

# The Philippines and Japan in America's Shadow

*Edited by  
Kiichi Fujiwara and Yoshiko Nagano*



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## Abbreviations

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|------|---|
| CE   | Clarence R. Edwards Papers, Massachusetts Historical Society  |
| ERP  | Elihu Root Papers. Library of Congress  |
| MP   | The Papers of William McKinley, Library of Congress   |
| USCG | United States Consulate General, Hong Kong, USNA Microfilm  |
| USMG | United States Major-General Commanding the Army   |
| USNA | United States National Archives. Washington, DC<br>BIA: Bureau of Insular Affairs<br>RG: Record Group 350 |
| USPC | United States Philippine Commission (Schurman)  |
| USWD | United States War Department  |

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9. *Sunday Tribune Magazine*, November 29, 1942, in Martin (1952), p. 184.
10. For visual representations of this event, see *Souvenir Pictorial of the Birth of the Philippine Republic*, October 14, 1943.
11. *Forces that Make a Nation Great* (1943). The significance of this work is reflected in its translation into Filipino/Tagalog as *Mga Lakas na Nagpapadakila sa Ating Bansa*, and its publication by the Committee on the National Language Textbook Preparation in 1949.
12. Other details about Laurel's biography and ideas can be found in Agpalo (1992).
13. The "Protected zone" was the predecessor of the "fortified hamlet" during the Vietnam War some 60 years later. While "protected zone" faded from Filipino memory in the course of the American Occupation, ironically it was revived in the term "zona," associated with a similar practice by the Japanese army during their occupation.
14. This information on Recto is from the notable biography by Arcellana (1990).
15. The data for this section, including extensive quotes from *The Tribune*, comes from the unpublished 1952 work by Dalmacio Martin, cited earlier. Martin, an educator, was a participant and keen observer in those events.
16. Editorial, "Beneath American's Velvet Gloves," *Tribune*, August 15, 1944, in Martin (1952), p. 194.
17. E.M. Alip and A.K. Abad, "Gen. Del Pilar, the First to Resent 'Occupation Day' Deception," *Sunday Tribune Magazine*, August 15, 1943, in Martin (1952), pp. 177-8.
18. This notice appears in the inside front cover of the May 1944 issue of *Pillars*, a monthly magazine that had numerous articles on Jose Rizal and other heroes in the issues that came out in 1943-1944; see also Martin (1952), p. 188. Laurel's discourse of heroes was evidently propagated throughout the media and in civic rituals.
19. "Capas: Saga of Heroism," in *The Quirino Way* (speeches compiled by Juan Collas), Manila, 1955, pp. 70-1.
20. It is widely known that this book was ghost-written by William Pomeroy, and that its general arguments reflect the official line of the Communist Party. This does not mean, however, that Pomeroy merely put these ideas into Taruc's head. Even after the latter left the Party, he never distanced himself from the work. The sentiments about US betrayal are also found in the songs of the Huk movement; see Maceda (1996).
21. For the full text of the speech, see Nick Joaquin (Quijano de Manila), "The Law and the Prophet: A Look into the Current Status of the Image of Jose P. Laurel," 1967, reprinted in *The Laurel Legacy*, Memorial Series vol. 2, Manila (1986).

## chapter 3

### American Impact on Elite Continuity in Post-War Japan and the Philippines

Temario C. Rivera

The Philippines and Japan share a common historical past in having experienced American rule: the former as an American colony for more than four decades and the latter as a defeated power under the American Occupation for about six and a half years in the aftermath of the Second World War. This common historical experience serves as a point of reference in this study for understanding the process of elite reconstitution and restoration in the immediate post-war political development of these two countries.

After the Second World War, both Japan and the Philippines largely succeeded in restoring and reconstituting the "old guard and traditional levers of elite rule" but Japan's post-war electoral system flourished under a stable and dominant conservative hegemonic rule while the Philippines languished under an unstable system of oligarchic electoral rule.

In explaining this major contrast in political and economic outcomes in these two countries, I will focus my analysis on the nature of the reconstitution and reconsolidation of elite rule after the immediate post-war period (roughly 1946-1950) by

examining the reforms and policies pursued by the American Occupation as well as the responses of the local elites to this process. In particular, I am interested in examining the opportunities and the constraints created during the occupation period in terms of the capacity of popular movements and non-traditional elite formations and parties to challenge traditional elite rule in both countries.

