



www.eprawisdom.com

Research Paper

THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SPHERE OF SOCIETY: PART 6

Maria Imelda Pastrana Nabor, Ph.D¹

¹Associate Professor 3, Department of Language, Culture, Humanities and Information Technology, Aklan State University, Banga, Aklan, Philippines

ABSTRACT

This study exemplifies the concept of social economy and addressing the economic crisis. Unemployment is branded as a moral disorder. The study also amplified dehumanizing economic relations, dehumanizing cultural beliefs, dehumanizing political relations and dehumanizing Greed and Plunder of Creation.

KEYWORDS: *totalitarianism, authoritarianism, collectivism, imperialism*

DEHUMANIZING ECONOMIC RELATIONS

Too much poverty and excessive riches dehumanize. The economic dimensions of human life are as ordinary and necessary as any others, yet the little economic success or too much often endanger more important goals in life. The questions of economic life for Christians touch both personal and institutional relationships. Leo condemns the excesses of the free market and rejects both capitalism and socialism. In the dynamics of economy, the following contentions must be resolved:

1. Unfair labor practices and low wages.
2. Profit orientation without accompanying social accountability.
3. Unequal distribution of wealth.
4. Imbalance in rural and urban advancement and unequal economic opportunities.
5. Rural to Urban migration.
6. Bureaucrat Capitalism.

The Christian concept of the social economy can be acknowledged by the following features: [Guerry, 112]

1. A human economy
2. An economy of the common good
3. An organic economy

4. A dynamic economy inspired by the principles of charity and social justice.
 5. An economy obedient to the moral law
- For Pope Pius XI, there are **basic features** concerning a human economy: [Guerry, 113-124]

1. It must be at the service of man.
 - a. The economy must respect, pursue and guarantee the primacy over all material things, whether wealth production or technical flourishing.
 - b. The place of man in society must be restored.
2. The human economy is a radical transition from the 18th and 19th century economists who employed natural philosophy only or from the context of totalitarian states, which diminishes everything to mere mechanics.
3. Productivity is not an end in itself.
 - a. If the organization and structure of economic life degrades the dignity of workers or their aspect of responsibility is weakened, or their freedom of action is ignored, such economy is unjust even if it generates vast amount of goods whose distribution is congruous to the norms of justice and equity.

- b. It must regard man's nature.
 - c. Technology is subordinate to man and to the sum of the spiritual and material values, which concern his nature and personal dignity.
 4. The human economy must take into consideration the intricate nature, the living unity of body and soul, individuality and personality of the whole man, a spiritual and rational being, a free and social being, child of man and Son of God.
 - a. Of man, the corporeal being, necessitating food, health, relaxation and rest.
 - b. Of man, the spiritual and rational being, called to a life of reason and intelligence. A being called also to spiritual, moral and religious life to evade being a slave to his senses, whims, instincts, and passions but become man and realize his vocation as a human person – to acknowledge his dependence on God – finally, called to a life with God as His son. An economy ignoring man to live in this higher state of life is not a human economy.
 - c. Of man, the social being, bound to others by a law of solidarity and at the service of the human person particularly the family, his vocation, different sectors of life, the national and international community. A human economy considers these social factors.
 - d. Of man, the free being, competent, collaborate and unite with others in the option to guide the social economy to its authentic end. A being free from centralized restraint of his economic and social life by rigid and mechanical formulae which, because they are so authoritarian and centralized ignore all local and regional distinctions and do not adequately associate the members of the national community in the building of the city.
 5. It must adjust itself to man's fundamental necessities.
 - a. The goal of the public economy is to ensure the permanent satisfaction of man's necessities in goods and material services, directed to their turn to raising the moral, cultural, and religious sphere.
- b. An economy of necessities is one directed towards satisfying the fundamental necessities of man such as food, clothing, housing, enhancement of personality, education of children, healthy enhancement of body and soul and the real needs of man.
 - c. Hence, not an economy of inauthentic necessities, artificially generated by propaganda and advertising.
 - a) Not an economy of lucre, for the profit of the capitalist financier who overshadows the economic scene and himself determines which necessities shall be satisfied. These necessities are articulated in terms of money and are founded on financial means and buying capacity and are thus for the people who have not the resources to procure the necessities of life.
 - b) Not an economy of luxury, unnecessary and unreasonable spending which contrasts bitterly with the misery of many.
 - c) Not a purely quantitative economy, aiming above all at "an abundance of goods, their value calculated purely and simply on material standards.
6. It is not human work in the service of the common good, which attracts and uses capital but, on the contrary, capital which disposes at its pleasure of both man and his work, like bowls in the hands of the player.
7. It must intend at man's advancement.
8. The intention must be to improve, develop and perfect human beings: the achievement of their lawful economic, social and cultural autonomy, a prosperity which in itself constitutes a solid ground for cultural and religious belief.
9. It must be accessible and available to all men.
10. It must be suitable to man and be made to a human scale.

8 steps to address economic crisis [taken from Herbert Docena and Jenina Joy Chavez (Philippine Daily Inquirer, August 24, 2008)]

First, end corruption and wasteful spending; second, ease the tax burden on the poor and rationalize

the tax system to make it more progressive; third, spend more on social services and investments; fourth, reduce debt service; fifth, bring down the price of oil and electricity; sixth, revive industry, create more jobs, and increase workers' and farmers' incomes; seventh, extend and reform the comprehensive agrarian reform program; and finally, provide the poor with jobs and services, not dole.

Collectivism'

Collectivism is a vision of the social group, the state, and those practices that deduce from this belief. In this view of the state or social group neither the individual person nor any other group that he/she forms or joins has legitimacy apart from the collective. The collective may assume different forms: party, nation, race, or the people have been frequent candidates.

The collective is the sole source of meaning and value; it arrogates to itself power in order to restrain the state with its subordinate groups. Since nothing in the entire society or within the secondary groups matters except insofar as it contributes to the collective or carries out its programs, collectivism is a menace to the individual. In the interaction between the person and the collective, the only secure relation is that he/she must fulfill an array of duties. With or without state power, the collective can subject persons to domination or, further, totalitarian restraint. Rights are only those granted by the collective, so they offer no defense of the individual with respect to it, especially since the code of law and procedures of adjudication that would secure rights are created by the collective on its behalf.

