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Rejoinder

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Rejoinder

DR. Legarda was so considerate as to give me an opportunity to read his review of my book in advance of its publication in *PHILIPPINE STUDIES*, and he also informed me that the editors had offered to publish any rebuttal I might care to make.

Although I appreciated the courtesy of both Dr. Legarda and the editors, I did not think that I would take advantage of the offer of the latter as I have always felt a sort of pity for authors who think that they must defend themselves against any and all criticism. Dr. Legarda has every right to criticize my book and his review is both competent and generous. He has pointed out some admitted faults and also several errors of fact of which I was unaware. For this I am grateful rather than otherwise. As for the broader matters dealt with in the book, such as the importance of Philippine-American trade relations, American parity rights, the gold standard, the managed currency system, the government economic controls, the alleged alien domination of the economy, etc., about these I do not wish to enter into further argument. They are all fairly well covered in the book and I am content to let the book speak for itself.

On second thought, however, I felt that there was one thing that Dr. Legarda says in his review which I should like to comment upon, and that is his statement that "Mr. Hartendorp seems to have lost touch with the people among whom he lives." Further on, he speaks of "the widening breach" between my views and "the more recent shifts in the Filipino point of view." Finally, he states: "It would be a pity for the estrangement to widen which we have earlier noticed between the author and a growing body of Philippine opinion."

A certain "widening breach" I myself have felt deeply and, I will say, sadly, for some years, but it seems to me that Dr. Legarda touches the very heart of the matter when he

himself specifies that this breach is "with the more recent shifts in the Filipino point of view".

I have questioned myself all along: Is it just that I am growing old and becoming less receptive, less understanding? But I never could convince myself of that. The change, so far as I could see, was not in myself, but, as Dr. Legarda says, in the "Filipino point of view"—if what has been happening must be taken as indicative of a change in the Filipino view generally, which I am not ready to concede. Still, there has most certainly been a change, if not in the point of view of Filipinos generally, then in the point of view of some, perhaps many, Filipinos, and certainly there has been a great change in the general tone of Philippine society, particularly in Manila.

It could be that this society has moved on and that I have stood still or lagged behind. Dr. Legarda seems to imply that I should have moved along with the more recent shifts in the "Filipino point of view" and should have accepted these shifts and supported them.

Now I have, from the time I first arrived in this country over forty years ago, always felt myself fully in rapport with the people. I have always considered myself as much of a *Filipinista* as it is possible for a non-Filipino to be. I have felt at home here and one with the people. And, indeed, the Philippines has blessed me with the manifold riches of a large family and a useful and, I trust, an honorable career. All this has perhaps come to me because I have steadfastly sought to devote myself to what I thought to be the best interests of the country as, first, a teacher, and then a writer and editor. I have received here every good thing in life—except monetary wealth, and that does not greatly matter to me. I feel that I reached the height of acceptance by the nation when some time before the inauguration of the Commonwealth, Mr. Quezon, the country's greatest statesman, chose me to assist him in the capacity of a personal adviser and entrusted me with work of high confidence.

I have heard it said that some of the younger Filipinos today consider me as one of the old-time "imperialists" in the

country. But when I was, during my first year in the Philippines (1917-18), a high school teacher in Cuyo, Palawan, I took the civil service examination for superintendent of schools, and failed to pass the test in *English*! I had written an essay on "Imperialism" from the anti-imperialistic point of view, and this must have led some American examiner in the Bureau of Civil Service in Manila, who evaluated my papers, to believe that I was some sort of "nut", unfit to be a superintendent of schools.

I could tell many stories of the same tenor, choices and decisions I made, defiant positions I took at personal risk. But I will refrain from doing so. I would like to mention only that as editor and publisher before the war of the PHILIPPINE MAGAZINE (mentioned by Dr. Legarda), I did everything possible to develop an understanding and appreciation of the immensely rich and varied cultural heritage of the people of the Philippines. A prominent professor in a university in the United States once wrote me that he considered the PHILIPPINE MAGAZINE "the most interesting magazine in the world". The librarian of another American university wrote that there was more call for the PHILIPPINE MAGAZINE by the students than for any similar publication. Thus, many years ago, I discovered and cultivated a field the richness of which was recently again demonstrated to the world, in a different way, by the Bayanihan folk dance troupe. I might add that many of the short stories published in the PHILIPPINE MAGAZINE were starred in O'Brien's annual anthology of the short story, the Filipino writers in this respect far outdoing those of any other country in this part of the world where English is used, including not only India, but even Australia. Philippine nationalism and culture was making its appeal to the world through the publication I was proud to edit.

