

INSTITUTE OF CURRENT WORLD AFFAIRS

WWU - 5
Son or Brother?

Hotel Filipinas
Dewey Blvd., Manila, P. I.
January 1, 1959

Mr. Walter S. Rogers
Institute of Current World Affairs
522 Fifth Avenue
New York 36, New York

Dear Mr. Rogers:

When I stepped out of the plane on my arrival here from Hong Kong a week or so ago I had two vivid first impressions: the heat, which even in Manila's cool December is still pretty much like the wrong end of an airconditioner; and a succession of flicks on my face, which turned out to be flies. I reacted in the traditional American style and began to look impatient as I watched a whole procession of baggage attendants walk back and forth before one of my suitcases without ever finding it. A tall, good-looking Philippine customs man was silently watching me. Then he said, very gently; "You must forgive us; we are not always efficient." I got off my high horse. I got down even further on the limousine drive into town. The driver, it turned out, had had one year of college before the war. He was the only one of five brothers to survive the Japanese. His father, an Army captain, also died. But he never got to go back to college. After the Japanese came the Huks and the driver wasn't able to leave the Army for nine years. Now he is married and plans to transfer his GI benefits for a college education to his children. He didn't seem to be bitter, just understanding. And he kept punctuating his every sentence to me with a "Sir" -- even though I told him that as a fellow ex-enlisted man the title was unearned.

I also got a quick lesson on the Philippine economy. I asked the bank office at the airport what I should tip the baggage man. The woman clerk said one peso. "Isn't that too much?" I asked. "Oh no, that's only 50 cents U.S.," I was told. (Actually, on the black market, the official 2-Peso-per-Dollar rate becomes 3 Pesos.) Next, I checked in at the Filipinas Hotel here, - overlooking the harbor. I did so simply because a local columnist, Teodoro Valencia, spotted me shopping for a typewriter in Kowloon, introduced himself and handed me his card with instructions on the back to this hotel's manager, a man he addressed as "Corbu," to give me a 25 per cent discount. Well, I found the room so nice I began to wonder if the 25 per cent discount had been compensated for by merely assigning me to a more expensive room. I went to the desk in the hotel's annex and asked the range of their room rates. I had to ask the clerk to repeat his answer: "Whom are you with?"

You might ask what the Philippines has to do with a worldwide look at the arguments for neutrality and non-alignment. Well, a few years back when Ambassador Bohlen was assigned here from his tour in Moscow a friend of mine in the State Department told me that the reason for sending such a first-ranking Ambassador to the Philippines was that here was a country which might "flip" any day and it was necessary to have the U.S. well represented. I suspected there might be a good deal of rationalization in my friend's explanation (when I told this to Bohlen, he said - "90 per cent") but I also thought there must be some grain of truth to impel my friend to make such an explanation. Before leaving

Washington I had two talks with General Romulo, the Philippine Ambassador, and he repeated several times: "You must not take us for granted." Romulo also told me how difficult it is for the Filipinos to understand the rationale of a U.S. aid policy which pours far more help into Japan, the former common enemy, than into the Philippines, America's long-time protege and strong ally. I have heard both Romulo's statements repeated a good many times here. However, I have been surprised to find that most every Filipino I met would just as leave not have Romulo speak for him.

Senator Claro M. Recto summed it up this way: "Romulo represents the U.S. to the Philippines rather than the Philippines to the U.S." Recto's words might be a bit more acrid than the average because I found that he, along with the management and columnists of the Manila Chronicle, are the leading exponents of whatever neutralistic sentiment exists here in the Philippines. I, frankly, went out of my way to seek and flush out these neutralists, or dissenters, if you will. I was told that their voice was louder than their backing, that the people of the barrios (villages) are for as close ties to America as possible, and that even in the political arena in Manila, Recto-Chronicle & Co. is a minority view.

Perhaps before discussing who says what, I had better mention the causes of neutralism, neutrality and non-alignment I have been able to find.

