecclesiae*”) but also for the defense and promotion of human dignity, as well as for a social order based on the values of justice, truth, freedom and love. “By an innate right inherent within our spiritual mission itself and advanced by development of historical events over the centuries, we also send our legates to the Supreme Authorities of States in which the Catholic Church has taken root or in which she is present in some way. It is of course true that the purposes of the Church and the State are of different orders... But it is also true that both the one and the other undertake to serve the good of the same common subject, man, called by God to eternal salvation and put on earth so that he might, with the of grace, attain unto salvation through his work, which bring him well-being in the peaceful setting of society.” The good of people and human commu-

³²⁵ Ibid., p. 223.

nities is served by a structured dialogue between the Church and civil authorities, which also finds expression in the stipulation of mutual agreements. This dialogue tends to establish or strengthen relations of mutual understanding and cooperation and also serves to prevent or resolve eventual disputes. Its goal is to contribute to the progress of every people and all humanity in justice and peace.³²⁶

The promotion of the Church’s social doctrine on worldwide peace, elucidated in the above pages, is another venue wherein Christians and Marxists can complement one another, even though their beliefs may not necessarily be compatible. But why and how? Because genuine Marxists or authentic communists have always stood for international peace in the history of humankind as they have always been the most determined and greatest principled adversaries of imperialist wars. Genuine Marxists have always been for the international peace of the toiling masses and colonized nations by waging national-democratic and socialist revolutions, won in various countries during the first seven decades of the 20th century, against the imperialists wars that have created and continue to bring huge wealth and state power to only a handful of monopoly capitalists who have exploited and oppressed and continue to subjugate and dominate the toiling masses in both the developed and underdeveloped nations of the world.

This means the promotion for worldwide peace could only be asserted effectively when Christians and Marxists in each country of the world would link up together to launch the anti-imperialist mass movement at the international level. Such anti-imperialist mass movement at the global level could start on the first day of each year of this current decade and ought to continue on the first day of every year in the next decades as Christians and Marxists would celebrate the *World Day of Peace* initiated and started by Pope Paul VI on January 1, 1968. Besides the pope’s annual messages that deal with the theme chosen for each *World Day of Peace*, international anti-imperialist protest actions and mobilizations could and must be done at the centers of the imperialist powers, especially in Washington D.C., the base of US imperialism.

³²⁶ Ibid., p. 224.

Part 7

CNL Declares Firmly: Only When Monopoly Capitalism, the Ideology Of Imperialism, Would Be Replaced By Scientific Socialism Could the Global Environment Fully Recover and Be Safeguarded

This 7th topic of the CNL commentary shall first present the *Compendium's* Chapter Ten that deals with "Safeguarding The Environment." Here in this chapter, the *Compendium* expounds the biblical aspects of the Church's social doctrine on the environment, the relationship of "man and the universe of created things,"³²⁷ "the crisis in the relationship between man and the environment,"³²⁸ and the "Common Responsibility"³²⁹ of humankind in "Safeguarding The Environment"³³⁰ as a "collective good."³³¹

In the process of presenting the *Compendium's* expositions, sub-topics shall be developed. A CNL sub-topic shall also be formulated in order to convey the thoughts of Pope Francis found in his Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si' (Praise be to You: On Care for Our Common Home, May 24, 2015)*, whose focus is about the global environment. Though Pope Francis' Encyclical Letter is outside the scope of the *Compendium*, as the latter was published in 2004, it is necessary for CNL to give due comments on the former as it conveys progressive reflections and standpoints that can spiritually motivate Christians all over the world to actively participate in the anti-imperialist mass movement for the protection of the environment.

Pope Francis' Encyclical Letter does not cite directly the terms "monopoly capitalism" and/or "imperialism"; but it clearly points out that the "business interests," "quick and easy profit," "multinational businesses" and global "economic interests of transnational corporations" are

³²⁷ Ibid., p. 230.

³²⁸ Ibid., p. 233.

³²⁹ Ibid., p. 235.

³³⁰ Ibid., p. 228.

³³¹ Ibid., p. 235.

the root causes that greatly disturb the global biodiversity and have led to “environmental deterioration” and “great inequality”³³² in the world today. This kind of exposition might have angered four American cardinals, who, according to international news in November 2016, were heard as revealing their intention to censure Pope Francis as a heretic. Behind their anger and intention, these US cardinals might have been greatly influenced unknowingly by the strong and deceptive maneuvers of the CIA to defend the US monopoly capitalists.

At the end of the CNL’s 7th topic, a final sub-topic shall be formulated for mainline Christian Churches (RC, UCCP, IFI, UMC, ECP, LCP) in the Philippines, especially the Catholics, to heed and put into actual practice Pope Francis’ call to take care and safeguard planet earth by joining actively the Filipino people’s struggle to protect, rehabilitate and defend the Philippine environment from being devastated further by the US and Chinese imperialists, and the local exploiters and oppressors who ought to be penalized by the Filipino people. Said final sub-topic shall expound on the protection and rehabilitation of the Philippine environment as one of the essential tasks of the current Philippine national democratic revolution that has a socialist perspective.

In fact, environmental protection, rehabilitation and compensation is one of the essential agenda of the Comprehensive Agreement on Socio-Economic Reforms (CASER) which has still to be finalized when the national peace talks between the GRP and the NDFP would resume upon the success of the oust tyrant Duterte movement. And the active participation the Christian Churches in the Filipino people’s struggle to safeguard, recover, conserve and defend the Philippine environment would serve as a concrete venue and application for Christians, national democrats and Marxists to complement one another, though they may have different beliefs. They can, indeed, help one another in developing the national economy through agrarian reform and rural development, national industrialization and economic development, and environmental protection, rehabilitation and compensation. In this way, they would be able to radically change Philippine society towards a bright socialist future

³³² Pope Francis, *Laudatio Si’* (Encyclical Letter), May 24, 2015 (https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudatio-si.html).

Part 7: Socialist Replacement of Capitalism Will Safeguard the Environment

and for the common good of the Filipino people, especially Christ's least brethren who belong to the PDO (poor, deprived and oppressed) like the workers, informal laborers, urban poor, peasants, fisherfolk and national minorities, including the members of the PDO families such as women, youth, children and the elderly.

While fully appreciating the *Compendium's* biblical and theological expositions of the Church's social doctrine on the environment, the relationship between “*man and the universe of created things*” and “*the crisis in the relationship between man and the environment,*” CNL would elucidate what concretely causes “*the imbalances existing between man and nature,*” what are the “*harmful long-term effects*” of “*scientific and technological discoveries*” and the detrimental consequences of the “*arbitrary use of the earth,*” and what is the primary cause of “*the crisis in the relationship between man and the environment*”³³³ in order to expose the globalized businesses of the monopoly capitalists as the primary root causes of the environmental glitches in the world today.

The **first section** of the *Compendium's* Chapter Ten expounds the Biblical aspects of the Church's social doctrine on the environment. Mentioning many verses from Genesis, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Isaiah, Psalms, Mathew, Luke, John, 1 Corinthians, Colossians, Romans and Revelation, the *Compendium* explains and states that

the living experience of the divine presence in history is the foundation of the faith of the people of God [and that] the faith of Israel is lived out in the space and time of this world, perceived not as a hostile environment, nor as an evil from which one must be free, but rather as the gift itself of God, as the place and plan that he entrusts to the responsible management and activity of man. Nature, the work of God's creative action, is not a dangerous adversary.³³⁴

Further the *Compendium* explains:

³³³ *Compendium*, pp. 229-233.

³³⁴ *Ibid.*, 228.

The relationship of man with the world is a constitutive part of his human identity. This relationship is in turn the result of another still deeper relationship between man and God... The definitive salvation that God offers to all humanity through his own Son does not come about outside of this world... The Lord puts nature at the service of his plan of redemption... Far from being enslaved by things [of this world], the disciple of Jesus must know how to use them in order to bring about sharing and brotherhood.³³⁵

In addition, the *Compendium* says:

Knowledge of the *imbalances existing between man and nature* should be accompanied by an awareness that in Jesus the reconciliation of man and the world with God—such that every human being, aware of divine love, can find anew the peace that was lost—has been brought about [CNL]... By the redeeming power of Christ... the whole of creation participates in the renewal flowing from the Lord’s Paschal Mystery, although it still awaits full liberation from corruption, groaning in travail (cf. Rom 8:19-23), in expectation of giving birth to “a new heaven and a new earth” (Rev 21:1) that are the gift of the end time, the fulfillment of salvation.³³⁶

As regards the **second section** of Chapter Ten on the relationship between “man and the universe of created things,” the *Compendium* broadens the social doctrine of the Church on the environment by citing social principles from the documents of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, and the many writings of Pope John Paul II. Quoting the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council’s Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (1966), the *Compendium* states:

For man, “created in God’s image, received a mandate to subject to himself the earth and all that it contains, and to govern the world with justice and holiness, a mandate to relate him-

³³⁵ Ibid., pp. 228-229.

³³⁶ Ibid., pp. 229-230.

self and the totality of things to him who was to be acknowledged as the Lord and Creator of all. Thus, by the subjection of all things to man, and the name of God would be wonderful in all the earth. [The Council teaches that] throughout the course of the centuries, men have labored to improve the circumstances of the lives through a monumental amount of individual and collective effort. To believers, this point is settled: considered in itself, this human activity accords with God's will."³³⁷

Still citing the Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (1966), the following is explained by the *Compendium*:

The results of science and technology are, in themselves, positive. "Far from thinking that works produced by man's own talent and energy are in opposition to God's power, and that the rational creature exists as a kind of rival to the Creator, Christians are convinced that the triumphs of the human race are a sign of God's grace and the flowering of His own mysterious design." The Council Fathers also emphasize the fact that "the greater man's power becomes, the farther his individual and community responsibility extends," and that every human activity is to correspond, according to the design and will of God, to humanity's true good.³³⁸

To explain further the social doctrine of the Catholic Church on the environment and the spiritual relationship between "man and the universe of created things," the *Compendium*—citing as references Pope John Paul II's *Meeting with scientists and representatives of the United Nations University, Hiroshima, Japan* (February 25, 1981), his *Address to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences* (October 3, 1981), his *Address to the participants in a convention sponsored by the National Academy of Sciences, for the bicentenary of its foundation* (September 21, 1982), his *Address to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences* (October 23, 1982), his *Homily during Mass at the Victorian Racing Club, Melbourne, Australia* (November 26, 1986), his *Address given*

³³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 230-231.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, 231.

A Commentary on the “Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church”
at Mercy Maternity Hospital, Melbourne, Australia (November 28, 1986),
and his *Meeting with the employees of the Olivetti workshops in Ivrea, Italy*
(March 19, 1990)—states the following:

In this regard, the Magisterium has repeatedly emphasized that the Catholic Church is in no way opposed to progress, rather she considers “science and technology are a wonderful product of God-given human creativity, since they have provided us with wonderful possibilities, and we all gratefully benefit from them.” For this reason, “as people who believe in God, who saw that nature which he had created was good, we rejoice in the technological and economic progress which people, using their intelligence, have managed to make.”³³⁹

It further adds:

In fact, technology “could be a priceless tool in solving many serious problems, in the first place those of hunger and disease, through the production of more advanced and vigorous strains of plants, and through the production of valuable medicines.” It is important, however, to repeat the concept of “proper application,” for “we know that this potential is not neutral: it can be used either for man’s progress or for his degradation.” For this reason, “it is necessary to maintain an attitude of prudence and attentively sift out the nature, end and means of the various forms of applied technology.” Scientists, therefore, must “truly use their research and technical skill in the service of humanity,” being able to subordinate them “to moral principles and values, which respect and realize in its fullness the dignity of man.”³⁴⁰

Citing Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1988), his *Message for the 1990 World Day of Peace* (1990), and his Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (1991), the *Compendium* explains, on

³³⁹ Ibid., p. 231.

³⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 231-232.

the other hand that scientific and technological discoveries have harmful effects in the ecosystem, and says:

A central point of reference for every scientific and technological application is respect for men and women, which must also be accompanied by a necessary attitude of respect for other living creatures. Even when thought is given to making some change in them, “one must take into account the nature of each being and of its mutual connection in an ordered system.” In this sense, the formidable possibilities of biological research raise grave concerns, in that “we are not yet in a position to assess the biological disturbance that could result from indiscriminate genetic manipulation and from the unscrupulous development of new forms of plant and animal life...” In fact, “it is now clear that the application of these discoveries in the fields of industry and agriculture have produced *harmful long-term effects* [CNL]. This has led to the painful realization that we cannot interfere in one area of the ecosystem without paying due attention both to the consequences of such interference in other areas and to the well-being of future generations.”³⁴¹

Still quoting from Pope John Paul II’s encyclicals mentioned above to explain the Church’s social doctrine on the relationship between “man and the universe of created things,” the *Compendium* says:

Man, then, must never forget that “his capacity to transform and in a certain sense create the world through his own work... is always based on God’s prior and original gift of the things that are.” He must not “make *arbitrary use of the earth*, subjecting it without restraint to his will, as though it did not have its own requisites and a prior God-given purpose, which man can indeed develop but must not betray [CNL].” When he acts in this way, “instead of carrying out his role as a cooperator with God in the work of creation, man sets himself up in place of God and thus ends up provoking a rebellion on the part of

³⁴¹ Ibid., p. 232.

nature, which is more tyrannized than governed by him.” [It states further:] If man intervenes in nature without abusing it or damaging it, we can say that he “intervenes not in order to modify nature but to foster its development in its own life, that of the creation that God intended. While working in this obviously delicate area, the researcher adheres to the design of God. God willed that man be the king of creation.”³⁴²

The **third section** in Chapter Ten that the *Compendium* presents is about “*the crisis in the relationship between man and the environment.*” Citing Pope Paul VI’s Apostolic Letter *Octogesima Adveniens* (1971), the *Compendium* declares:

The underlying cause of these problems [found in the relationship between man and the environment] can be seen in man’s pretension of exercising unconditional dominion over things, heedless of any moral considerations which, on the contrary, must distinguish all human activity.³⁴³

Quoting Pope John Paul II’s *Address to participants in a convention on “The Environment and Health”* (March 24, 1997), the *Compendium* further clarifies:

The tendency towards an “ill-considered” exploitation of the resources of creation is the result of a long historical and cultural process. “The modern era has witnessed man’s growing capacity for transformative intervention. The aspect of the conquest and exploitation of resources has become predominant and invasive, and today it has even reached the point of threatening the environment’s hospitable aspect: the environment as ‘resource’ risks threatening the environment as ‘home’. Because of the powerful means of transformation offered by technological civilization, it sometimes seems that

³⁴² Ibid., p. 232-233.

³⁴³ Ibid., p. 233.

the balance between man and the environment has reached a critical point.”³⁴⁴

Citing again Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1988), and Pontifical Council For Culture—Pontifical Council For Interreligious Dialogue’s *Jesus Christ the Bearer of the Water of Life, A Christian Reflection on the “New Age”* (2003), the *Compendium* mentions two tendencies, that cause “the crisis in the relationship between man and the environment” and that distort the correct relationship between the two, which are: “Reductionistic conception” and the inclination “to divinize nature or the earth” which relativizes man as the king of created things.

Nature appears as an instrument in the hands of man, a reality that he must constantly manipulate, especially by means of technology. A reductionistic conception quickly spread, starting from the presumption—which was seen to be erroneous—that an infinite quantity of energy and resources are available, that it is possible to renew them quickly, and that the negative exploitation of the natural order can be easily absorbed. This reductionist conception views the natural world in mechanistic terms and sees development in terms of consumerism. Primacy is given to doing and having rather than to being and this causes serious forms of human alienation. Such attitudes do not arise from scientific and technological research but from scientism and technocratic ideologies that tend to condition such research.³⁴⁵

Explaining further, the *Compendium* says:

A correct understanding of the environment prevents the utilitarian reduction of nature to a mere object to be manipulated and exploited. At the same time, it must not absolutize nature and place it above the dignity of the human person himself. In this latter case, one can go so far as to divinize nature or the

³⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 233-234.

³⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 234.

earth, as can readily be seen in certain ecological movements that seek to gain an international guaranteed institutional status for their beliefs.³⁴⁶

The “unconditional dominion over things, heedless of any moral considerations which, on the contrary, must distinguish all human activity” in the aforementioned quotation from Pope Paul VI’s Apostolic Letter *Octogesima Adveniens* (1971) properly describes the system of monopoly capitalism which has been globalized by imperialist powers for their worldwide hegemony wherein planet earth and the global environment is within the domain of imperialism. Thus, Pope Paul VI is correct to assert that the “unconditional dominion over things, heedless of any moral considerations which, on the contrary, must distinguish all human activity” is the underlying cause of “the crisis [and problems found] in the relationship between man and the environment,” especially the problem of global warming that distorts the natural balance and relationship between man and the environment. And it could also be deduced that the “reductionist conception” which considers the environment as just “a mere object to be manipulated and exploited” and the “ecological movements” that “divinize nature or the earth” are imperialist machinations and fabrications in order conceal the fact that the destruction and plunder of the global environment is primarily caused by the multinational and transnational corporations of the monopoly capitalists.

Finally, citing Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1988), and his *Address to participants in a convention on “The Environment and Health”* (March 24, 1997), the *Compendium* says:

The Magisterium underscores human responsibility for the preservation of a sound and healthy environment for all. “If humanity today succeeds in combining the new scientific capacities with a strong ethical dimension, it will certainly be able to promote the environment as a home and a resource for man and for all men, and will be able to eliminate the causes of pollution and to guarantee adequate conditions of hygiene and health for small groups as well as for vast human settle-

³⁴⁶ Ibid.

ments. Technology that pollutes can also cleanse, production that amasses can also distribute justly, on condition that the ethic of respect for life and human dignity, for the rights of today's generations and those to come, prevails.”³⁴⁷

However, though this would still be expounded on below, this quotation from Pope John Paul II will again remain as a kind of gobbledygook, a generally unintelligible jargon and a castle in the air, if it is not seen within the context of what kind of economic and political system which would be able to enhance “human responsibilities for the preservation of a sound and healthy environment for all.” Of course, such cannot be developed within the auspices of the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism, which is actually the root cause of the environmental degradation and the global problem of climate change.

In order to understand better the social doctrine of the Church regarding the environment and the relationship between “man and the universe of created things,” and concerning “the crisis in the relationship between man and the environment,” let us concretize the environmental issues that have been mentioned but have not been fully and tangibly explained by the *Compendium* in the aforesaid quotations—especially on “the imbalances existing between man and nature,” on the “harmful long-term effects” of the “discoveries in the fields of industry and agriculture,” on the “consequences of [human] interference in... the ecosystem... to the well-being of future generations,” on the “arbitrary use of the earth, subjecting it without restraint” whose “consequences... modify nature” and damage the whole “ecosystem” of planet earth, “provoking a rebellion on the part of nature,” on “the conquest and exploitation of resources that has become predominant and invasion and has reached the point of threatening the environment,” on “the balance between man and the environment has reached a critical point,” and on “exercising unconditional dominion over things.” Let us clarify all these environmental glitches by elucidating the overall current situation of the global environment. Clarifying the current environmental problems, that disturb planet earth, is very necessary and important in order to have a down-to-earth context of interpreting better the Catholic Church's doctrine on the environment, the relation-

³⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 235.

ship between “man and the universe of created things,” as well as “the crisis in the relationship between man and the environment.”

The worldwide reality now, which the Christian Churches have to recognize, is the fact that prominent scientists and militant environmentalists in the world have identified eight major threats that have jeopardized and continue to harm and alter the global environment, and have produced and persist to generate various negative effects to the ecosystem of planet earth, namely:

1. Global warming;
2. Depletion of the ozone layer;
3. Habitat destruction and the extinction of species;
4. Air pollution;
5. Water pollution;
6. Groundwater depletion and contamination;
7. Chemical risks; and
8. Dumping of industrial garbage to the underdeveloped countries.

As a whole, all the eight major threats to planet earth and the global environment have been and are continually being caused primarily by the industrial and commercial businesses of the multinational and transnational corporations that are privately owned and managed by the monopoly capitalists who have built a partnership with the big comprador bourgeoisie, big landlords and bureaucrat capitalists in fascist state puppets of imperialism, especially in the Asian, African and Latin American countries of the Third World. Let us now expound on each of the eight major threats to the global environment in the following paragraphs.

Global warming or climate change is the No. 1 global threat that greatly affects the health of planet earth and the whole environment. It is primarily the main cause of natural disasters such as hurricane or typhoons or tropical cyclones. It is caused by the increase of greenhouse gases—such as carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, ozone and synthetic chemicals—that are emitted from the *industrial and commercial businesses of the monopoly capitalists*. All industrialized countries promote the increase of greenhouse gases; but the United States has been identified since 1998 as the world’s single largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. And

global warming has six tremendous negative effects to planet earth, as follows:

First, global warming or climate change upsets and alters the weather condition of the world. A warmer world is generally more humid as a result of more water evaporating from the oceans. Storms are expected to be more frequent and more intense in a warmer world. Water also evaporates more rapidly from soil, causing it to dry out faster between rains. Some regions might actually become drier than before. Overall, higher latitudes receive more rainfall, and subtropical areas receive less.

