

INCOME REDISTRIBUTION THROUGH LAND REFORM*

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The Philippine Statistical Association (PSA) deserves congratulations for devoting the theme of its present convention to the proposition, "Towards a more equitable distribution of income in the Philippines."

For there is no problem in the Philippines today that cries aloud for immediate solution than the problem of bridging the yawning gap that separates our long-suffering people into the haves and the have-nots, into the extremely opulent and the extremely impoverished, into the very rich and the very poor. The prevailing maldistribution of income in the Philippines, which has aggravated through the years, is so serious that it demands no less than the collective efforts of all of us if we are to endure as a people.

No country can long survive being half-slave and half-free. This has been the inexorable verdict of history since time began. Once the downtrodden become fully convinced that they are being systematically and deliberately left out in the course of social progress, then they take the only means available to them to seek redress for the unrighted wrongs done against them.

No less than President Ferdinand E. Marcos has emphasized the seriousness of this problem when he said that the Philippines is literally sitting at the top of a social volcano that may explode any time, writing *finis* to everything that we and our ancestors have laboriously built for us and for those who will follow after us. If this cataclystic disaster befalls us,

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then we shall have nobody else to blame but ourselves for our stubborn refusal to heed the handwriting on the wall while there is still time.

It is in recognition of the urgency of this all-embracing problem that the Four-Year Development Plan for FY 1974-1977 revolves around the proposition that everybody in the economy must both participate and share in the country's progress — it is not enough that the Gross National Product or GNP rises steadily over a given period; the growth of the economy acquires relevance and meaning only when the fruits of such growth are enjoyed to the fullest extent by the broadest mass of the population, especially those who are at the base of our social pyramid. Economic growth must have as its basic goal the equitable distribution of the social income for the good of all, for only thus could we succeed in bringing about a more just and enduring social order in our economy.

Basic Thesis

The very enlightening and informative paper of Dr. Tito A. Mijares presents the rather discouraging pattern of income maldistribution in the Philippines based on the survey rounds on family income and expenditures conducted by the Bureau of the Census and Statistics in 1956-57, 1961, 1965, and 1970-71. This paper documents a generally held belief that in the Philippines the overwhelming majority of the people belong to the low-income group. To be more specific, the four survey rounds show that some 70 per cent of the total population belong to the low-income groups and only a tiny elite representing less than 10 per cent of the population belong to the top income bracket. Aggravating this maldistribution of income is the dismaying fact that the bulk of the poor income families are found in the rural areas while the high income earners almost invariably live in the urban areas. This implies that what is passed on as the performance of the Philippine economy in the field of economic and social development has been confined mainly in the urban centers where only a tiny portion of our population live, leaving almost undeveloped the rural areas where the broad mass of our people live. This further implies the immense disparity in levels of development between the urban and the rural areas. Stated positively, this indicates the need for reforms in the rural areas.

On the other hand, the very scholarly paper of Director Ruben F. Trinidad dissects how the tax policies of the govern-

ment affect the distribution of income. The Trinidad paper bewails the regressive nature of our tax system, the widening scope of tax exemption privileges extended to business firms as they erode the tax base and thus adversely affect tax collections, the continued exemption of certain segments of our population from taxation, our low effective tax rate compared with other countries, and the extent of tax evasion in the country as among the major causes of the government's inability to optimize the use of taxes as a means of bringing about a more equitable distribution of income in the country.

Both papers are one in saying that income maldistribution in varying dimensions and magnitude exists in the Philippines.

The present paper differs substantially from the two cited papers. It expounds the idea that maldistribution of income in the Philippines is but the effect of a far deeper cause, namely, the concentration of property ownership in the hands of a few, and that the most pervasive of this property ownership is land ownership.

Stated in nutshell form, *the monopolistic concentration of huge landholdings in the hands of a few in the Philippines, dating back since the heyday of the obnoxious ecomienda system, has been the main, if not the sole, cause of income maldistribution in the country*, obstructing, as it does, not only the establishment of a truly egalitarian and just society where our people will no longer be divided into the *exploitive* and the *exploited* classes but, equally important, it has been the major impediment to the overall growth and development of the economy.

It is the essentially feudalistic nature of our predominantly agrarian economy, more than anything else, that has hindered our progress as a nation, contaminating, as it does, practically all the sectors of the economy to virtual stagnation or standstill. Whatever gains or progress the economy has attained all these years have been achieved *despite, not because*, of this pervasive concentration of landholdings in the hands of a few who constituted the oligarchial class in the country and who, only until very recently, had been very articulate and instrumental in the formulation of the country's national policies.