Earlier, I spoke of the change in the tone of Philippine society, particularly in Manila. This is well illustrated by two items I happened to come across recently in looking through a volume of the issues of the PHILIPPINE MAGAZINE for the year 1935.

One was a familiar passage in President Quezon's inaugural address, delivered before a vast concourse of happy people gathered in front of the Legislative Building on November 15, 1935. He said:

Amity and friendship, fairness and the square deal in our relations with other nations and their citizens or subjects, protection of their legitimate investments and pursuits, in return for their temporary allegiance to our institutions and laws, are the assurances I make on behalf of the new Government to Americans and foreigners who may desire to live, trade, and otherwise associate with us in the Philippines.

Almost a year earlier, on December 24, 1934, at a dinner given by Mr. Quezon at his home to the members of a United States Senate mission headed by Sen. M. F. Tydings, Mr. Quezon, it was reported in the January, 1935, issue of the *PHILIPPINE MAGAZINE*,

made a formal bid for a "cultural, spiritual, and economic partnership" between America and the Philippines and for making the Philippine-American relationship permanent notwithstanding the impending political change, suggesting that one way of bringing this about would be for the United States to keep its markets open to Philippine products as then the Filipinos could continue to buy American goods. He praised the unselfish and disinterested accomplishments of the United States here and stated that his recent visit to the colonies of other powers convinced him that Senator Tydings was absolutely right when he declared in his speech before the [Constitutional] Convention that what the United States has done here has no parallel in history. "But the question now is not whether this work has been successful or whether it will be brought to a final conclusion. The question should be whether what you have done here is but an accident in your national life or whether it will remain as a monument forever to your record of unselfish accomplishment." He declared that one reason why the work of America has been accomplished so easily was the ready cooperation of the Philippines. He also pointed out that the results have not been without advantage to the United States. He spoke of the market for American goods here, but stated that over and above this is something more important, — "that is, the Anglo-Saxon culture inculcated here which it would be sad not only from our point of view but also from yours to have destroyed... I think it is within your power as well as ours, to work hand in hand and to see to it that the work is continued".

In reply, Senator Tydings thanked Quezon for his words of appreciation which were "sweet indeed to hear", and stated that only God

knows what is to happen in the Philippines in the future, but that "it is not impossible that a group of a few sensible men could sit together and work out a solution."

Some of this is to the point today, some of it perhaps not. A diligent search of the records of the time would no doubt bring up better illustrative material. The quotations concern chiefly one factor, though a very important one, in the general situation obtaining in the middle and later thirties. But they do give an idea of the general atmosphere, and what I have quoted is a long cry from the shrill and raucous declamations of a so-called "nationalism" which are forced upon our ears today. Yet Quezon was above all things a nationalist. It was he and his noble colleague, Sergio Osmeña, who carried the Philippines to independence. It was their nationalism which stirred me and many other Americans and foreigners. I believe that theirs was the true voice of Philippine nationalism. Their spirit was what I was "in touch with". There was no breach.

I was happy during the first years of the Commonwealth and full of hope for a splendid future for the country. I think everyone was. I was miserable during my years of internment in Santo Tomás, and worried about my children who were outside the Camp, especially about my three sons who were in the guerrilla forces, but I was not really unhappy or despairing because I know those years would end in ultimate victory over the enemy. I was happy after liberation, when I went back to Malacañang and was able to be of some service to President Osmeña, although I was disappointed over the fact that Mr. Osmeña was not elected as the first President of the Republic.

