



2. "Ramon Magsaysay is certainly looked up to by the Filipino people over and above everyone else but I don't think the consolidation of the Nacionalistas and the Democratic parties has helped his cause to any great extent. A lot of confusion has resulted and while it is gradually being ironed out, has presented somewhat of a divided front in supporting him. However, Magsaysay continues to campaign from city to city and barrio to barrio and is gaining a tremendous following. He is a fine man and conducting a very intelligent and gentlemanly campaign by ignoring the cheap claims and contentions of Quirino and the Liberal Party. The general feeling seems to persist that Magsaysay will win the election on November 10th but that Quirino will be the next President. Ballot boxes have a habit of very mysteriously disappearing or being stuffed by the party in power and in addition, flying squadrons or armed thugs are quite successful in keeping opposition votes away from the polls by threats and outright violence. I would like very much to make a movie of some of these political gatherings for they usually always end up in a big fight but I just don't have the nerve. Everyone seems to be packing a gun or a knife, known here in the Philippines as a balisong, and don't hesitate to use them."

3. "The political cauldron will probably continue to boil with even greater fury as we approach election day with the result that there will be a general exodus of foreigners from Manila and the other cities just prior to and following the election. I feel that it is just as deadly to be caught in the crossfire as would be the case if the gun were aimed at you and will join the rest of the foreign population and leave Manila from approximately November 6th to November 14th or 15th. I have never been one to run away from trouble but for safety's sake, believe it the better part of valor in this politically crazed city. We must begin to think about making reservations, for every suitable place outside the firing zone will no doubt be crowded with foreigners. Since Magsaysay's resignation as Secretary of Defense, many changes have been made in the Army and the Philippine Constabulary. Many of the high ranking officers have been replaced by questionable characters who were leaders during the bloody elections of 1949. Everyone feels that these moves are indications of what can be expected in this year's election and while every precaution is being taken by the opposition, still very little can be done to overrule the edicts of President Quirino. I sure hope that everyone is wrong in their deductions but I don't think it would be very sound judgment to stay around Manila to find out."

Available are photographic copies of:

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- a) "Alsop's Report", headlined "Columnist Says Magsaysay American Choice in Election", by Joseph Alsop, Page 1, Manila Bulletin, 25 Sep 53.
- b) Editorial, "Intervention Again", editorial page, Manila Bulletin, 25 Sep 53.

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Manila Bulletin, Fri. , Sept 25, 1953

ALSOP'S REPORT**COLUMNIST SAYS MAGSAYSAY
AMERICAN CHOICE IN ELECTION**

The following article, first of two on the Philippines, will appear shortly in more than a hundred U.S. newspapers of large circulation. It was wirelessly from Hongkong to New York and airmailed exclusively to the Bulletin, which carries the column regularly on the editorial page. Mr. Alsop was a recent visitor to Manila where he saw and interviewed leaders of both the Liberal party, including President Quirino, and the Nacionalista-Democratic coalition. The second article will appear tomorrow.

By **JOSEPH ALSOP**

Rudyard Kipling dismissed the little Englanders of his day with the line, "They nothing know of England who only England know." It, a quite different way, America's involvement in the world is relentlessly producing a comparable situation. For who at home understands, for example, that America now has a candidate in a critical election in a major Far Eastern nation?

Certainly this correspondent had no such idea until he reached the amiable, steaming hot, charmingly gimmick, irrepressibly vital Phil-

**ALSOP**

ippine capital. But here in Manila it is clear at once that Ramon Magsaysay is the American choice against the incumbent President Elpidio Quirino. The evidence speaks for itself with a loud voice.

In considering this remarkable fact, one can at least begin by saying that we need not be ashamed of our own side. Since the end of the war, the omnipresent blackmail of the communist threat has extorted American sympathy, or money, or military aid, or in some cases all three, for some highly unappetizing politicians and political regimes. But this is not true here.

The ailing, crafty and insatiable Quirino came into office in an election celebrated for its fraudulence. With all his shrewd charm, he still represents al-

(Continued on page 2)

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(Continued from page 1)

most every backward tendency in Philippine and Asiatic politics. He is surrounded by a clique whose rapacity has startled even tolerant Manila. If he is elected at all, he will win by the most ruthless use of his control of the army and government machinery; for these are his only visible support in an aroused nation.

Magsaysay, in contrast, crudely stands for the future that Asia may reasonably hope for, yet may so easily be cheated of by the powerful collaboration of corrupt ruling elements and the always active communists.