Thus, *it is the landed aristocracy, as a class, that has obstructed and retarded Philippine progress. It is this class, and*

the archaic ideas that they still entertain, that has nailed down the country to national poverty and underdevelopment. Such ideas are best illustrated in their resistance to the mere suggestion, or even mention, of land reform.

As this paper shall attempt to show, it is in areas where tenancy in all its form and guises is most widespread or pronounced that income maldistribution results as a matter of inevitable certainty.

It shall be the burden of this paper to prove that the only permanent solution to the establishment of a truly egalitarian and progressive society in this country is through land reform.

Importance of Land

Land is concededly man's most important resource. It is from land that everything emanates, and it is to land that everything will eventually go. Land is the source of all wealth, for there is nothing in this world that is not ultimately derivable from land. Even man came from land, and it is to land that he will soon go. Land is the mainspring of all human activities, be these economic, social, or political. Land provides all industries in the economy the basic raw materials needed in production, and the food requirements of the population.

Land as the source of all wealth determines not only the relations between man and land, but, more important, between man and man. Such relations define the social, political, economic — and even cultural — relations among people in society. In countries where land ownership is more or less evenly distributed, the people are more free and less shackled by the endless spectre of looking for their daily bread. More important, the social wealth and income are more or less equitably distributed among the population; there are no masters and slaves; no exploiters and exploited. In such societies, the people live in harmony with one another, and tensions between economic classes are virtually non-existent. In fact, it is pointless to speak of economic classes with irreconcilable class interests in such societies because such economic classes simply do not exist.

Thus, the equitable distribution of land ownership results in a more equitable sharing of the national output and a faster rate of development for the economy.

The opposite condition prevails in countries where ownership of vast tracts of lands is monopolized by a tiny few. *Here ownership of land invariably and inescapably leads to ownership of man by man.* The monopoly control exercised by the landed aristocracy on their lands enables them to monopolize wealth and power — using wealth to entrench themselves in power and power to enable them to amass more wealth. As a consequence of the tremendous wealth and power that they wield, they easily make their voice felt to the higher councils of government in the formulation and implementation of policies.

Furthermore, the anomaly that such monopolized land ownership spawn, namely, absentee ownership and widespread tenancy, tie the farming population to the nail-cross of abject poverty, abet and perpetuate the already acute maldistribution of wealth and income, and prevents the economy from attaining a faster tempo of national development.

The Agricultural Economy: An Overview

Despite all attestations to the contrary, one cannot dispute the simple fact that contemporary Philippine society is basically and fundamentally agrarian in character. In fact, it has always been so since the dawn of civilization. As of the 1970 population census, some 25 million or roughly 68.2 per cent of the country's estimated population of 36.7 million comprised the rural population and only less than 12 million or a little more than 30 per cent lived in the urban and quasi-urban areas. Available statistics show that as of the same period in review agriculture supplied some 58 per cent or almost three-fifths of the total labor force, accounted for about 36 per cent or more than a third of the Net Domestic Product (NDP) supplied some 76 per cent or more than three-fourths of the food consumed and raw materials needed by the manufacturing and processing industries, and contributed about 62 per cent of the country's total export earnings. All of our ten principal exports are basically agricultural products. During the last quarter of the present century, the agricultural sector contributed about 36.4 per cent of the nation's entire domestic output.

So dominant is the agricultural sector in the overall profile of the Philippine economy that there is virtually no industry or economic activity in the country today that is not dependent, whether directly or indirectly, on agriculture. It

is the performance in this sector that influences the overall performance of the Philippine economy for any given period, and the rise and fall in agricultural production spells the growth or stagnation of the Philippine economy.

A review of the overall performance of the agricultural sector during the entire post-war era reveals in bold relief the rather sluggish growth of this sector *vis-a-vis* the other sectors of the Philippine economy. Preliminary figures of the overall revised National Income series of the Philippines as estimated by the Statistics Office of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) show that the net value added (NVA) in the combined Agriculture-Fishery-Forestry sector at constant 1967 prices grew from ₱2,174 million in CY 1946 to ₱9,183 million in CY 1972. This reflects a growth of only about four times in more than a quarter of a century, or an annual average growth of 6.0 per cent. This may appear substantial but on closer scrutiny this is very low compared to the 16.8 per cent performance in Mining-Quarrying, the 14.3 per cent growth in Manufacturing and the 7.6 per cent growth rate in the Construction, Transportation-Communication, Commerce, and Services sectors. As a ratio of the Net Domestic Product (NDP), the share of agriculture declined steadily from 46.6 per cent in CY 1946 to 31.5 per cent in CY 1972, or an annual average percentage ratio of 36.4 per cent.

