

Tribe differing according to different backgrounds: geographic, cultural, social, etc. Suffice it to say, at least in my own estimation, the +s' have far outweighed the -s', and I have thoroughly enjoyed most every minute of these years. Statistics? along the lines of: agricultural skills, nutritional-medical-educational advances, leadership and community development, progress in the building of Base Catholic/Christian/Ecclesial Communities, peace and justice, law and order, formation of catechists and lay-cooperators, the spread of God's Kingdom and/or membership in the One Body of Christ, His Church, etc.?—all contained in the all-embracing term, Evangelization. As far as I am concerned, these are all dutifully tabulated by heavenly CPAs. Naturally speaking, however, progress is/has been visible, but there is still such a long way to go. For what it is worth, this year, 1987, our Baptismal Registry shows an increase of around 600: infants, children, teenagers and adults. This of course is but God's Grace working in and through us."

At the end of his final letter of March 1, Carl spoke of his coming jubilee: "In April, a combined celebration: the sixteenth Profession Anniversary of Bishop Reginald Arliss, C.P., D.D.D., now working in Manila, and his classmate, Father Marcellus White, C.P., as active as ever down here; the fiftieth Ordination anniversary of Father Leonard Amrhein, C.P., and also active down here; and my fiftieth Profession Anniversary—all in one full swoop, thanks be. I feel most unworthy to be in such illustrious company."

Then he appends a final Easter message: "Thanks a million for this past Christmas, and heartfelt greetings for a meaningful Holy Week and Joyous Eastern Sunday. Old frozen attitudes disappearing and new Covenanted life in Christ and His Paschal Mystery. God love and Bless all of you and all near and dear to you. Gratefully and fraternally in Christ, Fr. Carl, C.P."

That was March 1, 1988. Easter was on April 3. Thursday, the seventh of April, was just four days later!

CHAPTER TEN

"THEY LAID HIM IN A TOMB"

It was the night of April 7, 1988. The Power and the Glory. After firing eight shots into the body of the Priest (Father Carl), Judas (Sagin Monday) boldly walked down the road to the captain's house and demanded to be taken to the police (the C.O.) in Marbel.

The villagers of Bolul, frightened by the shooting arrived at the priest's house to find Carl's body lying on the porch. At once several rushed down the mountain side to inform the Bishop, Dinualdo D. Gutierrez, and Father Roberto Wapano, the rector of the Marbel seminary.

Father Harold Reusch, C.P., the superior of the Passionist community in the Philippines, gives the following report in the pages of "Compassion."

"Father Roberto, C.P., sent the witnesses down to me (Harold Reusch) to notify me and I immediately headed for Bolul to take care of Carl's body. When I arrived (April 8), Roberto with many of the Bilaans was already bringing down the body.

"Carl was laid out wearing his professional cross and in the Passionist habit he loved so dearly. Considering the terrible damage done to his body, he was made to look quite presentable and very much at peace. The plain coffin was of beautiful narra wood. As the Bilaans said, 'He would have wanted that. He always favored narra, our national wood.'"

"At about 3 p.m. that same day (April 8th) Carl's body was taken back to the mountain to his mission at Bolul. All of

his beloved Bilaan people were in deep mourning. They could not believe that their father and protector was dead. Here was a man who seemed so strong. He was tireless in climbing every mountain where they lived. He was always among them. He knew them better than they knew one another. In his own lifetime he had become a legend among them. Because he was so honest, just and fearless, they ran to him for help or protection whenever they were in need or in trouble. Now, he was dead. The Bilaan nation of over 80,000 seemed to be in a state of visible helplessness and sorrow.

"In accordance with our customs here, it was decided that Carl's body would lie in state in his new chapel at Bolul from Friday afternoon until Monday morning, April 11th. There would then be a funeral Mass for Carl presided over by His Excellency, Most Rev. Dinualdo Gutierrez, Bishop of Marbel.

"During these days, Bilaans came from far-flung mountain places to pay their respects to their great missionary. There was not enough food in the small village to feed them, so many of our faithful Christians donated sacks of rice, fish and other viands and sent them up to Bolul. The Bilaans of Bolul set up committees to house and feed all who came. In their common sorrow, the Bilaans drew closer together as a community, sharing all they had.