1. Nationalism. I would say this is the basic factor, in many cases probably the real word for those who say they want to untie the umbilical cord with the U.S. once and for all. The Philippine Republic is now approaching its thirteenth year. And as Teodoro Valencia, the columnist for the Manila Times, put it: "When you get married, to whom do you prove your independence? Not to your neighbors, they already looked upon you as grown up. You prove it by standing up to your father or mother." What Valencia didn't say, but which I have found elsewhere, is that there is a good deal of schizophrenia in this flight from the nest. Many Filipino politicians seem to want to be on their own with one breath, and sheltered by the U.S. with the other.

2. Economic needs. The Philippine economy is in a mighty shaky way. Graft and corruption stories festoon each day's front page. The Government is now so much in the red it has stopped payment on civil service salaries. Added to this, Filipino businessmen, particularly the sugar barons, are searching for new markets beyond the U.S. Although the U.S. has an agreement to buy up some 90 per cent of the Philippine sugar production until the mid-seventies, Filipinos feel Cuban sugar competition is already more than they can meet in the U.S. markets. And they contend that such countries as Japan are very anxious to buy Philippine sugar at good prices -- if only the sugar was not committed to the U.S.

3. The Laurel-Langley Agreement. As Chairman Lorenzo Sumulong of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee explains it, the Philippine economy originally was developed to be compatible with the import needs of the U.S. In return, a system of free trade was established. But with the arrival of the Depression in the early 'thirties, American protectionists moved to keep out the Philippine competition. A transitional period of ten years was decided upon during which the free trade relation gradually would be liquidated. But World War II interfered and the transitional period was extended to 25 years under the Bell Trade Agreement of 1949. Now as I understand it (and there is a better than even

chance I don't understand it since I never could get the same answers from two separate Filipinos), the Laurel-Langley amendment of 1955 was agreed to by both countries as a means of hastening up the transition and easing things on the Philippine economy. The Philippines are now permitted gradually to increase their tariff on U.S. goods and vice versa. Today, for instance, the tariff on U.S. goods into the Philippines jumps from 25 to 50 per cent; and the U.S. duty on Philippine exports entering the U.S. jumps from five to 10 per cent. Both represent 100 per cent increases. But since the Philippines are so dependent upon exporting to the U.S. they claim that they are losing more money than they are gaining under "L-L." and "L-L" is pointed to as evidence of continuing American economic oppression.

4. Military bases. There seem to be a series of mumblings over the treaties involving American military installations in the Philippines but the only significant one I could find is the one concerned with which country has jurisdiction over U.S. militia involved in civilian crimes. There is no problem concerning crimes where a member of the U.S. military is off base and off duty. These are a matter for the Philippine civilian courts. But Philippine Foreign Minister Felixberto M. Serrano currently is holding a series of exploratory talks with Ambassador Bohlen to see who adjudicates the case of a U.S. military man who may have been off duty when he committed a crime on a U.S. base. As things now stand, the Base Commander decides whether the man was on or off duty and therefore which country gets jurisdiction of the case. The Philippine Government now wants to be able to refer cases of doubt on the duty status to the Secretary of Justice and permit him to make the final decision on who gets the body. Last year's celebrated Girard case in Japan was played on Manila front pages with the strong implication that unless the host country yells, the American GI will roam the countryside taking potshots at those whom his whim fancies.



SERRANO: Caught in mid-gesture

I'll talk about Soliongo, the Manila Chronicle columnist and editorial writer, a bit later, but here is a piece* he devoted to the jurisdiction dispute. I present it as an illustration of how the neutralist sentiment is expressed. I do not vouch for its accuracy.

5. Relations with the rest of Asia. I've gathered from many directions that the Philippines is concerned for the day when the U.S. is less of a protector and it finds itself more on its own. According to Senator Sumulong, who also was one of the chief Filipino delegates to last fall's UN General Assembly, "They suspect us of being a mere blind follower of the U.S.," Sumulong said that when he was last at the UN, as a delegate to the second session in 1946, "We were in good standing." This past session he found other countries taking it for granted that the Philippines would always go along with the U.S. "We asked for only one thing, membership on the Economic and Social Council, and even that we did not get." Concludes Sumulong: "If we are going to be of help to the U.S. (and I am sure he meant to include the Philippines), we have to erase that misunderstanding." Sumulong sparkplugged a memo sent to the Ministry of Foreign

*See next page

Seriously SPEAKING

BY I. P. SOLIONGCO

The publicity which has attended the dispatch of a routine diplomatic note from the American embassy to the Department of Foreign Affairs informing the latter that an American sailor had been tried and sentenced to jail for the killing of a Filipino is something which Ambassador Bohlen had expected.

