



—Marc Riboud (Magnum).

AMERICA AND THE PHILIPPINES

THE BEWILDERING COLLISION

By STANLEY KARNOW

AN AMERICAN visiting the Philippines is apt to experience a strange shock of recognition. For a half-century of United States colonial tutelage, generously administered and gracefully relinquished in 1946, seems to have fashioned the Philippines into a mirror of America. But the reflection it casts can be deceptive. Nothing is more disappointing to Americans than the discovery, often belated, that "our little brown brothers," as imperial propaganda used to call them, are only superficial relatives.

Americans are often led astray by the outward signs of resemblance. Manila

looks, in many ways, like a sprawling, unwieldy city in the United States. Its traffic-clogged avenues are blighted by billboards proclaiming American merchandise in high-pitched Madison Avenue jargon; sleazy drive-ins offer "colossal" hot dogs, hamburgers, and other gastronomic imitations. Manila's suburbs, with their split-level ranch houses and California haciendas, rival Beverly Hills; its slums outdo Harlem. And many educated, urbane Filipinos appear more Americanized than any American.

GENTLEMEN with names like cigar brands—Benedicto, Modesto, Eugenio—are known to their pals as "Butch" and

"Baby," and they have an extraordinary capacity for behaving like Babbitts. They are avid golfers, earnest Rotarians, and proud students of "human relations" as taught by a local branch of the Dale Carnegie Institute. Nothing is quite so disarming as to wander into a luncheon of the Junior Chamber of Commerce in a provincial town: The speeches might have been written in Cedar Rapids, even if the delivery is rather reminiscent of Wallace Beery playing Pancho Villa. Filipinos may speak dialects like Tagalog at home, but their public language is a kind of calypso American that would have delighted Mencken. Recently, reporting the Mayor's investigation into police department complaints, a Manila

newspaper headlined: "City Dad Probes Cops Gripes."

It is midsummer madness to hold Philippine weddings in June, when the heat and humidity are at their worst. Yet fashionable Filipinas must be "June brides," and they perspire heroically through all the functions which, incidentally, feature delicacies imported from the United States. Though there are 7,000 Philippine islands, Filipinos thrive on canned American salmon and tuna fish. Manila high society rejects local avocados and bananas as lower-class "native" fare. When the late General MacArthur, an authentic Philippine folk-hero, visited Manila a few years ago, a banquet at the presidential palace opened with tinned American fruit salad.

Thus this Philippine mirror of America is a kind of carnival mirror, casting distorted images. In contrast to Hawaii, where the process of American acculturation almost entirely assimilated a multiracial population, the Philippines was never transformed into a parcel of the United States by colonial rule. American influence in its Pacific territory set in motion the dynamics of political and economic change, while scarcely altering the country's deep social traditions. The Filipino may behave and speak like an American; he usually doesn't think like an American. The Filipinos recognize that they are currently caught in a bewildering collision between modern hopes and ancient habits. They are groping to establish an identity, and that search is likely to continue for some time to come.

Ethnically Malay, with doses of Chinese thrown in, the Filipinos were controlled by Spain for 350 years and by the United States until after World War II—or as they themselves quip: "Three centuries in a convent and two generations in Hollywood."

Spanish domination unified the thousands of Philippine islands and Christianized the people in much the same manner that the *conquistadores* brought Catholicism to Latin America. In its inexperienced, pragmatic way, American rule gave the country a different dimension. Even before the Philippine *insurrectos* were subdued about the turn of the century—at a cost of 4,000 American and an estimated 100,000 Philippine lives—the United States was considering eventual autonomy for its new possession. In a statement remarkably advanced for that period of history, an American commission recommended the establishment of local government "designed not for our satisfaction . . . but for the happiness,

peace and prosperity of the people of the Philippine Islands, and the measures adopted should be made to conform to their customs, their habits, and even their prejudices. . . ."

As early as 1899, the Philippine Supreme Court was headed by a Filipino; by 1907, the Filipinos had their own legislature, though its proposals were subject to American veto. The number of Americans in the Philippine administration quickly diminished, from 51 per cent in 1903 to 6 per cent in 1923. Self-rule was largely made possible because of education, which the United States actively fostered. Soon after American



—William McCracken (Nancy Palmer).

Manila coachman—"Three centuries in a convent, two generations in Hollywood."

rule began, more than 1,000 American schoolteachers arrived to fan out through the islands. Within twenty-five years, there were more high-school students in the Philippines than in Spain, the former mother country. If not for the advent of World War II, the Philippines would probably have gained total independence in the mid-1930s.