"At 9 a.m. Monday morning, diocesan priests, religious and laity went up to Bolul along with our Passionist community and Bishop Gutierrez to honor Carl with the Mass of the Resurrection. The Bishop led the congregation in the Bilaan dialect and gave a simple but moving homily.

"After this first funeral Mass, the body was placed on the back of a large, beautifully decorated truck. In procession we took the body down the mountain sixty kilometers to our Church at Dadiangas. Carl had served this large parish for four years and was well-known for his kindness and con-

cern for all. The people formed into groups and began day and night vigils in Carl's honor.

"The final funeral Mass was on Wednesday, April 13th at 9 a.m. We are most grateful that Father Sebastian MacDonald was able to come here all the way from Chicago for the funeral. He gave a very beautiful homily. Bishop Gutierrez also presided at this Mass. More than fifty diocesan and religious priests concelebrated, and we estimated more than 5,000 people in attendance. Father Leonard Kosatka, C.P., was there from the Passionist Community in Japan where Carl had spent twenty years as a missionary.

"After this Mass, Carl's body was taken in procession to our monastery at Calumpang, twelve kilometers away, for interment in our own small cemetery.

"(Director of Novices) Father Gabriel (Baldostamon) had appealed to his many friends for the use of their trucks. So, over 2,000 people jammed themselves into the various cars and trucks for the dusty ride to Holy Cross. Father Sebastian presided at the graveside last rites.

"It was now about 12:30 p.m. under a boiling sun. The people were tired and hungry. Once again, our people rose to the occasion. Generous friends had given gifts of food. The people of Calumpang did the serving. More than 2,000 people were fed before they returned home."

CHAPTER ELEVEN

"THEY FOUND NO GROUNDS FOR A DEATH SENTENCE!"

"After the initial shock on hearing of Carl's death, our Community's first reaction was to pray for his good soul and to see to a fitting funeral for his body. We knew that we would have to be ready to forgive the killer for what he had done, and to see, somehow, the Plan of God in this tragedy.

"After all, Carl had died very much like the Christ whom he had loved and served. Deep in our hearts we had all feared, like Carl's sister, Marian, that something like this might one day happen to him. In his total dedication to his people, he had often trod into dangerous areas where even the heavily armed military were afraid to go. We might even believe that Carl was ready for such a death—that he was happy to give his life for his people."

These are the words of Father Harold Reusch. But Father Harold was also aware that even from the very night of the killing Sagin Monday was alleging several false accusations, such as that he had killed Carl in self-defense. These false charges were reported to the press and repeated even in the United States.

Many at once realized, as Father Harold put it, that "since such false reports could destroy Father Carl's good reputation, our Community has been striving to have them corrected and the damage repaired."

A charge of murder was brought against Sagin Monday and the trial began on June 7, 1988, under Judge Rodolfo Soledad of the Regional Court of Marbel.

In the following pages are some of the documents dealing with this trial:

A report on Sagin Monday;
Letter of the Director of Ministry of Justice to Cardinal Sin;
Report on the murder and preliminary investigations at Marbel, written by Father Robert Wampano;
Interview with Bishop Dinualdo Gutierrez
Editorial by Father Rex Mansmann, C. P.
Chicago Tribune, November 14, 1989, on the Judge's verdict
Letter of Father Harold Reusch on the verdict, January 21, 1990

SAGUIN MONDAY

He was wearing shorts and a pair of slippers when he emerged from his cell at the provincial jail in Marbel where he has since been confined, along with 300 other prisoners serving their terms.

At 5'3" and slightly built, Sagin Monday, 27, does not strike one as capable of violence. He appeared withdrawn but friends say he is slow to anger and quick to laugh.

Months earlier, a team of foreign journalists tried to interview him but failed. Prison officials reminded reporters that while Monday is their prisoner, he has the right to receive or refuse visitors.

The interview was in Tagalog, a language that seemed to please him but which gave him trouble throughout as he groped for the right words to express his thoughts.