More interesting, however, is the overall performance in agriculture during the last five to six years. Net value added in agriculture at 1967 prices increased quite modestly from ₱7,775 million in 1967 to ₱9,183 million in 1972. This means a growth rate of 11.8 per cent for the entire period under review, or an average annual growth of only 2.4 per cent. Again this is very insignificant compared to the average performance of 14.6 per cent in mining, 6.8 per cent in manufacturing, and 4.0 per cent in the other sectors.

In the specific case of rice and corn production which accounts for about 42.8 per cent of total agricultural crops production and with a combined share of about 60 per cent of total land area devoted to agricultural production, the situation is even worse. Average yield per hectare of palay stood at only 22.4 cavans in 1946 and increased to only 35.7 cavans in 1972. This reflects a total growth rate of only 59.4 per cent in the long span of 25 years, or a pitiful average annual growth of only 2.4 per cent for the entire period under review.

Corn production, on the other hand, averaged at 10.2 sacks of 57 kilograms in 1946, increasing to only 14.7 sacks in 1972. This means a cumulative increase of 44.1 per cent in 25 years, or a very negligible increase of only about 1.8 per cent annually for the same period. Land area devoted to rice production doubled from 1.65 million hectares in 1946 to 3.25 million hectares in 1972, and land area devoted to corn production expanded by 4 times — from 571,100 hectares in 1946 to 2,431,700 hectares in 1972. Available statistics show that as of 1972 some 71.6 per cent of the total population were dependent on rice as their basic staple, 15 per cent on corn, and 14 per cent on other crops, especially wheat.

A lesson or two could be learned from this documentation of basic facts about the sad state of agricultural performance in the Philippines, especially on rice and corn production. In the first place, the relatively slow pace of development in the agricultural sector, accounting, as it does, for about a third of total domestic production as reflected in the Net Domestic Product, has been the main, if not the sole, cause of the sluggish overall growth of the Philippine economy and its underdeveloped character. Stated in another way, *the underdeveloped character of the Philippine economy is directly and ultimately traceable to the underdeveloped character of the agricultural sector.* It is the snail's pace of development in this sector that has slowed down and retarded Philippine progress.

Secondly, the very low level of production in rice and corn implies, among others, the continued inability of the rice and corn industry to feed our growing population. In point of fact, the rice and corn industry cannot even feed the farmers themselves, and the increase in rice and corn production even fell short of the natural increment in the country's population.

Thus, as a safety valve to all of these difficulties, the Philippines had to continue relying on cereal imports to sustain the increasing food requirements of a growing population. Statistics show that the Philippines has been importing rice since 1903. Since the start of the post-war era, there was hardly a year where the Philippines did not import rice. On the average, rice and other cereal imports could easily account for about a fifth of the country's total imports, draining the country of its much needed foreign exchange.

Conditions in Agriculture

Many reasons have been cited by the authorities to "explain the root causes of the complex problems confronting the agricultural sector in the Philippine economy". Our farmers, it has been said, still cling to antiquated farming methods. They lack initiative, and they are idle most of the time. They do not use certified seeds in their farms, and they seldom use fertilizers. The farms they till are so fragmented, preventing them to maximize production. They lack irrigation facilities, and they have no access on credit facilities for their farm production. They are not properly organized as a group to influence policy-makers in working for their collective interests. They do not have marketing outlets for their products, exposing them easy prey to middlemen who underbuy their products during harvest time. They think only of today. Tomorrow will take care of itself. They are fatalistic in their outlook — they instinctively think that as a class they are doomed to languish in perpetual poverty. They resign themselves to whatever fate awaits them and, with the recurrence of floods and droughts that alternately inundate and scorch their patch of lands, an increasing number of them are beginning to suspect that even nature seems to be working against them.

