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The Tribune During the Japanese Occupation

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The *Tribune* During the Japanese Occupation

RICARDO TROTA JOSE

Those who remember the Japanese occupation undoubtedly remember the daily newspaper of that time, the *Tribune* which became a propaganda mouthpiece for the Japanese, and as such, became the brunt of jokes and insults from its readers.

It had not always been that way. Before the war the *Tribune* was a reputable daily, the foremost morning paper in Manila. Born on April Fool's Day, 1925, it competed with the American-owned *Manila Daily Bulletin* and the rival *Philippines Herald*. The rivalry led to a race for scoops, exclusives and occasional mudslinging, but it kept standards high. Don Alejandro Roces, who already owned the Tagalog *Taliba* and the Spanish *La Vanguardia*, combined the three papers into the TVT Publishing Corporation. Roces "would not permit blind loyalty to any political figure," and his publications strove for a balanced tone. The *Tribune* proudly called itself the "Independent Filipino daily" and attempted to show both sides whenever practical. When World War II broke out in Europe, the *Tribune* presented reports from both sides as much as possible. Pictorials on both the Royal Air Force and German paratroops appeared in the rotogravure *Sunday Tribune Magazine*, for example.¹

The *Tribune* treated its readers to several daily features. Seven centavos bought you an average of twenty pages, among which were the witty and popular columns of Amando Dayrit ("Good Morning Judge")

1. Discussion of the *Tribune's* prewar history based on Jose Luna Castro, "Press," in Gloria Feliciano and Crispulo J. Icbán, *Philippine Mass Media in Perspective* (Quezon City: Capitol Publishing House, 1967), p. 10; John A. Lent, "Philippines" in John A. Lent (ed.) *The Asian Press' Reluctant Revolution* (Ames, Iowa: University of Iowa Press, 1971), p. 202; Carlos P. Romulo, *I Walked With Heroes* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961), p. 181 *et seq.*; Luis Serrano, "History of the Manila Times," *Philippine Colophon*, March-June 1966, p. 13. See also Amada Tipace-Valino, "The Roces Family and Philippine Journalism," *Mr. and Ms.*, 19 March 1985, p. 27-28 for Roces's ideals.

and Rafael Roces ("Thorns and Roces"—although in 1941, perhaps tired of the pun, it became "Thorns and Roses"). Readers could air their views in "The Public Pulse." It made for interesting reading when readers battled it out in that space, especially if they were prominent personalities. At times the debates became personal, such as that between General Jose Alejandrino and General Paulino Santos, over the defense policy of the Commonwealth. Reflecting life in the pretellevision era, the *Tribune* published the daily radio schedules of all Manila stations, and the movie section and society page enjoyed star billing. Various other entertainment features, plus the sports page and business news gave the paper wide appeal.

On Sundays, the price went up to fifteen centavos, but it bought eighty-eight pages. There were twenty-four pages of news, plus a forty-eight-page magazine filled with photographs, fashion and home tips, and columns ("From My Nipa Hut" by Mang Kiko, the pseudonym of Francisco B. Icasiano, and "Pagoda Views"). The rest of the pages were supplements and ads.²

But the strength of the paper was in its writers and their independent stance. Many were rebels from the *Herald*, who had become dissatisfied with its policies and its closeness to President Quezon. Because of this, the *Tribune* also gained the reputation of being the "news-paperman's newspaper." Carlos P. Romulo had been the first editor of the *Tribune*, but he and two others rejoined the *Herald* later. In 1941, the *Tribune* had two associate editors, David T. Boguslav and Jose P. Bautista, both veteran newspapermen. Aside from Rafael Roces and Amando Dayrit, the *Tribune* also had writers like Armando Malay (former *Collegian* editor), Roberto Villanueva, Celso Cabrera, the Grau sisters (Consuelo and Corazon) and Pablo Viray.³

Quezon attempted to win the *Tribune* over to his side in order to tone down some of its criticism. He lambasted the paper on the Senate floor, "bought off" Romulo and Mauro Mendez, and even invited Don Roces aboard the presidential yacht, *Casiana*, knowing that Roces liked fishing. The *Tribune*, however, remained unaffected, and lived up to its name.⁴

2. Survey of *Tribune* issues, 1940-41.

3. David Boguslav, "Recollections of Thirty Years of Philippine Journalism," *Fookien Times Yearbook*, 1956, pp. 51-52, 82; Armando J. Malay, "Boguslav of Brooklyn," *Deadline*, October 1953, p. 6; interview with Armando Malay, 17 August 1983.

4. Jose G. Syjuco, "The Press of the Republic of the Philippines: Its Role and Activities" (thesis for National Defense College of the Philippines, Fort Bonifacio, 1968), p. 27. After Romulo left, Fernando Maramag took over as editor; when Maramag died, Boguslav and Bautista took over as co-editors. (Malay, "Boguslav of Brooklyn," p. 6).

The *Tribune's* reputation won for its Sunday issue a circulation of 70,000 in July 1941. That was a record for newspapers at that time and the management treated the staff to a whole day excursion and picnic, with games. The regular weekday editions averaged 35,000 a day, which was, for Manila at that time, a large circulation.⁵

The *Tribune* covered the war in Europe using the wires of the Associated Press and United Press, and utilizing maps to the fullest. The *Sunday Tribune Magazine* carried a running comparison of the current war with what had happened in World War I, and maximized use of photographs. As the war fever reached the Philippines, the symbol of resistance against the Tripartite Powers, an eagle superimposed on a "V," with the motto "Keep 'Em Flying" made it to the front pages of the *Tribune*, for morale purposes. Weekly news from the mobilization camps of the Philippine Army kept readers in touch with the build-up of national defense, as did pictorials on Filipino troop training. An anti-Japanese and somewhat pro-US tone was apparent, though not as strong as that carried by the *Bulletin* or the *Herald*. Roces had never been an out-and-out supporter of the Americans.⁶

