
“For a Sample, a Button is Enough”: Apolinario Mabini and the Creation of the Department of Foreign Affairs

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Known by his sobriquets like “The Brains of the Revolution”; “The Sublime Paralytic” or “*Ang Dakilang Lumpo*”, Apolinario Mabini’s recognized role in the First Philippine Republic has been limited to being a presidential adviser and, later, President of the Aguinaldo cabinet. Little is known, however, of his role as the country’s first Secretary of Foreign Affairs. This article focuses on the first years of the diplomacy of the revolutionary government and the First Philippine Republic under Mabini’s role in the foreign affairs portfolio. It will attempt to narrate the history as well as the trials of the early Department of Foreign Affairs in its role as an agency of diplomatic relations amidst the birth pangs of a newly-created republic.

Keywords: Apolinario Mabini, Foreign Affairs, Diplomatic History, First Philippine Republic, Emilio Aguinaldo

Introduction

The quotation for the title of this article seems inappropriate for the topic at hand. But surprisingly, the said quotation is from a letter written by Apolinario Mabini during his first month as adviser to President Emilio Aguinaldo and as temporary foreign secretary (Mabini, 1965, p. 59).

Here is the text of the entire letter:

My dear colleague,

There is a proverb that says, “For a sample, a button is enough.” You probably understand that our situation is not a pleasant one. We shall try to avoid a conflict as far as possible.



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Herein comes the imperative need to have arms in order to sustain our national honor.

I am sending you other propaganda sheets, just in case you may deem it advisable that foreign governments should have the idea that the aspiration for independence is taking shape and definitely growing stronger in the minds of the people.

*Yours affectionately,
Ap. Mabini
(Mabini, 1965, p. 59)*

The short note is, unfortunately, undated and has no name to whom it was addressed. What we can assume is that it was written during the first few months after the declaration of independence on June 12, 1898. What we are sure of was the intent of the letter to promote the independence declared by the revolutionary government to foreign governments. It seemed to be a reply from a previous letter sent to Mabini, which referred to the need for more actions to promote our independence abroad. It was evidence of our early attempts in foreign diplomacy as a free nation.

This article will focus on the first years of the diplomacy of the revolutionary government and the First Philippine Republic under the leadership of our first Secretary of Foreign Affairs – Apolinario Mabini. It will attempt to narrate the history as well as the trials of the early Department of Foreign Affairs as an agency of diplomatic relations amidst the birth pangs of a newly-created republic.

Apolinario Mabini—A Genius Born

In 2014, the nation celebrated the 150th birth anniversary of Apolinario Mabini who, through the years, has been labeled with

sobriquets like “The Brains of the Revolution,” “The Sublime Paralytic,” or “*Ang Dakilang Lumpo*.” Let us take a brief look at the life of the man who led the diplomatic activities of the revolutionary government and the First Philippine Republic.

Apolinario Mabini was born on July 23, 1864¹ in Barrio Talaga, Tanauan, Batangas. He was born in poverty to an illiterate father, Inocencio Mabini, a former *cabeza de barangay*, and Dionisia Maranan, a housewife. Unlike her husband, Dionisia had the fortune of learning the rudiments of early education like reading, writing, and counting (Villaroel, 1977, pp. 314-333).

In spite of poverty, Mabini got the best possible education he could have at that time. He took his first three years of secondary education in 1878 at the school of Fr. Valerio Malabanan in Tanauan and began his fourth year at the Colegio de San Juan de Letran in Manila. Financial problems, however, forced him to stop from his studies from time to time until finally, in June 1887, he was granted his Bachelor of Arts diploma with a grade of *Sobresaliente* or Excellent.

Mabini taught in a secondary school owned by a friend before opening one of his own in the Walled City of Intramuros. He managed this institution for two years – from 1893 to 1895 – while studying law and working as a clerk in a notary public office until he finally closed down the school to study full time.