All these observations substantially reflect the problems confronting the farming population. In the 1971 agricultural census, for example, of the estimated 2,354,843 number of farms in the country, 1,991,239 farms accounting for about 84.6 per cent of all farms were less than 5 hectares, and only 363,604 farms or 15.4 per cent with 5 hectares and over. Farm fragmentation in the country has aggravated over the years. In the 1960 agricultural census, of the 2,166,216 farms in the country, 1,755,629 farms or 81.0 per cent of all farms were less than 5 hectares and 410,587 or 91.0 per cent with 5 hectares and over.

Our farmers have no access on credit because of the "pawnshop mentality" of our banks in extending credit accommodations to them, making them easy prey to usurious malpractices. They are almost completely dependent on nature for rains to irrigate their farms, and many of them cannot afford the price of fertilizers. They lack marketing facilities for their produce. All these explain why agricultural productivity is very low and why the farmers are very poor.

But over-riding all these problems is the problem of tenancy in the country. To this problem we now turn.

The Tenancy Problem: Its Magnitude and Dimensions

The tenancy problem in the Philippines is nothing new. It has been with us for centuries. Even prior to the coming of the Spaniards the Filipinos already experienced some problems on land ownership but these problems were relatively simple. The obnoxious *encomienda* system introduced by the Spaniards in the Philippines by royal decree marked the formal inauguration of the tenancy problem in the country. With vast landholdings being granted to the encomenderos and their heirs as the rewards for taxing their fellow-countrymen to death to replenish the empty coffers of the King of Spain, the *encomienda system* paved the way for the subdivision of lands in the country into big *haciendas* and *encomiendas* owned and maintained by absentee landlords and caciques. It also marked the formal dispossession of the native of their lands, and their eventual absorption as tenants or *kasamas* of the absentee landlords.

In the course of time the *encomienda system* died, but the evils it spawned persisted, and continue to persist, up to this very day. The coming of the Americans at the turn of the 19th century hardly altered the iniquitous system generated by the *encomienda system*, for during the early years of the American occupation in the country the landed aristocracy managed to engraft themselves with the new power. With this simple maneuver, they were able to consolidate their forces and entrench themselves further, so that by the time the Americans had fully established themselves in the country the landed gentries soon emerged as the new ruling class in the economy, extending the tentacles of their influence not only to the various sectors of the economy but more so in politics which provided them with a convenient weapon to amass more wealth and perpetuate themselves in power. It is this group that monopolized business and politics in the country during the entire period of the American occupation in the Philippines, identifying their vested interests with those of the occupying forces in the grand design to control the country and its future.

The abuses committed by the landlords led to a series of sporadic revolts in different parts of the country. The *colorum uprising* in Tayug, Pangasinan, in 1931, the *Sakdalista revolt*

in Laguna in 1935, and the *Hukbalahap* revolt in Central Luzon in the 1950's were reflective of the deep-seated discontent and restlessness of the people in these places against the abuses of the landed aristocracy. These did not include the undocumented grievances of the *sacadas* against their landlords and the *contratistas* in the sugar industry.

These manifestations of discontent on the part of a restless citizenry jolted the authorities to institute much-needed and long-overdue reform measures in the agricultural sector, particularly in those areas where tenancy was very rampant. Republic Act No. 34 providing for a 70-30 crop sharing system between the landlords and the tenants, the Rice Share Tenancy Act of 1954, the Minimum Wage Law for Agricultural Workers, the Act creating the Tenancy Mediation Commission, the Act creating the Court of Agrarian Relations, the Land Reform Act of 1955, the Agricultural Land Reform Code, as amended, were all intended to bring about the necessary reforms in agriculture. These do not include the reform measures currently being done by the government in these areas in the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR).

Despite these reform measures, however, tenancy remains in its various forms and guises. Data from the DAR show that as of year-end 1972 there were some 1 million tenants in the rice and corn industry all over the country covering a total land area of 1,767,200 hectares. A more updated report from the same source shows that as of September 24, 1973 there were some 991,865 tenants all over the country involving a total land area of 1,752,346 hectares. The same report further indicates that tenancy is particularly rampant in Region III comprising the provinces of Bataan, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Tarlac and Zambales, accounting for some 156,363 tenants or 15.8 per cent of all the tenants in the country with a total land area of 402,120 hectares or 22.9 per cent. Region I (Abra, Benguet, Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, La Union, and Pangasinan) comes next with 129,178 tenants or 13.0 per cent and a total land area of 176,455 hectares or 10.1 per cent. This is followed up by Region VI (Aklan, Antique, Capiz, Iloilo and Negros Occidental) with 128,075 tenants or 12.9 per cent involving a total land area of 208,482 hectares or 11.9 per cent. Other regions which are very much infected by tenancy are Region IV (11.5 per cent), Region VII (9.4 per cent), and Region V (8.8 per cent). The least tenanted region in the country is Region IX comprising the two Zamboanga provinces — only 2.7 per cent of all tenants in the country. The

reason for this is that this region has never been a rice and corn producing region.