In retrospect, however, it may be debatable whether the rapid introduction of democracy into the Philippines was salutary, for a Western political system was accorded a people who, from their combined Oriental and Latin traditions, customarily consider public service a means to gain personal profit. As the Jesuit sociologist, Father Jaime Bulato, has explained, the Filipino's conduct is guided more by a sense of shame than of guilt; he would rather be judged guilty of corruption than feel ashamed for failing to dip into the government

coffers to help his family. During the last election campaign, the charge by his political opponents that President Ferdinand Marcos had, as a youth, killed one of his father's rivals made little headway with Philippine voters. Even if he had been guilty, they reasoned, Marcos had laudably acted to defend his father's honor.

American-inspired democracy in the Philippines, consequently, often suggests an exaggerated travesty of democracy that at times seems close to anarchy. Graft and corruption, nepotism, oratorical hyperbole—all these are parts of the Philippine political scene, very much as they characterized politics in the United States sixty or seventy years ago. There are even muck-raking Philippine journalists who reach back to Lincoln Steffens and Ray Stannard Baker for inspiration.

Another facet of United States rule is also having a current effect on the Philippines. As a few Filipinos now see it, the easy path to independence may have produced an oddly enervating result. In other colonial regions during the 1930s, budding nationalists were arming and agitating for self-government. The need for conflict was alien to Filipinos, however; they knew they were headed for freedom. But because they were pampered, many Filipinos now feel they failed to forge a solid sense of nationalism tempered by hardship and battle. They suspect that the vague "special relationship" that ties them to the United States is really a sequel to colonialism. One of the most thoughtful, articulate young Philippine politicians, Senator Raul Manglapus has said: "Our cart went before the horse. Others struggle for freedom before independence; we are struggling afterward. If we had had a brutal break with the United States, perhaps our relations today would be better."

In the days of United States colonial rule, Americans had a privileged market in the Philippines. Accordingly, American-manufactured goods flooded the islands, thwarting local incentives to industrialize. At the same time, the United States stimulated production of sugar, copra, hemp, and other export products until, by 1940, they represented about one-third of total Philippine income. The Philippines, therefore, typified the narrow "colonial" economy, reliant on the United States for survival. To a significant extent it still does: Nearly half its export earnings depend upon special commercial accords with the U.S.

The American encouragement of ex-
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THE AFFINITY WITH AUSTRALIA



—Camera Press (Pix).

The Outback—despite the discrepancies, the two countries are much alike.

By ALAN MOOREHEAD

THE AMERICAN INTEREST in the Pacific has been a strange tangle of contradictions. Search through the record of the early navigators—Tasman, Quirós, de Bougainville, Cook, and the others—and you will be hard put to it to find an American name. Yet who knows what distant coasts and islands were discovered by the Yankee sealers and whalers in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and they went the hard way, south around the Horn. They may even have been the first to sight Antarctica.

Then again the Americans, unlike the Dutch, the Spanish, the French, and the British, never sought an empire in this ocean, or any extensive trade. They looked across the Atlantic to Europe, and it was only when the Japanese struck at them at Pearl Harbor that they really became aware of the Pacific. Then at last the South Sea islands became something more than an exotic dream and the Panama Canal came into its own. Since that moment America never seems to have found or even to

have sought an opportunity of disengaging itself. The path—one might even say the warpath—leads on from Korea and Formosa to Vietnam, and now twenty-five years later, whether it likes it or not, America finds itself a Pacific power.

There are some interesting affinities in all this with Australia, which is the only other new force to emerge in the Pacific during these years. Australia, like America, never regarded itself as a Pacific country until the last war. It looked toward Britain, 10,000 miles away on the other side of the world, conducted the bulk of its trade with Britain, and fought alongside it in Europe and Africa. In return for this it expected that the British fleet would protect it from the Asiatics in the Pacific. In the war, however, it was the American navy which destroyed the Japanese fleet in the Coral Sea when it attempted to invade Australia in 1942, and from that moment the Australians began, for the first time, to look across the Pacific to the United States.

Despite the great discrepancy in population and resources the two countries are much alike. In area—3,000,000-odd

square miles—they are the same; they share a very similar temperate climate; both are Christian democracies; both speak the same language and observe the English system of common law; both entered modern history as British colonies and have built up their populations by dispossessing the native inhabitants and establishing European migrants in their place. There may even be a temperamental bond between the two peoples inasmuch as they both had to start from scratch and both feel young, free, and independent—resurgents from the older, more sophisticated civilizations of Europe and Asia.

An American could learn much about his own history by studying what is happening in Australia now. The non-British Europeans who have been migrating to the country by the hundreds of thousands in the past twenty years—Italians, Greeks, Germans, Dutch, and others—are mainly working-class people who at first tend to coalesce into ethnic groups but whose children regard themselves as wholly Australian. They have not as yet been able to exert much political power, and most of the land and the real wealth