Others were watching the success of the *Tribune*, however, and viewed its independence in a different light. The Japanese consulate in Manila kept tabs on the paper, and in 1936 wrote Tokyo that the paper was "being pro-Japanese." The consulate sponsored a series of articles on Japan in the *Tribune* in late 1935. The next year, also through the *Tribune*, it sponsored a female popularity contest, the prize being an all-expense-paid trip to Japan. In their periodic reports to Tokyo, the consul and his staff noted that Joe Bautista was approachable by the Japanese. Icasiano was a known Japanophile, having edited and published *Oriental Art and Culture*, as well as Roberto Villanueva, who had studied in Japan.⁷

But these reports were sent prior to the Sino-Japanese war, and in 1941 the *Tribune* staunchly supported the national defense efforts. The war which everyone expected came sooner than anyone could predict, however. The *Tribune*, adhering to the prewar custom of no work on Sundays, did not have a Monday issue, and thus was scooped on Monday, 8 December 1941, when the war broke out.

5. *Sunday Tribune Magazine*, 3 August 1941 has photographs of the party, pp. 30-31; Clod Leones, "The Press During the Japanese Regime," *Examiner*, 1 July 1963, p. 6, estimates daily circulation at between 30,000 and 40,000.

6. See, for example, *Tribune* and *Sunday Tribune Magazine* issues for August-September 1941. On Roces's stand, Malay interviews, 17 August 1983, 23 February 1984 and 22 June 1984.

7. Grant K. Goodman, "A Sense of Kinship: Japan's Cultural Offensive During the 1930s," *Crossroads*, June 1983, p. 56.

THE TRIBUNE AT WAR

The *Tribune's* first wartime issue heralded the coming of war in banner headlines: U.S. DECLARES WAR ON JAPAN; NICHOLS FIELD RAIDED. The December 9 issue, marked the beginning of an aggressive coverage of the war and its effects in Manila. One reporter remembered: "Everything was topsy-turvy. . . . From that time on it was a terrific experience. Everybody had to pitch in." Reporters covered their beats (Armando Malay, covering the courts, remembers the flood of marriages that swamped the Justices of Peace), but in addition were called on to cover various events as they happened. The people's reaction to the air raids, the government's steps to provide for civil defense, physical damage to buildings, experiences of the survivors of the ill-fated S.S. *Corregidor*, and even the personal experiences of the reporters themselves were culled and put into print. Everything seemed to be happening at the same time, and the *Tribune's* staff was hard pressed to keep up with the events and report them to the public.⁸

But it was war, and there were restrictions. American correspondents went to the field to report from the front lines, and stringers phoned in stories from the provinces, but USAFFE censors sat on stories or blue pencilled them liberally. The Commonwealth and USAFFE issued their own communiques, which were the only authorized sources of information relating to the government and the military. Major LeGrande Diller, MacArthur's public relations officer, arranged for two press conferences daily. Guidelines were issued such as restrictions on photographing anti-aircraft defenses.⁹

Dependence on MacArthur's communiques painted an optimistic picture, and since reports were censored defeats were not mentioned. Filipino heroism was extolled, Japanese losses were emphasized, and Roosevelt's promises of aid on the way were repeated. At the battle-front, it was either "the situation remains unchanged," or, if Japanese troops had landed, "our troops have more than held their own. . . . Our troops behaved well."¹⁰

While reporters sympathized with the necessity of censorship to protect military secrets, one correspondent complained about the "inefficiency, inconsistency and lack of understanding with which

8. *Tribune*, 9 December 1941; Malay interview, 17 August 1983.

9. Clark Lee, *They Call It Pacific*, (New York: Viking Press, 1943), p. 36 *et seq*; Communique, 11:00 AM, 9 December 1941 in Press Releases of the C-in-C's [MacArthur] Daily Communiques.

10. Communiques for 4:00 PM, 20 December; 5:00 PM, 22 December; 11:00 AM, 24 December 1941, in Press Releases.

censorship was administered."¹¹ Sometimes the communiques were not truthful at all. On 11 December, a major victory was reported in Lingayen Gulf, where Philippine Army units had repulsed a major Japanese landing. The afternoon communique announced that "the detachments that landed on the Lingayen coast are being disposed of. Mopping up operations are in progress." The truth was, there was no landing. The soldiers had simply fired at an unidentified boat.¹²

It was thus a surprise for the population of Manila to learn that their city had been declared an open city, that military units were pulling out and that Japanese units were knocking at their door. More bombings occurred, and the office of the DMHM (*Debate-Mabuhay-Herald-Monday Mail*), the TVT's rival chain, was hit and destroyed.

It seems the *Tribune* was still trying to present both sides when it could. On 11 December, probably before the censors could cut it out, the paper carried a story on Japan's War Aims as stated by a spokesman in a Japanese radio broadcast picked up by the United Press's Manila listening post. "The war that has just commenced," stated commentator Hori, "is a natural outcome of continuous machinations of the US and British Empire aimed at disrupting the peace and order of East Asia."¹³ Little was it known that the *Tribune* would carry many more articles like this in the next three years.

As it gradually became evident that the Japanese would occupy Manila, the *Tribune* began toning down its references to the Japanese. Instead of using "enemy" or "Japs," the *Tribune* began using "Imperial Forces" instead. *Tribune* staffers, afraid that their files might be used against them by the Japanese, burned what they could. The TVT offices on 30 and 31 December looked like scenes "straight out of Dante's *Inferno*."¹⁴

On 1 January, Japanese troops bivouacked at Parañaque, and several press men went over to interview them. While most were after exclusive stories, several of the reporters also petitioned the Japanese to be allowed to continue publishing. By that time, though, it seems the Japanese had already decided to take over the TVT chain. As soon as they entered Manila on 2 January, they seized and padlocked the offices

11. Lee, *They Call it Pacific*, p. 40.

12. Communiques for 7:30 AM and 4:00 PM, 11 December 1941, in Press Releases; John Toland, *But Not in Shame* (New York: Signet Books, 1961), p. 104; interview with Brig. Gen. Luis Villareal (ret.), 25 September 1985. He was executive officer of the 21st Field Artillery, which did the firing.

