

UNEQUAL PARTNERS :
The Philippines—US Relations, 1946—1957

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C E R T I F I C A T E

Certified that the dissertation entitled,
"UNEQUAL PARTNERS : THE PHILIPPINES-US RELATIONS, 1946-1957"
submitted by Shri Veeramalla Anjaiah in partial fulfilment of
award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.)
in Jawaharlal Nehru University, is a product of the
Student's own work, carried out by him under my supervision
and guidance. I recommend that this dissertation be
placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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P R E F A C E

Even after more than four decades of its independence, the Philippines still remains as an underdeveloped and agricultural country. The reason lies in its colonial past and neo-colonial present. The Spanish colonialism reinforced feudal tendencies and transformed the Philippines to a christian state. An apparently superior culture was imposed on the Filipinos forcibly. The Americans did not change the existing system i.e. feudalism in the Philippines. It was the American colonial education that created a new pro-US Filipino generation. On the otherhand, the Philippines became dependent on the US in all aspects.

The granting of formal independence and sovereignty to the Philippines on July 4, 1946 did not alter the nature of the US' relationship with the Philippines. In order to cloak its colonial ambitions, the US established a kind of 'special relationship with the Philippines in the post-independence era.

The present study is conceived as an effort to define the nature of special relationship, and its scope from the Philippine point of view. The

study of the Philippines - US relations is significant in understanding the context of relationship, the expectations generated and benefits which accrued from it.

This dissertation consists of five chapters. The first chapter traces the origins of the Philippines - US relations in the background of Spanish colonialism. It also examines the Filipinos' response to various colonial powers, viz., Spain, the US and Japan.

The second chapter analyses the Philippines - US relations under president Roxas. It also critically examines post-independence agreements and the Filipinos' response to restrictions imposed by the US on their sovereignty and independence.

The third chapter discusses the origins of agrarian unrest (Huk movement) against the pro-landlord policies of the Philippine as well as the US governments. It examines the Mutual Defence Treaty Quirino - Foster Agreement, and Baguio Conference and major issues involved in them. It also analyses the independent postures in Quirino's foreign policy towards Asia, and the US reaction to the same.

The fourth chapter deals with the 'new era' in the Philippines - US relations under President Magsaysay. It analyses, the emerging Philippine nationalism under the leaders like Senator Claro M. Recto. It also discusses the nature of US intervention in the Philippines' internal as well as external affairs. It lay special emphasis on land reforms, Manila pact or Southeast Asian Treaty organization (SEATO), and on the strengthening of 'special relationship' with the US.

The concluding chapter carries the findings of the dissertation.

The present study owes its existence to the inspiration and guidance of Dr. Bhagwan Dass Arora to whom I am deeply grateful. Dr. Arora provided constant help and encouragement at every stage of the work. His incisive comments benefitted me all the way through the complexities of the subject. My debt to him is immense.

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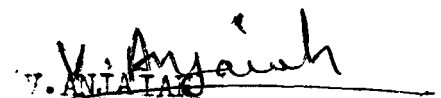
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V. ANJIAH

C O N T E N T S

	Page
Preface	ix-xii
Chapter I The Background	1-39
Chapter II The Presidency of Manuel Roxas, 1946-1948	40-72
Chapter III Elpidio Quirino, 1948-53	73-106
Chapter IV Ramon Magsaysay, 1954-57	107-145
Chapter V Conclusion	146-158
Bibliography	159-169

CHAPTER - I

THE BACKGROUND

Introduction

The dialectics of the Philippines' relationship with the United States of America (USA or US) are rooted in the nature of its 'colonial past' and the 'neo-colonial present'. The Philippines rose from a colony to an independent nation within the framework of its 'special relationship' with the US. It is the colonial past that compelled the Philippines to have a "close and special relationship".¹ with the US. Basically, this so-called 'special relationship' is an amalgam of historical, security and economic ties and emotional hangups.² One Filipino author puts it as a "moving experience."³

The Philippines, like the US, is an independent,

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1. Salvador P. Lopez, "Philippines - American Relations in the Decade of Seventies", Diliman Review (Quezon City), vol.17 no.6. October 1969, p.343.
 2. Robert Pringle, Indonesia and the Philippines: American Interests in Island Southeast Asia (New York, 1980), p.52.
 3. Francisco Sionil Jose, "The Roots of Anti-Americanism," Solidarity (Manila), Vol.v, no.1, January 1970, p.7.

democratic and sovereign country. That's why it is considered to be equal to the US in legal terms. But, in reality, it is unequal to the latter in terms of wealth, military power, scientific and technological capability, and bargaining strength. The study of these unequal partners' relations means the study of the context of the relationship, the expectations generated and the benefits or otherwise which it yielded. It is also necessary to understand the underlying basic conditions and factors that have contributed to the relations between the two countries. Surprisingly, no serious effort has been made to study these relations from the Filipino point of view. The present study is aimed at filling this gap.

The study of the Philippines' relations with the US would be rewarding if seen in the background of their earliest contacts so that the framework for their interaction and evolving pattern of their relationship could be established. Their early contacts go back to the turn of this century when the US Admiral Dewey entered the Manila Bay on May 1, 1898 as part of

US-Spanish War of 1898.⁴ Since then the US put an end to the 333-year old and decadent Spanish colonialism, and made the Philippines a colony of its own.

Spanish Colonialism (1565-1898)

At the time of his execution by the Spaniards, the Filipinos' national hero, Jose Rizal praised his motherland as the "pearl of the orient seas".⁵ The Philippines is

4. But, according to Geoffrey Bocca, the first American merchant ship entered into the Manila Bay on October 3, 1796. It stayed for sixty-eight days in Manila, and then left for home, carrying a cargo of sugar, indigo, and pepper. For further details see Geoffrey Bocca, The Philippines: America's Forgotten Friends (New York, 1974), p.32.

5. Jose Rizal - Mercado y Alonso (1861-1896) was a Chinese mestizo and a great Filipino patriot and martyr. He was a physician, ophthalmologist, novelist, linguist, essayist, anthropologist, philologist, painter, sculptor, teacher, educator, translator and a great historian. It was this multi-faceted personality and his famous works - 'Noli me Tangere (The Social Cancer) and 'El Filibusterismo (The Reign of Greed) had provided intellectual as well as ideological input to the embryonic Filipino nationalism in nineteenth century. He was executed by the Spaniards on December 30, 1896 on false charges. For other details see Estaban A. De Ocampo, "Dr. Rizal, Father of Filipino Nationalism" Journal of Southeast Asian History (Singapore), vol.3 (1962-63) p.47. See also, V. Anjaiah, "Prospect of US Bases in Philippines", Mainstream (New Delhi, Vol.27, no.17, January 21, 1989, p.14.

situated at a crossroads of the Pacific Ocean, South China and the Sulu seas. Its fertile lands, natural resources, strategic location, and fishing grounds have added more shine to the Filipino pearl. It was this shine that attracted the foreign colonial powers to colonize the Philippines.⁶

Of the three colonial powers to establish colonial rule over the Philippines, Spain has the distinction of being the founder in that effort and ruled the Philippines for more than three centuries, 333 years to be exact.⁷ The US and Japan were the other two colonial powers which occupied the Philippines for nearly half a century.

During more than three centuries of their colonialism, Spaniards carried the sword in one hand and the cross on the other.⁸ In the absence of any strong religious

6. Ibid.

7. Usha Mahajan, Philippine Nationalism: External Challenge and Filipino Response, 1565-1946 (St. Lucia, 1971), p.11.

8. D.G.E. Hall, A History of South East Asia (London, 1981), p.273.

doctrine prevalent, then in the Filipino society, it became easier for Spanish missionaries to christianize the Philippines. The Spaniards used religion as a tool to colonize and control the Philippines.⁹

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9. During the pre-Spanish period, the Philippines was divided into small political units known as 'barangays' on the basis of race, language and culture. Basically, barangay means a small village in the Philippine society. The barangay was led by an hereditary chief known as 'datu' (village headman). There was no uniform religious doctrine in the barangays. Each barangay used to practice different religious doctrines which includes ancestor worship. That's why, Spaniards laid more emphasis on christianization in the beginning in order to colonize the Philippines. For an extended analysis on pre-Spanish period see John H. Esterline and Mae H. Esterline, How the Dominos Fell: Southeast Asia in Perspective (California, 1985), pp.318-19.

Thus, the Spaniards imposed an apparently looking superior culture on the Filipinos with force. There was forcible imposition of new religious traditions, customs and practices on the Filipinos.¹⁰ As a result, Filipinos' not so strong indigenous culture and traditions got blunted in the process.

Spain had introduced an administrative structure based on Spanish institutions and civil law in the Philippines. At the same time, Spaniards coopted the indigenous traditional structure of authority into the colonial hierarchy.¹¹ As a result, the native leadership had been provided with a berth in the colonial administration. Thus, the native leaders, the Datus, became the pillars of colonial administration and intermediaries between the ruler and the ruled.¹² This was the core of Spanish legacy in the Philippines reflecting on the vulnerability of Philippine nationalism. In the later stage Americans and Japanese adopted the

10. Hall, n.8, p.273.

11. Esterline, n.9, p.320

12. Renato constantino, The Philippines: A past Revisited (Quezon city, 1975), p.52.

similar technique i.e., coopting the Filipino leadership into the colonial administration in order to control the Philippines.

By the end of seventeenth century, the commercialization of agriculture and rise of foreign trade brought several radical changes in the agrarian system. The Spaniards had neither the manpower nor the inclination to provide the commercial and middle class services required by the colony at that time. It was Chinese immigrants who exploited the situation to fulfil the exploitative needs of the Spanish colonial regime.¹³ Most of the Chinese immigrants adopted moneylending business as their prime profession in the barrios (villages). It was this money-lending business that transformed money-lenders to landlords and the peasants to 'Kasamas' or share-croppers.¹⁴

13. David Joel Steinberg, The Philippines: A singular and A Plural Place(Colorado, 1982), p.21.

14. Chinese immigrants acquired land via two distinct methods. They became inquilinos or lessees (inquilino means a person who was given a concession to clear and improve church land. The land remained the property of the church, and the inquilino would sublet it to tenants for a percentage of their crop yield) and then they would sublet the church land to native peasants for a percentage of the crop yield. In Taglog, people used to call this system as 'Kasamahan'.

b) The second method of acquiring land was through

At the same time, the Spanish friars had acquired enough lands by using religion and their authority in the government.¹⁵ The worst result of the Spanish colonialism was creation of landlordism in the Philippines which still rules the roost in the barrios.

moneylending business. According to Spanish law, Filipinos were not allowed to take more than twenty five pesos as loan from the moneylenders. In order to overcome this hurdle, moneylenders would buy a Filipino's land and grant him option of repurchasing it later. This system known as 'Pactos de retro: in which the original owner (Filipino) rarely was able to repurchase his land and the moneylender would automatically become the owner of the land.

Thus, Chinese acquired the land and become the landlords by the beginning of eighteenth century. For an extended analysis on this subject, see, *ibid.*, p.85. See also Teodor A. Agoncillo and Milegros C. Guerrero, History of the Filipino People (Quezon city, 1970), pp 104-05.

15. Constantino, n.12, p.67.

Spaniards, unlike Britishers in Asia, intermarried with the native Filipino women. Chinese immigrants followed the same path. As a result, a new mixed generation known as 'mestizo' emerged.¹⁶ By the mid-eighteenth century, mestizos, especially Chinese mestizos, emerged as rich landlords in barrios and big business community in towns and cities. Their wealth made it possible for them to be exposed to the Spanish education and culture. With this, a new generation of educated elite known as 'ilustrado' emerged.¹⁷ It would not be out of place to mention here that the Spaniards wanted to keep the Filipinos in ignorance so that they would remain the masters of the Filipinos forever.¹⁸

The union of church and the state under the colonial regime was another important feature of the Spanish colonialism in the Philippines. Under this system ,

16. Mestizo is a Spanish term used for people of racially diverse parents. For example a child who was born to a Chinese father and Filipino mother or vice-versa, known as Chinese mestizo. On the same lines the terms like Spanish mestizo and American mestizo came into existence.

17. Ilustrado means a member of Filipino educated elite.

18. Bocca, n.4, pp 30-31.

friars became more powerful than civilian officials as the church was the only viable link between the people and the government. The Filipino priests were humiliated by powerful Spanish friars and they were denied equal rights with the friars on the basis of race and language.¹⁹ This led to discontent among Filipino priests in late eighteenth century.

The first stirring of Philippine nationalism could be traced to 1521 when Lapu Lapu, a Filipino chieftain killed Magellan, a portuguese explorer and a representative of Spanish king, on the issue of paying tribute as a vassal of the spanish king on April 27, 1521. The victory of Lapu Lapu over an alien powers marks an important milestone in the history of Philippine nationalism. It is from Lapu Lapu's resistance to alien power on the question of political sovereignty that the origins of subsequent active Philippine nationalism must be traced.²⁰

The repressive policies of the Spanish colonial regime and the selfish activities of friars sowed :

19. Esterline, n.9, pp 323-24

20. Mahajani, n.7, pp 16-17.

seeds of discontent among the Filipinos.²¹ But, it took nearly two and a half centuries to convert the discontent to nationalism. This happened precisely because of the Spanish policy of denial of education to the Filipinos and of opportunities to the Filipino priests in churches on the basis of equality with the Spanish priests.

Surprisingly, Philippine nationalism was not born in the Philippines but in Spain itself. With acquisition of European education, a new consciousness spread among the 'ilustrados'. By 1872, the Spanish repression reached its peak when Spaniards executed three native priests - Jose Burgos, Mariano Gomez and Jocinto Zamora on false charges in order to suppress discontent among Filipino priests.²² The sacrifices of these priests became sources of inspiration for the coming generations to uphold the legacy of anti-colonial resistance. For example, Jose Rizal, responded thus:

"Without 1872, Rizal would today be a Jesuit and instead of writing 'Noli me Tangere' would have written something quite different. The sight of such injustice and cruelty aroused my imagination even as a boy and I swore to

21. Bocca, n.4, pp.30-31.

22. For further details see *ibid*, p.36

dedicate myself to the task of some day
avenging the fate of these victims".²³

The Philippine national movement began with the propaganda movement (1872-1892) in Spain. Its important leader was Jose Rizal. Since the propaganda movement was started by ilustrados, it confined itself to demands for freedom of press, of speech and of assembly, equality before the law, representation in the Spanish parliament, promotion of education and a stop to the military abuses. It never demanded complete independence of the Philippines.²⁴ However, it had failed to achieve any of its objectives.

In a significant development, on July 3, 1892, Jose Rizal founded a new organization known as 'Liga Filipina' in the Philippines with the following aims:

- 1) to unite the whole archipelago into one compact, vigorous and homogenous body;
- 2) mutual protection in every want and necessity;
- 3) defence against all violence and injustice;

23. Cited in Mahajani, n.7, p.55

24. Constantino, n.12, pp 148-51

- 4) encouragement of instruction, agriculture and commerce, and
- 5) study and application of reforms²⁵

Though it attracted a cross section of the Filipinos, the deportation of Rizal to Dapitan in Mindanao (Southern Philippines) by the Spanish regime rendered the Liga Filipina inactive.²⁶

Immediately, after this, the nationalist movement transformed itself from a reform time-stage to a revolutionary stage. The poor and lower middle class people having been dissatisfied with the propaganda movement and the Liga Filipina, decided to launch an armed struggle against the Spanish regime. As a result, a secret society called the "Katipunan", was founded on July 7, 1892 by Andres Bonifacio, an activist of working class to liberate the Philippines from Spanish colonial yoke.²⁷ However, Jose Rizal did not extend his support for a violent revolution aimed at by Katipunan. Yet, the Spaniards

25. Cited in Agoncillo, n.14, p.156

26. A good account of Rizal's deportation had been given in Bocca, n.4, p.42.

27. Katipunan is a Tagalog abbreviation for Kataastaasan Kagalanggalang na katipunan nang manga Anak nang Bayan ('Highest and Most Respectable Association of the sons of the people').

executed him on December 30, 1896 on false charges like 'rebellion and sedition.'²⁸

In the beginning, ilustrados' did not join the Katipunan because the leadership of the movement was in the hands of poor and lower middle class. When the movement grew to be a complete revolution, the 'ilustrados' under the leadership of Emilio Aguinaldo captured the leadership of Katipunan and executed Bonifacio, the founder of the movement on false charges. Under the leadership of Aguinaldo, the Republic of the Philippines (RP) was proclaimed on March 22, 1897.²⁹

But the leadership did not want to continue the struggle against Spanish regime and showed signs of compromise with the colonial government. Eventually, Aguinaldo agreed to lay down arms in lieu of amnesty and a hard cash payment of ₱ 800,000. This agreement was known as 'Biak-na-Bato pact of 1897.'³⁰

28. Esterline, n.9, p.327.

29. Agoncillo, n.14, p.202.

30. According to Biak-na-Bato pact, the Spanish Colonial regime would pay a total of ₱ 800,000 to revolutionaries in three instalments. They were allowed to go into exile to Hongkong. For further details see Mahajani, n-7, p. 75.

This was the 'First sell-out by the Aguinaldo-led nationalists in the history of the Filipinos' struggle against spanish colonialism. If Bonifacio was not replaced and killed by the order of Aguinaldo, the situation would have followed a different-course. That's why, the defeat of Bonifacio became the defeat of the anti-Spanish revolution.

According to Han Suyin, "Without true nationalism there can be no true independence for any nation, and without true independence there can be no true development and progress."³¹ The Filipino's took more than two centuries to realize the above truth when the light of nationalism spread in the Philippines. But, their leaders' compromise with the colonial regime became a major hurdle for the growth of nationalism in the Philippines. In the later stage two, the ilustrados compromised with all most all colonial powers by betraying the national liberation movement.

31. Quoted in Emmanuel Qap, "Nationalism : Road to Greatness and Internationalism", Solidarity vol.7, no.2, February 1952, p.21.

American Annexation

Americans came to the Philippines as a part of American-Spanish war of 1898. In this connection, the observations of Michael P. Onorato are quite interesting. It goes like this :

"Commander George Dewey was not sent to Manila Bay in order to prevent a Spanish naval attack on the American West-coast. The US Navy had not overestimated the strength of Spain's Asiatic Squadron; the American naval attack was undertaken so that the US could secure a strategic enclave close to China. Spain's overseas weakness beckoned America to the Philippines. President McKinley did not intend to take the entire archipelago; the American expeditionary corps was sent to guarantee Spanish acceptance of US claims to a Philippines coaling station."³²

It would be interesting to note that the American Civil war (1861-1865) was glorified as a war for the abolition of slavery. According to Renato Constantino, however, " it was a war between the aggressive industrial North and protectionist agricultural South, its outcome was the triumph of capitalism on the continent. The victory of the North swept aside the last major obstacle to capitalist expansion."³³ He described it as "the bourgeois

32. Michael P. Onorato, "The US and the Philippines: Independence Movement", Solidarity, vol. v, September 1970, p.2.

33. Constantino, n.12, pp.281-82.

revolution" of the US.³⁴

Nevertheless, it was the time when England, Germany and France were busy parcelling out China. They were partitioning that country into extra-territorial spheres of influence that would insure control of the trade in the areas they had appropriated. With the expansion of industries and agriculture, they needed new markets for their surplus production. The Philippines appeared as a God - sent gift,; an excellent outlet with seven million people; with strategic location and an easy access to China's illimitable markets for American production surpluses.³⁵ It is with these motivations that the Americans came to the Philippines. The American-Spanish war of 1898 could thus be treated as just an excuse.

