

■ This paper by a former President of the Philippines questions the correctness, sincerity, and practicality of the views on American-Philippine relations by Carlos Romulo, now Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Philippine Government.

QUO VADIS, ROMULOS?

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(Continued from last month's issue)

ASIAN SUPERNATIONALISTS?

As far as I am concerned, our diplomacy for a "closer cooperation with Asian countries" should never be carried to the outcome of diminishing our political, cultural and commercial relation with the West. We must forever be connected with the world mainstreams of progress and abundant life and greater freedom, and most of these are in the West. Our supernationalistic Asianism should not quixotically blind us to reality and realism. Let us live with the whole world freely and forget about building great walls of China, Boxeristic movements, Arian supracialism and all that sort of isolationism or chauvinism.

Trade alienation from the U.S. would hurt us fatally while it is a mere scratch to the U.S. taking into account the fact that our trade with her is 50% of our world foreign trade while America's trade with us is only 1% of her total world trade. If Mr. Romulo's "New Ideology" is really for Philippines achieving "economic productivity, industrialization and modernization" common sense and not psychedelic vision will point the way — and that is to keep close with the Western countries advanced in the sciences, the arts and technology — things which they are using to plant their feet on the moon and thereafter explore other planets.

We are worried over the rapidly increasing population. Only by advanced science and technology, which no Asian country except Japan can supply, can we make it possible to colonize the land under the seas and utilize the immense food and mining resources under the oceans. Only by hitting the highways of progress opened up by Western science and technology can we hope to make a headway economically. It is imperative, therefore, that we identify ourselves with countries that can supply us advanced science and technology. The two greatest needs of our economic development program are capital and technology. We have to turn to our friends of the West to get these two essentials. At the present no Asian country except Japan can supply us capital and technology so badly needed to achieve economic productivity, industrialization and modernization.

In quotation number 7 above Mr. Romulo advocates the brand of diplomacy which would identify us

closely with our Asian neighbors in order "to formulate with them a common stand on questions affecting peace and economic development." With Communist China indisputably the giant in Asia promoting her own "master plan" to establish communist Chinese hegemony in Asia, and straining herself to be able to manufacture nuclear weapons to enforce her gigantic ambition, the questions of peace and war in Asia as well as economic development assume tremendous importance.

SMALL BANTAMWEIGHT

Is the Secretary batting for a "mutual stand" of the small bantamweight countries of Asia to face the Asian giant or subserve it? Assuming that the former is what he has in mind (as it is unthinkable for Filipinos to submit to a godless ideology) is the unified stand of these Asian bantams sufficient to stop Communist China from enforcing her plan to dominate absolutely in Asia? Frankly, all of these developing small countries in Asia together, without outside help will not be able

to stop Communist China from realizing her plan. It takes another heavyweight to fight a heavyweight. There was the case of David vanquishing a Goliath, but that was possible because of divine intervention, and there has been only one David since Biblical times.

Is it not, therefore, to our national interest to maintain and improve our relations with Western democracies, principally the U.S.A., which is admittedly the democratic giant capable willing and able to stand up in defense of democracy against any communist giant?

I am informed, that one of our sister small countries in Southeast Asia, Thailand, stands foursquare on the proposition that America should continue her presence in Asia if only to enable the rising democratic forces here to develop sinews for national self-defense. Would it not be to the interest of this Republic to adopt this gallant stand? Probably, the communist countries will ridicule this attitude as an act of puppetry. Our Secretary himself has had the bit-

ter experience of being so ridiculed. But if it is done in the national interest, why should the slings of invective and the shafts of ridicule stop us from the pursuit of our national interest? In matter of national survival since when have we allowed ourselves to be threatened, cajoled or ridiculed into the criminal neglect of our national defense?

NEW DIRECTION?

In conclusion, let us take a little excursion into history to reassess our relation with the U.S. in connection with Romulo's new direction of foreign policy.

The U.S., in 1946 voluntarily granted us our independence for which we had sacrificed innumerable lives and fortune. Is there any instance in history wherein mighty powers victorious in war voluntarily renounced their sovereignty over a weak people like the Filipinos? When China was a mighty power in Asia in her former imperial times, did she ever renounce her sovereignty over a palm of territory voluntarily? America did this!

And more transcendently important than this, she started the grand cycle of liberation, for all empires to relinquish their sovereignty over their colonies. As a result, England renounced her sovereignty over India, Ceylon, Malaya, Burma, etc. Because of this American example the cycle of liberation rolled on irresistibly to other continents until France relinquished her sovereignty over her vast empire in Africa and Indo-China. England also continues liberating her vast colonies in Africa, and Oceania. If the U.S. has done nothing else, but setting the example of a mighty nation renouncing voluntarily her sovereignty over her colonies after achieving victory in a great world war, that alone would entitle her to the eternal gratitude of freedom-loving peoples.