Second, climate change melts ice sheets and glaciers. Warming temperatures are already causing significant changes to mountain glaciers around the world, ice sheets in Greenland and the Antarctic, and polar sea ice in the Arctic. From Europe to Africa to Asia to North America, mountain glaciers have receded over the 20th century, and melting is becoming more rapid. And because of the large-scale melting of ice, water and land, absorb and retain more heat, making planet earth warmer.

Third, global warming greatly affects sea levels. As the atmosphere warms, the surface layer of the ocean warms as well, expanding in volume and thus raising sea level. The melting of glaciers and ice sheets, especially around Greenland, further swells the sea. In fact, sea level has risen 10 to 25 cm (4 to 10 in) during the 20th century. By the end of the 21st century, sea level is projected to rise another 28 to 58 cm. (11 to 23 in.) if greenhouse gas emissions continue to increase significantly. Rising sea level would complicate life in many island and coastal regions. Storm surges, in which winds locally pile up water and raise the sea, would become more frequent and damaging. Erosion of cliffs, beaches, and dunes would increase. Small island nations, where the highest land is only a few meters above sea level, are already experiencing saltwater intrusion, making groundwater undrinkable, and increasing impacts from typhoons and heavy surf. These nations could literally cease to exist as the rise in sea level continues, and their governments would negotiate with other nations to transplant their populations. But even among big nations, a rise in sea level would have huge impacts on their coastal ecosystems. As a concrete example, a 50-cm (20-in) rise of the sea level would submerge many coastal wetlands and other low-lying areas of the United States.

Fourth, agriculture is directly affected by climate change. Global warming may increase agricultural production in some regions; but in other regions, that benefit from more rainfall and a longer growing season, may have a decrease in their agricultural production. Semi-arid tropical farmlands in parts of Africa may become further impoverished as many areas would be waterless due to global warming. Other farming regions of the world that bring in irrigation water from distant mountains may also suffer due to a decrease in the volume of water.

Fifth, plants and animals would find it difficult to adjust to the effects of global warming. Scientists have already observed shifts in the lifecycles of many plants and animals, such as flowers blooming earlier and birds hatching earlier in the spring. Many species have begun shifting where they live or their annual migration patterns due to warmer temperatures. With further warming, animals would tend to migrate toward the poles and higher elevations. Plants will also attempt to shift their ranges, seeking new areas as old habitats grow too warm. However, in many places cities or farmlands would prevent these shifts and species may become extinct as cities and farmlands block their way to find new places to live. Ocean ecosystems, especially fragile ones like coral reefs, will also be affected by global warming. Warmer ocean temperatures can cause coral to “bleach,” a state which if prolonged will lead to the death of the coral reefs around the world. Also, increasing carbon dioxide in the atmosphere enters the ocean and increases the acidity of ocean waters. This acidification further stresses ocean ecosystems.

Sixth, climate change affects human health. In a warmer world, scientists predict that more people will get sick or die from heat stress, due not only to hotter days but more importantly to warmer nights (giving the sufferers less relief). More frequent and intense heat waves will further contribute to this trend. At the same time, there will be some decreases in the number of cold-related deaths. Tropical diseases such as malaria including dengue fever, yellow fever, and encephalitis, may spread and widen their range. Scientists also project rising incidence of allergies and respiratory diseases as warmer air grows more charged with pollutants, mold spores, and pollens.

Depletion of the ozone layer is the second major threat to planet earth and the whole environment. The ozone layer, a thin band in the strato-

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sphere (layer of the upper atmosphere), serves to shield Earth from the harmful ultraviolet rays of the Sun. Scientists have discovered that chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs)—chemicals used in refrigeration, air-conditioning systems, cleaning solvents, and aerosol sprays—destroy the ozone layer. CFCs release chlorine into the atmosphere; chlorine, in turn, breaks down ozone molecules. Because chlorine is not affected by its interaction with ozone, each chlorine molecule has the ability to destroy a large amount of ozone for an extended period of time. Thus, scientists have concluded that the industrial chemicals from the businesses of the monopoly capitalists that are released into the atmosphere have broken down the ozone, a gas that blocks harmful ultraviolet sunlight, opening holes in the ozone layer.

If industrial chemicals continue to be released into the atmosphere, this would result also to a continued depletion of the ozone layer; and recent studies suggest that even if the manufacture of CFCs is immediately banned, the chlorine already released into the atmosphere would continue to destroy the ozone layer for many decades. In fact, US government scientists believe that the ozone loss over Antarctica, that had reached its greatest extent in 2006, may not fully recover until 2065.

The depletion of ozone layer would have dramatic consequences. Increased ultraviolet radiation would lead to a growing number of skin cancers and cataracts, and also reduce the ability of immune systems to respond to infection. Additionally, growth of the world's oceanic plankton (floating or weakly swimming minute animal and plant life of a body of water), the base of most marine food chains, would decline. Plankton contains photosynthetic organisms that break down carbon dioxide. If plankton populations decline, it may lead to increased carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere and thus to global warming.

The third major threat to planet earth and the environment is *habitat destruction and the extinction of species*. Habitat destruction and the extinction of species raise troubling questions about the health of the global environment. Plant and animal species are dying out at an unprecedented rate. Estimates range that from 4,000 to as many as 50,000 species per year become extinct. The leading cause of extinction is habitat destruction, particularly of the world's richest ecosystems—tropical rain forests and coral reefs. The destruction of tropical rain forests and coral reefs also contributes to the rise of global warming.

All forests, but especially rain forests, provide *habitat* for a wide variety of plants and animals and perform many other important functions that affect humans. If the world’s rain forests continue to be cut down at the current rate, habitats may completely disappear by the year 2030.

Particularly in the Philippines, historically the country used to be 90% (75 million has) forested during the precolonial period, down to 70% (21 million has) in the early 1900s. Massive deforestation was mainly attributed to the establishment of export crop plantations by the Spaniards. Deforestation decreased during World War II, but escalated again during the post-war years due to lumber exports and state-sponsored large-scale logging and mining operations as the country’s source of income. Especially during the US-Marcos dictatorship, companies, mostly foreign-owned and engaged in the export of timber and mineral extracts, were allowed to operate with impunity and rewarded with numerous perks and incentives. A research published on October 25, 2020 by Tree Huggger, a US-based environmental watchdog, indicates that the Philippines is among the top 10 countries in the world that recorded the highest deforestation rates in the past two decades. Using satellite images, the study points out that the country recorded an average deforestation rate of 28% since 1990.

Based on the latest Philippine Forestry Statistics released by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) in 2015, the country has only a remaining 7 million-hectare total forest cover, or merely 23% of its total land area, which is the lowest in Southeast Asia. Only 3% of primary or virgin forests remain in the country. Currently, conservative estimates by the reactionary government put the rate of destruction of forest cover at 47,000 hectares annually. This includes closed and open forests as well as mangroves, which help in preventing erosion, floods and storm surges.

However, despite the worsening impact of natural calamities in the Philippines in recent years attributed to deforestation, tyrant Duterte continues to promote and uphold the export of lumber and other wood products by allowing large-scale logging operations across the country, especially by multinational companies. Based on data by the Bureau of Customs, the Philippines has exported 878,664 tons of lumber from 2016 to 2019. Almost 90% of exports went to only two countries, namely

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China (81%) and Japan (18%). Similarly, under the regime of Benigno Aquino III, the country also exported almost 1.6 million tons of lumber. The aforementioned figures excludes the hundreds of millions of exported processed wood products such as plywood and furniture among others, and lumber extracted through rampant illegal logging operations.

Alongside their demand for social justice, a wide array of democratic sectors of the Filipino people are clamoring for environmental justice. They demand an end to the plunder and destruction of the environment, which makes the Philippines vulnerable to ecological disasters and extreme weather disturbances. Regarding coral reefs, these support greater numbers of fish and invertebrate species than any other ecosystem in the ocean. Together, the Indonesian and Philippine archipelagoes contain about 21,000 islands and nearly one-fifth of the Earth's coral reefs. Fewer than 10 percent of Indonesia's remain in prime condition. In the Philippines the figure has fallen below 5 percent. Many coral reefs have been extensively degraded or destroyed. Among the causes are pollution, the use of toxins and explosives to catch fish, and the actual removal of coral reefs to make way for the reactionary state-sponsored development.

Air pollution is the 4th threat to the global environment. It is primarily caused by industrial, commercial and transport businesses of the monopoly capitalists. A significant portion of industry and transportation burns fossil fuels, such as gasoline. When these fuels burn, chemicals and particulate matter are released into the atmosphere. Although a vast number of substances contribute to air pollution, the most common air pollutants contain carbon, sulfur, and nitrogen. These chemicals interact with one another and with ultraviolet radiation in sunlight in dangerous ways. Smog, usually found in urban areas with large numbers of automobiles, forms when nitrogen oxides react with hydrocarbons in the air to produce aldehydes and ketones. Smog can cause serious health problems.

Automobile exhaust contains unburned hydrocarbons, particulates, carbon dioxide, and oxides of nitrogen and sulfur that contribute to acid rain, smog, and global warming. The oxides combine with water vapor in the air to form acids, which return to the ground as acid rain. Smog, a mixture of smoke (particulates) and fog, irritates the eyes, throat, and lungs and also damages plants. Photochemical smog, a particularly harsh form of smog, is created when sunlight triggers a chemical reaction between the

unburned hydrocarbons and the oxides of nitrogen in automobile exhaust. Carbon dioxide, produced from the burning of fossil fuels including gasoline, is the leading cause of the greenhouse effect, a phenomenon thought to be responsible for rising global temperatures.

Smog is caused by industrial and automobile pollution. It is compounded by temperature inversions, which cause the air pollution to be kept in a particular area for extended periods. Continued exposure to smog can result in respiratory problems, eye irritation, and even death.

Acid rain forms when sulfur dioxide and nitrous oxide transform into sulfuric acid and nitric acid in the atmosphere and come back to Earth in precipitation. Acid rain has made numerous lakes so acidic that they no longer support fish populations. Acid rain is also responsible for the decline of many forest ecosystems worldwide, including the Black Forest of Germany and the forests throughout the eastern United States.

Carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide, and other contaminants pouring from industrial smokestacks contribute to the worldwide atmospheric pollution. Carbon dioxide contributes significantly to global warming, while sulfur dioxide is the principal cause of acid rain in the northeastern United States, southeastern Canada, and eastern Europe. Other environmental problems stemming from smokestack emissions include respiratory diseases, poisoned lakes and streams, and damaged forests and crops.

The fifth threat to the global environment is **water pollution**. Again, it is primarily caused by the industrial and commercial businesses of the monopoly capitalists. Nearly 1.5 billion people worldwide lack safe drinking water and at least 5 million deaths per year can be attributed to waterborne diseases due to pollution. Water pollution may come from *point sources* or *nonpoint sources*. Point sources discharge pollutants from specific locations, such as factories, refineries, sewage treatment plants, and oil tankers. Pollution from nonpoint sources occurs when rainfall or snowmelt moves over and through the ground. As the runoff from agricultural or mining operations or seepage from septic tanks or from sewage drain fields moves, it picks up and carries away pollutants, such as pesticides and fertilizers, depositing the pollutants into lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands, coastal waters, and even underground sources of drinking water. Pollution from nonpoint sources accounts for a majority of contaminants in streams and lakes.

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With almost 80 percent of the planet covered by oceans, people have long acted as if those bodies of water could serve as a limitless dumping ground for wastes. However, raw sewage, garbage, and oil spills have begun to overwhelm the diluting capabilities of the oceans, and most coastal waters are now polluted, threatening marine wildlife. Beaches around the world close regularly, often because the surrounding waters contain high levels of bacteria from sewage disposal.

Groundwater depletion and contamination is the sixth threat to the global environment. Water that collects beneath the ground is called groundwater. Worldwide, groundwater is 40 times more abundant than fresh water in streams and lakes. Although groundwater is a renewable resource, reserves replenish relatively slowly. Agricultural practices, depending on the source of water, need to change within a generation in order to save the groundwater source. In addition to groundwater depletion, scientists worry about groundwater contamination, which arises from leaking underground storage tanks, poorly designed industrial waste ponds, and seepage from the deep-well injection of hazardous wastes into underground geologic formations. By some estimates, on the average, 25 percent of usable groundwater is contaminated; and in many areas of the world where toxic wastes are dumped and where the productions of hazardous technologies, pollutant industries and hazardous agricultural products are located, as much as 75 percent of groundwater is contaminated.

The seventh threat to the global environment is chemical risks. A number of toxic substances that humans encounter regularly may pose serious health risks. Pesticide residues on vegetable crops, mercury in fish, and many industrially produced chemicals may cause cancer, birth defects, genetic mutations, or death. Many chemicals have been found to mimic estrogen, the hormone that controls the development of the female reproductive system in a large number of animal species. Preliminary results indicate that these chemicals, in trace amounts, may disrupt development and lead to a host of serious problems in both males and females, including infertility, increased mortality of offspring, and behavioral changes such as increased aggression.

Dumping of industrial garbage from industrialized nations to the underdeveloped countries is the eighth threat to the global environment. American corporations often continue to produce dangerous, US-banned

chemicals and ship them to developing countries. Additionally, the developed world has shipped large amounts of toxic waste to developing countries for less-than-safe disposal. For instance, experts estimate that 50 to 80 percent of electronic waste produced in the United States, including computer parts, is shipped to waste sites in developing countries, such as China and India. At a waste site in Giuyu, China, laborers with no protective clothing regularly burn plastics and circuit boards from old computers. They pour acid on electronic parts to extract silver and gold, and they smash cathode-ray tubes from computer monitors to remove lead. These activities so pollute the groundwater beneath the site that drinking water is trucked in to the area from a town 29 km. (18 miles) away.

In particular, the Philippines has also become the dumping area for the toxic waste of US imperialism. While using the Philippines as a military base and exercise area and as an arsenal for armaments and weapons of mass destruction under the guise of transit, visit, acquisition of supplies and forward deployment, toxic waste has been dumped in the former US military bases in the country and is continuously being spread by US military troops in many areas of the national territory. The Filipino people, therefore, hold the US government accountable for the pollution and destruction of land, water and other resources, and the environment in the former US military bases and elsewhere in the country.

As a summary, the eight major threats to planet earth presented above, that illustrate the current situation of the global environment, are the sources of the global environmental glitches and at the same time the causes of what the *Compendium* has expounded on as “the crisis in the relationship between man and the environment.” And as already clarified above, these eight major threats to the global environment have been and are continually being globally caused by the industrial and commercial businesses of the multinational and transnational corporations of the monopoly capitalists in partnership with fascist puppet states in the Third World countries. However, the monopoly capitalists or imperialists, especially those from the US, always conceal this fact and truth by blaming population growth or overpopulation as the main threat to planet earth and the main cause of environmental destruction.

The monopoly capitalists, headed by US imperialists, say the world’s population increases by about 77 million human beings each year. Riding

on the prediction of the Population Division of the United Nations that the world's population will increase from 6.23 billion people in 2000 to 9.3 billion people in 2050 and to as many as 19 billion people by the year 2200, the monopoly capitalists, primarily headed by US imperialists, support their lies and deception by arguing that as the number of people will increase, crowding will generate pollution, destroy more habitats, and use up additional natural resources. Thus, they declare that population growth will lead to the destruction of planet earth and the whole environment.

This kind of satanic deception not only angers the Roman Catholic Church that condemns the use of contraceptives but inflame the billions of toiling masses who are aware that the primary causes of the devastation of planet earth are the monopoly capitalists, primarily headed by US imperialists, who have world hegemony and who consider themselves as private owners of the global environment, plundering it for their own selfish superprofits that they extract from the labor power of the propertyless, exploited and oppressed toiling masses of the world. The CNL considers the continuing destruction of the global environment as a wake-up call for all "*men and women of good will,*" including Christians throughout the world, to join the toiling masses to increasingly intensify the people's revolutionary commitment and determination to safeguard planet earth by struggling determinedly against imperialism, and fight for people's liberation and the establishment of people's democracy and socialism in both the underdeveloped and industrialized nations.

Only by understanding deeply the eight major threats that destroy planet earth—global warming or climate change, depletion of the ozone layer, habitat destruction and extinction of species, air pollution, water pollution, groundwater depletion and contamination, chemical risks, and dumping of industrial garbage to underdeveloped countries—as caused primarily by the multinational and transnational firms of the monopoly capitalists, principally led by the US imperialists, also only then that the worldwide Christian Churches can be motivated wholeheartedly to heed and carry out more determinedly the Roman Catholic Church's call to "*safeguard the ecosystem, the common patrimony of all.*"³⁴⁸

³⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 242.

The **fourth and last section** of the *Compendium*’s Chapter Ten concerning “Safeguarding The Environment” deals on the Roman Catholic Church’s call to “safeguard the ecosystem, the common patrimony of all.” For this last section, the *Compendium* clarifies four basic points: **first**, “the environment as a collective good”; **second**, “the use of biotechnology”; **third**, “the environment and the sharing of goods”; and **fourth**, “the adoption of new lifestyles.”

On the **first point**, the *Compendium*, as its references in putting forward the six Church doctrinal policies as guidelines to make programs of action for the effective promotion and protection of “the environment as a collective good,” cite the following nineteen documents written by Pope John Paul II from 1980 to 1999, namely: *Address to the Indigenous Peoples of the Amazon, Manaus, Amazonas State, Brazil* (July 10, 1980); *Address to the Indigenous Peoples of Guatemala* (March 7, 1983); *Address to the Indigenous Peoples of Canada* (September 18, 1984); *Address to the Indigenous Peoples of Ecuador* (January 31, 1985); *Homily at the Liturgy of the Word with the Indigenous Peoples of the Peruvian Amazon Valley* (February 5, 1985); *Address to the Indigenous Peoples of Australia* (November 29, 1986); *Homily in Val Visdende (Italy) for the votive feast of St. John Gualberto* (July 12, 1987); *Address to Native Americans* (September 14, 1987); *Address to a study group of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences* (November 6, 1987); *Address to the European Commission and Court of Human Rights, Strasbourg, France* (October 8, 1988); Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1988); *Address to the Twenty-Fifth General Conference of FAO* (November 16, 1989); *Message for the 1990 World Day of Peace* (1990); Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (1991); *Address to the participants at a Symposium on physics* (December 18, 1992); *Address to the participants of the Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences* (October 28, 1994); Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in American* (1999); and *Message for the 1999 World Day of Peace* (1999). In expounding on the promotion of “the environment as a collective good,” the *Compendium* has often quoted many times said 19 documents of Pope John Paul II. And only once, it has cited the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace’s *Towards a Better Distribution of Land. The Challenge of Agrarian Reform* (November 23, 1997).

Expounded on by the *Compendium* in five pages, the six Church doctrinal policies as guidelines to make programs of action for the effective

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promotion and protection of “the environment as a collective good” could be summarized in the following headings:

- “Care for the environment represents a challenge for all of humanity.”³⁴⁹
- “Responsibility for the environment, the common heritage of mankind, extends not only to present needs but also to those of the future.”³⁵⁰
- “Responsibility for the environment should also find adequate expression on a juridical level. It is important that the international community draw up uniform rules that will allow States to exercise more effective control over the various activities that have negative effects on the environment and to protect ecosystems by preventing the risk of accidents.”³⁵¹
- “Prudent policies, based on the precautionary principle, require that decisions be based on a comparison of the risks and benefits foreseen for the various possible alternatives, including the decision to intervene. This precautionary approach is connected with... every effort for acquiring more thorough knowledge, in the full awareness that science is not able to come to quick conclusions about the absence of risk. The circumstances of uncertainty and provisional solutions make it particularly important that the decision-making process is transparent.”³⁵²
- “Programs of economic development must carefully consider ‘the need to respect the integrity and the cycles of nature’ because natural resources are limited and some are not renewable. The present rhythm of exploitation is seriously compromising the availability of some natural resources for both the present and the future. Solutions to the ecological problem require that economic activity respect [and safeguard] the environment to a greater degree, reconciling the needs of economic development with those of environmental protection... In this context,... [the] relations between human [indus-

³⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 235.

³⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 236.

³⁵¹ Ibid., p. 237.

³⁵² Ibid., p. 237.

trial] activity and climate change... must be opportunely and constantly monitored at the scientific, political and juridical, national and international levels... An economy respectful of the environment will not have maximization of profits as its only objective, because environmental protection cannot be assured solely on the basis of financial calculations of costs and benefits. The environment is one of those goods that cannot be adequately safeguarded or promoted by market forces.”³⁵³

- “The relationship of indigenous peoples to their lands and resources deserves particular attention, since it is a fundamental expression of their identity. Due to powerful agro-industrial interests or the powerful processes of assimilation and urbanization, many of these peoples have already lost or risk losing the lands on which they live, lands tied to the very meaning of their existence. The rights of indigenous peoples must be appropriately protected. These peoples offer an example of a life lived in harmony with the environment that they have come to know well and to preserve. Their extraordinary experience, which is an irreplaceable resource for all humanity, runs the risk of being lost together with the environment from which they originate.”³⁵⁴

In summary, all the aforementioned six guiding policies expounded on by the *Compendium* have been violated by the monopoly capitalists, primarily led by the US imperialists, and by their puppet states in many parts of the world, especially in the Third World countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. The multinational and transnational corporations of the monopoly capitalists and the economic programs of various bourgeois-fascist states have not safeguarded “the ecosystem [as] the common patrimony” of humanity. At the expense of the toiling masses and the indigenous peoples, the monopoly capitalists, the bourgeois-fascist states and their imperialist masters have plundered and continue to destroy the environment.