Collectivism also threatens the intermediate bodies of society and the vitality of the economic and other social processes that they sustain. The life of any group is only a subordinate goal. Within these groups, rather than self-determined participation, activity degenerates to response at the behest of often anonymous others. Rather than personal initiative, passive acceptance. The members' activity in collectivism stands out and removes from participation in a system of collegial, collaborative, or cooperative enterprise. The latter thrive through the particularity and initiative of their members; a collective renders its members its elements, if not similar and passive, than anonymous and compliant.

The form of obedience located in a collective offends human dignity because:

1. The person who is bidden to carry out a requirement has no effective alternative or no alternative group to which he/she may withdraw.
2. For an act of non-compliance, the system punishes the person in several ways, all of which point to that person's ceasing to matter from the constrained viewpoint of the collective. No heed is paid to the privilege of conscience. Since the collective assumes suprapersonal qualities, it tries to reduce those of its members. Its assertion of the form of its will requires that it attempts to eliminate the complexity introduced by the free wills of individual persons.

<i>Totalitarianism</i>	<i>Authoritarianism</i>	<i>Collectivism</i>
Concerns the range of state control over the societal, familial and personal spheres and incorporates a collection of intrusive methods that is utilized across this range.	- a style and pattern of unilateral administrative control. It does not require collectivist ideology or organization.	Concerns the purpose, goal and central agent of state or social control. Consequently, its far reaching and unique claim to legitimacy, collectivism tends toward totalitarianism and authoritarianism.

In a collectivist culture, emblems and stories do not emerge and continue as living traditions in broad state of society; rather, the controlling elements of the collective either create or seize them from its purposes. The collective organism claims for itself a further, extensive power: it alone determines time. The usual measure of this time is the collective's progress or the advancement of the group that is the center of the group's ideology and control. This flourishing is also read back into the years prior to the collective's stemming into control. This control surpasses or alters the other

strands of history. The collective's use for time reduces the lives of persons to the report of their function, and it eradicates alternate histories of neutral groups or of independent local communities. Beliefs in divine timelessness or in God as Lord of history are tenets of faith that shelter those who suffer from this domination of time; indeed these truths stimulate hope and thus enable resistance.

Colonialism or Imperialism²

The classical version: beginning with the great sea voyages of the late 15th and 16th centuries, the

creation of colonies by Europe and the U.S. in the Americas, Asia and Africa, usually resulting in the domination of the subject people militarily, politically, and culturally. The end of World War II has come to be known as ‘*decolonization*.’

In recent years, Catholic Social thought underscored new forms of colonialism, which usually replace military/political hegemony with a broad spectrum of subtle or overt economic or cultural structures of domination, a process known as ‘*neocolonialism*’: it highlights an assessment attempting to overcome the strategy of using foreign aid as a means of impinging on the sovereignty rather than considering the welfare of the developing nations.

In *Mater et Magistra* (1961), Pope John XXIII consequent regard on justice between nations of different economic development with an urgent appeal to respect individual characteristics and rights of these nations. If this were not achieved, for the pontiff, it would be but another form of colonialism, which although disguised in name, merely reflect the earlier but outdated dominion [MM 169-170, 172].

In *Pacem in Terris* (1963), Pope John XXIII argued on the evolution of underdeveloped countries

and reiterates that it is vitally important that the rich nation in offering aid “should respect the moral heritage and ethnic characteristics peculiar to each, and also that they should evade any intention of political domination [PT125].”

In *Gaudium et Spes*, Vatican Council argued that wealthy nations enjoy great abundance while millions are tormented by hunger and disease. This situation must not be allowed to continue, to the scandal of society” [GS88].

In 1967 Pope Paul VI took up this scandal and assessed and suggested pastoral praxis to eliminate such suffering. John Paul II reiterated Pope Paul VI message: “the persistence of and often the widening of the gap between the areas of the so called developed north and the developing south [SRS14]. He alluded to these structures of sin as different forms of imperialism [SRS36] and forms of modern imperialism [SRS37]. The use of imperialism is a synonym for colonialism.

John Paul II describes the two superpowers as: “Each of the two blocs harbors in its own way a tendency toward imperialism, as it is usually called, or toward forms of neocolonialism: an easy temptation to which they frequently succumb, as history, including recent history, teaches” [SRS22].

Socialization³

Narrow meaning of socialization: Karl Marx foresaw a progressive socialization, or social ownership in the processes of industry and manufacture through various stages, leading to a classless society and the complete socialization of the productive system. It may be a nationalization of resources with or without compensation to their owners, or a form of public or semipublic ownership rather than direct ownership by the state or ownership of industry and services by public boards or corporations established and regulated by the state.

The form of socialism Leo XIII had in mind in *Rerum Novarum* was Marxist. He rejected the abolition, or socialization of private property. In *Quadragesimo Anno* 105, on the economic pole, power and wealth had become concentrated in the hands of a few “who for the most part are not the owners, but only the trustees and directors of invested funds which they administer at their own good pleasure. Socialism, too, had shifted with the emergence, alongside communism and of a more moderate form of socialism.

In *Mater et Magistra*, Socialization is neither good nor evil. Its moral note depends on the particular forms, which it assumes, and the uses to which these are put. Man in society remains a free agent. The present trend towards socialization is not a product of natural forces, working by some blind instinct. It is the work of man who is free by nature and responsible for his actions [MM57-58].

For John XXIII, the acceptable level of economic and political socialization lay midway between two extremes:

1. The political tyranny that stems from the destruction of personal initiative.
2. The refusal of the state to intervene when the weak need protection.

In *Gaudium et Spes* 25, socialization is not without its dangers. It brings with it many advantages for the revitalization and betterment of human qualities and for the protection of human rights. The degree of socialization may vary from place to place depending on a community’s economic and social development but in all cases intervention should be for the common good, restrictions should be minimal, and totalitarian methods or dictatorship can never be justified [GS75].

