

## MacArthur's Philippine Experience (Part II) - MabuhayRadio

Written by Jose G. Caedo

Monday, 17 September 2007 02:49 - Last Updated Thursday, 10 June 2010 19:57

---

—

□

—

### In the Loop

Gen. Douglas MacArthur had extensive experience in the Philippines not merely as a soldier, but also as one who involved himself in the social and business activities of his peers in the local Philippine society. The wide-ranging connections he developed over 40 years with the Filipinos not only in the government, military, but also with the social elite gave him insights into various aspects of Philippine socio-economic life, and these were later translated into action during his tenure as Supreme Commander, Allied Powers (SCAP), during the first six years of the allied military occupation of Japan. (The U.S. military forces occupied Japan, Germany, and Austria for 10 years, ending in 1955 with a Peace Treaty.)

---

First arriving in Manila in 1904 as a fresh Second Lieutenant from West Point (Class 1903), MacArthur set to work with the Army Corps of Engineers in the Visayas supervising local defense construction, and where he incidentally tasted first blood, having to shoot three Filipino ambushers, one who shot MacArthur's hat off his head. He was later assigned as aide-de-camp to his father, Gen. Arthur MacArthur, then Governor General of the Philippine Islands.

Later, after the elder MacArthur's relief from said command, the family undertook a worldwide tour which brought them to many Asian countries, including Japan, where they were hosted by the Emperor, and where Douglas observed the social life of the Asian peoples, and how they lived within their particular cultural frameworks. A particularly keen observer, MacArthur joined the Japanese Imperial Army maneuvers, and realized how that Japanese Bushido Code

imposed the absolute discipline among the ranks of the armed forces.

It was also in 1904 that Douglas MacArthur first met two rising Filipino nationalists, Manuel L. Quezon, and Sergio Osmena. They were introduced at a small dinner party at the Army-Navy Club, and this led to a lifelong friendship which included MacArthur's becoming a "compadre" of Quezon—godfather to Quezon's children, and Quezon becoming godfather to Arthur F. MacArthur. At the time of their introduction in 1904, MacArthur noted that Quezon was a former Katipunan colonel under General Tomas Mascardo, who like Sergio Osmena, entered the practice of Law and politics. This was the early period that gave birth to the Partido Nacionalista, and Partido Democrata Ferderalista, the latter being a strong pro-American entity.

After World War I, where he served first as Assistant, then Division commander of the "Rainbow Division" in France (MacArthur was assigned to Manila as commander of the Philippine brigade, and the Manila forces). During his command of the "Rainbow Division," he was not only awarded several decorations for Valor and Gallantry, but was noted for the efficient and brilliant tactics he used to prevent unnecessary casualties. He was an extremely compassionate and humane soldier, who was concerned not only for his troops, but the welfare of local refugees and civilian populations as well during that long final drive to push the Germans back into the Rhineland.

Working closely with the local American Philippine colonial administrators, MacArthur was very different from the other high-ranking American military and civilian administrators in that he did not observe the color barrier. MacArthur attended numerous parties and events of the local Philippine elite, joining them as a peer and an equal. True, he fraternized only with the Ilustrado, or "elite" stratum of Philippine society then, but this type of interaction with local Filipinos was not a common practice among the American colonials of his echelon during that period.

### **Third Tour of Duty**

During his third tour of duty in the Philippines as a Major General commanding the entire Philippine Department, he lived in a house on the wall of the Intramuros, with his first wife, the socialite Louise Brooks. At this time, he also brought his elderly widowed mother, Pinky MacArthur, to live with them in Manila, where she eventually died and was buried. ( Her remains, as of those of Douglas MacArthur, and his father, Gen. Arthur MacArthur now rest in Norfolk, VA.) Again, MacArthur continued to cultivate his Filipino friends who by then were already members of the Philippine Assembly and were working on the Hare Hawes Cutting Law,

## MacArthur's Philippine Experience (Part II) - MabuhayRadio

Written by Jose G. Caedo

Monday, 17 September 2007 02:49 - Last Updated Thursday, 10 June 2010 19:57

---

and later the Tydings-McDuffie Act which granted Philippine Commonwealth status, and eventual independence within 10 years. (In 1945; but delayed until July 4, 1946, due to the intervention of the Second World War).

Note that it was also during the 1920's and 1930's that there was much agrarian unrest in the Central Plains of Luzon island, the " rice granary" of the Philippines. Labor was then being organized, and militant anti-landlord actions were taken by the local peasantry. As well, Muslim unrest was still rife on Mindanao, and the Philippine Constabulary forces were hard pressed to quell this internal unrest. The American colonial administration was very much concerned about this problem at this time, and MacArthur definitely would have been aware of this during his tours of duty in those years.

After his retirement from the U.S. Army as Chief of Staff, President Roosevelt offered MacArthur the position of United States High Commissioner in the Philippines. This, the latter declined stating that he was still interested in serving in a military capacity. At the time of his retirement, Philippine Commonwealth President Manuel Quezon was fortuitously in Washington, D.C., and he offered MacArthur the job of creating the Philippine Commonwealth Army. MacArthur agreed to accept the job, provided he received the rank of Field Marshall (there is no equivalent rank in the U.S. Armed Forces), the salary scale equivalent to his former position as Chief of Staff, U.S. Army (\$10,000/ annually), the exclusive use of the penthouse of the Manila Hotel, and other perquisites.

