



APPENDIX 5.14

INTRODUCTION, *INTRODUCTORY READINGS IN FILIPINO IDEOLOGY*

As previously mentioned, Marcos's propagandists released books on the Filipino Ideology under their principal's name. Below is the introduction to a curious book released by the President's Center for Special Studies, which does not have an identified author nor a copyright page. By juxtaposing texts written by intellectuals such as Apolinario Mabini and Claro M. Recto with selections from works attributed to Marcos, the book tries to portray Marcos as a political thinker worthy of esteem like his intellectual forebears. However, the juxtaposition also has the effect of highlighting how lacking in novelty the Marcosian Filipino Ideology is; from the internal revolution (channeling Mabini) to self-reliance (echoing Recto), all of "Marcos's" formulations were better enunciated by those who came before him.

The Revolution from the Center

The Filipino's quest for a form of government that would be both nationalist and popular has a long and illustrious history. The Filipinos, as is well known, were the first to wage an anti-colonial struggle in Asia, the first to specify the idea of a nation, at a time when the other colonies were resisting colonialism in terms of peasant uprisings and various forms of revivalism, as the Philippines itself had done in the past. Given the experience of colonial subjection, the conception of what was nationalist and what are popular held little distinction. Nationalism entailed the abolition of the old political order and the establishment of a new order that would reflect the interest of Filipinos as a whole. The ideas of the revolutionaries, notably the leaders of the Katipunan, expressed a firm conviction that the new political order would benefit not only the educated classes but also, and more particularly, the poor and downtrodden masses.

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These selections show the nationalist and egalitarian underpinnings of the political and social order envisioned by outstanding Filipinos. With the American occupation of the Philippines, however, political emancipation (nationalism) and social justice (egalitarianism) tended to be regarded as separate issues. Political emancipation was earnestly sought while peasant and labor unrest smoldered within society. The post-independence period brought the underlying social problems into sharper relief, and showed quite clearly that the basic political premise upon which society stood — liberal democracy of the American type — was not in keeping with existing social realities.

The revolution from the center is, in a sense, a reaffirmation of the unity of nationalism and popular aspirations as the guiding principle in the quest for a just social order. It rejects foreign models based on foreign experiences and opts for political instruments appropriate to the Philippine situation. Its egalitarian character is well in evidence in its identification with the interests of the poor: the revolution from the center gives expression to the "rebellion of the poor." But more than affirming principles, the revolution from the center has also created the basis for the realization of nationalist and egalitarian aspirations. The state itself, rather than being the neutral, and often ineffectual, moderator of social activities, becomes the instrument of revolution.

Figure 1. A copy of the introduction.

Source: President's Center for Special Studies. 1977. *Introductory Readings in Filipino Ideology*. Manila: President's Center for Special Studies, Office of the President, Republic of the Philippines.

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The Democratization of Wealth

The social order based on colonialism was characterized by a more or less unequal structure that militated against development, on one hand, and the more equitable distribution of wealth, on the other. Philippine society under Spanish rule labored under the most backward forms of tenancy, regressive taxes and an economy that acquired some dynamism only in the last century of that rule. In any case, the direction of economic development went beyond the bounds of Spanish control, and the Spanish government hindered rather than promoted this development. American rule retained, and even reinforced, existing agrarian relations by creating new social groups that benefited from the ensuing mercantile relations between the Philippines and the United States. American rule did provide economic growth, but this was a development that enhanced the welfare only of a sector of the population. By and large, post-independence Philippine society retained the vestiges of its colonial past. A prominent feature of this society was the emergence of an oligarchic class, with strong mercantile and agrarian interest, which controlled the reins of government and dictated the nature of the political order.

The quest for social justice, as these selections show, found expression in economic nationalism. This is particularly true of the post-war period, which these selections preponderantly represent. In the view of nationalists like Recto, the problem of social justice first of all had to do with genuine development – development *for* Filipinos. The social structure inherited from colonial days continued to spawn colonial-type economic and foreign policies, abetted no doubt by pressure from the former colonial rulers. What needed to be done was to repudiate those aspects of Philippine-American relations that were inimical to the economic program based on industrialization, that would make the country truly independent. The democratic revolution reaffirms this staunchy nationalistic position, but emphasized as well the distributive aspects of development. Rather than treat social justice as a secondary problem, the presumed consequence of development, it has to be considered as an integral aspect of any development plan.

Self-Reliance

The social conditions created by colonialism provided the prop for ideological thinking inimical to development and liberation. Spanish rule cultivated among Filipinos religious thinking of the more obscurantist type. American rule brought with it the spirit of liberal democracy, but its principles were largely circumscribed by American historical experience. Both of these gave rise to a “colonial mentality” characterized by backward forms of personalism (patron-client relations) and subservience. The principle of self-reliance, enunciated by various nationalist since the Propaganda Period, addressed itself not only to the more physical aspect of dependence on colonial initiative but to the equally formidable problem of ideological captivity.

A particular prominent feature of the struggle for self-reliance is the quest for a foreign policy that would be independent and reflective of Philippine interests. Mabini, Recto, and Marcos, of course, loom large in the shaping of Philippine Foreign policy. Indeed, it is in the era of Marcos that nationalist aspirations in this regard have been most fully met. Quite apart from foreign relations, the democratic revolution initiated by Marcos emphasized the internal and ideological aspects of self-reliance. The revolution itself is premised on self-reliance—on innovation and enterprise rather than an imitation and mendicancy. In a deeper sense, the revolution from the center anchors the whole idea of self-reliance on initiative at the grassroots level, politically through barangay democracy, and economically through participation by the broad masses of the people.