And why not? After all, there is every reason to believe that he had stage-managed it to create the impression in the public mind that the insistence of the Philippine government on jurisdiction is unnecessary and unjustified because of the seeming readiness of the United States to mete out punishment to on-base, off-duty offenders.

It is perhaps the duty of the Americans and of the United States government to praise Ambassador Bohlen for his efforts here, for his heroic efforts to preserve the extra-territorial rights of American soldiery in the Philippines. But it passes understanding why the Philippine government—specifically, that branch of it known as the foreign office—should cooperate, as it has cooperated, with Ambassador Bohlen in the implementation of an obvious and cheap stratagem. For in releasing to the press a statement praising the Ambassador for the punishment of a guilty American sailor, the foreign office made itself a party to a beautifully staged tragi-comedy.

Now, because of our colonial mentality we have a tendency to remember an isolated act of justice on the part of the American military and to rhapsodize over it as if it were the rule and not the exception. That isolated act seems to have wiped out the memory of scores of cases in which the guilty had been allowed, nay, helped to some sanctuary in the United States, free from responsibility to their victims, to our laws, and even to their conscience.

Perhaps for a better understanding of Ambassador Bohlen's attempt to influence Philippine public opinion and for a better insight into the simple-mindedness of some of the officials in our own foreign office, a recounting of the story which has been so expertly utilized by the Ambassador is in order.

Seaman Edward E. Cook was on a shore pass at the Subic naval base. For some reason or another, he got

into a brawl with three other Americans. Now, a member of the crowd which witnessed the affair was a young Filipino by the name of Rolando Cosca. Cosca, let it be made clear, was not a participant in the fight; he was merely an innocent onlooker. But Cook went after him, hit him on the head. Later Cosca died, without regaining consciousness.

When the relatives of the deceased accompanied by a lawyer went to the naval authorities at Sangley Point to ask for particulars of the case, they were met, as to be expected, with that hostility, that cold indifference with which American naval and military officers regard any inquiry about offending American soldiers and sailors.

In the meantime, the culprit, clearly with the cooperation of his superiors, had left. For a time, the Philippine government was helpless, but the relatives of Cosca resorted to the press and the publicity must have opened the eyes of Ambassador Bohlen and the naval authorities to the propaganda value of the case. Cook was brought back, tried and found guilty. He was dishonorably discharged from the U.S. navy and sentenced to eighteen months at hard labor.

Now, what is so extraordinary in punishing a homicidal sailor? The U.S. navy authorities acted, let it not be forgotten, only after they learned that the relatives had engaged the services of the law office of Congressman Ramon Mitra, chairman of the House committee on foreign affairs, and had sought the help of the press in exposing the whole story.

At no time did the navy authorities show any initiative in fulfilling their obligations to the Filipino victim under the terms of the base agreement. And as for Ambassador Bohlen, his initial reaction was, Pilate-like, to wash his hands of the whole affair. The Department of Foreign Affairs sent him two diplomatic notes in connection with it. It is not on the record that he acknowledged, much less answered, them.

Now that he had made the momentous discovery that the wanton killing of an innocent Filipino and the subsequent punishment of the guilty could be used to serve his propaganda needs, what business is it of the foreign office to help him make a shining virtue out of a necessity? Friday, December 26, 1958

Affairs in October which recommended that the Philippines abandon further co-sponsorships of U.S. resolutions before the UN. Another Senator, also a member of the UN delegation, Dr. Arturo M. Tolentino, a lawyer who was at one time Majority Leader of the House, explained: "It is not a feeling of going toward Russia. It is a feeling that if we loosen our ties with the U.S. a little -- mostly economic -- and make some arrangements with other countries it will be to our benefit." And he made it plain that while the U.S. might have its own reasons for siding with the "colonial powers" in UN votes, it was not to the best of the interests of the Philippines to go along.

