

**BIRTHING  
LUPANG HINIRANG--  
GOD'S CHOSEN LAND**

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**National Movement for  
Righteousness and Transformation  
(N-MRT)**

## Introduction

To an increasing number of Filipinos here and abroad, the Philippines is a lost cause.

But as Filipino Christians with endless faith in our God, we are duty-bound to ask, despite the hopelessness around us, the following questions:

- Can something still be done?
- Are we doomed as a nation?
- Has God abandoned this country?
- Does the Word of God to the prophet Jeremiah still apply to the Philippines today?

*“For I know the plans I have for you” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” (Jeremiah 29:11)*

## I. The Destiny of the Philippines

### A. God created each nation with a purpose

- Everything that God created has a purpose, even **nations**. God created each nation with a purpose. In general, God's purpose for every nation is to contribute something positive to humanity (*sangkatauhan*), to be a blessing to other nations. But each nation has a particular way in which God wants it to be a blessing to other nations. An example would be Japan. One of Japan's major contributions to other nations is technology.
- God, prior to creating the Philippines, had set what our nation's purposes will be. He had already predetermined how the Philippines will be a blessing to other nations. This is called our **destiny**.
- It is our responsibility to seek and to understand God's specific purposes for our nation – our nation's contribution to humanity or how God wants our nation to be a blessing to other nations of the world.

### B. Understanding God's purpose for our nation

- We can begin to understand God's purpose for our nation by **studying our history**.

God did not only set beforehand our nation's purpose but He has also been preparing us for our purpose. And God has been preparing us for our purpose by being actively involved in our nation's history. By studying our history and observing God's work in the past, we will gain an understanding of God's plan and purpose for our country.

- In our study of Philippine history, we will go over the following periods:
  - Pre-colonial period
  - Spanish period 1521-1898
  - American period 1898-1946
  - Philippine Republic 1946-1972
  - 1972 (Martial Law) - to 1991

### C. Three basic attitudes needed as we study our nation's history

As we seek to understand God's purpose for our nation through our history, we need to ask God to give us a humble, thankful and repentant heart.

- **A Humble Heart** – We need a prayerful dependence upon God, recognizing that without His spirit of wisdom, understanding, and revelation it will be difficult for us to see and discern the hand of God in our nation's history and His purpose for our nation.
- **A Thankful Heart** – We need to give thanks to God for His steadfast love and all His wonderful works in our nation's history as He prepares our nation for its destiny.
- **A Repentant Heart** – As we study our nation's history, we must allow the Holy Spirit to expose our hearts. We must be willing to confess and repent of negative attitudes, ways, values and traits that we may find in ourselves as well as in the majority of the Filipinos. For if we will not do so, we will be ineffective in serving God's purposes for our generation

### D. Framework in studying our history

Jesus' parable of the wheat and the weeds (Mt 13:24-30)

- **When God is at work, the enemy is also at work.**
- **As we study our history, we should see God's work in preparing for our destiny.**
- **But we should also see what the enemy has planted to hinder the fulfillment of God's purpose for our nation.**

### E. The Pre-Colonial Period

*"From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the time set for them and the exact places where they should live" (Acts 17:26)*

- God created the LAND
- God caused the land to be inhabited by PEOPLE
- God provided natural RESOURCES in order for the people to live in the land

## 1. The LAND

- The Philippines is an archipelago made up of 7,107 islands of which 2,773 are named.
- A total land area of 300,780 square kilometers makes the Philippines a medium-sized country
  - as large as Italy
  - larger than New Zealand
  - very much larger than Britain
- The Philippines: at the 'Crossroad'  
During ancient times, the Philippines became a crossroad through which various migrating groups passed because the trade winds naturally blew towards the direction of the Philippines.
  - Located at the crossroad, the islands became a haven of traders from China, India, Japan and some Arab countries who brought their cultural, economic and technological advancements.
- Together with other Southeast Asian countries, the Philippines is at a strategic location in reaching out to 2/3 of the world's population which is in Asia.
  - Two-thirds of the world's population can be reached in about 2 to 5 hours by plane from NAIA.

## 2. The RESOURCES

The Philippines is abundantly blessed with many natural resources.

- **agricultural land** – with fertile soil and favorable climate, potential agricultural land is 18 million hectares, only 1/3 of which is currently cultivated
- **teeming biodiversity on seas and land** – Philippine coral reefs have the greatest variety of sea animals, more than any other reef system in the world. Our reefs support over 2,500 kinds of fish and 600 kinds of coral

making the Australian Great Barrier Reef not so great after all. The latter is a poor second with only 1,500 fishes and 350 corals. The vast variety of our flora too has not been depleted up to now, despite centuries of degradation.

- **energy** – Vast reserves of oil and natural gas lie underneath Philippine waters. Deuterium, the fuel of the future, is known to be underneath the Philippine Deep, the deepest part of all the oceans of the world.
- **mines and minerals** – At a time when less than half of our land had been systematically surveyed, commercial quantities of the 13 basic raw materials required by the technological age had already been discovered: bauxite, chromium, copper, ore, lead, manganese, nickel, silver, silicon, uranium, etc. Recently, the second largest gold deposit in the world was also been discovered in the eastern half of Mindanao. Gold is the most efficient conductor of electronic pulses.

