

NSC BRIEFING

18 February 1957

BACKGROUND: Orientation of Philippine President Magsaysay

- I. Elections in November; campaign heating up.
 - A. Magsaysay charged as American puppet.
 - B. Magsaysay susceptible pressures appear more nationalistic.
- II. Magsaysay's record strongly anti-Communist.
 - A. Repeatedly backs US Far Eastern policy.
 - B. Pushing anti-Communist campaign.

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ORIENTATION OF PHILIPPINE PRESIDENT MAGSAYSAY

- I. Although voting will not take place until November, hot presidential campaign already underway and likely become hotter.
- A. Magsaysay opponents seeking discredit him as an American puppet.
 - B. President, believing this charge his chief vulnerability, has felt forced to take increasing cognizance of Philippine nationalist sentiment in dealing with the US, as was case in recent bases negotiations.
 - C. Although he almost certain of re-election, Magsaysay will probably continue to display increasingly nationalistic attitudes throughout the present campaign.
- II. Magsaysay has nevertheless publicly reiterated his intention to campaign on his pro-American record 25X6
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- III. Magsaysay's record offers no reason to question the sincerity of his pro-American sympathies nor his firm anti-Communist orientation.
- A. He has repeatedly emphasized the advantages of co-operation with the US and Philippine dependence upon US support and goodwill.
 - 1. He has strongly backed US policy regarding SEATO, Formosa and South Vietnam, and has repudiated the nationalist slogans of his opponents.

- B. His administration has permitted no let-up of military campaign to suppress Communist rebellion, and is promoting measures to combat internal subversion.
 - 1. Magsaysay is seeking legislation to outlaw the Communist Party and tighten existing laws on treason and rebellion.