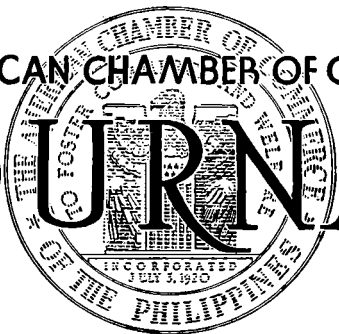


# THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

# JOURNAL



## Editorials

*"... to promote the general welfare"*

To those who, like the writer, were not present, but who heard the radio-broadcast of the inauguration proceedings on the Luneta, which, on December 30, opened the administration of President Ramon Mag-saysay, the most impressive feature was the happy and indeed jubilant shouting of the people. There was a high, full-throated cheering so sustained even during the solemn moments of the oath-taking, that the words of the Chief Justice were hardly audible and the responses, first of the Vice-President and second of the President, could not be heard at all. In sharp contrast, the great crowd was wholly attentive and silent during the President's twenty-five minute inaugural address which was delivered in strong and measured tones, ringing with sincerity. The message, although unusually short, was pithy and fully justified the people's will and hope.

It was forceful rather than eloquent, and the ideas, all of them expressing both dedication and determination, were well ordered and economically and effectively phrased.

He declared that he accepted the people's gift of the highest office, humbly and gratefully and that his sole determination was to be President for the people, quoting the basic Constitutional tenet that sovereignty resides in the people and that all government authority emanates from them, and stating that all those in public office are but servants of the people. He interpreted his election as follows:

"As I see it, your mandate in the past election was not a license for the selfish enjoyment of power by any man or group of men. On the contrary, it was an endorsement of the principle—at times forgotten—that the general welfare is the only justification for the exercise of governmental power and authority. Your mandate was a clear and urgent command to establish for our people a government based upon honesty and morality, a government sensitive to your needs, dedicated to your best interest, and inspired by our highest ideals of man's liberty."

He mentioned Rizal, Del Pilar, Bonifacio, and Mabini, and said that too often these men were spoken of as if their work was done and as if today their spirit has ceased to have meaning or value to the people. The truth is, he said,

that we need their spirit now more than ever; that the people needed men of the integrity and faith of Rizal and Del Pilar, men of action like Bonifacio, and men of such inflexible patriotism as Mabini, to complete the work which they began.

"I will have such men," he vowed.

"From this day, the members of my Administration, beginning with myself, shall cease to belong to our parties, to our families, even to ourselves. We shall belong only to our people. . . I will render—and demand—uncompromising loyalty to the basic tenet of our Constitution, that you, the people, are sovereign. The rule of government must be service to you. Accordingly, I pledge my Administration to your service. I pledge that we shall extend the protection of the law to everyone, fairly and impartially—to the rich and the poor, the learned and the unlettered—recognizing, no party but the nation, no family but the great family of our race, no interest save the common welfare. The Bill of Rights shall be, for me and the members of my Administration, a bill of duties. . . We shall strive to give meaning and substance to the liberties guaranteed by our Constitution—by helping our citizens to attain the economic wellbeing so essential to the enjoyment of civil and political rights."

Speaking more particularly of the three branches of the Government, he stated that he would seek zealously to preserve the separation of powers ordained by the Constitution as a safeguard against tyranny. As to the legislative power, he declared:

"The legislative power vested by the Constitution in the elected representatives of the people, will, I trust, operate vigorously to prosecute our common program of honest, efficient, and constructive government. As Executive, I look forward to intimate cooperation with the members of Congress, particularly with those statesmen who have stood guard over the rights and liberties of our people."

As to the judiciary, he declared that its independence would be strengthened.

Next he spoke of his general program, speaking first of "social justice" under which name heretofore, he said, fervent but frustrated hopes had been raised in the hearts of our less fortunate citizens. We must not permit this to be an empty phrase, but bring it to life for all. He declared he would take energetic and positive measures to improve living conditions especially in the barrios and neglected rural areas and for the workers in the urban and industrial centers.

In this connection he referred to the necessary re-examination of the system of land tenure to purge it of injustice and oppression, and to clearing and opening the country's vast and fertile public lands to settlement. "Land for the landless" will be more than a catch-phrase, he said. "We will translate it into actuality."

"Democracy becomes meaningless," he said, "if it fails to satisfy the primary needs of the common man, if it can not give him freedom from fear and freedom from want. His happiness and security are the only foundations on which a strong republic can be built. His happiness and security shall be foremost among the goals of my administration."

He viewed the entire development of the national economy in the same light.

"We must develop the national economy so that it may better satisfy the material needs of our people. The benefits of any economic or industrial development program shall be channeled first to our common people, so that their living standards will be raised."

Five short paragraphs, comprising about one-seventh of the whole address, were devoted to foreign affairs, with the emphasis on cooperation with the United States and the United Nations. The content was as tersely cogent as the rest.