The US sought the help of Filipinos before the war. On Commodore Dewey's prompting, Agninaldo and his followers returned from Hong Kong on May 19, 1898 to lead another struggle against the Spanish regime. The US gave Agninaldo false hope of Philippine liberation through cooperation between the two nations.³⁶

34. Ibid.

35. Manila Bulletin, February 10, 1960.

36. Roland G. Simbulan, The Bases of Our Insecurity (Metro Manila, 1983), p.66.

Filipinos extended their wholehearted support to the American forces in defeating Spanish army. The Filipinos had in the process occupied most of the islands. They proclaimed independence of the country on June 12, 1898. On January 21, 1899, the Philippines became a Republic with a Constitution and came to be known as "Malolos Republic."³⁷ It is important to note here that after having realized the incapability of the Spanish regime in facing the American forces, the mestizos and ilustrados this time actively participated in the revolution. Basically, Aguinaldo came from a middle-class family, but he always identified himself with the ilustrado' class. He inducted several mestizos and ilustrados into his government.³⁸

Meanwhile, the real intentions of the US came to light with the signing of the US-Spanish Treaty of Paris on December 10, 1898. By virtue of this treaty, the Spaniards ceded the Philippines to the US in lieu of US dollars 20 million.³⁹ The Filipinos assumed of course wrongly, that the American forces had arrived in the role of liberators and as such they were widely

37. The new Constitution was ratified by the Philippine Congress at Malolos town. That's why, the Republic known as 'Malolos Republic', For other details see Agoncillo, n.14, pp.229-37.

38. Bocca, n.4, p.47.

39. For other details of the Treaty see Agoncillo n.14, pp.240-41.

welcomed. The Americans were not liberators, they were conquerors.

On February 4, 1899, the Americans killed a Filipino soldier on false grounds. This resulted in Aguinaldo issuing a proclamation of war on the US. According to an estimate, nearly 120,000 American soldiers were deployed to suppress the Filipino resistance.⁴⁰ One could imagine the outcome of war. The war continued upto 1901. The US had applied suppressive methods to crush the resistance. A Filipino scholar records that "the US perfected anti-guerilla (sic) practices which have been universally condemned, such as the practice of summary execution and strategic hamlets - known then as 'reconcentrations'... American military forces in the Philippines used the internationally-banned dum-dum bullets against Filipino 'insurgents', tortured and conducted retaliatory shooting of prisoners and created concentration camps for Filipino civilians."⁴¹ It is evident from the statement of the then American Brigadier-General Jacob H. Smith of Samar about the American army officers'

40. Constantino, n.12, p.241.

41. Simbulan, n.36, p.57.

attitude towards Filipino revolutionaries during the war. The statement says : "I want no prisoners. I wish you to kill and burn : the more you kill and burn the better you will please me."⁴²

In order to demoralize the Filipino patriots in the eyes of their own people, the US had launched a slanderous misinformation campaign. The American soldiers painted the Filipino patriots as bandits, robbers and misguided youth. While repudiating the US's campaign against the Filipino patriots, a Filipino martyr, General Sakay, who lay down his life for the sake of his motherland, had described the intentions of revolutionaries in the following words:

"Death comes to all of us sooner or later, so I will face the Lord Almighty Calmly. But I want to tell you that we are not bandits and robbers, as the Americans have accused us, but members of the revolutionary force that defended our mother country, the Philippines! Fare Well ! Long Live the Republic and may our independence be born in the future! Farewell! Long Live the Philippines."⁴³

A Filipino scholar rightly pointed out that "the Philippines is a colony of its own leaders."⁴⁴

42. Cited in Constantino n.12, p.243.

43. Ibid., p.261.

44. Jose, n.3, p.10.

The greatest enemy of the Filipino people is no other than their oligarchy. It was this oligarchy that betrayed the people's revolution by bowing down in front of the American colonial masters. Several mestizos, and ilustrados, who joined the revolutionary government, had defected to the US'side. Just, they had replayed their historical role as they did with the Spaniards. After his capture, as a friend of oligarchy, Aguinaldo compromised with the Americans in return of a US pension. Thus, the Filipino resistance ended in 1901. American historians, till this day, have refused to treat the Filipino resistance as a war. They have been calling it "the Philippine insurrection" whereas, the Filipinos have always recognized it as "the Philippine American war."⁴⁵

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As the Filipinos' hopes about their liberators were disappearing, the U.S. Government launched a new campaign in order to cover its colonial ambitions. On December 21, 1898, President McKinley issued his so-called proclamation of "Benevolent Assimilation".⁴⁶

45. Ibid., p.8.

46. Though, it was a clear indicator of American intention to retain the Philippines, the Americans posed through this proclamation as friends of Filipinoes, to protect them in their homes, in their employment, and in their personal and religious rights. For other details see Agoncillo, n.14, p.263.

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He further declared : "The Philippines are ours not to exploit but to develop, to civilize to educate, to train in the science of self-government."⁴⁷

If this is true where is the necessity of purchasing the Philippines (as if it is a commodity) from the Spain? They can extend their 'Benevolent Assimilation' to the Republic of the Philippines. They didn't do it. Because all the above phrases were coined only to cover America's colonial ambitions. Nevertheless, the important reason that lay behind this drama was in the American Federal Constitution's assertion :- "Any new territory, no matter how acquired, may be incorporated into the union,"⁴⁸

On the basis of this clause, several Filipino ilustrados, who surrendered to the Americans in the beginning of the Philippine - American war and the American democrats, who were in opposition at that time, had begun to demand for incorporation of the Philippines into the American Union.⁴⁹ In order to turn down

47. Cited in Jose A. Lanzang, "The Philippine-American Experiment : A Filipino view", Pacific Affairs (Vancouver), vol.25, September 1962, p.226.

48. Cited in Chang Yun-Yo, "American Imperialism : A Chinese view", Pacific Affairs, vol.VII, March 1930, p.279.

49. Esca, n.4, p.64.

this demand, the US administration announced several so-called progressive programmes for the welfare of the Filipinos within the framework of its colonial ambitions.

Taft Era (1901-13).

In 1899, a commission known as 'Schurman Commission' was appointed by the US to enquire into the Philippine situation. It was this commission that recommended for the institution of a civil government for the Philippines. In 1900, another commission was appointed under the leadership of William Howard H. Taft. In the light of these commissions' recommendations, a civil government was established in July 1901. William Taft became the first American Governor-General of the civil government in the Philippines.⁵⁰

There is no data to show the percentage of literacy at the close of the Spanish period, but it is probably safe to assume that the figure was somewhere between five per cent and eight percent. Filipinos were denied education by the Spanish regime. Surprisingly the Americans paid particular attention to education. With the efforts of William Taft, by 1913, the literacy

50. Esterline, n.9, p.229.

rate increased to around 45 per cent.⁵¹ It may be mentioned here that the first public school teachers were American soldiers, who were later on replaced by the "Thomasites".⁵² English became the medium of instruction.

As the revolutionary leaders were surrendering in 1901 the US made the efforts to provide a berth to them in the colonial administration. William Taft declared the policy of "the Philippines for the Filipinos." The municipal and provincial governments were reorganized in 1901. Three Filipinos were appointed in the Philippine commission. Several Filipinos had been appointed in various posts in the colonial administration.⁵³

On the other hand, William Taft encouraged the political activities of the Ilustrados throughout his regime. As a result, the first political party, 'partido Federal was formed in December 1900.⁵⁴ It advocated for close collaboration with the Americans and incorporation of the islands into the American Union.

51. See for further details, Agoncillo, n.14, p.424.

52. The American teachers, who came to the Philippines by Ship, S.S. Thomas Known as "Thomasites" For further details see Borca, n.4, p.64.

53. Agoncillo, n. 14, p.326.

54. Constantino, n.12, p.238.

Later on several pro-Independence groups were formed by the Filipinos. There was however, a ban on these groups until 1906. Therefore, the 'partido Federal used to win all the local elections.

In another development, the Cooper Act of 1902 created the Philippine Assembly as the lower chamber of a bi-cameral legislature. The upper house was the Philippine Commission. After having lifted the ban on pro-Independence groups in 1906, the partido Nacionalista (Nacionalista Party, - N.P.) was formed in March 1907. Its call for immediate independence to the Philippines' became the rallying focus in the 1907 elections. Nacionalista party won thumping majority in these first ever national elections in the Philippines.⁵⁵

On the otherside, through the Payne-Aldrich Act in 1909, the US laid the foundation for unequal trade relations between the two countries. In accordance with this Act, several restrictions were imposed on Philippine exports to the US. All American goods could enter the Philippines free of duty and in unlimited quantities, whereas several quota limitations were imposed on Filipino, sugar and tobacco

55. Agoncillo, n.14, pp.330-34.

entering into the American markets. Moreover, the export of Philippine rice was blocked by the US. But all these restrictions were abolished in 1913 with the passing of Underwood-Simmons Act.⁵⁶ As a result of Payne Aldrich Act, the Philippine economy became dependent on the US, as all other foreign markets were ignored totally. The final result was economic dependence, a phenomenon that has continued to plague the two nations' relationship ever since.

Another contribution of the Taft regime was the separation of Church from the State. A Filipino priest, Aglipay founded the Philippine Independent Church in 1902. The two main objectives of the Church were :

- (1) to re-establish the worship of God; and
- (2) to restore the national dignity of Filipino priests.⁵⁷

The establishment of Independent Church could be described as a landmark in the history of catholicism in the Philippines.

56. Constantino, n.12, p.297.

57. Mahajani, n.7, p.293.

Harrison Era (1913-21)

During the governor-generalship of Burton Harrison, the policy of 'Filipinization' was accelerated.

T.A. Agoncillo describes 'Filippinization' thus : By 1919 Harrison had transformed a government of Americans "assisted by Filipinos to a government of Filipinos aided by Americans."⁵⁸

With the passing of the 'Philippine Autonomy' or Jones Act in 1916, the Philippine Commission was abolished and the Philippine legislature became a genuine bicameral body. Nacionalista leader, Manuel Quezon was elected as president of first Philippine Senate in 1916. On the other hand, another Nacionalista leader, Sergio Osmena became the vice-Chairman of the Council of state.⁵⁹ The American Governor-general, nevertheless remained the Chief executive with practically unlimited Veto power.

The rift between Manuel Quezon and Sergio Osmena for leadership caused the split in the party

58. Agoncillo, n.14, p.349.

59. Marcial P. Lichauco, "Roxas and Philippine Independence", India Quarterly (New Delhi) vol. ix (1953-54), p.269.

in 1922.⁶⁰ The split led to the rise of third party i.e. Democrata Party (DP).⁶¹ Though its chief objective was complete independence to the Philippines, Nacionalista Party ignored its ideal. Its leadership consisted of mestizos, ilustrados and educated middle class. It confined itself to local politics and never launched an outright movement against colonialism just like in other parts of Asia. Anyhow, the leadership of all the political parties was in the hands of oligarchy. While describing about the nature of Filipino politics, Renato Constantino commented thus : "... the Filipino leaders had become habituated to performing the role of brokers between the colonizer and the people. Having completely accepted colonial status, they sought to harmonize the people's demands with what the colonial power was willing to grant. Rather than point out more clearly to the people the truth about colonization, they played the role of interpreters of the colonizer's will."⁶² Filipino

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60. Manuel Quezon had formed a separate group, Partido Nacionalista Colectivista. Sergio Osmani's group known as Partido Nacionalista Unipersonalistas.
61. Partido Democrata was formed in 1914 by a small group of former N.P. members. For other details See Agoncillo, n.14, p.355.
62. Constantino, n.12, pp.332-33.

political leaders, in fact failed to build a strong nationalist movement for independence of the Philippines.

Republican Administration (1921-33)

The relations between the Philippines and the US passed through several critical phases during the Republican administration. In 1921, General Leonard Wood became the Governor-General of the Philippines. Unlike his predecessors, he adopted an antagonistic policy vis-a-vis the Filipinos. In order to express their resentment over General Wood's Policies, all the Filipino leaders resigned enmasse from their governmental posts. Perhaps, this was the only incident demonstrating resentment of Filipino oligarchy in the Philippine history after the Philippine-US War. However, the earlier position of close relationship was restored with the appointment of Henry L. Stimson as new Governor-General in 1927.⁶³

There were some other important developments during the Republican era. The US did not change existing cacique (exploitative landlordism) system. The commercialization of agriculture had created an

63. Esterline, n.9, p.332.

absentee landlordism which imposed severe constraints on landless tenants. On the otherhand the 1929 great worldwide depression still worsened the situation. It brought economic hardships to the Philippines. Prices of the basic export crops dropped drastically, causing grave hardship to the peasantry. Many were evicted from land and even those who continued working sank deeper into debt. At the same time, urban workers too lost their jobs as business concerns failed. Others suffered cuts in wages as employers passed on to them part of their reverses.⁶⁴

Under these circumstances, a new wave of consciousness emerged among the Filipino masses. Marxist political and economic thought reached the Philippines in the mid 1920's. In 1902, Isobero de los Reyes formed the first labour union in the Islands i.e. 'the Union de Litoglafas e Impresoles de Filipinos'. In another significant development, on November 7, 1930, the Communist party of the Philippines (CPP) was established.⁶⁵

With the emergence of these radical and militant organizations, the demand for grant of immediate

64. Constantino, n.12, p.363.

65. Ibid, pp 356-62.

independence became prominent. Starting with small-scale strikes, demonstrations, rebellions etc., the situation turned into a fullfledged movement viz. 'Sakdal movement' in 1935.⁶⁶ Filipino masses were fed up with the conservative political parties. Under the leadership of Benigno Ramos, the Sakdal movement gained popularity and raised the demand for true independence of the Philippines. He denounced the tactics of the so-called political leaders'. The movement turned violent, as the proper ideology and leadership was lacking to turn the same into a revolution. The Government suppressed the rebellion ruthlessly. The most shameful thing was that the Filipino leaders joined the Americans in suppressing the movement. Even an American officer understood the nature of the movement far better than these so-called Filipino leaders. The then acting Governor-General, Joseph Ralston Hayden described the uprising as a genuine "blow against caciquism" as well as for independence. According to him, "Quezon, Osmena and Roxas were traitors who wish to continue American rule in order that under the protection of American bayonets they and their class

66. A good analysis of Sakdal movement had been given in Motoe Terami - Wada, "The Sakdal Movement 1930-34", Philippine Studies (Manila), Vol.36 (1988-89) Second Quarter, pp.131-50.

may exploit the masses of their own people."⁶⁷

On the other hand, American labour organizations began a campaign against the immigrant cheap Filipino labour and demanded for immediate Philippine independence. The free entry of Philippine agricultural products caused several hardships to the American farmers. They too joined hands in demanding independence to the Philippines.

Perhaps pressured by American interests more than motivated by a genuine desire for independence, the conservative leaders sent an independence mission to the U.S. in 1931. It was known as the "Os-Rox mission."⁶⁸ Its primary task was to campaign and convince the American Senators for immediate passage of an independence bill. To ease the situation, American Congress passed the Hare-Hawes-cutting Act in 1933. The Act provided for independence after a transition period of ten years. The US military establishments would be retained in the Philippines. The existing preferential trade

67. Ronald K. Edgerlin, "Joseph Ralston Hyaden: The Education of a Colonialist", Solidarity vol. vii, no. 9, 1972, pp. 90-91.

68. The Mission consists of Sergio Osmena, Manuel Roxas and others. Since its leaders were Osmena and Roxas, it became known as "Os-Rox mission".

between the two countries would be continued. The Philippine Senate President Quezon, however, rejected the Act immediately, as he did not want to give any credit to his arch rival Osmena in this field. Later, he accepted another Act, "Tydings -McDuffie (Philippine Independence) Act" in 1934, which was almost a carbon copy of the earlier Hare-Hawes-cutting Act. The main difference between Hare-Hawes-cutting and Tydings-McDuffie Act was that the latter allowed only one amendment to the law i.e. the elimination of the provision for military bases and other reservations and the inclusion of the provision permitting the final statement on naval bases and fuelling stations on terms mutually satisfactory to both the US and the Philippines at the time of latter's independence.⁶⁹

Commonwealth Experience

In accordance with the Tydings-McDuffie Act, a new constitution was drafted and a commonwealth was inaugurated on June 16, 1935. Manuel Quezon and Sergio Osmena became its president and vice president respectively. The date July 4, 1946 had been fixed

69. Agoncillo, n.14, pp.384-85.

as the date of complete independence. The Act also provided for progressive five percent export taxes on Philippine products beginning in 1941 and upon independence in 1946, a brutal leap' to 100 percent tariff. whereas, during the transition period, there would be no reciprocal limits or duties on American products entering the Philippine markets.⁷⁰

The important highlights of the Commonwealth period (The Ten-year transition period) were social justice programme, and the release of several political prisoners. The biggest problem in the Philippines even today is the problem of land. Over the years Filipino, peasant become an illiterate tool of the landowners, the church and the Chinese moneylenders. He was held by his debts to near-peonage.⁷¹ In order to improve the living conditions of the rural masses, President Quezon launched the social justice programme. It was portrayed as the panacea for all the ills that plagued the countryside. It could usher in a new social system advertised as "Quezonian Communism".

70. Theodore Friend, Between Two Empires : The Ordeal of the Philippines 1929-1946 (Quezon City, 1969), p.156.

71. Bocca, n.4, p.76.

Quezon himself defined his programme as follows :

"... social justice means justice for all, laborers and employers, the poor and rich alike. Over and above the interests of class or group is the interest of the people, and in the upholding of the supremacy of the public interest there will be no compromise."

72

In the light of the above programme, Special social legislation laws were passed. These included the following : (1) laws establishing a court of Industrial Relations to function as arbiter between labour and capital; (2) laws providing minimum wages to agricultural and industrial workers and limited working hours, i.e. eight hours; (3) establishment of credit facilities for farmers; (4) laws authorizing the President to acquire private lands for resale in small parcels to farmers; and (5) laws requiring written contracts between landowners and tenants.⁷³ There were several loopholes in the administration. The oligarchy had a firm control over government machinery. Moreover, the corrupt bureaucracy

72. Quoted in Constantino, n.12, pp.274-75.

73. For further details see Agoncillo, n.14, pp.419-20.

became a major hurdle in the implementation of social legislations. That's why, the fruits of social legislation never reached the masses.

As the clouds of war were spreading to Asia, the Commonwealth government felt insecure. Therefore, the building of Philippine army, navy and airforce was assigned to American General MacArthur. He proposed an eighty million dollars plan to build up the philippine armed forces, within ten years.⁷⁴ But the whole process was inadequate and slow. In the process, the Philippines became the victim of Japanese fascist invasion in 1941.