13. *Tribune*, 11 December 1941. Further *Tribune* citations will not be noted if date is given in text.

14. Malay interview, 17 August 1983; Armando J. Malay, *Occupied Philippines* (Manila: Filipiniana Book Guild, 1967), p. 30.

of the *Bulletin* and the *Free Press*. The *Tribune* alone came out that day, calling for prudence on the part of the population.¹⁵

The next day, 3 January 1942, the *Tribune* was still free, but cautious. JAPANESE TROOPS ENTER CITY, it headlined, still carrying many of its prewar features. "Good Morning Judge" was still on the front page, as was the weather. The news, although not very welcome, was reported straightforwardly and there was even a notice from the American High Commissioner's office urging businesses to open. But the issue was only two pages, and cost ten centavos. Two days later, the price dropped by half, and there were four pages, but the *Tribune* was issued in tabloid format, and was full of warnings and proclamations. The popular columns were gone. Rafael Roces and Amando Dayrit had left the paper to join the guerrillas. Dave Boguslav, an American national, was incarcerated with the rest of the enemy nationals. Joe Bautista continued to be listed as editor of the *Tribune*, but it was now under the eyes of the Japanese.

By 5 January, the first censors had entered the *Tribune* offices. The staff was shocked when one of them, apparently tired from a long hike, took his shoes off and asked for a basin of water, and then and there washed his feet for all to see. A certain Mr. Isogai took charge of censoring the paper, and stayed in the office till the paper was put to bed.¹⁶

Why Roces allowed the Japanese to use his paper has been debated. Armando Malay states it was the "policy of the Roces family not to fight." Others on the staff believed that Roces was for collaboration at that time, that he and Pedro Aunario of *La Vanguardia* believed in the might of the Japanese. Others felt that because the TVT was Roces's life, he could not bear to have it shut down or leave his hands. Mauro Mendez, who had been editorial writer for the *Herald*, wrote that the newspaper was "the mainstay of the family fortune. The old Roces had fastened all his interests upon it."¹⁷

For the first three weeks, the paper was under Japanese civilian control. In the third week, the Japanese Army's Propaganda Corps, the *Sendenbu*, took over. The paper was still Roces's, except that he now had no control over it. The staff remained largely intact, and "Independent Filipino Daily" continued to fly in the staff box, but the paper

15. Eliseo Quirino, *A Day to Remember* (Manila: Benipayo Press, 1961), p. 52.

16. Malay interview, 17 August 1983. Letter, Capt. Junsuke Hitomi to Motoe Terami-Wada, 16 September 1978, fixes the date of entry of the *Sendenbu* personnel (translated copy with author). Capt. Hitomi (then a lieutenant) was with the *Hodobu*.

17. Malay interviews, 17 August 1983 and 23 Feb. 1984; Sylvia Mendez-Ventura, *Mauro Mendez: From Journalism to Diplomacy* (Quezon City: UP Press, 1977), p. 91.

had changed. It was no longer independent. It was now conquered and controlled. Never again would it recover its prewar standing.

JAPANESE POLICY AND CONTROL

The Japanese military plan of conquest was accompanied by a plan of political, economic and cultural control. In February 1942, Military Order Number 2 set the major lines along which the Philippines would develop, including the propagation of Filipino culture (to develop the Asian spirit in the Filipino), the spread of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere concept, the introduction of Japanese culture and language, the diffusion of vocational and elementary education, and the promotion of love of labor.¹⁸

Control of information was basic in achieving these objectives. Accordingly, the Japanese Military Administration on 7 February issued a proclamation requiring all publications to secure a permit before they could publish. Censorship was mandatory, and anyone who violated the rules would "be punished in accordance with the Military Laws." The *Tribune*, of course had been subject to direct censorship since the Japanese entered Manila.¹⁹

Information was also to be controlled at the source. Jorge B. Vargas, Chairman of the Executive Commission, instructed government officials and employees that all press releases, statements, notices and interviews intended for publication required the approval of the Director General of the Japanese Military Administration. Henceforth, any news had to be submitted to Vargas's office, which would then forward the drafts, with their translations, to the Japanese. The Bureau of Communications took Vargas's letter seriously and required every employee to read and initial the circular propagating it. Employees were warned that "anyone found disobeying these instructions may be separated from the service."²⁰

In addition to direct censorship, long-range propaganda plans were drafted and put into effect. The Japanese authorities believed that "the cultural standard of the Philippines was comparatively higher than other members of the Co-Prosperity Sphere" because of the American educational system.²¹ Thus, these plans had to be well-thought out.

18. *Official Journal of the Japanese Military Administration*, Vol. I, p. 14.

19. Proclamation, 7 February 1942, in *Journal of the Japanese Military Administration*, Vol. 1, p. 12. (This proclamation was also published in the *Tribune*, 8 and 9 February 1942.)

20. Vargas's letter, 9 May 1942, quoted in Bureau of Communications Circular No. 4, 16 June 1942, in Japanese Occupation Papers (UP), Folder 35.