As regards the **second point** on “the use of biotechnology,” the *Compendium*—basing its reflections mainly on Pope John Paul II’s *Address*

³⁵³ Ibid., pp. 237-238.

³⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 239.

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to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences (October 23, 1982) and some on the Pontifical Academy For Life's *Animal and Plant Biotechnology: New Frontiers and New Responsibilities* (1999)—points out eight guiding policies on “the use of biotechnology” in the promotion of humanity’s “common responsibility” to safeguard the environment, as follows:

The Christian vision of creation makes a positive judgment on the acceptability of human intervention in nature, which also includes other living beings, and at the same time makes a strong appeal for responsibility... For this reason the human person does not commit an illicit act when, out of respect for the order, beauty and usefulness of individual living beings and their function in the ecosystem, he intervenes by modifying some of their characteristics or properties. Human interventions that damage living beings or the natural environment deserve condemnation, while those that improve them are praiseworthy. The acceptability of the use of biological and biogenetic techniques is only one part of the ethical problem: as with every human behavior, it is also necessary to evaluate accurately the real benefits as well as the possible consequences in terms of risks. In the realm of technological-scientific interventions that have a forceful and widespread impact on living organisms, with the possibility of significant long-term repercussions, it is unacceptable to act lightly or irresponsibly.³⁵⁵

An example of “technological-scientific interventions that have forceful and widespread impact on living organisms, with the possibility of significant long-term repercussions” is the cloning of living organisms, animals and even the possibility of cloning humans. Another example is “the use of biotechnology” in the development, production and stockpiling of microbes and toxins made by living things for any weapons purpose, which is prohibited by biological treaty bans of the Biological Weapons Convention. One particular problem in Third World countries like the Philippines is the spread of GMO seeds that need a lot of inputs, and that

³⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 240.

finally result to the continuous disappearance of traditional varieties of seeds long-time suited to the agricultural production of said nations. Such irresponsible “technological-scientific interventions that have forceful and widespread impact on living organisms, with the possibility of significant long-term repercussions” are intentionally done by the imperialists, especially those from the US, as part of their imperialist instrument to maintain their world hegemony by controlling living organisms, including human beings.

Modern biotechnologies have powerful social, economic and political impact locally, nationally and internationally. They need to be evaluated according to the ethical criteria that must always guide human activities and relations in the social, economic and political spheres. Above all the criteria of justice and solidarity must be taken into account... In any event, one must avoid falling into the error of believing that only the spreading of the benefits connected with the new techniques of biotechnology can solve the urgent problem of poverty and underdevelopment that still afflict so many countries on the planet.³⁵⁶

As we have already expounded on in the CNL’s previous topics, the problem of poverty and underdevelopment in the world, especially in the underdeveloped countries of the Third World, like the Philippines, is caused by exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism that has been globalized by imperialist powers, primarily led by US imperialism. And the Roman Catholic Church’s assertion that “all the criteria of justice and solidarity must be taken into account” ought to be founded on the anti-imperialist mass movement, especially directed against US imperialism as the No. 1 enemy of the world, that must be launched at both the national and international levels to pave the way for the advancement of national liberation movements and the building of democratic and socialist systems and structures in each country of the world.

In a spirit of international solidarity, various measures can be taken in relation to the use of new biotechnologies. In the first

³⁵⁶ Ibid., pp. 240-241.

place, equitable commercial exchange, without the burden of unjust stipulations, is to be facilitated. Promoting the development of the most disadvantaged peoples, however, will not be authentic or effective if it is reduced to the simple exchange of products. It is indispensable to foster the development of a necessary scientific and technological autonomy on the part of these same peoples, promoting the exchange of scientific and technological knowledge and the transfer of technologies to developing countries.³⁵⁷

As has been pointed out several times in the CNL's previous topics, this guiding policy of the Church has not been properly implemented by the UN international organizations such as the Security Council, WB, IMF, WTO because these are manipulated by imperialist powers, primarily led by US imperialism, that impose policies, which maintain world hegemony of the US imperialists and are disadvantageous to the underdeveloped nations in the Third World, and to other countries in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. This concretely means that the establishment of an international solidarity, that shall undertake various measures for the use of new biotechnologies that promote the development of the most disadvantaged peoples and nations, must be founded on and must first and foremost advance an international anti-imperialist mass movement that strongly support the underprivileged nations to expose the manipulative schemes of the imperialist powers and assert their concrete demands to the UN international organizations.

Solidarity also means appealing to the responsibility of developing countries, and in particular of their political leaders, for promoting trade policies that are favorable to their peoples and the exchange of technology that can improve the conditions of their food supply and health... with special attention to the particular characteristics and needs of their territory and population... To this end, it would be useful to establish national agencies responsible for protecting the common good by means of careful risk management.³⁵⁸

³⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 241.

³⁵⁸ Ibid.

In previous discussions, we have shown that the trade system and the food and health situations in most developing/underdeveloped nations, which are characterized as semicolonial and semifeudal like the Philippines, are under the control of fascist reactionary governments that are dictated by imperialist powers, especially by the US imperialist government. That’s why what is badly needed in the underdeveloped nations is to develop national liberation movements in each of such countries for people to free themselves from exploitation and oppression, and upon national victory, establish the people’s democracy and socialism in their society.

Scientists and technicians involved in the field of biotechnology are called to work intelligently and with perseverance in seeking the best solutions to the serious and urgent problems of food supply and health care.³⁵⁹

Again, this is very much neglected in the Third World countries like the Philippines. Scientists and technicians are the least supported by fascist/reactionary governments and so they migrate to other countries for a better life; and food supply and health care are under the control of the big landlords, the big comprador bourgeoisie and bureaucrat capitalists who are all dictated by their imperialist masters. Revolutionaries in the Third World countries must have to learn from the Cuban people who first overthrew their nation’s fascist regime to free themselves and have established a socialist government that takes care of sufficient food supply and well-developed health care of its citizenry, even though US imperialism continues to impose all kinds of embargo against Cuba.

Entrepreneurs and directors of public agencies involved in the research, production and selling of products derived from new biotechnologies must take into account not only legitimate profit but also the common good.³⁶⁰

This naïve principle of “entrepreneurs and directors of public agencies... must take into account not only legitimate profit but also the common good” is based on the Catholic Church’s doctrine that capitalism can

³⁵⁹ Ibid.

³⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 241.

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be regulated and that the laboring masses and the capitalists can cooperate together in developing and running society's economy. In all the CNL's previous topics, it has been expounded on that the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism, that has been globalized by imperialists, has no concern at all to promote the common good and the universal destination of goods because the monopoly capitalists are only interested in the private ownership of the means of production and the continuous accumulation of superprofits and capital at the expense of the billions of the global toiling masses of workers and peasants.

Politicians, legislators and public administrators are responsible for evaluating the potentials benefits and possible risks connected with the use of biotechnologies. It is not desirable for their decisions, at the national or international level, to be dictated by pressure from special interest groups. Public authorities must also encourage a correctly informed public opinion and make decisions that are best-suited to the common good.³⁶¹

The fact is that politicians, legislators and public administrators in all the capitalist, non-socialist, and semicolonial countries are only interested in their own political careers and economic interests, and are continuously being pressured and dictated by imperialism, primarily by US imperialism. Such actuations only support world hegemony which the US imperialists maintain by continuously launching wars of aggression and military interventions, forcing all countries of the world to unite in the promotion of the monopoly capitalists' policy of liberalization, deregulation and privatization.

Leaders in the information sector also have an important task, which must be undertaken with prudence and objectivity. Society expects information that is complete and objective, which helps citizens to form a correct opinion concerning biotechnological products, above all because this is something that directly concerns them as possible consumers. The

³⁶¹ Ibid., p. 242.

temptation to fall into superficial information, fueled by over enthusiasm or unjustified alarmism, must be avoided.³⁶²

The reality cannot be denied that “leaders in the information sector” at the national level are under the dictates and control of fascist reactionary government rulers who are dictated by their imperialist masters, and at the international level under the directives and domination of imperialist powers, primarily led by US imperialism.

As a whole, the eight guiding policies on “the use of biotechnology,” which the Compendium has expounded on for the promotion of humanity’s “common responsibility” to safeguard the environment, are very passive, can never motivate Christians to act and uplift the exploited and oppressed billions of masses in the world, and only make the monopoly capitalists, the imperialist powers and their fascist puppet states smile and laugh merrily. Why? Because these guiding principles are not based on the concrete reality that the development of biological and biogenetic techniques has been and is being continuously directed by imperialist powers to primarily maintain their worldwide hegemony and serve the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism.

Concerning the **third point** on “the environment and the sharing of goods,” the Compendium mentions various problems and offers solutions to them. As regards the problem of “injustice of hoarding resources” and “greediness,” the *Compendium* declares that these can be prevented by sharing resources “equitably in accordance with justice and charity”; and the “modern ecological problems” “can be effectively resolved only through international cooperation.” Citing the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council’s Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (1966) and Pope Paul VI’s Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* (1967), the *Compendium* asserts:

As regards the ecological question, the social doctrine of the Church reminds us that the goods of the earth were created by God to be used wisely by all. They must be shared equitably, in accordance with justice and charity. This is essentially a question of preventing the injustice of hoarding resources:

³⁶² Ibid.

greediness, be it individual or collective, is contrary to the order of creation. Modern ecological problems are of a planetary dimension and can be effectively resolved only through international cooperation capable of guaranteeing greater coordination in the use of the earth's resources.³⁶³

The problem is the social doctrine of the Church, that the goods of the earth must be shared equitably in accordance with justice and charity, is not at all respected and promoted by the exploitative and oppressive system of the monopoly capitalists because of their unlimited greediness for superprofits, accumulation of capital, and bourgeois-fascist power. Also the modern ecological problems such as climate change cannot be resolved through international cooperation that guarantees greater coordination in the use of the earth's resources because the UN international organizations are constantly being manipulated by the imperialist powers, especially led by US imperialism, to maintain their worldwide hegemony not only against other nations, especially against Third World countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, but also over the whole planet and the global environment.

Regarding the problem of the environmental crisis and poverty, the *Compendium* asserts that this can be resolved by the principle of the universal destination of goods, as it states:

The environmental crisis and poverty are connected by a complex and dramatic set of causes that can be resolved by the principle of the universal destination of goods, which offers a fundamental moral and cultural orientation. The present environmental crisis affects those who are poorest in a particular way, whether they live in those lands subject to erosion and desertification, are involved in armed conflicts or subject to forced immigration, or because they do not have the economic and technological means to protect themselves from other calamities.³⁶⁴

³⁶³ Ibid., p. 242.

³⁶⁴ Ibid., pp. 242-243.

We have expounded on in the CNL’s 3rd topic that the principle of the universal destination of goods is unacceptable wholly to the economic systems and political structures of monopoly capitalism. And such “principle of the universal destination of goods” would just remain like an apple in the sky, never to be reached out by the poor, exploited and oppressed masses if monopoly capitalism continues to exist. However, Christians and Marxists, though not necessarily compatible with each other in terms of beliefs, can complement one another in the promotion of the principles of the common good and the universal destination of goods with the conviction that this principle could be achieved through the implementation of socialist principles.

One specific problem that the *Compendium* mentions is the inadequate access to drinking water in many countries of the world. Accordingly, the Catholic Church’s doctrine teaches that this problem can be resolved by the principle of the universal destination of goods. Citing the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace’s *Water, An Essential Element for Life. A Contribution of the Delegation of the Holy See on the occasion of the 3rd World Water Forum, Kyoto, Japan* (March 16-23, 2003) and Pope John Paul II’s *Message for the 2003 World Day of Peace* (2003) and his *Message to Cardinal Geraldo Majella Agnelo on the occasion of the 2004 Brotherhood Campaign of the Brazilian Bishops* (March 17, 2004), the *Compendium* explains:

The principle of the universal destination of goods also applies naturally to water, considered in the Sacred Scriptures as a symbol of purification (cf. Ps 51:4; Jn 13:8) and of life (cf. Jn 3:5; Gal 3:27). “As a gift from God, water is a vital element essential to survival; thus, everyone has a right to it.” Satisfying the needs of all, especially of those who live in poverty, must guide the use of water and the services connected with it. Inadequate access to safe drinking water affects the well-being of a huge number of people and is often the cause of disease, suffering, conflicts, poverty and even death. For a suitable solution to this problem, it “must be set in context in order to establish moral criteria based precisely on the value

of life and the respect for the rights and dignity of all human being.”³⁶⁵

The *Compendium* further asserts:

But its very nature water cannot be treated as just another *commodity* among many, and it must be used rationally and in solidarity with others [CNL]. The distribution of water is traditionally among the responsibilities that fall to public agencies, since water is considered a public good. If water distribution is entrusted to the private sector it should still be considered a public good. The right to water, as all human rights, finds its basis in human dignity and not in any kind of merely quantitative assessment that considers water as a merely economic good. Without water, life is threatened. Therefore, the right to safe drinking water is a universal and inalienable right.³⁶⁶

The first CNL comment on the above quotations is that the Catholic Church has not yet realized that under the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism, water, including safe drinking water, has become a commodity that is continually being exploited by monopoly capitalists and bourgeois-fascist states in order to gain superprofits. Even the public agencies for the purification and distribution of water are no longer public or they remain public only in name because almost all government agencies, that have formerly managed water purification and distribution, are privatized as privatization together with liberalization and deregulation are policies imposed by the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism.

Thus, because water has become a commodity and no longer a public good for all, it is being run under the system of free competition in the market economy of the monopoly capitalists and bourgeois state rulers who usually dictate higher prices for water. And the rising price of water usually leads to another problem that is passed on to consumers in the form of higher food prices. This harms greatly the poor countries and poor

³⁶⁵ Ibid., pp. 243-244.

³⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 244.

people such as the urban poor, the workers and the semi-proletariat in cities and urban communities. Under the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism, the right of people to water is violated, disposing billions of the toiling masses of the world to live in misery and inequality.

Other problems that affect the environment also cause the scarcity of potable water. In particular, *pollution* affects water supply, reducing the available water by making it toxic or unfit for human use. Nitrates from farm fertilizers as well as industrial chemicals from the various businesses of the monopoly capitalists can sink into groundwater or flow into streams, where they pose risks to both health and the environment. Nitrates used in fertilizers have been linked to some health problems. High levels of nitrates can also damage the environment by stimulating algae growth. The algae reduce the amount of oxygen in the water (a process known as eutrophication), killing other organisms. Other chemicals like pesticides and herbicides also enter the water supply in the same way as nitrates. Humans and animals that ingest the water also ingest these chemicals, which cause cancer, reproductive problems, and death. Animal and human wastes are another source of water pollution, which is a problem throughout the world, but is worst in the underdeveloped nations of the Third World. According to the UN, more than 90 percent of wastewater in underdeveloped countries goes untreated, and 50 percent of the world’s population does not have adequate sanitation. At least 20 percent of the world’s population has no access to drinking water that is free from pollutants or disease-causing microbes. This means about half of the people in the Third World suffer from diarrhea, the causes of which are often transmitted through water.

To conclude once again, the continuing existence of the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism only prolongs global problems such as the inadequate access to and scarcity of drinking water, widespread poverty, the gap between the few rich and the majority poor, environmental deterioration and other social problems in many countries of the world. This necessitates the continuous launching, expansion and consolidation of the anti-imperialist mass movement at the national and international levels for the end of monopoly capitalism and the establishment of socialist societies which can put into actual practice the Catholic

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Church's "principles of the common good and the universal destination of goods" at the service of the billions of toiling masses in the world.

The **fourth point** in the *Compendium's* last section on "Safeguarding The Environment" [is] "A Common Responsibility" of the whole of humanity is on "the adoption of new lifestyles." This means that safeguarding the environment becomes a common responsibility of all human beings only when people adopt new lifestyles. Citing Pope John Paul II's *Address to the UN Center, Nairobi, Kenya* (August 18, 1985) and his Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (1991), the *Compendium* asserts:

Serious ecological problems call for an effective change of mentality leading to the adoption of new lifestyles, in which the quest for truth, beauty, goodness and communion with others for the sake of the common good are the factors that determine consumer choices, savings and investments. These lifestyles should be inspired by sobriety, temperance, and self-discipline at both the individual and social levels.³⁶⁷

The *Compendium* further explains:

There is a need to break with the logic of mere consumption and promote forms of agricultural and industrial production that respect the order of creation and satisfy the basic human needs of all. These attitudes, sustained by a renewed awareness of the interdependence of all the inhabitants of the earth, will contribute to eliminating the numerous causes of ecological disasters as well as guaranteeing the ability to respond quickly when such disasters strike the peoples and territories. The ecological question must not be faced solely because of the frightening prospects that environmental destruction represents; rather it must above all become a strong motivation for authentic solidarity for worldwide dimensions.³⁶⁸

As a summary, CNL would want to state that all the elucidations of the *Compendium* in Chapter Ten—which explains the social doctrine of

³⁶⁷ Ibid., pp. 244.

³⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 244-245.

the Catholic Church on the environment as a common good of humanity, the crisis in the relationship between man and the environment, and the common responsibility of humankind to safeguard the environment under the principle of the universal destination of good—are formulated so nicely in such a way not to offend the outlooks and emotions of the monopoly capitalists whose multinational and transnational corporations are the No. 1 cause of the continuing plunder and destruction of planet earth and its whole environment. Even the “new lifestyles” as well as “attitudes,” that the Compendium proposes to be adopted by humankind in order to “safeguard the ecosystem,” are so limited and these even conceal, encourage and, in fact, allow the exploitative and oppressive lifestyles and attitudes of the monopoly capitalists and state fascists to continually destroy and plunder the environment.

CNL is united in the promotion of the Catholic Church’s call that the rights of individual persons and peoples to utilize the resources and goods of the earth have to be ensured so that such rights ought to be “exercised in an equitable and orderly fashion” and that “regulated interventions are necessary, interventions that are the result of national and international agreements, and a juridical order that adjudicates and specifies the exercise of this right.” However, if we look back into international agreements—like the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) founded in 1989, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) both established in 1994, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) that existed since 1948, and now the World Trade Organization (WTO) that has replaced GATT and has taken over the functions of GATT since 1995—all of these have been primarily initiated by monopoly capitalists from the developed and industrialized countries, especially the G8, that primarily ensure in an “*orderly fashion*” the interests of monopoly capitalists in the ownership and utilization of the earthly goods and in the administration of economic and trade laws that are dictated by the monopoly capitalists from the developed countries and are imposed especially to the underdeveloped countries in the Third World and eastern Europe. And because of the monopoly capitalist dictates and impositions, such international agreements and organizations, that direct and administer the ownership and utilization of earthly goods and resources, are very much less beneficial and advantageous to the

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underdeveloped nations, and exacerbate the continuing exploitation and oppression of the toiling masses of workers in both the industrialized and underdeveloped countries. Consequently, inequitable ownership, distribution and utilization of earthly goods and resources, underdevelopment in the Third World and eastern European countries, widening gap between rich and poor countries, widening gap between rich and poor people and widespread poverty and misery among the toiling masses of workers and peasants in both the developed and underdeveloped nations continue throughout the world today.

All the above expositions of the concrete actuations of monopoly capitalism and/or imperialism point to the fact that the monopoly capitalists and their exploitative and oppressive system have no intention to put into practice the principle of the universal destination of goods for the development of “an economic vision inspired by moral values that permit people not to lose sight of the origin or purpose of these goods, so as to bring about a world of fairness and solidarity.” This reality leads to the conclusion that monopoly capitalism is not “a means for promoting the well-being of all men and all peoples and for preventing their exclusion and exploitation.” Monopoly capitalism is not “a common effort to obtain for every person and for all peoples the conditions necessary for integral development, so that everyone can contribute to making a more human world.” It is actually a system for “the progress of some” (i.e., the few monopoly capitalists, the bourgeoisie and puppets and their imperialist masters) and a scheme which is “an obstacle to the development of others..., a pretext for enslavement” of the toiling masses, the majority of the world’s population.

Under the system of monopoly capitalism and the rule of imperialism, especially US imperialism, the social guidance of the papacy and the whole Catholic Church—that “the principle of the universal destination of goods requires that the poor, the marginalized and in all cases those whose living conditions interfere with their proper growth should be the focus of particular concern”—will never be realized. Why? Because monopoly capitalism as a system does not help Christians and Church leaders in strengthening the actual practice of “*the preferential option for the poor.*” The strong influences of the monopoly capitalist thinking and scheme, that have been deeply imbedded unconsciously into the minds and attitudes of the major-

ity of Church leaders, have been the cause that few Church people in the Philippines and around the globe have **not** deeply committed themselves in embracing the problems and struggles of “the immense multitudes of the hungry, the needy, the homeless, those without health care and, above all, those without hope of a better future.”