## 3. The PEOPLE

### a. The land was peopled by a mixture of races

Definitely many groups of people reached the Philippines during prehistoric times. However, the movements follow a complex network of paths. People came from Southeast Asian countries, from mainland Asia (China, Vietnam), and from the southeast (Celebes, Moluccas and New Guinea). The Philippines became a crossroad through which various migrating groups such as Negritoes, Polynesians, and Indo-Malays passed or finally came to settle.

### b. Early Filipino political economy and culture, though primitive communal, was deeply rooted

Filipino political economy and culture was not only fairly well-developed by the time contacts had been established with the Europeans in the 1500s; they would serve as the firm foundation of our society up to now. Spanish chronicles, artifacts recovered from archeological diggings, and oral folklore gathered by our anthropologists attest to this observation.

- Early Filipinos were not totally pagan or animistic; they already had a concept of a Supreme Being. He came by various names—Magbabaya, Bathala, Manama, etc—but lived in the seventh realm, too far out and too awesome for early Filipinos to reach out to or attempt to know. This underscores the Filipino’s humility before the Supreme Being, as well as his/her inability to conceptualize Him on his/her own.
- When early Filipino communities went to war, it was not to expand their territories or subjugate other peoples, but to settle petty disputes among themselves. They did not have to expand their territories or subjugate other peoples because God had provided plentifully for each tribe!
- Women were equal with men for the same reason. Vegetation was rich; it was sufficient for the people’s nutrition. Horticulture was discovered early, most likely by women, because plants grew easily on fertile soil, 12 months a year. The people’s sustenance, shelter, and clothing, not needing much physical strength, could therefore be provided by women. Men needed to hunt wild boar and deer only occasionally, for special occasions. So it happened that the babaylan, who had to be a woman, grew in stature in the community, becoming not only the tribe’s healer and counselor but also its historian, epic chanter, and datu whenever the datu was disabled.

**c. Different levels of development of pre-hispanic communities**

At the time of Spanish conquest, the early Filipino communities, although similar in many ways, were not homogenous in terms of local culture and development.

- The native communities in the highlands (such as the Negritos) lived a nomadic lifestyle having no permanent settlements of their own.
- In Luzon and the Visayas, early Filipinos lived in

well-organized independent villages called *barangays*. Each *barangay* was a self-sustaining community, consisting of 30-100 families, ruled by a *datu*. Most of these *barangays* were established along the bay coasts and at the mouths of major rivers.

- The Filipino Muslim communities in the South had the most developed social organization. They reached the level of established sultanates. Muslim communities reached the Visayas and as far as Luzon, e.g., Manila, Tondo, Batangas, Pampanga, Mindoro, and Catanduanes. If the Spaniards had not conquered the Philippines, many historians believe that we could have become an Islamic nation.

**4. On Nationhood**

Precolonial societies were ripe for the Spanish conquest by 1521.

- They needed a better understanding of their Supreme Being
- They had to be united into one nation
- They had to be brought into a more modern world—
- And suffer the consequences for these.

**F. Spanish Period (1521-1898)**

**1. Spain’s contribution to the Philippines.**

For 333 years (1565-1898), the Philippines was a colony under Spain. The development of the Philippines as a nation was therefore greatly influenced by the Spanish colonizers.

**a. Spain named the archipelago.**

- With the objective of seeking spices and gold which were in great demand in Europe, Magellan sailed towards the East by going west. He reached the Philippines on March 17, 1521. Two weeks later at a place called Masao, as they celebrated a mass on the Resurrection Sunday of 1521, Magellan named the archipelago the “Archipelago of St. Lazarus”.

- Twenty-one years later (1542), Villalobos reached the Philippines and he named the Philippines “*Islas Filipinas*” in honor of Crown Prince Philip (later King Philip II). This was Anglicized to “Philippine Islands” during American colonial rule, and changed to “Republic of the Philippines” in 1946.
- Significance of our name: Through the name of our country, we can gain an understanding of God’s purpose for our nation. In the Scriptures, when a person or place is given a name, the name chosen either describes the calling or the character of that person or place.
  - The Philippines was named after King Philip II who had a missionary heart. In 1565, he was advised to give up the Philippines because of its remoteness and apparent worthlessness. His response: “If there were only one person there to keep the name of Jesus alive, I would send missionaries from Spain to spread His Gospel. Looking for mines or precious metals is not the only business of kings.”
  - Indirectly, the Philippines is named after Philip in the Bible who was known first as a faithful servant and then later as an evangelist.

From the aforementioned facts we can sense that we have a missionary calling as a nation.

- Spain also defined our country geographically.

#### **b. Spain introduced Christianity.**

- Spain’s introduction of Christianity stopped the Islamization of the islands.
- Filipino identity developed around this new religion. Religious rituals, celebrations and fiestas set the rhythm for community life and held the community together. In a way, Christianity united the Filipinos as one people

with common beliefs and interests. But this was at the expense of almost wiping out our indigenous culture.