### American Occupation Policy and Reforms in Post-War Japan

The American Occupation in Japan sought a radical restructuring of Japanese society and politics aimed at demilitarization and democratization, and Japan was governed indirectly through the existing governmental machinery and agencies, including the emperor. As John Dower puts it: "... the defeated Japanese were made the subjects of an unprecedented experiment — audacious in its ethnocentrism but also in its ambition and, until devoured by the Cold War, its idealism. This was an undertaking plagued from the start by contradictions, among them the very notion of 'revolution from above'" (Dower 1999: 80).

Three major post-war policy documents provided Gen. Douglas MacArthur vast powers and exceptional latitude in pursuing his mandate as Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers (SCAP) in occupied Japan.<sup>1</sup> The first major decree issued by GHQ/SCAP was the "Civil Liberties Directive" on October 4, 1945, titled the "Removal of Restrictions on Political, Civil, and Religious Liberties." This order abolished the Peace Preservation Law<sup>2</sup> and other ordinances and regulations restricting "freedom of thought, religion, assembly and speech"; ordered the release of all political prisoners; the abolition of secret police organs, including the Home Ministry's notorious *Tokko Keisatsu* (Special Higher Police); the dismissal of the Minister of Home Affairs and various police chiefs; and the removal of all barriers to the "unrestricted discussion of the Emperor, the Imperial Institution, and the Imperial Japanese government."

As a result of the Civil Liberties Decree, "nearly 5000 officials in the Home Ministry and law enforcement agencies were dismissed and the Japan Communist Party (JCP), driven underground and persecuted under the Peace Preservation Law, resurfaced as a legitimate political organization" (Takemae 2003: 238). In the aftermath of the same decree, "439 Communists, Korean nationalists, liberal intellectuals and religious pacifists were freed on October 10, 1945 and the police were forced to suspend immediately the surveillance of another 2,060 "subversives" (ibid.: 240).

The next set of political reforms focused on the revival of political parties, electoral reform, and the purge of undesirable personnel from public office (ibid.: 261–70). The revival of parties not only saw the reemergence of the Conservative parties, but also of the reorganization of the Japan Communist Party (JCP) in October 1945 and the creation of the Japan Socialist Party (JSP) on November 2, 1945. As the first political party to re-emerge, the JCP reconfirmed its policy of overturning the imperial institution through a "peaceful democratic revolution" and sought to establish a broad popular front uniting workers, farmers and the urban poor. The JSP was organized by non-Communist proletarian and peasant groups of various persuasions and succeeded in leading a coalition government from June 1947 to February 1948 under its chair, Tetsu Katayama, a Christian Socialist and former adviser to the labor movement.

Electoral reform aimed at revising voting requirements and broadening the electorate through the following changes mandated by the Lower House Election Law passed on December 17 1945: 1) lowering the voting age from 25 to 20 years, vastly expanding the range of representation; 2) reducing the age requirement for candidates from 30 to 25 years; 3) giving women the right to vote; and 4) enhancing the electoral chances for newcomers through a limited plural system of voting in multi-member constituencies.<sup>3</sup> The new election law changed the composition of the Diet and enhanced the participation of smaller political groupings, independents, and women candidates, with

this combined sector accounting for about 35 percent of total Lower House seats in the April 1946 elections.

Implemented between 1946 and 1947, the directives on the purging of organizations and individuals listed seven "removal and exclusion categories" as the basis for disqualification from public life. These categories included "active exponents of militant nationalism and aggression," professional military officers, leaders of ultra-nationalist and terrorist societies, officials of overseas financial and economic organizations involved in Japanese expansion, and governors of former Japanese colonies and occupied territories. About 77 percent of those affected were career military men and the purge also disqualified more than 600 conservative party cadres and lawmakers from the April 1946 balloting. The political purges were complemented by the "education" purge of May 1946 and a year later by the "economic" purge which weeded out 1,535 heads of industry, finance and commerce. Ultimately, SCAP screened a total of 717,415 individuals, forcing 201,815 from key positions in public life (ibid.: 267-9).

What were the effects of these purges? A leading expert on the allied occupation of Japan asserts that:

Despite its inequities, however, the exclusion campaign effected a change of leadership in key areas of social, political and economic life. Many of the middle-echelon officials who had loyally served the Imperial state managed to retain their positions or find comparable work, but the purge decisively ended the political ascendancy of the officer corps and other reactionary elements in society, clearing the way for younger political and business leaders relatively untainted by ultra-rightist ideology. These latter would become the driving force behind postwar Japan's rapid economic recovery and its emergence as a democratic nation (ibid.: 270).

