

GENERAL ARTEMIO RICARTE y GARCIA: A FILIPINO NATIONALIST

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AS A RESULT OF THE AMERICAN OCCUPATION OF THE PHILIPPINES, especially during the early 1900's, a number of social movements emerged. While some took the form of apocalyptic expressions, others developed into social banditry and still others appeared as nationalistic movements. They developed in an attempt to show their strong defiance against the government established by the United States in the Philippines.

While a majority of the Filipinos belonging to the intelligent, propertied and educated class cooperated heartily with the authorities, a good number of people proved to be irreconcilable. One of them is General Artemio Ricarte y Garcia — “an iron-willed man who defied the Americans down to his last breath,”¹ a patriot who is “the living body, the flesh and blood of the Filipino heroes who chose hardships, misfortune and death to subjugation.”²

The movement he organized assumed nationalistic forms. It cannot be classified as social banditry because in the first place it was not reformist; rather, it was revolutionary in the sense that it did not accept the general framework of the established government. Instead it insisted that the established government must be fundamentally transformed.³ In the second place, its aim was not vengeance on the rich. Neither did it assume the characteristics of an agrarian movement. Nor did Ricarte in any of his pamphlets declare or state anything about having a “New Jerusalem” or of worshipping a supposedly reincarnation of a saint or God for that matter. Though it cannot be denied that the membership was extensive only among the lower and more ignorant classes of the people, it was a truly nationalistic endeavor to overthrow the American government.

Born of poor parents in 1866 in Batac, Ilocos Norte, Ricarte had to work his way through school successfully earning the Certificate of Maestro de Instruccion Primaria from the Escuela Memorial in Ermita. One of the first members of the Katipunan, he held the position of treasurer of the Balangay ng mga Anak Bayan Mapagtiis (the Katipunan name of Francisco de Malabon). He fought during the Battle of San Francisco de Malabon, one

¹ Ben Cañilles Unson, “An Exile Bares His Heart,” *Kislap-Graphic*, XXV (August 27, 1958), p. 32.

² Editorial, “An Offer of Russia to Ricarte If He Returns,” *Herald* (July 28, 1938).

³ See Eric Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels*. New York: Frederick Praeger Publisher, 1959, pp. 10-11. Differentiation between a reformist and a revolutionary.

of the earliest skirmishes between the Filipinos and Spanish forces during the revolution. Throughout the tumultuous years of the Filipino-Hispano hostilities, Ricarte, popularly known then as the *Vibora* (snake),⁴ was always on the forefront leading the Filipino forces. A brigadier-general of the Katipunan under the Magdiwang Council, he consequently occupied the position of Captain-General of the reorganized revolutionary government controlled by the Magdalo Council. He held this position until the time of the signing of the Pact of Biak-na-Bato on December 14, 1897.

Ricarte's encounter with the Americans began with the American occupation of Manila. As early as 1898 he was known to be very much outspoken with regards American intentions over the Philippines. He entertained suspicion and distrust in America's promise to help the Filipinos obtain their freedom from the Spaniards. He even warned General Emilio Aguinaldo saying that the Americans are a more dangerous enemy than the Spaniards. It did not take a long time though to prove his doubts. Soon Fil-American hostilities broke out and American occupied Manila became the target of operations of the Philippine Revolutionary forces.

General Ricarte at this point deemed it necessary to attack Manila and to gain control of it. And to make the attack successful and effective, he issued two circular letters, one dated July 12, 1899 calling for contributions and the other dated October 13 of the same year appealing to the Filipino people to rise in arms against the United States.⁵ This was followed by another letter dated January 2, 1900 addressed to the Lieutenant General who was commanding south of Luzon wherein Ricarte explained that the only way of attaining the liberty and independence of the Filipinos is to strike the blow in the city of Manila because once it is taken the Filipinos shall be able to dominate the suburbs and as the foreigners live in it the Filipinos shall be forced to have direct relations with them. . . "with our heads nobly erect we can demand what we want of them and of the enemy because the first (American) will have to submit to our authority. . ."⁶