Japanese Occupation

The Japanese occupation of the Philippines in 1941 threw the whole Commonwealth system into confusion. Quizon and Osmena established their government in exile in Washington. On the other hand, most of the mestizos and ilustrados sided with Japan as they had done earlier occasions. Senator Jose P. Laurel became the President of the Japanese-sponsored puppet Government of the Philippines. However, the majority of the Filipinos were not attracted to the Japanese slogan of "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere". They formed into a

74. Friend, n.70,p.162.

guerilla force known as 'Hukbo, ng Bayan, laban sa, Hapon (People's Anti-Japanese Army) briefly, Hukbôlahap. The American and Huks jointly fought against the Japanese forces⁷⁵.

with the defeat of Japan, American forces re-occupied the Philippines and the Commonwealth was restored with Osmaña as its president.⁷⁶ As per the Tydings-McDuffe Act, the first general elections were held in April 1946. The Nacionalista party was split into two groups on the issue of collaboration. Manuel Roxas won the elections and became the first President of the Philippines. On July 4, 1946, the Philippines became independent.

The Results of American Colonialism

The Philippines became a lone Christian nation in Asia owing to its long association with the West. The important contributions of the American colonial rule were - universal education, improvement of public health, welfare, commerce, industry and foreign trade. Communication and transportation were developed. An American form of political framework of democracy was introduced. Opportunities were given to Filipino leaders

75. Benedict J. Kerkuliet, The Huk Rebellion (Los Angeles, 1977), p.67.

76. President Quezon died in 1944. Therefore, Osmaña became the President in Washington itself.

in the colonial administration in the framework of 'Filipinization' of the administration.

Despite the positive aspects, there were also a lot of negative aspects in the American colonial legacy. Americans used the education as a subtle technique for perpetuating colonialism. English became the medium of instruction. The educational curriculum glorified the American way of life

Filipino learned a new way of life which was alien to their tradition and culture. On the results of American colonialism, Renato Constantino commented in these words. "Education became miseducation because it began to de-Filipinize the youth, taught them to look up to American heroes, to regard American culture as superior to theirs and American society as the model par excellence for Philippine society. These text books gave them a good dose of American history while distorting or at least ignoring, their own."⁷⁷

As a result, a new generation of miseducated Filipinos was produced. Americans successfully accommodated them suitably in the colonial administration. On the other hand the Philippine economy became dependent on the US. In course of time, American goods became necessities.

77. Constantino, n.12, p.312.

During its half-a-century American colonial rule, the Philippines remained as an underdeveloped, agrarian and dependent country. It was this colonial legacy, that compelled the Philippines to have a special relationship⁴ with the US in the post-second world war era.

The Filipino leadership, at every stage, compromised with the colonial masters. That's why the Philippine nationalism never grew properly. With a weak nationalism, the Philippines always become a victim of various colonial powers.

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CHAPTER - II

PRESIDENCY OF MANUAL ROXAS, 1946 - 1948

Postwar Situation:

Despite the ruling oligarchs' collaboration with the Japanese, through guerilla warfare, Filipino people created a history in fighting against the Japanese. They showed inexplicable courage in defending their motherland during the war. The country's economy was in shambles. The US General Dwight D. Eisenhower stated that of all the wartime capitals only Warsaw suffered more damage than did Manila. The whole city was in debris and a few hundred miserable persons were living in wrecked houses that had been glazed out of its rubble.¹ Similar scene of destruction was enacted in almost all the towns and villages in the Philippines.

According to an estimate, nearly a million Filipinos out of a total population of 20 million were dead during the war. Thus, in casualties the Philippines suffered greater loss than those in the United States, Britain

1. Robert Aura Smith, Philippine Freedom 1946-1958 (New York, 1958), p.115.

and France combined. Almost all the Philippines had become the victims of the Japanese repression in those days. That's why, the Philippines has been called "a nation of survivors".²

Transportation facilities were totally destroyed. Shipping and railways were out of operation for a long time. Nearly, five thousand bridges were destroyed throughout the islands. Food production was almost at a standstill because the livestock had been reduced by about 65 percent.³ On the destruction caused to industries during the Japanese occupation, Teodoro A. Agoncillo, a well-known Filipino historian, gives details as follows:

"...the damage to different industries amounted to ₱ 582,500,000, while domestic assets sustained a reduction of about ₱ 798,767,595. Various industries suffered great losses; rice ₱ 140,291,000; mining, ₱ 121,210,000; sugar, ₱ 94,590,000; and livestock, ₱ 81,203,000. The losses of other industries such as lumber, abaca, coconut and fishing were inconsiderable compared with others."⁴

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2. According to Geoffrey Bocca, "Every adult Filipino is alive today because he happened to avoid being and every child is alive because his parents escaped death". Therefore he called the Philippine a "nation of survivors". For other details see Geoffrey Bocca, The Philippines: America's Forgotten Friends (New York, 1974), pp 98-106.
 3. Teodoro A. Agoncillo & M.C. Guerrero, History of the Filipino People (Quezoncity, 1970), p.489. see also Smith, n.1, p.116.
 4. Ibid.

On February 27, 1945, the Commonwealth government was restored with Sergio Osmena as its President. Interestingly, however unlike in the rest of Asia, the immediate political issue in the Philippines was that of collaboration with the Japanese, rather than of nationalism and independence.

Collaboration Issue

During the Spanish regime, the native Chiefs had been transformed into colonial intermediaries. Towards the end of it, the ilustrados compromised with the national revolution and collaborated with the Americans. Their defection was to secure places within the colonial framework and preserve their positions and properties in the society. Thus, in order to subserve their vested interests, the traditional leadership collaborated with the Japanese.⁵ On each and every occasion, it was the ordinary people who fought against the enemy and their leadership betrayed the movement. It clearly demonstrates the weak nature of Filipino nationalist leadership.

After return of the American forces to the Philippines, the US President Franklin D. Roosevelt had made a policy declaration on collaboration issue saying that those who had collaborated with the Japanese should be

5. Renato Constantino, The Philippines : A Past Revisited (Quezon City, 1975), pp 39-92.

removed "from authority and influence over the political and economic life of the country."⁶ In the light of this policy, a law was enacted in August 1945 to set up a court to try collaborators. Nearly 5500 cases were filed against the collaborators by the Commonwealth government.⁷ This made the collaboration issue a major political issue in the 1946 elections.

1946 Elections

While answering to a question on Filipino political leaders, Pedro Abad Santos, a Filipino socialist leader, said : "These politicians are smart. They fooled the Americans. They fooled and have been fooling the people."⁸ As befits this allegation, the name of Manuel Roxas, who held a cabinet post in the puppet government, did not figure in any collaboration case. He was a close friend of General MacArthur during the pre-war time. It was this friendship that saved him from the allegations of collaboration. But, there was a clear evidence of his association with the Japanese during the war.

6. Agoncillo, n.3, p.493.

7. Herando J. Abaya, Betrayal in the Philippines (New York, 1946), p.255.

8. Ibid., pp 50-51.

When Manuel Quezon and Sergio Osmena left the Philippines on the advice of Americans in 1942, Roxas opted to stay in the country to fight against the Japanese. At this stage, he was promoted to Brigadier - General from Colonel in the resistance army.⁹ But he decided to surrender to the Japanese voluntarily on the pretext that his presence in the barrios would lead to the Japanese repression on the Filipino people. In turn Japanese freed him from imprisonment and offered the Presidency of the puppet Philippine Republic, which they were about to proclaim at that time. Roxas turned down the offer on health grounds and recommended the name of Jose P. Laurel for the Presidency.¹⁰ Roxas was one of the active members of the drafting committee of the new constitution, which was not acceptable to the Filipinos. He decided to put an end to his behind-the-scene role in the puppet Government by accepting the chairmanship of President Laurel's Economic Planning Board, virtually a rice procurement agency, which was a cabinet rank, on April 8, 1944.¹¹ Thus, he became a part of Japanese sponsored puppet government and indirectly helped the

9. Marcial F. Lichauco, "Roxas and Philippine Independence" India Quarterly (New Delhi), Vol. ix, no. 3, 1953, p. 275.

10. Theodore Friend, The Ordeal of the Philippines: Between Two Empires (Manila, 1969), pp. 211-16.

11. Abaya, n. 7, p. 40.

Japanese in suppressing the Filipino resistance.

Surprisingly, General MacArthur had given a clean chit to Roxas on the issue of collaboration. Just after his capture, Roxas was taken in a special plane to Manila where General MacArthur welcomed him and ordered him to rejoin his general staff. Perhaps, the reason might be Roxas's personal friendship with McArthur.¹² But a plain verification of Roxas's antecedents reveals that he was a representative of ilustrado class. He was a product of American education. He had done his law course from the University of Philippines. After his study, he joined in colonial administration as an Assistant to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Later he joined politics. Under the American patronage, he emerged as an influential political leader at youngest age. The rift between Quezon and Osmena on the question of leadership in the early 1920's provided him a chance to emerge as a third leader after Quezon and Osmena in the Nacionalista Party.¹³

It may be noted here that the old guard leadership (like Quezon and Osmena) was the product of

12. Lichauco, n.9, pp 276-77.

13. Ibid., p.270.

Spanish colonial education. The US realized that the new generation would serve their colonial interests better than the old-guard leadership. They disliked Osmeña for his association with the Huks in the name of anti-collaboration movement. Basically, the US needed certain leaders who could serve its interests in the Philippines. It seems to be appeared that the US did not bother about the antecedents of those leaders whether they were fascists or collaborationists. That's why, the American officers deliberately altered the records of the Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC) to give a clean chit to Roxas in connection with his collaboration case.¹⁴ When the Huk leaders Luis Taruc and his followers demonstrated against the US support to Roxas, the Chief prosecutor Tanada said : "Roxas is a collaborator, but under our laws of treason, he cannot be charged with the capital offense."¹⁵

In accordance with the provisions of the Commonwealth Constitution, national elections for the

14. Basically, CIC was an American Intelligence Organization. It was assigned to gather evidence and investigate the allegations of collaboration during the war made against the Filipino leaders. For further details see Abaya, n.7, p.256.

15. Ibid., p.255.

President and the Congress should have been held in November 1945. Keeping in view of the war destruction, the national elections were postponed to April 1946. At this stage, the issue of collaboration split the Nacionalista Party into two groups. Roxas and his followers left the Nacionalista Party and formed the Liberal Party (LP). But, President Osmena and his followers retained the old party label. Osmena and Roxas were the chief contenders for the post of President of the Philippines. One thing was common in both parties. They advocated social improvement, full independence for the Philippines on July 4, 1946 and 'close' friendly relationship with the US.¹⁶

The Osmena campaign strategy had laid emphasis on one particular aspect of collaboration : That if Roxas were elected, the Philippines could not hope to secure any assistance from the United States for rehabilitation. Surprisingly, the US Government had issued a statement on February 26, 1946 in which it said :

16. Keesing's Contemporary Archives (KCA), 1946-48 (London, 1948), vol.6, p.8029.

We neither support, directly or indirectly, any candidate, nor do we look with disfavor, directly or indirectly, on any candidate. The US Government will carry out its promised aid to the Philippine people regardless of whom they choose for their next president.¹⁷

It was this statement that shattered the hopes of Osmeñas Nacionalista party. On the other hand, it became an opportunity for Roxas to retaliate the attack of Nacionalista party on the issue of 'collaboration and American aid.'¹⁸ It clearly showed which side the US sympathies were.

Roxas gave a call to liberate the Philippines from "Chaos, corruption and Communism."¹⁹ On the other hand, Nacionalista Party, under the Osmeñas leadership had formed an alliance with the democrats and Huks consisting of peasants, workers and intellectuals to fight against the LP in the elections. On their part, the Americans used a delaying tactics in providing funds for relief measures. This provided Roxas with enough chance to attack Osmeñas's government. For example MacArthur had authorized Osmeñas to announce that Filipino soldiers would get fifty pesos per month as their backpay, but the US

17. Abaya, n.7, pp.251-52.

18. Ibid., p.253.

19. Ibid., p.261.

government had allowed only eight pesos and the soldiers blamed Osmena.²⁰ Even, MacArthur openly declared that "he can't work with Osmena."²¹ It clearly indicates that how an American General was so powerful as to threaten a commonwealth president.

Roxas launched a massive election campaign. He accused the government as "weak, impotent, corrupt, and inefficient" and that it was committing highway robbery against the people. According to him, Osmena was "sick, impotent, senile, decrepit old" and a "fascist" and that "he should be defeated." Even, he called-Osmena a "Chinese collaborator", Communist and fascist."²² On the campaign, Helnando J. Abaya, a Filipino scholar commented in these words : "The campaign, the bitterest in Philippine history, was one of the distortion and vilification and rank demagoguery. The issues were ignored, side tracked."²³

On the otherside, Osmena was too busy as President of the Commonwealth with the reconstruction

20. Friend, n.10, p.255.

21. Ibid., p.251.

22. Abaya, n.7, pp.258-59.

23. Ibid.

work and, therefore, he did not concentrate more on the campaign. He gave only one electoral speech in Manila during his entire campaign.²⁴ It was this weak election campaign that enabled Roxas to reap the political benefits.

Elections were held on April 23, 1946. Roxas had successfully attracted the urban voters through his massive campaign. As a result, he got 1,333,392 votes against his rival Osmena's 1,129,996 votes. His running mate Elpidio Quirino also got elected for the post of Vice-president with a huge margin.²⁵ As per the schedule, on July 4, 1946, the US granted independence to the Philippines, and Roxas became the first President of the independent Philippine Republic. The date of grant of independence, being the same as that of the US however it symbolically continued to remind the Filipinos of their weak nationalism.

Philippines- US Relations
Under Roxas Administration

With the election of a staunch admirer of the US to the post of President of the Philippines, the

24. Ibid., p.262.

25. KCA, n. 16, p. 8087.

relationship between the Philippines and the US assumed a new shape. The colonial masters posed themselves to be close and generous friends. The collaboration issue was no more.

President Roxas believed that what was good for the US was or most necessarily be good for the Philippines.²⁶ While commenting on Roxas's friendship with the US, Bhagwan Dass Arora, an Indian scholar and expert on South-East Asia, said : "...to President Roxas, American friendship was the 'greatest Ornament' of Philippines' independence ; whether it served the national interest of the Philippines and or negated its independence and sovereignty or not did not seem to be of much concern to him."²⁷ Every American imposition through various agreements was accepted by him in the false belief that what America did in the Philippines and elsewhere was done for the good of the Filipinos.²⁸

The Treaty of Good Relations, 1946

At the time of transferring sovereignty to the Philippines, the US insisted on the Philippines to sign a treaty regarding general relations between the

26. Agencillo, n.3, p.625.

27. Bhagwan Dass Arora, "Development Process in the Philippines : Some Aspects", in Parimal Kumar Das, ed., "The Troubled Region : Issues of Peace and Development in Southeast Asia (New Delhi, 1987), p.244.

28. Agencillo, n.3, p.625.

two countries after independence.²⁹ As a result, the Treaty of Good Relations between the US and the Republic of the Philippines (RP) was signed by the two governments on July 4, 1946. The preamble of the treaty says "The United States of America and the Republic of the Philippines, being animated by the desire to cement the relations of close and long friendship existing between the two countries and to provide for the recognition of the independence of the Republic of the Philippines as of July 4, 1946 and the relinquishment of American sovereignty over the Philippine Islands..."³⁰

The important provisions of the treaty are summed up as follows :-

- (1) The US "agrees to withdraw and surrender, and does hereby withdraw and surrender, all right of possession, supervision, jurisdiction, control or sovereignty existing and exercised by the United States of America in and over the territory and the people of the Philippine Islands, except the use of such bases..., may deem necessary to

29. Roland G. Simbulan, The Bases of our Insecurity: A study of the US Military Bases in the Philippines (Manila, 1983), p. 74.

30. Jose M. Aruego, International Documents for the Philippines (Manila, 1948), p. 111.

retain for the mutual protection of the United States of America and of the Republic of the Philippines." (Article I).

- (ii) The US would represent the interests of the Philippines "in countries where there is no Philippine representation" until the necessary arrangement was made to do so. (Article III).
- (iii) The Philippines agreed to assume all debts and liabilities of its cities, municipalities and instrumentalities deemed valid and subsisting on July 4, 1946. (Article IV).
- (iv) The Philippines agreed to assume all continuing obligations assumed by the US under the Treaty of Paris between the US and Spain, concluded on December 10, 1898 (Article VII).³¹

The above provisions clearly demonstrates that the US did not want to lose its hold on the Philippines. Several colonial aspects were included in various treaties in the name of friendship and mutual protection during the Roxas' presidency.

31. Ibid., pp 111-14.

The Philippine Trade Act or
The Bell Trade Act, 1946

Two months before the Philippines' independence, the US congress passed two important Acts, namely, the Bell Trade Act (The Philippine Trade Act) and the Philippine Rehabilitation Acts in April 1946.³² Out of these two, one was aimed at reinforcing control over the Philippine economy and the other was aimed at reconstructing and rehabilitating the wrecked economy. Read together one could say these meant rehabilitating Philippine economy in order to gain control over it.

But, according to George A. Malcolm, the Bell Trade Act's objectives were three-fold : - "to afford the economy of the Islands time to adjust itself to the realities of economic independence geared to political independence, to effect a gradual change from reliance on the United States market to normal competitive trade, and to secure for the United States important trade advantages."³³ A survey of the provisions of the Act reveals the following:

32. Arora, n.27, pp.242-43.

33. George A. Malcolm, First Malayan Republic (Boston, 1951), p.328.

The Act provided free trade between the Philippines and the US for a period of eight years from July 4, 1946 to July 3, 1954 and with five per cent annual tariff impositions on Filipino goods entering the American market to continue upto July 3, 1974, when tariff impositions reached cent percent.³⁴

It means American goods could enter the Philippines in any amount for the period 1946-1954. Whereas Philippine goods entering the US market were subjected to such limitations as absolute quotas.³⁵ Therefore, there was no equality and reciprocity in the Bell Trade Act. It would not be out of place to mention here that the Philippines with its wrecked economy, was not in a position to enjoy the fruits of the free trade with the US. Of course, sugar interests were the only beneficiaries from the free trade.³⁶

Further, the Act provided 'Parity rights' to the Americans to exploit natural resources of the Philippines at par with the Filipinos. But, it may

34. Arora, n.27,p.243.

35. As per the Act, the absolute quotas were - sugar, 850,000 long tons, coconut oil, 200,000 long tons; cordage 6,000,000 pounds, tobacco, 6,500,000 pounds; cigars, 200,000,000 buttons; (shell or pearl), 850,000 gross, and rice, 1,040,000 pounds cited in Smith, n.1, p.128.

36. Agoncillo, n.3, p.512.

be noted here that there is no such provision or right to Filipinos to exploit the natural resources in the US. While describing the consequences of 'parity rights' granted to the Americans, Teodoro A. Agoncillo said: "To give alien the right to exploit the natural resources is to create a condition of inequality between them and the citizen. The condition of inequality between them and the citizen. The alien will become a privileged individual."³⁷ Naturally, the alien will not have loyalty, to the Philippines. In any way, giving 'parity rights' to foreigners would not help the Philippines. Therefore, this provision was an unequal, unilateral and unjustified one.

Another important aspect of the Act was the pegging of peso to the American dollar. The para (f), Section 402 of the Bell Trade Act clearly stated: "...that the value of Philippine currency in relation to the US dollar shall not be changed, the convertibility of pesos into dollars shall not be suspended, and no restrictions shall be imposed on the transfer of funds from the Philippines to the United States of American, except by agreement with the President of the United States of America."³⁸

37. Ibid.

38. M. Cuadeeno, "The Bell Trade Act and the Philippine Economy," Pacific Affairs (Van Couver), vol. xxv, Dec. 1962, p.329.