21. Hitomi letter to Terami-Wada.

Within the occupation army was the *Sendenbu*, or Propaganda Corps, which was responsible for the creation and execution of propaganda plans, as well as the neutralization of enemy counter-propaganda. Because of the unsavory connotation of its name, the *Sendenbu* became the *Hodobu*, or Department of Information in August 1942.²²

Hodobu members were professionals in their respective fields—journalists, painters, movie technicians and so forth. The organization was based on a similar group in the Nazi Army, which had been successful in Europe. However the Hodobu group that went to the Philippines had been hurriedly pulled together on the eve of the war. About four or five members had been to the Philippines before and could speak Spanish and Tagalog. The entire group, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Tomoshige Katsuya, comprised eleven officers and around eighty civilians, with several soldiers attached. Initial instructions of the Hodobu were to seize newspaper companies and reopen them as soon as possible under their control, to spread propaganda, seize and control radio stations and all radio broadcasting equipment, and reopen movie theaters as soon as possible. The unit landed with the Japanese forces in Atimonan, and immediately began distributing leaflets to Filipinos they met (including, on one occasion, looters in an abandoned town). They arrived in Manila on 5 January 1942 and immediately took steps to further the propaganda efforts.²³

The ultimate aim of propaganda was to “facilitate the defense of the Philippines and the operation of the Army administration,” according to the propaganda plan of 10 June 1942. In line with this, cultural propaganda was to be carried out with the related aims of freeing the Filipinos from dependence on America, allying them with the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, encouraging them to cooperate with the army, and promoting perseverance in the occupation. Specifically, the Hodobu was to emphasize that America was responsible for starting the East Asian War, clarify the war aims of Japan, disclose the history of the clever oppression and exploitation of the Philippines by America, emphasize the ideals of East Asian Co-Prosperity, and thoroughly drive home the strength of Japan and the fact that the Japanese Army was an Imperial Army. At the same time it was to publicize the decline of the British and American position

22. Terami-Wada, Motoe, “The Cultural Front in the Philippines, 1942–1945: Japanese Propaganda and Filipino Resistance in Mass Media” (unpublished thesis, UP College of Arts and Sciences, 1984), p. 107; interview with Capt. Junsuke Hitomi, 6 June 1985 (in Kyoto).

23. Ibid.; Hitomi interview.

and emphasize the futility of dependence on America and resistance to Japan. It was also to emphasize the necessity of diligence and effort in the building of the Philippines, and thoroughly propagate the policies of the Army.²⁴

In 1943, the plan emphasized the same basic points but placed more stress on the inevitability of a Japanese victory and stimulating greater cooperation with the military administration and the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. "Lingering American concepts must be destroyed," and the guerrillas should be convinced of the futility of resistance. "Thorough indoctrination" was deemed necessary to inform the public of the "true" situation. In addition, the propaganda officers were instructed to "make every effort to build up a sense of confidence in the Japanese Army among the people. At the same time they were to attempt to strengthen the people's determination to win the war." Spreading the Japanese language also became part of the propaganda plan.²⁵

In 1944, with the Philippines independent in name, the plan still contained the same basic thrusts, except that there also was an added item: cooperation with the Laurel government. With the war turning for the worse for the Japanese, and a majority of Filipinos either supporting the resistance or else not participating actively enough in Japanese and government programs, the Hodobu plan stated: "The Philippine people must be convinced that they cannot remain aloof when all the nations of the world are in the midst of the present upheaval." This policy resulted in an increase in articles and editorials condemning fence sitting. Furthermore, "in this second year of independence, Filipinos must strive to improve conditions within the country. We must make it clear that the present pressing duty of the Filipinos is to establish peace." This was passing the buck and neglected entirely the effects of the Japanese military and economic policies, which gave rise to the worsening conditions in the country.²⁶

24. Watari Group [14th Army] Plan of Propaganda, 10 June 1942 in Allied Translator and Interpreter Service (ATIS), Enemy Publication No. 167, Discipline of Imperial Troops in the Philippines, and Army Propaganda Measures, 12 March 1944 (mimeographed), p. 6. Japanese goals and directions, gleaned from the publications only, can be found in Victor Gosiengfiao, "The Japanese Occupation: The Cultural Campaign," in Cynthia Lumbea and Teresita Maceda (eds.), *Rediscovery* (Quezon City: National Bookstore, 1977), and Rafaelita Soriano, "The Japanese Occupation of the Philippines, with Special Reference to Propaganda, 1941-1945" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1948).

25. Watari Group Propaganda and Pacification Plan, 29 December 1942 in ADVATIS Enemy Publications No. 343, Reports on Counterintelligence, Propaganda and Fifth Column Activities in the Philippines, 1945, pp. 5-6.

26. Watari Group Propaganda Plans for January 1944, in *ibid.*, pp. 53-60.

Propaganda was to make the most of the amnesty orders, and the Hodobu members were instructed to "counteract American notions of freedom and hedonism, and instill in its place a spirit of true, hard labor." Focus was also to be given to increased production of food stuffs, and the ideal of self-sufficiency was to be promoted, as were the various economic plans of the Laurel government.²⁷

The anti-American line, which apparently had not been effective, was to be strengthened by bringing to light "the tyrannical acts of the United States at the time of the Philippine-American war. . . . All possible means will be used to build up anti-American feeling."²⁸

The various other propaganda lines evident in the *Tribune* were all logical corollaries which stemmed from the basic policy plans. They were building Japan up as a leader of Asia, emphasizing Japanese culture, turning back to traditional Philippine culture and nurturing nationalism, portraying the evils of western and especially American culture. But the Hodobu had failed to reckon with the true Filipino culture and experience. The 1943 propaganda plan suggested: "We, too, must come to understand the Philippines."²⁹ Some Japanese took this seriously, but it apparently did not go very far beyond individual action.

The result of these plans brought forth half-truths, distortions and even outright lies. To prevent the Filipinos from learning what was being reported in the outside world, the military administration banned listening to shortwave broadcasts and required radio sets to be reconditioned so they could not receive Allied shortwave broadcasts. Naturally, all ties with the prewar news agencies, the Associated Press, United Press, and Reuters were cut. All foreign news came via the Japanese news agency, Domei. Further control of information dissemination was the registration of all mimeograph machines and typewriters.³⁰

The press, and especially the *Tribune*, was expected to play a major role in the projection of propaganda. The local press was keyed to policies followed in Japan, the ideals of which were summarized in a little booklet, *Our Mission Today*, written by Hidezo Kaneko, of the Manila Shimbun-sha (Manila Newspaper Company).³¹

Kaneko lambasted the American press, stating that it overemphasized profit, was controlled by the Jews (instead of journalism, it became

27. Ibid., p. 54. .

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid., p. 7.