Mabini enrolled in the Faculty of Civil Law of the University of Santo Tomas in 1888. The time he spent studying law was a period that changed his life forever. In 1892, he was initiated as a Mason in the Lodge “Balagtas.” That same year, Jose Rizal returned to the

Philippines with the intention of establishing a nationalist movement. On July 3, 1892, he founded the La Liga Filipina where Mabini became a member. The movement, however, died with Rizal's arrest and deportation to Dapitan on July 7; only four days after its foundation.

It was in the rebirth of the Liga that Mabini became fully active in the movement, being elected as the secretary of the Supreme Council. This revived group lived only a short life as it was dissolved a year later. By this time, the nationalist movement split into two, with the other half – the Katipunan – advocating independence through an armed movement. Mabini, who still believed in peaceful means, sided with the group known as the *Cuerpo de Compromisarios* in which he became a member of its leadership committee and was assigned to write to the Filipinos in Madrid for support and to gather money for the failing newspaper, *La Solidaridad*. Surprisingly, in spite of being busy with his underground activities, Mabini still managed to continue his law studies, getting high grades in all of his subjects.

On March 14, 1894, Apolinario Mabini graduated from the University of Santo Tomas with a Licentiate degree in Jurisprudence with a grade of *Sobresaliente*. But this climax to his educational career almost came to a dismal end when he learned that he could not afford the expenses for a cap and gown. An unidentified rich lady whom Mabini helped in a legal case came to his rescue and provided the necessary attire on the day of his graduation.

Now a member of the legal profession, Mabini became more active in the *Cuerpo de Compromisarios* while working as a clerk in the

notarial office of his friend, Numeriano Adriano. By this time, however, the Spanish authorities were becoming suspicious of reports of an underground movement in the making and began monitoring subversive activities in Manila. Adriano himself would later be accused by the Spaniards of being a member of the Katipunan and was executed in 1896.

When the Philippine Revolution erupted in August 1896, Mabini knew that he would be arrested or maybe even tried and executed for his alleged participation in the armed movement and for being a Mason. But a cruel twist of fate saved his life.

Eight months earlier, Mabini got sick and was confined at the San Juan de Dios Hospital in Intramuros. Soon, he lost the use of his legs. Later research showed that Mabini's paralysis could have been caused by polio. Seeing that their suspected rebel was an invalid, the Spanish authorities placed Mabini under hospital arrest in October 1896.

When he was released following the general amnesty in July 1897, Mabini went to Laguna to bathe in the hot springs in Los Baños which was believed to have curative powers. At the same time, Mabini contacted Gen. Paciano Rizal, Jose Rizal's elder brother, to join the rebels. Meanwhile, he stayed in the province to rest and find a cure for his paralysis. It was in Laguna that events, like the Truce of Biak na Bato and the start of the Spanish-American War, caught up with Mabini.

Then in June 1898, a letter arrived from General Emilio Aguinaldo requesting him to go to Kawit, Cavite. Thus, this began Mabini's role in the new independent government – first as presidential adviser then, later, as President of the Cabinet or Council of

Government and as Secretary of Foreign Affairs.

The Diplomacy of an Independent Nation

Foreign affairs was a priority of the revolutionary government and, later, the Malolos Republic. It was because of one thing – the need for recognition by foreign governments. Political and economic matters came later.

The setup for the work of foreign diplomats for the newly-independent Spanish colony was simple. The opening of the Philippines to world trade in the 19th century brought in goods from different countries and foreign businessmen who set up trading houses in the colony. These businessmen later doubled as consuls for their respective countries. By the time the revolution started, there were representatives from France, Germany, England, and even from the United States residing in the Philippines. On the Filipinos' side, Aguinaldo relied on the patriotism of his countrymen who were residing abroad (Kalaw, 1926, n.d.).²

As early as April 1898, Mabini already saw the need for recognition of an independent Philippines by foreign nations. In Item 8 of his manifesto "To the Leaders of the Revolution," he wrote that:

When the representatives of the provinces have appointed the President of the Government, he shall immediately nominate the delegates who will indicate to the North Americans and the other powers all matters that are of interest to the Philippines (Mabini, 2011, p.98).