In *Laborem Exercens* (1981) John Paul II said, “one cannot exclude the socialization, unsuitable

conditions, of certain means of production” [LE14]. It may be indispensable in order to ensure that the goods of the earth are available for all. The goods of the earth are for the benefit of all, and if individuals or families or groups are being deprived of this case, a higher political body may intervene to protect them; the level of this intervention will vary from time to time or from place to place depending on the circumstances. The purpose of all socialization in political-economic areas must be the common good; but the state, or any organization between individuals and the state, should not do for the individual or for lower groups what they can do for themselves provided they are in a genuine position to meet their just needs. Here the function of the state is subsidiary. Because of its special responsibility for the common good, the state should be alert to ensure justice for individuals, families and groups and if necessary, intervene to remove injustices. Finally, although private citizens, families and groups should be alert to any encroachment by the state, they need to remember the benefits that can come from a socialization inspired by a full acceptance of social mortgage on the goods of the world, that is, that they are meant by God to be used for the benefit of all.

The concept of socialization in education diverged from its use in politico-economic studies. For the educator it is the process by which people, especially the young, become integrated in themselves and into the communities of which they are members. The 1st agent of socialization is family. A specifically indispensable agent in the school through teachers, the curriculum, and the influence of other children. The communities in which a child lives and the experiences it bestows are also agents, while the state, because it is a society into which people must be integrated and because of its subsidiary functions in education, has an indispensable role in socialization. Finally, the church is involved, though its fostering of the basic virtues and values of human living and particularly through its mission of helping all to become full, living members of the community of the people of God.

Inflation [Miller, 485-486] Inflation is a circumstance of continuously rising prices or, equivalently, of unceasing falling value of money (in terms of its purchasing power). Periods of inflation are usually followed by periods of falling prices. Hyperinflation – a situation wherein prices rises 50% per month or more. It occurred in Germany in the 1920s and in Latin America in the 1980s. For the household, inflation is an erosion of the purchasing power of income. For

investors, it heightens uncertainty about future returns. For lenders it shrinks the value of loans repaid. For debtors it reduces the real sacrifice demanded to repay what they have borrowed.

Unemployment: Causes of Unemployment [Sheridan, 355]

1. The concentration of the country’s economic power in the hands of a small number of corporations which has made it difficult to develop labor intensive industrial strategies that generate thousands of new jobs.
2. The unceasing centralization of numerous job generating industries in urban areas, which contributes to escalating problems of unemployment and economic disparities in several other regions of the country.
3. The escalating levels of foreign ownership and restraint of principal industries which generally put local workers in a vulnerable position during times of economic recession, subject to plant shut-down and lay offs.
4. The orientation of our economy towards exporting natural resources (timber, coal and other minerals) rather than to manufacturing finished products, thereby giving up new employment opportunities.
5. The large investments of capital in high technology industrial projects (e.g., pipelines, hydro-electric projects), which may increase our gross national product but produce relatively few permanent jobs.
6. The prolongation of lockouts and strikes, which result in a loss of productivity and aggravate conditions of unemployment in some places of the county.

Unemployment: A Moral Disorder [Ibid., 355-356]

Unemployment and related causes of unemployment alludes to a more fundamental crisis that exists in the values and priorities of our society. Indeed, unemployment is not simply political or economic or social problem. It is a profoundly moral and spiritual problem in our times. As Pope John Paul II reminds us, the “plague of unemployment: is symptomatic of a basic “moral disorder.” We are called therefore, to examine the basic values and attitudes that motivate the economic and political activities, which made our society what, it is today.

Child Labor

The Filipino family values work. Sometimes,

children do work to support their education and aspirations because their families cannot afford to send them to school. Working children are those children below fifteen years who are employed, permitted or suffered to work in any public or private establishment where they are not directly under the responsibility of their parents or guardians or the latter employed them apart from their children. Hence, these children become victims of child labor.

Child labor is one of the most disturbing and most rampant problems we face squarely today. Child labor alludes to the illegal employment of children below 18 years old in hazardous occupations. Article 107 of PD 603 adopts the provisions of Article 139 of the Labor code stating that no child below 15 years old shall be employed except under the sole responsibility of his parents or guardian [RA 7658] and his employment does not interfere with his schooling. The Labor Code prohibits person below 18 years of age be employed in undertaking which is hazardous or deleterious in nature. Section 2 of RA 7610 offers special protection to children from all forms of abuse Psychological and physical), neglect, cruelty, exploitation (emotional maltreatment), sexual abuse and discrimination and other conditions prejudicial to their development. It also protects the children from unreasonable deprivation of his basic needs for survival such as food and shelter and the failure to immediately give medical treatment to an injured child resulting in serious impairment of his growth and development or his permanent incapacity or death.

Guidelines: Encouragement of Local Christian Communities to become involved in the process of: [Ibid., 357-358]

1. Becoming aware of the local realities and experiences of unemployment. This constitutes being present to unemployed workers, listening to their problems and identifying current and future job needs.
2. Assessing the basic and structural causes of unemployment.
3. Establishing ethical judgments about the realities and causes of unemployment. This configures some reflection and education in the Christian meaning of human labor and the primary purpose of an economic order as serving human necessities.
4. Assisting the particular struggles of unemployed workers. This consists moral and financial assistance for activities geared at creating new jobs, gaining job security for

workers, planning shorter work weeks, and engendering public awareness about the realities and causes of unemployment.

5. Involvement in endeavors to advance alternative industrial strategies. This comprises analyzing the economic potential, unfolding alternative plans for economic advancement, and pressing local governments and corporations to shift in their priorities and industrial strategies.
6. Escalating community ownership and restraint of industries where desirable. This includes the fostering of cooperatives, worker-restrained industries and other initiatives to unfold more effective community involvement and restraint of economic life.