30. *Tribune*, 27 May and 25 July 1942, 10 January 1943.

31. Hidezo Kaneko, "Mission of Journalism," in Hidezo Kaneko and Kozo Kaito, *Our Mission Today* (Manila: Nippon Bunka Kaikan, 1943).

"Jewnalism"), and Freemasons (who adopted the "Three 'S' Policy"—sports, screen and sex—to "weaken and enslave the people of the world"). American journalism was irresponsible and sales and scoop oriented, to the detriment of the country's fighting spirit.

The Japanese press, on the other hand which was to set the example was seen as a weapon, "not different from a machinegun or an airplane." In the New Order of journalism, "newspapermen's duties and work are no longer different from those of the armed forces. The only distinction lies in the use of the sword and the pen. . . . The papers daily published are intended solely for the benefit of the state." The press must "supply the public with impartial and unbiased news" which was independent of capitalists and politicians, but which must not contain news that would endanger the nation and its people. "The more the paper is intended for national purpose, the more it sells," wrote Kaneko. The journalist was to assure this by using techniques to arouse the interest of the public, even if the news was not particularly interesting but was important in making government policies understood. Rather than being an impassioned observer, a mirror to present realities, the press could and should serve as a lens to focus issues and direct people down the right path being propagated by the Japanese government.

Lieutenant Colonel Yoshio Nakashima, successor to Lt. Col. Katsuya as head of the Hodobu, stated: "The irresponsible, licentious liberty of the press and of speech so often misunderstood in the past for 'freedom of the press' has no place in the scheme of things. Our policy is, very emphatically, not to stifle or to curtail freedom of speech or of the press but, on the contrary, to encourage and give support to the formation and expression of a conscientious and constructive public opinion in the Philippines."³² This, of course, was part of the propaganda scheme and did not reflect the realities of censorship and other control methods so obviously in use.

Pedro Aunario, the "old man of Philippine journalism" and editor of the *La Vanguardia* summarized the Philippine press in the New Order (but conveniently overlooked the realities):

1. It reconciles the objectives of commercial advertising with the ideals of the state or nation without sacrificing the public welfare to the interest of a particular commercial enterprise or individual.
2. There does not reign the old rivalry between journalistic enterprises.

32. *Tribune*, 23 October 1942.

3. It renders a higher service to the public morality by not publishing in its pages scandalizing events like detailed stories of sensational crimes, robberies and murders that present the seamy and degenerated side of humanity.
4. It promotes national unity by banning from its pages articles that are politically partisan or fanatically sectarian or religious, and at the same time, giving importance to the section for letters from the readers to discuss matters of general interest.
5. It is an effective instrument for the diffusion of culture by frequently sponsoring literary and musical contests.
6. It develops mental dynamism in the youth.
7. It is equally interested in promoting the physical vigor and the spiritual strength of the people.
8. It is a great force in the task of correcting the frivolities and vanities which the materialistic American civilization left impressed on our character.
9. Being in daily contact with the people, it is the best source of sound principles with which to nourish the heart and the mind and constitute a force for a sound collective discipline.
10. With more effectiveness than the radio, the pulpit, the stage and screen, and other agencies of information, the present Nippon-Philippines press is the best advocate of New Asia.³³

Occasionally, the Japanese would try to play down their censorship of the newspapers: "Press censorship under the military is not quite as distressing as it may seem to many. Except for the fact that the articles are gone over every night by the members of the Department of Information of the Japanese Military Administration, the publication of the *Tribune*, together with its sister papers, the *Vanguardia* and the *Taliba*, goes on in its normal way." President Laurel also publicly rationalized that "censorship is only a limitation of the freedom of the press, not suppression." The Japanese even tried to inculcate a sense of freedom by claiming that self-censorship was in effect, but everyone knew, and the Japanese themselves admitted, that the censors checked copy nightly.³⁴

To give a guise of normalization, and also to consolidate control, the Chief of the Department of Information, Japanese Army, in Tokyo, ordered the Tokyo *Nichi Nichi* Shimbun-sha and the Osaka *Mainichi* Shimbun-sha, sister papers and the foremost newspapers in Japan, to

33. Pedro Aunario, "The New Era and Philippine Journalism," *Philippine Review*, April 1943, p. 38. F. B. Icasiano, "The War and the Press," *Philippine Review*, March 1944, echoes the call for a directed press.

34. *Tribune*, 5 January 1943 and 28 November 1943; Lent, "Philippines," p. 203.

form an umbrella newspaper company to manage all newspapers in the Philippines. The civilian company, called the Manila Shimbun-sha, was to absorb existing Japanese newspapers and take control of all others, but all operations, capital and staff members "shall be under the supervision of the Army." Preparations for the transfer of management and date of inauguration were also to be worked out with the military administration.³⁵

The Tokyo *Nichi Nichi* and Osaka *Mainichi*, which had a Manila bureau before the war and had published a special Commonwealth issue for the Philippines in 1935, made plans and, on 9 October, dispatched a team to Manila. The team was surprised that the Military Administration had made no preparations. The military officials claimed ignorance of the order.³⁶

Maj. Gen. Takeji Wachi, Director General of the Japanese Military Administration, issued Military Administration Order No. 63 on 12 October which entrusted the operation of the TVT chain and the Ramon Roces Publications to the Osaka *Mainichi*, while maintaining the Filipino staff. Eight days later, Military Administration Orders Nos. 69 and 70 were issued, expanding the responsibility of the Osaka *Mainichi* to include the Manila *Nichi Nichi* Shimbun-sha, Davao *Nichi Nichi* Shimbun-sha, *Sunday News Co.*, *Bicol Herald*, *Manila Bulletin*, *Free Press*, Carmelo and Bauermann Printing Plant, Creed Printing Plant, and Philippine Education Company. The Army was to buy all these companies ("the amount of money to be spent for this purchase shall be decided later") before turning them over to the new Manila Shimbun-sha.³⁷