In his Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'*, *Mi Signore (Praise be to You, My Lord: On Care for Our Common Home, May 24, 2015)*, Pope Francis presents concretely the problem of “*global environmental deterioration*,” describes substantially how the global environment is continually being devastated, explains the “weak international political responses” of international organizations, expounds “the human roots of the ecological crisis” as also the root causes of “global inequality” and poverty that victimizes “the excluded who are (the) majority of the planet’s population,” and proposes as “integral ecology” to solve the “ecological catastrophe,” characterizing it as “a broader vision of a liberation from the dominant technocratic paradigm” and “at the service of another type of progress, one which is healthier, more human, more social, more integral.”³⁶⁹

In opening his Encyclical Letter, Pope Francis declares:

Now, faced as we are with global environmental deterioration, I wish to address every person living on this planet. In my Apostolic Exhortation ***Evangelii Gaudium***, I wrote to all the members of the Church with the aim of encouraging ongoing missionary renewal. In this Encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, *Mi Signore*, I would like to enter into dialogue with all people about our common home.³⁷⁰

Quoting Pope Paul VI’s *Address to FAO on the 25th Anniversary of its Institution* (November 16, 1970) and his Apostolic Letter *Octogesima Adveniens* (May 15, 1971), Pope Francis proclaims:

³⁶⁹ Pope Francis, *Laudatio Si'* (Encyclical Letter), May 24, 2015 (https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html).

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

In 1971, Blessed Pope Paul VI referred to the ecological concern as “a tragic consequence” of unchecked human activity: “Due to an ill-considered exploitation of nature, humanity runs the risk of destroying it and becoming in turn a victim of this degradation.” He spoke in similar terms to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations about the potential for an “ecological catastrophe under the effective explosion of industrial civilization,” and stressed “the urgent need for a radical change in the conduct of humanity,” inasmuch as “the most extraordinary scientific advances, the most amazing technical abilities, the most astonishing economic growth, unless they are accompanied by authentic social and moral progress, will definitively turn against man.”³⁷¹

The pope further asserts that “the destruction of the human environment is extremely serious... Every effort to protect and improve our world entails profound changes in lifestyles, models of production and consumption, and the established structures of power which today govern societies.”³⁷²

Citing as references Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Redemptor Hominis* (March 4, 1979), his Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (December 30, 1987), and his Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (May 1, 1991), Pope Francis states:

Saint John Paul II became increasingly concerned about this issue. In his first Encyclical he warned that human beings frequently seem “to see no other meaning in their natural environment than what serves for immediate use and consumption.” Subsequently, he would call for a global ecological conversion. At the same time, he noted that little effort had been made to “safeguard the moral conditions for an authentic human ecology.” The destruction of the human environment is extremely serious, not only because God has entrusted the world to us men and women, but because human life is

³⁷¹ Ibid.

³⁷² Ibid.

itself a gift which must be defended from various forms of debasement. Every effort to protect and improve our world entails profound changes in ‘lifestyles, models of production and consumption, and the established structures of power which today govern societies’. Authentic human development has a moral character. It presumes full respect for the human person, but it must also be concerned for the world around us and “take into account the nature of each being and of its mutual connection in an ordered system.” Accordingly, our human ability to transform reality must proceed in line with God’s original gift of all that is.³⁷³

Quoting Pope Benedict XVI’s *Address to the Diplomatic Corps Accredited to the Holy See* (January 8, 2007) and his Encyclical Letter *Caritas in Veritate* (June 29, 2009), Pope Francis declares:

My predecessor Benedict XVI likewise proposed “eliminating the structural causes of the dysfunctions of the world economy and correcting models of growth which have proved incapable of ensuring respect for the environment...” It follows that “the deterioration of nature is closely connected to the culture which shapes human coexistence.” Pope Benedict asked us to recognize that the natural environment has been gravely damaged by our irresponsible behavior. The social environment has also suffered damage. Both are ultimately due to the same evil: the notion that there are no indisputable truths to guide our lives, and hence human freedom is limitless.³⁷⁴

Referring to the *Address in Santa Barbara, California* (November 8, 1997) and the *Message for the Day of Prayer for the Protection of Creation* (September 1, 2012) of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the Eastern Orthodox Church prelate of Chalcedon, Turkey, Pope Francis says:

[Ecumenical] Patriarch Bartholomew has spoken in particular of the need for each of us to repent of the ways we have

³⁷³ Ibid.

³⁷⁴ Ibid.

harmed the planet, for “inasmuch as we all generate small ecological damage,” we are called to acknowledge “our contribution, smaller or greater, to the disfigurement and destruction of creation.” He has repeatedly stated this firmly and persuasively, challenging us to acknowledge our sins against creation: “For human beings... to destroy the biological diversity of God’s creation; for human beings to degrade the integrity of the earth by causing changes in its climate, by stripping the earth of its natural forests or destroying its wetlands; for human beings to contaminate the earth’s waters, its land, its air, and its life—these are sins.” For “to commit a crime against the natural world is a sin against ourselves and a sin against God.”³⁷⁵

Pope Francis appeals “to all men and women of good will” and proclaims:

The urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development, for we know that things can change... Humanity still has the ability to work together in building our common home. Here I want to recognize, encourage and thank all those striving in countless ways to guarantee the protection of the home which we share. Particular appreciation is owed to those who tirelessly seek to resolve the tragic effects of environmental degradation on the lives of the world’s poorest. Young people demand change. They wonder how anyone can claim to be building a better future without thinking of the environmental crisis and the sufferings of the excluded. I urgently appeal, then, for a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet... The worldwide ecological movement has already made considerable progress and led to the establishment of numerous organizations committed to raising awareness of these challenges. Regrettably,

³⁷⁵ Ibid.

many efforts to seek concrete solutions to the environmental crisis have proved ineffective.³⁷⁶

Then in detailed descriptions, Pope Francis brings out and exposes the problems of pollution, climate change, depletion of natural resources, water pollution, pollution of the oceans, and depletion of species and organisms. He points out the sources and causes of all these, and declares that all these have negative impacts on planet earth and the whole global environment, including human beings especially the billions of poor and excluded people.

As regards pollution as a whole, Pope Francis says:

Some forms of pollution are part of people’s daily experience. Exposure to atmospheric pollutants produces a broad spectrum of health hazards, especially for the poor, and causes millions of premature deaths. People take sick, for example, from breathing high levels of smoke from fuels used in cooking or heating. There is also pollution that affects everyone, caused by transport, industrial fumes, substances which contribute to the acidification of soil and water, fertilizers, insecticides, fungicides, herbicides and agrottoxins in general. Technology, which, linked to business interests, is presented as the only way of solving these problems, in fact proves incapable of seeing the mysterious network of relations between things and so sometimes solves one problem only to create others.³⁷⁷

Further, Pope Francis identifies the sources of pollutants and states:

Account must also be taken of the pollution produced by residue, including dangerous waste present in different areas. Each year hundreds of millions of tons of waste are generated, much of it non-biodegradable, highly toxic and radioactive, from homes and businesses, from construction and demolition sites, from clinical, electronic and industrial sources. The earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an

³⁷⁶ Ibid.

³⁷⁷ Ibid.

immense pile of filth. In many parts of the planet, the elderly lament that once beautiful landscapes are now covered with rubbish. Industrial waste and chemical products utilized in cities and agricultural areas can lead to bioaccumulation in the organisms of the local population, even when levels of toxins in those places are low. Frequently no measures are taken until after people's health has been irreversibly affected.³⁷⁸

In elucidating the causes, effects and grave implications of global warming, Pope Francis begins and testifies that:

A very solid scientific consensus indicates that we are presently witnessing a disturbing warming of the climatic system. In recent decades this warming has been accompanied by a constant rise in the sea level and, it would appear, by an increase of extreme weather events, even if a scientifically determinable cause cannot be assigned to each particular phenomenon. Humanity is called to recognize the need for changes of lifestyle, production and consumption, in order to combat this warming or at least the human causes which produce or aggravate it. It is true that there are other factors (such as volcanic activity, variations in the earth's orbit and axis, the solar cycle), yet a number of scientific studies indicate that most global warming in recent decades is due to the great concentration of greenhouse gases (carbon dioxide, methane, nitrogen oxides and others) released mainly as a result of human activity. As these gases build up in the atmosphere, they hamper the escape of heat produced by sunlight at the earth's surface. The problem is aggravated by a model of development based on the intensive use of fossil fuels, which is at the heart of the worldwide energy system. Another determining factor has been an increase in changed uses of the soil, principally deforestation for agricultural purposes.³⁷⁹

³⁷⁸ Ibid.

³⁷⁹ Ibid.

In explaining the effects of global warming on the carbon cycle that in turn would lead to other serious ecological consequences, Pope Francis asserts:

Warming has effects on the carbon cycle. It creates a vicious circle which aggravates the situation even more, affecting the availability of essential resources like drinking water, energy and agricultural production in warmer regions, and leading to the extinction of part of the planet’s biodiversity. The melting in the polar ice caps and in high altitude plains can lead to the dangerous release of methane gas, while the decomposition of frozen organic material can further increase the emission of carbon dioxide. Things are made worse by the loss of tropical forests which would otherwise help to mitigate climate change. Carbon dioxide pollution increases the acidification of the oceans and compromises the marine food chain. If present trends continue, this century may well witness extraordinary climate change and an unprecedented destruction of ecosystems, with serious consequences for all of us. A rise in the sea level, for example, can create extremely serious situations, if we consider that a quarter of the world’s population lives on the coast or nearby, and that the majority of our megacities are situated in coastal areas.³⁸⁰

Expounding the grave implications of global warming and relating these to the situation of global poverty, Pope Francis explains, saying:

Climate change is a global problem with grave implications: environmental, social, economic, political and for the distribution of goods. It represents one of the principal challenges facing humanity in our day. Its worst impact will probably be felt by developing countries in coming decades. Many of the poor live in areas particularly affected by phenomena related to warming, and their means of subsistence are largely dependent on natural reserves and ecosystemic services such as agriculture, fishing and forestry. They have no other finan-

³⁸⁰ Ibid.

cial activities or resources which can enable them to adapt to climate change or to face natural disasters, and their access to social services and protection is very limited. For example, changes in climate, to which animals and plants cannot adapt, lead them to migrate; this in turn affects the livelihood of the poor, who are then forced to leave their homes, with great uncertainty for their future and that of their children. There has been a tragic rise in the number of migrants seeking to flee from the growing poverty caused by environmental degradation. They are not recognized by international conventions as refugees; they bear the loss of the lives they have left behind, without enjoying any legal protection whatsoever. Sadly, there is widespread indifference to such suffering, which is even now taking place throughout our world. Our lack of response to these tragedies involving our brothers and sisters points to the loss of that sense of responsibility for our fellow men and women upon which all civil society is founded.³⁸¹

Pope Francis alludes that the few rich people in rich (capitalist and industrialized) countries have no concern for the “*urgent need to develop policies*” that would drastically reduce the negative impacts of global warming when he asserts:

Many of those who possess more resources and economic or political power seem mostly to be concerned with masking the problems or concealing their symptoms, simply making efforts to reduce some of the negative impacts of climate change. However, many of these symptoms indicate that such effects will continue to worsen if we continue with current models of production and consumption. There is an urgent need to develop policies so that, in the next few years, the emission of carbon dioxide and other highly polluting gases can be drastically reduced, for example, substituting for fossil fuels and developing sources of renewable energy. Worldwide there is minimal access to clean and renewable energy. There

³⁸¹ Ibid.

is still a need to develop adequate storage technologies. Some countries have made considerable progress, although it is far from constituting a significant proportion. Investments have also been made in means of production and transportation which consume less energy and require fewer raw materials, as well as in methods of construction and renovating buildings which improve their energy efficiency. But these good practices are still far from widespread.³⁸²

Thenceforth, Pope Francis expounds issues on the depletion of natural resources and water pollution. Both problems, the pope asserts, greatly lead to the scarcity of potable water, the depletion and extinction of plant and animal species, and the consequent imbalance of the ecosystem. Pope Francis sees all these problems exacerbate global poverty and inequality that victimizes billions of people, especially the poor, who are forced to live in misery and unhealthy environment.

Pope Francis declares:

Other indicators of the present situation have to do with the depletion of natural resources. We all know that it is not possible to sustain the present level of consumption in developed countries and wealthier sectors of society, where the habit of wasting and discarding has reached unprecedented levels. The exploitation of the planet has already exceeded acceptable limits and we still have not solved the problem of poverty.³⁸³

He further confirms:

One particularly serious problem is the quality of water available to the poor. Every day, unsafe water results in many deaths and the spread of water-related diseases, including those caused by microorganisms and chemical substances. Dysentery and cholera, linked to inadequate hygiene and water supplies, are a significant cause of suffering and of infant mortality. Underground water sources in many places are threatened

³⁸² Ibid.

³⁸³ Ibid.

by the pollution produced in certain mining, farming and industrial activities, especially in countries lacking adequate regulation or controls. It is not only a question of industrial waste. Detergents and chemical products, commonly used in many places of the world, continue to pour into our rivers, lakes and seas.³⁸⁴

Specific problems, that Pope Francis points out that affect the ecosystem, are: the privatization of water as “a commodity subject to the laws of the market” and the scarcity of water which would “lead to the increase in the cost of food and the various products,” and the “loss of forests and woodlands,” as what is currently being done in the Amazon and Congo basin. And the pope sees these specific problems are due to “business interests,” “quick and easy profit,” “multinational businesses” and “global economic interests of transnational corporations,” which greatly disturb biodiversity, resulting to the loss of the different species of plants, animals, fungi and microbial organisms living on earth and the variety of habitats in which they live, and further aggravating “environmental deterioration” and “great inequality.”

Thus, Pope Francis declares:

Even as the quality of available water is constantly diminishing, in some places there is a growing tendency, despite its scarcity, to privatize this resource, turning it into a commodity subject to the laws of the market. Yet access to safe drinkable water is a basic and universal human right, since it is essential to human survival and, as such, is a condition for the exercise of other human rights. Our world has a grave social debt towards the poor who lack access to drinking water, because they are denied the right to a life consistent with their inalienable dignity. This debt can be paid partly by an increase in funding to provide clean water and sanitary services among the poor. But water continues to be wasted, not only in the developed world but also in developing countries which possess it in abundance. This shows that the problem of water is

³⁸⁴ Ibid.

partly an educational and cultural issue, since there is little awareness of the seriousness of such behavior within a context of great inequality.³⁸⁵

The pope explains further and says:

Greater scarcity of water will lead to an increase in the cost of food and the various products which depend on its use. Some studies warn that an acute water shortage may occur within a few decades unless urgent action is taken. The environmental repercussions could affect billions of people; it is also conceivable that the control of water by large multinational businesses may become a major source of conflict in this century.³⁸⁶

To describe further the devastation and deterioration of the global environment, Pope Francis correctly thinks that the “quick and easy profit” and “global economic interests” of the “multinational businesses” and “transnational corporations” are “short-sighted approaches to the economy, commerce and production.” And he sees all these cause the plunder of “the earth’s resources,” “the disappearance of thousands of plant and animal species,” “the pollution of the oceans” and especially the “tropical and subtropical seas” as well as “coral reefs,” “drastic depletion of marine species and organisms,” and the “consequent imbalance of the ecosystem.”

The pope states:

The earth’s resources are also being plundered because of short-sighted approaches to the economy, commerce and production. The loss of forests and woodlands entails the loss of species which may constitute extremely important resources in the future, not only for food but also for curing disease and other uses. Different species contain genes which could be key resources in years ahead for meeting human needs and regulating environmental problems. It is not enough, however, to think of different species merely as potential “resources” to

³⁸⁵ Ibid.

³⁸⁶ Ibid.

be exploited, while overlooking the fact that they have value in themselves. Each year sees the disappearance of thousands of plant and animal species which we will never know, which our children will never see, because they have been lost forever. The great majority become extinct for reasons related to human activity.³⁸⁷

Pope Francis further explains:

In assessing the environmental impact of any project, concern is usually shown for its effects on soil, water and air, yet few careful studies are made of its impact on biodiversity, as if the loss of species or animals and plant groups were of little importance. Highways, new plantations, the fencing-off of certain areas, the damming of water sources, and similar developments, crowd out natural habitats and, at times, break them up in such a way that animal populations can no longer migrate or roam freely. As a result, some species face extinction. Alternatives exist which at least lessen the impact of these projects, like the creation of biological corridors, but few countries demonstrate such concern and foresight. Frequently, when certain species are exploited commercially, little attention is paid to studying their reproductive patterns in order to prevent their depletion and the consequent imbalance of the ecosystem.³⁸⁸

Thus, the pope declares:

Caring for ecosystems demands far-sightedness, since no one looking for quick and easy profit is truly interested in their preservation. But the cost of the damage caused by such selfish lack of concern is much greater than the economic benefits to be obtained. Where certain species are destroyed or seriously harmed, the values involved are incalculable. We can be silent witnesses to terrible injustices if we think that we can obtain

³⁸⁷ Ibid.

³⁸⁸ Ibid.

significant benefits by making the rest of humanity, present and future, pay the extremely high costs of environmental deterioration.³⁸⁹

Citing the destruction of biodiversity in the Amazon and the Congo basins and reflecting on the Fifth General Conference of the Latin American and Caribbean Bishops’ *Aparedica Document* (June 29, 2007), Pope Francis declares:

Let us mention, for example, those richly biodiverse lungs of our planet which are the Amazon and the Congo basins, or the great aquifers and glaciers. We know how important these are for the entire earth and for the future of humanity. The ecosystems of tropical forests possess an enormously complex biodiversity which is almost impossible to appreciate fully, yet when these forests are burned down or leveled for purposes of cultivation, within the space of a few years countless species are lost and the areas frequently become arid wastelands. A delicate balance has to be maintained when speaking about these places, for we cannot overlook the huge global economic interests which, under the guise of protecting them, can *undermine the sovereignty* of individual nations [CNL]. In fact, there are “proposals to internationalize the Amazon, which only serve the economic interests of transnational corporations.” We cannot fail to praise the commitment of international agencies and civil society organizations which draw public attention to these issues and offer critical cooperation, employing legitimate means of pressure, to ensure that each government carries out its proper and inalienable responsibility to preserve its country’s environment and natural resources, without capitulating to spurious local or international interests.³⁹⁰

³⁸⁹ Ibid.

³⁹⁰ Ibid.

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As regards the pollution of the oceans, especially the tropical and subtropical seas as well as coral reefs, which would lead to a drastic depletion of marine species and organisms, Pope Francis confirms:

Oceans not only contain the bulk of our planet's water supply, but also most of the immense variety of living creatures, many of them still unknown to us and threatened for various reasons. What is more, marine life in rivers, lakes, seas and oceans, which feeds a great part of the world's population, is affected by uncontrolled fishing, leading to a drastic depletion of certain species. Selective forms of fishing which discard much of what they collect continue unabated. Particularly threatened are marine organisms which we tend to overlook, like some forms of plankton; they represent a significant element in the ocean food chain, and species used for our food ultimately depend on them.³⁹¹

And basing his reflections on the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines' Pastoral Letter *What is Happening to our Beautiful Land?* (January 29, 1988), Pope Francis states:

In tropical and subtropical seas, we find coral reefs comparable to the great forests on dry land, for they shelter approximately a million species, including fish, crabs, mollusks, sponges and algae. Many of the world's coral reefs are already barren or in a state of constant decline. "Who turned the wonderworld of the seas into underwater cemeteries bereft of color and life?" This phenomenon is due largely to pollution which reaches the sea as the result of deforestation, agricultural monocultures, industrial waste and destructive fishing methods, especially those using cyanide and dynamite. It is aggravated by the rise in temperature of the oceans. All of this helps us to see that every intervention in nature can have consequences which are not immediately evident, and that certain ways

³⁹¹ Ibid.

of exploiting resources prove costly in terms of degradation which ultimately reaches the ocean bed itself.³⁹²

After his lengthy expositions on the environment problems (of pollution, climate change, depletion of natural resources, water pollution, pollution of the oceans, and depletion of species and organisms) and on the sources and causes of all these, as presented in the above pages, Pope Francis concludes that *the environmental deterioration exacerbates global inequality that afflicts all the more the billions of the poor and excluded people in the world. Global inequality is manifested in the inequitable ownership, distribution and consumption of resources of planet earth.*

Reflecting on the Bolivian Bishops’ Conference’s Pastoral Letter on the Environment and Human Development in Bolivia *El universo, don de Dios para la vida* (March 23, 2012) and the German Bishops’ Conference’s Commission for Social Issues, *Der Klimawandel: Brennpunkt globaler, intergenerationeller und ökologischer Gerechtigkeit* (September 2006), Pope Francis asserts:

The human environment and the natural environment deteriorate together; we cannot adequately combat environmental degradation unless we attend to causes related to human and social degradation. In fact, the deterioration of the environment and of society affects the most vulnerable people on the planet: “Both everyday experience and scientific research show that the gravest effects of all attacks on the environment are suffered by the poorest.” For example, the depletion of fishing reserves especially hurts small fishing communities without the means to replace those resources; water pollution particularly affects the poor who cannot buy bottled water; and rises in the sea level mainly affect impoverished coastal populations who have nowhere else to go. The impact of present imbalances is also seen in the premature death of many of the poor, in conflicts sparked by the shortage of resources, and in

³⁹² Ibid.