Two months after the circulars were passed Ricarte carried out his attack. With a group of Filipino soldiers, he managed to sneak into the city. Unfortunately, the Americans captured him at Paco Bridge. He was detained at the military prison in Anda Street in Intramuros and tried for spying behind American lines. On January 7, 1901 he was deported to Guam together with some *revolucionarios*. In 1902 with the capture of General Emilio Agui-

⁴ "He took the name *Vibora* as his *nom de guerre*, inspired according to him by the off-verse in the New Testament (Matt. 10:16) "Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; Be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves." Leopoldo R. Serrano, "The Misunderstood Patriot and *Vibora*" *Philippine Herald Magazine*, July 26, 1958.

⁵ *Memoirs of General Artemio Ricarte*, National Herces Commission, Manila, 1961. Appendix L Police Record of Artemio Ricarte.

⁶ *Ibid.* Appendix D—Unsigned Draft of a Letter in regard to the attack in Manila in 1900, found among the papers of Ricarte.

naldo and the consequent fall of the Malolos Government all Filipino prisoners and exiles who took their oath of allegiance to the United States were pardoned and sent home. Two of the Filipino exiles however remained adamant: Ricarte and Mabini. Both refused to go back to the Philippines if the price was taking the oath of allegiance to the American Government. In 1903 the two were taken back to Manila. Upon reaching Manila Bay, however, the American authorities did not allow them to leave the ship unless they first took the oath of allegiance. True to his words, General Ricarte refused to take the oath but the Sublime Paralytic, then a very sick man said to Ricarte "Allow me to take the oath that I may see our homeland before I die. I feel that I have only a short while more to live, and if I go with you, I would just be a burden"⁷ and so Mabini took his oath. Meanwhile, the authorities transferred Ricarte to another ship bound for Hongkong where he stayed for another ten months.

But his deportation served only to arouse in him more strongly the desire to free the Philippines from the clutches of the American government. He kept himself abreast with international events especially those pertaining to the Philippines. The Russo-Japanese war over Port Arthur which was then at its height interested him very much. Ricarte believed that a war between these countries would be of great advantage to the Oriental countries most especially to the Philippines in its struggle for independence. He opined that a Russo-Japanese war would signify the rise of all Oriental peoples against the West and believed that the Philippines should take the opportunity not only to gain her independence but to take a part in the great struggle for Oriental emancipation.⁸

While in Hongkong he kept also in close touch with the Hongkong Junta founded by Aguinaldo and with the other Filipinos. When the Katipunan Abuluyan was founded Ricarte was unanimously elected as its president.

On May 1903 a certain Manuel Ruiz Prin of Manila arrived in Hongkong. He introduced himself to the Filipinos there as a representative of the Filipino people and given authority by a so-called Universal Republic of Philippine Democracy to deal with foreign countries regarding the independence of the Philippines. Ruiz it seemed asked Ricarte to introduce him to the other Filipinos in Hongkong. Whether Ruiz was a crook or not Ricarte nevertheless believed in his sincerity and intentions. And since they shared the same cause they worked hand in hand.

In November or early in December 1903 they founded a committee called the Universal Republic of Philippine Democracy with the following as officers and members: President, Rafael de Leon; Secretary, F. G. Rivera; and members: Primitivo Artacho, Roman Francisco, Luis Santos, Mauro

⁷ Guillermo Andaya, "How Ricarte Almost Revived the Revolution," *Philippine Free Press*, Jan. 30, 1960.

⁸ E. del Rosario, "General Artemio Ricarte," *Philippine Review*, 11, June, 1944.

Resurrecion, Petronilo Perez, S. Oligarion, Elias Morales and one Concepcion. The main objective was to secure the independence of the Philippines.⁹ Prior to the formation of this committee, however, Ricarte has been issuing orders (dated September 1903) as director in behalf of a government which he called Gobierno Triunvirato Dictatorial Filipino, the nature of which was purely military. Under this government each province was to have a military governor with the rank of Brigadier General, Colonel, Lieutenant Colonel, or Major according to the importance of the province. Its main objective was the attainment of the independence of the Philippines.¹⁰ To achieve this goal, Ricarte found it necessary to come back to the Philippines to start a revolution to overthrow the United States Government. He expressed this desire to the committee but it was opposed on the ground that it was a very risky plan. But Ricarte determined as he was proceeded with his plan and on December 23, 1903 arrived in the Philippines secretly as a stowaway in a British freighter.