I gathered these sentiments in interviews with both Sumulong and Tolentino in their separate law offices (there is no prohibition against a legislator putting just as much time into his private practice as into his public responsibilities). But I gather that these two Senators, members of the Nacionalista Party of the current Government, are not just sounding off on their own. Just before I arrived here, President Garcia spoke before the Manila Overseas Press Club and declared: "If we can serve as catalysts of free Asian unity and cooperation for the preservation of our hard won freedoms, our share of the victory will be more than ample justification... We are now prepared to broaden our horizons, to explore additional areas of friendship and cooperation. If this is to be called a shift of policy, it must not be misconstrued as a shift of indecision. On the contrary, it should be recognized as a shift to a higher plane of national maturity and national self-confidence." There has been all sorts of speculation about his speech. I know the American Embassy wasn't unhappy because, even before it was delivered, I met one of its members in Hong Kong and he told me Garcia was about to deliver a very good speech. This also indicated something of the liaison between the Dewey Boulevard Embassy and Malacañang, the Presidential Palace.

I went to one of Garcia's regular Friday afternoon press conferences and, going up to meet the President afterwards, was told that he is anxious for closer ties with both the U.S. and the Asian neighbors and that his speech in no way represented a departure from American relations. Incidentally, the Malacañang press conferences are considerably different than those Mr. Eisenhower conducts in the old Indian Treaty Room of the Executive Office Building. Senor Garcia has air conditioning, upholstered chairs (quite tall and a bit rococo, but comfortable) and a groaning buffet table for later refreshments. Nothing subtle about that table either, it's in full sight. And during the press conference one reporter didn't even bother to wait. He got up, walked over and pocketed a handful of cigars and resumed his seat. I suspect that the comforts have a dulling influence on the questioners. Garcia's press secretary had to keep searching the audience for volunteers. I admit that the questions thrown at President Eisenhower are pretty soft-gummed. But at least there is no dearth of volunteers anxious to pose them.

I have gathered various interpretations of Garcia's speech and his own ambitions for a shift of foreign relations away from the U.S. Garcia's own words, I have just told you. Foreign Minister Serrano appeared to be candid when he told me that he doubted that the President would have time to follow up his speech with any positive action toward the Asian neighbors -- because of the economic problems he faces at home. Serrano's press man, Ramon Mitra Jr., the 30-year-old son of the Chairman of the House Foreign Relations Committee, said Garcia's speech actually was a sleeper, a decisive push out toward Asia couched in soft terms which would not offend the U.S. Columnist Teddy Valencia told me at breakfast one morning that he had spent several hours with the President the day before and was certain that Garcia was determined to follow through an "Asia for Asians" remark he had made when he was Foreign Minister under President Magsaysay. With a stay of less than two weeks in the Philippines, I am afraid I can't presume to decide which of these various interpretations is correct. But I do know that



EL PRESIDENTE: Garcia of The Philippines tells Unna of Washington that he wants to be friends with everybody. Presidential Press Secretary Joe Nable listens reverently.

Garcia is pushing the exchange of State visits with Asian nations. He concluded a goodwill visit to Japan just as I arrived there and Malayan Premier Tengku Abdul Rahman is scheduled to visit the Philippines just after I leave.

6. The final element which I think may be making some Filipinos speak out in neutralistic terms is the disappointment over the extent of U.S. aid. I was told that President Garcia, on Ambassador Romulo's advice, visited the U.S. this past year with the frank announcement that the Philippines wanted \$250 million. Garcia returned with half that and even this amount is slow in forthcoming. Of course, U.S. aid is far more than this amount. The military bases, their personnel and their personnel's families mean sizeable consumer spending. And the veterans' benefits the U.S. continues to pay its World War II Filipino conscripts means another very sizeable contribution to the Philippine economy.

These then are the elements influencing a neutralistic trend. And the trend, from what I can find, has its spokesmen in Senator Recto and The Manila Chronicle.