#### **c. Spain brought in European culture and advancement.**

- The Spanish colonizers instituted a centralized form of government uniting all *barangays* under colonial rule. But this did not include the fierce Muslim communities in the south and the equally fierce natives in the Cordillera region.
- The Spanish missionaries contributed greatly to the development of the indigenous communities. Through the *Reduccion* many towns were founded, roads and bridges were constructed, new plants and animals were introduced, new industries were taught, schools and colleges were founded, and hospitals and orphanages were established. The Observatory of Manila was founded by the Jesuit missionaries.

#### **d. Spain unintentionally contributed to the development of Filipino nationalism.**

- Before 1872, the Filipinos did not have a feeling of oneness and a desire for independence. However, certain events led to the awakening of nationalism:
  - the institutionalization of crop monopoly
  - the opening of the Philippines to world trade
  - the influx of liberal ideas from Europe especially under the liberal regime of Governor-General Carlos Maria de la Torre (1869-1871)
  - the rise of the *ilustrado* class
  - the execution of the three Filipino priests Gomez, Burgos and Zamora in 1872.

#### **2. The Filipino struggle against the Spanish colonizers led to the birth of the nation**

- Throughout the three centuries of Spanish rule, almost everywhere in the country, the Filipinos opposed the imposition of Spanish sovereignty. More than a hundred major revolts took place from 1565 to 1872 all over the archipelago.

- The unjust execution of GomBurZa in 1872 served as a catalyst for the growth of a nationalist movement. It ushered in the Reform Movement which sought the assimilation of the Philippines by Spain. Although the movement failed to achieve its objective, it led to the founding of the Katipunan.
- In 1892, a national revolutionary movement, the Katipunan, was established to gain independence from Spain. This was the peak of Filipino nationalism and this period is now referred to as the Philippine Revolution of 1896 -1898. The following are some of the major events during this period:
  - The Cry of Pugadlawin – August 23, 1896
  - The Tejeros Convention on March 22, 1897 – rivalry in the revolutionary leadership
  - The execution of Bonifacio on May 10, 1897
  - The Pact of Biak-na-bato on December 15, 1897 – as part of the truce, Aguinaldo and his companions went on voluntary exile to Hong Kong after receiving the amount of 400,000 pesos.
  - The Battle of Manila Bay on May 1, 1898 – the Spanish fleet was defeated by the Americans
  - Declaration of Independence on June 12, 1898 at Kawit, Cavite where for the first time, the Philippine National flag was hoisted and the Philippine National March was played in public.

### 3. On Nationhood

- The nation was defined geographically
- The nation was given a name
- A national consciousness was formed
- The nation was born – declaration of independence, flag, anthem, constitution

### 4. The weeds of Spanish colonization

- The Spanish colonizer corrupted the indigenous Filipino's high sense of morality
- To maintain their domination, they perpetrated the ignorance and weaknesses of the Indio
- Spanish colonial structures of inequality produced a sense of inferiority and low self-worth among Filipinos

## G. American Period (1898-1946)

### 1. The Coming of the Americans to the Philippines

- Though the nation was born in 1898, its growth was stunted by the coming of the Americans on the same year.
- The Americans arrived in the Philippines on May 1, 1898 – 11 days after the declaration of the Spanish-American War. They attacked and defeated the Spanish fleet at Manila Bay. On August 18, 1898, two months after the declaration of Philippine Independence in Kawit, Cavite, Manila (the seat of Spanish rule) surrendered not to the Filipinos but to the Americans.
- The coming of the Americans to the Philippines should be seen in relation to America's rapid industrial development in the last 20 years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The industrialization resulted in an oversupply of manufactured goods and capital and the creation of finance and monopoly capital, thus creating a need for new markets. Moreover, in the 1890's the US suffered a long and severe depression. This overall economic condition led the US to the expansionist policy of acquiring colonies in different regions of the world including Asia.
- The policy of expansionism became a controversial issue in America. One group favored expansionism for the purpose of getting a market for American products and sources for needed raw materials. The other group opposed this, believing the US had no right to colonize another country and it was not provided for in their constitution. Thus, when Spain surrendered to America in August 1898, Pres. William McKinley did not know what to do with the Philippines. But the colonization of the Philippines was later sealed with the decision of Pres. McKinley and the US Senate's ratification of the Treaty of Paris.
- Pres. McKinley decided to colonize the Philippines after seeking guidance from God. He walked the floor of the

White House “night after night,” he relates. Then, one night, it dawned on him::

*“1) that we could not give them back to Spain – that would be cowardly and dishonorable; 2) that we could not turn them over to France or Germany – our commercial rivals in the Orient – that would be bad business and discreditable; 3) that we could not leave them to themselves – they were unfit for self-government – and they would soon have anarchy and misrule over there worse than Spain’s was; 4) that there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all, and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them, and by God’s grace do the very best we could by them, as our fellowmen for whom Christ also died. And then I went to bed, and went to sleep and slept soundly...”*

- On December 10, 1898 the Treaty of Paris was formally signed, ending the Spanish-American War. Included in the treaty was the ceding of the Philippines to the U.S. by Spain at the price of 20 million US dollars. At the U.S. Senate, the treaty was ratified with only one vote making the difference.