Immediately after his arrival in the Philippines Ricarte started to work. He issued a proclamation under the seal of the Republica Universal Democrata Filipina announcing his arrival in the Philippines and at the same time called upon his Filipino brothers to rise in arms against the United States government and its policy of the "Philippines for the Filipinos" which is "nothing more than a delusion nicely covered with attractive clothes".¹¹ Together with this proclamation Ricarte issued a circular stating certain military penal laws.¹² He also contacted persons who could help him carry out his plans. Jose Muñoz, Mauro Reyes, Felix Almarines, Lauro San Jose, Juan Evangelista and Modesto Victorino were among those who visited General Ricarte and with whom he discussed the military organization initiated by him. Hoping to find assistance from the former revolucionarios, he visited General Emilio Aguinaldo. Much to his disappointment, the first President of the Republic replied that he did not wish to take part in the revolution. He also sought General Pio del Pilar in Pandacan who appeared to be willing to cooperate with Ricarte but turned out to be a turncoat. By this time, his presence became known to the American authorities prompting them to conduct a search all over the city. However some of the Filipino agents deputized to find Ricarte side-tracked his American pursuers and counselled Ricarte instead to return to Hongkong and to leave Manila immediately. But Ricarte dedicated to his goal continued seeking out for his friends like Gregorio Aglipay and Isabelo de los Reyes. Again his conference with

⁹ *Memoirs, op. cit.* Appendix K—Stenographic report of an interrogation put to Artemio Ricarte in the presence of Captain W. S. Grove and Lieutenant Calderon of the Philippine Constabulary, Chief C. H. Trowbridge and Assistant Chief Carl Hard of the City Secret Service of Manila.

¹⁰ *Memoirs, op. cit.* Appendix H—Gobierno Triunvirato Dictatorial Filipino.

¹¹ *Memoirs, op. cit.* Appendix I—Proclamation of Artemio Ricarte announcing his arrival in the islands.

¹² *Ibid.*

them brought only another disappointment as both tried to dissuade him from carrying out his plans picturing the situation of the country knowing that the people would not respond favorably. They seemed to be contented with the American set-up of government. He also tried to seek help from Dr. Dominador Gomez who, like the others, advised him to go back to Hongkong. Dr. Gomez opined that with the doctrine that Taft had set up which is the "Philippines for the Filipinos," the independence of the Philippines would be achieved in three or four years without the necessity of a bloody or armed revolution thus it would be better for Ricarte to go back to Hongkong.

Since he could expect no help from these people, he decided to go to the north hoping to get some support. But before he left, he counselled L. S. Jose, F. Almarines, M. Victorino, and J. Evangelista not to discontinue from organizing revolutionary regiments. To build up their hopes and confidence, Ricarte gave them some pamphlets entitled: *Nuestra Bandera* "Outline of the Plan of Organization and Insignia of the Army". Embodied in this pamphlet was the scheme of government which Ricarte planned to establish in the Philippines with the overthrow of the American Government. Formulated by Manuel Ruiz Prin, it is outlined as follows: "The government was to be known as the *Gobierno Provisional Revolucionario*. Its officers were to be a President, Secretaries, and sub-secretaries of War, Finance, Foreign Affairs and Interior. The archipelago was to be divided into states with Manila as the federal capital. Each state was to be allowed three delegates and two senators to the Federal Congress. Certain fundamental laws were to be declared federal such as: abolition of death penalty, abolition of all prisons and penitentiaries, death penalty for treason, espionage, robbery, rape and insubordination, establishment of universal suffrage, establishment of a jury system, abolition of taking of oaths, freedom of emigration and others. For military purposes the country was to be divided into 8 districts each having a politico-military governor who should have the rank of a secretary who should also be a brigadier general. Assisting him would be 6 councilors with the rank of colonel and a secretary with the rank of major. The central government was to be formed as follows: a president who should also be lieutenant general; 6 councilors, two fiscals, eight military judges, one secretary, two secretaries, twenty-five sub-secretaries.¹³ Contained too in the pamphlet was an exposition of the crimes committed in the Philippines by the United States and a demand for recognition as belligerents.¹⁴ Ricarte also gave them copies of the proclamation he signed (dated December 25, 1903) while in Hongkong printed with the seal of the *Democrata Universal Republica* Supreme Headquarters and the "Proclamation to the Filipino People" signed by Mr. Ruiz Prin in Hongkong dated September 15, 1903.