A centerpiece of early occupation reforms was the passage of a new constitution prepared and finalized by SCAP after scrutinizing several proposals from various private study groups (such as the Constitutional Research Association [Kenpo Kenkyukai], the Constitutional Discussion Group [Kenpo Kondankai],

and the Japan Bar Association, various political parties including the Socialist Party and Communist Party, and influential individuals, notably Iwasaburo Takano, labor leader, scholar and founder of the Ohara Institute for Social Research (ibid.: 273) and other liberal or socialist academics, journalists and lawyers such as Yasuzo Suzuki, Tatsuo Morito, and Hyoe Ouchi (Sims 2001: 244).

Promulgated on November 3, 1946 and taking effect on May 3, 1947, the new constitution "renounced the Meiji charter's authoritarian Prussian legacy, replacing it with liberal Anglo-American legal concepts" (Takemae 2003: 271) and incorporated the following new and radical features: 1) reducing the emperor to a "symbol of the state and the unity of the people" with no powers "related to government" and deriving the emperor's position "from the will of the people with whom resides sovereign power" (Chapter 1); 2) renunciation of war as a sovereign right of the nation and outlawing the maintenance of "land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential" (Chapter 2, Article 9); 3) a bill of rights and duties guaranteeing the exercise of basic human and civil liberties, including equality under the law, freedom of thought and expression, freedom of religion, abolition of the peerage system, universal adult suffrage, and the banning of discrimination based on race, creed, sex, social status or family origin in all kinds of relations, and gender equality in marriage and family relations (Chapter 3); and 4) making the national Diet the "highest organ of state power and the sole lawmaking organ of the State" and constituted of two houses (House of Representatives and House of Councillors) whose members are all duly elected (Chapter 4).<sup>4</sup>

While the new constitution was no doubt imposed on the Japanese government, it "was not out of keeping with the popular mood in Japan in 1946 and continued to meet with wide acceptance thereafter" (Sims 2001: 244). The conservative Japanese sectors opposed the change in the status of the emperor, but Article 9 of the Constitution which renounced war and disallowed the maintenance of armed forces provoked more resentment from conservatives and nationalists. However,

this provision did not prevent the establishment of substantial Self Defense Forces starting with the creation of a 75,000-strong Police Reserve Force in 1950 in response to the "reverse-course" and reshaping of American policy in the context of the global Cold War and the Korean War in Asia (ibid.: 245).

The next round of reforms targeted by the SCAP focused on a set of institutional and economic changes including police and local government, the bureaucracy, labor controls, the *zaibatsu*, and landlordism. Together with police and local government reforms, bureaucratic deconcentration was seen as a major Occupation goal. Many of the members of the Government Section of GHQ/SCAP considered the bureaucracy as a "bastion of the Old Order comparable in importance to the Tojo war cabal, the great financial combines, reactionary political parties and large landlords." Under strong pressure from SCAP, the Diet passed on October 21, 1947, the National Public Service Law which sought to streamline and modernize the bureaucracy and eliminate favoritism and self-perpetuating distinctions based on social status. However, bureaucratic reform proved to be difficult. As pointed out by one scholar: "Despite its modernizing influence on the civil service, which is undeniable, SCAP ultimately was more concerned with improving bureaucratic efficiency than with reshaping the bureaucracy itself. As a result, the apparatus of state remained prey to the vested interests of its diverse constituencies, with each ministry and agency determined to defend against all comers its prerogatives and particularistic agenda" (Takemae 2003: 307).

Another eminent scholar of the Occupation period asserts thus:

The American reformers did change the political economy of Japan in significant ways most notably through land reform, the dissolution of family-controlled *zaibatsu* holding companies, and the promotion of legislation that gave unprecedented rights to organized labor. They also imposed certain specific bureaucratic reforms of lasting importance, eliminating the military establishment and breaking up the powerful Home Ministry that had exercised control over the police and local governments. But they

did preserve the rest of the bureaucracy, and the '1940 system' more generally, as a matter of convenience. To work through existing channels made implementing occupation policies easier; to fundamentally change the system would have created turmoil in an already confusing situation (Dower 1999: 560).