## 2. The Filipino-American War

- In his 1899 message to the U.S. Congress, Pres. McKinley issued his Benevolent Assimilation policy towards the Philippines. He ordered the Philippines to be placed under military control. Realizing the real motive of the Americans, the Filipinos fought to uphold their freedom, leading to the Filipino-American War (1899-1902).
- The Americans had all the advantages but the Filipinos fought hard. With the strong resistance given by the Filipinos, the Americans used inhuman tactics to suppress the Filipinos. To obtain information, captives were given the “water cure”; others were tied and dragged bodily behind galloping horses; others were tied up by their thumbs. Whole villages were burned or turned into reconcentration camps in order to cut supplies to Filipino soldiers.

- Before the war ended in 1902, a writer of “Life” Magazine wrote that “more than 4,000 Americans, some 20,000 Filipino soldiers and guerillas, and more than 200,000 civilians had died” (1:5:50). General Bell estimated that one-sixth of the population of Luzon had died because of the war.
- To further suppress Filipino nationalism, the Philippine Commission passed the Sedition Law on November 4, 1901; the Reconcentration Act on June 1, 1903; and the Flag Law which prohibited the display of the Philippine flag from 1907 to 1919.

## 3. Campaign for independence

Although the Filipinos were defeated during the Filipino-American War, the Filipinos did not give up their quest for independence. They continued to openly voice out their sentiments against US aggression. Twelve Independence missions were sent to the US from 1919-1934. In 1934, the US Congress passed the Tydings-McDuffie Law which was accepted by the Philippine Legislature on May 1, 1934. This was also known as the Philippine Independence Law, as it provided for a ten-year transition period under the Philippine Commonwealth. The plan was disrupted by the Japanese Occupation of the Philippines (1942-1945). On July 4, 1946, the Republic of the Philippines was inaugurated.

## 4. American Contributions to the Philippines

Immediately after their military conquest, the Americans faithfully carried out their colonial policy “to develop, to civilize, to educate and to train in the science of self government” the Filipinos. For nearly five decades, the U.S. Americanized the nation:

- The Americans trained the Filipinos in the democratic form of political governance.
- Public education was established. In 1901, 600 volunteer American teachers, the “Thomasites”, came to the Philippines.
- The English language was extensively propagated in

the country, making the Philippines the third largest English-speaking nation in the world today.

- Public health was promoted, leading to the wiping out of epidemics of cholera, small pox and bubonic plague.
- Major improvements were made in transportation and communication facilities. Roads, bridges and railway systems were constructed; telephone, radio and wireless telegraph services and air transportation were introduced.
- Biblical Christianity was propagated. In August 1898, immediately upon the arrival of American forces in Manila, two Protestant services led by American chaplains were conducted at Intramuros. Missionaries began to arrive mainly during 1899-1905 (Presbyterians, Methodists, Episcopalians, Alliance, etc). Other evangelical missions also came during the 1920's and 1930's (Assemblies of God, Four-Square, Fundamentalist Baptists, etc.).

## 5. Nationhood

- One national government was established throughout the whole archipelago.
- The 1935 Philippine Constitution, which established governance by Filipinos, was approved.
- The Philippine presidency was established

## 6. The weeds of American rule

- American military conquest and suppressive laws subverted the full growth of nationalism.
- The public school system induced Filipinos to regard the American system as "superior."
- Filipinos, in learning to become avid consumers of American products, learned to despise their own.

## H. Japanese Interregnum (1942-1946)

- **The war was a horrifying time, especially for women and children.** The culture that the Japanese brought to our shores was both strange and traumatic to us. It was not in our democratic nature to kowtow to other people, even if they were our superiors, but we had to bow to them at checkpoints and everywhere we met them. It was also not

in our democratic nature to use women as vessels for men's comfort. Many of our children and teenagers, and even men and women, were horrified and shocked beyond imagination to see their countrymen walking to the river with bayongs on their heads, these heads to be cut off with samurai swords while running; the bodies would keep on running, though the heads had already been severed. Some saw babies thrown into the air, then caught with the razor-sharp tips of a samurai sword. This lack of respect for people, indeed this carnage, was traumatic for the generation that lived through it. Such were the tares the enemy planted in the minds of our people during the Japanese times.

- **The Japanese did take pains at least in Manila to encourage rediscovery of our own culture, something our two previous colonizers never did.** But such a rediscovery was limited to a few of our artists.
- **We had won the war against the Japanese when the Americans came in 1945,** but we welcomed them with open arms, perhaps because they treated us so differently from the way the Japanese treated us. In the end, we forgot that we ourselves had won the war, and made of the Americans our heroes, our new idols. When MacArthur said "I shall return" and fulfilled his promise, he became another idol in our pantheon of gods. We forgot that it was Jesus Christ who was supposed to return to us, not a mere man.