Brandt Report [Sheridan, 366]

1. The existing paradigms of economic advancement which negate the right to work, ruin the environment, advance resources for the benefit of few and exploit poorer sectors of the population in the countries, both north and south.
2. The reluctance to acknowledge the political rights of 3rd world people to self-assessment as makers of their own economic development and the repudiation to assist popular struggles for liberation from oppressive regimes.
3. The operations of transnational corporations which extract valuable resources and capital from 3rd world countries, thereby depriving those national governments of revenue sources demanded to serve the necessities of their own populations.
4. The lack of progress in establishing sufficient measures for stabilizing the price of raw materials and controlling speculation on international markets, which would allow the 3rd world countries more effective utilization of their natural resources in the development of their societies.
5. The continuing repression of basic human rights by authoritarian or military regimes in many 3rd world countries and the ways in which governments and corporations of industrialized countries tend to reinforce the repressive regimes through their economic and political transactions with little regard for human rights.
6. The escalation of military expenditure and arms trade, which draws approximately \$20 billion

from 3rd world countries alone, i.e., an average of one and a half times the total expenditure for health and education in these countries.

The Consumer Factor [Sheridan, 262]

1. Consumers must question the purpose of an economic system, which urges us to consume extravagantly and to waste, rather than to share available food resources. Consumers must resist advertisements and other forms of social pressure to which generate affluent eating habits.
2. Consumers must exercise the tradition of fast and abstinence by reducing our consumption of food, especially meat. Considering vegetable-based foods offer nutritious substitutes for beef, pork and poultry.
3. Consumers must channel the savings by moderation, whether money or goods, to neighbors in need or through effective voluntary agencies.
4. Consumers must develop new educational programs in families, churches and schools oriented toward changes in consuming patterns and personal lifestyles. Such programs could assess the cultural significance of eating together as families, as friends, as colleagues.

The Market Factor [Sheridan, 263-265] Christians must ask policy makers:

1. to make substantial contributions towards the creation of a world food bank (of wheat, rice, and coarse grains, plus fertilizer, fuels and other agricultural resources).
2. to make more concessional sales of wheat /rice to poor nations at below market prices.
3. to increase the purchasing power of the poor countries by paying just prices for their exports.
4. to provide more effective forms of agricultural assistance which will help developing countries to produce more food for their own people.
5. to escalate the purchasing power of low income earners such as small farmers, fishermen, by unfolding effective programs for the distribution of income.
6. to break economic and cultural patterns which downgrade agriculture and drive farming families off the land. Present practices ignore fertile land, which cannot be worked by large scale, capital-intensive machinery and methods.

7. to improve both in quantity and quality research studies on effective stewardship of the soil and the seas, and on balanced development of the rural and urban sectors.

Unequal Distribution of Wealth

Pope John XXIII Encyclicals (*Mater et Magistra*, 1961 and *Pacem in Terris*, 1963) influenced subsequent Popes and Bishops concerning the grave problem of famine, hunger, and poverty in the world. The root of the problem is the unsatisfactory distribution of the world's riches. Is it not petrifying to visualize the indifference of rich people? Can they bear in their consciences a billion people plunged in misery? If we could only realize that we are all united in just one family regardless of race, sex, language, and nationality. God created man as brothers, not enemies. He gave them the earth to be cultivated by their toil and labor. Each and everyman is to enjoy the fruits of the earth and to receive from it his sustenance and the necessities of life. Thus, no one has the right to abandon the needy. Distributive justice among nations is built upon these inalienable rights of the person, and that the goods of the world are destined for use of all. It entails that, development is a necessity in this circumstances. But this can be achieved only through a collective action of the entire people.⁴ The implications of this vision of society for development is man. This development is the creation of conditions, both material and spiritual to assist man to be the best as he can be. If problem arises in the pursuit of wealth, we must prioritize human dignity and social equality. The higher spiritual interests are dependent upon lower material ones. If the needy's natural human rights at the material plane are unjustly encroached – if he is starving, homeless with no income, then indirectly his rights at the spiritual plane will also be unjustly encroached. It follows that he will be incapable of enjoying the benefits of religion, education, employment and laws etc. Even if some of the material needs of the needy are satisfied for the meantime but if his spiritual needs are negated then he remain paralyzed in looking after his own needs.

Violence [Sheridan, 204-207] Violence is visualized in the unequal distribution of wealth of primary goods within society and sometimes within individual families. Sexual, cultural and ethical discrimination are forms of violence. The lack of adequate food, clothing and shelter is a violation of human dignity, which causes family breakups and sets brother against brother. Violence is the squaring of accounts through bloodshed. There is violence in the manipulation of minds and the

coercion of wills. Violence is done to the small wage-earner who labors with such difficulty to improve his lot, in contrast to the ease with which those who hold the reins of economic, political and professional power give themselves the best salaries and social prestige. The wasteful misuse or destruction of producer goods and consumer goods when there are starving people in the world is a form of violence. Violence is viewed in the public assistance, which is virtually consumed by bureaucracies before it reaches the people for whom it was intended. Violence is done when people's rights are trampled by fanaticism and crime. There is violence in the collective egoism of pressure groups. Violence is visualized in the complacency of the affluent. Such social injustices give rise to much unrest.

Violence as any force, physical or psychological, which is exerted on a man or group of men to obtain what neither argument nor law nor moral persuasion would make it possible to obtain from them. Violence involves the use of force or other pressures, which assault the dignity of persons by impeding them from freely participating in responsible societal discretions.

Injustice breeds violence. It is deprivation, misery, humiliations; arbitrary restraints bring about a revolt of the oppressed and of others who are determined to fight for a just humane world. This revolt elicits repressive action by the forces of law and order, which sometimes lead to physical and psychological excesses.

Commitment to terrorist aggression and its ugly consequences are serious forms of violence, but worse still are the institutionalized forms of violence and the economic, political, and social injustices to which they emerge. Both forms of violence demand early and substantial response. There is only one-way to break the vicious circle of violence: expose the sources of unrest and eliminate injustices.

Urbanization

Thousands of farmers are leaving their lands because of the cost of mechanization necessary to cultivate farms continually expanding to be financially profitable. This tends to leave rural areas depopulated with the side-effects of creating both "ghost-towns" and inhuman urban growth.