The formal inauguration of the Manila Shimbun-sha was held in the offices of the *Tribune*. The Japanese newspapermen and managers, military officials and Filipino staff were all present as Alejandro Roces was presented with a check, drawn on the Bank of Taiwan, formally marking the purchase of the TVT by the Army. Roces received the check with misty eyes. The newspaper was Roces's life, and he could not accept the sale. He never cashed the check, but he never returned to the TVT office again.³⁸

35. Mainichi Shimbun-sha, *Tozai Namboku* [The Four Directions] (Tokyo?: Mainichi Shimbun-sha, n.d.), p. 92. Newspaper management in occupied Southeast Asia was assigned to different companies: Java was placed under *Asahi Shimbun*, Burma under *Yomiuri Shimbun*, Malaya, Shonan [Singapore], Sumatra and North Borneo under the Domei News Agency and a conglomeration of small newspaper companies. (*Tribune*, 1 November 1942).

36. *Ibid.*, p. 93.

37. *Ibid.*, p. 94.

38. Malay interviews, 17 August 1983, 23 February and 22 June 1984.

The Manila Shimbun-sha ostensibly marked the shift of newspaper control from military to civilian hands. Publicly, the company was to further clarify "the invulnerable position of the Nippon Empire" and to make "more thoroughly understood the purport of the Military Administration in the Philippines, and to propel with greater force the materialization of the New Philippines." The 10 September directive, though, kept operations and finances of the Manila Shimbun-sha under the supervision of the army. The censors, in uniform, came in every evening and checked copy nightly. In case of trouble, erring reporters were called to Kempeitai headquarters at Fort Santiago.³⁹

The old *Tribune* files had to make room for photographs of the New Order. Malay, designated librarian with the loss of his beat, had to clear the photo files to make way for new material. Photographs of prewar weddings gave way to photographs of the Japanese Emperor and other ranking officials. These were not ordinary photos. One had to be reverent to them, or else be reprimanded for carelessness.⁴⁰

All finances were apparently provided by the Japanese Military Administration, and managed by the Manila Shimbun-sha. As a result there were fewer ads, a far cry from the prewar newspaper. And yet the Manila Shimbun-sha claimed its operations were not in the red until mid or late 1944.⁴¹

With the declaration of Philippine independence on 14 October 1943 the Manila Shimbun-sha changed its name to Philippine Publications to reflect the change. But the staff and purposes remained the same. The Hodobu continued to censor the paper directly, and issued directives. One such directive, issued in December 1943, ordered the publication of a speech of General Kuroda, third Commander-in-Chief of Japanese Forces in the Philippines, as well as photographs highlighting Japanese military might. "The contents of the newspaper will be controlled," (as if they weren't already!) "in order to increase their popularity and to make certain that they are catering to the interests of the people," the directive continued. "One group of reporters will travel around to all districts and report on the developments in those districts since the establishment of independence and on the people's cooperation with the new Philippine government."⁴² The same direc-

39. *Tribune*, 1 Nov. 1942. Malay once wrote an article on the courts which had some inaccuracies. He was asked to report to Fort Santiago and the *Kempeitai* told him to see Laurel, then Commissioner of Justice (Malay interview, 17 August 1983, 27 December 1986).

40. Malay interviews, 17 August 1983 and 23 February 1984, 27 December 1986.

41. Mainichi Shimbun-sha, *Tozei Namboku*, p. 95.

42. Propaganda Plan for 1944, in ADVATIS, *Enemy Publications*, p. 57; Malay interview, 17 August 1983.

tive also stated: "Our control over Filipino reporters must be increased to insure their cooperation with all our plans." Obviously the reporters were recalcitrant.

Laurel may have been displeased with continued Japanese control of the press after the independence ceremonies, when in a press conference in November 1943, he stated: "The Filipino people must have their own press, especially since the Philippines is now free and independent."⁴³ However, he does not seem to have taken concrete action to alleviate the control of the press. Instead, he maintained control of news sources in the government by creating, in January 1944, the Board of Information which was tasked with controlling, directing and supervising "all information and publicity activities of the government." Among its specific tasks was the establishment of "a more intelligent and enlightened public opinion and thus bring about complete restoration of peace and order, popular cooperation with the government, and accelerated national rehabilitation and reconstruction." Laurel had his own ideas on how to run the government, and perhaps was also dissatisfied with the prewar press. Hence the creation of this board. Appointed to head it was Arsenio Luz, who had been in charge of the Manila Carnival before the war. The executive officer was Vicente J. Guzman, of the *Tribune*, who also was a member of the KALIBAPI.⁴⁴

THE TRIBUNE STAFF

The *Tribune* staff was inherited by the Japanese almost intact. Boguslav was interned along with the other American civilians, but strangely his name was still carried in the staff box for the first few months of 1942. Amando Dayrit continued writing "Good Morning Judge" until around 6 January 1942. After that he left the paper and joined the underground. Rafael "Liling" Roces never wrote his column under the Japanese. He, too, left the paper and joined the "Free Philippines" resistance group.⁴⁵

The rest of the staff had little choice. Armando Malay had to keep his job because he had a family to feed. He couldn't join the guerrillas because he had no training, and he doubted that he could survive guerrilla life.

43. *Tribune*, 28 November, 1943.

44. *Tribune*, 19 January 1944; Arsenio Luz, "Why the Board of Information," *Philippine Review*, March 1944, pp. 14-15.

45. Most of the details of the staff are taken from interviews with Malay, 23 February 1984 and 22 June 1984, and interview with Vicente Barranco, 10 June 1984.