According to Senator Claro M. Recto, the above provision had meant for to serve the unilateral purpose of the US. He also objected to the provision providing power and authority to the president of the US on imposing restrictions on transfer of funds from the Philippines to the US.³⁹ Obviously, it was an infringement on the Philippine sovereignty.

The Act further provided that the Philippine government was required to permit not less than one thousand American immigrants into the Philippines every year for not less than five years. At the same time, the US government would permit only not less than one hundred Filipinos every year, into the US.⁴⁰ Here also, the reciprocity was missing.

The Bell Trade Act's provisions concerning American control of the exchange rate of the Peso, the party clause pertaining to the US citizens, and quota limitations on duty - free Philippine exports to the US were quickly perceived by many Filipinos as infringements on their sovereignty.⁴¹

39. Renato Constantino, The Making of a Filipino (Quezon city, 1969), p.203.

40. Agoncillo, n.3, p.516, See also Agaya, n.7, p.191.

41. John H. Esterline and Mae H. Esterline, How the Dominoes Fell: Southeast Asia in Perspective, (California, 1985), p.338.

Being an American law, it was nothing to do with the independent Philippines, unless it was also made law by the Government of the Philippines. The 'parity' clause required an amendment to the Constitution, as the Article XIII of the Constitution assests : "All agricultural timber, and mineral lands of the public domain waters, minerals, coal, petroleum, and other mineral oils, all forces of potential energy, and other natural resources of the Philippines belong to the state, and their disposition, exploitation, development or utilization, shall be limited to citizen of the Philippines."⁴² In order to get their 'parity rights' through Constitutional amendment, the Americans linked the acceptance of Bell Trade Act with the implementation of Rehabilitation Act, which would provide generous funds for the reconstruction of the Philippine economy.

Rehabilitation Act, 1946

The Philippine Rehabilitation Act was passed by the US Congress in April 1946 as a complement to the Bell Trade Act. It provided for an outlay of \$620,000,000 to be given to those who suffered damages during the

42. Cited in Smith, n.1, p.341.

war. But the condition was that no amount in excess of \$ 500 would be paid unless and until the Philippine Constitution was amended in such a manner as to give " parity rights" to the American citizen.⁴³ There was no option for Philippine government except to accept the American terms and conditions. According to Agoncillo, "The United States... played the role of a man who having been aided by a friend who lost everything in defense of the former, now brashly demanded that he be given the right to live with his friend's wife in exchange for his financial help."⁴⁴ On the same issue, B.D.Arora put his comments as follows : "It was nothing short of exploiting the helplessness and miseries of the Filipino society and nation as it was emerging from the trauma of massive destruction it had suffered during the Japanese occupation."⁴⁵

The major opposition to the Constitutional amendment came from Luis Taruc and other Huk leaders. The ruling Liberal party did not possess three-fourth majority in the Congress for the passage of amendment Act. The above hurdle was removed only when

43. Agoncillo, n.3, pp.495-96.

44. Ibid., p.496.

45. Arora, n.27,p.244.

the Roxas government expelled six congressmen belonging to the Democratic Alliance (D.A.) especially Huk leaders from the congress on the alleged grounds of "electoral frauds and terrorism" in the elections in central Luzon.⁴⁶ This incident clearly demonstrated the nature of democracy in the Philippines. Actually, either the election commission, or Supreme Court were not involved in proving the charges of 'electoral frauds and terrorism of DA's Congressmen. This was done at the instance of President Roxas. This was a blot on the democracy in the Philippines.⁴⁷ Thus, the Philippine Congress voted for the amendment bill. Moreover, elected with the US support President Roxas was ready to go to any length to please his patrons in Washington.

The amendment had to be ratified through a plebiscite in terms of the Constitution. Roxas and his men went to the people to explain "blessings of American exploitation of the natural resources of the country and painted a dream picture of wealth, contentment, peace and prosperity in the wake of such exploitation."⁴⁸ Here was a president who Constitutionally

46. Agoncillo, n.3, p.500.

47. Ibid.

48. Ibid.

permitted foreigners to exploit natural resources in his country on par with his own citizens. What could be the fate of independence and sovereignty of the Philippines?

The opposition leaders like Claro M. Recto, Jose P. Laurel and Luis Taruc launched an anti-amendment campaign. Yet, Roxas managed to win the plebiscite with huge margin. Robert Aura Smith described the plebiscite as "popular election".⁴⁹ But according to David Wurfel, "nearly 60 per cent of the registered voters stayed away from the polls."⁵⁰ Hence it could not be called a 'popular mandate'.

One could not blame President Roxas for having entered into so many unequal agreements with the US. In the post-war situation, the Philippines badly needed the American assistance for rehabilitation and reconstruction of the economy. With this weak bargaining position, the Philippines was forced to accept the American terms and conditions to get aid and assistance from the US. The weakness of the

49. Smith, n.1, p.130.

50. David Wurfel, "Roxas Administration," in George McTurnan Kahin, ed., Govt. and Politics of Southeast Asia (Ithaca, 1964), p.698.

Philippines was clearly reflected in each and every post-war agreement with the US.

Military Bases Agreement, 1947

The Philippines, with its strategic location always figured high in the US strategic and security calculations. In order to maintain its influence over South-East Asia including the Philippines, the US entered into an agreement with the Philippines, known as "Military Bases Agreement (MBA)" in 1947.

Basically, the Treaty of General Relations of 1946 provided a legal base for the Military Bases Agreement.⁵¹ Prior to this, the US Congress had already adopted the Joint Resolution No. 83 on June 29, 1944 in order to retain the military establishments in the Philippines even after its independence. The Resolution said : "...after negotiations with the President of the Commonwealth of the Philippines or the President of the Philippine Republic, the President of the US is hereby authorized as he may find appropriate to withhold and acquire and to retain such bases... for the mutual protection of the Philippines

51. See Article I of the Treaty of General Relations of 1946. Cited in Agoncillo, n.3, p.505.

Islands and the US."⁵²

In the light of the above resolution, a military bases Agreement was signed by the Philippines and the US on March 14, 1947 for "mutuality of security interest."⁵³ The MBA permitted the US to retain the use of 23 military bases covering a total area of 240,000 hectares with full extra territorial rights on a 99-year lease and free of rent.⁵⁴

Article I of the MBA conferred on the US right to retain the bases listed in Annex A and the section 2 of the same Article makes it clear thus : "The Philippines agrees to permit the United States upon notice to the Philippines, to use such of those bases listed in Annex B as the United States determines to be required."⁵⁵

Under the MBA, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) may serve on US bases and the US army may serve on the Philippines military establishments (Article II).

52. Simbulan, n.29, p.102.

53. Ibid., p.76.

54. Arora, n.27, p.244.

55. For Annex A & B, See Aruego, n.30, p.119.

The US may expand the bases mentioned in the Annex B to exchange such base, or relinquish rights to bases as any of such exigencies may be required by military necessity (Article II).

The US have the rights, power and authority within the bases (Article III). There would not be any restrictions on the movement of the US vessels in any part of the Philippines (Article IV). All material equipment, supplies or goods consigned to the bases are exempted from customs and excise duties (Article V).

The US has the right to use any part of the Philippines' land including sea for periodic maneuvers, for additional staging areas, bombing and gunnery ranges and for immediate airfields (Article VI). It shall have the right to use all public utilities and services and it may enter any privately owned property near the bases for "health inspection purposes" (Article VII & VIII).

The US has the right to make all kinds of surveys and to retain and maintain military cemeteries and historical sites, (Articles IX & X). American nationals employed in the bases could freely enter and leave

the Philippines and they are exempted from paying the internal revenue tax (Articles XI & XII). They are vested with extra territorial rights (Articles XIII & XIV).

The Philippines government was entrusted with the task of providing adequate protection of the bases (Article XV). The bases will not come under the postal jurisdiction of the Philippines and the US shall have the right to remove or dispose of any or all removable improvements, equipment or facilities in the bases (Articles XVI & XVII). The Philippines has no right to grant power or authority relating to the bases to any third power without the consent of the US (Article XXV). The US shall have the right to recruit the Filipinos for voluntary enlistment into the US armed forces (Article XXVII).⁵⁶

Though the bases were established to safeguard the security interests of both countries, in fact they have been serving the interests of the US only since their establishment. In the early stage, the purpose of establishment of these bases was to check the expansion

56. For Full text of MBA document see Ibid., pp.119-34.

of communism in Asia. They were the part of the US' global power structure, an essential link in a chain of facilities which enabled the United States to project its power worldwide. They kept the US forces ever ready throughout the Far East. They symbolised the American determination to remain a Pacific power.⁵⁷

The provisions of the MBA like jurisdiction over bases and certain privileges to the Americans evoked strong opposition from the Filipinos. Though the military bases provided employment to the Filipinos, the social costs to national dignity, i.e. the degradation of Filipino women, suffered by the Filipinos because of the maintenance of these bases is irreplaceable. While commenting on the consequences of US bases, Roland G. Simbulan said :

"The existence of the bases, has inflicted much harm on the Filipino people. These military installations have been the breeding grounds of "sin cities", where prostitution, gambling, smuggling of tax-free goods, black-marketing, extortion and drug trafficking flourish, eroding the moral fabric of Philippine society. Prostitution and drug-dealing in fact, are among the most thriving "industries" created by the bases."⁵⁸

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57. V. Anjaiah, "Prospect of US Bases in Philippines", Mainstream (New Delhi), Vol xvii, no. 17, January, 21, 1939, p. 16. See also Robert Pringle, Indonesia and the Philippines: American Interests in Island Southeast Asia, (New York, 1930), pp. 68-70.
58. Simbulan, n. 29, p. 251.

Moreover, these bases never protected the Philippines in the past. During the second World war, the Philippines became a victim of Japanese aggression without any hindrance. On this issue, senator Claro M. Recto commented that US military bases act as magnets of foreign attacks.⁵⁹ In a speech delivered on October 29, 1966, Senator Recto announced that the US bases were absolutely of no service to the Filipino people, but are, rather, an insult to national dignity.⁶⁰

Military Assistance
Agreement, (1947)

The MBA was followed by another agreement known as "Military Assistance Agreement (MAA)" to develop and train the Armed Forces of the Philippines. The MAA was considered to be an accompanying document to the MBA and it was signed by the two countries on March 21, 1947.⁶¹

In accordance with the MAA, the American assistance could be in the form of arms, ammunition, equipment and

59. Ibid., p.71.

60. Ibid., p.92.

61. Arora, n.27, p.244.

supplies, certain aircraft and naval vessels and training assistance by the US army. The agreement even defines the kind of military assistance which the Philippines could get from the US both in terms of advise and actual armament and it prohibits the Philippines from buying non-surplus US equipment even with its own money if there is no approval of the US government. Further, an American agency, 'Joint US Military Advisory Group (JUSMAG)' was created in order to extend "strategic staff direction, logistics, training and intelligence coordination to the Armed Forces of the Philippines."⁶²

It is interesting to note here that the costs of operating and maintenance of the JUSMAG were to be met by the Philippine government. But the members of the JUSMAG were under the direct control of American Ambassador to the Philippines.⁶³

Evolution of Postwar Agreements

After having assured many facilities for the Americans through various agreements, the US sincerely filled the Philippines first with food, clothing and

62. Simbulan, n.29, p.82.

63. Ibid., pp 82-83.

cigaretts and later with all manner of manufactured goods including machinery and other engineering equipments.⁶⁴

Under the Rehabilitation Act of 1946, an amount of \$ 400 million was disbursed among 1,250,000 war victims. The army's surplus property worth of \$220,000,000 was transferred to the Philippines. Nearly \$ 120,000,000 were spent on the rehabilitation of public buildings and services. The Reconstruction Finance Corporation granted the Philippines a loan of \$ 60,000,000 to put the government on its feet. The US Army alone had paid to Filipino civilian employees since liberation from the Japanese to 1950 approximately \$ 250,000,000. The US Army's distribution of supplies, mainly to Filipinos, had been estimated to be half a billion dollars. Nearly \$ 200,000,000 had been paid to Filipino veterans as their backpay. According to an estimate, the US had pumped about \$ 2 billion into the Philippines in the first eight years of its independence.⁶⁵

The sudden flow of money to the Philippines resulted in the high cost of living in various cities and towns.

64. The New Burma Times (Rangoon), Feb.7, 1950.

65. For full details see Ibid and see Smith, n.1,p.118. See also wurfel, n.50,pp.174-75.

Nevertheless, the Philippines economy gradually recovered from the horrors of the war through the American aid.⁶⁶

As a result of Bell Trade Act of 1946, foreign markets except America were closed for the Filipino goods. In addition, American goods had flown into the Philippines without any hindrance. With the entry of American goods, the Philippines' local industries were destroyed. Slowly, Americans captured the key sectors of the Philippine economy. Thus, the Philippines became totally dependent on the US even after its independence. This is evident from an American scholar, George Taylor's observations :

"New forms of alien bondage-political, economic and military - were being clamped down on the Filipinos. The United States was trying to preserve the colonial character of the Philippine economy, perpetuate the economic dependence of the Philippines on American capital and transform the Philippine into a permanent auxiliary base for the American army and navy in the Pacific-the Filipinos got off to a very bad start on the road to independence."⁶⁷

On the other side, the gap between the rich and the poor became more widened. The elite became middlemen and lower level administrators. The life of rural peasants

66. Ibid.

67. Cited in Arora, n.27,p.245, See also Simbulan, n.29, p.71.

became miserable because of high interest rates on loans, sharing agricultural expenses and rent payments. The landlord-tenant relationship became worse. No political leader had touched these rural problems.⁶⁸ It was the Huks who challenged the very bases of landlordism and corrupt bureaucracy. The atrocities committed by the Philippine Armed Constabulary aggravated the situation. After having unseated their leaders from the Congress, the Huks intensified their struggle. Under the patronage of the US, President Roxas pursued a 'mailed-fist' policy of armed suppression against the Huks.⁶⁹

With increase in suppression, the strength of Huk movement also increased. In March 1948, President Roxas declared the Huk movement as illegal. Yet, the movement survived and even rose to the equal number of Philippine government forces.⁷⁰

The postwar agreements clearly demonstrated that they were signed between two unequal partners. The US exploited the weak bargaining position in which

68. Esterline, n.41, pp.338-39.

69. Arora, n.27, p.246.

70. Alvin H. Scaff, The Philippine Answer to Communism, (Stanford, 1955), p.28.

the Philippines found itself. The relationship between the US and the Philippines meant a relationship between an advanced capitalist industrial economy and the agrarian economy, between the dominant country and the subordinate country. The conditions of the above agreements would lead to the economic advancement of the US and the economic impoverishment of the Philippines.⁷¹

Anyhow, President Roxas by signing various agreements with the US, paved the way for cementing the "special relationship" between the Philippines and the US in a paradigm of inequality. President Roxas died on April 15, 1948. Two days later, the Vice-President Elpidio Quirino, assumed the office in place of Roxas.

71. Simbulan, n.29, p.278.

CHAPTER - III

ELPIDIO QUIRINO 1948-53

On the sudden death of President Manuel Roxas, Vice-President Elpidio Quirino assumed the highest office of the country on April 17, 1948. Quirino had held several offices, viz. Congressman, Senator, Secretary of Finance, Interior and Foreign Affairs in Commonwealth as well as during the Roxas Administration.¹ As a Foreign Secretary, concurrently with his position as vice-President in the Roxas Administration, he played a crucial role in strengthening the Philippines' relations with the U.S.

Unlike Roxas, President Quirino was not a collaborator and he had even lost his wife and three of his five children at the hands of Japanese soldiers. He was born in an ordinary family. He used to work as a 'barrio' teacher on a salary of ₱12 a month before joining the politics. He worked as a property clerk in the Manila Police Department in order to secure funds for his higher studies.

1. Russell H. Fifield, "The Challenge to Magsaysay" Foreign Affairs (New York), Vol. 33, no. 1, 1954, p. 150.

He graduated from the college of law, University of the Philippines.² With this ordinary and low background, when he became President, he tried to introduce several reforms and welfare measures. But the corrupt bureaucracy in collaboration with certain landed interests hindered the introduction and implementation of these programmes. The new President faced a host of problems. Most of these were the left-overs of president Roxas.

Huk Problem

As a result of 333-year Spanish colonial rule, the Philippines had been transformed into a feudal society. Its main feature was widespread poverty in agriculture. It would be beyond doubt that about half a century of American occupation brought about a tremendous progress in education, self-government, public health and an increasing national income. But the fruits of American rule went to the government, to the landlords and to urban areas.³

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2. George A. Malcolm, "American Colonial Carguerist" (Boston, 1957), p. 103.
 3. Hernando J. Abaya, "Betrayal in the Philippines" (New York, 1946), p. 206.

The US totally neglected the rural areas, where the feudal absentee landlords and their agents ruled the roost.

The enormity of the problem of agricultural poverty became apparent when it was realized that less than 40 percent of the 3,143,836 families comprising the Philippine population own both house and land.⁴ It means nearly 60 per cent of the population did not possess either land or house of their own. Moreover, nearly 75 percent of the population were dependent on Agriculture. In 1938, the agricultural activity accounted for 80 per cent of the national income.⁵

The rate of fifty-fifty share in crop between landlords and tenants did not give enough income to the tenants. On the other hand, in 1939 the average daily wage of ^{an} agricultural labourer was just twenty-two American cents per day.⁶ Thus, the low wages, high interest loans and absentee landlordism made the lives of barrio people quite miserable. The 1930

4. This was appeared in 1939 Philippine census. For further details see *ibid.*, p.208.

5. *Ibid.*, p.209.

6. *Ibid.*, p.208.

worldwide depression aggravated the situation. The gap between the rich and the poor still widened by the end of 1930's.

In order to express their dissatisfaction against the landlords and colonial masters, the Filipino peasants rose in revolt several times. The Department of Labour traces the early uprising in as early as 1662. Another record shows that a revolt occurred in Batangas Province in 1739.⁷ Since seventeenth century, down to the modern times, Filipinos revolted more than a hundred times against the oppression and exploitation. But all these revolts were poorly organised and they never became a serious threat to the colonial government.⁸

By 1920s, however, a wave of new consciousness had emerged among the Filipino masses with the penetration of marxist political and economic thought into the Philippines. By 1930s', the new consciousness created a strong and militant peasant and labour movement. The leadership was in the hands of communists and socialists.⁹ It was this movement that formed

7. See Emiliano Morable, "History of the Philippine Labor Movement", in Department of Labor Yearbook (Manila : Department of Labor, 1949), Vol.I, pp.32-38.

8. Alvin H.Scaff, The Philippine Answer to Communism (Stanford, 1955), p.6.

9. Ibid., p.13.

into the Hukbalahap movement on March 29, 1942, when the Japanese invaded the Philippines in December 1941.¹⁰

On the otherside, with the emergence of militant peasant and labour movement, the land-lords took shelter in cities under the protection of Japanese forces.¹¹ Thus, two lines were drawn to fight against each other. This was a struggle between a group of intellectuals and downtrodden people, and a group of exploiters and foreign agresors.