## I. Philippine Republic (1946-1972)

### 1. The Nature of Our 'Independence' During the Philippine Republic

The US fulfilled its promise of granting independence to the Philippines, as provided for in the Tydings-McDuffie Law of 1934. But we **did not** proclaim our independence. The U.S. colonizers proclaimed it for us. "A nation is born. Long live the Republic of the Philippines! May God bless and prosper the Filipino people, keep them safe and free," declared High Commissioner McNutt. It was not the same for other countries: the U.S. formally declared its independence from Britain; after World War II, Asian countries like India,

Indonesia, and Burma declared their independence. The deeper question is: were we truly independent during the Philippine Republic?

- **Economically** – After the war, we were begging for financial assistance considering that our country was one of the countries in Asia most devastated by the war. Our economy was in ruins and our government was bankrupt. The War Damage Act was passed by the U.S. Congress and \$620 million was appropriated for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the Philippines. However, it was only to take effect upon fulfillment of the following conditions:

- Amending the Philippine Constitution to grant parity rights to the Americans. The amendment gave them the right to dispose, exploit, develop, and utilize our agricultural, forest, mineral, and marine resources and to operate public utilities. The 1935 Constitution gave this right only to Filipinos and to corporations that were 60% Filipino owned.
- Agreement to the Bell Trade Relations Act providing free trade relations for eight years between the U.S. and the Philippines until 1954 (with quota); after which, goods coming from the Philippines and the U.S. would be taxed with a 5% tariff increase until the 100% tariff would be reached in 1974.

Given our situation, we had no other choice but to accept these impositions. In 1954, the Bell Trade Agreement was revised and the Laurel-Langley Agreement took its place. This new agreement provided for the gradual abolition of free trade between the U.S. and the Philippines (1956-1974), but it also broadened the parity rights of the Americans to many other business activities.

- **Militarily** – On March 14, 1947, the Military Bases Agreement was signed, giving the U.S. the right to an unlimited number of bases in the Philippines for 99 years as well as the enjoyment of extra-territorial rights. Initial negotiations on this Agreement were made in the 1950's. In 1966, a final agreement was made reducing the number of years to 25. However, since the count started

in 1966, the U.S. had already gained 44 years (19 years from 1947-1966 and 25 years from 1966-1991).

- **Politically** – Because of our economic and military relations with the U.S., the Philippine presidents during the Philippine Republic most often yielded to U.S. pressure because resisting would mean risking their Malacañang positions.

Note: The Philippines gained its independence in 1946 but it still has to gain its sovereignty. The issue of national sovereignty is vital to the fulfillment of a nation's destiny. A nation under foreign domination – whether economic, military, or political – will find it very difficult to pursue its destiny.

## 2. American Tares in the Philippine Republic

During the period of the Philippine Republic, the U.S. dominated the Filipino national consciousness to the point that the U.S. became the only other nation that mattered. Although the Philippines was no longer a colony of the U.S., it became an economic and cultural appendage of America.

- Most of our imports were American consumer goods; at one point the Philippine government had to impose controls in order to stop the run-away purchase of non-essential goods to save the country's dollar reserves from being dissipated.
- The Filipino elite engaged in the export of primary agricultural products (sugar, coconut, abaca, etc.) had only one target market: the U.S.
- The U.S. was the largest source of foreign investments. Americans owned majority of our industries - coconut, sugar, cordage factories, consumer products, and three of the four oil refineries. There were times that the gross sales of U.S. multinational companies – General Motors, Ford, Unilever, Proctor and Gamble – exceeded our country's GNP.
- The big landowners, who were part of the political elite, supported American interests. They benefited from the agricultural export economy, an appendage of the US industrial economy.
- In the area of foreign policy, the Philippines consistently

aligned itself with the U.S. position.

- It can be said that the U.S. became a national obsession. Filipinos gave preference to anything that was American, to the point that many Filipinos dreamed of migrating to the U.S. This was seen in the steady flow of migrants to the U.S. and later on the massive migration of 1965 when the U.S. relaxed its quota for Asian immigrants.
- One of the things we learned from America was its individualism, at the expense of the bayanihan spirit which the Lord planted in our hearts as part of our purpose as a nation.

### 3. Resurgence of Filipino Nationalism

In 1946 the slogan was “Welcome, Victory, Joe” but in 1971 the slogan was “Yankee, Go Home”. In a period of 25 years, the Filipino attitude towards the American changed drastically. What caused this change in attitude?

- In the 1950s, Claro M. Recto ardently campaigned for nationalism. It was Recto who refuted the U.S. when it claimed ownership of the military bases. Recto pointed out that American ownership would impair the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Philippines making her independence “incomplete.”
- In the 1960s, anti-U.S. demonstrations began to increase, at first because of the 1964 killing of two Filipinos by American guards at Clark Air Base which brought to 32 the number of Filipinos shot dead, then later because of the US war in Vietnam.
- Many Filipino youth also became aware of the one-sided economic relationship between the Philippines and the U.S. They began to protest against any extension of the Parity Rights for the Americans which were to end in 1974.

