

The Struggle for Justice: War Crimes Trials in the Philippines, 1947–1953

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ABSTRACT

In August 1947, the Philippines began the Japanese war crimes trials. The Philippine authorities endeavored to restrain the vengeful thoughts of the Filipinos and pursued justice under the law to demonstrate its prestige as an independent nation and the capabilities of its citizens. This article examines the characteristics of the trials and the reaction of the Filipino society, the treatment of the Japanese prisoners serving sentences in the New Bilibid Prison, and lastly, the executive clemency granted to the Japanese war criminals by the President of the Philippines.

KEYWORDS

war crimes, justice, retribution, executive clemency

INTRODUCTION

After the end of World War II, different war crimes trials were conducted in the Philippines and in Japan. The trials of General Yamashita and Lieutenant General Homma in Manila were conducted by the U.S. Army. Other war crimes trials were held in Tokyo, Japan, where the Philippine government sent representatives (a justice and a prosecutor). These trials were well-known internationally. The rest of the trials were done by the Philippine government in Manila from August 1947 until December 1949. For two-and-a-half years, the Filipino military commissions tried 151 Japanese defendants. This article discusses the conduct of these trials by the Philippine government.

Although it appears that many Filipinos today have forgotten or have no idea about the war crimes program that tried members of the Japanese Army after the War, the program was an important national undertaking for the Philippines. For the newly independent nation, this program was very challenging because of the nationwide anti-Japanese sentiments. In fact, the trials were conducted in an atmosphere that sought justice and retribution for Japanese war crimes.

During the conduct of the trials, the Philippine authorities confronted the dilemma between “justice” and “anger.” The government endeavored to restrain the vengeful thoughts of the Filipinos and pursued justice under the law to demonstrate its prestige as an independent nation and the capabilities of its citizens.

TAKING OVER THE TRIALS

The war crimes trials in the Philippines were initiated by the U.S. In August 1945, the Japanese government accepted the Potsdam Declaration and the war ended. The Allies began the war crimes trials based on Article 10 of the Declaration, which stipulated the punishment of war criminals. In the Philippines, the American forces set up military commissions at the High Commissioner's residence (now the U.S. Embassy) on Dewey Boulevard (now Roxas Boulevard) immediately after the war and tried the cases on violations of the law. Some Filipinos took part in the U.S. war crimes program as judges and prosecutors.¹

The Philippines became independent in July 1946, but the American forces continued to hold the trials in Manila. This could have infringed on the sovereignty of the Philippines. Doubts about the legality of the trials led the U.S. authorities to consider transferring the jurisdiction to the Philippines. The dissatisfaction of the War Department in Washington over the handling of the Manila trials by the American staff also prompted them to make this decision.² In February 1947, the U.S. formally proposed this transfer to the Philippines. There were still approximately 350 alleged war criminals in the Philippines at that time.³

Under such circumstances, there were three options for the Philippines. First, the government could accept the proposal and conduct the trials. Second, it could decline the offer and ask the American forces to try the suspected criminals at their overseas military commissions such as in Yokohama. Third, it could acquit the suspects without

trial and let them return to Japan. Finally, the Philippine government accepted the proposal. Secretary of Foreign Affairs (and Vice President) Elpidio Quirino informed the American side of this decision.⁴

STRUCTURE AND PHILOSOPHY

At the end of June 1947, American forces placed about 350 suspects under the custody of the Filipinos. When the Philippine government agreed to take over the jurisdiction of the trials, President Manuel A. Roxas expressed that “the financial condition of the Republic would not permit it to conduct a war crimes program, successfully and expeditiously, unless the United States provided the maximum of assistance.”⁵ In response to the request, the American forces supported the war crimes program by allowing the Philippines to use their buildings, facilities, and vehicles, as well as leaving some American legal staff behind.⁶