Immediately after surrendering, he not only implicated Father Carl with the NPA but also Bishop Dinualdo Gutierrez and provincial Governor Ismael Sueno, two of the most prominent personalities in the province. They too, he alleged, are supporting the NPA.

Pressed later in jail as to his accusations, he revealed he knew of other priests who are supporting the NPA. But he

will not divulge their names, he said, because he was prevailed upon by another priest not to mention their names.

Saguin described himself as a graduate of the Notre Dame of Marbel who had been a public school teacher for eight years now. He said he averaged P1,900 pesos a month in pay plus a monthly allowance of P360.00. He said he is currently on leave while awaiting his fate in jail.

July 5, 1988 Letter from J. Antonio M. Carpio, Director, Republic of the Philippines, Ministry of Justice, National Bureau of Investigation, Manila

His Eminence

Jaime L. Cardinal Sin, D.D.

Villa San Miguel

1501 Mandaluyong

Metro Manila

Re: Alleged Murder of Fr. KARL SCHMITZ

Your Eminence:

Investigation conducted by this Bureau disclosed the following:

1. On 07 April 1988, at about 8:50 in the evening, Father KARL SCHMITZ, C.P., was shot in cold-blood and brutally killed in his convent at Bolul Mission in Koronadal, South Cotabato.
2. Mr. SAGUEN MUNDAY, a Bilaan native of South Cotabato, admitted killing Fr. SCHMITZ. However, when he was arraigned on 12 May 1988 before Judge RODOLFO SOLEDAD of the Regional Trial Court, Koronadal, South Cotabato for the crime of Murder, he pleaded not guilty thereto but manifested his willingness to plead guilty to the lesser offense of Homicide.

3. No evidence was gathered to show that Father KARL SCHMITZ supported or sympathized with the NPAs in South Cotabato, contrary to the allegations of Mr. MUNDAY that the former was supporting the New People's Army of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

Very truly yours,
ANTONIO M. CARPIO
Director
HJG/cma

THE MURDER OF FATHER CARL SCHMITZ, C.P.

Father Robert Wampano, C.P.

On April 7, 1988, at about 10:00 P.M., somebody, whom I still don't know until now, called me up at St. Gabriel Seminary, Koronadal, South Catabato. She told me very shocking news: Father Carl Schmitz, C.P., my colleague in the Passionist Congregation and the Missionary to the Bilaans in the Diocese of Marbel, South Cotabato, was murdered at his convent in Bolul, a mountain barrio of Koronadal, which is about nine kilometers from the town, and where the Mission Center is located.

To verify the veracity of the news, I went directly to the police station. The police confirmed the news as true. Father Carl was shot dead by a Bilaan named Sagin Monday at about 9:00 P.M. that date. Father Carl died brutally at the age of seventy.

I also met one of the eyewitnesses, Domingo Edo, together with one of the Mission workers Tinoy Hollero, who drove the Mission vehicle (a green Ford Fiera) down to bring Domingo to the Police for safety. Domingo told me that he saw Sagin Monday SHOOT Father Carl. He appeared still shocked.

We proceeded to Bolul and arrived at about 11:30 P.M. When I went up to the convent porch, I saw the body

of Father Carl sprawling on the porch floor. There were some people already at the scene. I asked for the Barrio Captain, Mr. Geronimo Nelmida. But I was informed that the Barrio Captain had not come up yet. (I wondered why.)

I waited for the military to arrive. Finally they came after more or less forty-five minutes after I arrived. Why the delay? I was informed that they passed by the Barrio Captain's house first. I did not know for what. Perhaps, a customary courtesy call?

The P.C. had their own investigator, Sgt. Edwin Apura, who was a bit drunk. He talked to some of the witnesses, and at times shouted at them. The police investigator who accompanied the P.C. was PFC Rogelio Barcenella, INP, who acted like a puppy of the P.C.

Some empty shells were found in the scene and I was informed that there was still one cartridge clip of garand ammunitions left behind by the killer and I don't know where that is now.

The house of Monday was searched and another three firearms were recovered from there, two garands and a paltik. Why Monday was able to have these firearms in his possession remains to be seen.