### 4. Missionaries, Revival and Christian activism

- Among the U.S. troops who came to liberate the Philippines in 1945 were evangelical Christians, many of whom later returned as missionaries. After the Communist take-over of China in 1949 many of the expelled Protestant missions started new work in the Philippines. From 1948 to 1960, more than 20 new

evangelical missions arrived in the Philippines (Southern Baptists, OMF, Conservative Baptists, General Conference of Baptists, etc)

- During the time of student demonstrations in the late 1960s, spiritual revival began to occur amongst the youth in campuses and universities in Manila. Part of this revival movement was the Jesus People.
- The new surge of nationalism affected the Churches in many ways.
  - in the Protestant churches, a movement for autonomy from the mother church in the USA occurred
  - among the Roman Catholic clergy, a revival of the Filipinization movement took place
  - Many Catholic and Protestant organizations participated in the nationalist movements for social change. Others who opted for a more radical position organized the Christians for National Liberation

### 5. Nationhood

- The resurgence of nationalism was part and parcel of the development of Filipino nationhood.

### J. Martial Law to Restoration of Democracy (1972-1991)

#### 1. The Martial Law years: 1972-1981

During the second term of Pres. Ferdinand Marcos (1969), there was an economic recession, rampant graft and corruption, and a widening gap between the rich and the poor. These were some of the issues that led to widespread student demonstrations in the streets of Manila.

On September 21, 1972, Pres. Marcos placed the entire Philippines under Martial Law. This was in response to several crises which threatened the country: the Plaza Miranda bombing, violent student demonstrations, the capture of the M/V *Karagatan*, among others. Some highlights of the Martial Law years:

- Widespread human rights violations – an unprecedented number of political prisoners, cases of torture and salvaging
- Conjugal dictatorship of the Marcoses
- Crony capitalism, dependence on foreign creditors (IMF-WB) and investors
- In 1983, foreign debt reached \$25 billion and 70% of the population was living below the poverty line
- Spread of nationalism and the growth of CPP-NPA forces and the MNLF
- Filipino Diaspora – in the early 1970s the unstable economic and political situation and the demand for labor in the Arab Gulf states triggered the march of migrant workers from the Philippines to countries other than the U.S. In the early 1990s the Filipino diaspora, composed of migrants and temporary overseas workers, was around 6 million. Today it is 8 million.

## 2. Restoration of Democracy

- 1983 assassination of Ninoy Aquino
- February 7, 1986 - Snap Elections imposed by the IMF as a condition for loans
- February 22-26, 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution
- Cory Aquino Administration (1986-1992) and her policy of reconciliation
- Ratification of the 1986 Constitution
- Coups and calamities (Central Luzon earthquake, July 1990; supertyphoons Ruping, November 1990 and Uring, November 1991; Mt Pinatubo eruption, June 1991, preceded the breakthroughs in many areas in the life of our nation.

## 3. 1991— the Year of Breakthrough

- The U.S. bases were finally dismantled after the Mt. Pinatubo eruption (although before that, the Senate had already rejected the renewal of the bases treaty). As a result, the Philippines gained complete territorial sovereignty.
- A split in the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) occurred, leading to its decline and fragmentation.

- In the Born-again churches, denominational barriers began to be broken down, leading to unity, e.g., formation of pastoral movements in different localities and large gatherings of Born-again Christians for prayer.
- Renewal and charismatic communities in the Roman Catholic Church gained strength especially amongst the lay people, e.g, Couples for Christ, Life in the Spirit Seminars, El Shaddai, Catholic Charismatic Renewal.

## 4. On Nationhood

- EDSA People Power became a source of national pride.
- Complete territorial sovereignty was attained although not economically and politically.
- The Philippines, after 400+ years, is still considered a young nation.
- Nationalism is rekindled.
- But corruption remains unabated, spreading to all sectors and classes, and threatening to destroy the nation.

## 5. Today's tares

- Corruption and lawlessness are on the rise.
- Aren't these tares planted by enemy, to thwart God's plan for the nation?
- And isn't it our duty as Christians to cut off these tares, bind them, and burn them?

## I. Summary:

- Does God have a plan for the Philippines?
- Based on our history, what do you sense is God's purpose for our country?
- What do you see are significant events in relation to God's purpose for our nation?
- How is God preparing the Filipinos for his purposes?
- How much has God invested in the Philippines? With God's investments in our country, do you think He has abandoned us?
- As Filipino Christians, what do you think is our role in the

fulfillment of God's purpose for our nation?

**J. Response:**

- Give thanks to God for his plans and purposes for the Philippines.
- Give thanks to God for all His wonderful works in each historical period.
- Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good. His love endures forever for us Filipinos.

**II. Love for Our Country – the Philippines**

**A. Serving God's purposes for our nation**

***“For when David had served God's purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep.” (Acts 13:36)***

- David understood God's purpose for his generation.
- David did not only understand God's purpose for his generation, he also served God's purpose in it.
- Now that we have gained an understanding of God's purpose for our nation, we must now also seek to faithfully serve God's purpose for our nation until we see its fulfillment.