In July 1947, President Roxas issued Executive Order No. 68 and established the National War Crimes Office (NWCO) to supervise the war crimes program. The NWCO was one section of the Office of the Judge Advocate General of the Philippine Army (reorganized as the Armed Forces of the Philippines in October 1947) and its office was located at the rear of the Philippine Normal School building on Arroceros Street near the Manila City Hall. The executive order also established the rules and regulations governing the trials. Based on the order, persons accused of war crimes should be tried by military commissions or special courts of army judges created to prosecute war criminals. The

commissions had jurisdiction over such crimes as violations of the rules of war. Defendants were guaranteed the right to have their own counsel and documents related to their trials were translated into Japanese and delivered to them. All judgments and sentences were to be reviewed, initially by the AFP Board of Review, and then by the Chief of Staff.⁷

When the U.S. transferred the jurisdiction over the trials, there was still strong anti-Japanese sentiments among the Filipinos. In view of the widespread violence committed by the Japanese army, such as mass murder and executions performed without hesitation, some Filipinos felt that they did not need to bring the Japanese to trial.⁸ Notwithstanding the situation, the Philippine government did not seek revenge, but rather, fair trials in accordance with the principles of international law. It tried to restrain the vengeful impulses of the Filipinos and pursued justice under the law to furbish its image as an independent nation and the capabilities of its citizens.⁹ At the staff meeting of the trials in July 1947, Secretary of Justice Roman Ozaeta who was speaking for President Roxas, “admonished the commissioners to extend themselves in making certain that the trial was fair and reasonable.”¹⁰

The counsels were one of the safeguards for effective due process of the trials. But as the editorial of the *Manila Bulletin* mentioned, “Nobody wants the job” and “Few Filipinos could stomach the idea, anyway, of defending a Japanese accused of crimes with which all Filipinos are too familiar.”¹¹ In fact, during the discussion at a cabinet meeting before the trials, President Roxas expressed his

anxiety about the difficulty in engaging the services of Filipino lawyers to defend the Japanese because of the pervasive anti-Japanese sentiments among the people. Therefore, he proposed that Japanese lawyers would defend the war criminals even if they were not qualified to serve as attorneys in the Philippines.¹² As a result, about 10 Japanese lawyers (and around the same number of interpreters) were nominated by the Japanese government and sent to Manila.

STERN JUSTICE

For many Filipinos, the Japanese occupation era was harsh and oppressive. In that respect, it was quite natural that they held vengeful thoughts and actions against the Japanese. In 1945, it was a common occurrence that whenever Japanese soldiers surrendered, angry Filipinos would throw stones and shout invectives at them such as “bakayaro,” a strong swear word which the Japanese often used against the Filipinos.¹³ During the trials in 1948, one Filipino journalist described the Japanese invasion and how the Filipinos felt about it: “The Japanese invasion, and the subsequent occupation, was too horrible. After three years of the Japs, after the mass tortures and executions, the looting, burning, raping—Filipinos had ceased to think of the Japanese as human beings, only as something to be killed, to rid the earth of.”¹⁴ This was the atmosphere that the Philippine war crimes program had to take into account.

The Philippine war crimes trials began on 1 August 1947 with the case against Captain Chushiro Kudo.¹⁵ The last case was against Major General Kenshichi Masuoka, the

former chief of the Kempeitai, the military police, whose sentence was handed on 28 December 1949. According to an official report, 73 trials were conducted and 151 defendants were tried.¹⁶ On the other hand, 187 suspected Japanese were “cleared”¹⁷ and repatriated to Japan “without going through the ordeal of a trial.” The chief prosecutor mentioned that this fact proved “the prosecution of Japanese war criminals in the Philippines was not to wreak vengeance, but rather for the proper administration of justice as we know the term in our democracy.”¹⁸

SUMMARY RESULT OF THE TRIALS

NO. OF CASES TRIED	NO. OF ACCUSED	SENTENCES	
73	151	Death penalty	79
		Death by hanging	71
		Death by musketry	8
		Life imprisonment	31
		Fixed terms	27
		Sentences disapproved	1
		Acquittals	13

