

## President Magsaysay's Nationalism

**B**ECAUSE of the importance of his address at the Far Eastern University commencement exercises, in which he first spoke at length on his five-year economic development plan, President Magsaysay's address on the development of the national character, delivered the very next day at the commencement exercises of the National University, appears not to have drawn the attention it merits.

In his statement, made a few weeks earlier, on the country's Asian foreign policy, the President had said that he stood for the development of a "healthy nationalism", and in his National University address he essayed to define what he meant by this.

The President approached the matter in a very simple way. "In my mind," he said,—

"nations are very much like individuals", and the world is simply a large community in which nations live and work as neighbors. What I consider a "healthy nationalism", therefore, is to achieve as a nation the kind of character we admire and try to achieve as individuals; to maintain the standards of national behavior which our traditions call for in a good neighbor."

Readers will no doubt recall that a great American President, the late Franklin D. Roosevelt, initiated the "Good Neighbor Policy" with respect to the nations south of the Rio Grande, a policy which has met with signal success up to the present day. The relationship of the Philippines with its neighbors is not the same as that of the United States with the nations of Central and South America, yet the simple concept of the good neighbor can be just as useful and valuable in this part of the world as it has proved to be in the Western Hemisphere.

President Magsaysay went on with the same engaging simplicity, taking the date of the nation's independence as obviously the date "we came of age."

"Before that, in our national childhood and youth [he said], we were exposed to many influences, good and bad. We grew up in the care of foster parents. Sometimes the treatment we received was harsh; other times it was affectionate and kind. Sometimes it was too stern, and we rebelled; at other times it was too indulgent, and we became spoiled.

"The methods of our foster parents were not always the wisest, and there was always the gap of our different ancestry, the memory of which remained strong in our blood and our hearts. But with sincere efforts on both sides, there came better mutual understanding and satisfaction. It was a test of our racial instinct [for us] to accept the best that our foster parents had to offer, and to reject what was unsuited to our racial tradition. I believe that we came out very well in that

"It should be understood that the analogy between individuals and nations is not wholly valid. The great difference between the relationship among individuals and nations is that individuals are not sovereign in the sense that independent nations are. Despite international law and treaties such as the Charter of the United Nations, there is still no over-riding authority or power in the world recognized and obeyed by all, as there is in well-governed individual nations.

If the activities of middlemen in the rice trade can not be totally stopped, at least, Filipinos must endeavor to increase their participation in the trade of their basic staples, particularly rice. Philippine laws have always been for the protection of Filipino retailers, but it is sad to note that most of the local businessmen are indifferent and are easily discouraged by slight changes in the business trends. The Government must, therefore, give these Filipino merchants greater incentive to gain increasing participation and control of the channels of rice retail distribution in their own country. For one thing, it is generally felt that loans to small Filipino rice retailers should be liberalized to enable them to compete on fair terms with the aliens who, with their closely-knit organizations, can easily harness larger capital. Another measure which could undoubtedly improve the sad plight of Filipino rice dealers would be the establish-

ment, even if we can not claim complete success. Like any individual in the same circumstances, we acquired many of the virtues our national foster parents tried to pass on to us, but we also absorbed some of their faults."

One happily locks in vain for any "anti-imperialistic" bitterness over the past in these words or for any expressions at all attributable to an "inferiority complex."

Frankly the President pointed to the great contributions of Spain and America:

"From Spain we took and adapted for our use the great moral and spiritual force of Christianity. America added to our native love of freedom a political philosophy that proclaimed the right of individuals and nations to freedom and self-determination; that called for tolerance and equality of opportunity for all men. Education, we were told, must not be for the privileged few, but must become available to all who wished to better themselves. America's doctrine of the individual's duty to the community, found a sympathetic response in the ancient traditions of our race. Self-reliance, fair play, pride in our national heritage and our national heroes,—these were all part of American teachings and did much to equip us for national maturity."

As to some of the faults absorbed from the nation's foster parents, President Magsaysay referred, with respect to the Spanish influence, to the disposition to be "too much impressed with the importance of prestige and position" and to be "too ready to acquire attitudes of distaste for labor and commerce." With respect to the American influence, the President said that too many Filipinos tended "to forget the courageous pioneers who built America" and take instead, as models, "the unscrupulous promoters condemned by Americans themselves." "Too many, also," he said, "ignore the responsibilities of maturity and continue to lean on paternal protection and generosity." "Too many of us never got past Hollywood."