Principles to Guide Policies in all economic institutions [EJA 90-93]

1. The fulfillment of the basic needs of the poor is of the highest priority.
2. Increasing active participation in economic life by those who are presently excluded or vulnerable is a high social priority.

3. The investment of wealth, talent and human energy should be especially directed to benefit those who are poor or economically insecure.
4. Economic and social policies as well as the organization of the work world should be continually evaluated in light of their impact on the strength and stability of family life.

Dehumanizing Cultural Beliefs Racism

Shun Govender proposed a materialistic conception of history to understand the historical nature of oppressive structures. Govender narrated to us in detail: [Govender, 42]

Racial separation and conflict between white and black can be traced back historically right to the very beginning of white settlement in the Cape some three hundred years ago. Its origins must be viewed in the compulsion which developed in disputes over possession of the land and cattle economy, the technological superiority which the settlers used against the black inhabitants, and the subsequent inferior position which people of dark skin were forced to occupy in the social and economic structure of the colony. This place of social and economic disadvantage of the blacks was subsequently entrenched systematically by legal enactments, taxation and dispossession of rights to the land, much of which took place in terms of conquest.

The people who engaged in this act of historical aggression were products of western Christian civilization and late victims of the philosophical and spiritual ideals, which did the rounds in Europe. The desire for economic gain in the East brought whites to the shores of South Africa. The expansion which began in the Cape and then spread eastwards and northwards in the Boer republics, led over the years to a form of economic relations between white and black in which the blacks were to become and remain the losers. South Africa's economic history – from the time of slavery, in an agricultural economy, though the discovery of gold and diamonds, to today's highly diversified modern industrial state under a capitalistic dispensation – has resulted in the consistent and utter wretchedness of the majority of South Africa's people. Black people were reduced to a labor force, pushed into reserves which the state is today turning into the so-called national states with no economic viability at all, deprived of their citizenship, removed from their traditional rural community life and forced into already overcrowded homelands where law and order is increasingly breaking down. The wealth produced yesterday and today in

south Africa is being enjoyed by the whites and the up and coming black middle class. Such an unjust distribution is therefore at the direct expense of the poor in our country, whose oppression is further compounded by the fact that they are consistently deprived of the means, legally, politically and economically to improve their lot and demand a just deal.

Racial minorities belongs the right to their culture and to their language. Their access to economic resources may not be restricted nor their natural fertility limited or abolished.

Elitism is a belief and advocacy of leadership or rule by an elite (being undemocratic) sense of advocations.

Chauvinism is an excessive exercise especially blind patriotism.

Philippines are influenced by colonial mentality, excessive Personalism, and family centeredness, patriarchy, pre-scientific worldview, and escapism. To this day, most Filipinos still measure their worth in accord to their internalized standards of foreign ways, including the most superficial and senseless fads. There is ambivalence of Filipino values: escape from responsibility and lack of discipline may lead to *bahala na* attitude and selfish individualism, *utang na loob*, excessive Personalism (*palakasan*), *pakikisama* and family nepotism. How then can Filipino values be transformed into positive social values? First, instead of relying entirely on education, we can analyze our system of rewards and punishments. Second, we can liberate the captivity of the Filipino mind and soul from the colonial mentality perpetuated by the media and entertainment world. In the social analysis process the church remains a powerful social and political resource and force. The sound values exercised by Filipinos are sensitivity to personal needs, strong regard for the family, and resiliency in the face of hardship.

As a damaged culture occurs when there is a failure in nationalism, total devotion to those within the circle, total war on those outsider; a contempt for the public good, submission to false doctrine and authority, and the national ambition to change nationality.

Christian Muslim Relations and Peace [Gorospe, 205-209]

One of the grave national issues of social justice is the centuries old Christian Muslim compulsion in Mindanao. The Catholic Bishop Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) has already written 5 pastoral letters on peace and 2 letters on Christian-Muslim relations. On September 2, 1996, peace agreement was signed by the Government (GRP) and Moro National Liberation

Front (MNLF). The idea is to have mutual concessions for the sake of peace.

Reasons why Christian-Muslim dialogue should be a top priority:

1. Geographical – both communities are in the Philippines.
2. Historical – history of mutual prejudice and conflict.
3. Religious – Christianity and Islam have much in common.

Issues in Christian community relation:

1. Question of two nationalities and two patriotisms – Bangsa Moro and Filipino.
2. Autonomy and the political unity of the republic.
3. Mutual misunderstanding, historical mis readings, irritants and fears.
4. Question of the common nationalism.

Reason for the GRP-MNLF peace agreement: the last foreseeable chance for peace agreement. The Reservation about the GRP-MNLF peace agreement:

1. Lack of public information and consultation until practically the last stages of the negotiations.
2. The constitutional and legal infirmities of peace agreement.
3. The language of the GRP-MNLF peace agreement shows barely enough respect for the Philippines constitutional process.
4. The southern Philippine counsel for peace and development (SPCPD) is against decentralization.
5. Lack of equality in representation.
6. The composition of the SPCD is incompatible.
7. Moves to amend precipitately the constitution for personality or partisan political agenda.

Christian's Viewpoint towards Muslims Misinterpretation: Islam causes Muslim to be fanatical and bloodthirsty.

On the contrary: Islam is a religion of peace and Jihad (holy war) in the struggle against the self for Allah, and for the sake of livelihood in the community. Misreading: Muslims have not contributed to Philippine nationhood and democracy.

On the contrary, Muslims have their share in resisting foreign invaders and were present in great numbers at the EDSA People Power Revolution. Fear:

Muslims are afraid because Christians look on them as the next enemy after the fall of communism. Muslims are afraid that the government schools and agencies are merely tools for the christianization of Bangsa Moro. Irritants: Prejudice and stereotypes against Muslims as well as Muslims under representation in the government.

Muslim Viewpoint towards Christians

Misrepresentation: Christianity is not wholistic, because it separates religion from politics.