Source: Guillermo S. Santos, “Report on the War Crimes Program of the Philippines,” *Philippine Armed Forces Journal* 4, no. 2 (January–February 1951), 27

The length of the trials varied from case to case. One case lasted just two days because the defendant pleaded guilty to the charge and was subsequently sentenced. The trials of over 10 defendants were time-consuming, some taking as long as seven months for the sentences to be rendered. The Philippine trials focused on the maltreatment of the Filipino prisoners of war during the Bataan “Death

March.” The majority of the charges were atrocities against Filipino civilians like murder, violence, and rape.¹⁹

The cases can be grouped into four categories: 1) high-ranking officers with command responsibility for the maltreatment of prisoners of war, massacres, and torture of civilians; 2) cases involving Kempeitai officers and enlisted men who carried out killings and torture; 3) perpetrators of massacres of civilians or suspected guerrillas in punitive expeditions against guerrillas; and 4) cases that drew Philippine public attention, such as the case of the murder of Chief Justice Jose Abad Santos and the cannibalism in Mindanao which occurred after the end of the war.²⁰

As for the outcome of the trials, 137 defendants (91%) were convicted and half of them were given death sentences. About 80% of the defendants found guilty were army soldiers with ranks ranging from commander to private. The other defendants were navy men and civilians.²¹ Considering the fact that over half of these defendants (52%) were sentenced to death, one may say that the Philippine war crimes trials were very severe towards the defendants (for comparison or reference, the rate of the death penalty of the other Allies’ trials was about 20%).²²

The punishment might have grown severe in part because the prosecution focused on serious crimes such as mass murders and rapes. It also might have reflected the vindictive feelings of the Filipinos against the Japanese then. From the viewpoint of Filipinos, the war crimes trials were regarded as “fair” compared with the treatment of the Filipinos by the Japanese military during the war.²³

In November 1947, the Philippine government suddenly dismissed the Japanese defense team and sent them back to Japan. President Roxas made this decision based on the investigation of an incident of violence involving a Japanese lawyer and a Filipino prosecutor on 21 November 1947.²⁴ Subsequently, the Filipino officers served as lawyers of the Japanese defendants.²⁵ They were assigned to the defense of the Japanese as a professional duty probably because “nobody wanted to defend a former enemy accused of murdering and torturing his own people.”²⁶ Many officers of the Defense Panel,²⁷ like Lieutenant Colonel Pedro A. Serran and Lieutenant Artemio A. Alejo, had been guerrillas or prisoners of war and now, ironically, they had to defend their former enemy. As expected, they frequently received criticism from their countrymen. They were branded as “traitors” or “collaborators.”²⁸ Nonetheless, the Filipino defense team endured this difficult situation and fulfilled its responsibilities. Some Filipino lawyers like Captain Jose G. Lukban, even filed a lawsuit with the Supreme Court of the Philippines questioning the legality of the war crimes trials and seeking to invalidate them.²⁹

LENIENT TREATMENT

Japanese war criminals who were found guilty served their terms in the New Bilibid Prison (NBP) in Muntinlupa.³⁰ They were placed under the custody and protection of the Department of Justice of the Philippines. There was a proposal for the convicted criminals to serve their terms in Sugamo Prison in Tokyo but the Philippine prison authorities opposed this plan because they feared that after a peace treaty was signed (or once the American

forces left Japan), these men might be quickly set free. Instead, the prison officials recommended that the Japanese war criminals should serve their sentences in the NBP.³¹

The Japanese prisoners were treated well in prison. Eriberto B. Misa, Director of Prisons, told the Japanese inmates that the prison staff would treat them humanely and there was no intention of revenge. In fact, the Japanese prisoners were provided three meals a day and the guards did not resort to violent acts against them.³² Death row convicts were not subjected to hard labor, while those sentenced to imprisonment for a definite term or for life were assigned to light chores such as cooking, cleaning, tending the garden, and so on. The prisoners, except death row convicts, were allowed to walk freely around the prison compound without guards and enjoyed sports such as baseball and basketball.³³ The prison authorities let the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) inspect the treatment of the Japanese prisoners³⁴ and gave special permission for Shunin Kagao, a Japanese Buddhist priest, to remain as a “prison chaplain” even after the expiration of his official stint.