"But these are all faults," said the President, "which are not uncommon to youth. If the basic individual is sound, they disappear with age and experience. Likewise, if the nation is sound, it becomes the good citizen and the good neighbor of the world."

Still clinging to the analogy of the individual, the President said that "to know what we want to be as a nation we need only ask ourselves what we want to be as individuals."

"We want health, strength, and skill to be a good provider and to enjoy the benefits of modern living. We want to express and broaden our cultural heritage; to develop and take pride in our racial talents. We want to live this life with Divine help and guidance, and we recognize the moral and spiritual obligations that merit such blessings.

"To live this national life, to make the most of our talents and our virtues, we need security in our home and we must forge mutually beneficial relationships with friendly nations. We need sources of skills and materials we lack, and markets in which to exchange the fruits

ment of retailer cooperatives organized for their economic protection and welfare.

All in all, what the rice industry really needs is an efficient marketing system. The disorderly handling and disorganized marketing of rice prevailing in the country today breeds destructive competition which ultimately results in the control of the marketing field by alien middlemen and alien dummies. The ACCFA-backed marketing plan discussed above might prove the best solution—the buying and selling of cereal by Filipino dealers organized into cooperatives, with the financial backing of the Government. If we succeed in overhauling the rice marketing system and in increasing the rice surplus, the Philippines can consider the rice problem as solved.

<sup>1</sup>Annunciation, Daniel F. 1932. A study of marketing rice in Nueva Ecija. The Philippine Agriculturist, 21:177-193.

<sup>2</sup>These NARIC rice mills have a total capacity of about 28,400 cavans of paddy.

of our productive enterprise for what we desire from others. We need the leisure, the means, and the stimulation to broaden our cultural horizons."

Here are simple, homely references the national needs with respect to public health and sanitation, national defense, economic development, cultural advancement, national piety, ethical improvement, diplomatic relations, foreign trade.

"In normal times," continued the President, "these needs are the rights of free men and free nations, but today we must win them and protect them by the quality of our citizenship in the world-community, and by the firm application to our everyday living of the principles and morality we claim as our own." This, clearly, is a reference, in individual terms, to Philippine membership in the United Nations and the obligations of that membership.

Under this head he made a direct reference to the common action in Korea. "For the common security we need," he said, "we contribute what we can afford. Our force in Korea, our participation in the United Nations, working for freedom and against subversion and aggression, are examples."

His next point related to national inter-dependence:

"No man, except one satisfied with a bare existence, can live alone. No nation desiring a rising standard of living for its people is economically independent. Skills, finances, markets—only with these can a nation's own wealth be turned into a better life for the people. Where they are lacking, they must be sought by friendly cooperation."

Then he summarized:

"In other words, the kind of 'healthy nationalism' we want is that mature spirit of self-confidence which takes freedom as a right not to be challenged; a right to be part of the free world, not to withdraw from it."

His last point was an affirmation of the people's faith in the democratic process and in government by law.

"As individuals and as a nation, we have faith in the democratic process and in government by law. For this reason, we believe that the law-abiding community of nations holds the key to world peace and security. It is only in such atmosphere that true nationalism, for small as well as large nations, can survive against the attacks of those who claim that force, lies, and subversion are legitimate instruments of policy."

And he concluded as follows:

"This conflict between law and violence makes the obligations of world citizenship today a grave responsibility. It calls for far-sighted wisdom, for sound judgment; it calls for dignity and restraint; for a mature faith in our ability to protect our interests. In such national behavior lies the strength of free-world unity and the survival of nationalism itself."

There is in this expression of President Magsaysay's nationalism nothing that is narrow and invidious, nothing that would tend to encourage ill-will and hostility, or arouse, in others, opposition and counter-measures of an equally narrow nationalistic character. It is a Filipino nationalism wise and tonic, to which all non-Filipinos of goodwill can subscribe.