When did I first become aware of a breach between myself and what Dr. Legarda calls the "Filipino point of view"? I think that I first strongly felt this over the Krivenko case decision, which denied aliens in the Philippines the right to acquire ownership of even the smallest plot of land for a home or place of business. I did not believe that the Supreme Court could uphold that decision, but it did. The breach widened when the Government launched out on a course of active intervention in the economic life of the country, when a managed cur-

rency system was adopted and import and exchange controls instituted, giving the Central Bank and other control entities dictatorial powers over the life of the people. The breach widened with the adoption of the Retail Trade Nationalization Law, denying aliens the right to earn a livelihood in the retail field of business. Again I did not believe that the Supreme Court could rule anything else than that this law was unconstitutional, but the Court upheld the law, invoking the "police powers" of the State,—always the ready recourse of oppressive governments. The breach widened further when a year or so ago the National Economic Council recommended a policy to restrict the growth of all foreign-owned industrial and business enterprises. I could never have imagined that a body of intelligent men, some of them economists, could propose so self-mutilating a course of action. The breach widened still further, of course, with the official endorsement of the so-called "Filipino-first" policy, most recently being developed into a "Filipino-only" policy.

These various policies and measures do not represent mere shifts in the point of view of those responsible for them, but fundamental changes, in fact reversals, in the character of the Philippine body politic and in the direction in which it was moving with such great promise.

I believe in life, in civilization, in the brotherhood of man, in democracy as a form of government, and in personal freedom possible only under that form of government. And although in a democracy the majority rules, the rights of minorities are guaranteed, usually in a written constitution, and are zealously protected. The grand words I have here used are vague in their meaning to some people and their use is often platitudinous. But note the only way in which I can apply them.

I see a government which threatens to become more powerful than the people. I see an oligarchy developing of politicians and the new-rich created by the government's "favor-dispensing" agencies. I see a growing curtailment of self-direction and freedom. I see industry and trade retarded. I see the people oppressed by ever-rising taxes and prices. I see minorities harried and dispossessed. I see life thwarted and the fruits

of endeavor denied. I see a behavior contradictory to the highest values of civilization. I see the spirit of nationalism, worthy enough in itself, exploited by men who seek only to maintain themselves in power or to enrich themselves at the expense of others.

I had to part company with all of that. And I am happy to be able to say that many of the more outspoken Filipinos are indicating that they are getting enough of all that, too.

The promise of Philippine greatness and power as a nation lies in its people, whose vigor, intelligence, and versatility are drawn from the rich amalgamation, over the millennia, of many diverse racial strains and cultures. Are we now to betray that blood constitution and this great heritage and narrow the concept of the Filipino down to the self-seeking notions and schemes of the fractional element in politics and in business which is today so vociferous?

The people of the Philippines are quite properly known as Filipinos, yet this is not the Filipino Republic. It is the Republic of the Philippines, which rightfully embraces the people of the Philippines, every man, woman, and child born here and resident here. The Constitution and the laws should protect them all. The Government should be concerned over them all, for they, all together, constitute what is truly the nation. Every citizen, every resident should work for union, not division, between the elements composing the people. In social cohesion, harmony, and cooperation lies the only strength of any body politic.

I cannot believe that what Dr. Legarda calls the "recent shifts in the Filipino point of view" are actually supported by any considerable proportion of Filipinos. The true Filipino point of view, I believe, is that for which Quezon and Osmeña stood and all the devoted men who worked with them. Theirs is the point of view still shared, I believe, by the millions of Filipinos here with whom I hope I have not "lost touch".

Our Government has during these past few years taken a divergent course, sailing in a mist of chauvinism into reef-studded totalitarian waters, imperilling the very life of the Republic.

In my book I have not criticized anything that is truly Filipino, but errors and wrongs which have come about through the adoption of imported ideas as to government aims and policies which are wholly alien to the basic feelings and beliefs held in our Philippine society and destructive of everything the nation has heretofore achieved along the path of democracy—a path on which the people set their feet even before America came to these shores.

This is not a situation I can, to preserve a superficial good will toward myself, weakly acquiesce in or cautiously remain silent on. It is not a situation which permits of equivocation or nothing more than hints of disagreement.

In speech and in writing I have always been forthright with my friends and my readers. I believe it is insulting to speak or write otherwise.

A. V. H. HARTENDORP