On the contrary this is good because historical experience has shown that the best constitutional arrangement is separation of church and state because this separation respects freedom of conscience and religion. Misreading: Filipino Christians are cowards and colonial puppets and Christianity converted the Filipinos by the sword

On the contrary two hundred revolts of Filipino Christians against the Spanish rule prove just the opposite. The early Filipinos embraced the Christian faith because the 1st missionaries were an extraordinary breed and externally Christianity had much in common with indigenous religions. Fear: Christians reasonably fear discrimination in the projected Bangsa Moro autonomous region.

The fear is based on the intolerance of Muslim countries like Saudi Arabia and Sudan against non-Muslims. All Filipinos, Christians, Muslims or Lumads must together build an inter-religious harmonious authentic human society, a more just equitable civil society based on justice and love where peace (Shalom or Salaam) reigns. After centuries of Christian-Muslim compulsion, whether SPCPD will at long last bring true and lasting peace remains.

Dehumanizing Political Relations

Classical Greece viewed the polis and the common as the sphere of human flourishing. The private domain was a zone of deprivation and incomplete humanity. Aristotle saw the human person as “by nature a social and political being” [Nicomachean Ethics 1097b, 1.10], whose happiness is achieved in the exercise of the public virtues of citizenship. These virtues go beyond the minimal cooperation needed to keep society functioning materially to a richer form of fellowship where the higher goods of self-government, wisdom, and contemplation of the truth can be achieved: “a state exist for the sake of a good life, and not for life only. Political society exists for the sake of noble actions, and not of mere companionship” [Politics 1280b, 11.6-7, 1281a, 11.3-4].

In Rome, Cicero said a commonwealth was “not any collection of human beings brought together in any sort of way but an assemblage of people in large numbers associated in agreement with respect to justice and a partnership for the common good” [De Republica 1, xxv, 1].

The biblical tradition adds a distinctive emphasis to these classical ideas. Augustine challenged the supremacy of the polis as the domain of final human fulfillment. Another domain – the City of God, the heavenly Jerusalem is the ultimate good of every person. For Thomas Aquinas, God’s own goodness is the good of the whole universe [ST 1,11,q.19, art.10,1]. This theocentric definition of the human good had a radical effect: it desacralized what the classical sources made holy: the polis. In doing so, it must oppose any rules who claims divine prerogative. The commandment to love one’s neighbor, as oneself demands commitment to the common good. But this commandment does not make the neighbor – individually or collectively – a surrogate for God. The final good of every person transcends any good that can be achieved politically, economically, or culturally.

The Philippine society is characterized by the presence of external “neo-colonialism” and internal “colonialism” – the latter through domestic capitalism and “feudalism” both of which maintain a bigger number of population in the state of poverty, powerlessness and dependency.

The 1991 Second Plenary council of the Philippines offered a description on the Philippines as the land of lights and shadows: it is characterized by poverty and injustice (lack of peace and order). The people nationwide affirmed a number of issues and problems in our society that dehumanize people:

1. The alarming ecological devastation.
2. Rampant graft and corruption.
3. Staggering economic circumstances.
4. The escalation of criminality.
5. Population explosion.
6. Lack of spirituality and injustice.
7. The opportunity of the masses for a significant discretion making for themselves on matters regarding their future is declined.
8. Political powers are concentrated in the hands of the elite few, i.e., traditional politicians, businessman, and the military. In the perception of the people, multinationals and political superpowers support this power concentration.

9. Political dynasties.
10. Some laws are commendable only for the advancement of the interest of the political elites and their business patrons.
11. Some laws of the republic are not conducive to the common good of the people but serve only the interest of the political elites and their business patrons.

Philippine society is still based on the patron-client system, which is now supplemented, by vote-buying and violence. Political organizations are subject to ideological and political manipulation. Factional divisions explicate a debilitating aspect for the common good. Election has become an expensive and immoral/illicit process where personalities, not contentions, are preferred and given importance.

One of the basic indispensable features of the state is the fostering of social justice in the political arena and its vitality to form a community that promotes unity and collaboration among the number of social groups. The contradicting outlook of such undertaking is violence. The intention of the state in forming a political community failed because there can never be a community when people exercise violence to each other. Sharing is inconceivable if the institution itself embodies evil and injustice, if individuals failed to perform their duties and roles in society. Obviously, there is a mixture of exploitation and manipulation. Dehumanizing political relations are oppressive and negate the dignity, freedom, and humanity of the people. It follows that, with this kind of political and economic framework, members of society must discover and resolve the compulsions and continue to seek equality and participation.

Population Issues⁵

Population alludes to any collection of living animal or human elements continually being modified by increases through birth or immigration and by losses through death and emigration. Contentions concerning population are: size of a population such as high growth rate for underdeveloped countries and decline in fertility for developed countries, population movement, population density, population structure, the general health and the aging of the population, environmental resources, age distributions, the labor force, technical skills, educational systems are all complementary elements in trying to arrive at population theories and policies, food supply, adequate water and shelter, and other necessities of life.

The divergence in standpoint between the Catholic Church and the population policies and

programs concerns its critique of individual sexual rights and reproductive health and reproductive rights, its adherence of the sacredness of human life, human sexuality, marriage, and the family, and its intensified objections to recourse to sterilization, contraception, and abortion as pertinent to population control programs and family planning measures.

The significance of the population question for Roman catholic social thought begins with the church's ancient understanding of human sexuality as intended by God for procreation. The purpose was to populate the earth, to produce enough people to fill the earth and subdue it, and under God, to have dominion over it [Gen 1:28].

This conviction that sex found its primary purpose in procreation was enhanced by the recognition that the family was the primary social unit and the foundation of all social life and social order. Human beings by nature are social beings, needing one another for the full flourishing of human life and for realizing their ultimate destiny of eternal union with God. Sex, then, was ordered to marriage, marriage to the procreation of children and the establishing of family, and family to the nurture and training of new citizens for society and church. The wonder and majesty of God's creative love was reflected in every new child as well as in the number and diversity of all the peoples of the earth.

