

The President's Statement on Our Asian Foreign Policy

Malacañang Press Release, March 10

"FOLLOWING a morning breakfast-conference at Malacañang with congressional leaders, President Magaysay this morning (Wednesday, March 10) issued a statement clarifying his Administration's foreign policy with reference to Asia.

"The statement takes an unequivocal position supporting the freedom and independence of individual Asian nations.

"The policy spelled out calls for closest possible cultural and economic cooperation with free Asian neighbors in matters of regional interest, while respecting the right of each nation to self-determination in matters of its own interests.

"Recognizing the withdrawal of old-style colonialism from Asia, the statement identifies aggressive communist imperialism as the new colonial threat and takes the position that a return of colonialism in any form is not to be tolerated.

"The full text of the President's statement is as follows:

"I AM in full agreement with the leaders of Congress in the following statement of our Asian foreign policy: "The Philippine Government stands for the right of self-determination and independence of all Asian nations; for closer cultural and economic relations and mutual cooperation with freedom-loving Asian countries as a group and within the framework of the Charter of the United Nations; and for the proposition that a return to colonialism, of which the last vestiges are now disappearing from Asia, shall not be tolerated in any form.

"The colonialism that threatens Asia today is world Communism. Nations which have won their freedom from old-style colonialism now face the danger of losing that freedom. A good defense against this threat is a healthy

Asian nationalism, a nationalism which defends the right of all Asian peoples to self-determination. We support this kind of nationalism as a rallying point for all free Asians against the forces of aggression and subversion.

"The Filipino people can best serve the cause of freedom and democracy by cooperating actively with other Asian peoples in the achievement and maintenance of political independence, economic stability, and social justice. We cannot contribute to that cause if we isolate ourselves from other freedom-loving Asian states and are suspected by them of ulterior motives or insincerity in our relations with them. Our Asian policy must, therefore, seek to remove all causes of distrust.

"Our Asian policy is not directed against any nation or race. We recognize the fact that to achieve our goals, under-developed countries in this region need the assistance of more advanced economies and that each Asian country should be free to decide for itself whether or not it desires such assistance as well as the conditions it believes compatible with its sovereignty and economic objectives.

"For ourselves, we have entered into agreements with the United States of America for mutual defense and special trade relations. There is no incompatibility between the political and economic ties and solidarity of aspirations in peace and in war, which have bound our two countries for more than half a century, and our warm desire to become good neighbors in Asia in a united effort, imposed by geographical propinquity and racial affinities, to achieve the general prosperity of this region. Rather, these two complementary objectives should give us that balanced foreign policy which we have lacked in the past.

"I trust that all patriotic Filipinos will agree on this policy of freedom and friendship in Asia."

Philippine Languages

THE Philippines has 55 language-dialects and 137 sub-dialects, exclusive of English, Spanish, and Chinese. This is obviously an impossibly large figure for information operations. Actually, however, there are elements of uniformity which make the task much simpler than it might seem at first glance.

The Philippines Bureau of the Census and Statistics recently released hitherto unpublished data from the 1948 Census indicating the growing importance of the major languages of the nation at the expense of the minor. English and Tagalog are running a close race for being the languages spoken by the largest number of Filipinos, but the relative rate of increase is now higher for Tagalog than for English. The extent to which Tagalog (the official national language) has spread outside its native heath, is indicated both by comparison with previous Census years and with the number of persons for whom Tagalog was not a native tongue. Between 1939 and 1948 the percentage of the total Philippine population speaking English rose from 26.6% to 32.4%. Tagalog speakers increased from 25.4% to 32.2%, and Cebuano-Visayan from 22.6% to 25.5%. Hiligaynon-Visayan, Bicol, and East Visayan (Leyteño or Waraywaray) showed only slight relative increases, while Ilocano, Pampengo, Pangasinan, and Spanish showed relative decreases. Although no exact comparison has been made of persons speaking other languages and dialects than the above, it is believed that generally they failed to keep up with the growth of population. More Filipinos

speak English as a non-mother tongue than any other, only a few knowing it before school-age but over 7,000,000 learning it subsequently. In second place is the official national language, Tagalog, which has been learned by over 4,000,000 non-Tagalogs, 61% of the total number who speak it. No other languages or dialects remotely approach these figures.

The 1948 Census did not attempt to evaluate the claims of individuals who said they spoke languages other than their native tongue. Clifford H. Prater, Jr., a Fulbright scholar, said of the 1939 Census in his study *Language Teaching in the Philippines* that "it may be assumed that a large number of the individuals... actually possessed only a slight acquaintance with the language." On the other hand, it should be pointed out that the important daily newspapers of the Philippines are now written in English and that virtually all serious Philippine literature is written in English. English, says Prater, "is distinctly a second language, artificially acquired as a part of the formal educative process. For the average Filipino who speaks it, it has closer associations with books and recitations than with every-day life." However, Tagalog is similar in grammar and phonetic structure to all the other major Philippine languages, which in turn are allied to Indonesian tongues. Only a few months of study are required by an adult Filipino for a good working knowledge of another Philippine language than his own, since the main differences are in vocabulary. Even here there is