**B. Love of Country: a necessary quality so that we may serve God's purpose for our nation**

- It would be very difficult for us to serve God's purpose for our nation if we do not have a deep love for our country. It is the love for this country that will cause us to overcome every obstacle, every hindrance and every opposing force to the fulfillment of God's purposes for our nation.
- This is love of country: *“This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.” (1 John 3:16).*
  - We ought to lay down our lives for our countrymen. We ought to lay down our lives for the 80 million Filipinos.
  - To lay down our lives for the Filipino people is to live not

for ourselves but for our countrymen.

- To lay down our lives for the Filipino people is to look not only after our own interests, but after the interests of the Filipino people as a whole.
- To lay down our lives for the Filipino people is to share our resources, skills, abilities and talents for the good of the Filipino people.
- To lay down our lives for the Filipino people is to willingly give ourselves - our very lives - for this generation and for the next generation of Filipinos.

- Loving our country is basically obeying the command of Jesus *to love our neighbor as ourselves*. Because when we love our country, we are loving 80 million Filipinos.

**C. The Lack of Love for our Country**

**The manifestations and root of our lack of love for our country:**

- a. *‘walang pagpapahalaga sa sariling atin at mababang pagtingin sa sarili’* (low self-worth)

For many years of colonization, our colonizers did not recognize nor give value to our indigenous Filipino culture. They completely neglected our roots and instead transplanted them with their own. We therefore began to reject our roots, preferring anything foreign.

Furthermore, the two world empires (Spain and America) that ruled us developed in us a 'slave mentality' – allowing others to rule and take care of us. We began to look at ourselves as 'second class' and anything that was ours as inferior. Consequently, we looked on the foreigners as superior. We developed an attitude of dependence upon them – to Madre España and later to Uncle Sam.

- b. *‘pagtuon sa sariling kapakanan, hindi sa kapakanan ng lahat’* (individualistic attitude)

The Spanish colonizers destroyed our communal culture, replacing it with a feudal set up; the Americans imparted to us a highly individualistic culture. As a result, we are

most of the time focused and concerned with our own interests rather than that of the common good.

Even in relation to the Gospel, much emphasis has been given to the need for personal salvation, while the issues of justice, mercy, socio-economic and political concerns have been rejected or relegated as matters of minor importance.

c. *'kawalan ng malasakit dahil maaabala/ walang mapapala'* (apathy)

Early Filipinos had the common attitude of *'pagkamatulungin sa kapwa'* but this too was affected by history. Spanish colonizers took advantage of Filipinos being *'matulungin'* when they subjected them to hard and forced labor in the construction of roads, bridges, churches, forts, etc. The Filipino attitude of *'pagkamatulungin'* became negative in the sense that he would only help if he could get something in return or only to the point that it is convenient. And he would only involve himself in issues that directly affected him.

Today, apathy may be a result of seeing so much poverty and suffering that our hearts have begun to harden and we have accepted these things as normal. And because we are overwhelmed by the magnitude of the problem, we feel we cannot do much to solve it and therefore, we opt not to do anything.

d. *'paghamak sa sariling bayan'* (despising the land)

Because of the many years of American domination over the Filipino consciousness, the U.S. became a national obsession especially during the latter half of the 20th century. The height of this was the 'dream' of many Filipinos to leave the Philippines and go to America. Today, because of the prevailing hopelessness over our situation and high unemployment, one out of four Filipinos would leave for abroad, given the opportunity.

### 3. The Challenge to Love our Country

We need to ask God to give us His love for the Philippines. Only with a God-given love for our country will we be able to pray with intensity and with persistency for our nation; only with a God-given love for our country will we be able to change our society; only with a God-given love for our country will we be able to willingly give ourselves for 80 million Filipinos until we see the fulfillment of God's purposes for our nation.

### 5. Response

- Repent and ask God to forgive us for our lack of love for our country (our apathy, lack of concern, not valuing what is ours, despising our land, *'ningas cogon'* in praying for our nation, etc.).
- Release forgiveness to all those who have oppressed and exploited our country, foreign or Filipino.
- Open your heart to God and ask Him to fill you with His love for our country, the Philippines.
- Willingly offer your life to God as a living sacrifice for the fulfillment of His purposes for our nation.

## III. Our Journey Towards National Transformation

### A. The Three Major Stages of Our Journey

It will be beneficial for us to realize as early as possible that:

1. What we will go through together is a journey. It is a continuing process of transforming the nation so that it will be in a much better position to pursue its destiny.
2. Our commitment is not to an event but to a long journey towards the fulfillment of God's purposes for our nation.

With this understanding, we will have a long-term perspective of things. The following are the three major stages of our journey:

- Stage I: Birthing the nation
- Stage II: Building the nation
- Stage III: Sending the nation

## **B. The End in View: Sending the Nation as a Light to the World**

We have seen in history that for the past 600 years, God has been preparing the Philippines to be a Light to Asia and beyond. Bringing the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to Asia and beyond is one of the major ways in which God wants us to be a blessing to other nations. This is our major contribution to humanity – “*sangkatauhan*”. This is the final stage of our journey, to send the nation as a Light to the world. To see this fulfilled is to see thousands of Filipino Christians being sent to evangelize many countries in Asia and the world, and to see the thousands of migrant Filipino workers scattered around the world become powerful witnesses of the Lord Jesus Christ.