Vatican II's Church in the Modern World (GES, 51, 87) and *Populorum Progressio* 37 teaches us that: "under certain modern conditions couples find themselves in circumstances where at least temporarily the size of the family should not be increased". The number of children depends on the "judgment of the parents and it cannot be left to the judgment of public authority". The judgment of the parents presupposes a rightly formed conscience, which unfolds a correct and genuinely human responsibility, which respects the divine law and takes into consideration the circumstances of time and place. Pope Paul VI *Humanae Vitae* bans any form of artificial contraception, direct sterilization and abortion as a means of family planning and allows only natural family planning methods.

Catholic Social Teaching negated that the earth's population has reached or exceeded tolerable human limits [FC 6]. It has not denied the need for responsible control of population growth nor that government has a proper role in executing that responsibility [PP37]. It has certainly not taught that an ever increasing human population is a good thing in and of itself.

There are *three major concerns*:

The 1st concern is the inalienable right of persons to marry and beget children and thus their right to determine the size of their own families. This right is morally limited by economic, social, physical, and psychological circumstances of the people (*Humanae Vitae* 10). It ought not to be restricted by the government or any other social agency. Governments may have a proper role in influencing the circumstances in which the couple makes their discretion, but it would be a fundamental violation of human dignity and right for any political power to impose this discretion (GES 87).

The 2nd concern is with the methods used to restrain population growth or population explosion or population time bomb. It has never been a part of Catholic teaching that a desirable social end justifies the means taken to gain that end. While it is certainly true that population levels can be restrained to some account by such practices as abortion, sterilization, infanticide, and widespread use of contraceptive devices, these and other means have been traditionally found to be morally objectionable in Catholic teaching. Since human dignity is rooted in the human capacity for moral agency, such immoral practice would be a violation of the dignity of the human person (*Humanae Vitae* 23; *Familiaris Consortio* 6).

The 3rd concern is in regard to population question with materialism that would, in the interests of a higher standard of material well-being, repudiate the responsibility to bring new life into the world and nurture it. The Church accentuates its teachings not on individual material success but human solidarity and the responsibility to share the material and cultural goods of the earth more fairly and evenly. For the church, the problem is not overpopulation but unequal distribution of the world's goods (*Mater et Magistra* 188-92).

The church does not teach that human population should grow unchecked. The church focused more on the human person's dignified life. The population question has been addressed primarily from a moral perspective rather than from a technical and political standpoint.

This materialism and the contraceptive mentality fueled by greed and selfishness and reflected in the preference for material things over the well being of persons [LE 6-8], causes human individuals and communities to lose sight of the truly human goods of relationship with God and one's fellow human beings [PP 41-42]. The human aspiration to seek to do more,

know more and have more in order to be more [PP6] is affirmed in catholic social thought as a fundamental aspect of human dignity, so that increased economic production and higher standards of living are seen as legitimate human goals. But this material progress should be in the service of integral human development and carried out in a spirit of human solidarity and mutual cooperation.

War and Deterrence⁶

The most indispensable events in world history were the two world wars, the "cold war" following the end of the 2nd world war, the technological advancement during and after the war that opened the specter of the destruction of humanity and the movements toward freedom around the globe.

World war 1 exemplified how modern war consumes both material resources and human lives. Pope Benedict XV condemned the barbarity of that war and worked to bring about a solution so that killing could end. He criticized compulsory military service. World war II exhibited destruction of human and material resources and the holocaust event raising the question of complicity in evil. How much one could do to resist evil and bring about a peace with justice.

Deterrence became the focus of attention due to the dominance of nuclear weapons and the cold war. These events moved the people to reflect about peace. Peace is not just the privation of compulsion but a state of well-being, both of the individual and of the community.

War is still part of human affairs due to the presence of a structural defect in the international community. *Gaudium et Spes* preserves the right of war for nation states to defend their people, but it restricts the right of war to defense and not as means for restoring lost rights [GS 79; PT 127].

Deterrence, envisioned as indispensable to preserve peace and justice is the source of conflicts. Deterring by thermo nuclear war threaten grave evils and long term peace will be impossible to emerge from such threats. The German bishops visualized deterrence as a lesser evil than war or domination by communist powers [Out of Justice, Peace 153]. For the American bishops preferred continual deterrence as a structural feature of international life [CP 188].

In the Old Testament, peace is the perfection of a thing. It is the consequence of the community's being in covenant communion with God. The absence of peace grows out of a lack of harmony in that relationship [Ezek 13]. Peace constitutes not only union with God but

righteousness. Hence, there is no peace for the evildoer [Isa 48].

Warfare contradiction constitutes the ethos of the early church. Shedding blood was at odds in the Gospel. This perspective was altered in the 2nd century. In the 4th century, Augustine regarded arms as a duty and war as a punishment for evildoer. Such tragic event could be just. In this period, the church was responsible for preserving public order and defending against invaders.

In the medieval period, crusade or holy war was revived taking its cue from the Old Testament that depicted Yahweh as a warrior [Joshua, Judges]. In the New Testament, Jn 2:15; Mt 10:34 and Lk 22:35-38 depicted the notion that combat with Islam was divinely sanctioned.

Just war, for St. Thomas, may be held for **three intentions: just cause, legitimate authority, and right intention**. Thomas' viewpoint converged with Augustine upholding that war is an obligation deduced from the virtue of charity. Safeguarding the well-being of innocent persons from aggression was a requirement of the common good.

The stemming of independent nation-states and the fall of a united Christendom after the Reformation was the end of any universally acknowledged authority. This entails that justice is inconceivable of any one side's cause in war. As an outcome attention turned to justice in the manner it was waged.

Vatican 1 articulated the horrifying modern warfare. Pius XI proposed that all wars of aggression were to be prohibited. Defensive war to repel aggression was reluctantly indispensable. Traditionally, the Church considered **3 concerns for just cause: to vindicate rights, to repel unjust assault and to avenge injury**. Pius XI redefined the meaning of just cause. He constrained the just war theory as a **defense against aggression**. War, however, is worse than a measure of injustice. A nation must endure injustice than to resort

to war. Pius XI suggested a peaceful means of settling disputes. It must only participate in a war declared by legitimate authority.