The P.C. investigator had a strange way of investigating. He went inside the convent and entered the room of Father Carl and started to open the cabinets, examine his clothes and other personal belongings. I was really peeved by this actuation and I confronted the investigator and asked him to get out of the room.

Recalling what the investigator did, I came to suspect that he was trying to find some evidences which would link Father Carl to the accusations of the killer that Father Carl was supporting the Communists and was coddling criminals. I presupposed that the investigator had already met

and talked with the killer and presumably had known the accusations of the killer thrown at Father Carl, before going to Bolul.

Moreover, the investigator went out to the porch and started examining the pocket of Father Carl. He took out the wallet and the wrist watch. Again I was suspicious. So I got things taken from Father Carl and gave them to one of the catechists for safe keeping. Then the investigator located the bullet wound hesitantly.

I was so discontented with the way the P.C. and the Police did the investigation, that I requested some of the Bilaan to help me wrap the body of Father Carl. The Hollero Family offered their Ford Fiera to be used to bring the body down to the Funeral Parlor, in the Poblacion of Marbel. On the way to the Funeraria, we met Father Harold, and he turned his vehicle back and accompanied us to Allen Funeraria.

Perhaps at this point, it is noteworthy to mention that after the killing, Sagin Monday went directly to the Barrio Captain and surrendered voluntarily. He confessed to the Barrio Captain that he killed Father Carl. The killer then asked the Barrio Captain to bring him to the 456 P.C. Headquarter down in Marbel.

On the same morning, the affidavit of Sagin Monday was also taken by Sgt. Edwin Apura in the presence of his legal counsel, Attorney Lupe Calio, who is a government lawyer, for Monday entered a plea of being an indigent. In his affidavit, Monday accused Father Carl of supporting the Communists and coddling criminals. Furthermore, he claimed that Father Carl had boxed him when confronted with these accusations. Thus, in self-defense, he shot Father Carl to death.

In the morning of April 8, 1988, at about 7:00 A.M. Father Harold Reusch, our Superior, went to the P.C. Headquarter to see the Murderer.

At about 9:30 A.M. on April 8, 1988 and after his affidavit was taken, Sagin Monday with some P.C. soldiers, went to the Provincial hospital for medical examination and certification to support his claim that Father Carl had boxed him. The examining Doctor was Dr. Pinky Albano. According to her finding, there was a contusion with punctured wound at the right side of Monday's forehead. When I talked with the doctor later, she told me that the puncture could have been very possibly inflicted with a ring.

- A. Father Carl wore no ring. Thus, if Monday was really boxed, it was not Father Carl.
- B. When I visited Captain Mongao in the morning of April 9, 1988, I saw he had a big ring.
- C. Father Harold took a picture of Monday at close range at about 7:00 A.M. on April 8, 1988 before Monday went out to see a doctor, and the picture shows no contusion nor puncture on his forehead.
- D. The eyewitnesses, Domingo Edo, Gabriel Cuer, and Yolanda Passinag, claimed that Father Carl did not and could not have boxed, not even touched Monday since Father Carl was at the porch and Monday was at the bottom rung of the stair, which is seven steps from the porch's floor. According to Gabriel Cuer, the killer went up to the porch only *after* he had shot Father Carl and Father Carl's body was already sprawling on the floor.

Interview of Bishop Gutierrez

"The question everybody is asking is who ordered the killing and why? Definitely there is a pattern of Church persecution. In Tulanan town, Father John Collado and other priests, including some Dominican sisters were accused as accomplices to a rape case. In Tagum, Davao del Norte, the vicar-general is also accused of seduction on fifteen counts. He is Father Mario Valle. There is another priest in Luzon who is also accused of planting marijuana. You are seeing the work of the devil.