The Department of Foreign Affairs was, in fact, one of the first offices put up by

the revolutionary government. Its function is mentioned in the proclamation of the establishment of the revolutionary government on June 23, 1898: "whose object is struggle for the independence of the Philippines until she is recognized by the free nations of the earth." The words of the document were written by Mabini but signed by Aguinaldo.

The concern for foreign diplomacy is also found in the same June 23 proclamation. It provided for a Revolutionary Committee – a Junta – to be established abroad (in this case, Hong Kong), which is to be divided into delegations: one for foreign relations or diplomacy, one for the navy, and one for the army. A reason for lumping two sections of the military department with foreign relations can be found in the Instructions for the establishment of the revolutionary government dated June 27, 1898. Here, Mabini defined the function and make-up of the Department of Foreign Relations:

Rule 7. As a basis for the establishment of the central offices, the following plan shall be followed:

In the Department of Foreign Relations, only the center for diplomacy shall be established for the time being; it shall be composed of three sections: 1st) dealing with correspondence and the formation of the diplomatic corps; 2nd for interpretation; 3rd) regarding the measures to be adopted in relation with the press.

For the present, the centers for navy and commerce shall not be established, instead a section will be set up that will be in charge of all matters related to trips for the purchase of arms and provision as and other items required by such branches. This section will

remain provisionally attached to the center for diplomacy (Mabini, 2011, pp. 195-196).

The position of foreign affairs secretary was first offered to Cayetano Arellano, a prominent and brilliant lawyer. It took some time for Mabini to convince his former UST Law professor to accept the position as Arellano kept giving him the runaround. When he finally consented, Arellano became scarce at the Cabinet meetings citing health reasons. He eventually resigned, saying that he did not agree with the Aguinaldo government's diplomatic policies for foreign governments. Another foreign affairs official, Dr. Trinidad Pardo de Tavera, resigned as Director of Diplomacy after disagreements with Mabini on the former's advice that they should consult the Americans first before talking with other countries. What Aguinaldo did not know was that both Arellano and Pardo de Tavera had been secretly in favor of American rule – a fact that became public when Arellano accepted the appointment of Chief Justice of the Philippine Supreme Court from the American authorities and when Pardo de Tavera was allowed to put up a political party that favored American annexation of the country (Agoncillo, 1997, n.d.).

In accordance with the provision on the creation of the revolutionary government, the executive body of the Hong Kong Junta was appointed on August 10, 1898 (Taylor, 1971, p. 197).³

The same decree also appointed diplomatic agents or plenipotentiaries to represent the Philippines in the following countries:

1. Mariano Ponce and Faustino Lichauco for Japan

2. Juan Luna and Pedro Roxas for France
3. Heriverto Zarcas for Australia
4. Felipe Agoncillo for the United States
5. Antonio Ma. Regidor for England

The diplomats were tasked with the following duties:

- a) the work of propaganda abroad
- b) the conduct of diplomatic negotiations with foreign governments
- c) the preparation and contracting for all kinds of expeditions necessary for the requirements of the Revolution (Taylor, 1971, p. 197). These "expeditions" were probably the importation or smuggling of arms and ammunition to the country.

At the same time, secret instructions (advised by Mabini) were issued to the diplomats. These instructions were:

- a. To fight for the independence of the Philippines to the extent of our powers and means. Protectorate or annexation acceptable only if all military or diplomatic efforts failed;
- b. To adopt measures for friendly relations with Washington government and leave nothing undone that would lead to the recognition of the Filipino government
- c. To establish an alliance with the US even to the extent of sacrificing the Caroline and Marianas Islands;
- d. To make the government and/or Filipino Central Committee available for communication with the committees in London and Paris; and,
- e. To arrange with foreign firms for the export of Philippine products (Kalaw, 1924, p. 62).