The Huks had nearly killed more than 25,000 Japanese soldiers as well as collaborator, during the war. They lost less than 3000 guerillas.¹² Right from the beginning, the US did not want the ordinary people to take up arms against the Japanese forces. Yet, there were instances when Americans coordinated the guerilla activities of US Armed Forces in the Far East (USAFFE).¹³

10. Abaya, n.3, p.18. The term 'Hukbalahap is a Taglog word and abbreviation of Hukbo ng Baya, Laban sa Hapan (The People's Anti-Japanese Army).

11. Ibid., p.213.

12. Luis Taruc, Born of the People (New York, 1953) p.209.

13. For further analyses, see Ibid., pp.70-72.

It must be noted here that there was a clear distinction between Huk guerillas and USAFFE soldiers. Huk guerillas were unpaid and determined patriotic soldiers whereas the members of USAFFE were ordinary paid soldiers. That's why, one could find the USAFFE had several undisciplined soldiers. It must be remembered that these soldiers along with Philippine constabulary (PC) used to work as agents and musclemen of landlords and industrialists before the war. At the critical juncture too, they used to raid barrios and terrorize the people. Therefore, the Huk members began to call such groups of US AFPE as "tulisaffe".¹⁴ Anyhow, it was not likely that all the members of USAFFE were bandits. Both the groups had put up strong resistance to the Japanese forces.

After the liberation, there were misunderstandings between the Americans and the Huks. These resulted from conflict between landlords and the Huks. As the US adopted a lenient policy towards collaborators after the liberation, landlords returned

14. It is a taglog word means bandit and USAFFE during the Japanese occupation. See Ibid, p.153.

to the barrios under the protection of PC to reestablish their rule over Huk dominated areas. They terrorized the people through their private armies as well as PC.¹⁵ As the Huks resisted, the US army insisted that the people surrender their arms to the Philippine government. But, in the name of self-defence the people refused to surrender the arms. On this issue, the Huk leader, Luis Taruc admitted in a meeting in February 1946 that they had arms, which were wrested from the Japanese during the occupation. He said; "these arms are of little importance. What we value most are our lives, our honour and our principles. But as long as the people see sinister fascist threats to their security, they will not give up their arms."¹⁶

Since the liberation, the US pursued an antagonistic policy vis-a-vis the Huks. The reason might be their left leanings and communist ideological commitment. Huks were denied rehabilitation and war time pay by the US on par with the USAFFE.¹⁷ The US

15. Abaya, n.3, p.220. See also Taruc, n.12, pp. 221-22.

16. Ibid.

17. Geoffrey Bocca, The Philippines : America's Forgotten Friends (New York, 1974) pp.117-18.

army arrested the Huk leaders and members including Luis Taruc.¹⁸ This was the reward for having fought with the Japanese fascists for nearly three years.

Though the primary objective of the Huk movement was to fight against the Japanese, having emerged from peasants and workers struggles in 1930s it also aimed at agrarian reforms, land redistribution and abolition of feudalism in the Philippines. At the same time, the Huk movement was not against the then commonwealth government. In fact, the then Huk leadership was afraid of being cut off from the US, and expressed its faith in the leadership and the Constitution of the commonwealth. However, they were bitterly opposed by the Commonwealth government and the U.S. While describing the reasons for his imprisonment, Luis Taruc said; "We were in prison because imperialists considered us too 'dangerous' to be at large, dangerous not to our own people but to the interests of a handful of monopoly capitalists on the other side of the ocean. The Americans had come back not to liberate us but to reclaim us."¹⁹ For the US, the friendship with the landlords

18. Teodoro A : Agoncillo & Mc.Guerrero, History of Filipino People (Quezon City, 1970) pp.525-26.

19. Taruc, n.12, p.206.

and capitalists was most important irrespective of their antecedents. For it, the peasants and workers were subversives, as they had been fighting for their basic needs. The former had been safeguarding the colonial interests of the US, whereas the latter had been fighting against the same. Naturally, the US would support the landlords and capitalists. The same thing happened in the 1946 elections. The US favoured Manuel Roxas, a collaborator during the Japanese regime against President Sergio Osmena, a friend of peasants and workers in the 1946 elections. Here it clearly demonstrates that the US support to a presidential candidate would lead to his victory in the elections : whether he was a collaborator, or not.

The mailed fist anti Huk policy of President Roxas led to the rise of Huk movement in the Central Luzon areas. The refusal of senatorial seats to democratically elected Huk leaders aggravated the situation.²⁰ Instead of finding the roots of the movement, president Roxas, favoured a military action as a solution to the problem. This resulted in

20. Scaff, n.8, p.28.

widespread atrocities on common-people by the government troops. The indiscriminate state terrorism turned the people against the government and strengthened the Huk movement. The basic demands of the Huks were - (a) an agrarian reform with a 60-40 crop division between landlord & tenant, (b) a leasehold system to replace the tenant system, and (c) division of all large landholdings among poor peasants and improvement of credit facilities.²¹

Instead of pursuing the above demands, President Roxas banned the Hukbalahap organization in March 1948.²²

This did not solve the problem. Moreover, the movement rather witnessed a rapid spread to many provinces.

It is in this background that the Huk problem should be analysed during the Presidency of Elpidio Quirino. In order to win the 1949 elections, it became necessary for President Quirino to make a truce with the Huks. As a first step, President Quirino made a proposal for offering amnesty to Huks through his brother Judge Antonio Quirino. The Huk leadership put forward the following demands as pre-conditions

21. Shirley Zimmerman, "Lessons From the Huk Rebellion" Solidarity (Manila), vol. iv no. 7, 1969, p. 80.

22. Scaff, n. 8, p. 29.

for a truce : (1) scrapping of the Bell Trade Act; (2) no resumption of trade with Japan; (3) division of large estates for distribution to the tenants; (4) release of all Huk prisoners; (5) industrialization; and (6) no military bases agreement with the United States.²³ President Quirino inclined to accept the demands of the Huks. Out of six demands, three demands were domestic and the others were aimed at scrapping unequal treaties with the US.

Since the terms for truce were approved from both sides, on June 21, 1948, President Quirino issued a proclamation granting amnesty to all leaders and members of the Hukbalahap. In turn, the Huks agreed to surrender their arms to the government (in lieu of acceptance of their demands) within a period of fifty days following the grant of amnesty.²⁴

As a result, Luis Taruc left the fields and returned to Manila on June 29, 1948. His Congress seat was restored and he was permitted to collect his three year salaries. Almost every one in the Congress tried to pose in pictures with him claiming that they

23. Agoncillo, n-18, p.531.

24. Ibid., p.530.

too," were Huks at heart."²⁵

In accordance with the agreement the Quiráo administration did not release all the Huk prisoners. Apparently, no action had been taken to pursue the other demands. Earlier, the government promised to issue licences to the peasants and workers for arms, in connection with their self-defence. But the government denied such type of assurance to the people. At the same time, landlords and their private armies (civil guards) were already possessing arms. On the other hand the civil guards increased their attacks on peasants and their leaders during the truce period. The people felt insecure in those conditions. That 's why, they refused to surrender their arms. But, the government insisted that the Huks surrender their arms.

As a result, peace efforts were broken and Luis Taruc escaped from Manila and resumed guerilla activity against the Government. At this stage, the Huks for the first time declared that their ultimate goal was to overthrow the government through arm struggle.²⁶

25. Taruc, n.12, p.260.

26. Abaya, n.3, p.214.

They realized that as long as imperialism and feudalism dominated their motherland, there would always be misery for the toiling masses of the Philippines. In order to eradicate such misery, there existed a necessity of a revolutionary movement like Huk national liberation movement.²⁷

Thus, the Huk movement which had started as an anti-Japanese people's movement transformed itself into a full scale revolutionary movement by 1948. While narrating the nature of Huk movement, Hernando J. Abaya commented in these words:²⁸ "Its record shows a continuous growth through a determined struggle in co-ordination with the common people. It was born from the masses of Central Luzon, was fed and cared for by them, fought for and with them...The Hukbalahap did not follow a lie-low policy, a policy of waiting. They fought throughout three years."²⁸ They continued this fighting spirit upto 1954.

The Elections of 1949.

President Quirino paid an official visit to the US from August 8-13, 1949 in order to gain the

27. Taruc, n.12, p.260-2.

28. Abaya, n.3, p.214.

the support of the US for his candidature in the forthcoming elections as if the US was a vote bank.²⁹ Once again, it clearly showed that the US was the main actor in the Philippine Presidential elections and also the dependent nature of Philippine presidents on the US. President Quirino's opponent was a Nacionalista Party candidate, Senator Jose P. Laurel, a collaborator and the former President of the Puppet Republic during the Japanese aggression.

Surprisingly, according to a press report in Manila Times on April 14, 1949 stated that General Douglas MacArthur had told in an interview to Manuel V. Gallego, a roving ambassador that the US would cut off all aid to the Philippines if Filipinos elected collaborator President, meaning Laurel.³⁰ Evidently, the US could dictate terms for Philippine sovereignty, President Quirino stressed the above in his campaign.

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29. Keesing's Contemporary Archives (KCA) 1948-50 Vol. VII, (London, 1950), p.10224.
30. Renato Constantino, The Making of a Filipino: A Story of Philippine Colonial Politics (Quezon City, 1969), p.141.

In retaliation, Senator Laurel accused Quirino administration of corruption, extravagance and inability to maintain law and order, and making of the Philippines a "vassal" of the US. Further, he promised, if elected, to defend the country's independence against US economic "exploitation". He got the support of Huks in this election.³¹

President Quirino won the election with a majority of 485, 488 votes against his main rival Senator Laurel. His running mate, Fernando Lopez was also elected as Vice-President with a margin of 557,087 votes.³² But the election was characterized by extreme irregularities, extensive frauds and many instances of terrorism.³³ This was the fate of democracy in the Philippine after having received training in the art of self-government, and democracy from the US for a period of half a century.

31. KCA, n.29, p.10, 757.

32. Frances Lucille Starner, Maggaysay and the Philippine Peasantry (California, 1961) pp 204-206.

33. Ibid., p.206.

Philippine - US Relations

Under Quirino Regime

The US had contributed nearly US \$ 2 billion for the recovery of the wrecked Philippine economy during the first four years of the independence.³⁴ As a result, by 1949, the Philippine domestic production had steadily increased to 91 per cent of the pre-war (1937)- level. National income had increased from ₱4.4 billion to ₱5.7 billion, an increase of 30 per cent.³⁵ The per capita income rose to ₱ 280 in 1949 from ₱ 228 in 1946.³⁶

Instead of the steady expansion the period from 1946 to 1950 was characterized with a succession of economic crises as the basic social problems developed economic symptoms.³⁷ First, the relation between landlords and tenants returned to the pre-war times. Secondly, corruption, graft and mismanagement became common features of the administration. Lastly, the slow recovery of exports and cessation of special US postwar dollar transfers had produced a foreign exchange crisis.³⁸

34. The Christian Science Monitor, June 8, 1950.

35. Frank H. Golay, The Philippines: Public Policy and National Economic Development (New York, 1968), p. 68.

36. Ibid, p. 101.

37. Ibid., p. 68.

38. John H. Esterline and Mae H Esterline, How the Dominoes Fell, South East Asia in Perspective (California, 1986), p. 339.

The Philippine government had failed to collect an estimated 60 per cent of the revenue due to it. There were several loopholes in the administrative system which in turn led to corruption among the bureaucrats. The government had almost exhausted its available resources and borrowed beyond the legal limit from its own banks. The payments of government cheques was stopped by the National Treasury until revenues accumulated. Public construction projects were discontinued for lack of funds.³⁹ The government was forced to show a deficit of \$ 250 million in its 1950-51 budget.⁴⁰

According to Luis Taruc, "For over half a century the Philippines has become largely the private landed estate of a handful of big businessmen who live ten thousand miles away in the United States."⁴¹ He further said, "The American imperialists did not want our country to become industrialized because they wanted our people to buy only the products made in American factories.

39. Albert Ravenholt, "The Philippines : Where did we fail?" Foreign Affairs, vol.29, April 1951, p.413.

(NYT)

40. New York Times, February, 8, 1950.

41. Taruc, n.12, p.265.

Our country was to be a market for their goods.⁴² As befits this allegation, the US on one hand pumped money into the Philippine economy in the name of rehabilitation and reconstruction of the Philippine economy and on the other exported to the Philippines non-essential commodities like cigarettes, automobiles, gasoline and cosmetics.⁴³ This was a give and take policy. Therefore, in a way, American businessmen benefitted more from the US aid to the Philippines rather than Filipinos. It was evident from the census of 1948.

The 1948 census showing the ownership of industries⁴⁴

	<u>Philippines (%)</u>	<u>Foreign countries (%)</u>
Transportation	76.1	23.9
Forestry	51.9	42.3
Mining	42.4	57.6
Electricity	17.8	82.2
Fisheries	100	-
Commerce	46.1	53.9
Manufacturing	49.1	50.9

42. Ibid., p. 267.

43. NYT, June 4, 1950.

44. See for further details, Agoncillo, n. 13, p. 599.

Thus, the key sectors of the economy were owned by the foreigners. The parity rights provided to the American businessmen with an opportunity to exploit the Filipino masses.

In spite of the economic ills of the Philippines, the rise in the strength of the Hukbong Laban (Huk) caused more concern to the US administration as the Huk became a serious threat for the US interests in the Philippines. The New York Times warned about the danger of Communism in the Philippines thus :

"The danger is that economic malaise high prices, low salaries, unemployment and possibly skipped pay rolls will breed discontent that will play into the hands of the communists."⁴⁵ In order to find out an immediate solution to the economic ills of the Philippines, the US despatched a survey mission under the leadership of Daniel W. Bell in 1950.

The Bell Mission, 1950

As the economic situation was deteriorating, the people's faith in the Quirino Administration

45. NYT, June 4, 1950.

was diminishing gradually. During his visit to the US in 1949, President Quirino made a proposal regarding appointment of an American group for the Philippines similar to the Dodge mission to Japan in order to prepare the ground for the economic recovery.⁴⁶ President Quirino favoured a joint mission consisting of Americans and Filipinos in this regard. But the US turned down the proposal.

President Quirino ^{WAS} forced to accept the US proposal for appointment of an independent American mission to find out ways and means of first discovering the ills of the Philippine economy, and then submitting recommendations to solve the problems with the help of American aid.⁴⁷ Here, the appointment of an independent American mission clearly demonstrated the weak bargaining position of the Philippine government. The Quirino's government had to accept the American imposition in terms of the 'special relationship' existing between the two countries. At the same time, it also exposed the weak capabilities of Filipino economists in the eyes of the U.S.

46. The New Times of Burma, March, 21, 1950.

47. NYT, June, 4, 1950.

The Bell Mission under the leadership of Daniel W. Bell surveyed the economic conditions of the Philippines for several months and submitted its final report to President Truman in last week of October 1950. The report was published on October 28, 1950. The mission recommended for economic, agrarian and fiscal reforms to be undertaken by the Philippine government.⁴⁸ It also proposed that the US should extend technical assistance and provide \$ 250 million to help finance the programme of development extending over a period of five years.⁴⁹ Within a month, the Philippines government entered into an agreement with the US to implement the Bell mission recommendations.

Quirino-Foster Agreement, 1950

On November 14, 1950 President Quirino and American Economic Cooperation Administration President, William C. Foster signed an Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation between the two countries. The Philippines agreed to implement the Bell Mission Recommendations and the US in turn agreed to provide

48. Agencillo, n. 13, pp. 595-97.
49. Ravenholt, n. 30, p. 414.

technical assistance, to resume negotiation of a treaty of friendship, commerce, and navigation to reconsider the provisions of the 1946 Bell Trade Act, and to initiate an economic aid programme estimated at \$ 250 million over five years.⁵⁰ Thus, the US linked its aid with the introduction of agrarian and economic reforms in the Philippines. It was this prerequisite that became a major irritant for landlords and businessmen.

When President Quirino made efforts to put forward the reforms in shape of bills and acts in the Philippine congress in 1951, the Philippine's landed and business interests irrespective of their party loyalties either blocked or delayed the passage of new laws in the Congress.⁵¹ It became a common phenomenon that any adequate program of reform and development would always conflict with privileges, interests, of the more powerful, political, financial and landed groups. According to Albert Ravenholt, these vested groups did not hesitate to take shelter under Filipino nationalism in order to protect their selfish interests.⁵²

50. Golay, n.35, p.83.

51. Ibid.

52. Ravenholt, n.36, p.415.

With the increasing pressure from the US, President Quirino however, managed to get industrial peace act, Agricultural credit and cooperative Financing Act, Minimum Wage Law Act and Republic Acts no.600 and No.601, which increased corporate income taxes and established a special tax on sale of foreign exchange passed in the congress with utmost difficulties.⁵³ The passage of these acts, however showed how influential US was in the Philippines' internal matters. It could even control the vested interests, as the President and his administration found themselves helpless in solving their own problems.

The new tax measures, however, produced gradual improvement in the Philippine fiscal situation. According to Frank H. Goley "National government tax revenues, which had amounted to ₱ 329 million in fiscal year 1949-50, virtually doubled to ₱ 655 million in fiscal year 1951-52. The special tax on sales of foreign exchange was particularly productive, receipts from this tax amounting to ₱ 155 million in the year 1951-52."⁵⁴ By 1952, with the increase of revenue

53. Goley, n.35, p.84, See also Ravenholt, n.39, p. 415.

54. Ibid.

collections, the Philippine government was able to expand social investment and enhance welfare expenditure in order to counter the Huk menace.

Quirino's Foreign Policy

The problem of external relations was a new issue for a sovereign independent Philippines. The US had been looking after the external dimension of policy since its occupation of the Philippines. Apparently, the US had been playing a crucial role in formulating the Philippine foreign policy. It is evident from the observations of Senator Claro M. Recto. He said :

We have never been a party to the formulation and implementation of any foreign policy. The one resulting from our relations with the US - pompously called "foreign policy" - has always been formulated and implemented exclusively by the American State Department. It is, you see, unilateral and one-sided, the matter of form is irrelevant.

They order and we obey; they say "Jump" and we say "How high". The order may come in the form of suggestion... Our compliance in the form of assent,...."55

Thus, The US had been playing a dominant role in each and every aspect of the Philippine affairs

55. Constantino, n.30, p.229.

in the immediate postwar era. The Philippines had already become dependent on the US in matters of national defence, economy, foreign relations, and even internal reforms.

In the post-war era, the US had pursued a Europe-first policy. It was evident by launching Marshall plan in which billions of dollars of aid had been allocated to the western nations.⁵⁶ Taking advantage of the post-war situation, the US emerged as a super-power resources and wealth remaining unaffected during the war. At the same time, her economic, strategic and trade interests expanded from regional to global level. It is not likely that the US had completely neglected Asia :

The fast changing Asian and global scenario provided a chance for President Quirino to show some sort of independent initiative in framing the foreign policy of the Philippines. The establishment of People's Republic of China in October 1949 and birth of communist movements in several Asian countries including the Philippines caused a serious concern for the Philippines security. In the beginning Quirino's policy was non-interference in the internal affairs

56. Ibid., pp 138-39.

of neighbouring countries. This had nothing to do with the US interests in the region. In his inaugural address President Quirino said : "... in its relations with China, the government would respect 'the right of any neighbours to choose freely his own system of government, and would, "maintain an open mind with the requirements of our national security and the security of Asia as a whole."⁵⁷

It would not be out of place to mention here that President Quirino and Taiwan leaders, Marshall Chiang Kei-shek had already expressed their consent on the necessity for creating a union of Pacific and East Asian countries in order to check the expansion of communism in Asia.⁵⁸ Further, President Quirino, sent his associate Carlos P. Romulo to participate in a conference in New Delhi in January 1949 to support the Indonesians in their struggle for Independence. It was in this conference that the Philippine delegate had proposed the formation of an "Asiatic Organization."⁵⁹ Moreover, President Quirino himself made a proposal during his visit to the US in August 1949 for the formation

57. Chiang Kei-shek visited the Philippines on July 10, 1949 to discuss the matter about the threat of communism. See KCA, n.29, p.10, 190.