## Our Foreign Service and Foreign Trade\*

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...GENTLEMEN, right at the first bound of the new Administration, our President and your Secretary of Foreign Affairs announced the policy that our foreign service will lay special emphasis on trade promotion with our neighbor countries of Asia, without neglecting the maintenance of our trade relations with the United States and Europe. It is my intention this afternoon to elaborate more on this policy, so I have chosen for my subject "Our Foreign Service and Foreign Trade." This discourse is by no means exhaustive. It is not even a complete outline of this rather broad and difficult subject; but if I can stimulate constructive debate and discussion on this vital subject, if I can spark a more conscientious and, may I say, more scientific study and investigation of this matter, I would consider my effort amply rewarded. I will feel happy in the thought that out of such discussion and investigation, light and fire may emerge—light to show us the way and fire to spur us to action.

**Trade with all Southeast Asia.**—Since we have decided to establish economic ties with Southeast Asia, we will pay special attention in this discussion to this part of the world. Just how and where do we stand in Southeast Asian trade? Is our prospect in trade development in this area good? To answer these questions, let us examine statistics, however insipid and prosaic these may be. Taking as a unit, the eleven Southeast Asian countries (Australia, Burma, Ceylon, China, French East Indies, India, Indonesia, Malaya, New Zealand, Pakistan, and Thailand), our trade statistics show that our imports in 1952 were ₱78,500,000 as against our exports of ₱8,700,000, representing a trade balance unfavorable to us in the amount of ₱69,800,000. Total imports from these countries covering the period 1948 to 1951, inclusive, amounted to ₱315,300,000, as against our exports of ₱1,600,000, representing an unfavorable trade balance to us of ₱253,700,000. In 1952, our exports to these countries were only 1/9 of our imports from the same area; in other words, we bought from them nine times as much as we sold. In the period 1948-1951 our total exports were only 1/5 of our imports; in other words, we bought from them five times as much as we sold.

**Trade with Indonesia.**—Take the individual case of Indonesia. With that country alone, our trade is decidedly lopsided. While we imported from her in 1952 ₱41,700,000 worth of products we only exported ₱1,200,000, representing an unfavorable balance of ₱40,500,000. It is worth noting that this unfavorable trade balance increased by leaps and bounds because in 1950 it was only ₱31,000,000. This was maintained in 1951 and it leaped to ₱40,000,000 in 1952, whereas,

in 1948, this unfavorable trade balance was only ₱19,800,000. In other words, in the brief span of six years, this unfavorable trade balance increased 100%.

**Trade with Thailand.**—It is also noteworthy that our trade with Thailand shows a rapidly growing unfavorable trade balance because whereas we had in 1947 an unfavorable trade balance of only ₱4,000,000, in 1951 it sky-rocketed to ₱31,800,000. This represents an increase of almost 800%. Certainly, this is an alarming picture of our trade-position with Thailand.

**Trade with Japan.**—Take the case of Japan. I have not included Japan among the eleven Southeast Asian countries for the reason that we do not have normal political relation with this country. It is, however, a relief that this is the only Southeast Asian country with which we have a favorable balance of trade, our exports being ₱75,100,000 in 1952 and our imports, ₱38,000,000, representing a balance in our favor of ₱37,100,000. It is a source of comfort to note that from the time we established a barter-trade relationship with Japan, we registered a steadily increasing favorable trade balance of ₱20,700,000 in 1950, ₱6,260,000 in 1951, ₱37,100,000 in 1952, and ₱57,400,000 in 1953.

**Trade with United States.**—Now, let us take a graphic picture of our trade with the United States of America. Undoubtedly, because of our fifty years of association with the United States under a Free Trade System imposed upon us in 1909 by the Payne Tariff Act and carried over by the Jones Law, then the Tydings-McDuffie Independence Act, and lastly the Bell Trade Act after our independence in 1946, it is only natural that our biggest foreign trade is with the United States. It must be noted, however, that whereas before the war the trade balance was in favor of the Philippines, after the war this position was reversed, because from 1946 up to this time, the trade balance was decidedly in favor of the United States, beginning with ₱438,000,000 in 1946, registering the highest peak in 1947 with ₱575,600,000, with the lowest of ₱41,000,000 in 1950, and picking up again in 1951 to ₱150,000,000 and in 1952 to ₱141,400,000. It is a consolation, however, to note the fact that our exports to the United States indicate a steady increase, beginning with ₱76,800,000 in 1946 and reaching their highest point with ₱52,400,000 in 1951, while in 1952 it was ₱49,700,000. This steady increase of our exports is mainly due to the rehabilitation of our principal export-producing industries destroyed during the war but which have recovered gradually to their pre-war productive capa-

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