John XXIII sees the stemming international order demanding a contribution to the global common good. Nation states must regulate themselves and evade any violation for universal common good. Hence an authentic international order is indispensable. John never declined the just war theory. He's silent on the right of national defense and declined nuclear war strongly.

Some conditions are necessary to legitimize war: first, not to kill indiscriminately, i.e., the civil population should not be assaulted; second, the effects of war must be limited; finally, it must be the last recourse after having tried all peaceful means [GS 79]. Vatican II, due to the horror and perversity of war magnified by the multiplication of scientific weapons [GS 80], declined arms on the basis of moral principle [GS 78] or pacifist tradition. It is a crime against God and man himself. War merits unequivocal and unhesitating condemnation [GS 80].

Paul VI legitimized **the pacifist viewpoint**. John Paul II differentiated between recourse to arms for social change and armed force as a last resort in a defense of a nation. He condemns violence and injustice and suggests self-defense by proportionate means.

Catholic teaching acknowledge 3 different paradigms in war:

1. The crusades – the war was sanctioned for a holy intention: the safe passage of pilgrims to the Shrines of the Holy Land.
2. Just war and pacifism – acknowledges the horror of war. Violence must be justified since there is a presumption in favor of non-violence.
3. The *jus ad bellum* and the *jus in bello*.

1983 U.S. Pastoral Letter of the U.S. catholic bishops, the *jus ad bellum* criteria as to why and when it is permissible to go to war: [The Challenge of Peace, 85-99]

1. Just cause	5. Last Resort
2. Competent authority	6. Probability of success
3. Comparative justice	7. Proportionality
4. Right intention	

The *Jus in bello* criteria of how war ought to be waged are: [CP. 101-110]

1. Proportionality
2. Discrimination

Genocide⁷

Genocide involves activities whose goal is to liquidate in whole or at least in large number members of a distinguishable national, ethnic, racial or religious group. It is a composite of direct killing, serious bodily

or mental harm, imposition of living conditions that in due time will result on death, forcible prevention of births, and transferring children of the persecuted groups to another community.

For example, Eric Wolf advanced the notion of *pariah* people to describe groups of indigenous people who frequently stood in the way of colonizers and hence were prime candidate for genocidal attack. Other scholars replaced it with “stranger peoples”, feeling that Wolf’s term ‘pariah’ reduced the victims to subhuman states. Others used the term “hostage peoples”.

Jean Paul Sartre, out of his involvement with the French struggle in North Africa emphasized the intimate links between colonialism and genocide. In contrast, political philosopher Hannah Arendt attributes the growth of genocide to the rise of an ethos of secularization, of disenchantment with the world, and of rationalization having its origins in Western religion. This bureaucratic dehumanization and mass murder are within the mainstream of Western culture.

Dehumanizing Greed and Plunder of Creation Graft and Corruption

1. Tax evasion
2. Ghost projects and payrolls
3. Nepotism and favoritism
4. Extortion
5. Tong or Protection Money
6. The Lagay system or bribery

NOTES

¹H. Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958). P. Chmielewski, “Collectivism” in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Social Thought*, ed. J. Dwyer (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1994). ²A. Hennesly, “Colonialism” in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Social Thought*, ed. J. Dwyer (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1994).

³D. Dorr, Dorr, *Option for the Poor: A Hundred Years of Vatican Social Teaching* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1983). E. Heideain, “Socialization” in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Social Thought*, ed. J. Dwyer (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1994).

⁴Pope John XXIII appealed to the insensitive conscience of the rich. He said: we are all equally responsible for the undernourished people. Therefore, it is necessary to awaken man’s consciences to the sense of their responsibility which weighs upon everyone, especially upon those who are more likely blessed with this world’s goods.

⁵J. Hannigan, “Population” in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Social Thought*, ed. J. Dwyer (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1994).

⁶R. Bainton, *Christian Attitude toward War and Peace* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1960). Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, “Arms Race” in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Social Thought*, ed. J. Dwyer (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1994). K. Himes, “War” in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Social Thought*, ed. J. Dwyer (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1994). D. Hollenbach, *Nuclear Ethics* (New York: Paulist, 1985). R. Miller, *Interpretations of Conflict: Ethics, Pacifism and the Just War Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991). NCCB, *The Challenge of Peace* (Washington: USCC, 1983). Schall, James S.J. *Out of Justice, Peace Joint Pastoral Letter of the West German Bishops; Winning the Peace Joint pastoral Letter of the French Bishops*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1984. T. Shannon, ed. *War or Peace* (Maryknoll, Orbis, 1980).

⁷L. Kuper, *Genocide* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1981).

³¹J. Gremilion, ed. *The Gospel of Peace and Justice: Catholic Social Teaching since Pope John* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1976). C. Gudorf, *Catholic Social Teachings on Liberation Themes* (Washington: University of America Press, 1980). See also the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines on the issues on women.

³²Richard McBrien, *Catholicism*, 992.

³³G. Baum, *The Priority of Labor: A Commentary on Laborem Exercens* (New York: Paulist, 1982). G. Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation* (New York: Orbis, 1973). A. McGovern, “Class Struggle” in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Social Thought*, ed. J. Dwyer (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1994). R. Tucker, *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 2nd ed. (New York: Norton, 1978).

³⁴D. Dorr, Dorr, *Option for the Poor: A Hundred Years of Vatican Social Teaching* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1983). D. Hollenbach, *Claims in Conflict: Retrieving and Renewing the Catholic Human Rights Tradition* (Ramsey, N.J.: Paulist, 1979). W. O’Neill, “Private Property” in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Social Thought*, ed. J. Dwyer (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1994). For Locke’s defense of private property, see his *Second Treatise on government*, especially chapter 5. A helpful collection of essays on property rights and economic justice is Virginia Held, *Property, Profits, and Economic Justice* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1980).

³⁵G. Baum, *The Priority of Labor: A Commentary on Laborem Exercens* (New York: Paulist, 1982). M. Stevens, “Right to Strike” in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Social Thought*, ed. J. Dwyer (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1994).