58. Ibid.

59. New York Times, January 24, 1949.

of a Pacific union in order to unite South-east Asia and the Pacific vis-a-vis the threat of communism.⁶⁰ All these initiatives of President Quirino showed the Philippines' desire to improve its relations with the Asian neighbours on one hand, and creation of a regional organisation to counter the expansion of communism in Asia on the other.

At this time, the US found itself consolidating its position for emerging as a super power, it did not seem to consider the threat to Asia from the Communism as a serious one. That's why, the US did not show any interest in Quirino's proposal for a Pacific Union against Communism.⁶¹

On his part taking an independent line, for the first time, President Quirino decided to go ahead in establishing a regional organization in Asia. As a first step, Carlos P. Romulo, the then President of the United Nations General Assembly, was appointed as the new Philippine Foreign Secretary on May 10, 1950 to undertake the task.⁶² Romulo successfully convened a regional conference in Baguio from May 26-30, 1950.

60. KCA 1948-50, Vol. VII, no. 942, p. 10, 524.

61. Man Mohini Kaul, "The Philippines and South-East Asia" (New Delhi, 1978), pp. 50-51.

62. KCA, n. 60. pg. 10, 585.

Baguio Conference 1950

The Philippines had convened Baguio conference with a clear objective of creating a regional organization. It was evident from the speech of Ramulo which he delivered in the conference. In his speech Ramulo expressed support for the creation of a permanent regional organization keeping in view the security of the region. He further announced that "the remedy which most of our countries require is not military action but action to forestall internal subversion."⁶³

The delegates of Australia, Ceylon, (Sri Lanka) India, Indonesia, Pakistan, Thailand and the Philippines participated in the deliberations of the Baguio Conference. There were different opinions among the delegates on various issues. Moreover, there was no formal agenda for the conference. Ramaswami Mudaliar, the Indian delegate differed with the Philippine perspective on major foreign policy issues.⁶⁴

At the end of the Conference, a resolution regarding, mutual cooperation, among Asian countries, United action in United Nations and cordial relations among South and Southeast Asian countries was passed

63. Ibid.

64. Kaul, n.61. pp.51-52.

by the delegates unanimously.⁶⁵

Though the Baguio Conference had failed to provide any organizational framework for a permanent regional organization, it provided an opportunity to the Philippines to establish friendly relations with its Asian neighbours. The Philippines concluded treaties of friendship with Pakistan on January 3, 1951; with Indonesia on June 21, 1951; with India on July 11, 1952 and on April 29, 1954.⁶⁶ This was a significant development in Philippine's foreign policy.

Anyhow, the results of the Baguio conference did not fulfil the aspirations of President Quirino. Suddenly, he replaced his foreign secretary Romulo by Senator Joaquin Elizalde on December 31, 1951. Now, Romulo became the Philippine Ambassador to the US.⁶⁷

As the situation in Asia worsens with the emergence of communist movements in several countries, the relationship between the Philippines and the US acquired a new dimension in matters of security.

65. For an extended analysis on the proceedings of Baguio Conference see Kaul n.61, p.52.

66. Agoncillo, n.18, p.631.

67. KCA, n.60, p.11, 933.

The Mutual Defence Treaty, 1951

Starting with the Russian revolution in 1917, the Communist movement spread gradually to several corners of the world. In October 1949, Chinese communists declared China as People's Republic of China. It was this revolution that raised new hopes among the Asian Communists. Then came the Korean war in 1950. By then three Indo-Chinese states, Burma, Indonesia and even India were threatened by Communist revolts.

As regards the Philippines, inspite of introducing agrarian reforms in terms of Bell Mission recommendations, followed by American military and economic aid, the Huk movement had consolidated its strength in the countryside considerably. Corruption, low morale, inflation, and economic exhaustion were the weak points from the governmentside in crushing the Huk movement.⁶⁸

With the emergence of communist movements in other parts of Asia, the Philippines became increasingly concerned with the problem of external security. While describing the immense danger of communism, the

68. David Joel Steinberg, The Philippines : A Singular and A Plural Place. (Colorado, 1982), p. 110.

then Philippines Defence Secretary, Ruperto Kangleon said : "The Philippines are definitely a target of the Communists. The fall of Formosa would facilitate infiltration into this country by the Chinese Communists."⁶⁹ It was this grave situation that compelled the Philippines to enter into a mutual defense treaty with the US in 1951.

At the same time, the US was puzzled to know about the rise of strength of the Huks in the Philippines. The Huks staged raids in 1949 and 1950 on government troops on an increasingly larger scale. They had fixed the year 1951 as a year of final victory.⁷⁰ The Korean war aggravated the situation. Under these circumstances, the US changed its policy towards the security arrangements in Asia. The US immediately considered the Philippines request on mutual security pact. Thus, both the governments signed the Mutual Defence Treaty (MDT) on August 30, 1951 in Washington.⁷¹

The MDT provided that an attack in the Pacific on either party would be a threat to peace and security

69. The Christian Science Monitor, June 8, 1950.

70. Scaff, n.8, p.35.

71. Roland G. Simbulan, The Bases of Our Insecurity (Metro Manila, 1983), p.84.

in the Pacific Basin. Further, the Treaty stated :
"Each party recognizes that an armed attack in the
Pacific area on either of the parties would be
dangerous to its own peace and safety and declares
that it would act to meet the common danger in
accordance with its constitutional process."⁷²

Since the US has not given any automatic security
assurance to the Philippines in case of an armed
attack, this treaty could not be called as mutual
defence treaty. On this clause, Simbulan rightly
commented thus : "This is really just one way of
saying that if one was attacked, the other will think
about it."⁷³ Simbulan also expressed his fear that

the MDT could drag the Philippines into any armed
conflict brought on by American policy anywhere in
Asia.⁷⁴ For example, the Philippines was forced to
send its troops to Korea, though the Philippines had
virtually no interest in that war. Actually in the
beginning President Quirino was against sending the
troops to Korea, keeping in view of the internal
situation and the fear of provoking China and Soviet
Union

72. Constantino, n.30,p.210.

73. Simbulan, n.71, p.84.

74. Ibid.

Union. As the US pressure was increasing for sending troops to Korea, the Philippines President was forced to change his policy and sent the troops on August 7, 1950. He defended his action thus :
"Knowing that there can be no half way house between Slavery and freedom, it has ranged itself on the side of the freeworld and is contributing its share of the sacrifice to keep it free. This is why our boys are fighting in Korea."⁷⁵

The US and the Philippines described the MDT as "a strong step towards security and peace in the Pacific."⁷⁶ But the Filipino nationalists like Claro Recto argued against the MDT on grounds of discrimination in comparison with New Zealand, Australia and Japan.⁷⁷

The Huks and the US

By 1950, the Huk movement was able to challenge the very bases of American establishments in the Philippines. The then US Ambassador, to the Philippines, Myron M. Cowan openly condemned the activities of the

75. Kaul, n.61, pp.53-54.

76. KCA, n.6 , p.11,715.

77. Constantino, n.30, p.177.

Huks and called upon the Filipinos to wage a war against communism.⁷⁸ In order to safeguard its interests, the US did not even hesitate to support a president who was alleged to have used illegal methods in winning the elections. This clearly shows that the US wants a guardian in the Philippines to safeguard its interests, irrespective of his character and antecedents.

When the US found President Quirino was unable to suppress the Huk movement, it introduced Ramon Magsaysay as the successor of President Quirino.⁷⁹ The most unfortunate thing was that the Filipinos did not have any opportunity to choose their leader on their own. Simply, they had to accept the American sponsored candidate. In 1953 elections, Magsaysay defeated President Quirino with a wide margin and with this began a new era in the Philippine politics.

78. NYT, June 5, 1950.

79. Starner, n.32, p.32.

CHAPTER - IV

RAMON MAGSAYSAY 1954-57*

The period of Ramon Magsaysay's presidency (1954-57) is a major landmark not only in the history of politics of the Philippines but also in the history of the Philippines-US relations. He was a creation of new times and conditions.

Unlike his predecessors, President Magsaysay was not a mestizo, lawyer and conventional politician. He was an ethnic Malay, a former guerilla leader and an ordinary mechanic. He was known as "Monching",¹ the affectionate diminutive of his name Ramon. He was a person of enormous worth. In addition, his close association with the US added new dimensions to his "young, energetic, personable and unsophisticated personality."²

The Emergence of Magsaysay

The emergence of Magsaysay as a top leader

* Though the Presidential elections were held in November, 1953 Ramon Magsaysay assumed his Office on January, 1, 1954.

1. Monching' was a nickname of President Magsaysay, cited in Robert Aura Smith, Philippine Freedom 1946-58, (New York, 1953), p. 150.
2. Russel H. Fiefield, "The Challenge to Magsaysay" Foreign Affairs (New York), vol. 33, n. 1, 1954, p. 150.

of the Philippines goes back to 1950 when the Huk movement had arisen as a challenge to the Quirino administration as well as to the US establishments and interests in the Philippines. The Philippine army and the police were too weak to take the challenge of Huks as they were poorly trained, underpaid and hard pressed.³ They used to terrorize the barrio people in the name of combing operations and sometimes taking away the villagers' chickens and rice without payment.⁴ In addition, they were always identified with the landlords and their civil guards. In these circumstances, the barrio people recognized the Huks as their natural protectors.

On the otherhand, corruption, graft and mismanagement in the administration had already made President Quirino unpopular. Moreover, the malpractices and terrorist activities in 1949 elections highlighted the fate of democracy in the Philippines. It was this situation that compelled a member of the Philippine Election commission to conclude that "there is no more

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3. Alvin H. Scaff, The Philippine Answer to Communism (California, 1965), p.28.
 4. Geoffrey Bocca, The Philippines : America's Forgotten Friends (New York, 1974), p.118.

democracy in the Philippines."⁵ Jose P. Laurel, the Nacionalista Party leader used to refer to President Quirino as the "Squatter in Malacanan".⁶ By 1950, people had apparently lost faith in the integrity of their government in the Philippines.

Since President Quirino and his 'mailed-fist policy' had failed in suppressing the Huk movement, the US was in search of a new plan and a new leader to wage a war against communism in the Philippines in the early part of 1950.⁷ The selection of a new leader began in April, 1950 when Senator and the then Chairman of the House Committee on National Defence, Ramon Magsaysay visited the US to ask for additional Military aid to the Philippines under the Military Assistance Agreement of 1947. Magsaysay's mission was successful and thereafter, he established friendly contacts with the high ranking US officials.⁸

As a result, Edward L. Lansdale, a US Air Force colonel became a personal advisor to Magsaysay and built the Presidential career of Magsaysay.

5. Williard H. Elsbree, "The 1953 Philippines Presidential Elections "Pacific Affairs" (Vancouver), Vol. xxvii, no. 1, 1954, p. 3.

6. Cited in Fiefield, n. 2, p. 149.

7. Scaff., n. 3, pp. 35-36.

8. Frank H. Golay, The Philippines: Public Policy and National Economic Development (New York, 1961), p. 82.

At first, Lansdale recommended Magsaysay's name to president Quirino for the post of Secretary of Defence. Since his appointment as Secretary of Defence in September 1950, President Magsaysay never looked back throughout his career.⁹

President Quirino gave a freehand to Magsaysay to deal the Huk problem.¹⁰ With the help of Lansdale and other JUSMAG members, Magsaysay reorganized the army and integrated the armed forces with the constabulary as a single unit. Undesirable and corrupt army officers were discharged. Sincere officers were given incentives. Abuse of civilians was severely punished salaries and allowances were increased.¹¹ Thus, apparently, a new campaign was launched to raise the respect and credibility of the armed forces.

In its anti-communist drive, the Philippine government was totally dependent on the US in the matters of arm, advice and aid. The US openly intervened in the internal affairs of the Philippines. For example, American planes bombarded the Huk villages and camps.¹² Once Lansdale himself said : "The US

9. Bocca, n.4, p.126.

10. For other details, see Smith, n.1, p.155.

11. For an extended analysis on army reorganization see Scaff, n.3, p.36.

12. Benedict J.Kerkwliet, The Huk Rebellion Rebellion (California, 1977), p.243.

government wanted me to give all feasible help to the Philippine government in stopping the attempt by the Communist led Huks to overthrow the government by force."¹³

In a major breakthrough, Philippine armed forces under the leadership of Magsaysay arrested the entire politbureau of the Huks in October 1950. This was a major setback for Huks. The strategy of Magsaysay in fighting the Huks was double folded, which was known as "an iron fist for the die-hards and fellowship for the misled."¹⁴

Magsaysay laid more emphasis on the rehabilitation of Huks. He established 'Economic Development Corps' (EDCOR)' projects in Mindanao to provide land and houses to the surrendered Huks. It was not likely that he was so soft towards Huks. There were several allegations of "brutality" against Magsaysay and his men in dealing the Huk menace. He openly admitted : "I had to fight fire with fire. No fighting is pretty and guerilla warfare is probably the worst. Sure, we ambushed 'em, whenever we had the

13. Roland G. Simbulan, The Bases of Our Insecurity (Metro Manila, 1983), p.171.

14. Frances Lucille Starner, Magsaysay and the Philippine Peasantry (Los Angeles, 1961), p.54.

the chance. They were trying to ambush us, weren't they? Sure we deceived them, to the best of our ability."¹⁵

However, Magsaysay managed to break the backbone of Huk movement by 1951. With this, Magsaysay became popular among the Filipinos. He used the army in 1951 Congressional elections in order to avoid rigging and other malpractices. This reaffirmation of the democratic process in the Philippines added new dimensions to his political career. In addition, Magsaysay's flair, humble background, war-time record, and close association with the US made him a strong contender against President Quirino in 1953 Presidential elections.¹⁶

American Intervention in 1953 Elections

After having received a severe setback in 1951 senatorial elections, President Quirino had lost face and power. Several Liberal party leaders fixed the responsibility on Magsaysay for party's defeat in the elections and called for his immediate

15. Cited in Bocca, n.4, p.130.

16. David Joel Steinberg, The Philippines: A Singular and A Plural place (Colorado, 1982), p.111.

removal from the cabinet.¹⁷ The credit for reducing Huk menace had to go to President Quirino. He was the person who made efforts to implement the Bell Commission recommendations. He was the person who gave a freehand to Magsaysay to deal with the Huk problem and the same facility was not extended to other Secretaries of the cabinet. But the whole credit had gone to Magsaysay as if he was head of the state.

As the popularity of Magsaysay was increasing, the differences between President Quirino and Magsaysay were also increasing considerably. A movement known as "Magsaysay for President Movement" (MPM) had been organized by the supporters of Magsaysay, though he was still a member of Quirino's cabinet.¹⁸ The final break between two leaders came on the issue of granting of further amnesty to the Huks. As a result, on February 28, 1953, Magsaysay submitted his resignation from the cabinet as well as Liberal

17. Smith, n.1, p.164. Nacionalista Party won all the eight Senatorial seats in 1951 elections because of free and fair elections.

18. Field, n.2, p.153.

party.¹⁹

Before Magsaysay's resignation from the Quirino's cabinet, there were rumours that since 1951 senatorial elections, Magsaysay had been negotiating with the Nacionalista leaders about his nomination from the Nacionalista party in the coming presidential elections. These rumours proved correct when he joined the Nacionalista party on March 9, 1953 and his subsequent Presidential nomination from that party in 1953 elections.²⁰ But, the authoritative revelation came more than eight years later in November 1959 when Nacionalista Senator Claro M. Recto declared about Magsaysay's secret links with the Nacionalista Party in 1952 thus : "...he (Magsaysay) had in January, 1953; one month and a half before he resigned as a member of President Quirino's official family, already signed his affiliation card with the Nacionalista party. During that period, he was both a Liberal and a Nacionalista".²¹ Senator Recto

19. Actually, President Quirino ignoring the suggestion of Magsaysay, had ordered for a cease-fire with Huks and declared a period of negotiations. After the capture of Huk politburo in 1951, the Huk movement had already become handicapped. That's why Magsaysay felt that it was not necessary to entertain talks on cease-fire with the Huks. See Keesing's contemporary Archives (KCA) 1952-53, p.13305.

20. Renato Constantino, The Making of A Filipino: A Story of Philippine Colonial Politics (Quezon city, 1969), p. 183.

21. Ibid., p.264.

further said that in November 1952 Magsaysay had entered into a pact with the Nacionalista party, though, he was still a member of Quirino's cabinet. Thus, Magsaysay betrayed his President during his term in Quirino's cabinet by playing a dubious role with both parties.

One of the major issues of 1953 election campaign was "American intervention in the Philippine politics."²² This was not a new issue in the Philippines. The post-war period began with President Roxas who had secured General MacArthur's endorsement and won the Presidential election in 1949. It was an established fact that before his election, President Quirino made a trip to the US in 1949 in order to seek the U.S.'s support for his Presidential election that year. He had even projected in his election campaign that if Laurel were to be elected, US aid would stop. Earlier, only Communists used to allege about US intervention in the Philippine politics. Surprisingly this time the allegation came from the President Quirino himself.

There was enough evidence to prove the fact of US intervention in Philippine politics. A large part of NAMFREL (National Movement for Free Elections),

22. Fifield, n.2, p.151.

an independent organization started by few intellectuals to enlighten voters on their rights and to aid in the fight against electoral frauds, material was printed in the US and distributed throughout the Philippines with the help of US officials. Several American journalists visited the Philippines and took a pro-Magsaysay stand in their reports.²³ Even they portrayed Magsaysay as an "American boy".²⁴ On the other hand, in an article in Manila Daily Bulletin, Joseph Alsop, a Philippine journalist described Magsaysay as "the American candidate" in the Philippine Presidential elections."²⁵

For the first time, the Philippines witnessed a new trend in 1953 election campaign. Magsaysay's personal adviser and "publicity man", Lansdale and campaign manager, Carlos P. Romulo, a Filipino diplomat and a staunch admirer of the US, were the creators of this new trend.²⁶ Several organizations

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23. For an extended analysis on the role of the US in 1953 Philippine elections, see Ibid., p.152.
24. Constantino, n.20, p.22.
25. Cited in Bhagwan Dass Arora, "Development Process in the Philippines: Some Aspects" in Parimal Kumar Das, ed., 'Troubled Region: Issues of Peace and Development in Southeast Asia (New Delhi, 1987), p.246.
26. Time, November 23, 1955, p.37, See also Man Mohini Kaul, The Philippines and Southeast Asia (New Delhi, 1978) p.55.

like Magsaysay - for-President Movement (MPM), Magsaysay - for - Women's President Movement (MWPM) and the students for Magsaysay, etc., had come up throughout the Philippines to support Magsaysay in the elections. This was the new trend in Philippine politics.²⁷ As a recognition of his services, President Magsaysay awarded Lansdale a post-election title of 'General Landslide.'²⁸

On the otherside, Luis Taruc, the Huk leader, extended his full support to President Quirino, though his party was against this move. He urged the Filipinos to join hands in defeating Magsaysay because "Magsaysay is the most dangerous of the American puppets and worst dog of Wallstreet."²⁹

It was the heat generated in the situation that led President Quirino to accuse the Americans of intervention in the 1953 elections. However, American officials in Washington as well as in Manila repudiated the allegation of intervention and called for honesty at the polls.³⁰ Thus, with the help of the US, his charismatic

27. For further details see, Fifield, n.2, p.153.

28. Constantino, n.20, p.222.

29. Starner, n.14, p.55.

30. Fifield, n.2, p.152.

personality and an effective 'election campaign, Magsaysay defeated Quirino with a massive majority of 1,599,001 votes.³¹ With this, a new era in the history of the Philippines - US relations had began.