¹³ *Memoirs, op. cit.* Appendix G—Ricarte's Scheme of Government.

¹⁴ *Memoirs, Ibid.*

Blank copies of appointment signed by Mr. Manuel Ruiz as president and Ricarte as Vice-President of the above mentioned government were also distributed. The appointments were of two classes: one of generals and field officers and others for officers.

Starting from Pasay, Ricarte went to Marilao, Bulacan, Cabiao, Nueva Ecija and Pampanga. In Pampanga he met a certain Nicolas Calvo who was a former officer during the insurrection and later a corporal in the constabulary under the American government. Calvo and his soldiers agreed to join the revolt and so upon their return to Vigan where they were permanently stationed, they laid out the plans for the uprising. As planned, they seized the barracks and secured a number of arms. Calvo liberated the prisoners in the jail, armed them and left with his detachment. Unfortunately the Constabulary caught them. Some of those arrested were sentenced to death while others to forty years imprisonment and a fine of \$10,000.¹⁵

After his unsuccessful campaign in the north Ricarte decided to come back to Manila where he conferred with Aurelio Tolentino, a Tagalog playwright known for his plays which depicted the Philippines' struggle for independence from the United States. Tolentino by this time had earned already the ire of the Americans. Tolentino like the others did not consider the plans of Ricarte as wise since the people seemed contented with the governmental set-up set by the United States. He even suggested to Ricarte to submit himself to the authorities. Later, however, Tolentino joined hands with Ricarte. His plays were declared seditious and therefore were censured for public performance.

Aside from Tolentino, Ricarte sought too the help of General Macario Sakay, president of the Katipunan Katagalugan.¹⁶ He at once proved to be willing to cooperate with Ricarte. However, the two soon parted ways due to disagreement over the legitimacy of each other's authority—that is—as head of the Republic of the Philippines. Moreover, Ricarte much to the dismay of Sakay appointed Tolentino as dictator of the Gobierno Triunvirato Dictatorial.

And so Ricarte and Tolentino began their work by filling in military commissions and distributing them in Manila. They wrote also letters to E. Aguinaldo, P. Lichauco, P. Ocampo and others. But they began to be disgruntled when the people on whom they depended so much for a successful revolution were not sympathetic to their cause. It became evident to

¹⁵ "Report of Secretary of Commerce and Police," in *Report of the Philippine Commission* (1904), p. 425.

¹⁶ Upon the Capture of General Emilio Aguinaldo by the United States Army on 1901 and his consequent taking of the oath of allegiance to the U.S., Sakay assumed the leadership as head of the Republic of the Philippines which he called the Katipunan Katagalugan included all the barrios, towns and provinces of the Philippines . . . that is, Jolo, Mindanao, Visayas, the Ilokos and other places which are truly Tagalog. See Antonio K. Abad, *General Macario L. Sakay: Was He a Bandit or a Patriot*. Manila: J. B. Feliciano and Sons Printers-Publishers, 1955.

both that they must either surrender to the authorities and suffer the consequences of their acts, or they must do as others had done and join the bands of outlaws and await death from starvation or capture by the constabulary.¹⁷ For this reason Tolentino decided to pave the way for surrender and wrote a long and threatening letter to the Governor General demanding a solution of the problem favorable to Ricarte and himself and to others connected with the conspiracy, picturing the fearful alternative of "bloody revolution" should the demand not be complied with.¹⁸ After patiently waiting in vain for a reply, they decided to separate ways to gain probably more followers—Tolentino to Camarines Norte and Ricarte to Mariveles.

