



PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

THE PHILIPPINES—This UPI newsmag shows locations in the Philippine Islands, a nation of plantations, mines, jungles and forests making it a raw-material producing country. It is the only sizeable overseas colony the United States ever had. (UPI)

Philippines Is Hot, Wild Country With Potential Promise

By DON C. BECKER
United Press International

MANILA (UPI) — The Philippines is a hot, wild country — the only sizeable overseas colony the United States ever had — where politics, poverty and potential promise underlie almost everything.

It is perhaps the best-educated country in Southeast Asia. Filipinos have a flair for the artistic, for hospitality and sometimes for violent emotional reactions.

With its Spanish-American colonial background, this island nation of 30 million people is unlike anything else in Asia. Independent since July 4, 1946, the Philippines has some of the characteristics of a South American country.

There is fabulous wealth, controlled in the main by old Spanish families, by a few Americans and by the commercially adept Chinese who are so good at commerce the government has taken steps to legislate them out of many areas of business.

The Philippines is a country of plantations, mines, jungles, forests — a raw-material producing nation. The vast majority of Filipinos live out their lives close to the soil.

There is great poverty. Per capita income is a little over \$100 a year. The so-called middle class has yet to emerge in any strength.

Of Malay Stock
The Filipinos are of Malay stock, with a mixture of Spanish and Chinese. The main language is Tagalog, a Malay tongue. But most literate Filipinos speak English, and many speak Spanish as well.

Manila, with one of the finest natural harbors in the world, is the hub of the nation. Before World War II Manila was described as the Jewel of the Orient, but today it is drab and unimpressive although a young, husky mayor by the name of Antonio J. Villegas has his mind set on changing all that.

From the standpoint of tourism, despite the magnificent sunsets on Manila Bay, the Philippines has a bad reputation, not necessarily deserved. Foreign authors and newspapermen visiting the Philippines inevitably write about lawlessness and make note of the fact that many bars and restaurants are adorned with signs advising customers to check their firearms outside.

Signs of the old Wild West, indeed. Shootings are commonplace — particularly in the wild and woolly provinces. But Filipinos rarely shoot at tourists or foreigners.

Papers Free-Swinging
There are six free-swinging English language newspapers published daily in Manila. There are also six commercial television channels and more than 20 commercial radio stations in the city although the metropolitan population is only just over three million.

Makati, a suburb of Manila, is probably the finest light industrial area in Asia. It is surrounded by four residential districts which are populated by rich Filipinos, Americans, Spaniards, Chinese and other foreigners, including the diplomatic colony. These districts are in bewildering contrast to the slums of Manila, which are among the worst in the world.

The dozens of institutions for higher education include the University of Santo Tomas which was founded by the Spanish in the 17th century. The Philippines has probably more doctors and lawyers than all the rest of Southeast Asia combined.

Nation of Islands
There are 7,100 islands in the republic, but the majority of Filipinos live on only 110 of them, the two largest being densely populated Luzon (49,420 square miles) in the north and Mindanao (36,000 square miles) in the south. They are remem-

bered as bloody World War II battle grounds.

About 6,000 of the islands are less than one square mile in size. The climate is tropical — hot and humid — and temperatures range between 70 and 92 degrees Fahrenheit throughout the year.

From June until September, typhoons roar up out of the western Pacific heading toward the Asian mainland. They often create havoc and cause crop damage as they pass through the Philippines. Rainfall is abundant six months of the year, and Manila gets up to 100 inches annually.

The soil is rich. The Philippines is the world's largest copra producer. Other chief exports are sugar, lumber and iron ore. Rice, which the nation sometimes has to import, is the staple food.

Corruption Widespread
The "fix" is available all over the Philippines, the graft-fighting tactics of President Diosdado Macapagal notwithstanding. It is perhaps most pathetic among some union leaders who have enriched themselves at the expense of the workers by accepting bribe money from employers.

All politicians in the Philippines aren't dishonest, but neither are they all honest. Some pay little or no income taxes although in the house of representatives they have voted themselves fabulous amounts of "discretionary funds" which make them among the highest-paid in the world.

The bureau of internal revenue also is subjected to the temptations of corruption. The government loses countless millions in revenue because it is unable to enforce its tax laws adequately.

Growth Promising
Unquestionably, the Philippines has its problems, but it still has managed an annual economic growth rate of 6 per cent over the last decade. As a U.S. weekly news magazine commented recently, the Philippines seems hopeless compared with the United States or Europe, but if you happen to come from Indonesia or India it doesn't seem nearly so bad. And President Macapagal has started a promising five-year socio-economic program.

If the nation has a single overriding problem it is a lack of respect for law and order. Before the war, during the American regime, oldtimers say the respect existed. Many say it was the Japanese occupation which caused the harm, when lying and stealing were looked upon as patriotic. When the war was over, the disorder continued.

Bank Debits in Area Show Decline

Bank debits for Southwestern Oregon including Curry, Josephine, and Jackson counties decreased in November, 1963, compared to November, 1962, the University of Oregon Bureau of Business Research has reported.

Debits for November, 1963, totaled \$110,768,230. For October, 1963, the total was \$115,599,579, and for November, 1962, the total was \$126,510,901.

Oregon, with 266 banks reporting, had a decrease in bank debits in November, 1963, of 5.3 per cent compared to October, 1963; and an increase of 6.6 per cent compared to November, 1962.

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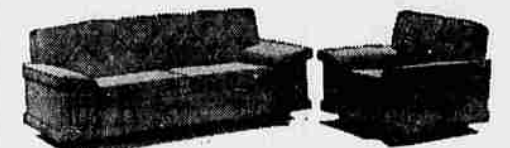
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