In addressing Japan's economic reconstruction, SCAP proceeded from the assumption that the country's militarism and imperial aggression were founded on economic and institutional causes that needed to be rooted out. In brief, these factors included a controlled labor force that was underpaid and overworked; the *zaibatsu* system of a few large industrial and financial conglomerates which monopolized the capital-intensive export sector of the economy using semi-feudalistic labor and management practices; and a landholding system dominated by a relatively small number of landlords that perpetuated poverty in the rural areas.

The land reform program was arguably SCAP's most successful reform project. By 1949, it had reallocated two million hectares of arable land or about 80 percent of all tenanted holdings. By the end of the reform, 90 percent of all land under crops was being cultivated by independent growers, and the number of landless tenants had declined to a mere seven percent of farm producers (Takemae 2003: 344). Not only did these reforms boost agricultural production and increase rural incomes, it also effectively undercut the political constituency of support for both the Socialist and Communist movements in the countryside.

In contrast to the overall success of the land reform program, SCAP's campaign to dissolve the *zaibatsu* system faced strong opposition from both Washington policymakers and big businesses in the US who by mid-1947 had become wary of undermining Japanese capitalism and started to emphasize economic recovery, containing Communism, and strengthening conservative rule in Japan. Those who sought to restrain the campaign against the *zaibatsu* included the US Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, and influential officials such as Secretary of Defense James F.

Forrestal, Undersecretary of the Army William H. Draper, and Secretary of the Army Kenneth Royall. This powerful bloc succeeded in eviscerating MacArthur's deconcentration campaign against the *zaibatsu* system. Thus, by the end of the Yoshida era, a combination of internal American policy disputes and the strong resistance offered by the bureaucracy and big businesses resulted in the "creation of a powerful 'new *zaibatsu*' structure in which, however, the old *zaibatsu* continued to play a leading role" (ibid.: 336-9).<sup>5</sup>

The labor movement was another key target for SCAP's democratization reforms on the economy.<sup>6</sup> Under SCAP's guidance between 1945 and 1947, the labor movement experienced unprecedented freedoms allowing it to grow rapidly. SCAP abolished the reactionary labor fronts established by the militarists in the late 1930s and the Diet passed on December 22, 1945, the Labor Union Law which guaranteed the right to organize, bargain collectively and strike, and established labor relations boards at the central and prefectural levels to mediate disputes. This new environment of freedom unleashed an extraordinary level of popular participation, mass militancy, and union organizing particularly in the face of severe food shortages during the early Occupation years. Workers waged "production-control struggles" in various companies and mounted huge public demonstrations (500,000 on May Day 1946 in Tokyo) calling for the liberation of grain stores in the Imperial Palace, the popular control of hoarded goods, the resignation of the inept Shidehara government, the purge of war criminals, and worker control over production.

This mass mobilization and worker militancy would have climaxed in a general strike planned for February 1, 1947 but Gen. MacArthur directly intervened with a formal decree outlawing the strike, threatening to call the troops if the organizers pushed through with the planned action. This proved to be a turning point in the Occupation policy of liberalization, and henceforth, SCAP clamped down hard on labor organizing and militancy by banning strikes and the right to collective bargaining in almost all public enterprises starting

from 1948. This was followed by the "Red Purges" which sought to break radical unions at the company and industry level and involved close collaboration among occupation officials, conservative politicians, government bureaucrats and corporate managers. About 11,000 activist union members in the public sector were purged and about the same number suffered the same fate in the private sector including the media by the end of 1950.

Moreover, this decided drift toward conservatism was further dramatized by the "depurging" or return to public activity of individuals earlier purged "for all time" for their active involvement in militarist and ultranationalist activities. However, as stressed by Dower: "Although the 'reverse course' helped establish a domestic conservative hegemony of politicians, bureaucrats and businessmen that remained dominant to the end of the century, Communists and Socialists continued to be elected to the Diet and to command serious attention in debates over public policy" (1999: 273).

Thus, in the crucible of the war and the American Occupation, a reconstituted conservative elite emerged in Japan that was strong enough to provide the foundations of the subsequent conservative political hegemony under the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). But the political legacy is more complex than this. As aptly summed up by Dower once again, "the occupation legacy was a new conservatism but within a restructured state in which progressive and reformist ideals, and laws, retained a substantial constituency among the Japanese people themselves" (ibid.: 313).