Ricarte's campaign began to alarm the authorities. For this reason, a reward of ₱2,500 was offered for his capture. To make himself less conspicuous and to be able to carry out his strategy Ricarte worked as a laborer in the American arsenal in Mariveles, Bataan. He planned to seize the firearms and ammunitions in the arsenal. Unfortunately he got sick. After recovery, he worked again and this time as a clerk at the Justice of the Peace office in Mariveles under the assumed name of Jose Garcia. A second misfortune however befell him. The clerk of court where he was working turned out to be a Filipino spy and through him the authorities learned of Ricarte's presence in the town. Thus on May 29, 1904 the American troopers captured him. Found guilty the court sentenced him to one and a half years imprisonment for illegal possession of firearms and six years with a fine of ₱10,000 for rebellion. On June 7, 1904 he started his prison term at Bilibid prison.

Although his movement did not cause serious disturbances his capture had the effect of quieting certain restlessness among the people in the province adjacent to Manila.¹⁹ But while there was this restlessness, the authorities ascertained at this point that the people were not sympathetic to Ricarte's movement and that they were not prepared for another revolution neither did they desire one.²⁰

While in prison, Ricarte was visited by various American government officials as well as newspaper correspondents. One English journalist then working for the *Cablenews* by the name of William Watson took the opportunity of interviewing Ricarte about the Katipunan. Out of a series of interviews, Ricarte's "Apuntes Historicos de la Insurreccion por los Asociados al Kamahalmahalan Kataastaasan Katipunan nang Mga Anak Ng Bayan Contra El Gobierno Español En Las Islas Filipinas" was

¹⁷ *Memoirs, op. cit.* Appendix N—The Christmas Eve Fiasco and a Brief Outline of the Ricarte and other similar movements from the time of the breaking up of the Insurrection of 1899-1901, p. 187.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ "Report of Secretary of Commerce and Police," in *Report of the Philippine Commission* (1904).

²⁰ *Ibid.*

born.²¹ The American officials who visited him took turns in persuading him to take the oath of allegiance to the United States. Ricarte however firmly refused to do so, sticking to a pledge he made which is to unceasingly defy the United States government.²²

While the American authorities reported that Ricarte was given very good treatment as a prisoner, Ricarte related quite the opposite. In an interview with P. R. Verzosa, he revealed that for years he was a living dead in his prison cell. In his *bartolina* or solitary confinement he had nobody to talk to except the rats and the cockroaches. He was prohibited from opening his own letters or writing them and forbidden too to receive visitors except the Americans.²³ But despite this pitiful condition Ricarte survived because of his strong will and determination to fight the American government. He did everything to keep himself physically well. At one time though his mental and physical resistance weakened and he almost suffered a breakdown.²⁴

On June, 1910 at the expiration of his prison term, Ricarte found himself still in prison. And it was only through the efforts of Atty. Mariano Legaspi Florendo that the authorities released him a few days after. As he took a few steps away from the prison gate an American agent approached him and extended a supposed invitation of the Governor General for him to go to Malacañang. Feeling confident Ricarte went with him. The agent brought him instead to the office of the General Collector of Custom, Col. H.B. McCoy who pressured him to take the oath of allegiance. Given only two hours to decide, Ricarte pleaded to be given forty eight days to do so as he wished to see first his family. To quote 'anim na taon wala akong malay sa nangyayari rito sa Maynila at pagdaka ako'y pahahalikin ninyo sa bandila — anim na taong nagdusa na ako at ngayon ay panibagong pahirap na naman.'²⁵ But despite this pleadings, McCoy just proved to be stern. Thus Ricarte still undaunted by his harrowing six-year imprisonment refused to take the oath. On that same day he was banished to Hongkong with no money and clothes except for the one he wore.²⁶ The inconsiderateness of the authorities served only to intensify his eternal hatred for the Americans strengthening thereby more deeply the pledge he made.