Philippine - US Relations

Under President Magsaysay

After having received considerable US help and assistance in his election as President, Magsaysay remained a staunch supporter of the US throughout his political career. This should be kept in mind before analysing the Philippines - US relations under President Magsaysay. President Magsaysay pursued a pro-US policy even when it was at variance with the country's interest. In an article in Foreign Affairs, President Magsaysay had explained the Philippines - US relations thus : "Let the original, the true spirit of America always dominate ~~her~~ relations not only with our country but with all free nations. For a free world, which depends so much on the United States for strength that is the best guarantee for understanding, security and freedom."³²

31. For detailed results See Starner, n.14, pp 207-10.

32. Ramon Magsaysay, "Roots of Philippine Policy", Foreign Affairs, vol.35, no.1, 1956, p.36.

It was this attitude of President Magsaysay that created his rivals within his own party. Renato Constantino, an important critic of Magsaysay described his rivalry with Magsaysay as a fight between nationalism and puppetry."³³

To mark his friendship with the US, President Magsaysay appointed his election campaign manager, Carlos P. Ramulo, as his personal representative in Washington. There was no official Philippine ambassador in Washington. On this strange situation, Senator Recto rightly commented thus : "...the country had in Washington an ambassador without an embassy and an embassy without an ambassador."³⁴

Ownership of Military Bases

The ownership of military bases was the first issue to become an irritant in the Philippines - US relations. In a surprise move, the US informed the Philippines that it had ownership rights over military bases. Basically, the US claim was based on the observation of US Attorney - General Herbert Brownell Jr. who argued that the laws passed by the American Congress vaguely inferred retention

33. Constantino, n.20, p.196.

34. Manila Chronicle, June 1, 1964.

of US ownership of the bases after independences.
He cited several provisions of treaties in support
of his argument.³⁵

On their part the Philippine nationalist
leaders repudiated the US claim regarding ownership
of bases. While retaliating to the American argument,
Senator Recto cleverly questioned : "...if the
United States really believed that it had a rightful
claim to these lands, why did it lease, these same
lands from the Philippine government for 99 years
'free of rent' as provided in the bases agreement?"³⁶
This was the result of special relationship existing
between the two countries. In the name of friendship,
how did a friend ask for other's property?

The crisis on this issue, however, blew over
when the Philippines Supreme Court, in its judgement
on June 22, 1954 declared : "There is no question that
a foreign law may have extra-territorial effect in a
country other than the country of origin, provided the
latter, in which it is sought to be made operative, gives
consent thereto."³⁷

35. Cited in Constantino, n.20, p.200.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid., p.201.

President Magsaysay and Communism

Since his assuming office on January 1, 1954, President Magsaysay intensified his struggle against the Huks. But, the immediate task of the new administration was to 'clean the house'. Anyway, President Magsaysay opened the Malacanan palace for people. The letter 'g' was added to Malacanan as a symbol of nationalism. In order to wean the support of the people from the Huks, President Magsaysay issued strict orders to all officers to pay more attention to people's grievances. A Presidential complaints and Action Committee was established by President Magsaysay. When thousands of complaints poured in, it became difficult for the government to dispose of all the cases.³⁸

TH-3252



The improved record of the government and the army had greatly strengthened the campaign against the Huks. The Rice Share Tenancy Act was strictly implemented for the first time. The EDCGR resettlement projects became an asset for ex-Huks and peasants.³⁹

On the other hand the Huks had earlier hoped

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38. Teodoro A. Agoncillo & M.C. Guerrero, History of Filipino People (Quezon City, 1970), pp 545-46.
39. Ibid , p.542.

that fraud and violence at polls would discredit the democratic process and their movement would gain momentum in the years to come.⁴⁰ The fair and free elections in 1953 became a severe setback for Huks' expectations. Actually, their activities got still more circumscribed when the entire leadership was arrested by the government in 1950. Increasing military raids and intense propaganda against communism led to the surrender of a large number of Huks to the government.

In a final effort in early 1954, President Magsaysay secretly appointed Benigno S. Aquino Jr., a reporter of the Daily Mirror, as his personal emissary to negotiate with Luis Taruc for the surrender of the latter. After four months of negotiations, finally on May 17, 1954, Luis Taruc surrendered to the government.⁴¹ With this victory, President Magsaysay became a successful anti-communist leader in Asia. His approach was so simple that he weaned the cadres away from the communist leaders through his welfare measures and left the hardcore leadership isolated and hardpressed. This was the core of his approach to

40. Fifield, n.2, p.154.

41. Agoncillo, n.38, p.534.

Communism.⁴² It would not be out of place to mention here that without the help of the US President Magsaysay would not have won his battle against communism. The main interest of the US was that the communism was a major threat to her economic, commercial and geo-strategic interests in the Philippines.

After having experienced the threat of communism, President Magsaysay explained the ambitions of communism in these words : "...Communism is not just some distorted nationalist ambition, like Hitler's, to be satisfied with land or riches, but an unremitting universal campaign to rule the earth, to eradicate individual liberty, to destroy God and the souls of men."⁴³

It was this perception^{of} President Magsaysay that led the country to get the Mutual Defence Treaty supplemented with multilateral arrangements based on the principle of collective security in order to check the expansion of communism in Asia on a regional basis.⁴⁴ As a result, SEATO (Southeast Asian Treaty Organisation) was established in 1954.

42. Scaff, n.3, p.139.

43. Magsaysay, n.32, p.33.

44. Ibid., p.32.

Manila Pact of SEATO, 1954

As earlier noted, the fast changing Asian scene had compelled the US to change its policy towards Asia. With the emergence of communist movements in various countries of Asia, it became clear that in addition to bilateral security treaties, there should be a collective security arrangements in Southeast Asia to block communism. On the advise of the US, the Philippines hosted a conference of Australia, France, New Zealand, Thailand, Pakistan, the US and the UK in September 1954, to make "collective arrangement" into a reality."⁴⁵

While speaking at the opening session of the conference on September 6, 1954, President Magsaysay explained its objectives thus : "It is the task of this conference to help build an adequate system of defense around an exposed and threatened sector of the world. On the success of this conference may well depend the peace of Asia in the next ten years and the future freedom in the world for the next thousand years."⁴⁶

45. Kaul, n.26, p.60.

46. Cited in Agoncillo, n.38, p.632.

On September 8, 1954, all the eight members signed a Security Pact known as 'Manila Pact', But the Manila pact had a serious security snag. It did not contain the kind of automatic clause that the NATO had in regard to an attack on a member country. For example, Article IV of the Pact asserted :

"Each party recognizes that aggression by means of armed attack in the treaty area against any of the parties or against any state or territory which the parties by unanimous agreement may hereafter designate, would endanger its own peace and safety, and agrees that it will in that event act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes. Measures taken under this paragraph shall be immediately reported to the Security Council of the United Nations."⁴⁷

Obviously, an act on the part of the US depended on "its constitutional processes."

Anyhow, this treaty was important in providing a means of defining problems and coordinating planning and in arranging for military exercises and the development of infrastructure within the region.⁴⁸

The eight members had signed another document known as "Pacific Charter" in the same meeting. They proclaimed :

47. Cited in Kaul, n.26, p.62.

48. Shane Paltridge, "Australia and the Defense of Southeast Asia", Foreign Affairs, vol.44,n-1, 1965, p.54.

"First, in accordance with provisions of of the United Nations Charter, they uphold the Principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and they will earnestly strive by every peaceful means to promote self-government and to secure independence of all countries whose peoples desire it and are able to undertake its responsibilities.

Second, they are each prepared to continue taking effective practical measures to issue conditions favorable to the orderly achievement of the foregoing purposes in accordance with their constitutional procedures.

Third, they will continue to cooperate in economic, social and cultural fields in order to promote higher living standards, economic progress and social well-being in this region.

Fourth, as declared in the southeast Asia collective Defense Treaty, they are determined to prevent or counter by appropriate means any attempt in the treaty area to subvert their freedom or to destroy their sovereignty or territorial rights."⁴⁹

The Pacific Charter was an attempt to project the Manila Pact as seeking the welfare of the Asian peoples and it was not promoting colonialism in Asia.⁵⁰

Since it was an American sponsored military pact India, Indonesia, Burma and other Asian nations did

49. Cited in Smith, n.1, p.213.

50. Cited in Kaul, n.26, p.262.

not join the Treaty. From February 19, 1955 onwards, when all the members ratified the Treaty, the Manila Pact became "Southeast Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO)."⁵¹

In the Philippines, the SEATO had received a severe criticism from the nationalists. Senator Recto called the SEATO as a "clever scheme for achieving selfish ends on the part of England, France and the US using two or three small nations as front." He opined that military alliance in shape of SEATO would not be the proper answer to communism in Asia. Further, he questioned: "Why a weak, poor and small nation like the Philippines should assume added military responsibilities for the defense of Thailand, Formosa, Vietnam, Australia and New Zealand..."⁵²

While describing the implications of Manila Pact on the Philippines, Simbulon said; "The US, created SEATO for the 'regional defense of Asia' :... "to prevent any counter subversive activities directed from without against their territorial integrity and political stability".⁵³ Since it was a collective security agreement, the US easily could drag the

51. Smith, n.1, p.213.

52. Cited in Constantino, n.20, p.215.

53. Cited in Simbulon, n.13, pp.89-90.

Philippines to her war of aggressions or involvements as in Korea and Vietnam. On the otherhand, Soviet Union recognized the SEATO as an aggressive military bloc organized to oppose the Asian national liberation⁵⁴ movements.

In spite of all this criticism, President Magsaysay defended the Philippines joining in SEATO with a communist-phobia. He ignored the fact that the Treaty would provide foreign powers a chance to conduct joint operations and interference in the Philippines. Moreover, it could drag the Philippines to engage in wars against movements for liberation of other Asian countries.

Vietnam Question

In formulating the Philippine foreign policy, the US was the key player during President Magsaysay's regime when the US asked its allies to join it in warning the Communists against further aggression in war-torn Indo-China, President Magsaysay immediately responded to its call as if the Philippines was a

54. Cited in George & E. Tallor, "The Challenge of Mutual Security" in Frank H. Golay, ed., Philippine-American Relations (Manila, p.966), p.75.

regional power. On this issue, Senator Recto's comments were interesting to know the implications in issuing a warning to North Vietnam. He pointed out that the Philippines was in no position to issue such threats "because she was just a 'small-power.'" He expressed his fear thus: "We may just be like hunting dogs sent out to bark at wild boars. Not physically able to fight the boar, we back out at first sign of conflict."⁵⁵ He realized that the war in Vietnam was purely a civil war and therefore Philippine participation would be an intervention.

In spite of the staunch opposition from the nationalists, on July 15, 1955, the Philippines recognized South Vietnam. Again, Senator Recto attacked this act of recognition as "injudiciously premature, and manifestly violative of well-known principles of international law."⁵⁶ The recognition of a US-puppet, Ngo-Dinh Diem's regime, clearly indicated President Magsaysay's alignment with the US. The same thing was repeated on the question of Formosa

55. Cited in Constantino, 20, p.205.

56. Cited in Ibid, p.231.

in extending support to the US in its defence of Formosa from the People's Republic of China. That's why, Senator Recto warned the Magsaysay administration that any intervention of the Philippines in other countries would be considered by other Asian nations as proof that the Philippines was "a puppet of the United States."⁵⁷

Laurel-Langley Agreement, 1955

In the first year of his presidential career, President Magsaysay faced several attacks on his pro-US policies. The Philippine nationalists under the leadership of Senator Recto, had consolidated their strength and demanded for removal of various unequal provisions in the Bell Trade Act, Military Bases Agreement and MAA, etc. with this increasing pressure from the Nationalists, President Magsaysay requested the US to revise the Bell Trade Act of 1946. As a result, in 1954, a committee consisting of James M. Langley (US) and Senator Jose P. Laurel (the Philippines) and others had been appointed to prepare a revised trade Act. After three months of negotiations,

57. Ibid, p.209.

on December 15, 1954, the governments of the Philippines and the US signed an agreement known as 'the Laurel-Langley Agreement.' to replace the Bell-Trade Act, 1946. The salient features of this agreement were as follows :-

- 1) The agreement provided the Philippines a control over its own currency by eliminating Article V of the Bell Trade Act.
- 2) It eliminated most absolute quotas on Philippine articles entering the US.
- 3) It eliminated quota allocation limitations on Philippine articles subject to quotas in the US.
- 4) It provided 'parity rights' to citizens of either country to exploit natural resources in the territory of others on reciprocal basis.
- 5) It made imposition of quantitative restrictions on the products of both countries.
- 6) It provided the right to citizens of either country to engage in business activities in the territory of the other on a reciprocal basis.
- 7) It provided security exceptions in the mutual interest of both countries.
- 8) It increased tariff preferences for Philippine articles entering the US.

- 9) It decreased tariff preferences for US articles, entering the Philippines.
- 10) It eliminated the prohibition against the imposition of Philippine export taxes.
- 11) It provided for the elimination of the Philippine exchange tax and the dual rate of exchange which created by substitution of an import levy to be progressively reduced and eliminated.
- 12) It permitted the Philippines to ask the US Congress for possible increases in the sugar quota when other nations were permitted to do so.
- 13) It increased duty-free quotas on Philippine articles which are subject to declining duty-free quotas in the US.⁵⁸

The important item of the agreement was that ordinary customs duties on American goods would be increased gradually from 25% between 1956 and 1958, to 50% between 1959 and 1961, to 75% between 1962 and 1964, to 90% between 1965 and 1973, and to 100% between January 1, 1974 and July 3, 1974. On the other hand, ordinary customs duties on Philippine goods entering the US would be increased from 5% between 1956 and 1958,

58. For an extended analysis on Laurel-Langley Agreement, See Smith, n.1, pp.189-90.

to 10% between 1959 and 1961, to 20% from 1962 and 1964, to 40% between 1965 and 1967, to 60% between 1968 and 1970, to 80% between 1971 and 1973, and to 100% between January 1, 1974 and July 3, 1974.

Actually, the rate of increase in the customs duties to be levied on American goods from 1956 to 1974 was greater than the rate of increase in the customs to be imposed on Philippine goods over the same period.⁵⁹

On the face of it, the Laurel-Langley Agreement seemed better than the Bell Trade Act of 1946. In reality, the new agreement would perpetuate the status of the Philippines as an economic satellite of the US. The Philippine trade continued to be tied to the US market.

Senator Recto revealed the facts about parity rights provided to the Filipinos in the US thus :

"All these parity rights are merely in form, certainly not in substance, as far as those rights granted in favour of the Philippines are concerned. It cannot be questioned that there is mutuality if the wording alone of the Agreement is considered, but certainly there is none in actual application and political results...The concession made to us is empty and the much-heralded "mutuality" is nothing but a mirage."⁶⁰

59. For other details see Agoncillo, n.38, p.2623.

60. Cited in Constantino, n.20, pp.222-23.

It would not be out of place to mention here that the Filipinos had no surplus capital to exploit natural resources in the US. Whereas the Americans had enough capital to invest in exploiting natural resources in the Philippines. Again, this remained as an unequal provision of the treaty.

Japanese Reparations

The issue of Japanese reparations was another instance of American involvement in the Philippine internal affairs as well as foreign policy. Basically, the Philippines signed a draft peace treaty with Japan at the San Francisco Conference of 1951. It was the Philippine Congress that blocked the ratification of the treaty.⁶¹ The Congress put forward three basic demands as precondition for the ratification of the peace treaty. The demands were : (a) Japan should pay \$ 8 billion (the official Philippine estimate of war damages); (b) part of this sum should be paid before ratification of the peace treaty, and (c) payment should be completed within a period of ten to fifteen years.⁶² But Japan refused to consider the demands of the Filipinos. Since then, the reparations question remained as a hurdle in the Philippines - Japanese relations until 1956.

61. Golay, n.8, p.307.

62. Manila Times, Jan.29,1952.

As a friend of Japan, the US had been pressuring the Philippines to ratify the peace treaty since 1951. The Philippine congress did not agree for an unjustified deal with Japan in this matter.⁶³

With the election of President Magsaysay, the US's task became easier. President Magsaysay gave a new life to the Philippines-Japanese relations by signing the Philippine instruments of ratification of the Peace Treaty of 1951 on July, 18, 1956.⁶⁴

The agreement provided that Japan would pay 7550 million to the Philippines in capital goods, services and cash within a period of twenty years". Out of \$550 million, only a small part, i.e., \$ 20 million would be paid in cash to the Philippine war widows and orphans.⁶⁵ Japan would provide the entire amount to the Philippines at an annual average rate of \$ 25 million during the first ten years of the agreement

63. Golay n.8, p.307.

64. The Nacionalista Party had substantial majority in the Philippine Congress. For further details see Keasing's Contemporary Archives 1955-56, p. 15072.

65. Ibid, 14,400

and at an average annual rate of \$ 30 million during the following ten years. In addition to \$ 550 million, Japanese government agreed to provide \$250 million in the form of loans from private Japanese firms and individuals to Filipino firms and individuals on a commercial basis.⁶⁶

The above Reparations Agreement was a complete surrender to the American pressure. The agreed amount of \$ 550 million was a low figure in comparison with \$ 8 billion. The US argued that Japan was not in a position to pay such a huge amount, as if the Philippines was a rich country to show generosity on Japan.⁶⁷ Once again it was proved that the President Magsaysay's interest was definitely the same as the interest of the US.

Magsaysay Reforms and the US

During its half-a century colonial rule, the US never initiated a policy of land reforms in the Philippines. Basically, the US made a tacit deal with the ilustrados to maintain the existing social structure in lieu of the elite's collaboration. That's why the

66. Golay, n.8, pp.308-09.

67. Kaul, n.26, p.54.

US was unwilling to undercut the basis of the ilustrados wealth by striking at their landownership.⁶⁸ It was this policy of the US that failed to redress the inequalities of the Philippine land system. The deteriorating land relations between the landlord and tenant led to its rise of several rebellions, viz., Sukdal movement and Hukbalohap movement etc.

The history of land reforms goes back to 1904 when Governor William Howard Taft formulated a policy of purchase of prior lands from the Roman catholic Church for resale to cultivators. This policy was revived only in 1936 when the Commonwealth President Manuel Quezon launched his famous 'social justice programme. Under this programme, the President was authorized to purchase the large ^{estates} ~~either~~ by negotiation or through expropriation measures and resale to the peasants.⁶⁹ But all these reforms were largely confined to official records only owing to lack of enough funds.