The NBP superintendent, Alfredo M. Bunye, personally suffered hardship during the Japanese occupation era. He was the superintendent since 1940 but due to the prison break by the Hunters ROTC guerrillas in June 1943, he was forced to resign the position under pressure from the Japanese Army. In addition, his father, Ignacio O. Bunye, was killed by Japanese soldiers on 3 February 1945. Three months later, Bunye resumed his work at the NBP. Despite these incidents, Bunye treated

the Japanese prisoners with kindness because he believed that since the war was over, even former Japanese soldiers should be treated as normal human beings. He told the Japanese prisoners that “we will take special care of you, on the Philippines’ honor.”³⁵ Moreover, President Elpidio Quirino, who was Roxas’ successor, and the Department of Justice instructed the prison staff to take special care of the Japanese prisoners.³⁶

BEYOND THE HATRED

Nonetheless, nobody should jump to the mistaken conclusion that the Philippines showed leniency when it came to the verdicts of the court because President Quirino, who made all the decisions, ordered that the death sentences be carried out. The first execution was carried out in August 1948; followed by the second and third executions in November 1948. The fourth was the mass execution of 14 prisoners in January 1951. It was the last execution of Japanese prisoners in the Philippines because all the remaining death row inmates were pardoned by President Quirino in 1953.

Only 17 of the 79 condemned criminals were executed from 1948 to 1951. The rate of execution was about 20% and when compared with the 80% rate of executions by the other Allies, one could say that the Philippines was very restrained in imposing the death penalty.³⁷

According to the rules governing the war crimes trials, no death sentence should be carried out “until confirmed by the President of the Philippines.”³⁸ This signified that

the head of the state had the ultimate responsibility for the execution. It also implied that there was a leeway for highly political decisions about the execution of the Japanese prisoners. President Quirino granted executive clemency to the remaining Japanese prisoners on 27 June 1953, just before he flew to the U.S. for medical treatment. Based on the diplomatic notes exchanged between the two countries dated 4 July 1953, the 49 prisoners sentenced to imprisonment for a definite term or for life were to be pardoned and released “on condition that upon their release, they shall leave and shall not return to the Philippines.” The 56 criminals condemned to die were to serve their sentences in a Japanese prison after their death sentences were commuted to life imprisonment.³⁹ This news was delivered to the Japanese prisoners on July 7.

It is interesting to note that instead of amnesty, which required the approval of the Congress, President Quirino chose executive clemency, one of the powers vested in his position. It is also interesting to note that he did not grant pardons uniformly. He separated the prisoners into two groups: those who would be granted pardon and released, and those on death row whose death sentences would be commuted to life imprisonment in a Japanese prison. Another distinct feature of the Quirino pardon was the condition that those who would be released should never return to the Philippines. One can surmise that these measures were intended to persuade the Filipino people to support his decision.

President Quirino struggled with his personal feelings towards the Japanese because he also suffered during the

war.⁴⁰ First, he was imprisoned in a cell at Fort Santiago (the headquarters of the Kempeitai) for more than ten days in 1943 on suspicion of being a supporter of the guerrillas. Second, his wife and three children were killed by Japanese soldiers during the battle of Manila in February 1945. The family victims included his two-year-old daughter named Fe.⁴¹ He endured these hardships nonetheless and he tried to rein in his feelings in the interest of the nation. The Cold War and the expected benefits for his country by resuming trade with Japan likewise affected his position.