### Elite Restoration in Post-War Philippines

In the context of the overall disruption of the established order in Southeast Asia during the Second World War, the Philippines arguably had the most impressive record of elite resilience. The colonial, pre-war oligarchic families that controlled Philippine politics not only survived the war, but continued to dominate post-war electoral contests. Unlike in



Indonesia, Burma or Vietnam, the local revolutionary movement and radical nationalist popular movements in the Philippines did not emerge triumphant from the cataclysm of war.

In the Philippine context, my main interest lies in examining why the new opportunities and socio-political forces unleashed by the war failed to effectively challenge traditional elite rule. At the international level, one obvious explanatory factor had to do with the further entrenchment and enhancement of American power at the end of the war. The other colonial powers in the region saw their military and political resources severely undercut in the aftermath of the war and found themselves unable to effectively determine the march of events in their former colonies. In contrast, the United States emerged as the most powerful post-war player and sought to dictate the flow of both global and local events. Moreover, the radical nationalist movements in the Philippines were either communist-led, such as the *Hukbalahap*, or pro-Japanese, such as the followers of Gen. Artemio Ricarte and Benigno Ramos. These features of the radical mass movements in the Philippines led to violent American opposition and repression particularly in the immediate post-war years when the American forces under Gen. MacArthur committed themselves to restoring the power of the pre-war oligarchy.

This new post-war arrangement of power gains extreme saliency in the Philippine context in light of another enduring political legacy of American colonial rule in the country. This is the further entrenchment of an oligarchy through an electoral political system formally started in 1901. This meant that elite rule has been perpetuated by a formal electoral system which provided immense advantages to powerful political clans of landlords and big businesses. Under American colonial rule, this oligarchic hegemony was exemplified by the dominance of the Nacionalista Party under the leadership of Manuel L. Quezon, the elite's most consummate practitioner of clientelist-patronage politics. Quezon's role in this system of clientelist politics rooted in and sustained by the local oligarchy is aptly described by one author as follows:

As Commonwealth president, Quezon perfected a patronage system he had used for 18 years as Senate president to establish his dominion over Filipino politics. No longer restrained by his distance from executive prerogatives, Pres. Quezon soon erected an interrelated, finely tuned clientelist system that reached from the *municipio* to Malacañang, to the White House (McCoy 1988: 120).

However, American colonial rule and the local oligarchy's control of electoral politics could not wipe out the country's long revolutionary tradition of peasant radicalism and trade union militancy that formed the base of both the legal and the extra-parliamentary opposition. The social base of this militant opposition was united by a comprehensive program of land redistribution and agrarian reform, the exercise of full democratic rights and a firm demand for immediate national independence in contrast to the oligarchy's crass manipulation and opportunism on these issues. Shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War, the most organized and militant sections of the peasantry and working class decided to form a single party with the official merger in 1938 of the Socialist Party of the Philippines representing the organized peasants of Central Luzon and the Communist Party of the Philippines representing the radical trade union members.<sup>7</sup> With the outbreak of war, the newly merged party succeeded in organizing the most effective anti-Japanese guerrilla resistance movement, the *Hukbalahap* (Hukbong Bayan Laban sa Hapon [Peoples' Army Against the Japanese]) specifically in Central and Southern Luzon.

In the aftermath of the war, two significant developments emerged as direct threats and challenges to traditional oligarchic rule. First, the guerrilla resistance against the Japanese invaders created an armed revolutionary force rooted in the peasantry, the militant working class, and radical intellectuals whose social roots and political program posed a challenge to the restoration of traditional elite rule. Second, the issue of collaboration with the Japanese Occupation by leading elements of the political oligarchy served to drive a wedge within the elite class and opened up some opportunities for challenging traditional elite

dominance. In the unfolding of both of these developments, American policy and intervention proved decisive.

The Hukbalahap waged its anti-Japanese guerrilla struggle in the overall context of an anti-fascist united front strategy in the Second World War. In this strategy, the United States was treated as an ally in the war against fascism and the usual attacks against American imperialism largely ceased during this period. It was also in the context of this worldwide anti-fascist strategy in the gathering storm before the outbreak of war that Commonwealth President Quezon agreed to allow the outlawed Communist Party to resume its public life and to free its imprisoned leaders such as Crisanto Evangelista, the founding chair. However, in pursuing the worldwide communist anti-fascist strategy, the local communist movement may also have lost the flexibility to reach out and respond to anti-American but pro-Japanese mass nationalist movements such as the followers of Gen. Ricarte and Benigno Ramos. For instance, efforts by the pro-Japanese, anti-American *Makapili* (League of Patriotic Filipinos) to form a joint front with the anti-Japanese Hukbalahap against the returning American forces proved unsuccessful (Terami-Wada 1999: 83).