As the Huk problem became uncontrollable, the US in 1952 appointed Robert S. Hardie, an American expert on land reforms, to inquire the causes of peasants

68. Steinberg, n.16, p.96.

69. Golay, n.8, pp 272-73.

unrest and its remedies. In his report, Robert S. Hardie called for the total reorganizing of the existing agrarian structure. He recommended for the removal of tenancy system and its replacement with a rural economy based on owner operated family sized farms. He also recommended that a separate enforcement machinery be provided such as an autonomous court of industrial relations.⁷⁰ After that, several American advisers prepared the ground for enactment of land reform bills during the presidency of Magsaysay.

As a result, in 1954, the Philippines Congress passed the Agricultural Tenancy Act (ATA). In accordance with the Tenancy Act, the government had the authority to purchase large estates, break them up, and make them available for easy-term sale to farmers.⁷¹ As usual, the government did not have enough money to make the purchases. Also the Act became less effective owing to lack of effective enforcement machinery.⁷²

70. For an extended analysis on Hardie Report of 1952, See John Cherian, "The Presidency of Magsaysay 1953-1957" (M.Phil. Dissertation, Jawaharlal Nehru University, School of International Studies, New Delhi, 1978), p. 24.

71. For further details, see Golay, n. 8, p. 274.

72. Cherian, n. 70, p. 33.

However, the EDCOR projects yielded good results. For example, they provided each family with an amount of more than ₱ 10,000 for rehabilitation. But, the number of settler families in EDCOR project never exceeded one thousand families and it was a negligible figure when seen in comparison with the entire peasant population.⁷³

In 1955, the Land Reform Act (LRA) was passed in a special session of the Congress. While speaking on the Land Reforms Bill, Magsaysay had stated :

Our ultimate goal is to reshape the land-tenure system in our country in such a way as to build up a strong nation of small, independent and untented farm owners, free from want, protected from injustice, and eager to contribute their share to the welfare, and progress of the nation."⁷⁴

The Land Reform Act of 1955 provided for the creation of a Land Tenure Administration. It would work directly under the President and undertake studies of the nation's land tenure problems and find out the solutions. It was authorized to acquire private agriculture lands both by negotiated purchase and by expropriation for resale to tenants, and to others who would work the lands themselves.⁷⁵

73. Golay, n.8, p.284.

74. Cited in Cherian, n.70, p.33.

75. See Starner, n.14, p.184.

It would be interesting to know that the pressure groups representing landed interests had blocked the passage of ATA and LRA for a long time. Since the above reforms were creation of American advisers, the landed interests taking advantage of nationalistic fervour opposed the above reforms. But it was not likely that the US did not have any interests in these measures. Yes, the US had several interests in the agrarian reforms. For example, Section 2 of the LRA clearly stated : "It is the declared policy of the state to create and maintain an agrarian system which is peaceful, prosperous and stable..."⁷⁶. As seen from the above, the US intended to keep the Philippines as an agricultural country. This alone would facilitate their exploitation of the Philippine raw materials and keeping it as a market for their finished goods.

National leaders accused President Magsaysay of his being a mere puppet in the hands of the US. President Magsaysay, denied the above allegation and called the nationalists as supporters of communism and anti-Americans. In a challenging tone he declared : "Senator Recto can run as the candidate of MaoTse-Tung and I will run as an enemy of Communism and a friend

76. Cited in Constantino, n.20, p.225.

of the United States."⁷⁷ In addition, President Magsaysay denied the party ticket to Senator Recto in 1955 Senatorial elections. This was an act of Vengeance by the President. Yet, Senator Recto retained his seat in the Senate.⁷⁸ This demonstrated that nationalism had been emerging gradually because of President Magsaysay's pro-American policies.

Significance of The Huk Movement

It must be remembered that the Bell Mission and agrarian reforms were introduced only because of the Huk movement. According to Abraham Lincoln, "the nation could not remain half slave and half-free." On the same lines, the Philippines could not forever remain nine-tenth serf and one-tenth landlord.⁷⁹ The Huk movement was the culmination of centuries of peasant sufferings, degradation, humiliation and accute poverty. That's why, Teodoro A. Agoncillo did not consider the Huk movement as "an isolated armed uprising against duly constituted authority." It was born in the barrios of central Luzon. It united Filipinos irrespective of religions, political and social differences first against the Japanese and later the

77. Cited in Ibid., p.235.

78. Ibid., pp.235-41.

79. Cited in Agoncillo, n.38, p.535.

Philippine government and its friend, the US for nearly 12 years.⁸⁰ The movement itself was both a lesson and a fair warning to the government. The movement clearly indicated that peasants and workers would not tolerate the neglecting attitude of the government for ever.⁸¹

So far as success and failure of the movement was concerned, the peasants undoubtedly showed the landlords and the government that they weren't slaves. On this, a Luzon farmer rightly commented thus : We did not lie down like whimpering dogs when they started to ship us. We stood up to them and fought for what was rightfully ours."⁸² On the question of failure of a movement, it is essential to borrow the words from a former Huk. He said : "No strike, no demonstration, no rebellion fails. Protest against injustice always succeeds."⁸³

Thus, the Huk movement demonstrated that for the first time, the silenced masses learned to speak about their rights. They learnt how to fight against the oppression of landlordism. The Huk movement was in

80. Ibid., p.534.

81. See Hernando J. Abaya, Betrayal in the Philippines (New York, 1946) p.214, See also Agoncillo, n.38, p.534.

82. Benedict J. Kerkvliet, The Huk Rebellion (California, 1977), p.269.

83. Cited in *ibid.*

a sense a big sound to wake up the government as well as its friend, the US.

US Vice-President

Nixon's Visit

Since the signing of M.B.A. in 1947, Filipino nationalists had been fighting on the issue of 'jurisdiction' over military bases. Between 1947 and 1956, more than 20 Filipinos had been killed in or near the periphery of the bases by American soldiers.⁸⁴ But, none of the US soldiers who killed Filipinos had ever been tried in a Philippine court. The reason is that the Philippines did not have any right to try the above American soldiers in terms of Article XIII of the MBA, 1947.

By 1956, the Philippine nationalists led by Senator Claro M. Recto were able to challenge the US authority in the Philippines. They demanded for negation of Article XIII of the M.B.A. In the wake of growing Filipino opposition to the US military bases, the US Vice-President Richard M. Nixon had chosen the occasion of tenth anniversary of the Philippines independence to visit the Philippines.⁸⁵ Basically, the main intention

84. Simbulan, n.13, pp.90-91.

85. KCA, n.64, p.14987.

behind the US Vice President Nixon's visit was to pacify the Filipino nationalism.

On July 4, 1956, US Vice-President Nixon and President Magsaysay issued a joint statement in which the US affirmed Philippine title to American bases.⁸⁶ It may be recalled here that it was the US that claimed the ownership of the bases in 1954. It appears that the US now wanted to give up its claim over the bases. But the Philippine Supreme Court had already rejected the US claim in this matter in as early as June 1954.

The joint statement of both the leaders further noted that both the leaders "discussed the necessity of strengthening military bases in the Philippines in order to bolster the common defense of the two countries as well as that of the free world in this area." Moreover, both the governments had agreed to hold formal negotiations on military bases in the near future.⁸⁷

While commenting on the joint statement Senator Claro Recto said : "Sovereignty can only be expressed through the operation of our laws and courts."

86. See Constantino, n.20, p.247.

87. See KCA, n.64, p.14, 1987.

Anyway Nixon's visit did not yield anything substantial in the field of relations between the two countries.

On March 17, 1957, President got killed in a plane crash. The death of Magsaysay was a great loss to the Filipino people. He was a dynamic leader of the Philippines ever produced. In spite of allegations of puppetry, President Magsaysay was sincere in pursuing several agrarian reforms.

Anyhow, the Philippines-US relations had touched their highest point during Magsaysay's regime. The Philippines became more dependent on the US by 1957. At the same time, Filipino nationalism had also consolidated its strength. Though the Huk movement was crushed, the problems of peasants not ended here. In spite of all these, the era of President Magsaysay was widely interpreted as a "progressive era."⁸⁸

88. Fifield, n.2, p.149.

CHAPTER - V

CONCLUSION

The Philippines is characterized as an under-developed and dependent capitalist society with remnants of feudalism. Its special relationship with the United States did not yield anything to change the basic infrastructure of the Philippine society. It was the US colonial administration that created the current distorted structures of the Philippine economy. It established the legal and economic framework in which the Philippines still remains as an exporter of raw materials with an easy access to exploitation of its cheap labour and importer of manufactured goods.

The origins of Philippine dependence go back to 1909 when the colonial trade pattern was formalized by the Payne-Aldrich Tariff Act. It stimulated 'free trade' throughout the period preceding world war II. As a result, the Philippine was compelled to export its products to the US. By 1941, 80 per cent of the Philippine foreign trade was with the US.

In the absence of a strong nationalist movement, even after more than four decades of independence, the US continued to dominate the Philippines in all aspects. It would, however, be wrong to conclude that the Philippines is not an independent, sovereign and democratic country. The reason lies in the past.

Spaniards used religion to control and colonize the Philippines whereas the Americans used education to do the same thing. As a step forward, the Japanese came to the Philippines with a slogan of "Asia for Asians". There were certain common points in various colonial regimes that ruled the Philippines. Each colonial power posed as a liberator of the Philippines from the earlier regime. Spaniards put forward an argument that they civilized and christianized the Filipinos. It is essential to note here that the Filipinos are Malays by ethnicity. Their culture was an amalgam of Chinese, Indian, Japanese and other Asian influences during the pre-Spanish period. Therefore, the native culture, religion and traditions were not primitive and barbarians in nature as described by the Spaniards.

The Americans created an impression that they came to the Philippines to put an end to the authoritarian, exploitative, feudalistic and corrupt regime

of Spain, as if they did not have any intentions other than this. The Japanese gave a call to denounce western imperialism and creation of new Filipino culture which would be oriental in nature within the Asian co-prosperity sphere. At the end of the war the Americans returned to the Philippines as liberators of Filipinos from Japanese fascism.

Each and everytime, Filipinos got an impression that each colonial power came to the Philippines to liberate them from the colonial powers and aligned with them vis-a-vis previous regime. It would, however, be wrong to conclude that there was no opposition from the Filipinos vis-a-vis colonial powers. Filipinos tried armed revolt against each colonial power. But every attempt failed in its objective. This happened, precisely because of betrayal by the leadership of the Filipinos.

During more than three and a half centuries of colonial period, all most all the colonial powers pursued a policy of sword with one hand and the taming of native leadership on the other in the Philippines. It was the Spanish regime that granted special concessions to the native chiefs in colonial

hierarchy. The Datus, the village Chiefs, became the intermediaries and power brokers between the ruled and the ruling classes. As a twentieth century colonial power, the US attracted the ' ilustrados' into the colonial administration with a slogan of 'philippines for the Filipinos'. Japan

repeated the same thing by establishing a puppet regime headed by Filipino leaders during the war. Therefore, the first and foremost enemy of the Philippine nationalism was its own leadership. After having enjoyed the benefits in the colonial administration, Filipino leaders never launched an outright militant struggle for independence. They confined themselves to submitting petitions and sending independence-missions to Washington throughout the American colonial period.

It is surprizing to know that certain sections of the Filipino leadership demanded for the merger of Philippines into the United States. On the other hand, American Labour Unions started a movement for complete and immediate independence to the Philippines in the early 1930's. Of course, the reasons might be their own interests. Once President Magsaysay proudly declared that the Filipinos won their freedom by rising against Spain and by persuading America. It must be remembered here that the US had voluntarily transferred the sovereignty to the Phillipines. Therefore, it was not the question of the Phillipines gaining independence.

rather it was the question of US agreeing to transfer the sovereignty. That's why, in the post independence era, the US got an advantageous position in the format of special relationship vis-a-vis the Philippines. If the Filipinos had launched a national liberation struggle like in other parts of Asia, the situation would have been different in the present state of affairs.

As a result of American colonialism, local culture and tradition were still further twisted and blunted. Apparently, a superior culture was imposed on Filipinos. English became the medium of instruction in education. The education curriculum glorified the American way of life. The Philippine economy became dependent on the US. The chief mechanism of elite control was the two-party system which combined the worst features of feudal paternalism and the American politics of Patronage. By mid 1930's, the situation became clear that the Philippine independence would not be a hurdle for American economic, strategic, military and political interests. Yet, they put a 10-year transition period for Philippine independence in order to know the consequences of independence.

After having gained enough confidence during the transition period, the US withdrew its sovereignty from the Philippines in July 1946.

It is in this background, the relations between the Philippines and the US entered into a new phase during 1946-57. The US administration favoured Manuel Roxas, a collaborator, in 1946 elections in order to achieve its interests. With the post-war situation, Philippines had no other option than to look forward to its past-colonial master for aid and reconstruction of its wrecked economy. Taking advantage of the Philippine's weak position, the US demanded for parity rights to the Americans in lieu of aid and assistance to the Philippines. Under these circumstances, the Philippines entered into several unequal treaties like the Bell Trade Act of 1946, The Treaty of Good Relations of 1946, the Military Bases Agreement of 1947 and Military Assistance Agreement in 1947.

It must be remembered here that the US openly threatened the Philippines that no amount in excess of \$ 500 would be paid under war damages until the provisions of Bell Trade Act were accepted and the Philippine Constitution was amended in such a manner as to give "parity" rights to the Americans. As a product of American miseducation and being imbued with a pro-US bias, president Roxas

accepted all the terms dictated by the US, whether they served the national interests, of the Philippines and or negated its independence and sovereignty. It would, however, be wrong to conclude that there was no opposition to the American impositions in the Philippines. There was a serious opposition to the post-war agreements. Filipino nationalists perceived parity rights, pegging of peso to the American dollar, quota limitations as infringements on their sovereignty. The Huk movement emerged as a serious threat to the American interests.

Though, the Huk movement was started to fight against the Japanese imperialists, fighting against the landlordism, corrupt bureaucracy, and cruel Philippine Armed Constabulary were also its objectives. Its leadership comprised of intellectuals like, teachers, lawyers, and engineers, etc.

When the situation worsened, the Philippine government pursued a mailed-fist policy with the help of JUSMAG. But the repression was not the proper solution to the agrarian problem. Moreover, the proclamation of People's Republic of China in October 1949, the Communist movements in other parts of Asia aggravated the situation. The Americans sent a mission

to the Philippines to survey the economic conditions and recommended solutions for them. As a result, the Quirino-Foster agreement of 1950 came into existence. But several clauses of this agreement were not acceptable to the Philippine businessmen and landed aristocracy.

When the anti-communist measures had failed during Quirino's regime, the US did not hesitate to replace President Quirino with Raman Magsaysay. This clearly indicated US control over the Philippine politics. Even President Quirino came out openly with an allegation about American intervention in 1953 elections. American newspapers described the candidature of Magsaysay as American candidate in the Philippine elections.

Among the three Presidents during the period of this study, Roxas and Magsaysay were the close friends of the US. President Quirino was quite different from these two. He was the person who took an initiative in Asian Affairs. He proposed a Pacific Union but the US did not show any interest and only took note of the President's independent move. When the situation went out of control in Asia, the US put forward a regional association in order to block the Communist expansion in Asia. As a result, the Baguio Conference was held later

followed by Manila Pact of SEATO". It was President Quirino who showed some independent postures in the foreign policy of the Philippines. In the beginning, he was against sending the Philippine troops to Korea, keeping in view the internal situation and for fear of provoking China and the Soviet Union. When the US pressurised him in this matter, there was no other way for President Quirino except to send the Filipino troops to Korea. In spite of staunch opposition from the Philippines, the US managed to drag the Philippines into the peace Treaty of Japan in September 1951.

So far as President Magsaysay was concerned, his background, dynamism and association with the US made him a popular leader. He had taken several measures to increase faith of the people in the government. But he too pursued the mailed-fist policy to suppress the Huk rebellion. His approach to communism was so simple that he separated the cadres from the Communist leaders through his welfare measures and left the hardcore leadership isolated and hard pressed. But it would not have been possible for Magsaysay to crush the Huk movement without the help of the US. The Huk movement was an attempt to increase the self-

respect and improve the living conditions of the masses. President Magsaysay and the US had declared that the communism was dead in the Philippines. But the Guerrilla movement of New People's Army (NPA) in the later years showed that Communism was not dead with the surrender of Huk Supremo, Luis Taruc in 1954.

During the Magsaysay regime, Philippine nationalism acquired a new dimensions. His pro-American policies created enemies from his own party. Leaders like, Senator Claro M. Recto and Lorenzo Tanada criticized the US and its policies towards the Philippines. Senator Recto demanded for negation of MBA and all other unequal treaties. As the nationalism was growing, the pressure for revision of Bell Trade Act of 1946 also increased on the Philippine government. To Pacify the rising nationalist movement, the US replaced the Bell Trade Act of 1946 with Laurel-Langley Agreement of 1955. The above treaty had also failed to abolish the unequal features of the previous one.

To counter Filipino nationalism, President Magsaysay, accused nationalist leaders as agents of Communists. He denied Senatorial ticket to Senator Recto in the 1955 off-year elections. Yet, Claro Recto

retained his seat with the help of other nationalist forces. This indicated new trend in the Philippine politics.

There was a strange situation in the Philippines. If any body criticized the US, he would be branded as a communist agent. In spite of his considerable majority in the Congress, President Magsaysay was unable to introduce or implement agricultural reforms. Because local capitalists and landlords had their agents in almost all the political parties. If any act aimed at harming these groups' interests, they would block the enactment in the Congress. They would not hesitate to take the shield of nationalism.

In almost all post-war agreements during the period of the present study, there were several provisions which serve the interests of the US. This means, they were infringements on Philippine sovereignty. It was beyond doubt that the US military bases might attract foreign attacks on the Philippines. Moreover, as long as foreign bases were in the Philippines, they would provide great moral support to the Philippine Oligarchy. As long as these bases were there, it would always be easy for the oligarchy to lean on them to foil any reform movement. They could call any reform movement as communist when in fact it was not.

It appears from the present study that the US wanted to keep the Philippines always poor and backward so that it became still more subservient as it relied on heavy doses of US economic and military assistance. The Philippines always demanded an equal status with the other allies of the US, like, Korea, Taiwan, Japan, Turkey, and Israel. It would, however, be wrong to conclude that the US had not provided enough aid and assistance to the Philippine development. For example, the US generously provided nearly more than 2 billion dollars during the first eight years of independence. At the same time, the US pumped into the Philippine market with luxury goods rather than essential items. With this the Filipinos remained poor and backward in all aspects inspite of the huge American aid.

The special relationship between the Philippines and the US meant an unequal relationship between a superpower and a developing country. It was a relationship between an agricultural society and an advanced industrialized society. It was a relationship between a dominant country and a subordinate country. If not terminated soon, the Philippines would continue to suffer under the dominance of the US.

As long as the US influence was there, nationalism, anti-Americanism and Communism would continue to grow in the Philippines. It was in the interest of the US that it should withdraw its military bases forthwith. There were three major evils which were blocking the Filipinos road to the development. It remained to be seen as to how much time Filipinos would take to liberate their motherland from the chains of three big evils - imperialism, feudalism and capitalism.

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