For four years (1910-1915) he lived in Hongkong. There he initiated the publication of a fortnightly newspaper "El Grito del Presente." But on March 1916 the Secretary of Commerce and Police excluded it from Philippine mails thus causing the death of the newspaper. He also formulated

²¹ *Memoirs, op. cit.* p. XXI and Letter to Jose P. Santos, dated October 24, 1932 in *Unpublished letters of Artemio Ricarte to Jose P. Santos, I.*

²² Letter to J. P. Santos dated Oct. 24, 1932.

²³ *Memoirs, op. cit.*, p. XXI. See also P. R. Verzosa, *General Artemio Ricarte: Kung Bakit Hindi Siya Humalik sa Bandilang Americano.* Tokyo, 1926.

²⁴ Letter to J. P. Santos, *Ibid.*

²⁵ P. R. Verzosa, *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*

a constitution which indicated not only his desire to change the name of the Philippines but to have his proposed government supersede any that might be established in the Philippines. The government he conceived to have is as follows:

In all the territory comprised by the Rizaline Islands there shall be established a Revolutionary Government directed by chiefs of the Liberating Army which shall exercise its functions until it is recognized by the government of the United States of North America and the absolute 'independence of the Rizaline Islands to be proclaimed to all the world by it.'²⁷

The object and ends of this Revolutionary Government which it shall endeavor to carry out are as follows:

- a. To overthrow quickly and by whatever means, the present foreign government, in order to establish in the Rizaline Islands the true and honorable Government of the People and for the People.'
- b. To respect the laws and provisions approved by the Revolutionary Government and to make them respected, hence, it must endeavor to secure the reign of real justice in all the Rizaline Islands. . . .²⁸

The Supreme Government of the Rizaline Republic shall be composed of Three Powers, to wit: ²⁹

| | | |
|--------|-------|-----------------|
| First | | Executive Power |
| Second | | Advisory Power |
| Third | | Judicial Power |

The Captain General of the Revolutionary Army shall be the President of this Power, and the Lieutenant General of the Island of Luzon shall be the Vice-President.³⁰

The Advisory Power shall be composed of a number of members twice that of the number of districts, according to the division of the Rizaline Islands into zones . . .³¹ One of the duties of this power shall be to cooperate with the Captain General of the Revolutionary Army in his efforts to discover efficacious means to overthrow the American Government in all the Rizaline Islands as soon as possible.³²

The Judicial Power which shall be the Supreme Tribunal of the Rizaline Republic, is the only one that has authority to enforce the compliance of all Soldiers of Honor with all the laws and regulations relative to the progress and development of the "golden ideal" of the Rizaline Islands.³³ The President of this Power will be the Lieutenant General of the Revolutionary Army in command of the Visayan Islands.³⁴

The Revolutionary Army will be constituted by the union of all natives of the Rizaline Islands³⁵ and for purposes of the organization of the troops, the Rizaline Islands shall be divided into six zones.

²⁷ *Memoirs, op. cit.*, Appendix M—Constitution of the Revolutionary Government in the Rizaline Islands which are to be erected into a nation with the name of Rizaline Republic. Chap. II, Art. 5.

²⁸ *Ibid.* Chap. II, Art. 16.

²⁹ *Ibid.* Chap. II, Art. 17.

³⁰ *Ibid.* Chap. III, Art. 18.

³¹ *Ibid.* Chap. VI, Art. 28.

³² *Ibid.* Chap. VI, Art. 32, Sec.—a.

³³ *Ibid.* Chap. VII, Art. 35.

³⁴ *Ibid.* Chap. VII, Art. 36.

³⁵ *Ibid.* Chap. VIII, Art. 46.

Written on March 31, 1913, Ricarte had this constitution printed and distributed among his followers in Manila.