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any number of other problems which are insufficiently represented on global agendas.³⁹³

Pope Francis further states:

It needs to be said that, generally speaking, there is little in the way of clear awareness of problems which especially affect the excluded. Yet they are the majority of the planet's population, billions of people. These days, they are mentioned in international political and economic discussions, but one often has the impression that their problems are brought up as an afterthought, a question which gets added almost out of duty or in a tangential way, if not treated merely as collateral damage. Indeed, when all is said and done, they frequently remain at the bottom of the pile. This is due partly to the fact that many professionals, opinion makers, communications media and centers of power, being located in affluent urban areas, are far removed from the poor, with little direct contact with their problems. They live and reason from the comfortable position of a high level of development and a quality of life well beyond the reach of the majority of the world's population. This lack of physical contact and encounter, encouraged at times by the disintegration of our cities, can lead to a numbing of conscience and to tendentious analyses which neglect parts of reality. At times this attitude exists side by side with a "green" rhetoric. Today, however, we have to realize that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.³⁹⁴

Quoting the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace's *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (2004), Pope Francis criticizes the conclusion of the monopoly capitalists or imperialists that population growth or overpopulation is the main threat to planet earth and the main cause

³⁹³ Ibid.

³⁹⁴ Ibid.

of environmental destruction, as we have already pointed out above. The pope asserts:

Instead of resolving the problems of the poor and thinking of how the world can be different, some can only propose a reduction in the birth rate. At times, developing countries face forms of international pressure which make economic assistance contingent on certain policies of “reproductive health.” Yet “while it is true that an unequal distribution of the population and of available resources creates obstacles to development and a sustainable use of the environment, it must nonetheless be recognized that demographic growth is fully compatible with an integral and shared development.” To blame population growth instead of extreme and selective consumerism on the part of some, is one way of refusing to face the issues. It is an attempt to legitimize the present model of distribution, where a minority believes that it has the right to consume in a way which can never be universalized, since the planet could not even contain the waste products of such consumption. Besides, we know that approximately a third of all food produced is discarded, and “whenever food is thrown out it is as if it were stolen from the table of the poor.” Still, attention needs to be paid to imbalances in population density, on both national and global levels, since a rise in consumption would lead to complex regional situations, as a result of the interplay between problems linked to environmental pollution, transport, waste treatment, loss of resources and quality of life.³⁹⁵

Pope Francis also sees the global environmental devastation as the result of the worldwide inequality between rich and poor nations; but as we have clearly elucidated in the previous CNL topics, this global inequality between the developed and the underdeveloped countries is due to the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism. Reflecting

³⁹⁵ Ibid.

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on the *Christian Message* (December 2009) of the Bishops of the Patagonia-Comahue Region (Argentina), the pope proclaims:

Inequity affects not only individuals but entire countries; it compels us to consider an ethics of international relations. A true “ecological debt” exists, particularly between the global north and south, connected to commercial imbalances with effects on the environment, and the disproportionate use of natural resources by certain countries over long periods of time. The export of raw materials to satisfy markets in the industrialized north has caused harm locally, as for example in mercury pollution in gold mining or sulfur dioxide pollution in copper mining. There is a pressing need to calculate the use of environmental space throughout the world for depositing gas residues which have been accumulating for two centuries and have created a situation which currently affects all the countries of the world. The warming caused by huge consumption on the part of some rich countries has repercussions on the poorest areas of the world, especially Africa, where a rise in temperature, together with drought, has proved devastating for farming. There is also the damage caused by the export of solid waste and toxic liquids to developing countries, and by the pollution produced by companies which operate in less developed countries in ways they could never do at home, in the countries in which they raise their capital: “We note that often the businesses which operate this way are multinationals. They do here what they would never do in developed countries or the so-called first world. Generally, after ceasing their activity and withdrawing, they leave behind great human and environmental liabilities such as unemployment, abandoned towns, the depletion of natural reserves, deforestation, the impoverishment of agriculture and local stock breeding, open pits, riven hills, polluted rivers and a handful of social works which are no longer sustainable.”³⁹⁶

³⁹⁶ Ibid.

Still exposing the inequality between rich and poor countries and citing the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ *Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence and the Common Good* (June 15, 2001), Pope Francis declares:

The foreign debt of poor countries has become a way of controlling them, yet this is not the case where ecological debt is concerned. In different ways, developing countries, where the most important reserves of the biosphere are found, continue to fuel the development of richer countries at the cost of their own present and future. The land of the southern poor is rich and mostly unpolluted, yet access to ownership of goods and resources for meeting vital needs is inhibited by a system of commercial relations and ownership which is structurally perverse. The developed countries ought to help pay this debt by significantly limiting their consumption of non-renewable energy and by assisting poorer countries to support policies and programs of sustainable development. The poorest areas and countries are less capable of adopting new models for reducing environmental impact because they lack the wherewithal to develop the necessary processes and to cover their costs. We must continue to be aware that, regarding climate change, there are differentiated responsibilities. As the United States bishops have said, greater attention must be given to “the needs of the poor, the weak and the vulnerable, in a debate often dominated by more powerful interests.” We need to strengthen the conviction that we are one single human family. There are no frontiers or barriers, political or social, behind which we can hide, still less is there room for the globalization of indifference.³⁹⁷

Then, Pope Francis strongly states that the environmental crisis would remain a global problem if the global community would not “take another course” and be “capable of striking out on new paths,” and if “weak international political responses” would continue. The pope declares:

³⁹⁷ Ibid.

These situations have caused sister earth, along with all the abandoned of our world, to cry out, pleading that we take another course. Never have we so hurt and mistreated our common home as we have in the last two hundred years... The problem is that we still lack the culture needed to confront this crisis. We lack leadership capable of striking out on new paths and meeting the needs of the present with concern for all and without prejudice towards coming generations. The establishment of a legal framework which can set clear boundaries and ensure the protection of ecosystems has become indispensable, otherwise the new power structures based on the techno-economic paradigm may overwhelm not only our politics but also freedom and justice.³⁹⁸

Citing the Fifth General Conference of the Latin American and Caribbean Bishops' *Aparecida Document* (June 29, 2007), Pope Francis laments:

It is remarkable how weak international political responses have been. The failure of global summits on the environment make it plain that our politics are subject to technology and finance. There are too many special interests, and economic interests easily end up trumping the common good and manipulating information so that their own plans will not be affected. The Aparecida Document urges that "the interests of economic groups which irrationally demolish sources of life should not prevail in dealing with natural resources." The alliance between the economy and technology ends up sidelining anything unrelated to its immediate interests. Consequently the most one can expect is superficial rhetoric, sporadic acts of philanthropy and perfunctory expressions of concern for the environment, whereas any genuine attempt by groups within society to introduce change is viewed as a nuisance based on romantic illusions or an obstacle to be circumvented.³⁹⁹

³⁹⁸ Ibid.

³⁹⁹ Ibid.

At this point, however, CNL would want to assert firmly that the environmental crisis would remain forever a global problem not merely because of “weak international political responses” but more so due to the continuing imperialist impositions and dictates at the international level through UN international organizations that manipulate debates and decisions on vital environmental issues, fully favoring the greedy interests of monopoly capitalists, as has been expounded on very clearly on pages 133-135 in the CNL’s 5th topic, “On Monopoly Capitalist Globalization; *Quo Vadis* Humankind.”

And referring to his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (November 24, 2013), Pope Francis adds:

Economic powers continue to justify the current global system where priority tends to be given to speculation and the pursuit of financial gain, which fail to take the context into account, let alone the effects on human dignity and the natural environment. Here we see how environmental deterioration and human and ethical degradation are closely linked. Many people will deny doing anything wrong because distractions constantly dull our consciousness of just how limited and finite our world really is. As a result, “whatever is fragile, like the environment, is defenseless before the interests of a deified market, which become the only rule.”⁴⁰⁰

Pope Francis gives as an example of a “weak international political response” the poor implementation of the “1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro.” Citing the *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development* (June 14, 1992), the pope says:

The 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro is worth mentioning. It proclaimed that “human beings are at the center of concerns for sustainable development.” Echoing the 1972 Stockholm Declaration, it enshrined international cooperation to care for the ecosystem of the entire earth, the obligation of those who cause pollution to assume its costs, and the duty to assess the environmental impact of given projects and

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid.

works. It set the goal of limiting greenhouse gas concentration in the atmosphere, in an effort to reverse the trend of global warming. It also drew up an agenda with an action plan and a convention on biodiversity, and stated principles regarding forests. Although the summit was a real step forward, and prophetic for its time, *its accords have been poorly implemented, due to the lack of suitable mechanisms for oversight, periodic review and penalties in cases of non-compliance* [CNL]. The principles which it proclaimed still await an efficient and flexible means of practical implementation.⁴⁰¹

Explaining further “the human roots of the ecological crisis” and reflecting on Pope John Paul II’s *Message for the 1990 World Day of Peace* (1990), Pope Francis declares:

It is foreseeable that, once certain resources have been depleted, the scene will be set for *new wars*, albeit under the guise of noble claims [CNL]. War always does grave harm to the environment and to the cultural riches of peoples, risks which are magnified when one considers nuclear arms and biological weapons. “Despite the international agreements which prohibit chemical, bacteriological and biological warfare, the fact is that laboratory research continues to develop new offensive weapons capable of altering the balance of nature.” Politics must pay greater attention to foreseeing new conflicts and addressing the causes which can lead to them. But *powerful financial interests* prove most resistant to this effort, and political planning tends to lack breadth of vision [CNL]. What would induce anyone, at this stage, to hold on to power only to be remembered for their inability to take action when it was urgent and necessary to do so?⁴⁰²

The pope adds:

⁴⁰¹ Ibid.

⁴⁰² Ibid.

Still, we can see signs that things are now reaching a breaking point, due to the rapid pace of change and degradation; these are evident in large-scale natural disasters as well as social and even *financial crises*, for the world’s problems cannot be analyzed or explained in isolation [CNL]. There are regions now at high risk and, aside from all doomsday predictions, the present world system is certainly unsustainable from a number of points of view, for we have stopped thinking about the goals of human activity.⁴⁰³

Citing Pope Benedict XVI’s Encyclical Letter *Caritas in Veritate* (June 29, 2009), Pope Francis explains that “technocratic paradigm” is a “human root of the ecological crisis.” But the pope’s definition of what he means by “technocratic paradigm” in the following seems to describe the exploitative and oppressive economic system of the monopoly capitalists:

The technocratic paradigm also tends to dominate economic and political life. The economy accepts every advance in technology with a view to profit, without concern for its potentially negative impact on human beings. Finance overwhelms the real economy. The lessons of the global financial crisis have not been assimilated, and we are learning all too slowly the lessons of environmental deterioration. Some circles maintain that current economics and technology will solve all environmental problems, and argue, in popular and non-technical terms, that the problems of global hunger and poverty will be resolved simply by market growth. They are less concerned with certain economic theories which today scarcely anybody dares defend, than with their actual operation in the functioning of the economy. They may not affirm such theories with words, but nonetheless support them with their deeds by showing no interest in more balanced levels of production, a better distribution of wealth, concern for the environment and the rights of future generations. Their behavior shows that for them maximizing profits is enough. Yet by itself the mar-

⁴⁰³ Ibid.

ket cannot guarantee integral human development and social inclusion. At the same time, we have “a sort of superdevelopment of a wasteful and consumerist kind which forms an unacceptable contrast with the ongoing situations of dehumanizing deprivation,” while we are all too slow in developing economic institutions and social initiatives which can give the poor regular access to basic resources. We fail to see the deepest roots of our present failures, which have to do with the direction, goals, meaning and social implications of technological and economic growth.⁴⁰⁴

Integral ecology is suggested by Pope Francis as a solution to the problem of environmental deterioration and global inequality. He says:

Since everything is closely interrelated, and today’s problems call for a vision capable of taking into account every aspect of the global crisis, I suggest that we now consider some elements of an integral ecology, one which clearly respects its human and social dimensions.⁴⁰⁵

He characterizes “integral ecology” as “a broader vision of a liberation from the dominant technocratic paradigm” and “at the service of another type of progress, one which is healthier, more human, more social, more integral.” In detail, Pope Francis explains “integral ecology” as: (1) an “environmental, economic and social ecology”; (2) a “cultural ecology”; (3) an “ecology of daily life”; (4) an ecology that is founded on “the principle of the common good”; and (5) an ecology that promotes “justice between the generations.”⁴⁰⁶ In explaining all the above, the pope often refers to his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (November 24, 2013).

And for the implementation and achievement of an “integral ecology” that would be able to solve the problem of environmental deterioration and global inequality, Pope Francis outlines the foremost “lines of approach and action.” For him, these “lines of approach and action” are important to have a much deeper understanding of the global environ-

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁶ Ibid.

mental crisis and worldwide inequality and the human causes of these global problems, and to deliberate on the five “the major paths of dialogue which can help us escape the spiral of self-destruction which currently engulfs us,” namely: (1) “Dialogue on the environment in “The International Community”; (2) “Dialogue for a new national and local policies”; (3) “Dialogue and transparency in decision-making”; (4) “Politics and economy in dialogue for human fulfillment”; and (5) “Religions in dialogue with science.”⁴⁰⁷

To understand better what Pope Francis means by “integral ecology” as “a broader vision of a liberation from the dominant technocratic paradigm” and “at the service of another type of progress, one which is healthier, more human, more social, more integral,” CNL deems it helpful to cite the four NOs which are lengthily expounded on by the pope in his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (November 24, 2013), namely: (1) “No to an economy of exclusion”; (2) “No to the new idolatry of money”; (3) “No to a financial system which rules rather than serves”; and (4) “No to the inequality which spawns violence.”

These four NOs ostensibly describe Pope Francis’ condemnation of the exploitative and oppressive system of monopoly capitalism, though these terms are not specifically mentioned in the pope’s Apostolic Exhortation. His denunciation is expressed in his rejection of: “the laws of competition and the survival of the fittest” that result to the exclusion and marginalization of the “masses of people... without work”; the “trickle-down theories” that do not solve the widespread poverty and inequality in the world; “the absolute autonomy of the marketplace and financial speculation,” “the debt and accumulation of interest” and the “thirst for power and possession” that all lead to “financial crisis,” which the pope labels as “a new tyranny”; “the inequality... because the socioeconomic system is unjust” and due to “evil crystallized in unjust social structures.”⁴⁰⁸ Thus, Pope Francis proclaims firmly: “In this system, which tends to devour everything which stands in the way of increased profits, whatever is fragile, like the environment, is defenseless before the interests of a deified

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁸ Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* (Apostolic Exhortation), November 24, 2013 (https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html).

market, which become the only rule.”⁴⁰⁹ And the pope seems to be alluding satirically to monopoly capitalism by declaring: “We are far from the so-called ‘*end of history*,’ since the conditions for a sustainable and peaceful development have not yet been adequately articulated and realized [our emphasis].”

As protection and rehabilitation of the environment is one of the essential tasks of the current Philippine national democratic revolution that has a socialist perspective, the Christian Churches in the Philippines as well as the Filipino revolutionary organizations through the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) ought to complement one another in order to enhance joint efforts to safeguard the Philippine environment from being devastated further by the imperialists and local exploiters and oppressors who ought to be penalized by the Filipino people for the destruction of the country’s environment.

To heed and put into actual practice the call of Pope Francis to take care and safeguard planet earth, it behooves that the Christian Churches in the Philippines, especially the Catholics under the leadership of the **Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines (CBCP)** whose members comprise 84% of the population, ought to join actively the Filipino people’s struggle to protect and rehabilitate the Philippine environment from being destroyed further by the US and Chinese imperialists, the big comprador bourgeoisie and the big bureaucrat capitalists who ought to be punished by the Filipino people for devastating the country’s environment. The active participation of the Christian Churches in the Filipino people’s struggle to safeguard, recover, conserve and defend the Philippine environment would truly become a concrete venue and application of the guiding principle that Christians, national democrats and Marxists ought to complement one another, though they may have different philosophies and beliefs, to radically change Philippine society for “another type of progress, one which is healthier, more human, more social, more integral,” to borrow Pope Francis’ words, for the common good of the Filipino people, especially Christ’s least brethren, the PDO or “the excluded and marginalized,” as Pope Francis would put it, such as the workers, informal

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid.

workers, urban poor, peasants, fisherfolk and national minorities, including members of their families such as the women, the youth, the children and the elderly, who comprise 90% of the Philippine population.

First and foremost, the active participation of the Christian Churches in the Filipino people’s struggle to protect and rehabilitate the environment could start by supporting the resumption of the national peace talks between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the NDFP. The resumption of the national peace talks is important in order to resolve the root causes of the armed conflict through the completion of the four substantive agenda of the formal peace negotiations, stipulated on September 1, 1992 by both the Negotiating Panels of the GRP and the NDFP in the declaration called “The Hague Joint Declaration,” namely: (1) Human rights and international humanitarian law; (2) Socio-economic reforms; (3) Political and constitutional reforms; and (4) End of hostilities and disposition of forces.

So far, the first agenda had been accomplished when both Negotiating Panels signed on March 16, 1998 the *Comprehensive Agreement on the Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL)*. This crucial agreement was in turn approved and signed by the corresponding principals of both Negotiating Panels, NDFP Chairperson Marino Orosa and GRP President Joseph E. Estrada, on April 10, 1998 and August 7, 1998, respectively.

However, national peace talks between the GRP and the NDFP were stalled for 17 years during the US-Macapagal Arroyo Regime and the US-Aquino II Regime. It was only in 2016 when Duterte, projecting himself as the “first socialist and leftist president” but only to conceal his fascist orientation towards tyrannical rule, gave his go-signal for the formal peace negotiations between the GRP and the NDFP to resume. Thus, the series of peace negotiations between the two Negotiating Panels—that started on August 2016 and continued up to March 2017, and assisted by the Royal Norwegian Government as the Third Party Facilitator—resulted in the drafting of the second and third substantive agenda, namely: *CASER (Comprehensive Agreement on Socio-Economic Reforms)* and *CAPCR (Comprehensive Agreement on Political and Constitutional Reforms)*. As their appreciation to the determination of both the GRP and NDFP Negotiating Panels, the CPP and the NPA declared after the March 10-11,

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2017 round of peace talks that they were prepared to issue a unilateral declaration to bring back the ceasefire to support the continuation and completion of the drafting of *CASER* and *CAPCR*. However, this did not push through because tyrant Duterte unilaterally declared the termination of the whole peace negotiation between the GRP and the NDFP, the cancellation of the passports of the NDFP negotiators and consultants, and their arrest and detention without bail, which were all outright violations against the *Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG)*, approved by the GRP and NDFP Negotiating Panels and their corresponding principals on September 1, 1992. And as already expounded on in CNL's 6th topic, "On Terrorism, War, Violence, and Worldwide Peace," tyrant Duterte formally terminated the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations when he issued Proclamation No. 360 on November 23, 2017 after meeting with US imperialist President Trump at the ASEAN summit in Manila on November 12-13, 2017.

As already explained in CNL's 2nd topic, "On Poverty and Inequality, and What Can Be Done," the *CASER* draft has identified three main areas as foremost doable priorities of the Filipino people in order to achieve a comprehensive national development of Philippine society: (1) Develop the national economy; (2) Uphold the people's rights; and (3) Defend and sustain economic sovereignty for national development. In particularly developing the national economy, this must be done through agrarian reform and rural development; national industrialization and economic development; and *environmental protection, rehabilitation, and compensation*.

With regards to environmental protection, rehabilitation and compensation, the *CASER* draft gives a general picture of the Philippines known to be one of the most biodiverse and rich environments; and yet, ironically, the country is among the poorest economies in the Third World. It explains that the profit-driven nature of capitalist production, with the particular neocolonial pattern of production and trade, that overrides social and ecological considerations, has been the main factor in the devastation of the Philippine environment. It exposes that the strategy of export-led economic growth has opened the country's natural resources to control and plunder by the foreign monopoly capitalists, big comprador bourgeoisie and bureaucrat capitalists; and it further explains that as the

imperialists and the local exploiting classes freely siphon off the nation’s natural wealth, they leave behind a ravaged environment.

The *CASER* draft concretely confirms the fact that it is because of the imperialists, the big landlords, the big comprador bourgeoisie and the big bureaucrat capitalists that the Philippines, though rich in natural resources, remains to be a semi-colonial and a semi-feudal society, a non-industrialized country with a backward agriculture. And such is the reason why majority Filipinos—who belong to the toiling masses of workers, semi-workers and informal laborers, peasants, fisherfolk, and national minorities—are poor and propertyless. As has already been expounded on in the CNL’s previous topics, the poverty of the majority of the national population is due to the continuing exploitation and oppression by the US and Chinese imperialists, the big comprador bourgeoisie, the big bureaucrat capitalists and the top AFP and PNP fascist commanders. These class exploiters and oppressors with their imperialist masters exacerbate the poverty of the Filipino people by devastating further the natural wealth and resources of the country for the selfish superprofits of the same ruling class exploiters and oppressors and their imperialist masters at the expense of the welfare and economic development of the Filipino people. The *CASER* draft further states that such destruction of the Philippine environment intensifies the yearly occurrences of natural disasters and undermines the prospects of long-term economic development for the benefit of the exploited and oppressed Filipino masses.