## **C. The Medium and Long Term: Building the Nation in Righteousness**

At present, our nation is in shame and is an object of scorn by many nations because of the many problems persistently plaguing our country – graft and corruption, dirty politics, destabilization plots, kidnapping, bank robberies, terrorism, etc. To become effective ambassadors of Christ to the world, we need to regain our dignity as a people and the respect of other nations. This means active participation in nation building until we see righteousness and justice flourish in the land. At this stage of our journey, we will concentrate in advancing the Kingdom of Christ until it invades and transforms every aspect of Filipino life: government, church, business, agriculture, education, entertainment, family, health etc. This stage will start after the May 2004 Elections; the first ten (10) years will require continued vigilance in prayer and diligence in working towards national transformation.

## **D. The Short Term: Birthing the Purposes of God for this Nation**

Of the three stages of our journey, this is the most crucial and critical. This will determine if God’s purposes for our nation will either be birthed – meaning they will begin to come to pass – or aborted – meaning they will be delayed for many years. In September 2003, the Intercessors for the Philippines (IFP)

sensed that: “the nation today is facing a critical crossroad towards its destiny. Will it be destruction or deliverance? Will it be judgment or mercy? The nation hangs in a precarious balance.” We need to travail for our nation’s destiny for nine (9) months (from September 2003 until the elections in May 2004). In this first stage of our journey. Our efforts will be geared towards mobilizing God’s people for prayer that is united, sustained, escalating, visible and specific to each stage of the struggle. As a nation we need to cry out to God, be on our knees and plead for mercy, with the hope that He will cause righteousness to arise upon our nation.

## **E. Generating a National Movement for Righteousness and Transformation (N-MRT)**

The movement that we want to generate is a **National Movement for Righteousness and Transformation (N-MRT).**

It will be nationwide.  
It will be a movement, not an organization, drawing in the largest numbers possible. It will be a force meant to goad the population, and its leaders, towards righteousness in the eyes of God.

It will impel the whole of Philippine society towards social transformation for the fulfillment of God’s purposes for the nation.

The name of the movement is **The National Movement for Righteousness and Transformation (N-MRT).**

It is the National MRT,  
Traversing the nation,  
Providing spiritual transport for God’s plan for the Filipino nation,  
Cutting through the moral and spiritual congestion that besets the land.

**1. Our Clarion Call:**

“If MY PEOPLE WHO ARE CALLED BY MY NAME, will humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their evil ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” (2 Chron 7:14)

Who are those who should humble themselves,  
and pray and seek His face,  
and turn from their wicked ways,  
so that He may hear from heaven,  
and forgive their sin  
and heal their land?

Who are  
THE PEOPLE WHO ARE CALLED BY HIS NAME?

He being Christ,  
they must be the Body of Christ.  
It is the Body of Christ  
that must travail for the nation.

**2. The Urgency of the Situation:**

“The nation today is facing a critical crossroad towards its destiny. Will it be destruction or deliverance? Will it be judgement or mercy? The nation hangs in a precarious balance.”

*IFP Philippine Prayer Alert  
October-November 2003*

**3. Our Vision:**

To fulfill God’s purposes for the nation

**4. Our Mission:**

- a. To birth the purposes of God for this nation
- b. To build the nation in righteousness
- c. To send the nation as a Light to the world

**5. Our Goal:**

To be a praying nation under the governance of Christ

**6. Our Two-Fold Strategy:  
Prayer in Action, Action in Prayer**

**Prayer in Action:** Prayer rallies that:

- a. unite the Body of Christ,
- b. are visible to the general public,
- c. are sustained,
- d. escalate from church level to the national level, and
- e. advance specific prayers asking for palpable answers from God at each phase.

**Action in Prayer:** As God’s people gather in prayer, the Lord Jesus Christ will give instructions and guidance on how and what actions should be undertaken so that:

- a. every yoke of oppression will be broken;
- b. this nation will be built in righteousness;
- c. every aspect of Philippine society will be transformed.

**7. Our Movement:**

The force at the core moving our cause forward is  
Jesus Christ.

The embodiment of Jesus Christ’s purposes on earth  
is the Body of Christ.

This includes all churches and individuals  
who believe that Jesus Christ is their Lord and Savior.

We rely on the Body of Christ, therefore,  
to be the core of the  
**National Movement  
for Righteousness and Transformation (N-MRT).**

To concretize this core, we are putting up  
a Coalition of Christian Forces.

These are Christian organizations,  
mainly youth organizations,  
which accept that love of Jesus  
translates concretely as love of country  
chosen, *hinirang*, by God  
to be a Light to the World.

The Coalition of Christian Forces that will be established through  
the groundwork of its Provisional Coordinating Committee  
will represent the force at the core moving our cause forward.

It will, however, aim to draw into its locus all righteous forces in  
the land, thereby pooling the resources of the best in the  
population towards the spiritual battle against evils stalking  
the land.

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