During the period when the work to create the Philippine Commonwealth Army, MacArthur also met, courted, and married Ms. Jean Faircloth of Tennessee, who was then visiting her relatives in the islands . Their only child, Arthur, was born during this period, and they socialized with their Filipino circle, such as Speaker of the Assembly Manuel Roxas, the Elizalde brothers, the Zobels, and the Sorianos of San Miguel Corporation. The overall plan MacArthur drew was to create 128 training camps in ten regions throughout the Philippines. Each training camp would be staffed by four officers who would train 4,000 infantry cadres each as a strategic reserve which could be activated and armed in time of war. As well, a fledgling Philippine Navy would be formed of fifty Motor Patrol-torpedo (PT) boats equipped with torpedoes for fast interdiction of enemy shipping on an inter-island basis. The Armed Forces of the Philippines was created in 1936, with the Philippine Constabulary integrated into the AFP.

During the creation of the AFP, MacArthur also derived a deeper understanding of the social, economic, and civil aspects of Philippine life. As a commander of troops from civilian conscripts mostly from the uneducated peasantry, he learned how these men lived, worked, and he began to understand what drove or motivated them. MacArthur gained a high respect for the Filipinos

## **MacArthur's Philippine Experience (Part II) - MabuhayRadio**

Written by Jose G. Caedo

Monday, 17 September 2007 02:49 - Last Updated Thursday, 10 June 2010 19:57

---

not only as soldiers, but as a people in general. It is quite moving to read his respectful commentaries on the bravery, gallantry, and nobility of the Filipino people in his memoirs. In those writings, he also described how honorable and prayerful the people were, and how much hope he had for the success for the Philippines he carried as the Showcase of American Democracy in Asia. Clearly, he was thinking and referring to the Philippines when he was reconstructing Japan after the war. There are numerous references about his high regard for the democratic system working well in the Philippine milieu.

### **Applying MacArthur's P.I. Experience in Japan**

I posit that this long experience MacArthur had with the Filipinos led the groundwork for what ultimately was applied in Japan during the Allied occupation of that country. There were similarities between Philippine and Japanese society, both which could safely be said to have been, at core, feudal at that time. However, while Japan already came into its own as an industrial economy, albeit entirely dependent on imported raw materials, the Philippines remained an agrarian subsistence economy well into the 1950s and 1960's. Moreover, while the defeated Axis nations were economically rehabilitated by the United States under the Marshall Plan, the Philippines received no such aid at such level. The \$600 Million said to have been turned over by the United States to the Philippines after the war comprised mostly of the surplus military equipment left behind by the military. This materiel would have been costly to ship back stateside. There was though, a War Reparations agreement from 1946 to 1976 between Japan and the Philippines for war damage, and was administered by the Philippine Reparations Commission.

MacArthur also wanted to help change matters in the new Philippine Republic, wanting it to remove the old feudal system, as he did in Japan. He directly involved himself in promoting Manuel Roxas as the opponent of President Osmena. At the time, Roxas was charged with treason for allegedly collaborating with the enemy. MacArthur made public statements from Japan supporting Roxas and saying that while the latter worked with the Japanese, he was actually an American agent. It is a fact that American support, covert and overt went to the newly-formed " Liberal Party", an offshoot of the Nacionalista Party. Unfortunately, then, as now, there are no true ideological, or programmatic differences between the major political parties, except for the Communists.

And while the application of Liberal Democratic concepts was a huge success in a former police state, and helped it achieve world-class economic dominance, the same concepts, ideas, and programs fell on fallow ground in the Philippines. The reasons are numerous, and more exhaustive studies on the history of the Philippine economic deterioration are available.

## **MacArthur's Philippine Experience (Part II) - MabuhayRadio**

Written by Jose G. Caedo

Monday, 17 September 2007 02:49 - Last Updated Thursday, 10 June 2010 19:57

---

Given the foregoing, the question before each Filipino, or Filipino Americans today is: "Is there a Douglas MacArthur in you?"

I believe that he exists in spirit among us, wherever a Filipino is in the world. We all send remittances, material goods, charitable contributions, and a plethora of other good work to improve the quality of life in the homeland. It is this spirit of sharing and caring for the homeland and its people that is aflame within us. In whatever we do, be it financially, or even politically through registering more Filipinos to become Duals Citizens and vote in the Philippine elections to improve governance, there is positive impact. Registering as American voters helps in persuading American policy makers to view Philippine, or Filipino American issues positively.

MacArthur wrote that one of the highest honors he considers to have received was the Joint Resolution of the Philippine Congress for him . In one of the very first such documents passed by the new Republic's Legislature, MacArthur's name would thenceforth be used with the terms "Defender and Liberator of the Philippines"; further, that henceforth, whenever Philippine military units would have their roll call, the officer would call out " Douglas MacArthur," and the First Sergeant would answer, " Present in spirit, Sir!". Let us keep that spirit alive.

**Copyright Jose Caedo 2005. Reprinted with permission from Mr. Caedo.**

**To read Part One of Jose Caedo twin articles about Gen. Douglas MacArthur, please click on this link:**

[The MacArthur Experience \(Part I\)](#)

## MacArthur's Philippine Experience (Part II) - MabuhayRadio

Written by Jose G. Caedo

Monday, 17 September 2007 02:49 - Last Updated Thursday, 10 June 2010 19:57

---

[Joomla SEO powered by JoomSEF](#)