AGAINST PARITY

It is true that, in granting independence to our war-ravaged country, America exacted from us the Bases Treaty, the Parity Amendment and the Bell Trade Agreement. In the matter of the Parity Amendment, the true

majority of Filipinos were against it, and in the Senate, it would have been defeated if it had not been for the vote of one renegade Nacionalista senator who was won over by President Roxas to vote for Parity with the Liberals.

It would have been lost in the House of Representatives if the eight Socialist congressmen led by then Congressman Taruc and definitely against Parity, had not been expelled from the House before the voting on Parity, on charges that they had committed terrorism to get themselves elected. Let it be remembered that the Nacionalista Party stood against Parity, and were it not for those incidents mentioned above, there would have been no Parity Amendment.

The Bases Agreement negotiated with then Vice President and Secretary of Foreign Affairs Elpidio Quirino and ratified by the Senate, was accepted by the Filipinos at that time because, after the war, we were down and out and we were worried about our national

defense, but, above all, because Soviet Russia, at that time under the ruthless leadership of Stalin, was getting ready to invade all countries, at least with their atheistic ideology of communism. As early as 1945, Mr. Romulo and I were members of the Philippine delegation to the first UN conference in San Francisco and it was already apparent that Russia was getting ready for an "International Revolution" to impose communism all over the world. For the same reason we agreed to the Mutual Defense Pact.

It is also true that the Bell Trade Agreement though later softened by the Laurel-Langley Trade Agreement, was much too one-sided in favor of the U.S.A. It is equally true that the one half billion dollars given us for rehabilitation was conditioned on our approving the Parity Amendment. But then without justifying this American opportunism, I say that the Filipinos then were tender-hearted and profoundly grateful towards America after

- (1) she liberated us from the cruel Japanese occupation of four years, and after doing so,
- (2) she voluntarily relinquished her sovereignty over the Philippines and
- (3) after granting us independence she voted one half billion dollars to rehabilitate our destroyed country.

GRATITUDE TO AMERICA

For all these noble deeds, we Filipinos were melted in gratitude to America. I am not trying to defend America for her acts of unfairness now complained of by Secretary Romulo among so many. I am reminding you of the circumstances surrounding these events.

During the American regime in the Philippines of half a century, we enjoyed the most liberal treatment among all the colonies of the world at that time. She did not suppress the movement for independence that immediately followed the ap-

proval of the Cooper Bill which became the first Organic Act of the Philippine civil government. So many of the best Americans among them, Cooper, Hoar, Jones, Harrison, Tydings, McDuffy, and a constellation of many others fought and worked with us to achieve our goal of independence. When the big American trusts at the time wanted to exploit the Philippine natural resources for themselves, an American Governor-General in the person of Howard Taft, nipped the idea in the bud by proclaiming the famous Taft doctrine of the "Philippines for the Filipinos."

During her regime, she established a public system of education based on the instruction of the English language, and the Western culture of English has become the unifying language of the Philippines that has reduced a great deal the tribalistic divisions of the Filipinos at that time and inducted an awareness of the oneness and solidarity of the Filipino people. Up to now, this cultural force, introduced by the Americans, continues to

be the richest part of our cultural heritage, and remains as our medium of rapport with the progressive nations of the world.

That is America's record in the Philippines in a nutshell.

Is there any nation in Asia, from the biggest to the smallest that can boast of similar altruistic record? Why, then, should we part ways with America where hundreds of thousands of Filipinos have embraced American citizenship, mostly in Hawaii and the Pacific Coast and are enjoying the privileges of American citizenship?

I do not absolve the U.S. from the mistakes and the high-handed acts she has perpetrated against Filipinos. I do not condone some of the acts complained of by Mr. Romulo in his speech. In fact, I do maintain she must rectify without delay these unfair acts to improve her image in the eyes of small democratic countries.

But of one thing I am profoundly convinced and it is; that if we strike a balance

between the good and the bad things she has done for or against us, I can say without fear of successful contradiction even by ultra-nationalists that, by and large, she has done well by

us, and it is to the interest of this country to maintain and constantly improve the relations and ties of friendship between the U.S. and the Philippines based on equality and mutual respect.

PRINCIPLES IN ACTION

On no occasion call yourself a philosopher, nor talk at large of your principles among the multitude, but act on your principles. For instance, at a banquet do not say how one ought to eat, but eat as you ought. Remember that Socrates had so completely got rid of the thought of display that when men came and wanted an introduction to philosophers, he took them to be introduced; so patient of neglect was he.

And if a discussion arise among the multitude on some principle, keep silent for the most part; for you are in great danger of blurting out some undigested thought. And when some one says to you, "You know nothing," and you do not let it provoke you, then know that you are really on the right road. For sheep do not bring grass to their shepherds and show them how much they have eaten, but they digest their fodder and then produce it in the form of wool and milk; Do the same yourself; instead of displaying your principles to the multitude, show them the results of the principles you have digested. — *From the Manual of Epictetus.*