The Cold War in Europe had an impact on Asia as well. The U.S. regarded Japan as a key ally in waging the Cold War in Asia. By this time, the U.S. had convinced its fallen adversary to re-enter the international community as an independent, democratic country. The Philippines, belonging to the democratic bloc, aligned its policy towards Japan with that of the U.S. After the war, the Philippines depended heavily on the U.S. for both its financial and security needs.⁴² In September 1951, the Philippines signed a peace treaty with Japan under pressure from the U.S.

The Quirino administration made a significant move to improve its relations with Japan by granting the establishment of the Japanese mission in Manila in October 1952. It was Japan's first foreign office in the Philippines after the war.⁴³ In spite of signing the peace treaty, the Philippines did not ratify it for a long period due to strong objections from the opposition party which insisted on the "no reparations, no ratification" policy.⁴⁴ In January 1953, President Quirino expressed his disappointment that the Senate did not act on the peace treaty that technically

made the Philippines still at war with Japan. He stressed the importance of normalizing relations with Japan from an economic point of view.⁴⁵

Taking into account his personal philosophy and the national policy towards Japan, Quirino took a broader and objective view of the Japanese war criminals issue. Starting February 1951,⁴⁶ he granted presidential pardons, as a test case, to quite a few war criminals who were not given death sentences.⁴⁷ He must have observed the public reactions very carefully and there being no specific criticism of his decision, he was encouraged to take further steps in June 1953. At the end of June, just after granting the executive clemency, Quirino flew to the U.S. On July 5, he issued the following statement from a hospital in Baltimore prior to his surgery.

I have extended pardon to Japanese war prisoners serving terms in the Philippines not as an amnesty which requires concurrence of the Philippine Congress. I should be the last one to pardon them as the Japanese killed my wife and three children and five other members of the family. I am doing this because I do not want my children and my people to inherit from me hate for people who might yet be our friends for the permanent interest of the country. After all, destiny has made us neighbors.⁴⁸

In the statement, Quirino mentioned that Japanese soldiers had killed his family members. He also pointed out that the co-existence of the two countries would be

inevitable from a geopolitical point of view and friendly relations would better serve the national interests of the Philippines. He believed that breaking the cycle of hatred was necessary to rebuild relations.⁴⁹

CONCLUSION

On 22 July 1953, over 100 Japanese prisoners returned to Japan by virtue of the executive clemency granted by President Quirino.⁵⁰ The decision was triggered by various factors such as the international situation during the Cold War and Philippine national security considerations, the importance of Japan as a trading partner, the forthcoming presidential election in November, negotiations for reparations with Japan, and Quirino's own political philosophy. Quirino prioritized the restoration of his country's relations with Japan and might have thought that the issue of the war criminals was obstructing this goal. The pursuit of "justice" through the war crimes trials and the execution of sentences must have provided justification for the "forgiveness." The executive clemency was received favorably by the Japanese people as a goodwill gesture from the Philippine side⁵¹ and it accelerated the normalization of relations between the two countries. Three years later, in July 1956, the Philippines and Japan restored diplomatic ties through the reparations agreement and the ratification of the peace treaty. The symbolic demonstration of forgiveness initiated by President Quirino was a landmark decision that renewed positive relations between Japan and the Philippines.