Many of Mabini's letters to Aguinaldo when he was presidential adviser talked of the founding of an office for foreign affairs. In an undated letter written in Malolos in 1898, he spoke of the need of a foreign affairs office and added the qualifications of those who would manage this post:

It is important that there be someone who will give unity to the deeds of those abroad. We need a man whose political plan is in agreement with that of the Government to head the office. The personnel belonging to this office should speak other languages so that they may be aware of all that is going on abroad. They should also know what is happening within the government so that they may adapt themselves to the circumstances. Without this office, money will be spent in vain.

The head of the office should have absolute freedom of action once he has received your approval. He should issue orders, inform all those sent abroad of what is happening, receive all telegrams from other places and keep you informed in the same manner that a general who has complete freedom of action can execute a combat plan according to his best judgment. For this reason, he must be aware, not only of what is happening internally but also outside through foreign newspapers.

There is no hurry to send men to America; we have not yet been ceded by the Spaniards; we do not know yet what powers may intervene and where we would work better. It is more important to set up the office, something like a central office from where everything else will come (Mabini, 2011, pp. 214-215).

Mabini became *de facto* Secretary of Foreign Affairs following the resignation of Arellano and Pardo de Tavera and after the Department of Foreign Relations was transferred to the Presidency in October 1898.

He soon found himself with his hands full, juggling the responsibilities of running the government for Aguinaldo and handling diplomatic dispatches. He considered the foreign affairs position of greater importance because Philippine independence must be immediately recognized abroad. The establishment of relations with the United States was not enough even though Aguinaldo and the *ilustrados* were already placing their trust on the Americans. The latter, on the other hand, was still deciding if they were going to keep the Philippines as their new territorial possession. For Mabini, foreign diplomacy must be done with the major world powers and not just with America.

On January 2, 1899, Mabini was formally appointed by President Emilio Aguinaldo as "Secretary of Foreign Relations" in addition to his work as President of the Cabinet or what was called the "Council of Government" (Mabini, 2011, pp. 236-238). This appointment came as part of the preparation for the establishment of the Philippine Republic. That same day, Mabini issued his first message to the Congress as head of the Council of Government. Here he mentioned his plans as Secretary of Foreign Relations:

Lastly, it shall seek from all foreign powers the recognition of Philippine Independence, making use of all the resources recognized by international law and through diplomacy, constantly demonstrating with unimpeachable deeds that the Filipino people are aware of and know how to practice its social duties like any other civilized and independent nation. At the same time, it will look after the establishment and development of commercial relations, breaking away from all bonds and providing the greatest facilities for trade abroad, as far as circumstances in that particular country

will allow (Mabini, 2011, p. 240).

A Cautious Diplomacy

Mabini's diplomatic activities between the period following independence and the establishment of the Republic were, at first, cautious. The Spanish-American War was still going on with the Filipinos fighting on the side of the Americans. The thought that they had to continue fighting for the recognition of Philippine independence after its declaration was still on his mind. In an undated letter to Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, he wrote:

Since the beginning, my political belief has been to send men there (to America) and spend our money on anyone who is willing to give us arms. Once we have attained a certain degree of strength, we can then have more than just confidence. What I want is for us to hire foreign officers who might teach us the art of warfare and form the nucleus of a corps consisting of new soldiers having a high educational attainment and recruited from different provinces. These offices will compose the General Staff and, when the time comes, take command of the troops.

I insist on this because, once the powers realize that we are ready to fight, they will be forced to come to terms with us, especially if they learn that the country that supplied us with officers and arms greatly sympathizes with our cause" (Mabini, 1965, p. 74).