Being at a far distance, he entrusted the plan of the uprising in the Philippines to his organizers Rufino Vicente, Timoteo Cariaga, Tomas Enrile, Manuel Delgado and others. They circulated in the provinces of Rizal, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija, Tayabas, Iloilo and Antique selling certificates of ranks from Lieutenant to Colonel with prices ranging from fifty centavos to ten pesos each. They argued that the selling of commissions would give them the opportunity to get in on the ground floor so that when independence or an insurrection should come, the Ricarte army would be in control and the class of people it represented would be in a position then to equalize the distribution of the wealth of the country.³⁶ The "army corps" was composed mostly of people coming from the lower and more ignorant classes. An oath-bound society, it made use of the pacto de sangre patterned after that of the Katipunan.

For the implementation of his plans, Ricarte divided the entire archipelago into zones or subdivisions each under the command of generals, colonels, majors etc., to be in charge of the recruitment, enlistment and raising of funds. He even had the plans for the defense of Corregidor Islands laid out. This is revealed in a cablegram from the Bureau of Insular Affairs, War Department addressed to the Secretary of War, Washington dated February 17, 1913. It read as follows:

Harry W. Bandholtz, through Constabulary Secret Service, has captured complete most recent plans, accurately showing location and fields of fire of all batteries Corregidor Islands, adjacent Islands, and many military maps Manila and vicinity, about to be sent to Ricarte Hongkong.³⁷

All of Ricarte's plans, however, were thwarted with an immature uprising which occurred on December 24, 1914 in the Botanical Garden of Manila and in Navotas, Rizal. It was undoubtedly due to the rash and uncontrollable leadership of one Timoteo Cariaga, a fugitive from justice on the charge of homicide and naturally a desperate man.³⁸ It appeared probable that the people aside from being misled by promises of support which did not seem forthcoming grew also impatient with the postponement of the date fixed for disorder.

According to the report of Captain George H. Seaver, Chief of Police of the City of Manila, the insurgents were to gather at the Botanical Garden from eight to twelve o'clock on the night of December 24, 1914. On the appointed day, some one hundred fifty to two hundred Filipinos gathered at the Mehan Botanical Garden. They were instructed to march to

³⁶ "Report of the Secretary of Commerce and Police," in *Report of the Philippine Commission* (1914), pp. 178-179.

³⁷ Cablegram to Secretary of War, Washington from Bureau of Insular Affairs, War Department, (February 17, 1913).

³⁸ "Report of the Governor-General," in *Report of the Philippine Commission*, 1914, pp. 44-45.

U.S. army posts and stations and to seize the arms and ammunition and then to raid the Insular Treasury and seize the money. Three "army corps" were organized. "Capt." Eduardo Adajar, a cook, headed the first army corps which gathered in the Mehan Garden. They awaited for the firing of a gun, the signal for the attack of the Cuartel de España on the Walled City. Having armed themselves they were to march to Fort McKinley. The signal did not however come. Instead the police came and quietly broke up the gathering. Those arrested yielded their weapons, daggers, anting-anting, military commissions, Katipunan flag and the commissions and orders signed by the Ricarte organization.

The second "army corps" gathered at Luneta awaiting for Timoteo Cariaga but who for some reasons failed to show up. Only the "army corps" placed under the command of "Major" Antonio Laureano was able to carry out partly the instructions. At the firing of guns which they mistook to be the signal, his men started for the municipal building. Laureano secured a revolver and two sabres and took the captain of the municipal police as prisoner. They also attempted to open the safe but in vain. Mariano Melendres, the Provincial Governor of Rizal and one of the prisoners of Laureano related to the Governor-General that he (Melendres) asked in vain to be liberated.³⁹

Aside from these uprisings, there were posted in walls of tiendas Tagalog proclamations signed by Timoteo Cariaga and M.O. Delgado, Subcommander of Manila Zone, with the emblem of the Revolutionary Army of the Philippines. The proclamation incited the people to awake and draw once more the terrible bolo of revolution.

