

## Books

### The Philippines: Shattered Showcase of Democracy in Asia

by Beth Day

(Introduction by Carlos P. Romulo. M. Evans & Co.; 245 pp.; \$7.95)

Raul S. Manglapus

It is a pity that only the introduction to this book is signed by Carlos Romulo. The whole book might otherwise have been adequately titled "An Autobiography of Sorts of Carlos P. Romulo." And it is perhaps time for one. Romulo has been a Filipino legend in the international diplomatic community for over a quarter of a century. As ambassador and foreign secretary he has served every government since the founding of the Philippine Republic in 1946. And he has served brilliantly.

As benefits a Romulo autobiography, the strongest chapters are those that deal with his role in the conduct of Philippine foreign policy: his participation in the forging of SEATO, his bold performance as the spokesman for the "aligned" in the predominantly "nonaligned" Bandung Conference of Asian and African nations, his views on the new realities in Asia and on the relations between the United States and the Philippines. The rest of the book is a pained and tortuous effort to explain why, after years of speaking out for human freedom—in World War II and until the early 1950's Romulo was known as the "voice of democracy"—he has chosen not only to bow to, but to serve as an aggressive defender of, the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos.

Shortly after the Marcos coup of 1972 Romulo was interviewed in Manila by a panel headed by the bureau manager of UPI. He was asked: "What about the Christian Socialist Party [i.e., the Christian

Social Movement, or CSM]? It offered an alternative." Romulo replied that the CSM had "practically ceased to exist after its humiliating defeat in 1969."

Romulo's fanciful mourning of the CSM will amuse even the most superficial observer of Philippine politics of the last decade. The facts are: (1) The CSM, of which this reviewer was president, did *not* participate in the 1969 elections and, therefore, could not have then suffered a "humiliating defeat"; (2) the CSM was largely responsible for forcing Congress to provide fair, nonpartisan election rules for the Constitutional Convention of 1971; (3) CSM members ran for delegate to the Convention, were elected with dramatic majorities, and assumed positions of leadership in the progressive bloc of delegates which resisted Marcos's attempts to manipulate and corrupt the convention; (4) CSM leaders were, as a consequence, singled out for immediate arrest after the coup; and (5) the Valeo Report to the U. S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations says the martial law government lists the CSM as one of the four major "threats" to Marcos at the time of the coup.

Romulo's scandalous isolation from internal Philippine politics and even from the official martial law government "line" provides us with an explanation, perhaps the kindest explanation one could make, for the sudden turnabout which even his most nostalgic sympathizers in the

U. S. are finding difficult to understand. Romulo, so the explanation would go, was so totally immersed in foreign affairs that he simply lost track of what was going on inside the country.

This indeed would be the kindest way to dismiss such cute observations as "the American Congressional sport of 'kick the President' was translated into a Philippine version of 'kill the President.'" The idea that Filipinos were spending their time killing their presidents while Americans were content with just kicking theirs would be simply funny if it were not also a denigration of the Filipinos. Four U. S. Presidents have suffered a fate slightly more serious than kicking, namely, assassination. No Philippine President has ever been assassinated. The attempt to assassinate Manuel Ruxas, the first President of the Republic of the Philippines, was real. If we include José P. Laurel's Japanese occupation presidency, the attempt against him was also real, although, as this book would put it, he was only "wounded by patriot guerrillas."

By contrast, all the well-publicized "attempts" on Marcos's life remain "sworn statement" conspiracies. Except for the obviously demented (some say staged) slashing attempt on Mrs. Marcos in December, 1972, no one has ever really taken a shot at the Marcoses, in spite of the prophetic adage about one who lives by the sword. For Marcos is the only man who began his long march to the presidency by killing his father's successful electoral rival. He was tried, convicted by the court, but acquitted in a Supreme Court decision which has become a classic of Philippine juridical benevolence.

But, of course, "killing the President" is intended as hyperbole for taking potshots at the President from behind the immune walls of Congress. The implication is that the Philippine Congress was so powerful that it succeeded in paralyzing the valiant efforts of the well-meaning Marcos. An alleged parallel case is that of Manuel Quezon, who in the 1930's was supposed to have

been "blocked consistently by political opposition in Congress" in his efforts at reform. This is distortion of history and misrepresentation of the constitutional position of the Philippine presidency. If there was anything Quezon lacked it was time, not Congressional support.

The 1935 Constitution, drafted by delegates almost totally blinded by the Quezon charisma, gave him presidential powers not found in any other democratic charter. A determined Philippine president could make any congress, even if it were controlled by the opposition party, bend to his will if he were granted concentrated unitary (as opposed to federal) executive control and awesome powers of patronage, veto, determination of time and subject matter of special congressional sessions, suspension of *habeas corpus*, and the right to declare martial law without congressional approval.

There is audacity in the present distortion because there is still a surviving generation of Filipinos (and of Americans who are old "Philippine hands") who remember Quezon not, as this book would now picture him, as a tired old executive at the mercy of a recalcitrant congress, but as a dynamic leader who held every single member of the legislature in the palm of his hand. Romulo himself once claimed to be a victim of the strong Quezonian hand. For daring to criticize Quezon in the free Philippine press, Romulo, a writer and publisher who would have made a superb senator, was erased by Quezon from the surefire majority senate slate to which friends had wanted him nominated. (Philippine senators, like the president, were elected at-large.) In his isolation, Romulo is to be excused for inadvertently permitting the most fundamental events in the changing Philippine scene to pass him by unnoticed.