But Mabini was also not blind to the fact that the arrival of the Americans in the Philippines was beginning to be a problem in their planned diplomacy with other European nations. In the same letter, he pointed out that:

I have determined the state of our relations with the other powers, but it changes from day to

day. At first I thought it was from America alone that we should seek advice; now it seems Germany wants to meddle; and we cannot predict what is going to happen in the future. We will spend the money of the country so that America will know of our condition; and yet it may happen that we cannot be friends with America after all, because the wishes of the other powers will prevail (Mabini, 1965, p. 74).

The initial idea of the government was to establish independence under American protection, which Mabini reiterated in a letter to Daniel Tirona in October 1898 as he laid out the groundwork for international relations:

Instruct our friends in Japan to present their credentials to the government there and see if they will be honored. Probe into their attitude towards our objective and observe keenly. They might want to fool us. Do not promise anything which might compromise us. Ascertain definitely whether they oppose or favor our independence with American protection extended to us. Do not reveal that we prefer it (Mabini, 1965, p. 69).⁴

But by the end of that same month, Mabini was wary about their relations with the Americans. The increase in American forces in the Philippines and the pro-American tendencies of some of the *ilustrados* chosen for the Malolos Congress and the new government already worried him. Two short letters to Aguinaldo instructed the President to take precautions in transmitting communications to the diplomats.

Honorable President:

For the protection of all, please do not send your instructions to our diplomatic missions through telegrams. If you desire, send them thru a courier so that their contents may not be divulged.

I desire nothing save the safety of our country (Mabini, 1965, p. 77).

Mr. President:

As the telegrams sent to America will naturally be divulged, we can no longer expect anything from the world powers from the moment the latter will learn of their contents. Because of this, the moment America refuses to listen to us, or delays the solutions of our problems, we cannot turn to anyone for help... (Mabini, 1965, p. 77).

On January 4, Mabini formally assumed office. Unfortunately, by that time, his work in foreign relations was becoming futile. The United States had ended the war with Spain the previous year, and in December, both countries were negotiating for a peace settlement in Paris. The Philippine plenipotentiary to the United States, Felipe Agoncillo, was in Washington meeting with the US government officials, including President William McKinley, to push for the recognition of his country's independence from Spain. But Agoncillo was largely ignored. The desire for a colonial possession was already growing in President McKinley and his Cabinet.

In December, Spain signed the Treaty of Paris transferring the Philippines to the United States for the sum of \$20M. Protests from the Aguinaldo government proved futile. Tension among the American troops in the Philippines and the Filipino soldiers quickly grew.

In a letter written to Galicano Apacible on the day he assumed office, Mabini already said that "a conflict with the Americans is now imminent and inevitable" – a prediction that came true a month later (Mabini, 1965, p. 86). The factor that changed his diplomatic stance

with the Americans came when news came about the appointment of Gen. Elwell Otis as military governor of Manila and the announcement of the benevolent assimilation proclamation. There was also news that an American expeditionary force set sail to invade Iloilo as well as the rest of the Visayas and Mindanao.

At Otis' request, a conference was scheduled between Filipino and American representatives to address complaints between the two governments. The Filipino commission was represented by Gen. Ambrosio Flores and Lt. Col. Manuel Arguelles. It also included lawyer Florentino Torres, who had already gained the trust of the Americans in meetings regarding Spanish prisoners-of-war.

It was in the Commission's first meeting with the American panel when Mabini gave instructions that "the Commission may state that independence is the aspiration of the Filipino people," which would take effect when the American "shall come to recognize officially the Filipino government" (Mabini, 1965, p. 111). They were also ordered to use the word, "succor" instead of "protection" – a totally different meaning than what the Aguinaldo government had before in dealing with the Americans.

When the peace talks between America and Spain began in Paris in 1899, Agoncillo was instructed to insist "on complete independence for the Philippines under the temporary protection of the Americans "whether the need arose" (Mabini, 2013, p. 89). But the tension between the Americans and Filipinos had gone beyond the breaking point and culminated with the Philippine-American War in 1899. Agoncillo found himself a fugitive from the Americans and had

to flee the country to go back home (Agoncillo, 1997, n.d.).