NOTES

- 1 Fred R. Castro and Guillermo S. Santos, "A Report on War Crimes Trials in the Philippines," *The Lawyers Journal* 15, no. 10 (October 1950), 472. The U.S. trials in Manila began in October 1945 and continued until April 1947. Within one-and-a-half years, 97 cases were tried and 215 defendants were indicted. "Statistics of U.S. War Crimes Trials in All Theaters as of 30 September 1948," Box 9, Entry 146, RG 153, Records of the Office of the Judge Advocate General (Army), National Archives at College Park, MD, USA (hereafter NARA).
- 2 Legal Section to Chief of Staff, "War Crimes Trials in Philippines," 6 May 1947, Legal Section (LS) Papers, GHQ/SCAP Records, microfiche, LS-10036, Kensei-shiryoshitsu (Modern Japanese Political History Materials Room), National Diet Library, Tokyo, Japan (hereafter NDLKS).
- 3 *Ibid.*
- 4 Elpidio Quirino to Paul V. McNutt, 12 March 1947, LS Papers, LS-10036, NDLKS.
- 5 Legal Section to Chief of Staff, "War Crimes Trials in Philippines."
- 6 *The Manila Chronicle*, 31 July 1947.
- 7 See Executive Order No. 68, "Establishing A National War Crimes Office and Prescribing Rules and Regulations Governing the Trial of Accused War Criminals," 29 July 1947, Republic of the Philippines, *Official Gazette* 43, no. 9 (September 1947), 3547–3553.
- 8 Carmen Guerrero Cruz, "Justice, Not Retribution," *The Evening News* 2, no. 46 (August 1947), 7.
- 9 *The Manila Chronicle*, 30 July 1947; *Manila Bulletin*, 30 July 1947.

- 10 Telecon conference, 31 July 1947, Manila Telecon File, Box 1353, Administrative Division, Legal Section, RG 331, Records of Allied Operational and Occupation Headquarters, World War II, NARA.
- 11 *Manila Bulletin*, 7 May 1947.
- 12 Minutes of the 67th Meeting of the Cabinet, 18 February 1947, General Miscellany, Series IV, Box 7, Manuel A. Roxas Papers, University Archives, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Philippines.
- 13 Armando V. Gatmaitan, interview by author, Makati City, 11 February 2015. Also see Kiyoshi Osawa, *Firipin no Ichi Nihonjin kara* (From a Japanese in the Philippines) (Tokyo: Shinchosha, 1978), 188; Toshio Suzuki, *Kaiso no Firipin Sensen* (A Memoir at the Philippine Front) (Tokyo: privately published by Toshio Suzuki, 1979), 146.
- 14 Teodoro M. Locsin, "Day of Reckoning," *Philippines Free Press*, 39, no. 3 (17 January 1948), 18.
- 15 Kudo was indicted for the suspected murder of civilians in Bay, Laguna in February 1945.
- 16 Guillermo S. Santos, "Report on the War Crimes Program of the Philippines," *Philippine Armed Forces Journal* 4, no. 2 (January–February 1951), 27.
- 17 *Ibid.* "Cleared" means that the suspects were not prosecuted because of the lack of sufficient evidence or being regarded as a "minor case."
- 18 Nicanor Maronilla-Seva, "The Law of War and Philippine War Crimes Trials" (Thesis submitted to Adamson University, Manila, 1950), 90–91.
- 19 Hitoshi Nagai, *Firipin BC-kyu Senpan Saiban* (The BC-Class War Crimes Trials in the Philippines) (Tokyo: Kodansha, 2013), 82–86.

- 20 Ricardo T. Jose, "The Philippine War Crimes Trials, 1947–1949," *Remembering World War II in the Philippines* 2 (Manila: National Historical Institute, 2007), 72–73. Jose Abad Santos was killed in May 1942 due to his refusal to cooperate with the Japanese army. Regarding the Mindanao (Bukidnon) case, see Hitoshi Nagai, "A Soul in Sad Exile: Never-ending War of a Japanese Army Surgeon," *Hiroshima Research News* 9, no. 1 (July 2006), 1–2.
- 21 Yoshio Chaen, ed., *BC-kyu Senpan Firipin Saibanshiryo* (Documents on the BC-Class War Criminals in the Philippines) (Tokyo: Fuji Shuppan, 1987), 6.
- 22 Besides the Philippines, the United States, China, United Kingdom, Australia, France, and the Netherlands also conducted their own trials.
- 23 *Manila Bulletin*, 29 December 1949.
- 24 *The Manila Times*, 26 November 1947; *The Manila Chronicle*, 31 July 1947.
- 25 Most of them belonged to the Judge Advocate General Service of the AFP and were well grounded in law.
- 26 *Manila Bulletin*, 27 November 1947.
- 27 There were 14 officers in the Defense Panel. See Martin P. Reyes, "The Trial of Japanese War Criminals in the Philippines" (Master's thesis submitted to the Graduate School of Law, University of Manila, 1949), 48.
- 28 Nina L. Roseta, interview by the author, Quezon City, 21 November 2012. Also see "PA Defense of Japs Scored," *Manila Bulletin*, 15 January 1948; "They Will Hang the Japs," *Philippine Armed Forces Journal* 1, no. 4 (February 1948), 9–10.
- 29 On 26 March 1949, the Supreme Court dismissed the case and expressed its opinion that the war crimes trials in the Philippines were legitimate. It made this decision on the grounds that the Philippines had, as part of its legal code, adopted the rules and principles of international law including those of The Hague