The Huk leadership and rank and file were caught completely unprepared by the ferocity and hostility against them shown by the American returning forces under the command of Gen. MacArthur. Sometime in 1944, the Hukbalahap leadership in fact organized a failed mission to get directly in touch with Gen. MacArthur in Australia to coordinate with the expected arrival of the returning American forces (Lava 2002: 47-60). Tragically, even in face of the systematic persecution perpetuated by the returning American military forces against them, the HUKs initially sought to continue its policy of a working united front with the American military. The historians, Renato and Letizia Constantino, describe the Huk's response thus:

The Huk fighters and their supporters reacted to American hostility at first with surprise and bewilderment and later with deep resentment. They had sacrificed everything for the anti-Japanese struggle and they never expected their American

allies in the anti-fascist war to use fascist methods against them. There had been ominous signs of antipathy prior to the reoccupation, but the Huk leadership held fast to the policy of the united front. Even after the local governments they had set up were discarded and their guerrilla organization refused recognition, and even after the first few squadrons were forcibly disarmed, the Huks continued to implement their united front policy. They continued to help in the mopping up campaigns; they helped to organize labor battalions for the construction of army installations; and they even offered to mobilize a strong Huk force to assist in the invasion of Japan (Constantino and Constantino 1978: 168-9).

Suffering enormously from the arrest and killing of its leaders and brutal attacks against its followers by rival guerrilla forces coddled by the American military and private armies of local landlords, the Huks nevertheless decided to participate in the post-war parliamentary process. In the 1946 presidential and congressional elections, the Huks joined the Democratic Alliance (DA), a broad coalition of reformist urban middle and upper class liberals, peasant organizations, militant trade unions, and anti-collaborationist guerrilla groups which allied itself with the Osmeña wing of the divided Nacionalista Party.<sup>8</sup> With its organized peasant and working class base, the Huks and the Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP) provided the mass constituency of the DA. The Democratic Alliance ran on a five-point program which included immediate and unconditional independence, anti-collaboration, democracy against fascism, social security and agrarian reforms, and industrialization.

With its strong mass base in Central Luzon, the DA succeeded in electing seven members to the House of Representatives, including well-known Huk-PKP leaders Luis Taruc and Jesus Lava. However, the elected DA congresspersons, together with three Nacionalista Party (NP) senators and another NP congressman, were denied their legitimate seats in Congress when the Roxas administration charged them with alleged fraud and terrorism in their election. Behind this disqualification scheme was the Roxas administration's need

for a three-fourths' vote of Congress to be able to amend the constitution to accommodate the Parity Amendment of the Bell Trade Act.<sup>9</sup> While the Roxas administration succeeded in amending the constitution and passing the Bell Trade Act, it also foreclosed a golden opportunity of integrating into the legal process the core constituency of the radical opposition by forcing its duly elected representatives out of the parliamentary arena.

### The Collaboration Issue

The second major issue at the end of the war that presented an opportunity to challenge the traditional oligarchic power structure in the country was the collaboration issue.<sup>10</sup> Almost all of the leading national elite politicians served in both the Executive Commission under Japanese auspices and the later Japanese sponsored wartime government headed by Jose P. Laurel. Many of the provincial elites were also appointed as local government executives. A key issue that made possible the electoral alliance between the DA and Pres. Osmeña's Nacionalista Party against Roxas' Liberal Party in the 1946 elections was in fact the collaboration issue. However, as successor to Pres. Quezon who died in Washington during the war and as a senior leader of the same pre-war political oligarchy, Osmeña found himself in an extremely ambivalent position to lead the attack on the collaboration issue.

The US collaboration policy vis-a-vis the Philippines was originally set by Pres. Roosevelt in June 1944 when he stated, "Filipinos who collaborated with the enemy must be removed from authority and influence in the political and economic life of the country." In response to this policy, Quezon asserted that although the United States had the "technical legal right" to determine the guilt of and punish collaborators, she "will be wise if she forgoes this right and allow[s] such persons to be dealt with by the Philippine government" because Filipinos "would feel that having failed to defend them ... America was in no position to punish

them" (Hayden 1944: 440). Indeed, there was a subtle but important difference between Roosevelt's and Quezon's line on collaboration as explained by one author:

Roosevelt emphasized the removal of collaborators from positions of authority and influence without concern for their guilt. Behind Quezon's emphasis on the determination of the guilt of collaborators, which would require the sifting of evidence in a deliberate judicial process, was the conviction that his Nacionalista colleagues who had collaborated had been motivated to ease the lot of Filipinos under the Japanese. The Commonwealth president was also determined to stay in power in the islands, and he recognized no need to dismantle the government of Quezonista loyalists he had assembled during the years of Commonwealth rule (Golay 1997: 440-1).