Reflecting from his Guam exile on his short stint as Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Mabini wrote in his book, *The Philippine Revolution*:

After a long wait, Mr. Arellano finally stated that he could not discharge the office of Secretary of Foreign Affairs, in view of which Mr. Aguinaldo insisted that I should take charge of the department. I accepted for the purpose of seeking an understanding with the United States Government before the proposed constitution was voted upon by the Philippine Congress, and assumed office on the 2nd January 1899. All my efforts failed because the Treaty of Paris, concluded on the 10th December the previous year, had vested in the Congress of the United States the authority to determine the civil rights and the political status of the Filipinos, and Congress — according to the emphatic assurances of General Otis — would not exercise that authority so long as the Filipinos were up in arms. Since the administration in Washington had a majority in Congress, it was very likely that the latter would take a decision in accordance with the wishes of the administration; but if we surrendered unconditionally, leaving our political fate at its mercy, the Americans would no longer have any doubts about our unfitness because, by not defending our freedom, we would be showing our little understanding and love for it. We had therefore to choose between war and the charge of unfitness (Mabini, 2011, pp. 265-266).

Political intrigue and in-fighting between the Mabini Cabinet and the other Filipino politicians in the Malolos Congress also ruined the Filipinos' dream of an independent nation. Men, like Pedro Paterno, had been trying to influence Aguinaldo for a

cessation of hostilities and consider autonomy under American guidance. But Mabini was adamant on independence and not falling under the rule of a new master. The failure of the Mabini Cabinet to negotiate with the Americans for peace (even though the United States was already bent in possessing the Philippines) soon led to its downfall. Mabini resigned as President of the Cabinet on May 4, 1899 and officially ended his work with the Malolos Republic. President Aguinaldo then appointed Paterno as head of the new Council of Government, which was to end seven months later, in November 1899, as Aguinaldo fled to the mountains of Northern Luzon to escape capture by the Americans (Mabini, 2011, pp. 278-279).

Ironically, even though Mabini had resigned three months after the outbreak of the war, his duty as Foreign Secretary ended by the start of the conflict. As to his work in that department, historian and Mabini biographer, Cesar Adib Majul (1996, p. 164), has this to say:

“In his major foreign policy to have the independence of the Philippines recognized by foreign nations, Mabini completely failed (Majul, 1996, p. 164).”⁵

Aftermath

The retreat of the Filipino forces against the onslaught of the American Army forced the abandonment of the Republic's capital in Malolos. Unfortunately, Mabini's ailment made it difficult for him to join the guerrillas or even join Aguinaldo in his flight to the mountains. He had to travel by cart or even carried by a hammock through forests and mountain trails. He eventually reached Pangasinan where he temporarily stayed in

Rosales before moving on further into the mountains.

On December 11, 1899, Mabini was discovered by the Americans hiding in a house in Kuyapo, Nueva Ecija. He was brought back to Manila and jailed in a military prison on Anda Street in Intramuros. He was well-treated by the Americans and was allowed to continue writing to fellow Filipinos still fighting in the field as well as articles for periodicals here and abroad. His political discussions were becoming well-known among his countrymen that he was warned several times by the American officials against trying to incite the people to take up arms again.

Mabini was released from prison on October 3, 1900. He returned home to his brother's house in Nagtahan (Mabini, 2011, p. 272). Here he continued his anti-colonial campaign by writing articles addressed to the American people and other officials. His activities and stubbornness to join the Americans finally led to the ultimate price: On January 6, 1901, Mabini was informed that he was to be returned to his old prison in Intramuros in preparation for his exile abroad. On January 15, he and other Filipinos were placed on a ship for Guam (Mabini, 2011, p. 272). There he would remain in exile for two years.