"Why was the former vice-governor killed? Because he was also another staunch advocate of human rights and justice. So anybody who is a staunch advocate of human rights is fair game to some people. Father Carl was a very strong advocate of human rights. He praised people when they deserved praise. But he also denounced them when they deserved it. But his advocacy of human rights is different from the advocacy of human rights by "cause-oriented" groups. He always worked towards reconciliation. So even if human rights are violated, he would always appeal to the violator to be reconciled. That makes him a man of peace. Peace in the sense of development. Not only the absence of war. And this is the real meaning of peace. It is the sum total of the blessings of God. A Bilaan beneficiary of the programs of Father Carl killing him is illogical. It does not make sense. What makes sense is when somebody asked him to kill the priest. It is not unusual for human beings to be greedy. That is why killers for hire are plenty worldwide."

Lunay S'Bung Newsletter - Vol. II, No. 4 Editorial by Father Rex Mansmann, C. P.

To the Filipino the murder of a priest is all but unthinkable; something that happens in atheistic Russia, but certainly impossible in the devoutly Catholic Philippines. Yet in the last eight years four priests have been murdered in Mindanao. What forces and changes in the social fabric have made possible what people here consider to be a kind of patricide? Is it merely a story of a disgruntled and frustrated man losing for a fatal hour his good senses? Or is there more to Father Carl's death than meets the eye? Many think there is.

However one may assess Father Carl's case there is little dispute about the tensions that have wracked this Third World island nation for two decades and more. A brief look at even a few of the elements in the chemistry of the Philippine political scene will reveal its volatility.

In agricultural Philippines ten percent of the population own or control ninety percent of the land resources; eight out of ten families live below the poverty line. Four million tribal and Muslim Filipinos remain politically and socially disenfranchised. Law enforcement is spotty at best, and a western-style juridical system grinds exceedingly slowly, but not exceedingly fine. Little wonder that three separate rebel groups roam the Mindanao mountains.

Against this background President Cory Aquino labors to bring reform and social change beneficial to the mass of poor and disadvantaged. Every close observer of the Philippine national scene gives Cory high marks for sincerity and determination. But few seem to realize what she has to work against. The debt ridden economy bequeathed to her by Marcos is small potatoes compared to a military threatening coup d'etat and a truculent lower and middle level bureaucracy who yearn for the easy and profitable days of the Marcos era.

The group however most determined to frustrate Cory's national reform movement is made up of the people who stand to lose the most: big land owners and old-style politicians. The anti-reformists are a group toughened by many a storm and come equipped with well-honed manipulative skills, useful contacts with corrupt and criminal elements and enough amorality to use them. There are many signs that this group is tightening its defenses, which in fact it hardly ever relaxed. While private armies are by no means a thing of the past, more sophisticated techniques are now employed: front organizations for example, (South Cotabato Land Owners Association): media backed propaganda campaign to discredit Cory's strongest ally, the Catholic Church (Filipino and foreign missionary priests and religious are regularly accused of immorality) and finally the most used tool in their kit, the quick and unfounded accusation of "Communists" against anyone serving the poor and working for a more just distribution of national wealth and

human rights. Once a person is labeled as NPA or communist, assassination is justified, at least in the minds and company of the anti-reformists.

Among this company Father Carl's murderer, once Father Carl had been falsely accused of helping the communist New People's Army, becomes a hero and someone worthy of the anti-reformists' protection.

One must be deeply skeptical of conspiracy theories. It is all too easy to marshal "facts" to support one's hypothesis. On the other hand many unusual and uncharacteristic circumstances remain to be explained. And the aid being given to the confessed murderer cannot be ignored. Nor can we discount the almost universal conviction of informed and intelligent Filipinos that there were other highly placed persons who at least indirectly encouraged the murderer. And given the present destabilizing milieu being created by the anti-reformists it becomes less and less difficult for those of us on the scene to see how Father Carl's murder could happen.

Father Rex Mansmann was born in Pittsburgh in 1932. He joined the Passionists in 1953 and was ordained in 1960. At once he volunteered for the Passionist Missions in the Philippines. In 1963 he succeeded Father George Nolan in the mission among the T'boli Tribe in Lake Sebu.

For over twenty-six years he has administered the Santa Cruz Mission in the mountains of Mindanao. Today there are 5,000 children in the schools, health care systems with dispensaries and a hospital, agricultural programs, and a successful catechical ministry with 460 catechists.