In provinces where sugar is a primary industry — *viz.*, the Negros provinces, Iloilo, Aklan, Capiz, etc., a study conducted by the Wage Commission this year shows that about one-third of all workers in the sugar mills were *sacadas* or migrant workers from neighboring provinces. Numbering about 150,000 to 180,000 workers they received very low wages which were further reduced to almost starvation levels by numerous deductions by the *contratistas*. It has been estimated that a *sacada* who spends some 7 months working in the sugar plantation would be lucky if after all the deductions taken from his meager pay for that period, he could manage to bring ₱100 for his family back home.

Income Maldistribution and Tenancy

These, then, are the ugly facts about the tenancy problem in the country, and in places where tenancy is very rampant, income maldistribution results as a matter of course. Tentative figures from the Bureau of the Census' 1970-71 survey on family income and expenditures show that of the 855,200 families, 258.6 thousand or 30.2 per cent received less than ₱2,000 annually per family, accounting for only about ₱284.2 million or 8.1 per cent of all the income received by all families in the region. In the provinces of Bulacan, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, and Pangasinan, to mention but a few, the overwhelming majority of families in these provinces were submerged in the low-income groups. Thus, in Bulacan, 41.0 per cent of all families were in this group, accounting for only 16.5 per cent of the total income received by all families in the province. In Nueva Ecija, 61.1 per cent of all households were in this group, accounting for only 20.5 per cent of all incomes received by all households. In the province of Pampanga, which has been considered in Philippine history as the hotbed of tenancy these many centuries, 57.1 per cent of all households were in this category, accounting for only 27.6 per cent of all incomes received by all families in the province.

Right in the home province of DAR Secretary Conrado Estrella, (Pangasinan), 62 per cent or more than three-fifths of all households were in this income class, accounting for only 24.3 per cent of all incomes received by all families in that province and in the province of Tarlac, 50.2 per cent of all house-

holds were in this aggrupation, accounting for only 25.9 per cent of the income received by all households in that province for the period.

Data from the Department of Agrarian Reform show that as of June 30, 1973 there were some 1,374 landowners in the country with at least 100 hectares of lands each, owning an aggregate land area of 375,654.2 hectares. Of this number, 524 farmers or some 38 per cent of all these farmers were in Region III owning a total land area of 132,617.6 hectares or 35 per cent of all the lands owned by all the farmers in the group.

These data prove one irrefutable fact — that income maldistribution results fundamentally if not entirely from excessive concentration of land ownership. It is in this area, therefore, that reform policies must be geared to bring about a more equitable distribution of wealth and income in the country, expand production in agriculture, and thus hasten the tempo of the country's overall development and progress. Only thus could we create a nation of free men in this country.

Attacking the Agrarian Problem

The seriousness of the agrarian problem in the country has compelled the authorities to address themselves to finding solutions to this nagging problem. It was the land problem—and the series of sporadic revolts that it generated—that impelled President Quezon to formulating his social justice program of government. It was the land problem—and the Hukbalahap uprising that it sparked, that drove President Mag-saysay to enunciate his land for the landless program. It was the land problem, and the sickening poverty that it brought about, that inspired President Macapagal to launch his land reform program, and it is the same problem that forced President Marcos to remark that there is no turning back in land reform, stressing that his program of government under the New Society will be adjudged a success or a failure depending upon the way it implements its agrarian reform program.

Much has been achieved by the government in its determined bid to solve the agrarian problem confronting the economy. The enactment of the Agricultural Land Reform Code (Republic Act No. 3844) in 1963, as amended by the Code of Agrarian Relations in 1971, the promulgation of Presidential Degree No. 2 on September 26, 1972, proclaiming the entire

country a land reform area, and of Presidential Decree No. 27 "decreeing the emancipation of the tenants from the bondage of the soil..." are all manifestations of the government's avowed determination to solve the agrarian problem in the Philippines. The government has even made compulsory the teaching of land reform in colleges and universities. The new Constitution spells out in clear and unequivocal terms the government's policy on land reform.