"While I shall give priority to our domestic problems, my Administration will not neglect our international responsibilities. We can not escape the fact that today the destinies of nations are closely linked. It is in this spirit that we regard the goodwill and assistance extended to us through the various programs of international economic cooperation with the more developed nations, chiefly the United States. Considering this aid to be primarily a means of speeding up our program toward self-reliance, I pledge that every peso's worth of assistance will be spent honestly and to the best advantage. It is to our common interest that this Republic, a monument to mutual goodwill and common labor, should prove to the world the vitality of the democracy by which we live. . . . No effort will be spared, no element of cooperation will be withheld in strengthening and safeguarding our physical security. We are prepared to live up to all our obligations under our Mutual Defense Treaty with the United States."

This, by the way, was the only reference in the address to any specific treaty.

As to the country's relations with the United Nations, he stated:

"We shall continue to cooperate with the United Nations in seeking collective security and a just world peace."

With respect to Philippine relations with other Asiatic nations, he said:

"To our Asian brothers, we send fraternal greetings. They are beset by problems of the same nature and complexity as those that confront us. We invite them to share our experience in finding solutions to those problems through democratic means. It is my hope that we [shall be able] to exchange experiences and information on methods that each of us has found most effective in subduing illiteracy, poverty, disease, under-productivity, and other common evils which have afflicted our countries for past generations."

Lastly, in regard to his general program, he spoke of the "armed dissidence" within the country, with which, he said, "we can not compromise". He called upon the remnant of the Huk elements still in hiding to lay down their arms, declaring:

"I say to the rank and file of the Huks—who have been misled by the lies of the Kremlin—that they can win the economic security and social justice they desire only within the framework of our democracy. We shall welcome back the truly repentant with understanding and sympathy."

He was stern with the "leaders of the Communist conspiracy who would deliver this country and its people to a foreign power."

"I shall use all the force at my command to the end that the sovereign authority of this Government shall be respected and maintained. There can be no compromise with disloyalty."

Finally came the most moving part of his address, that part in which he anticipated the sceptics:

"I have been warned," he said, "that too much is expected of this Administration, that our people expect the impossible."

Then came his answer:

"For this young and vigorous nation of ours, nothing is really impossible."

He continued, like the leader he is:

"Let us have faith in ourselves, the same faith which fired the heroic generation of our Revolution. They fought and won their struggle with nothing but bolos in their hands and courage in their hearts. Without political training and experience, they wrote a constitution [the Malolos Constitution] comparable with the best and established the first Republic in Asia [under the presidency of General Aguinaldo]. Our own generation was told by doubters and enemies that we would never have independence from the United States. We live today under a free and independent Republic. Our faith was fulfilled."

"Today," he concluded, "we are told anew that it is impossible to do what must be done. But our people, sustained by God, under whose protection we have placed our destiny and happiness, and strengthened by an abiding faith in His goodness and mercy, our people, united and free, shall shape a future worthy of our noble heritage if we but act; act together; act wisely; act with courage, and act unselfishly, in a spirit of patriotic dedication."

The people's answer to this address was in the highest degree dramatic and caused the listeners to the radio-broadcast of the proceedings to hold their breaths. Breaking the police-lines, overwhelming the presidential guards and secret-service men, detailed for his protection, the people laid hold of him as he left the reviewing stand to get to his automobile, and raised him to their shoulders. The same phenomenon referred to in an editorial in last month's issue of this *Journal* again occurred before the wondering and no doubt anxious eyes of the assembled dignitaries from many nations. Thousands of people struggled to reach him to shake his hands or merely to touch him. In the ensuing melee he could easily have been knifed or shot by some assassin in the pressing multitude. But only smiling faces surrounded him and an answering expression never left the President's face as he was tossed over the heads of the people, his hands reaching out to all.

It was with a sigh of relief that the radio listeners learned that he had at last reached his open Ford car and was on his way, slowly through the press, to Malacañan.

The importance of the Eisenhower plan for the establishment of an international pool of fissionable materials under an entity to be called **The Eisenhower International Atomic Energy Atomic Pool Plan Agency**, is that, simple and practical as it appears to be, it is a catalytic one,—to borrow a term from physical chemistry, introducing a new factor bound greatly to accelerate the formation of favorable new combinations; just as a chemist may use a very small quantity of a certain substance to produce an immediate chemical reaction on a very large scale.

The plan may, at least to begin with, be put into operation with or without Russian participation, and its probable effect may also be likened to the breaking up of a great log-jam in a river, which may threaten a wide area with flood and destruction, by the removal of a single log.

Up to the present time, atomic energy development has been the monopoly of a small number of great powers, working in secrecy and chiefly on atomic weapons of the most dreadful destructive power, and the deadly armament race thus engendered under the universal fear, threatens the self-immolation of all the peoples of the world.

The United States has time and again proposed a submission of atomic energy development to international control, with the necessary international inspection, but this has been obstinately opposed by the Russian rulers.

The Eisenhower plan will not end this competition, but as the nations of the world turn to the open and co-operative application of atomic energy to the arts of peace, both the fear and the rivalry will be mitigated.

And as the great destructive forces which have been discovered are turned to constructive use, the world may shortly be so immensely benefited and such an era of general well-being may be ushered in, that it would be likely that deadly conflict between human groups would lose all point.

\*Laid before the United Nations in his noble address of December 8.