

PRESIDENT QUEZON SPEAKS ON FOREIGN POLICY*

It is significant that at the very beginning our Constitution declares that the Philippines renounces war as an instrument of national policy, and adopts the generally accepted principles of international law as a part of the law of our nation. This is not a mere reiteration of the Kellogg-Briand Pact, so loudly proclaimed and so oftenly disregarded; nor is it a passing or expedient adherence to a political tenet due to the present inability of our people to sustain an armed conflict. In addition to the principle enunciated in the Kellogg-Briand Pact, the Constitution has made international law part of the law of the land. This is a positive injunction against any violation of the accepted principles of international law by our Government.

This constitutional declaration implies that our people recognize that no nation has the right to resort to war in order to carry out its national policies; that every state is a member of the family of nations; that each nation has rights that must be respected by the other; that superiority of force is no justification for adopting and carrying out a national policy that may be prejudicial to the liberties and interests of other peoples; and that right and justice alone—never force—should determine and decide the conflicts that may arise between nations. In other words, it means that we are willing to submit to arbitration or to an international court for adjudication of any and all controversies that may arise between the Philippines and other countries.

Such is the spirit of nationalism that underlies our Constitution and our conduct towards the world should be inspired by that spirit.

The progress and development of international law coincided with the period when the sentiment of nationalism first came into being. For a time, it looked as if the right of every people to their own national life, free from outside interference or aggression, were to be forever recognized and respected. The principle of self-determination was the term chosen to designate this right. Unfortunately, however, the advance of international law, as the enforceable rule of conduct among nations, has not only been halted but also received a serious setback, as shown by the ominous events which have taken place during the last few years, and by others which even now, while I am talking to you, are filling the hearts of men with the fear of another holocaust. Wars are being waged without any previous declaration of hostilities; territories belonging to one country are ruthlessly invaded by another; nations are conquered, and the maps of Europe and of Asia are being changed from day to day. Self-

* Excerpts of the U. P. Commencement Address Delivered by His Excellency President Manuel L. Quezon on April 4, 1939.

determination is no longer valid except for those who have the power to back it with force.

I have already mentioned the terrible evils which have caused maladjustments in the economy of different nations. In relation to the world economy, we find that certain essential raw materials are practically the monopoly of a few fortunate nations, and, although their use has become prime necessities of modern life, the unfortunate countries that do not possess them may not procure these raw materials with the same facility or at the same cost as those nations possessing them. Again, international trade is being artificially directed and controlled in the interest of each nation, with little regard to the immediate effect it may have upon the lives of millions of human beings, and still less to the ultimate consequences upon the particular nation concerned, the export trade of which must sooner or later suffer adversely. It is my firm belief that until a new order is established whereby the wealth of the nation is shared by all classes of society, and the common man is given a chance to live as a human being, and whereby every nation is permitted to have an equal access to essential raw materials, and world trade allowed to take its natural course, international covenants to insure peace will not be worth the paper on which they are written.

Is it practicable to bring about the establishment of this new order? One would be a visionary who would unhesitatingly answer in the affirmative, while he who would answer in the negative would have lost all faith in man's wisdom and in the fundamental goodness of the human heart. It is certain, however, that it will not be the present generation that will see such order established. So the practical question that confronts us is; What should we do to insure our national safety against external aggression?

So long as there are nations that believe, and back their faith with force, that their national interests as conceived by them are paramount to the interests of any other nation and even to the interest of mankind, our only recourse is to build up our own force to defend ourselves against aggression. This is the reason why the Constitution asserts that the defense of the State is a prime duty of government, and that in the fulfillment of this duty all citizens may be required by law to render personal military or civil service.

I now turn to the question of our future conduct towards the nations of the world. To America we owe a special debt of gratitude. To her altruism and generosity, we shall be indebted for our national independence. She has made us heir to her ideals of liberty and democracy and the beneficiaries of her civilization and culture. It should be our constant endeavor to preserve undiminished this invaluable inheritance as well as our friendly and cultural relations with her after we shall have become independent. Toward the rest of the world, we shall follow a course that

will insure their amity and cooperation, without in any way involving ourselves in their affairs. We should adopt a most liberal policy in our foreign commerce. This is the policy demanded by our best interests. We shall thereby make friends and, being primarily an agricultural country, we shall in any case profit by it. In our foreign policy, let our motto be: JUSTICE AND FRIENDSHIP FOR ALL!

"Ban Lifted"

We have today in our country many foreigners, the largest that we have of foreigners exceed 200,000. Those are the Chinese. So far I do not think that these 200,000 Chinese have caused the Philippines any serious injury. As a matter of fact the National Assembly has just passed a bill for the first time, permitting Chinese to immigrate into the Philippines for as you know, or must know, up to this time there was a ban against Chinese and other Orientals to enter the Philippines by an act of Congress. So, in spite of the fact that we have over 200,000 Chinese we have opened the doors to Chinese to immigrate into the Philippines not more than 500 a year.

"Just And Humane"

"If the country can stand more than 200,000 Chinese, about 20 or 25,000 Japanese, and many thousands of Spaniards, Englishmen, Italians, etc., I don't suppose that the Philippines would think simply because there are to come into this country 10,000 Jewish refugees, who are not coming in one day or one year, but in the course of many years, that there was the slightest ground for concern. I don't see any. The people of the Philippines, as a result of this policy which the government of the Commonwealth has adopted, agreed with the department of state at Washington to receive these refugees into these islands. On the other hand, by so permitting them to come, we are showing the world the kind of people we really are: hospitable, just, and humane. *The Filipino people have taken pride in the fact that they are considered amongst the most hospitable people on earth.* On no better occasion could they have shown their hospitality than in welcoming to these lands people who have been forced out of their homes.**

** Portion of President Quezon's Speech on His Policy On Jews during Inauguration of the Mariquina Hall, April 20, 1940.

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