



CARLOS P. ROMULO

# The Voice Of Liberty

By General CARLOS P. ROMULO

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *The following poem of General Carlos P. Romulo, Philippine Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the United Nations, and currently president of the UN General Assembly, was featured by the Saturday Review of Literature in its January 14, 1950 issue. In reprinting the poem, the Manila Guardian hopes to project the thoughts of the foremost spokesman of the Philippines—and for mankind—today, and to pay tribute to the man, whom future generations may rightly call World Citizen No. 1.*

**I** BRING the voice of bold, unfettered men  
 The voice that will not die  
 Through this and ages still to be  
 The price be fire or blood.  
 Sweeping the full extent of history,  
 Its substance, immanent, sublime,  
 Imparts the answer to our kind being here,  
 Not like the savage brute  
 Bereft of faith or hope,  
 But standing up to God  
 Within the harmony of space and time . . .  
 If troubled hands should seek to mute  
 Its accents firm and clear  
 That men and women free  
 Might circumscribe their ken  
 Within the narrow scope  
 Of prejudice and hate,  
 Then all their doubt and fear  
 Spread by relentless hordes  
 Seeking but Mammon's gain,  
 Can by unfaithful words  
 Becloud and desecrate  
 Its mandate but in vain.  
 Ere Man devised his rule of Law  
 To reaffirm the higher and divine,  
 Ere mosque or synagogue or shrine  
 Took root upon this earth,  
 This voice was heard in awe  
 By human ears perverse,  
 And then he saw the birth  
 Of Truth that spanned the universe. . .  
 Out of the mealstrom of the elements,

Resounding with the force  
 O ruthless hurricanes,  
 It came to strike and lash  
 At dungeon gates of steel  
 Tearing into the paths  
 Of empires, to reverse  
 The misdirected course  
 Of tyrannies that tried to crush  
 The guiltless in their chains,  
 And hold back in their wraths  
 Communes and parliaments.  
 Across the distant meadow plains  
 Of Runnymede, where Common Man,  
 Roused from the anguish of his hearth,  
 Laid down the Charter of his will  
 That all his peers who bore  
 The cross of Arrogance  
 Might live and slave no more;  
 Into the iron cells of the Bastille  
 Where despots came in ire  
 Their victims to disgorge;  
 Over the battlefields of Bunker Hill,  
 Of Concord, Valley Forge;  
 Against the cannon and the fire  
 That thundered through Bataan  
 And paved the foe's advance  
 On proud Corregidor—  
 It swept to bring rebirth  
 To muted faiths, and renaissance  
 To dying sacraments. . . .  
 The thunder and the crash are gone  
 Leaving but ugly scars

Across the shadowland of dismal years;  
 Dark memories of youth  
 Betrayed in senseless wars,  
 Of men who gave their blood  
 To serve ambitions mad—  
 These only, and the tears,  
 Of bitterness remain  
 For little things hard won . . .  
 So much is gone, so much of peace,  
 Of love, of light, of truth  
 In each remembered death;  
 Yet, ere the sighings cease,  
 War's foul and scaring breath  
 May burn the land again  
 Where heavy iron bars  
 Of cults and creeds are down  
 And sudden frontiers frown  
 Upon a world in fears. . . .  
 Then once again the potent power  
 That makes the eagle soar  
 Above the highest peak,  
 Beyond the farthest sky,  
 Will strike the fatal hour  
 For those who would deny  
 The freedom of the mind;  
 And sternly, bold, unfettered men,  
 By word of tongue or pen,  
 In terms of Truth will speak,  
 As they have done before,  
 The faith of Humankind;  
 While multitudes, unchained and free,  
 Will wave the battleflags and sing  
 The Hymn of Liberty. . . .  
 This be the immortal Voice I bring—  
 The Voice that will not die.