Convention and the Geneva Convention of 1929 and that the President was authorized to complete the trials and the punishment of the war criminals through the promulgation and enforcement of Executive Order No. 68. See “Kuroda vs. Gen. Jarandoni, et al., (G. R. No. L-2662, March 26, 1949),” *Bulletin of the Judge Advocate General of the Armed Forces of the Philippines* 3, no. 1 (March 1949), 24–26.

30 Even after the transfer of the jurisdiction of the trials, the Japanese prisoners were held at the Japanese Prisoner Stockade in Mandaluyong (located east of Manila) handled by the American Provost Marshal Command. In June 1948 the death row convicts, and next in December, other remaining prisoners were transferred to the NBP respectively.

31 Locsin, “Day of Reckoning,” 34.

32 In the beginning, there were some cases of violence against the Japanese prisoners by junior officials and Filipino prisoners. Director of the Yokohama Office of the Repatriation Relief Agency to the Director General of the Relief Bureau and Director of the General Affairs Division, 5 October 1949, Vol. 1, D’1.3.0.2-5-2, Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, Tokyo (hereafter DAMOFA).

33 Nagai, *Firipin BC-kyu Senpan Saiban*, 102–108, 112.

34 Joseph O. Bessmer to the Far East Section, ICRC, 18 August 1949, B G017 07-140, Archives of the International Committee of the Red Cross, Geneva, Switzerland.

35 Hitoshi Nagai, “Peace Born out of Tolerance: A Legacy of Alfredo Bunye,” *Hiroshima Research News* 13, no. 3 (March 2011), 4–5.

36 Toru Nakagawa to Katsuo Okazaki, 15 December 1952, Vol. 1, D’1.3.0.3-1-1, DAMOFA.

37 Hitoshi Nagai, *Firipin to Tainichi Senpan Saiban, 1945–1953* (The War Crimes Trials and Japan-Philippines Relations, 1945–1953) (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 2010), 223–224.