Like Father Carl, Rex also has problems with land grabbers, those who destroy the rain forests, those who seek gold, etc. He too is charged with being a Communist. Gunmen are waiting for an opportunity to remove him as Carl was removed.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1989 - Chicago Tribune

**CHICAGO PRIEST'S KILLER CONVICTED:
Missionary was Shot to Death in the Philippines**
By Teresa Albor

KORONADAL, Philippines—

The Admitted killer of a Roman Catholic missionary from Chicago was convicted of homicide Monday and sentenced to twelve years in prison.

Sagin Munday, twenty-eight, will be eligible for parole in five and one-half years. Judge Rodolfo Soledad found him not guilty on a charge of illegal possession of a firearm in the shooting death of Rev. Carl Schmitz.

Father Schmitz, a Chicago native who had worked in the Philippines for more than a decade, was shot on April 7, 1988, at his mission home in the forested hills ten miles north of here. Koronadal, the provincial capital, lies 650 miles south of Manila on the island of Mindanao.

Munday confessed to the killing, but claimed that the seventy-year-old priest struck him during an argument in which he had accused Father Schmitz of giving money to communist rebels in the area. Witnesses said the two had exchanged words rather than blows, and that Munday had fired the fatal shots with a rifle as the priest stood above him on a porch.

Francisco Ampig, a government prosecutor, said he was "not satisfied" with the verdict. Carl Crimmins, a nephew of Father Schmitz who attended the session, expressed dismay.

"I never expected it," he said. "I can't believe it."

Judge Soledad could have convicted Munday, a one-time student at the local missionary school and an acquaintance of the dead priest, of murder and ordered a more severe

sentence, but chose the lesser offense because of the claim that Father Schmitz had hit his killer.

The verdict brings the judicial process to a close, but appeared to leave unresolved the matter of whether Munday acted on his own. Friends of the dead priest in the local religious community have questioned the extent of the investigation following the shooting and suggested there may have been a conspiracy or a cover-up involving the military, with which Munday had close ties.

The priest's family, the religious community and the American Embassy repeatedly petitioned Philippines President Corazon Aquino and military authorities in a campaign that succeeded in bringing national attention to the trial. The Schmitz family also sent a representative from the U.S. to attend almost every hearing.

January 21, 1990

Letter from Father Harold Reusch, C.P.

Her Excellency, Madam Corazon C. Aquino
President of the Republic of the Philippines
Malacanang Palace
Manila, Philippines

Your Excellency, Madam President Aquino,

Since I am convinced that you are totally dedicated to the common good of the Filipino people and that you are especially concerned that true justice prevail throughout the Philippines, I beg to bring to Your Excellency's attention a judicial decision in which there seems to be a serious miscarriage of justice.

I refer to the decision rendered on November 13, 1989 by Judge Rodolfo Soledad of the Regional Trial Court, Eleventh Judicial Region, Branch Twenty-four, at Koronadal, South Cotabato, Philippines. The decision was given for the case entitled "The People of the Philippines versus Sagin Mon-

day for murder." It is criminal case No. 2812. The decision contains fifty-eight pages and was dated October 19, 1989.

This was the case in which Sagin Monday was not guilty of murder but merely of homicide and he, therefore, imposed the sentence of from eight to twelve years imprisonment. Judge Soledad drew his conclusion of homicide principally from two claims that were made by the defense, e.g.:

1. That before the shooting, there was a "heated argument" between the killer, Sagin Monday, and Father Carl Schmitz;
2. That Father Carl Schmitz had struck Sagin Monday on the forehead causing him to react with justified violence and that Monday had shown proof of a wound inflicted on him by Father Carl Schmitz.

All of those who were knowledgeable in this case were disappointed and shocked by the decision rendered by Judge Soledad. The reasons for their dismay and disbelief can be summed up as follows:

1. Judge Soledad seems to have distorted or misunderstood the clear evidence of witnesses given during the formal trial;
2. Judge Soledad totally ignored the evidence given by many first-hand and trustworthy witnesses;
3. He accepted and based his entire decision only on the testimony given by the self-confessed killer, Monday, and one of his friends.