The year 1901 saw the end of the First Philippine Republic. By then, the government was reduced to one man – President Emilio Aguinaldo, who, along with several of his officers, hid in the mountains of Northern Luzon. The odyssey came to an end when Aguinaldo was captured by the Americans on March 23 in Palanan, Isabela.

In 1902, President Theodore Roosevelt announced the end of the “Philippine insurrection.” In February the next year, Mabini was given permission by American authorities to return to the Philippines on a condition that he took the oath of allegiance to the United States. Sick and frail, the paralytic agreed.

On February 26, 1903, Mabini returned to his native homeland and, before Customs authorities, took his oath of allegiance to the United States (Mabini, 2011, p. 327). He returned to his old home in Nagtahan where he corresponded and was consulted on several matters by Filipino leaders; among them were guerillas who were still fighting in the hills. He also watched with disappointment how the men he knew in the days of the Republic were now jockeying for positions in the American colonial government. But Mabini was now cautious about going against the Americans for although he was no longer considered a threat by the authorities, his words of advice were still valued by many Filipino leaders.

On May 13, 1903, barely three months after his return from exile, Mabini became a victim of the cholera epidemic raging in the city. He died in poverty. His funeral was arranged by admirers and some labor and civic groups. Mabini's funeral procession to the Manila North Cemetery was one of the largest gatherings that year (Majul, 1996, p. 27).

It was a fitting tribute to a man who remained loyal to the ideals of independence of his country.

An Assessment

Philippine diplomacy under the revolutionary government and, later, the Malolos Republic lived a short life with the

leadership of Apolinario Mabini. The arrival of the Americans in 1898 hindered what was to be the start of a newly-independent nation, with a government that was set to begin its task of having itself recognized by independent countries in Europe and Asia. Our early relations with America began with an amicable friendship and ended with suspicion and hostilities.

The idea of the need for a foreign affairs office was the brainchild of Mabini. It was not a unique idea. What was distinct about it was its immediacy – the need for foreign recognition of the Malolos Republic becoming more pronounced. The revolution against Spain was not yet finished, and the relations with the Americans were a touch-and-go situation. But as we can see, Mabini already had conceptualized early on, the idea for its structure and its administration. As Rafael Palma (2013) later described it in his biographical study of Mabini:

Much can be said about the basic political structure established by Mabini over the remains of the Spanish administration. What is obvious is that it was a complete original structure. It did not conform to any specific system. It drew from theories that were applicable to the circumstances, to prevailing ideas and social conditions (pp. 36-37).

These ideas later became the basis for the creation of the Department of Foreign Affairs in 1946 following the granting of independence and the establishment of the Third Philippine Republic. Ironically, one of the first foreign powers that recognized the new republic was the very one that ended it almost 50 years ago – the United States.

Endnotes

1 The birth date provided here is the official one recognized by the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP) following a debate whether he was born on July 23 or a day earlier. The data for Mabini's early life and student years were taken from Villaroel, 1977: 314-333. The same article was published as a monograph by the National Historical Institute in 1979.

2 For an account of the diplomatic relations of the revolutionary government and the Malolos Republic, see Kalaw 1926.

3 Philippine Revolutionary Records (PRR) (formerly the Philippine Insurrection Records or PIR) FA-2 *Correspondencia "El Comite Revolucionario"* Bakood 10 de Agosto, 1898, 20-22. A translation of this document appears in Taylor, Volume 3 (1971): 197.

4 The June 12 1898 Declaration of Independence also stated that our independence was done "under the protection of our Powerful and Humanitarian Nation, The United States of America" – a policy that was maintained by the revolutionary government until relations with the Americans soured the following year.

5 Majul 1996: 164. Majul wrote an earlier biography of Mabini, *Apolinario Mabini, Revolutionary* which won First Prize in the Mabini Biography Contest in 1964 and was published that same year.

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