The *CASER* draft firmly asserts that the continuing existence of the exploitative and oppressive system of the imperialist powers and their fascist state puppets only means the continuing devastation of the country’s natural resources, which certainly would promote further the poverty of the Filipino people. Thus, this must raise the consciousness and commitment of the Filipino masses, including Christians and their Church leaders, to continue and assert the Filipino people’s rights to conserve, safeguard and improve the Philippine environment. Included in the Filipino people’s environmental rights is their right to advance the anti-feudal, anti-fascist and anti-imperialist mass movement against the US and Chinese imperialists, the big comprador bourgeoisie and the big bureaucrat capitalists for the continuous conservation, protection and improvement of the country’s natural wealth, the mangrove forests, the water systems, the agricul-

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tural lands, the coral reefs and marine life, the mineral resources, and the energy resources (both renewable such as geothermal, wind, solar, hydro and biofuels, and non-renewable such as oil, natural gas reserves, coal and uranium) for the common good, the needs and use of the present and future generations of the Filipino people.

Particularly in line with the environmental objectives of *CASER*, the Filipino people, including the Christian Churches, and their mass organizations must launch series of anti-feudal, anti-fascist and anti-imperialist mass actions and mobilizations in order to compel the government to adopt comprehensive and balanced national policies to conserve, protect and develop the natural resources of the country for the use and needs of the Filipino people, especially of the exploited and oppressed classes and sectors; and they must stop the imperialists, the comprador bourgeoisie and bureaucrat capitalists in depleting the wealth of the nation. The people's mass movement must be engaged in and push the government to pursue economic development that would protect and efficiently use the country's renewable and non-renewable resources in both land and sea, and a national progress that would primarily serve the economic and cultural needs of the people, especially the masses of workers, semi-proletariat, the urban poor, peasants, fisherfolk, and national minorities.

For the achievement of the environmental objectives of *CASER*, the Filipino people's anti-feudal, anti-fascist and anti-imperialist mass movement—with the active participation of the people's mass organizations, the media, schools and Christian Churches—must compel the government to develop a national plan and support the people's mass actions to:

1. Undertake massive education campaigns to promote environmental consciousness and ecologically sound practices, and safeguard the environment.
2. Carry out activities on environmental protection and management, rehabilitation and development of natural resources, including reforestation.
3. Develop people's program to address the problem of pollution, waste control and disposal, and the lack of safe water supply, and protect watershed areas.

4. Promote the use of renewable energy sources while ensuring people’s control and collective ownership of the environmental resources.
5. Increase the capacity and capability of the mass organizations to mitigate the problem of climate change, and ensure the institutions of community-based disaster risk reduction and climate adaptation.
6. Penalize all culprits of environmental destruction, including US government and other governments, corporations, government officials; require them to rehabilitate disturbed areas back to a condition of environmental safety, and to compensate communities, victims and surviving relatives. In particular, the US government must be held accountable for the toxic waste pollution of the land and environment in the former US military bases in the country.
7. Guarantee sufficient compensation and aid to and social justice for families and communities that are affected by disasters, massive pollution and contamination because of the operations of logging, mining, energy, agrochemical corporations, and military establishments.
8. Repeal or withdraw all laws, orders, issuances, programs, and all bilateral and regional free trade agreements that promote plunder of natural resource and the pollution of the environment. Specific examples of these are the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS), the imperialist-funded programs such as the Natural Resource Management Program (NRMP), the Integrated Forest Management Agreement (IFMA), the Mining Act of 1995, and the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA).
9. Penalize foreign perpetrators and local counterparts, prohibit and terminate their environmentally destructive practices such as wanton clearing and leveling of land; reckless open-pit mining and quarrying; large-scale reclamation; export mono-crop production; logging for export; dumping by other countries of their toxic wastes in the national territory; the entry of hazardous technologies and pollutant industries from industrial capitalist countries; the entry of hazardous agricultural products and practices; the displacement especially of peasants and national minorities by the power generation plants and other infrastructure projects; the pollution and destruction of land, water and other resources; all military actions that target civil population and devastate the environment such as indiscriminate

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aerial bombardment and artillery fire, poisoning of water sources, use of biochemical weapons, and burning of crops and houses; the use of the Philippines as a military exercise area of the US military forces; the proliferation and entry of nuclear, biological and chemical and other weapons of mass destruction in the country, and the use of the Philippines as a storehouse for all kinds of war materiel or armaments and munitions.

While developing the use of renewable energy resources and avoiding the displacement of people and communities, regulate the extraction of non-renewable energy resources, mining and marine wealth necessary for the development of the people's self-reliant and self-sustaining economy, the promotion of people's democratic and civil rights, the improvement of their social services and cultural advancement, especially of and for the laboring masses of workers, semi-workers, peasants, fisherfolk and national minorities.

While guaranteeing the just, equitable and effective participation of the citizenry and local communities in the protection of their collective and individual rights and in the making of decisions regarding biological and intellectual resources, ban and prohibit the appropriation by foreign agencies of natural resources, of commonly available and wild varieties of flora and fauna through intellectual property conventions on patenting of genetic properties and technological processing, including the patenting of life or the exclusive appropriation of any life form.

One sovereignty issue on the Philippine environment, which has not yet been included in the *CASER* draft of March 2017 but should be an essential part of the Filipino people's sovereign rights for the protection and rehabilitation of the country's environment, is the Chinese imperialist invasion of the West Philippine Sea. In the course of peace negotiations between the GRP and NDFP up to 2017, the NDFP Negotiating Panel has clearly expressed to the GRP Negotiating Panel and Duterte himself that the sovereign and maritime rights of the Philippines over the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and the extended continental shelf (ECS) in the West Philippine Sea must be asserted, exercised and defended in accordance with the final 2016 judgment of the Permanent Arbitration Court and United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas (UNCLOS).

However, the tyrant Duterte regime has not heeded the NDFP demand because of Duterte’s BBB projects funded with high interest by the Chinese social imperialist government. Nevertheless, the revolutionary forces and the Filipino people have the utmost interest in upholding the sovereign rights of the Filipino people over the EEZ and ECS of the West Philippine Sea and in demanding that the Filipino people avail of the rich marine resources conservatively estimated at around USD 1 trillion and the even richer oil and gas resources estimated at \$26 trillion in the EEZ.

The objective of the NDFP Negotiating Panel to assert in the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations the Filipino people’s sovereignty over the EEZ and ECS of the West Philippine Sea and the finalization of *CASER* was killed when, on November 23, 2017 after meeting with US imperialist President Donald Trump, autocrat Duterte issued Proclamation No. 360 that formally terminated the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations. The termination of the peace negotiations only means that tyrant Duterte is fully allowing the Chinese imperialist firms to continue occupying the West Philippine Sea. Up to now, Chinese social imperialist firms—like the China Communications Construction Company (CCCC), the CCC Dredging Group, China Shipbuilding Group, the CCCC’s China Harbour Engineering Company, though all these have been determined illegal by the 2016 Permanent Arbitration Court in line with the UNCLOS—are free and busy in land reclamation and construction of at least seven military facilities in the South China Sea, particularly within the Philippine EEZ.

However, the finalization of *CASER* through the peace negotiations between the GRP and the NDFP for the achievement of a comprehensive national development of Philippines will never be accomplished while tyrant Duterte holds on to power and remains to be the president. Autocrat Duterte not only formally terminated the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations; but more so he issued Proclamation No. 374 on December 5, 2017, listing the CPP-NPA as terrorist organizations. Then, he issued on December 4, 2018 Executive Order No. 70 that formed the “*National Task Force*” which has a pipedream to End the Local Communist Armed Conflict (ELCAC) by 2022. This shall surely fail because such military fantasy shall never resolve the root causes of the armed conflict (that of US imperialism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism), but shall further strengthen the NPA’s armed struggle and the Filipino people’s protracted

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war which shall certainly be victorious some decades from now. Worst, the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020 (ATA 2020) by the Philippine reactionary Congress has legalized the terrorism of autocrat Duterte; it has legitimized state fascism to preserve and strengthen the system of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism, and to exploit and oppress daily the Filipino people.

While the CPP-NPA and the armed masses continue to raise the people's war to higher levels, all the other unarmed revolutionary member organizations of the NDFP are, therefore, calling the Filipino people, including the Church people, the people's legal mass and Church organizations to campaign and mobilize for the ouster of tyrant Duterte before the 2022 national elections. It is the hope of the Filipino people to overthrow the Duterte fascist regime to pave the way for a new president whose regime would side the Filipino people by repealing all fascist laws and executive orders, uphold and implement *JASIG* and *CARHRIHL*, and resume the national peace negotiations between the GRP and the NDFP in order to continue and complete the drafting of *CASER* (*Comprehensive Agreement on Socio-Economic Reforms*) and *CAPCR* (*Comprehensive Agreement on Political and Constitutional Reforms*) to be signed and approved by the GRP and NDFP Negotiation Panels, and their respective principals. It would only be by then that the GRP and NDFP Negotiation Panels could proceed to the drafting of the last substantive agenda of the peace talks, the end of hostilities and disposition of forces of the AFP and the NPA.

As a short conclusion of the 7th topic, CNL wishes to reiterate the need for the Christians with their Churches' leaders and the Marxists ought to complement one another, even though their beliefs and philosophies may not necessarily be compatible, in order for them to enhance joint efforts to preserve and safeguard planet earth and the environment of every nation in the world. However, Christians, and especially their Churches' leaders such as cardinals, archbishops, bishops, conference ministers, district superintendents, district presidents, clerical deans of deaneries, parish priests and local church pastors have to be open for the radicalization of their Christian faith in order to correct the prolonged partiality of the Christian Churches to monopoly capitalism, and strengthen their Christian missionary endeavors as being complementary to the revolutionary tasks of Marxists. It is through such processes that the Christians, the laity

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and the ordained, are encouraged to understand and realize that only when monopoly capitalism, the ideology of imperialism, would be replaced by scientific socialism could planet earth and the whole global environment would fully recover and be safeguarded.

Part 8

CNL's Concluding Remarks: God's Kingdom As The Reign Of Truth, Justice, Peace, Love, Equality and Liberation

The *Compendium's Conclusion*, whose title is *For A Civilization Of Love*, and citing Pope John XXIII's Encyclical Letter *Matter et Magistra* (1961) and the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council's Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (1966), states:

It is difficult to meet the *demands of building the future in a new context* of an even more complex and interdependent *international relations that are also less and less ordered and peaceful* [CNL]. Life and death seem to be solely in the hands of a scientific and technological progress that is moving faster than man's ability to establish its ultimate goals and evaluate its costs. Many phenomena indicate instead that "the increasing sense of dissatisfaction with worldly goods which is making itself felt among citizens of the *wealthier nations* is rapidly destroying the treasured illusion of an earthly paradise [CNL]. People are also *becoming more and more conscious of their rights as human beings, rights that are universal and inviolable, and they are aspiring to more just and more human relations* [CNL]."⁴¹⁰

Quoting Pope John Paul II's Encyclical Letter *Veritatis Splendor* (1993), the *Compendium's Conclusion* further declares:

In the *presence of serious forms of exploitation and social injustice*, there is "an ever more widespread and acute sense of the *need for a radical personal and social renewal capable of ensuring justice, solidarity, honesty and openness* [CNL]. Certainly, there is a long and difficult road ahead; bringing about such

⁴¹⁰ *Compendium*, p. 291.

a renewal will require enormous effort, especially on account of the number and gravity of the causes giving rise to and aggravating the *situations of injustice present in the world today* [CNL]. But, as history and personal experience show, it is not difficult to discover at the bottom of these situations *causes which are properly cultural*, linked to particular ways of looking at man, society and the world [CNL].”⁴¹¹

The *Compendium* gives stress to the “new commandment of love.” Mentioning as its references the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #826 & 1889, and the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council’s Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium* (1965) and Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* (1966), the *Compendium* asserts:

Jesus teaches us that “the *fundamental law of human perfection*, and consequently of the *transformation of the world*, is the *new commandment of love*” (cf. Mt 22:40, Jn 15:12; Col 3:14; Jas 2:8) [CNL]. Personal behavior is full human when it is born of love, manifests love and is ordered to love. This truth also applies in the social sphere; Christians must be deeply convinced witnesses of this, and they are to show by their lives how love is the only force (cf. 1 Cor 12:31-14:1) that can lead to *personal and social perfection*, allowing society to make *progress towards the good* [CNL].⁴¹²

Expounding more on love “in the social sphere” and citing *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, *QD De caritate*, a. 9; Pope John XXIII’s Encyclical Letter *Mater et Magistra* (1961); Second Vatican Ecumenical Council’s Decree *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (1966); Pope Paul VI’s Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* (1967), his *Address to FAO* (November 16, 1970) and his Apostolic Letter *Octogesima Adveniens* (1971); Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Redemptor Hominis* (1979), his *Address to the Members of the Pontifical Commission “Iustitia et Pax”* (February 9, 1980), his Encyclical Letter *Dives in Misericordia* (1980) and his Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici* (1989), the *Compendium* strongly affirms:

⁴¹¹ Ibid., p. 292.

⁴¹² Ibid., p. 294.

This love may be called “*social charity*” or “*political charity*” and must embrace the entire human race [CNL]. “*Social love*” is the antithesis of egoism and individualism [CNL]. Without absolutizing social life, as happens with short-sighted perspective limiting themselves in sociological interpretations, it must not be forgotten that the *integral development* of the person and social growth mutually influence each other [CNL]. *Selfishness, therefore, is the most insidious enemy of an ordered society* [CNL]. History shows how hearts are devastated when men and women are incapable of recognizing other values or other effective realities apart from material goods, the obsessive quest for which suffocates and blocks their ability to give of themselves. In order to make society more human, more worthy of the human person, *love in social life—political, economic and cultural—must be given renewed value*, becoming the constant and highest norm for all activity [CNL]. “If *justice* is in itself suitable for arbitration between people concerning *reciprocal distribution of objective goods in an equitable manner, love and only love* [including that kindly love we call ‘mercy’] is capable of restoring man to himself [CNL].”⁴¹³

Though Christians and Marxists are not compatible with one another in terms of beliefs, they can complement one another in the building of human societies where truth, justice, peace, love, equality and liberation would exist for the economic, political, cultural and comprehensive development of Christ’s least brethren, the billions of the global toiling masses of workers, peasants and national minorities.

To set the interrelationship between the points expounded on in the CNL’s previous topics and the concluding doctrinal views of the *Compendium* as mentioned in the above quotations, we can firmly state that it is the exploitative and oppressive system, created by the monopoly capitalists and imperialist powers, primarily headed by the US imperialists, which has made “international relations... less and less ordered and peaceful,” has controlled and is maintaining “wealthier nations,” chiefly the G8 that

⁴¹³ Ibid., pp. 294-295.

compete fiercely against each other, at the expense of the underdeveloped countries in the Third World. It is the same system that has also caused “the situations of injustice present in the world today” and has consolidated at the national and international levels “egoism and individualism,” which the *Compendium* calls the antithesis of “social charity” or “political charity.” It is the same exploitative and oppressive system of the monopoly capitalists and imperialist powers that has globalized “selfishness,” condemned by the *Compendium* as “the most insidious enemy of an ordered society” in the world today. That same system is the root cause of the continuing worldwide inequality and gap between the few rich and the billions of toiling masses of workers, semi-workers, peasants and national minorities.

It is, therefore, easy to understand what the *Compendium* means in its assertion: “But, as history and personal experience show, it is not difficult to discover at the bottom of these situations causes which are properly *cultural*, linked to particular ways of looking at man, society and the world.”⁴¹⁴ For CNL, it is the ideology or culture of monopoly capitalism/imperialism, primarily led by US imperialism, that has dominated the whole of humanity today. It is a culture that continually generates global exploitation and oppression, environmental destruction of planet earth, injustice, poverty, inequality and enslavement of the billions of toiling masses at the national and international levels, gravely affecting both the industrialized but more especially the underdeveloped nations. Such imperialist/monopoly capitalist culture is satanic and evil; it impedes the attainment of the common good of humanity, of justice, liberation and equality among peoples, especially the toiling masses of workers, peasants and national minorities, who compose the majority of the world population. Note that in 2000 the total world population was 6.1 billion wherein 1.2 billion people were in the developed nations; while the 4.9 billion lived in the underdeveloped Third World countries.

In the struggle against the imperialist culture, CNL upholds and is united with the Church, the People of God, about the doctrine on the Kingdom of God. In various parts of the book, the *Compendium* expresses “the acute sense of the need... to proclaim and establish among all peoples the Kingdom of God in order to overcome evil,” attain the “common

⁴¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 292.

good of humanity,” respond to “the demands of building the future in a new context,” enlighten people of “becoming more and more conscious of their rights as human beings... aspiring to more just and more human relations,” and beckon the human race to take action on “the need for a radical personal and social renewal capable of ensuring justice” and “political charity” at the national and international levels.

Mentioning as references the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council's Constitution *Lumen Gentium* (1965) and its Decree *Christus Dominus* (1966), Pope Paul VI's Apostolic Letter *Octogesima Adveniens* (1971), Pope John Paul II's Encyclical Letter *Redemptoris Missio* (1991), and *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2419, the *Compendium* states:

[The Church's] mission is that of proclaiming and communicating the salvation wrought in Jesus Christ, which he calls “the Kingdom of God” (Mk1:15), that is, communion with God and among men. The goal of salvation, the Kingdom of God, embraces all people and is fully realized beyond history, in God. The Church has received “the mission of proclaiming and establishing among all peoples the Kingdom of Christ and of God, and *she is, on earth, the seed and the beginning of that Kingdom* [CNL].”⁴¹⁵

With the same above mentioned references, the *Compendium* further asserts:

The Church [the seed and the beginning of God's Kingdom on earth] places herself concretely at the service of the Kingdom of God above all by announcing and communicating the Gospel of salvation and by establishing new Christian communities. Moreover, she “serves the Kingdom by spreading throughout the world the ‘Gospel values’ which are an expression of the Kingdom and which help people to accept God's plan. It is true that the inchoate reality of *the Kingdom can also be found beyond the confines of the Church among peoples everywhere, to the extent that they live ‘Gospel values’* and are open to the working of the Spirit who breathes when and where he

⁴¹⁵ Ibid., pp. 24-25.

wills [CNL]. (cf. Jn 3:8)” But it must immediately be added that this *temporal dimension* of the Kingdom of Christ is present in the Church and straining *towards eschatological fullness* [CNL].⁴¹⁶

Citing the aforementioned references, the *Compendium* expounds the interrelationship of the Kingdom of God and human social nature:

The transformation of social relationships that responds to the *demands of the Kingdom of God is not fixed within concrete boundaries once and for all* [CNL]. Rather, it is a task entrusted to the Christian community, which is to develop it and carry it out through reflection and practices inspired by the Gospel. It is the same Spirit of the Lord, leading the people of God while simultaneously permeating the universe, who from time to time inspires new and appropriate ways for humanity to exercise its creative responsibility. This inspiration is given to the community of Christians who are a part of the world and of history, and who are therefore open to dialogue with all people of good will in the *common quest for the seeds of truth and freedom sown in the vast field of humanity* [CNL].⁴¹⁷

On the interconnectedness of earthly progress and God’s Kingdom, and of the worldly goods and the Kingdom of truth and of life, the *Compendium* says:

Mutual love, in fact, sharing in the infinite love of God, is humanity’s authentic purpose, *both historical and transcendent* [CNL]. Therefore, “*earthly progress* must be carefully distinguished from the growth of Christ’s Kingdom [CNL]. Nevertheless, to the extent that *the former can contribute to the better ordering of human society, it is of vital concern to the Kingdom of God* [CNL].”⁴¹⁸

It explains further:

⁴¹⁶ Ibid., p. 25.

⁴¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 26-27.

⁴¹⁸ Ibid., p. 27.

The good things—such as human dignity, brotherhood and freedom, all the good fruits of nature and of human enterprise—that in the Lord's Spirit and according to his command have illuminated and transfigured, belong to the *Kingdom of truth and life, of holiness and grace, of justice, of love and of peace* that Christ will present to the Father, and it is there that we shall once again find them [CNL]. The words of Christ in their solemn truth will then resound for all people: "Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you *from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me... as you did it to one of the least of my brethren, you did it to me*" (Mt 25:34-36, 40) [CNL].⁴¹⁹

The *Compendium* also explains the interrelationship of the human action in building a city of man and the establishment of God's Kingdom:

Human activity in history is of itself significant and effective for the definitive establishment of the Kingdom, although this remains a free gift of God, completely transcendent. *Such activity, when it respects the objective order of temporal reality and is enlightened by truth and love, becomes an instrument for making justice and peace ever more fully and integrally present, and anticipates in our own day the promised Kingdom* [CNL].⁴²⁰

It asserts further:

The Church, sharing in mankind's joys and hopes, in its anxieties and sadness, stands with every man and woman of every place and time, to bring them the good news of the Kingdom of God, which in Jesus Christ has come and continues to be present among them... [The Church] makes the *message*

⁴¹⁹ Ibid., p. 28.