If the true facts in this case were to be known, they could be summed up as follows:

1. There was no heated argument between Sagin Monday and Father Carl Schmitz previous to the killing. There were many reliable witnesses who testified very clearly to this. Some of these were school teachers. They either saw or heard Sagin

Monday shouting all kinds of abusive words at Father Carl but they denied that Father Carl retaliated by any kind of harsh words. Rather, as they said, Father Carl spoke very softly and mildly and tried his best to calm down his assailant. It seems that Judge Soledad, in his decision, took no notice of this testimony for, surely, in law to have a "heated argument" both sides must be involved in angry discussion.

2. Father Carl Schmitz did not strike Sagin Monday nor even touch him. Throughout the encounter before the killing, Father Carl remained at the top of the stairs of his little convento while Sagin Monday stayed at the bottom of the stairs even though Father Carl kindly invited him to come up and sit down. They were separated by a distance of three meters by actual measurement. It was, therefore, impossible for Father Carl to touch or strike Sagin Monday. These facts were testified to by many reliable witnesses under oath. Yet, Judge Soledad preferred to ignore this testimony and accept the claim of the killer plus one of his friends that Father Carl had struck him. Indeed, Judge Soledad gave great weight to this pretended assault of Father Carl upon Monday in drawing up his decision. What is worse, Judge Soledad accepted Monday's claim that when Father Carl struck him he left a wound on his right forehead. Monday's lawyer produced a document signed by Dra. Pinky Pantua Albano, a public health physician of Koronadal, dated at 10:00 A.M. on April 8, 1988, the morning after the killing. The official certificate states that Dra. Pantua examined Sagin Monday and found a "contusion hematoma—punctured wound" on Monday's right forehead. It could have been inflicted by a blunt mechanical force or caused by a fist blow if the assailant was wearing a ring. It was a known fact that Father Carl never wore a ring and was not wearing a ring at the time

of the encounter. (This is supported by photographs of the dead body of Father Carl.) Dra. Pantua was also aware that the wound displayed to her by Monday was fresh and still oozing so it could not have been inflicted before the killing thirteen hours previously. On top of this, we have clear photographs of the killer, Sagin Monday, taken before 8:00 a.m. on April 8, 1988, while he was in the Philippines Constabulary stockade at Koronadal. These photographs show that Sagin Monday's face, including his right and left forehead was completely unmarked. When these photographs were shown to Dra. Pantua she agreed that there was no sign whatsoever of the wound she examined on Monday's forehead at 10:00 A.M. that same morning. The conclusion is that sometime between 8:00-10:00 A.M. on April 8, 1988, someone inflicted a wound on Monday's forehead with the intention of blaming this wound on the deceased, Father Carl Schmitz. With such clear contrary evidence, it is very difficult to understand how Judge Soledad could have accepted this artificially inflicted wound as proof that Father Carl struck Sagin Monday.

As a matter of fact, I was the priest who visited Sagin Monday at the P.C. Stockade of Koronadal between 7:30-8:00 A.M. on April 8, 1988. With the expressed permission of the P.C. Commandant, Captain Mongao, I spoke with Sagin Monday, observed his appearance and took photographs of him from a distance of about two meters. These photographs are very clear and speak for themselves. I can personally testify under oath that from my own observation Sagin Monday had no marks whatsoever on his face before 8:00 A.M. on April 8, 1988.

The decision of Judge Soledad in this case seems to be manifestly contrary to the facts as presented during the trial. It

also is a serious defamation of the good name of Father Carl Schmitz who was a gentle, holy missionary totally dedicated to the upliftment of his tribal people, the Bilaan nation. As a loyal Catholic priest, he was opposed to Communism and was a strong force in dissuading his Bilaan people from joining the NPA. In more than thirty cases in which some of his Bilaans had been enticed or forced to join the NPA, Father Carl went to them, persuaded them to reform and personally brought them back to surrender to the proper military authorities so that they could be rehabilitated. His cruel death is an irreparable loss to our mission work among the Bilaans. On top of this, to have his reputation destroyed in a legal document is a further injustice that is inexcusable.

