

## Reaction to Jalahuddin de los Santos's Paper

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*Asst. Commissioner Mastura:* Until now Prof. de los Santos has not changed from the idealist that he is. His paper poses the challenge of the revivalist Islamic movement throughout the world which makes a good starting point of discussion for the Southern Philippines separatist groups, including the MNLF. On social change and the return to proper social order—this has to be examined in relation to Islam which has been used as the battlecry of separatist groups like the MNLF, for such movements as the MIM or for such revivalist groups as the Ansar el Islam. Islam is the most prostituted religion because, most of the time, Islam is used for certain ends. The Professor's paper pointed out the means through which *jihad* would have been more fruitful if it had not been obsessed with political power.

As to the paper's warning against using western models, the political structure of the Philippines is modeled after that of the western world. So, how does traditional society move into a structure that is precisely western since the strategy of the model is in itself a politico-social order, a western orientation? Did not Cicero say that we can "imply participation in political power," hence, the obsession of the group such as the MNLF for political power? The speaker missed the point that the Philippines is basically a political-oriented, ethnic-oriented society. The paper grouped together the many ethnic groups such as the Maranao, Maguindanao and Tausogs into one; it missed the point of the variety of demands by the distinct groups. The paper is nationalist in approach. The Muslim groups are supposed to owe national loyalty, so how can they relate themselves to the separatists' very political framework? Are there personalities of the qualities of Rizal, Mabini or of the President of the Philippines who could evoke such kind of respect identified with the national leadership? Has the government been responsive to the demands of the Muslim minority group? All the state has done is to look at the various conferences, various lectures and various papers which have been read about the Southern Philippines problems—for instance, the demand for codification of Muslim Laws or demand of

autonomy. How has the minority group, say, the Maranao, the Maguindanao or the Tausog, responded positively to the government effort, to the government system and structure, in its effort to pull them back into the national body politic? These questions ought to be answered. The paper is quite good especially on the point of how we can make use of the Islamic point of view in approaching the problems in Southern Philippines.

### Rebuttal

*Professor de los Santos:* As to the paucity of the materials in our library, the problem is even bigger than that. Muslims never appreciate the Muslim social devices or social mobilization although they belong to the intellectual reservoir of Islam. As an example, in the conduct of group activities and in social mobilization, successful political movements in non-Islamic communities are very political in orientation. They have resorted to certain devices. Every time the Chinese in Eastern China meet to discuss problems, they resort to reading the Red book and the quotations of Chairman Mao. This is their standard reaction. This is not new in the world of Islam. We do not have the quotations. We have to read the sayings of the Prophet which he got from the *sunna*. They go around consulting the verses in the *sunna*. Now, the people, especially those in the higher levels, are ignorant of the existence of such valuable social devices. Even in the educational activities of the movement in the South, models that were used are not at all Islamic. The lack of devices for social organization is deplorable. In praying, Muslims are required to pray five times a day. It does not mean that Allah will be happier with them compared to those who pray only 3 times a day. No! There is a social consequence. Everytime you pray, you are aware that you are a member of the Muslim community and if you are a member, you have an obligation to discharge your duty because Islam, in a bigger sense, is a society of people who are under covenant to perform definite obligations to Allah. He feels Islam has become a very important cornerstone in the foundation of Philippine national unity. In fact, the President made this an international commitment in the Menado communique. It is a challenge especially to the Muslims to try as much as possible to exhaust the doctrines in the reservoir of Islam.

*Assistant Commissioner Mastura:* As to Idealism and Realism, Muslims must adhere to Islam. Islam is not an ideal that cannot be

reached. There is simplicity in Islam and that is the beauty of it. It is easy to understand its structural form so that the people can easily understand it. The ideals of a Marxist dream will take a long time to achieve, while insofar as the ideals of Islam are concerned, the chances of achieving these, if people perform the norm of Muslims, would be very easy. The "cell" is an example of the social structure of Islam, which is a group of people linked together by adherence and belief, the same political philosophy and the same world view. In Islam, family is also a group of people joined together by blood relation. There is no priesthood in Islam because the father is supposed to be the Imam in the family. Every family has a political officer; he is the father and he is looked up to as the possessor of the genealogy—Pansaka Islamia as well as the head by virtue of his blood, connected with the head of his family. Many fathers in the Muslim family have forgotten their role as man. Many Muslims are not making use of those possibilities that are opened to men with their hesitant approach to the situation instead of realizing the importance of all the Islamic institutions. Non-Islamic models are not totally bad as Muslims are taught how to do the process of selection. Islam is so open-minded, neither concerned with logistics, nor is it compartmentalized. Also, Muslims do not have the monopoly of knowledge. The starting point of development is the human being.

Politically, ethnic-oriented thinking is a very strong barrier to our development along Muslim lines. For so long as we have the mentality of a Moro, it would be very, very hard to develop along Islamic lines. In so far as the Islamic line is concerned, more liberation means death of a Moro and the birth of the Muslim. 'In the beginning there should be Islam,' says the Resallah. Loyalty to the Ummah is loyalty to Islam. That loyalty should not be so narrow as to end only without followers or respective groups. It is possible to be loyal to Islam and at the same time to be loyal to the country and community. For as long as the national government does not pass on the way of the practice of Islam and allow us to practice and develop along our lines, it becomes our obligation as a minority within the non-Muslim majority countries to respect and to obey the law of the land and to live in the country, not as objects of charity or parts of the national burden, but as contributing members to the society.

Regarding nationalism, there will be a little bias in this paper because of my affiliation as a Muslim. The Muslims become very good Muslims in a situation where the national government not only

tolerates Islam but accepts Islam as a strong foundation of the country. We can as a people contribute to political integration. The President has made it an international commitment to recognize Islam if we are for national unity. There are 850 million Muslims all over the world; more than 1/2 or more than 50 per cent live in the minority in non-Muslim majority countries. If we compare our situation with the situation of the rest of the countries, about 18 million in China, about 50 million in Soviet Russia and Central Asia, we will find out that Philippines is the only Christian majority country that has come out with a treatment of its minority very much better than the Christians in other countries.

In Burma, for example, the Muslims have been denied even the right to go to Hadj since 1963. We should also agree that part of the delay in the development of this part of the country was due to the fact that a movement was born in the South. If that movement was not born in the South, I think the development of tolerant attitudes to the Muslims would not be fast.

Insofar as Al Akbar and Jihad are concerned, the highest form of Jihad only we can perform. It is directed against the weakness in our society, the political institution — the corruption in our society and the indebtedness of our society. It is a question of Al Jihad Al Akbar in our government. We can combine all our resources and look deeply inside ourselves, purely ourselves, using all the devices that would be handed down to us from generation to generation since the Ressalah came to us.