- 38 See "Approval of Sentence" (V. h.) of "Establishing A National War Crimes Office...", 3552. Sentences of life imprisonment were also to be reviewed by the President.
- 39 The exchange of notes between Felino Neri (Acting Secretary of Foreign Affairs) and Toru Nakagawa (Chief of the Japanese Mission in the Philippines), 4 July 1953, Vol. 1, D'1.3.0.3-1-1, DAMOFA. These notes were exchanged on 6 July 1953 (*Asahi Shimbun*, 7 July 1953).
- 40 Andres B. Callanta, "Quirino Stresses View on Jap Trade," *The Manila Times*, 6 May 1948. Also see Elpidio Quirino, "Need for Common Understanding," *The Quirino Way: Collection of Speeches and Addresses of Elpidio Quirino* ([Manila]: privately published by Juan Collas, 1955), 358. The speech by Quirino was delivered extemporaneously to the delegates of the Philippines-Japan Youth conference on 11 February 1953.
- 41 Nagai, *Firipin BC-kyu Senpan Saiban*, 167–172.
- 42 Ricardo T. Jose, "The Philippines during the Cold War: Searching for Security Guarantees and Appropriate Foreign Policies, 1946–1986" in Malcolm H. Murfett, ed., *Cold War Southeast Asia* (Singapore: Marshall Cavendish International (Asia), 2012), 50–66.
- 43 The Philippine government established the foreign office "Philippine Mission in Japan" in November 1948 but did not allow a Japanese counterpart for a long time due to the resentment against the Japanese (*Manila Bulletin*, 31 August 1949).
- 44 "A Transcript of a Recorded Interview with Carlos P. Garcia," 18 September 1964, The John Foster Dulles Oral History Collection, microfilm, JFD-2, Reel 4, NDLKS.
- 45 The message of the President to the Joint Session of Congress on 26 January 1953. See *Official Gazette* 49, no. 1 (January 1953), 41–42. The Philippines resumed trade with Japan after 1947 under the control and supervision of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (GHQ/SCAP) and in 1949 Japan became

the second largest trade partner of the Philippines. In May 1950 the Philippines signed the bilateral barter trade agreement with Japan, which became an important country as a trading partner as during the prewar period. See Enrique D. Bautista, "Postwar Japan-Philippine Trade," *Minisphil Tokyo Fortnightly* 1, no. 1 (March 1950), 9–10; *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, 18 May 1950.

⁴⁶ February 1951 was one month after the executions of the 14 prisoners. The Japanese public was greatly shocked by this unexpected mass execution and the people sent many petitions to the Office of the President to spare the lives of death row convicts. This might make Quirino realize the importance of the treatment of the Japanese war criminals and effect his policy. See *Asahi Shimbun*, 3 February 1951; *The Manila Times*, 5, 12 February 1951; *Manila Bulletin*, 5 February 1951; "Hito yori Kikan seru [illegible because of masking] Chusa no Danwa Yoshi (The Summary of Remarks by Lieutenant Colonel [illegible because of masking] who Returned from the Philippines)," Vol. 3, D'1.3.0.1, DAMOFA. According to the letter of Juan Collas, the private secretary of President Quirino, around February 1951 the President decided on the policy of "not enforcing death sentences imposed on Japanese war criminals." See Collas to Tatsuo Kano, 8 July 1953, The Kano Art Museum, Shimane, Japan.

⁴⁷ The war criminals who were given pardons were Lieutenant Colonel of the Kempeitai Hideichi Matsuzaki in February 1951, Lieutenant General Shigenori Kuroda in December 1951, and First Lieutenant of the Kempeitai Heiji Kita in February 1952. Also see *Official Gazette* 47, no. 2 (February 1951), xiv; *Nippon Times*, 13 February 1951; *The Daily Mirror*, 29 December 1951, 21 February 1952.

⁴⁸ Press release, 5 July 1953, Folder 1, Box 125, Elpidio Quirino Papers, Filipinas Heritage Library, Makati City, Philippines. The local newspapers in the Philippines and Japan covered this statement. For example, see *The Manila Times*, 7 July 1953; *Mainichi Shimbun*, 6 July 1953 (evening edition).

- 49 Tomas S. Quirino to Fusao Mishima, 16 June 1976, Fusao Mishima Collection.
- 50 After returning to Japan, over 50 former condemned criminals whose sentences were commuted to life imprisonment were confined to the Sugamo Prison in Tokyo, but on 30 December 1953 they were released based on a subsequent pardon by President Quirino. Interestingly, Quirino granted pardons to them on the condition that they shall never return to the Philippines. Prior to this, he lost the presidential election to Ramon Magsaysay in November and this pardon to the Japanese prisoners was one of his last actions as the country's chief executive.
- 51 See for example, editorials of *Asahi Shimbun*, 28 June 1953 and *Mainichi Shimbun*, 29 June 1953.

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