⁴²⁰ Ibid.

of freedom and redemption wrought by Christ, the Gospel of the Kingdom, present in human history... She teaches [man] the demands of justice and peace in conformity with divine wisdom... This social doctrine is a word that brings freedom [CNL]. This means that it has the effectiveness of truth, love, justice, freedom and peace... [in] building a city of man that is more human because it is in greater conformity with the Kingdom of God [CNL].⁴²¹

Of course, as we have often explained in all the CNL's previous topics, Christians and Marxists are not compatible in terms of beliefs and philosophies because the former believe in the supernatural and eschatological such as the Kingdom of God, Jesus Christ the Son of God and redeemer of humankind, while the latter think in terms of dialectic-historical materialism and scientific socialism but fully respect the beliefs of the former by promoting the social principles of religious freedom and the separation of church and state. Nevertheless, when the **“Kingdom of God”** and **“the Church/people of God as the seed and beginning of God's Kingdom on earth,”** as expounded on in the paragraphs above, are interpreted and reinterpreted in human terms to mean the **“reign of truth, justice, peace, love, equality and liberation among human beings,”** then the Christians with their Church leaders and the Marxists ought to complement one another in the building of human societies in both the First World and the Third World countries where truth, justice, peace, love, equality and liberation would exist for the economic, political, cultural and comprehensive development of Christ's least brethren, the billions of the global toiling masses of workers, peasants and national minorities in the world, who have long been victimized by the monopoly capitalists, imperialist powers and fascist state puppets especially in the Third World nations.

Since the establishment of CNL on February 17, 1972 and within the context of the Philippine National Democratic Revolution with a Socialist Perspective, revolutionary Christians (bishops, priests, pastors, nuns, deacons and deaconesses, novices, postulants, seminarians and the laity) and Marxists have proven in the past 50 years the principled and revolutionary

⁴²¹ Ibid., pp. 30-32.

complementariness of Christianity and Marxism in the revolutionary process of fighting the basic problems of US imperialism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism, that are safeguarded by the fascist state and its reactionary army and police. Enriched by revolutionary experiences in the past 50 years, CNL shall persevere in attaining greater heights of the two-stage revolution by advancing in the coming years the implementation of the CNL's seven revolutionary tasks. These are the following:

1. Build the CNL as the underground political organization of church people and as part of the overall revolutionary mass movement;
2. Participate actively in the revolutionary armed struggle;
3. Strengthen the NDFP and help build the united front;
4. Actively participate in the revolutionary mass movement of the basic sectors;
5. Wage a struggle against colonial, feudal, and fascist culture and promote a national, scientific, mass culture;
6. Struggle for democratic reforms within the churches in support of the new democratic revolution; and
7. Help advance the international solidarity and the anti-imperialist struggle at the international level.

Imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism, is adjudicated by CNL as the Beast of the Apocalypse pictured in the Book of Revelation, a global satanic power that is sucking the sweat and blood of billions of toiling masses of the world, “drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of the martyrs of Jesus” (Rev. 17:6), and being served by the “false prophets” (Rev. 19:20) such as the CIA, the bourgeois politicians and businessmen, the reactionary army and police of the imperialist powers and their fascist puppet states, the pseudo-Christian and pro-imperialist evangelists of today.

All the previous CNL's topics have expounded on that imperialism, as the highest stage of capitalism which is headed primarily by the US imperialists, is the principal cause of all evils, social sins, exploitation and destruction of the environment, oppression, aggression, terrors, unjust wars and violence, poverty and inequalities among peoples and nations in the world today. Through the extraction of the surplus value of the labor power of the toiling masses, the accumulation of superprofits, the export

of surplus capital and the monopoly capitalist policies of liberalization, deregulation and privatization, imperialism has controlled and continues to dominate the global economy, politics, culture and the military establishments leaving in misery, poverty and inequality the billions of the global population, especially the toiling masses of workers, peasants and national minorities.

The Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWT) confirms CNL's expositions on monopoly capitalism. It declares that the globalization of the monopoly capitalists is a counter-sign of God's Kingdom. Globalization is an exploitative and oppressive means of the monopoly capitalists to continue their economic hegemony in the world; it, therefore, prevents the realization of God's Kingdom “on earth as it is in heaven” (Matt. 6:10). It is the process of re-structuring and integrating liberal capitalist economies of the world that have resulted in the massive labor mobility and dislocation, displacement and suffering of peasants, fisher-folks, and indigenous peoples, irreversible destruction of eco-system, the commoditization of women and children and indigenous culture. The heart of globalization is monopoly capitalist profit and more profit through free-trade ideology dominated by transnational corporations, multinational enterprises, and global corporations, which are super-conglomerates, resulting in imperialist domination. And the high priests of the monopoly capitalists, primarily led by the US imperialists, are the IMF, WB and WTO. This global exploitation and oppression of monopoly capitalism belies the deceptive propaganda of the imperialists on the “New Economic Order” of helping the Third World countries through the combination of aid and trade agreements in order to transfer the wealth from the developed countries such as the US to the developing and under-developed nations.

In other words, CNL firmly declares that it is imperialism that is impeding the proclamation and the establishment of the Kingdom of God and the Christian Churches as seeds and the beginning of God's Kingdom. It is the monopoly capitalists and imperialist powers, which are primarily led by US imperialists, that are obstructing totally God's Kingdom as the reign of truth, justice, peace, love, liberation and equality because they are, in fact, the global generators of the satanic system of falsehood, injustice, disorder, hatred, enslavement and inequality at the national and interna-

tional levels. The monopoly capitalists and imperialist powers have divided and owned the world. They are the global exploiters and oppressors of billions of the toiling masses of workers, peasants, and national minorities in both the industrialized and underdeveloped nations. They are the global defenders of private property ownership, have created all kinds of exploitative and oppressive economic concepts such as the theory of supply and demand and other manipulative economic and political policies to hide the fact that private property ownership is the root cause of poverty and inequality wherein the majority of the masses of the world population, who are the poor and laboring, are mostly propertyless; while the few rich (monopoly capitalists/imperialist) families own the wealth of nations and the world.

As main source of the system of falsehood, the monopoly capitalists hide their injustice and proclaim to the whole world that the cause of poverty is overpopulation and laziness, and shamelessly spread lies that overpopulation is the cause of the current environmental degradation in the world. They conceal and steal the surplus value of labor power of the toiling masses. They disguise as financial aid the surplus capital they export in order to accumulate more capital from foreign debts and extract more superprofits from the workers and the cheap raw materials of the underdeveloped Third World nations. Their exploitative and oppressive system thrives through their policies of liberalization, deregulation and privatization which are imposed worldwide by means of imperialist wars of aggression. And the imperialist powers, mainly led by the US imperialists, hide their wars of aggression against nations by projecting themselves as purveyors of democracy and liberation of countries which they target to cow down and maintain as semicolonies. At the international level, the monopoly capitalists/imperialist powers have established and continue to monopolize the UN international organizations like the UN Security Council (with five permanent members each having veto rights—US as lead, UK, France, Russia and China), WB, IMF, ECOSOC, OECD, WTO as rubber stamps, all controlled by the G8 for the continuation of imperialist global hegemony, impositions, manipulations, and inter-imperialist competitions.

Founded on the aforementioned expositions that imperialism is hampering God's Kingdom as the reign of truth, justice, peace, love, liber-

ation and equality, then it is also on the same basis wherein CNL declares that imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism, is the concrete and current manifestation of the Beast of the Apocalypse, “*the corrupt and satanic power*” in the Book of Revelation, that daily sucks the sweat and blood of the billions of toiling masses of the world. Nevertheless, the *Compendium* gives humankind the hope of defeating totally the Beast of the Apocalypse as it asserts convincingly:

But Christ is the Victorious Lamb who, down the course of human history, overcomes every power that would make it absolute. Before such a power, Saint John suggests the resistance of the martyrs; in this way, believers bear witness *that corrupt and satanic power is defeated*, because it no longer has any authority over them... [CNL]⁴²²

...and the world is destined to undergo a *radical purification* (cf. 2 Pet 3:10) that will make it a *renewed world* (Is 65:17, 66:22; Rev 21:1), finally becoming *the place where righteousness dwells*” (2 Pet 3:13) [CNL].⁴²³

And for the defeat of imperialism, the present-day manifestation of the Beast of the Apocalypse, the Christian Churches, “the seeds and the beginning of God’s Kingdom,” have to “evangelize all men and women of good will” to establish and promote the reign of truth, justice, peace, love, liberation and equality in the world. It is in this regard that the *Compendium* stresses the importance of upholding and advancing “social charity” or “political charity” and “social justice.” In further expounding Church’s social doctrine on “social charity” or “political charity,” the *Compendium* asserts:

Social and political charity is not exhausted in relationships between individuals but spreads into the network formed by these relationships, which is precisely the social and political community; it intervenes in this context seeking the greatest good for the community in its entirety. In so many aspects

⁴²² Ibid, p. 193.

⁴²³ Ibid., p. 229.

the neighbor to be loved is found “in society,” such that to love him concretely [is to] assist him in his needs or in his indigence..., to make use of social mediations *to improve his life or to remove social factors that cause his indigence* [CNL]. It is undoubtedly an act of love... to strive *to organize and structure society* so that one’s neighbor will not find himself in poverty, above all when this becomes a situation within which an *immense number of people and entire populations must struggle, and when it takes on the proportions of a true worldwide social issue* [CNL].⁴²⁴

And while asserting the importance of “social charity” or “political charity,” the Compendium also stresses the significance of “social justice.” Mentioning as references the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #1928-1942 and Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Laborem Exercens* (1981), the *Compendium* states:

Ever greater importance has been given by the Church’s social Magisterium to social justice..., a requirement related to the social question (poverty, inequality, few rich and many poor) which today is worldwide in scope, concerns the social, political and economic aspects and, above all, the structural dimension of problems and their respective solutions.⁴²⁵

Based on the above mentioned elucidations, Christians and Marxists ought to complement one another to defeat imperialism, the current expression of the Beast of the Apocalypse, by building human societies where truth, justice, peace, love, equality and liberation would exist for the economic, political, cultural and comprehensive development of Christ’s least brethren who are composed of the billions of toiling masses of workers, peasants and national minorities in the world today. This means in the first place that Christians and their Churches, especially the Roman Catholic Church whose total membership is 52% of the more than 2 billion Christians around the world today, have to get rid of their partiality to monopoly capitalism and begin to be open-minded to scientific socialism

⁴²⁴ Ibid., p. 107.

⁴²⁵ Ibid., p. 104.

in order to resolve effectively the global problems of poverty, inequalities, the gap between the few rich and the many poor peoples and nations, exploitation and oppression, environmental destruction, terrorism and unjust wars. This further means that the worldwide Christian Churches have to believe that humankind would be liberated from such global social problems ONLY when they have faith in and fully support the mighty power of the toiling masses of the world to overthrow monopoly capitalism and dismantle all imperialist structures, build socialist states in every nation for the development of humanity and the common good of peoples in the economic, political and cultural fields, constantly launch among socialist countries the anti-modern revisionist struggle at the national and international levels to thwart the return of capitalism, and unwaveringly uphold the theory of continuing revolution up to worldwide triumph of scientific socialism or communism over imperialism and all forms of reaction.

For the advancement of the complementariness of Christianity and Marxism, CNL collectives pray, may the Christian Churches’ leaders in the world today follow the examples of Pope John XXIII and Pope Paul VI who convinced participants of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council to stop condemning Marxism and started the mellowing down of the anti-Communist attitude of the Roman Catholic Church. For the promotion of worldwide peace, Pope Paul VI visited and negotiated with Communist leaders and regimes of the former USSR (even though this was already the period of modern revisionism).

The complementariness of Christianity and Marxism, though the two may not necessarily be compatible with each other in terms of philosophies and beliefs, is so important for the continuing manifestation of God’s Kingdom as the reign of truth, justice, peace, love, equality and liberation among human beings, especially among the toiling masses for the eradication of the imperialist falsehood, injustice, disorder, hatred, inequality and enslavement in the world, and for the establishment of socialist structures in each nation of the world. This further means that Christians and Marxists ought to stand on the same common social ground, negotiate and agree on social, economic, political and cultural guiding principles and policies that are beneficial to all. They can unite against the imperialist

wars of aggression, oppose grave injustices and human rights violations, and overthrow fascist states.

May the development of such complementariness of Christianity and Marxism continue worldwide and be inspired always by Pope Francis, who, in one of his interviews done at the Vatican City on November 11, 2016, declared fervently: "It's the Communists who think like Christians." It was Eugenio Scalfari, who interviewed Pope Francis and asked:

You told me some time ago that the precept, "Love your neighbor as thyself" had to change, given the dark times that we are going through, and become "more than thyself." So you yearn for a society where equality dominates. This, as you know, is the program of Marxist socialism and then of communism. Are you therefore thinking of a Marxist type of society?⁴²⁶

Pope Francis responded solemnly:

It has been said many times and my response has always been that, if anything, it is the Communists who think like Christians. Christ spoke of a society where the poor, the weak and the marginalized have the right to decide. Not demagogues, not Barabbas, but the people, the poor, whether they have faith in a transcendent God or not. It is they who must help to achieve equality and freedom.⁴²⁷

It was also in 2016 when Pope Francis received from former Bolivian President Evo Morales a crucifix fashioned into a communist hammer and sickle. Morales became the first national minority politician elected as president of Bolivia in 2005. Through the help of the friends of CNL in Europe who asked permission from Pope Francis, his picture, receiving from former Bolivian President Morales said crucifix, serves as the back cover of this CNL commentary.

⁴²⁶ Pope Francis: "Trump? I do not judge. I care only if he makes the poor suffer," *La Repubblica*, November 11, 2016 (https://www.repubblica.it/vaticano/2016/11/11/news/pope_francois_trump-151810120/).

⁴²⁷ *Ibid.*

To understand better the background of the crucifix fashioned into a communist hammer and sickle, Jorge Mario Cardinal Bergoglio, a Jesuit and Pope Francis’s name before he was elected to the papacy on March 13, 2013, and President Evo Morales were very close friends. It was Cardinal Bergoglio, the Archbishop of Buenos Aires, Argentina, who together with other Church leaders rallied the Catholic Church in Bolivia to support Morales’ decree to nationalize the Bolivian industries and to redistribute million hectares of land to the landless. On May 1, 2006 Morales issued a decree taking state control of Bolivia’s oil and natural gas production. Following through on a campaign pledge, Morales said, “The time has come, the awaited day, a historic day in which Bolivia retakes absolute control of its foreign resources. The looting by the foreign companies has ended.” The decree required all foreign companies to turn over most of their control of the country’s oil and natural gas fields to Bolivia’s state-owned oil company. It also gave foreign investors in the oil and natural gas industries six months to renegotiate their contracts with Bolivia, stopping short of total expropriation. To enforce the decree, Morales ordered the Bolivian soldiers to occupy the oil and gas fields. Then on November 2006, Morales followed through on a campaign promise of land reform. *The Bolivian congress passed a measure proposed by Morales that called for redistributing underutilized or idle land to rural communities.* Bolivian officials estimated that as much as 20 million hectares (49 million acres) of land might be redistributed. The measure generated massive street demonstrations both for and against. The congress considered the measure just as *the Catholic Church in Bolivia issued a survey showing that 90 percent of the nation’s land is owned by only 50,000 families.*

Particularly here in the Philippines, developing the complementarity between Christianity and Marxism can have different forms. Like the stance of most of the Philippine bishops in both the Catholic and Protestant Churches, there is no more place to be silent or to take the middle road of not being identified as “rightist” or “leftist” but to speak out and act to radically change the situation of the Filipino people, especially the toiling masses of workers, peasants and national minorities. Christians and Marxists can agree on the most resolute and militant course of action for the good of the Filipino people. They can go as far as overthrow the current unjust Duterte regime and replace it with a patriotic and democratic

government, and work together for the advancement of the Filipino people's struggle for national liberation, democracy, social justice and inclusive development. Christians and Marxists can also complement each other in the promotion and advancement of the national peace negotiations between the GRP and the NDFP, which can resume upon the victory of the oust tyrant Duterte movement and especially when a new president, who would be willing to establish a patriotic and democratic government, would be elected in the coming 2022 national elections. More concretely, the Christians and their respective Church leaders can rally the Congressmen and Senators to implement nationwide the already signed and approved agreements between the GRP and the NDFP such as JASIG and CARHRIHL, and support fully the resumption of the national peace talks between the GRP and the NDFP in order to finalize CASER for the signature and approval of both the GRP and the NDFP Negotiating Panels and their respective principals, and continue the national peace negotiations to draft and finalize agreements on political and constitutional reforms, and finally on the end of hostilities between the AFP-PNP and the NPA and the disposition of these forces.

For Christians and Church leaders who do not understand or who lag behind in grasping the complementariness of Christianity and Marxism, there are no other methods than information, education and well-reasoned persuasion for radicalizing their faith in the context of the concrete realities in the Philippines and the world, advancing their political consciousness, and enhancing the level of common understanding and cooperation.

For those who are rabid anti-communists, pro-imperialists and diehard reactionaries, they have the right to hold on to their conviction or opinion; and there is no other way to deal with them but through debate or dialogue. Debate or dialogue can focus on the futility of the NTF-ELCAC which will surely fail because it will never resolve the root causes of the armed conflict, giving stress in expounding that the advancement and victory of the NDR through people's war and the start of socialist construction will remain as the only hope of the exploited and oppressed Filipino people for the complete resolution of the root causes of the armed conflict. But for those anti-communists, pro-imperialists and diehard reactionaries who wield and use state power and armed counterrevolution to

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suppress Marxists, the struggling Filipino people and Christian revolutionaries, they will be dealt with differently by the armed revolutionary masses.

The Partido Demokratiko-Sosyalista ng Pilipinas (PDSP)—with Christian “democracy” or “social Democracy” and Christian “socialism” or “democratic socialism” as its “minimum and maximum program,” respectively, cajoling Filipino Christians to hate and denounce Marxism/scientific socialism or communism—is a futile tool of US imperialism, feudalism, bureaucrat capitalism and state fascism in the Philippines which the Filipino people are determined to overthrow for their total liberation from class exploitation and oppression.

The Partido Demokratiko-Sosyalista ng Pilipinas (PDSP) traces its origin from Raul Manglapus, a CIA-backed political figure during the 1950s to 1960s, who, with Manahan also a CIA-sponsored politician, led the Christian Social Movement (CSM) and founded reformist political “third parties” like the Grand Alliance that turned to become the United Opposition. The CSM and Grand Alliance/United Opposition espoused the anachronistic “free enterprise” ideology, “peaceful revolution,” “constitutional reform” and “profit-sharing” of the workers and capitalists in order to oppose communism and perpetuate US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism in the Philippines. It was Fr. Romeo J. Intengan, S.J. and Norberto Gonzales who developed the PDSP’s anti-Marxist/-Leninist/-Maoist ideology, founded on Christian “democracy” or Christian “socialism.” Manglapus and company made use of Christianity to cloak their pro-US imperialist orientation and preserve the country as semicolonial and semifeudal society.

Established on May 1, 1973 with Norberto Gonzales as its chairman, the PDSP claims to be a Christian “socialist” party based on the traditional following of the dominant church, i.e., the Catholic Church. With Christian “democracy” and Christian “socialism” as its “minimum and maximum program,” the pseudo-Christian “revolutionaries,” or much better Christian reformists, define the PDSP as a “third force” party in the present class struggle between capitalism and communism. They ascribe individualism to capitalism and wrongly accredit “totalitarianism” to Marxism, communism or scientific socialism. They see Christian “democracy” as supposedly upholding the “human person” under theo-philosophic prin-

principles. They work for Christian “socialism” that is neither individualistic nor collectivistic but personal in the Christian sense, which in the end will just remain as a utopian vision that will never ever happen in Philippine society but will just serve in the Philippines as cloak and justification for the continuation of the dominance of the monopoly capitalists and imperialist powers, the big comprador bourgeoisie and the big landlords who are themselves the bureaucrat capitalists.

In practice, the Christian “democrats” or “social democrats” or Christian “socialists” are the defenders of capitalism against scientific socialism; and they are the utopian and hypocritical neo-feudalists with their fundamental religious bias. They speak of peaceful social revolution; and they obscure the objective class struggle between the exploiters and the exploited, the oppressors and oppressed whom they try to reconcile through the principles of “the common good,” “the universal destination of goods,” “cooperation,” “solidarity” and the “distribution of wealth” without disturbing the property rights and state power of the exploiting classes and oppressors.

Christian “democracy” or “social Democracy” and Christian “socialism” or “democratic socialism,” therefore, is the PDSP’s feudal ideology which is handmaiden to imperialist ideology, the actual outcome of which is the combined imperialist and feudal exploitation and oppression of the Filipino people up to the present day. Thus, the actions of Christian “social democrats” or Christian “democratic socialists” defend basically and reinforce merely the class dictatorship and property rights, the political and economic power of the imperialists, compradors and landlords in Philippine society. Their programs and activities promote state fascism in the country in order to preserve Philippine society as semicolonial and semi-feudal, and prevent the advance of the national democratic revolution with a socialist perspective under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism.