Alejandro Roces was never strongly pro-American, and, since the paper was his life, he opted to cooperate with the Japanese in the beginning. A number have said that he was impressed by the Japanese. But after the Manila Shimbun-sha was formed and he was given the check, he grew embittered. His idea was simply that the Japanese could use his paper and presses, but he would never sell. The bitterness and sadness in him from the Japanese take-over, as well as the assassination of his son and daughter-in-law at the gate of his house in 1943, led him to suffer a heart attack, from which he died. After his death, Joaquin, his son, became an ordinary employee in the Manila Shimbun-sha, with no special privileges.⁴⁶

Joe Bautista, titular editor of the *Tribune*, had no say over editorial policy, and simply went through the routine of putting the paper to bed every night. The "genial, roly-poly, cigar-smoking" Bautista was famous for having been the first reporter in the Philippines to cover news using a plane. He had developed the prewar provincial news section and rose from the ranks to become prewar associate editor. Despite his experience, his role was now just mechanical. He, along with Francisco B. Icasiano, went to Japan in 1943 to attend a conference of journalists in Tokyo, and wrote a short piece on his impressions of this trip for the *Philippine Review*. An article on Prime Minister Hideki Tojo's visit to the Philippines published in the *Tribune* carried his byline, but whether he actually wrote it, or was forced to write it, is not known.⁴⁷

More influential than Bautista was Icasiano, the editor of the prewar *Sunday Tribune Magazine*, who "carried much weight" not only with the Japanese but with the Roces family as well. He was a well-known writer before the war (his weekly column, "From My Nipa Hut" was well read). He had also co-edited the periodical *Oriental Arts and Crafts* as well as an anthology of Quezon's speeches. Icasiano was a Japanophile and had gone to Japan in April 1939 as head of the First Philippine Culture Tour of the Far East. He was close to several Japanese, and one *Tribune* staffer remembered: "We feared him, but what could we do?" His column remained a regular feature of the *Sunday Tribune Magazine* during the occupation, still bylined "Mang Kiko." He also wrote another column, "Off and On," for the regular *Tribune* where he wrote as "Maharajah." Icasiano also is believed to have written some of the editorials.⁴⁸

46. Malay interview, 17 August 1983; Marcial P. Lichauco, *Dear Mother Putnam* (N.p.: privately printed, 1949), p.107-109.

47. People of the Philippines vs. Jose P. Bautista, People's Court Case No. 3525, Information, U. P. Archives.

48. Malay interview, 17 August 1983; Barranco interview, 10 June 1984; Grant K.

Other literary figures who frequented the *Tribune* offices were Pedro Aunario, editor of *La Vanguardia*, Leon Maria Guerrero (who wrote occasional pieces under the pseudonym Ignacio Javier) and Aurelio Alvero.⁴⁹

The regular staff continued covering their beats in the early part of the occupation. Armando Malay covered the courts when there were still stories to be covered. Corazon Grau, society editor, together with her sister, Consuelo, covered the society news in the column "Brevities," and Pedro Hernandez continued covering the sports scene. The artists, among them Gat and Tony Velasquez (of "Kenkoy" fame), were occasionally called to illustrate the paper, but with the drop in the number of pages, these occasions were few. The photographers, Honesto Vitug, M. Q. Alcantara and others, were likewise given assignments occasionally, but film was limited and Japanese photographers were many.⁵⁰

Other reporters had no beats to cover. Crispin Gonzalez had no shipping news to report. Vicente Navarro's beat, the National Assembly, was gone until 1943 (and even then its activities were hardly reported), and Victorino Lorico's business scene had dried up. With news being controlled at the source and a large influx of Japanese newspapermen taking over active reportage, many of the Filipino reporters were assigned routine jobs instead. Malay, because he minored in library science at UP, was designated librarian. Others became copywriters or proofreaders. Occasionally, they would be given special assignments to cover specific events, but these were not too frequent. Others were invited to contribute articles to the *Sunday Tribune Magazine* or other magazines, or were asked to deliver talks over the radio.⁵¹

Better off, by circumstance or by choice, were three veteran staffers and a newcomer to the *Tribune*. Ernesto del Rosario, Mariano Ma. Ganaden and Roberto Villanueva were *Tribune* men who were favored by the Japanese in being given assignments. Roberto Villanueva had co-edited Icasiano's Asian culture magazine and had studied in Japan for a while. Del Rosario, a police reporter before the war, became

Goodman, *Liberator*, Vol. I No. 4 (October 1944), p. 12 confirms Maharajah's identity. The anthology of Quezon's speeches is Pedro de la Llana and F. B. Icasiano (comp.), *Quezon in His Speeches*, (Manila: State Publishing Co., 1937).

49. Malay interviews, 23 February and 22 June 1984; Barranco interview, 10 June 1984; interview with David Sternberg, 9 May 1978. Interview with David Sternberg, 9 May 1978 confirms Ignacio Javier as Leon Ma. Guerrero.

50. Malay interviews, Barranco interview.

51. Ibid.

KALIBAPI public relations officer at one time. Vicente J. Guzman, a *Bulletin* man, had gone to Japan before the war to cover the Far Eastern Olympics, and was invited by the Japanese to join the *Tribune*. The four were given choice assignments and often had their bylines on the front page. Guzman went to Japan in 1943, with the first Filipino delegation to Japan. He was active in propagating the KALIBAPI goals, and was later taken from the *Tribune* by Arsenio Luz and placed in the Department of Information.⁵²

Two other new faces on the *Tribune* staff were Vicente Barranco and Esmeraldo de Leon, both from the *Herald*, but who had worked for the Japanese-owned *Sunday Informer* before the war. Barranco had also covered the Japanese consulate and was familiar with its staff. Shortly after the Japanese had taken over Manila, a Mr. Okazaki, member of the Japanese consulate before the war, approached Barranco to offer him a position in the *Tribune*. Being a journalist by profession and having a family, Barranco accepted. De Leon was probably approached similarly.⁵³

Most writers seem to have played safe and did not write outwardly pro-Japanese articles. Sports and society news, of course, posed no problem, and articles on Philippine culture and history, which the Japanese encouraged, were nationalistic. But political news, already controlled at the source, was the domain of a select few, and the battlefield was off limits to Filipino journalists.