Senator Recto, now in his late sixties, a legislator who reads his own poetry when floor debate dulls, is a very successful Manila lawyer, the chairman of the Philippine Constitutional Convention of the 'thirties and, during recent years, the man who would like to be President but who always seems to end up as the loudest voice in the opposition. In my search for dissident voices, I started right off at the top of the pile with Recto. I merely phoned him and he said come right down to the office. The office turned out to be in the Chronicle TV station's building, right next to the editorial building. Recto is jowly, paunchy and, at least for my interview, devoid of humor. He was all in green: a light green barong tagalog (an embroidered open-necked shirt worn tails out), green studs and green cuff links. When I started to take notes he balked so I put away my pencil. Recto started right off by saying he is for "coexistence" with all nations, and that means Russia and Red China. At the moment, he wants the opportunity to establish economic ties, the political can come later. He lamented that "We are still a protectorate of the U.S."; declared, "It is our fault for not explaining, not that of the U.S."; added that while President Magsaysay "never said 'no' to the U.S.," President Garcia has. Recto said he has not gone as far as "some" in urging a "Filipinos First" policy. But he certainly is opposed to the Philippine economic ties to the U.S. which inhibit his country from buying and selling elsewhere at more advantageous prices. He is annoyed with the failure of the U.S. to grant "jurisdiction" to the Philippine courts; annoyed that the Philippines have "no say" in where U.S. bases are located or whether or not they contain nuclear weapons (Recto likens U.S. military establishments in the Islands to lightning rods drawing trouble); and he is annoyed with the failure of the U.S. to pay adequate war damages for the wreckage MacArthur made ("worse than the Japanese, by far") or to compensate the Philippines for the upheaval caused by the U.S. jumping off the gold standard in the 'thirties. Recto was extremely general in his complaints and when I asked for specifics he told me to check elsewhere. For instance, when he said the U.S. owes the Philippines 500 million and I asked him whether this was in dollars or pesos, he said he didn't know.

Now, with all this, I did not find Senator Recto hostile. But on the other hand, I had the feeling that he was holding back and tempering his complaints. Before seeing him, I had been told that part of his hostility to the U.S. had been caused by his imprisonment by the MacArthur regime for collaborating with the Japanese, and part by the fact that his first wife had left him for an American and his daughters had married Americans who displeased him. I asked Recto about his imprisonment and he very quickly denied being "bitter" and informed me that was impossible anyway since "the courts have completely vindicated me." (Other Filipinos later told me the government merely failed to press the charges.) Now a good many people warned me that Recto is a Communist. But Ambassador Bohlen, who said he has had some experience with the word, declared Recto might very well be anti-American but he is no Communist. As the chief speaker in the Rizal Day exercises on the bayside Luneta the day before yesterday, Recto declared: "We better be careful or else we might find ourselves foreigners in our own country." The Senator spoke in Tagalog and The Chronicle described it as "breaking an old custom and establishing a new tradition." In today's Manila Bulletin there is a story declaring that Recto has demanded control of foreign policy as the price for his return to the

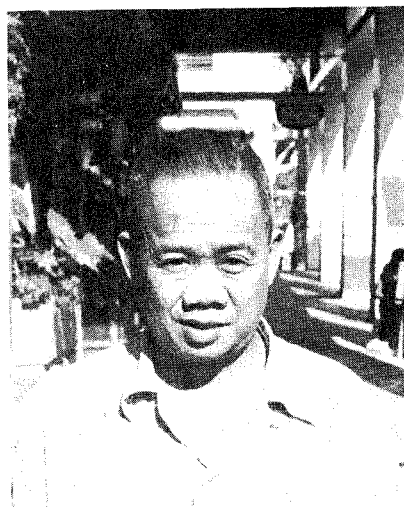
administration party. There are other reports that Recto is manuevering to get the vice presidential nomination when Garcia comes up for reelection. The current vice president is a member of the opposition Liberal Party. And it is no secret that Garcia will be prevented from filling out any second term of office because of a Constitutional limitation on tenure. Garcia, you see, took office in 1957 after the plane crash which killed President Magsaysay. Will Recto see his ambition succeed? Well, when he ran outright for the Presidency in the last election he ended up as a poor fourth.