Pres. Osmeña initially organized a cabinet that included hard-line anti-collaborationists, notably two leading guerrilla leaders, Tomas Confesor and Tomas Cabili, who served as secretaries of interior and defense, respectively. Early on, however, Gen. MacArthur, who was the de facto ruler in the first 10 months after the Allied landing in Leyte, asserted his authority on key issues including the collaboration problem. MacArthur's GHQ announced the "liberation" of Manuel Roxas while other officials who served with the Japanese sponsored government such as Jose Yulo, Antonio de las Alas, Quintin Paredes, Teofilo Sison and others were declared as "captured" and consequently detained (Steinberg 1967: 115). During the war, Roxas succeeded in evading formal membership in the Laurel government until he was prevailed upon by Laurel to serve as the "food czar" (minister without portfolio) in a futile attempt to solve the food crisis some five months before MacArthur's landing in Leyte (*ibid.*: 107).

As a member of the Nacionalista ruling triumvirate (together with Quezon and Osmeña), Roxas was considered Quezon's presumptive heir and was also a close friend and military aide of Gen. MacArthur. By personally absolving Roxas of any collaborationist taint, MacArthur also clearly signaled his choice of Roxas as the post-war Philippine leader. Consequently, Roxas

began to build an alternative center of power to Osmeña's and rallied all those suffering from the collaborationist tag. Roxas' base of power was also greatly enhanced with the convening of the Congress elected in 1941 which was dominated by supporters of Quezon and with Roxas himself assuming the Senate presidency and as chair of the powerful Committee on Appointments. Moreover, a Roxas ally, Rep. Jose Zulueta, served as the speaker of the Lower House. With the approaching 1946 presidential elections, Roxas established a new party, the Liberal Party, and brought with him many of the old guards and Quezon supporters from the Nacionalista Party.

Meanwhile, the collaboration issue persisted. Pres. Truman announced in March 1946 that "there is no necessity for any change in our established policy of leaving the disposition of collaborationists in the Philippines to the civil authorities there" (Golay 1997: 453). Osmeña and Roxas compromised to pass a bill creating a People's Court and an Office of Special Prosecutors on September 25, 1945 to try those charged of collaboration. However, these two agencies worked under severe time, personnel and material constraints. For instance, the law required that indictments of those charged with crimes must be filed within six months, a near impossible task for the 25 special prosecutors considering that the Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC) of the American Army turned up more than 5,600 cases in which "presumptive evidence warranted detention."

The final outcome of the trials was absolutely dismal. As summarized by a major author on this subject:

Of the 5603 cases originally filed before the People's Court, only 156 had been convicted (0.27 percent), and of those, only one, Teofilo Sison, was prominent politically. In percentage terms ... 0.6 percent of the wartime leadership was convicted, and 74 percent was never in court. There was no blood bath in which the mob ruled at the end of the war, and there was no purge either internal or external. The elite remained intact, with a remarkable survival rate, considering the risks of war and the average age of the group. The war diminished neither the size nor the authority of the establishment (Steinberg 1967: 162-3).

## Conclusion

Thus, in a deeper sense, the restoration of the old order in the Philippines was far more predictable than anything that approximated continuity with the old order in Japan. In defeated Japan, MacArthur's clear mandate included the destruction of the ruling wartime elite (the military bureaucracy but sparing the emperor). In reoccupied Philippines, MacArthur's immediate political objective was the restoration of the old order albeit under the leadership of a more energetic member of the political oligarchy (Roxas as against Osmeña) who was deemed more capable of reconstructing and restoring the old order consistent with overall American interests.

The grouping of progressive forces centered in the Democratic Alliance (DA) that emerged in the aftermath of the war proved to be threatening to both American interests and the local elite. With its main constituency rooted among peasants and workers steered by the exigencies of the anti-Japanese guerrilla war and animated by a radical program of political and social transformation, the DA mounted a potent electoral struggle. To crush this mass-based political challenge, the administration and its landlord allies launched armed attacks against the leaders and supporters of the Hukbalahap and disqualified the winning DA candidates in the lower House on trumped up charges of electoral fraud to ensure passage of the Bell Trade Act and its Parity Amendment. Thus, under these conditions, the emergence of a legitimate left-wing legal political party in the Philippines was thoroughly undermined.