Only last Monday (October 21, 1973) President Marcos signed a number of presidential decrees aimed at accelerating the implementation of the government's agrarian reform program. One decree further expands the coverage of Presidential Decree No. 27 by including areas from below 50 hectares to 24 hectares. Another decree raises the capitalization of the Land Bank to P3 billion. The third decree provides for a more liberal mode of payment of lands, with the government fully guaranteeing payment of the 15 equal annual amortizations by the tenants and the fourth decree makes land transfer certificates issued pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 27 eligible as collateral for loans by banks and other financial institutions. A fifth decree makes it unlawful the ejection of tenants by landlords.

Speaking on the occasion of the first anniversary of the signing of Presidential Decree No. 27, the President reiterated the determination of the government to push through its land reform program, so that by 1977, the program shall have fully covered the entire country and liberated from the bondage of tenancy over 1 million tenants farming a total land area of 1,767,000 hectares in some 56 provinces all over the country.

This then would be the day when the government can claim success in its agrarian reform program.

Available statistics document the substantial gains attained by the government in its all-out drive against tenancy. Data from the Department of Agrarian Reform show that as of June 30, 1973 the government has awarded some 42,460 land transfer certificates (LTC's) to 30,005 tenant-tillers covering a total land area of 53,417.04 hectares. This represents about 6 per cent of the 868,221 tenant-tillers identified by the government as of the period in 11 regions all over the country.

As of September 24, 1973, this expanded to 121,855 LTC's covering a total land area of 149,664.9 hectares and benefiting some 87,510 tenant-recipients.

At the rate the government is implementing its agrarian reform program, it would not be a surprise if it will be able to cover the entire country ahead of its timetable.

And if to this achievement one will add the successful implementation of farmers' cooperatives in the country, then one will get the impression that it took the New Society under martial rule only less than two years to accomplish what the government has not accomplished in its more than twenty years experience in planting the idea of cooperatives into the minds and hearts of our farming population.

Concluding Comments

Throughout recorded history land has been man's best friend and worst enemy. On the one hand it has provided him with everything he needs in life. On the other hand it has also provided him with all the means to exploit and destroy his fellowmen. It is precisely because land provides us with everything we need that we crave to own and to monopolize the ownership and use of land. It is the desire to own lands that wars have been fought among nations. It is also the greed for lands that converted friends and relatives into the most implacable enemies. Nations go to war ostensibly in defense of an ideology or a belief, such as protecting the national honor, safeguarding the national interests, and words to that effect, but in reality these are just sugar-coated excuses to grab somebody else's land or territory. As with nations in ancient times, so with nations in modern times. Greece, Rome, Europe during the heyday of conquest for overseas territories, the superpowers in modern times—all these countries without exception have been and engaged in an internecine struggle for supremacy because it is only in being militarily invincible that nations will be assured of respect for integrity of their national territory.

History tells us that it is the land problem that has brought about the collapse of empires. History also tells us that it is the land problem that has given rise to civil wars among citizens in many lands, whether ancient or modern. Thus, ancient Rome fell because of the pernicious effect of its intolerable *latifundia system*; France succumbed to a bloody revolution and the reign of terror because of the repressive land policies of her rulers, Russia fell to the thrust of a Marxist-oriented revolution because of the oppressive land policies of the czars.

and the mighty Chinese empire collapsed under the heavy weight of the peasant-oriented revolution of Mao tse tung because of the inability of the Chiang kai shek regime to institute radical reforms in land while there was still time.

If there is one lesson that we can learn from this, it is that *the concentration of vast landholdings in the hands of a few inevitably leads to revolutions of the oppressed segments of society against their oppressors. The other lesson is that the invincibility of a nation from other countries does not in itself guarantee the same degree of invincibility from its angry citizens.*

The Philippines has taken the only logical course of action to save the young Republic from a possible bloodbath spawned by maldistributed wealth and income generated by an undue concentration of land ownerships in the hands of a few through agrarian reform. Our own version of land reform may appear imperfect and full of flaws before the eyes of other nations, but we want the world to know that we are trying to solve our agrarian problem in our own way.

Let us give the authorities all the break they need during these critical times to implement their own ideas on how to solve the agrarian problem in the country. Above all let us perform our assigned task in the remaking of our society.