Having found among the prisoners commissions and orders signed by the Ricarte organization, the American authorities immediately linked Ricarte's name to the December uprising. This was however the last known serious disturbance linked to his name.

Meanwhile with the outbreak of the first world war, the British became suspicious of the political exiles in Hongkong. They feared that these exiles were encouraging the move to expel the British from India. For this reason, they brought Ricarte to Shanghai. But upon arrival there, the American authorities arrested and jailed Ricarte for flimsy reasons. Later upon the instructions of the consul, they released him. Looking for another loophole, the Americans arrested Ricarte for the second time on a charge of vagrancy and ordered him to be taken back to Manila. But El Vibora managed to escape and boarded an English ship as a stowaway. The British however discovered him and this time jailed him for one month. By this time, his wife, Agueda Esteban, managed to secure ship passage for two for Japan. Taking this opportunity to free himself from the clutches of the Americans, Ricarte and his wife sailed for Japan; first

³⁹ Memoirs, *op. cit.* Appendix N, pp. 158-160.

to Moji, later to Tokyo and finally settled in Yokohama. In Japan the couple set up a small restaurant named Karihan Cafe at 149 Yamashita-cho.

His twenty six years of self-exile in Japan did not change at all his hopes and affections for the Philippines. In fact his restaurant became a mecca to Filipinos abroad. Many of his countrymen especially the members of the Philippine Independent Missions stopped at his restaurant to seek his views on Philippine independence. One of the issues concerned with Philippine independence that interested him very much was the Hare-Hawes - Cutting Bill. For him the bill was like a sweet-coated pill in the sense that while on the surface the bill purported to grant independence, it actually would strangle the Filipinos' aspiration for a true economic as well as political independence.⁴⁰ For this reason he deemed it wise for the Philippine Legislature to examine and study the bill seriously.

General Ricarte also carried considerable correspondence with his countrymen in the Philippines like Jose P. Santos. A reading of his letters would reveal his undying nationalism. In one of them Ricarte informed Santos of his membership in the "Bagong Katipunan" an organization which aimed to attain the "Golden Ideal" of the Filipinos.⁴¹ In another, he advocated for changing the name of the Philippines to Luvimin -(Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao) and some of the cities to be named after our national heroes.

Neither did Ricarte change his attitude towards the Americans. In an interview with Verzosa, he said that he will go home to the Philippines only if she is no longer tied to the chains of the United States.⁴² In fact even at the age of 73 he still refused to come back despite the invitation given to him by the Philippine National Assembly through a resolution wherein they offered to give him a pension of ₱100 a month. President Manuel Luis Quezon even personally asked him to return to the Philippines. But to all these persuasions Ricarte had only one answer; that is, he is anxious to go back but there is a great obstacle that stands in the way and that is the necessity of swearing allegiance to the American flag.⁴³

During the Second World War, however, Ricarte became a "misunderstood patriot" and this was due to his collaboration activities with the Japanese. He fought with the Japanese because he sincerely believed that the Philippines would secure her independence with the help of the Japanese.

⁴⁰Stand in the Hare-Hawes Cutting Bill, in *General Ricarte's Articles and Essays*, January 23, 1933; and "Views on Why the Hare-Hawes Cutting Bill Should Not be Decided by a Plebiscite But By the Philippine Legislature," *Ibid*.

⁴¹Letter to J. P. Santos dated January 2, 1931 in *Unpublished Letters of Artemio Ricarte to Jose P. Santos*, I.

⁴²P. R. Verzosa, *General Artemio Ricarte* . . .

⁴³Editorial "An Offer of Pension to Ricarte If He Returns," In *Philippine Herald*, July 28, 1938.

But whatever Ricarte did during the Japanese occupation history will vindicate him as a man who stood by his principles—a patriot who preferred the difficult life of an exile in Japan to surrender to the Americans whom he sincerely believed, merely supplanted Spanish tyranny and deprived the Filipinos of their bitterly fought for freedom.⁴⁴

⁴⁴ Jose Quirino, "I Talked With Ricarte Before He Died," *Kislap-Graphic*, XXX, December 4, 1963.