In reality, the PDSP has been put up to prevent the spread of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism (MLM). But this remains as just another futile dream of the PDSP, the revisionists, pro-imperialists, diehard reactionaries and anti-communists because Filipino revolutionaries have already accepted MLM as the ideology of the exploited and oppressed masses, guiding the Filipino people, especially the toiling masses of workers who are in basic alliance with the peasant masses, in their struggle for national

liberation, democracy and socialism. The PDSP’s futile aim to prevent the spread of the MLM ideology in the Philippines is very clear in the pronouncement of Fr. Romeo J. Intengan, S.J. in his article published in the Manila Times on January 21, 2007. Intengan believes that the PDSP, founded on “social democracy” and “democratic socialism,” is an alternative and a rejection “to Marxism-Leninism and to liberal capitalism.” He further claims that the PDSP is “compatible with the doctrine and morals common to the Abrahamic religions—Christianity and Islam—which most of our people profess.” He declares that the “Marxist-Leninists profess a worldview and practice that are clearly atheistic and antireligious, and are contemptuous of civil and political rights of dissenters.” He misrepresents shamelessly the Marxist-Leninists whom he accuses wrongly as “contemptuous of civil and political rights of dissenters” that “bring about a totalitarian system with a monopoly of state power” and in concluding that “Marxists tried to highjack the theology of liberation as the Christian response to social ills.”

In reality, Intengan conceals the fact that it is imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism, that is very atheistic and anti-religious not in words but in concrete praxis and that it is the imperialist powers, primarily led by the US imperialists, that have established, in the name of bringing democracy and liberation to countries, fascist and totalitarian regimes in the world. Intengan does not seem to recognize that Marxist-Leninist-Maoist revolutionaries do not need “*the theology of liberation*” to change the world. He does not understand that liberation theology has been developed by honest and devoted Christians themselves as the expression of their radicalized faith in order to contribute for the liberation of the exploited and oppressed masses.

Guided by the CIA, the PDSP pseudo-revolutionaries do not only prevent the advance of the national democratic revolution but also help their US imperialist masters, the bureaucrat capitalists and fascists in Philippine society with their futile objective and pipedream to end the CPP-NPA. Norberto Gonzales, the Chairman of the PDSP, clearly declared such fruitless aim in 2010 when he was the Defense Secretary of the fascist US-Macapagal Arroyo Regime, stating fiercely: “For the CPP-NPA I would like the armed force to really give them a taste of what war really is.” Thus, some soft-hearted PDSP leaders commented:

A striking recent example is the involvement of the chair of the PDSP in the pursuit of deplorable national security objectives during the Arroyo administration, as well as his involvement in the formation of a so-called “shadow government” consisting of errant opportunists to the Aquino administration. These political moves only add to the confusion between the ideology and praxis of Filipino social democracy.

Instead of “Christian socialism” or “Filipino social democracy” or “democratic socialism,” CNL would encourage Filipino Christians—the ordained, the religious and the laity—to be inspired by scientific socialism for the advancement of the ongoing national-democratic revolution with a socialist perspective in Philippine society. The current national-democratic revolution is the resumption of the 1896 old democratic revolution in the sense that it struggles for national liberation and democracy in the entire Philippines. However, it is at a new and higher level because the class leadership no longer belongs to the bourgeoisie or any of its stratum but to the working class in alliance with the peasant masses. It pursues the general line of new-democratic revolution through protracted people’s war. In the era of modern imperialism and proletarian revolution, it is only under the class leadership of the proletariat that the struggle for national liberation can be completed and that the struggle for land reform can be realized as the main substance of democracy.

After the basic completion of the new-democratic revolution through nationwide armed overthrow of the big comprador-landlord state, it will become necessary and possible to proclaim the Filipino people’s democratic state and begin the socialist revolution even as bourgeois-democratic reforms shall still be undertaken in the transition. The establishment of the people’s democratic state shall mean national liberation from imperialism, freedom from class exploitation and oppression, and the enjoyment of individual and collective rights in the political, social, economic and cultural spheres, even including the religious sphere, for instance, of the Christian Churches and Islam.

The final victory of the national and democratic revolution shall be the beginning of the socialist revolution, which will strengthen the national cohesion and integration of the entire Filipino people. The unity of the

international proletariat and the cooperation of socialist countries under the principle of proletarian internationalism will also strengthen the entire Philippines against modern revisionism and the return of capitalism. By that time, CNL (Christians for National Liberation) as a revolutionary organization of Christian believers shall be transformed to Christians For Socialist Revolution (CSR) in order to continuously arouse, organize, and mobilize the Church people and lay Christians, and for them to vigorously uphold and participate with their increasing number in the impending new epoch of continuing socialist revolution. CSR shall actively take part in struggle against modern revisionism to prevent the return of capitalism. It shall join in the continuing fight against imperialism, bourgeois nationalism, ethnocentrism, racism, religious obscurantism and all forms of exploitation and oppression at national and international levels.

Appendix

Postscript By Jose Maria Sison⁴²⁸

June 27, 2021

As Founding Chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and Chief Political Consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), I welcome the Commentary of the Christians for National Liberation (CNL) on the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, which calls on all Christians to participate in the transformation of social realities in the new millennium and which proposes “an integral and solidary humanism” capable of creating a new social, economic and political order founded on the dignity and freedom of every human person.

I commend and congratulate the CNL for responding to the call and proposal of the *Compendium* and for seeking to consolidate the ranks of Christians in accordance with their love of God and their brethren for the purpose of greater service to the Filipino people in their struggle for national and social liberation against foreign monopoly capitalism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

I fully agree with the democratic and ecumenical proposition that Christian believers and nonbelievers can enjoy in common the freedom of belief and thought; and at the same time dialogue and cooperation in order to analyze social issues, formulate the program or course of action and strive to achieve the common good of the people. We can differ on the First Great Commandment, but we can easily agree on the Second Great Commandment and work together in loving and serving the people.

The CNL is excellently qualified to put forward its Commentary on the basis of its long experience, sustained work, sacrifices and achievements in working with other revolutionary forces within the NDFP and with the broad masses of the people since 1972 in the people’s democratic revolu-

⁴²⁸ Original title: “On the CNL *Commentary on the Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church*, Postscript By Jose Maria Sison, Founding Chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines, and Chief Political Consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines.”

tion against the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system dominated by US imperialism and administered by the state functionaries of the local exploiting classes of big compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists.

I appreciate that the CNL inspired by the love of God is critical of how hatred of atheism and communism has been used to limit and slant the social doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church in favor of monopoly capitalism and deny the common good in scientific socialism. The CNL explains very well the history and contexts of the papal encyclicals, the phenomenon of modern revisionism, the intensification of inter-imperialist contradictions, the recrudescence of fascism in tandem with neoliberalism, the rise of anti-imperialist and democratic mass struggles and the resurgence of the irrepressible forces for national liberation, democracy and socialism.

It is just for the CNL to heed the demand of the masses and call for the end of the system of exploitation and oppression that causes poverty and the violation of human rights. Under the neoliberal policy regime, the poor, deprived and oppressed toiling masses have increasingly suffered in the last more than four decades. Thus, the CNL proposes interrelated mass movements in the struggle against poverty and inequality.

So long as the social doctrine of the Church limits the possibility of social transformation within the confines of monopoly capitalism, the common good cannot be attained and the dignity, unity and equality of all the people cannot be fulfilled. The economic systems and political structures of capitalism and the earlier forms of exploitative societies (slave and feudal) have run counter to the original egalitarianism of Jesus Christ and Christianity.

Christians and non-Christians can agree on how the contradiction between capital and labor runs and how it can be resolved. The social character of production has been rising tremendously, with collective labor and higher technology, but the private character of appropriating the product of labor by the monopoly capitalists has become even more rapacious. Therefore, the only way to resolve the contradiction is to intensify the economic and political struggles in order to defeat imperialism and establish socialism.

The neoliberal policy of imperialist globalization has rampaged for so long and victimized the proletariat in the industrial countries and peo-

ples in underdeveloped countries like the Philippines. Under these circumstances, the call of the Church for a “humanism of work” cannot be achieved within the framework of monopoly capitalism. Christians and non-Christians must unite to end the globalized system of exploitation and oppression in the Philippines and in other countries being carried out by the multinational and transnational corporations.

The escalating conditions of exploitation and oppression of the people of the world have included the worst forms of terrorism by the US and other imperialist powers in the form of puppet tyrannies, military intervention and wars of aggression. These have destroyed the lives of more than 25 million people as well as their social infrastructure in many countries since the end of World War II. But the imperialists and their puppets like Marcos and Duterte treat as the worst terrorists all those who oppose the atrocities and do the painstaking work of arousing, organizing and mobilizing the masses.

In the face of the intolerable and degrading conditions of oppression and exploitation, the suffering people have no choice but to defend themselves and fight back in accordance with the encyclical teaching on just war against tyranny, oppression and the daily violence of exploitation. The unjust violence of imperialism and the reactionary states has become so intense and widespread that the people are reasonably justified to wage revolutionary armed struggle for national liberation, democracy and socialism in the Philippines and in other countries, especially in the global South. In any case, the common objective of Christians and non-Christians is to build and establish worldwide peace by liberating humanity from any form of national and class exploitation, oppression and enslavement.

The CNL is admirable for answering the call of the *Compendium* to safeguard the environment as a common good and a common responsibility. The multinational and transnational corporations of monopoly capitalism extract superprofits and keep the Philippines underdeveloped and impoverished by plundering the natural resources of the Philippines and the cheap labor of the toiling masses. They pose threats to the very existence of the planet Earth. These include global warming or climate change, depletion of the ozone layer, habitat destruction and extinction of species, air pollution, water pollution, groundwater depletion and con-

tamination, chemical risks, and dumping of industrial garbage to underdeveloped countries.

It is an essential task of all Filipinos, Christians or otherwise, to protect and rehabilitate the environment from the depredations of the imperialists and their local collaborators. It is for the common good that all the Christian churches in the Philippines and the Filipino revolutionary organizations through the NDFP complement one another in order to safeguard the Philippine environment from being devastated further.

Even as the Christians and Marxists differ on belief and thought, they can complement one another and cooperate in the building of human societies where truth, justice, peace, love, equality and liberation would exist for the economic, political, cultural and comprehensive development of the toiling masses of workers, peasants and national minorities. We have seen the cooperation of Christians and Marxists in the people’s war as well as in the process of peace negotiations in promoting the social, economic and political reforms needed to lay the foundation for a just and lasting peace.

I admire the CNL for condemning imperialism as the Beast of the Apocalypse pictured in the *Book of Revelation*, a global satanic power that is sucking the sweat and blood of billions of the world’s toiling masses and that is being served by the “false prophets,” such as the US Central intelligence Agency, the bourgeois politicians and businessmen, the reactionary army and police of the imperialist powers and their fascist puppet states, the pseudo-Christian and pro-imperialist evangelists of today.

I appreciate the CNL for criticizing and repudiating such pseudo-Christians as those who belong to the Partido Demokratiko-Sosyalista ng Pilipinas (PDSP) and who play with such catch phrases as Christian “democracy” or “social democracy” and Christian “socialism” or “democratic socialism” to mislead Filipino Christians towards hating and denouncing Marxism, the people’s democratic revolution, scientific socialism and communism. The PDSP serves as an instrument of US imperialism, feudalism, bureaucrat capitalism and state fascism in maligning and suppressing the Filipino people’s struggle for national and social liberation.

Both Christians and Communists have a long sense of history. But the former have an indefinitely longer one in which Christianity is supposed to provide daily inspiration to the lives of its following and the spir-

itual comfort to those who are in the throes of pain, suffering or death in any future society. Communists concede that their party and the socialist state are no longer needed after socialism graduates into the classless society of communism. But of course, both Christians and Communists are fulfilled that whatever contribution they make for the common good of mankind run beyond their mortal lives, whatever are the prognostications about the longevity of Christianity and Marxism.

There are rabid anti-communists who try to frighten the Christians by claiming that on the way to socialism, communists engage them in a united front only to persecute and suppress them in socialist society. Let us always remember that Friedrich Engels severely scolded Herr Eugen Dühring when he invoked science and socialism to suggest that forcible means be used to do away with religion. Engels categorically declared that it is precisely in violation of science and socialism to do violence to the fundamental right and freedom of belief and thought.

When Marx and Engels said that religion is the opium of the people, it was to criticize and repudiate the misappropriation of religion by the exploiting classes to befuddle the exploited and render them powerless. We are all happy that the CNL has both the religious and scientific optimism and looks forward to working and cooperating with communists in the entire epoch of socialist society that follows the people's democratic revolution.

Socialist states have always guaranteed in their Constitution this right and freedom. Christians and Communists have worked together well in socialist societies. They are never bothered by projections and speculations about the future after socialism. They are not obsessed with personal and sectional rewards and are in fact willing to pay the supreme sacrifice for the just cause whenever necessary. They are confident that whatever they contribute to the current common good and to the further social development of humanity will continue as indestructible creative energy in the lives of the people generation after generation.

Appendix

Greetings to the Christians for National Liberation On Its 50th Anniversary, By Coni Ledesma⁴²⁹

Congratulations to the Christians for National Liberation on the occasion of its 50th anniversary!

Congratulations also for the publication of *A Commentary on the Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*. It is a timely publication to celebrate CNL's 50th anniversary. All CNL members and non-CNL members, who are strongly influenced by Christian teachings should read and study this book.

The CNL has come a long way since the 1970s, when priests, pastors and religious men and women gathered regularly to share and discuss their growing politicization and their conviction that the National Democratic movement was the way towards the liberation of the Filipino people. They were following the call of Pope John XXIII for priests and religious to integrate with the masses. And in the process of integrating and struggling with the masses, the pastors, priests and religious became revolutionaries. And as revolutionaries, they decided to found the Christians for National Liberation.

During the 50 years of the CNL many have become martyrs, disappeared, tortured, imprisoned. These have inspired many of their confreres to join the CNL and participate in the national democratic struggle.

A Commentary on the Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church clearly shows how the Catholic Church developed from being an underground organization to a Church that sided with the aristocracy and now continues to side with capitalism and imperialism.

⁴²⁹ Original title: "Greetings to the Christians for National Liberation On Its 50th Anniversary and Comments on the CNL's *A Commentary on the Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* to Commemorate Its 50th Anniversary, By Coni Ledesma, Founding Member of the CNL."

A Commentary on the “Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church”

In contrast to this, CNL has taken the preferential option for the poor. It stands with the people fighting against oppression and exploitation and for socialism.

A Commentary on the Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church brings out “that Christianity and Marxism or scientific socialism/communism can complement each other even though they may not necessarily be compatible in terms of spiritual and political beliefs. Meaning, Christians and Marxists can live together, dialogue and work in partnership for the people’s common good, especially that of the toiling masses of workers, peasants and national minorities, leading to ‘a generation of new men [and women], the molders of a new humanity’ in the world.”

CNL has shown in practice that this is being done.

The *Commentary* weaves the history of Christianity in its discussion of historical materialism. I found this very informative and important. From being a persecuted Church, it took the side of the rulers and became a ruling Church. The teachings and pronouncement of the Church have been mostly influenced from this position. Pope John XXIII and now Pope Francis have had positions that took the oppressed into consideration. In contrast, CNL members have always taken the preferential option for the poor, deprived, and oppressed.

The CNL is an allied member of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines. It was a founding member of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines. Its program and activities reflect the program of the NDF. It is one with the Filipino people fighting against imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism for national democracy with a socialist perspective.

I wish the CNL many more achievements as it surges forward, unafraid of the perils and dangers of the current situation.

Mabuhay ang CNL!

Appendix

On the 50th Anniversary of the Christians For National Liberation, Salutations and Commendations By Luis Jalandoni⁴³⁰

I extend my warmest congratulations to the Christians for National Liberation for more than 50 glorious years of revolutionary struggle! Yours is a rich history of struggle against oppression and exploitation and your preferential love for the poor, deprived, and oppressed. This has meant arduous struggle against US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. For the last five years or so, this has also meant struggle against Chinese imperialism.

You have deeply involved yourself in the struggles of the toiling masses, so that CNL members, since its founding, have been politicalized in the vast sea of struggle of the Filipino people against the most cruel exploitation and oppression.

The very rich experience of CNL in the depths of the exploitation and oppression, in its preferential love for the poor, deprived and oppressed is expressed in the undying commitment to serve the exploited and oppressed, and struggle valiantly for their liberation. The hundreds of CNL martyrs attest to this CNL commitment. So does the unwavering commitment of CNL members throughout the country, from its founding and onward up to now, in the ongoing struggle of the Filipino people, Christians and non-Christians, Communists and other non-believers, who do believe in the Filipino people's deepest longings for national and social liberation.

This is the true ecumenism of Christians, Communists, and other non-believers, fighting and dying together for the people while respecting the beliefs of each involved in the struggle.

I commend the CNL for studying the history of the Church from its beginning of proletarian common ownership of property to the years

⁴³⁰ Original title: "On the 50th Anniversary of the Christians For National Liberation, Salutations and Commendations By Luis Jalandoni, CNL Founding Member and Member of the National Council of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines."

when the Roman Catholic Church was declared as the official church of the state starting with Emperor Constantine. Through all the years of the Church’s condemnation of communism, devoted Christians found effective ways of showing love of neighbor, love for the poor, deprived and oppressed. As Christ declared in the Sermon on the Mount, “Whatever you did for the least of my brethren, you did it to me!”

It is highly commendable that the CNL leadership, after 50 years of struggle for liberation, studies the history of the Church and Christians and learn deep lessons, going through the various official Church positions in the Encyclicals, seeing the deeply imbedded fear of Communism but also drawing important lessons for the people’s struggle for liberation. Among these are the declaration of the current Pope Francis that “it is the Communists who think and act like Christians.” We also see the importance of a Papal encyclical declaring that under a long-standing tyranny, resistance through armed struggle is acceptable. We see the great importance of Pope John XXIII for opening up the Church to the world of the people’s struggle to be free. Though only one miracle could be proven for Pope John XXIII, Pope Francis decided to canonize him, stating that the Second Vatican Council of Pope John XXIII was a miracle. There is also the example of Archbishop Romero, who stood for the struggle of the people of El Salvador for liberation and was martyred by the Salvadoran military and declared a Saint by Pope Francis.

My own experience and that of so many others attest to the fact that it is in the midst of the struggle against the most cruel exploitation and oppression that many of us became politicalized.

When I was Social Action Director of the Diocese of Bacolod under Bishop Fortich in 1968, I was baptized in the struggle of the peasant settlers in Hiyang Hiyang, Cadiz. The peasant settlers refused to give in to the landgrabbing of the lands they had tilled for generations. The warlord Armin Gustilo wanted to take over their lands. They resisted. I joined student activists in fighting with them. Two old women among them gave us shelter under the rain. They offered us boiled eggs. When Gustilo had them bludgeoned to death, it began my politicization.

Then other sugar workers from the Victoria Milling Company went on strike demanding their right to just wages and the right to set up their independent union. Prominent exploiters dismissed them from work.

They fought back in a six-month strike. In a 34 kilometer march, supported by other workers, peasants, youth and some Church people, they firmly continued their strike. Again, in Bais, Negros Occidental, the workers in their thousands went on strike. Forced by the landowners to live in the canals, they lit torches of resistance. Overall in Negros, I, together with the student youth, Church people and workers felt the sea of resistance against incredible oppression. In this sea of struggle, we got politicalized.

When Coni and I attended the first assembly of the CNL in August 1972, I met and was deeply impressed by the commitment of Church people—priests and religious, workers, peasants, sugar workers, the youth and women. They were the first members of the Christians for National Liberation.

It is indeed commendable that CNL leaders and members are involved in studying the history of the Church, the Papal Encyclicals and other pronouncements of the Roman Catholic Church as part of their commitment to the liberation of the people. However, I feel that the great majority among us got involved because of integration with the struggles of the oppressed and exploited, who long for liberation.

I wish to express my view that the essential character of the Christians for National Liberation is expressed in the committed engagement of CNL members with the struggles of the oppressed and exploited towards national and social liberation. I believe deeply that this character is expressed in the many martyrs of the CNL, together with other revolutionaries, Christians and non-Christian alike, in a true ecumenism. This is the same essential character of so many members of CNL in the ongoing liberation struggle all over the country.

The nature of the Christians for National Liberation, I believe, is determined by its preferential love for the poor, deprived and oppressed. This has been carried out militantly by the CNL members and leaders through the many in unremitting struggles for liberation.

In the wide sea of exploitation and oppression, the CNL has stood as one of the pillars of the liberation struggle of the Filipino people. This is also the reality of the life of the CNL martyrs. Their love for the oppressed and exploited is a characteristic they share with other revolutionaries. Their ongoing deep participation in the struggle for national and social liberation will be a lasting inspiration to the Filipino people.

A Commentary on the “Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church”

I wish many more years of victories and achievements for the CNL! May your 50 glorious years of service and love for the poor, deprived and oppressed be the firm foundation for continuously serving the Filipino people, together with other revolutionaries, in our struggle for national and social liberation!

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