He did not notice the ruthless Marcos plan to contrive a crisis and use it as the excuse for martial law, but respected American journalists were quick to do so. Charles Thompson of the *Philadelphia Evening News*, who wrote a series on the

Philippines last year, recalled that the economic crisis began with the spending by Marcos of 800 million pesos (about \$200 million) to get himself reelected in 1969, leading to the devaluation of the peso in 1970 and the spiraling of prices of imported and domestic goods. Peter R. Kann of the *Wall Street Journal*, writing recently for *Foreign Affairs*, chronicles the climax of the plan—the "choreographing" at the presi-

dential palace of the toilet bombing and of the assassination attempt on the Secretary of Defense.

Romulo remembers the Constitutional Convention only in connection with the bombing of its toilet. In spite of its pollution with Marcos's buying of some delegates, the Convention had remained a strong hope for democratic change until Marcos declared martial law and railroaded through it a "transitory



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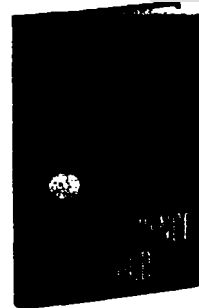
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provision" making him dictator.

Romulo also missed the exciting developments in the provinces where farmers were suddenly finding spectacular success in organizing themselves and consolidating their position in the participatory democracy. The Reverend Bruno Hicks, the American Franciscan missionary expelled after the Marcos coup who had worked for years among the farmers of Central Philippines, said that the organized farmers were "delivering an impact on the political institutions" and that this was "democracy beginning to work."

So here we have two verdicts on the Philippines of 1972. Romulo, from his ivory tower, calls it an American-style democracy that failed to work. Father Hicks, who worked with the people, calls it Philippine democracy beginning to work.

Some shortsighted U.S. businessmen feel more comfortable with the Romulo verdict. Labeling Philippine democracy "American-style" was a handy excuse for crushing civil liberties and for reversing a certain nationalist trend which former U. S. Secretary of State William Rogers once hailed as healthy for a developing nation. Labor strikes have been banned, the labor movement has been emasculated, and, in order to provide the Marcos regime with the facade of a "quickie" prosperity, foreign investors are now invited to "write their own ticket." This means profits, and it is the language businessmen best understand.

Fortunately, an increasing number of Americans are beginning to appreciate the verdict of their fellow American, Father Hicks. Development without popular participation, plus the instability of a dictatorship without succession, adds up to an explosive condition that could suck the large American economic and military presence in the Philippines into another protracted debacle. All the eighty-one Roman Catholic bishops of the Philippines have openly demanded the end of martial law "to heal the wounds of the nation." Leaders of the important Protestant minority had de-

manded it even earlier. American leaders in Washington have begun to wonder aloud why American tax money should go in military aid to the Marcos repression.

A word about the author. Ms. Day is to be commended for allowing the publisher to reveal quite candidly that she had "first visited the Philippines in January 1973." For readers who may wonder how she could then speak with such authority on

the Philippines it is added that "she became fascinated with the story of Philippine democracy while interviewing President and Mrs. Marcos." Perhaps some day, when she will have learned more about Philippine democracy from sources other than those who conspired to shatter it, Ms. Day will lend her pleasant and readable style to a more authoritative book on the rebuilding of that democracy.

## The United Nations and Economic Sanctions Against Rhodesia

by Leonard T. Kapungu

(Lexington Books; 155 pp.; \$12.50)

Andrew Lukele

Prior to 1965 there was little interest in the affairs of Rhodesia. But in November of that year this dependent of Great Britain was dramatically thrust into the center of world attention when its white settler community, defying Britain, made a unilateral declaration of independence. The Rhodesian settlers, seeing that Britain was bowing to what one of her prime ministers had termed "the winds of change," were fearful that some aspects of Britain's new policy of decolonization might also be imposed upon Rhodesia. It was a move calculated to forestall African majority rule and to bring Rhodesia closer to neighboring South Africa in entrenching white privilege and dominance in Africa.

Unlike her practice in previous situations, Britain did not seek to suppress this rebellion by military intervention. Instead, she attempted to institute a series of economic sanctions against Rhodesia and, at a later stage, also called on the United Nations to establish a program of selected sanctions. The hope was that the sanctions would force the rebels to see the error of their ways and ultimately give up their rebellion.

It is now nearly a decade after the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI), and the Rhodesian rebel government has not been brought to a halt. The U.N. sanctions remain simply words, and this small country, now led by a minority representing less than 1/25 of the total population of four million, has succeeded in defying not only Britain but the United Nations as well.

Why did Britain not quell the rebellion in the manner to which she was accustomed? What prompted the U.N. to follow Britain's lead into an adventure so elaborate and futile? And finally, what enabled Rhodesia to withstand the economic sanctions and to continue in defiance and apparent prosperity? (The meaning of fast-breaking events of recent weeks, leading to tenuous discussions between the regime and its African opponents, is by no means clear as of this writing.)

These are some of the questions posed by Dr. Kapungu, a native of Rhodesia now with the United Nations. His answers are remarkably persuasive, especially in view of the modest length of the book. Many of the points Kapungu raises in response to these and other questions