As I have indicated already, Senator Recto is not only an office tenant of The Chronicle but, at this period anyway, the newspaper's chief oracle, both in editorials and news columns. For the past dozen years, The Chronicle has been owned by the Lopez family whose sugar barony is one of the Phillipines' largest. Their columnist, Soliongco, told me the Lopez sugar "central" annually exports \$60 million worth of the sweet stuff to the U.S. Soliongco also explained that the newspaper's publisher, Eugenio Lopez Sr., is convinced that the U.S. market will dry up within the near future and that he had better start finding new markets. Japan, I was told, is anxious to buy Philippine sugar and right now is paying far more to import sugar from Cuba. But because of the commitment to the U.S., which now sops up about 90 per cent of Philippine sugar at a fixed price, the Philippines are not free to encourage any other buyers from the outside. I did not meet Publisher Lopez, but I did meet his son, Eugenio Jr. "Henny", as he is called, was one of a group of Asian newsmen given a guest tour of the U.S. late last year. I met him at dinner at my boss' house in Washington. At the time, I knew only that he was The Chronicle's general manager, that he was a graduate of Virginia Military Institute and that, by his own admission, his paper espoused a neutralist position. I knew nothing about the sugar. But when Henny asked me to his home in Manila's posh Forbes Park suburb the sugar was pretty apparent. However, I found him sincere and informed and saw no reason why I should be quarreling with him over what he thought best for the Philippines. P.S. -- It was a superb dinner and Henny's wife is a beauty.

On my right at dinner, by the way, was another handsome woman, although older, Carmen Guerrero-Nakpil, who, along with Soliongco, peppers America daily from her column on The Chronicle's editorial page. Carmen's brother is now Philippine Ambassador to the Court of St. James. Her father was a financially successful doctor who, to the Catholic Filipinos, was quite a controversial gent. The lady columnist, I have been told by several, grew disenchanted with the U.S. at about the same time a GI friend departed. Her spoken words, as well as her written, I found beautifully formulated. But I am afraid that I failed to understand her argument that the Filipinos should all adopt Tagalog as a national language even if only a fraction of them now spoke it. I had the feeling that an emotional lady, having turned her back on the U.S., was now anxious to justify her action with a sort of unselective embrace of nationalism-for-nationalism.

But Carmen's fellow columnist, Idalecio P. Soliongco, is another matter. You've already seen how he writes. Long before meeting him, I heard every-

where that here was the real article, "a Communist who has been to Russia." I was also told that Soliongco, with decidedly negroid features, had been burned on visits to the U.S. Well, we met at lunch (a very good lunch and so. of course, my belly led to my head). Soliongco said he was for policing Communists domestically but for the Philippines minding its own business with a neutral course internationally. He said the Philippines could not afford the financial burden involved in the U.S. stand against Communist countries. And he said that permitting U.S. bases on Philippine soil only invited an invasion of sovereignty. Soliongco labeled the U.S. stand against Communism "a 'crusade' in the historical sense of the word." And he declared that economically, "The conflict between the U.S. and the Philippines, as day chases day, is becoming sharper and sharper. And with this, the Philippines themselves more and more realize the necessity of independence." He quoted Toynbee



SOLIONGCO: Photographed according to his own prescription.

in saying the U.S. now "enjoys the position of a dominant minority." And Soliongco gave me a bit of the history of the UN delegation's urge to follow an independent course from the U.S. It seems that when the Palestine issue was before the UN in 1947, General Romulo gave a speech opposing partition (and therefore against the Israeli stand). Romulo had first consulted with then President Roxas. But, according to Soliongco, U.S. Ambassador McNutt then got a hold of Roxas and reminded him that seven bills favoring the Philippines were currently pending before the U.S. Congress. Roxas wired the delegation to change its stand and vote for partition. Romulo sailed for Europe and avoided the vote. And the flip-flop by the rest of the delegation made the Philippines appear ridiculous before the UN assemblage. Now Soliongco was saying some rather unpleasant things about my country, but he managed to say them in an even-tempered way, quite unlike his female colleague, Carmen. And, more than that, Soliongco volunteered something good. He said he had been in the U.S. three times during the past 10 years and noticed a "decided" change in race relations. He all but admitted he had been burned on his first visit. But he made no complaints of his subsequent ones during the past few years. And he didn't rub Little Rock in my face. He mentioned it as an aberration. I was grateful for that. Incidentally, this columnist, who, I gather, is the most controversial in the Philippines, told me he really preferred photography to writing. When I took his picture, he dictated the lens aperture and shutter speed. And when I talked to him at his desk before lunch, I had a hard time listening. The wily rascal had a photograph looking upwards at a girl with folded bare legs -- facing his guest chair.