Occasionally the Japanese would add to what Filipinos had written. Armando Malay was once asked to do a piece on Tojo for a new magazine, *Free Philippines* (different from the magazine of the same name circulating among the guerrillas). He obliged, but wrote in a tame manner. The Japanese, however, added lines which made the article strongly supportive of the Prime Minister. When he saw it, Malay requested that his name be dropped, for it was no longer his article. The editor replied that he could not remove it. The best he could do was to change the name. As published, it was attributed to "A. Marai."⁵⁴

Life for press personnel was stable, but like most other fixed-income professions at that time, the pay was insufficient. The Manila Shimbun-sha supplemented this with rice, but even so it was not

52. Ibid.; *Liberator*, Osmeña number (1944), p. 24 and Vol. I No. 4 (October 1944), p. 41; *People of the Philippines vs. Vicente J. Guzman*, People's Court Case 1851, Information, in *People's Court Records*, U.P. Archives.

53. Barranco interview.

54. Malay interview, 22 June 1984. The article came out as A. Marai, "Premier Tozyo: Man of the Hour," *Free Philippines*, October-November 1943, p. 27.

enough, and some of the employees had sidelines. They got involved in small buy-and-sell businesses or opened small shops.⁵⁵

Other Manila Shimbun-sha employees got involved with the guerrillas. Pablo Viray and Dion Castillo-Ynigo were actively involved in intelligence gathering. Both were later arrested by the Japanese and executed. Their arrest came as a surprise and shock to most staffers, who had not known how deeply the two had been involved in underground operations. Vicente Barranco was connected with the Sixth Military District, and Malay provided what he knew of the floor plans of the *Tribune* offices to one unit.⁵⁶

The establishment of the Manila Shimbun-sha brought with it the influx of several professional Japanese newspapermen. All in all, there were around 150 Japanese staffers from the Osaka *Mainichi* and Tokyo *Nichi Nichi* who came, the bulk being assigned to do editorial work. About thirteen Japanese took charge of management, and some thirty supervised printing operations. A banquet was held for Japanese and Filipino newsmen at the Manila Hotel on 22 October 1942, shortly after the Manila Shimbun-sha began operating. Col. Nakashima stressed the role of the press and the importance of cooperation in running the press. In practice, of course, it was the Japanese who directed the press.⁵⁷

President of the Manila Shimbun-sha was Masao Matsuoka, long-time member of the Osaka *Mainichi* Shimbun-sha and prewar editor of the *Keijininippon* in Korea. He became ill, though, and returned to Japan in early 1944, where he died. He was succeeded by Junji Yamada. Matsuoka (and later Yamada) headed the editorial section, concurrently with Hidezo Kaneko. The managing director was Taro Hirano, and Tetsubo Ando directed the mechanical section. Fukuichi Fukumoto, prewar Manila bureau chief for the Osaka *Mainichi*, played a key role as general manager of the Manila Shimbun-sha, since he was familiar with most of the key personalities in the Philippines.⁵⁸

Placed directly in charge of the *Tribune* were Emiiru Masatomi, officially listed as managing editor, and Iwao Matsunaga and Eisaburo Kusano, as assistant editors. Masatomi and Matsunaga seem to

55. Barranco interview; Malay interview 22 June 1984.

56. Barranco interview; Malay interview 17 August 1983, 22 June 1984.

57. *Tribune*, 23 October 1942; *Mainichi* Shimbun-sha, pp. 95-97. *Tozei Namboku* lists the names of Japanese newspapermen who went to the Philippines with Manila Shimbun-sha; pp.101-302 contain reminiscences and brief career histories of those who were in the Philippines.

58. *Mainichi* Shimbun-sha, *Tozei Namboku*; Sumio Makino, "In Memory of Masao Matsuoka," *Philippine Review*, December 1944. The Vargas scrapbooks (Vargas Museum) contain Christmas cards from Fukuichi Fukumoto from 1935-40).

have written most of the editorials, and Masatomi (his first name was Emil, but pressure to Japanize it resulted in its being spelled "Emiiru") additionally wrote a daily column, "Our Tomorrow." With the advent of independence in 1943, he changed it to "Our Today."⁵⁹

Masatomi was American-trained, was easy to get along with and regularly went out with the Filipino journalists on their drinking jaunts. One day he remarked, "I don't think we shall win this war." The Filipino writers were shocked, but controlled their emotions lest it be a trick to reveal their true loyalties.⁶⁰

Another prolific writer (he wrote essays for the *Sunday Tribune Magazine*) with long-time Philippine connections was George Enosawa, who had written a biography on Quezon before the war, *From Nipa Hut to President*. He had been active in the Philippine Society of Japan and had edited its monthly, *Philippines-Japan*.

The other Japanese reporters and correspondents, some recruited from the Japanese community in Manila, included veterans of twenty years' service and some of Japan's best writers. It was they who covered the bigger stories and wrote the extremely pro-Japanese articles. They also wrote the war dispatches.

In addition to those regularly connected with the Manila Shimbun-sha, the Japanese Military Administration invited some of Japan's most prominent novelists and writers, among them Shiro Ozaki, Yojiro Ishikawa, Hidemi Kon, Ashihei Hino and philosopher Kiyoshi Miki, to visit and interact with the Filipino intelligentsia.⁶¹

CONCLUSION

There was considerable talent on the *Tribune* staff in January 1942 and it richly deserved the title of "Independent Filipino Daily." But the Japanese changed all that when they transformed the *Tribune* into a propaganda mouthpiece for the occupation forces. A later article (*Philippine Studies* 38 / Second Quarter) will discuss more deeply the nature of the Japanese control of the *Tribune* which made it an object of contempt and the butt of jokes and insults from its Filipino readers.

59. Malay interview, 17 August 1983; Barranco interview; file card on Manila Shimbun-sha in Malay files.

60. Ibid.

61. Hitomi letter to Terami-Wada.