Many people feel that Judge Soledad may have been forced into giving a distorted decision in order to appease certain powerful persons who were supporting the killer, Sagin Monday. There were many signs that the military of South Cotabato were especially interested in this case. Sagin Monday was reputed to be an ICHDF. Captain Mongao of Koronadal admitted that Monday was a PC "asset" or informer. Various military persons were reported as claiming that Monday was a "hero" for killing Father Carl. The military supplied their own lawyer, Attorney Flaviano, to personally defend Monday. From the beginning, Your Excellency was informed that there might be some irregularities in the case. You were kind enough to intercede with the Minister of Justice who, in turn, appointed Attorney Aurelio Trampe as Senior State Prosecutor in this case. Attorney Trampe did his work with exemplary efficiency and he is not to blame that the decision went contrary to the testimony given during the trial. On two occasions, small groups of the NBI came to investigate because of many "strange circumstances" surrounding this case. (For example, a potential witness for the prosecution, Mr. Calutong Hollero, was mysteriously killed at Bolul on August 23, 1988. It is said that Calutong Hollero was with the killer, Sagin Monday, on the morning of April 7, 1988, and knew of Monday's

intention to kill Father Carl in cold blood.) It is also said that when the NIB became suspicious of a possible military involvement in the case they withdrew quietly.

Whatever may be the truth in the matter, it is evident that the case deserves a thorough investigation. It is also evident that, no genuine, thorough investigation has been made by an impartial professional non-military organization. Many of our people believe that the only ones capable of doing this would be a TASK FORCE INVESTIGATION by the NBI. I would like to personally urge Your Excellency to order such a Task Force Investigation in the hope that true justice will be served. I have no doubt that Your Excellency is totally dedicated to justice, peace and order in the Philippines. The entire world admires you for your courage and integrity.

Madam President, I humbly and sincerely appeal to you. You are the only hope we have to see that true justice may be had in this serious case!

Respectfully yours in Christ,

HAROLD REUSCH, C.P.
General Consultor
Passionists

CC:

His Eminence, Jaime Cardinal L. Sin, D.D. -
Archbishop of Manila

Most Rev. Dinualdo D. Gutierrez, D.D., STD. -
Bishop of Marbel

Most Rev. Fr. Jose Agustin Orbegozo, C.P. -
Superior General, Passionists

Honorable Minister of Justice -
Republic of Philippines

Atty. Aurelio Trampe -

Senior State Prosecutor, Republic of Philippines

Honorable Judge Rodolfo Soledad -

Koronadal, So. Cotabato, Branch Twenty-four

Very Rev. Fr. Wilfredo Estraza, C.P. -
Superior, Passionists in the Philippines

Mrs. Marian Crimmins -

Sister of Father Carl Schmitz, Chicago, Illinois

V. Rev. Fr. Sebastian MacDonald, C.P. -

Provincial Superior, Chicago, Illinois

NEWS REPORT - April 13, 1990

The Catholic News Service in the United States released the following story:

“Manila, Philippines—A Passionist order official has charged in a letter to President Corazon Aquino that a Filipino judge was pressured by the military to give the killer of a U.S. Passionist missionary priest a light sentence. The decision destroyed the missionary priest’s reputation, wrote Father Harold Reusch, General Consultor of his Congregation in Rome, in the January 21, 1990 letter. The judge, Rodolfo Soledad, ruled that Sagin Monday, a Bilaan tribesman, shot to death 70-year-old Passionist Father Carl Schmitz in South Cotabato, about 750 miles south of Manila, in April 1988. The judge said the priest could have provoked the attack by punching Monday just before the shooting. In November 1989, Soledad found Monday guilty of the lesser charge of homicide rather than murder and sentenced him to eight to twelve years instead of life imprisonment. There is no death penalty in the country. Father Reusch, who was Father Schmitz’ local superior at the time of the murder, said all evidence indicates Father Schmitz never touched Monday on the day of the shooting.”

This news release was published in “The Explorer” of the Diocese of Joliet, Illinois, on Good Friday, 1990.