The new man is not all that the older man is. The finesse, the disillusioned knowledge of the world, the surface polish that are so immediately striking in Quirino are not present in Magsaysay. You think when you meet Magsaysay, "He has worked with his hands and he fought in the woods," and you would still suspect these things if you did not already know them to be true. And you also think, surely this man is a bit uncomplicated, even maybe a bit naïf for one who must thread the labyrinths of Asiatic politics, and this is probably true too, and may one day prove a drawback.

Yet this dark, vigorous, burning man is explosively courageous, angrily honest, and above all possessed of a vision of the future that has made him a hero of his people. Today the Philippines is a poor land in which a very few enjoy great wealth. Yet this is also a land of immense, untapped riches, with a frontier in Mindanao, in Mindoro, in Palawan, that holds almost the promise of the American frontier. The vision that Magsaysay offers is a vision of national self-development, of hard-working progress and better life for the people.

But this does not answer the question of how the United States came to have this candidate in the election of another nation all the way across the broad Pacific. The answer is at once simple and complex.

Magsaysay comes of relatively humble people. He ran a bus line before the war. In wartime, he was the guerrilla leader of his province. When peace came, General MacArthur named him provincial governor. He ran for congress and was elected. In the period when the communist Hukbalahaps were still operating in the suburbs of Manila his bravery, energy and determined anti-communism attracted attention. In that disordered time the Philippine government was living by American aid. American influence was an important factor in making Magsaysay minister of

Magsaysay cleansed his ministry and the Philippine army of graft and politics. He breathed a wholly new spirit into the campaign against the Huks. By untiring effort he destroyed or localized these communist guerrillas and to checkmate communism he began to offer his new vision to his people.

In all this effort, Magsaysay worked intimately with the American embassy and military advisory group. The relation was so happy that Quirino has even charged that Magsaysay's American liaison officer acted as "Magsaysay's public relations man." All that ended of course when Magsaysay left the Cabinet to run for the presidency against his former chief. Our wholly admirable ambassador here, Admiral Raymond Spruance, has maintained an attitude of the strictest correctness in the present campaign.

None the less, President Quirino has twice burst out that the embassy was intervening in the struggle. Although these unfounded charges have had to be withdrawn, Quirino's supporters, like Speaker Eugenio Perez, have continued to repeat the accusation. The real attitude of the American government is discernible behind the correct facade in such a very simple fact as the

failure of any Eisenhower administration candidate for President Quirino to be elected. It is a friendly and almost cordial during his recent three months in America to the present.

As a candidate for President, therefore, Magsaysay is the American candidate in the Philippine election which will be held next November. He can produce the most far-reaching effects upon the future in Asia.



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INTERVENTION AGAIN

The explosive topic of American intervention in the Philippine elections has come up once more in a slightly new way, via the opposition to President Quirino's administration. Senator Laurel, talking more or less informally, asked the American community and American officialdom both here and abroad to "do something" about the preservation of democracy in the Philippines. It might be considered an open invitation to intervene.

The United States does indeed have an abiding interest in the preservation of democracy in this country, both its government and its people. Every official action and every casual expression has shown that to be true, ever since independence was granted and right up to the present moment—increasingly so in fact, in recent months. We don't believe Dr. Laurel or anyone else has reason to doubt that.

So it becomes necessary to determine, so far as it can be done, just how far the United States or any of its citizens or institutions should go in trying to further the preservation of democratic institutions at a time when political rivalry causes every action and every word to be suspect of partisanship.

What the United States and its citizens cannot do is well defined by law, and has been called repeatedly to attention by the American embassy. It is not permissible to contribute money towards the election or the defeat of any candidate, nor to actively join an election campaign, or to attempt to vote. It is against both American law and Philippine law to do so, and the Philippine law of course applies to all aliens.

What the United States or any other foreign nation could do legally and with propriety to "preserve democracy" in the Philippines has not been defined, and is a controversial subject indeed. We wish that Dr. Laurel had been more specific about what he meant by it. We don't think he meant the United States should make a direct attempt to influence voters. If he did we cannot agree with him. That would be a tacit violation of sovereignty and would give our mutual enemies a chance to mock anew at independence.

An official or unofficial expression of preference for one candidate or another, or one political regime as against another should not be a violation of either sovereignty or decorum. In fact any prohibition against it, self-imposed or otherwise would seem to violate the privilege of free speech. Any reporting of opinion among Americans or other nationals, such as for instance Mr. Joseph Alsop's article on today's front page, is within the best traditions of a free press so long as it is an evaluation based on impartial investigation.

And without fear or hesitation it seems to us that the American government and its people should take a militantly active interest in the preservation of free and clean elections, without violence and without coercion. Such interest has been exhibited freely, and will continue.

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