It would take more than 50 years before political parties representing the interests of the marginalized and disadvantaged sectors could win seats in the lower house of the Philippine Congress with the implementation of the Party List Law in the 1998 elections. The failure of the post-war conservative political leadership to institute fundamental social and economic reforms and effectively incorporate the radical mass nationalist movement in the parliamentary process has resulted in the continuation of a communist-led armed challenge that

persists to this day.<sup>11</sup> Contrast that with the Japanese situation where the Socialists and Communists have had a continuing political presence both in the Diet and the daily discourses of political life. Moreover, the most reactionary segment of the old political hierarchy in Japan, the military bureaucracy, was also effectively wiped out by the occupation reforms. But more significantly, it was the structural reforms that vastly improved the lives of ordinary Japanese peasants and workers in Japan particularly through the successful land reform and democratic rights gained by these sectors under the American Occupation. In stark contrast, the American-restored political oligarchy in the Philippines effectively opposed the advance of popular struggles aimed at equally wide-ranging structural reforms in the aftermath of the war. No wonder these absent structural changes continue to be at the forefront of the agenda of change in the Philippines today.

### Notes

1. These documents were the Potsdam Declaration (July 26, 1945), US State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee's (SWNCC) "US Initial Post-Surrender Policy for Japan" (September 22, 1945), and the Pentagon's "Basic Directive for Post-Surrender Military Government in Japan Proper" (November 3, 1945).
2. Passed in 1925, the Peace Preservation Law imposed harsh penalties of up to ten years' imprisonment for those found guilty of involvement in organizations aimed at the overthrow of the emperor system or the system of private property and targeted communists, anarchists, and other radicals.
3. The New Election Law, which favored women and smaller political parties, was revised in March 1947 by the Yoshida-led government, which restored the pre-surrender electoral precincts and replaced limited plural balloting with a single vote.
4. See The Constitution of Japan at <<http://www.solon.org/Constitutions/Japan/English>>.
5. See also Theodore Cohen, *Remaking Japan: The American Occupation as New Deal* (1987), pp. 353-77.
6. This section on the labor movement draws heavily from the works of Eiji Takemae (2003), pp. 310-24 and Theodore Cohen (1987), pp. 187-239.
7. The merged parties officially became known as the Communist Party of the Philippines (Merger of the Socialist and Communist Parties). For an account of the convention merger of these two parties, see James S. Allen, *The Radical Left on the Eve of War: A Political Memoir* (1985), pp. 56-9. Today, this merger party is referred to as the Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP) to distinguish it from the new Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) established in 1968.
8. The Democratic Alliance (DA) was composed of three guerrilla groups — the Hukbalahap, the Free Philippines and the Blue Eagle; a peasant union, the PKM (Pambansang Kaisahan ng mga Magbubukid [National Union of Peasants]); a labor group, the CLO (Committee on Labor Organization); and four other progressive organizations — the League for National Liberation, the Anti-Traitors League, the Anti-Japanese League, and the Civil Liberties Union. See Renato Constantino and Letizia R. Constantino, *The Philippines: The Continuing Past* (1978), pp. 182-3.
9. The Philippine Trade Act, better known as the Bell Trade Act was passed by the US Congress in 1945 and provided for eight more years of duty-free trade until 1954 and gradually ascending tariffs for 20 years until 1974. It also fixed the rate of exchange at two pesos to one dollar, thus depriving the Philippines of its currency sovereignty. Its most notorious provision was the so-called Parity Amendment which granted Americans the same rights as Filipinos in the exploitation of natural resources, acquisition of lands of the public domain, grazing, fishing and mineral rights, and the ownership and operation of public utilities.
10. On the collaboration issue, see David Joel Steinberg, *Philippine Collaboration in World War II* (1967); Hernando J. Abaya, *Betrayal in the Philippines* (1970); and Teodoro A. Agoncillo, *The Burden of Proof: The Vargas-Laurel Collaboration Case* (1984).
11. For an extended discussion of these problems, see Temario C. Rivera, "Transition Pathways and Democratic Consolidation in Post-Marcos Philippines," *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 24, 3 (December 2002): 466-83.