I have dipped into a bit of gossip surrounding Senator Recto, the Lopez family, Carmen and Soliongco purposely because I thought you might want to weigh this for yourself in understanding the motives attributed to the Philippines leading neutralists.

I had a morning appointment with Foreign Minister Felixberto M. Serrano, a gray-haired gentle-voiced ex-college professor. His office was ornate, but minute by State Department standards. And as we sat facing each other over coffee, Serrano's press man, Mitra, picked up my camera and snapped our picture. Serrano and President Garcia, being diplomats, had greeted me with the same smiling phrase: "We've met before in Washington, haven't we?" I, untrained in the technique, let this ready buildup of intimacy fall flat with a fact-correcting, blunt, "No." I hope to learn. Serrano didn't say much during our talk. But he did hint that "unreasonable nationalism" might crop up in the Philippines "if certain needs are not met." And while he was emphatic in declaring that he saw no chance of neutralism taking hold "in the foreseeable future," he did say: "Brother to brother, the U.S. is taking us too much for granted." I understand that during his discussions with Ambassador Bohlen on the renegotiation of bases treaty, Serrano said something to the effect, "Why do you not trust us, we are your son?"

My interview lasted a half-hour, prolonged by the Foreign Minister even though I made several gestures to avoid impinging on his time. Later, his aide told me: "You were squeezed in between the Pakistan Ambassador and the Papal Nuncio and I think the Minister wanted to keep the Pope waiting."

Dr. Tolentino, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee member, UN delegate and lawyer, answered my questions on neutralism this way: The impression abroad that we are still tied to the coattails of Uncle Sam is not doing a good thing for the Philippines. Now as for neutralism, the Philippines can never be in the center. It should always be a democracy and I don't think that within this generation there can be any approval of Communism. This past year we approved a bill outlawing Communism (which is more than the U.S. has done). But I feel we should not have to rely on the U.S. but roll up our sleeves and buckle down. I find an independent attitude preferable. We should begin cultivating our relationships with other countries without the fear that the U.S. should be offended." Dr. Tolentino said that the Philippines should be prepared to take the bitter with the sweet: less help from Uncle Sam with more independence in the Philippines. But he made it clear that he was not for opening trade relations with Red China, as Senator Recto and Soliongco advocate. That, he said, would bring "infiltration." He defined his term: "Clamoring for Chinese Communist goods just to lower prices would throw our entire economic balance here out of line and create an impression that really the Communist regime is better than the Democratic regime."

I have been told that recognition of the Chicoms by the Philippines is impossible anyway because of the fear that such recognition would bring divided allegiance and ready infiltration in the ranks of the Philippines large Chinese merchant population. And as for recognizing Soviet Russia, Senator Sumulong said: "The Soviets never wanted to recognize us. Ever since our independence in 1946, they have said that we are merely a puppet of the U.S. and not sent any diplomatic representative here."

At the U.S. Embassy, one official told me: "Neutralism is not the force in the Philippines that it is in Indonesia. But it is nonetheless a part of Philippine life which demands that we understand its implications." Another U.S. official said: "Neutralism is a national sentiment for inner frustrations. They can't forget they were our kids and that we gave them their independence and they didn't win it."

This brings me back to this "Son or Brother?" question. As you see, even Foreign Minister Serrano uses one relationship on one occasion and the other on another. I suspect that until the Filipinos become more convinced of their own identity, of their own relationship with Father, the pressures for neutralism, for independence from the U.S., however unrepresentative of popular sentiment, will continue.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Unna", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Warren W. Unna

Received New York January 28, 1959