

9:25 PM

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Jan. 23, 1941

MALACAÑAN PALACE

MANILA

Saturday

I have finished the last draft of my State of the Nation address of about 113 printed or type-written pages. But as usual the reading copy will be about 15 pages long for a 30 minute delivery.

The bombing of Esso and Caltex buildings were headlined in the morning papers. Esso burned as the dynamite used had a bottle of gasoline with it - apparently home-made. Crude and bulky but effective.

I attach the report on it by J-2.

After a meeting with Sec. Ponce Enriquez, Gen. Juan Hato, Garcia + Ramos and Col. Ver, I have a feeling that the Congressional opening and rally on the 25th will be peaceful. But the NPA or CPP who are suspected to have done the bombing are expected to continue and may do so at targets other than Congress. It may be Malacanang. Or any of the other public buildings.

I met Andy Seriano and Sebastian Ugarte of the Herald this morning. I explained that the fight against the oligarchs was not against bigness but against the use of bigness to oppress our people and intimidate the public officials for more financial gain.

He seemed relieved but still worried about anarchy. I had to assure him when I called him back alone that

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Jan. 22nd (Cont)

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If the situation deteriorates, I may have to use my extraordinary powers like declaring martial law. He seemed relieved and said, "You would be surprised at the number of people who would welcome it." I explained that I was willing to negotiate with the moderates but the NPA and CPP would want nothing short of taking over the government. However, I emphasized the need for reform, for an anti-trust law, for cooperatives, for a more equitable redistribution of wealth.

I even suggested a meeting with businessmen to whom I could explain the whole thing again — and even a meeting with Chris Rocas afterwards.

But I called his attention to the fact that there was not one among those in media saying anything about or against communism. And we must now.

So I obtained his pledge to use the Herald against communism which is our common foe.