

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

H. B. No. 5432



Introduced by HONORABLE BELLAFLOR J. ANGARA-CASTILLO

EXPLANATORY NOTE

We live in a global community where countries are more interdependent than ever, where on the other hand there is a felt need to recognize specific countries with which the Philippines had sustained historic and cultural relations in order to encourage interaction between governments and peoples.

Philippine-French relations go as far back as the age of discovery and exploration. When he embarked on his epochal mission to discover the route to the Spice Islands, Ferdinand Magellan had 15 Frenchmen among his crew. In the Christianization of the Philippines, some of the religious who served in the country came from France, as well as other nations allied with the rulers of Spain. The seminary of St. Clement in Manila, the first Diocesan seminary in the Philippines, was established with the help of French Monsignor Charles-Thomas Maillard de Tournon in 1704.

Aside from serving as missionaries, other French residents of the Philippines served as traders, technicians, soldiers, and officers and crews of the Manila Galleons.

By the 17th century, France began to take notice of the Philippines for its strategic location for trade. It was the French who discovered the potential of the abaca plant in the manufacture of ropes used in the shipping industry.

Despite Spanish restrictions against foreign trade, a community of French and other foreign traders existed in Manila before its formal opening in 1832. By then, Paris fashion had become a standard in Manila. Foreign vessels brought in French products such as stockings, muslin and linen cloth, umbrellas, gloves and coats. On the other hand, France imported most of the indigo produced in the Philippines.

French residents and travelers produced interesting accounts of the Philippines. Writing in 1818, French explorer Gabriel Lafond was captivated by the beauty and potential of Manila Bay. French navigator and geographer Dumont d'Urville visited Jolo and offered gifts to the sultan in May 1828.

Paris figured prominently in the intellectual life of a number of prominent Filipinos. Trinidad Pardo de Tavera published *El Sanscrito en la Lengua Tagalog* in 1883. The painters Juan Luna and Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo did many of their works in France. The Philippine government has installed a marker on the site of the atelier of Juan Luna in boulevard Arago (14th arrondissement in Paris).

Rizal lived in Paris which he described as an "intellectual city par excellence" during the summer of 1883, then in 1885 and in 1887 and finally in 1889 to 1891 where he worked with a French ophthalmologist, Louis de Wecker. A historical marker has been installed in 124 Rue de Rennes to commemorate the stay of Rizal in Paris.

The greatest contribution of France lay in its revolutionary history and free social environment which inspired Filipino nationalism and our heroes. While living in Paris, Rizal annotated Antonio de Morga's *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas* which corrected the Spanish biases against Filipinos. It was also here that Rizal and other reformists formed a group called the "Indios Bravos" which advocated redeeming the honor of the Filipino race.

During the centennial of the French Revolution in 1889, Rizal sought to organize a conference of scholars working in the Philippines to come to Paris. It was during this conference that an association called Association Internationale des *Philippinistes* was to be launched with Ferdinand Blumentritt as president and Edmond Plauchut as vice president.

Both Filipino reformists and revolutionists imbibed French liberal ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity. Rizal's novels *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo* were inspired by Alexander Dumas, one of France's great literary giants. Andres Bonifacio was heavily inspired by the French Revolution. Both he and Emilio Jacinto, the Brains of the Katipunan subscribed to the ideas of Jean Jacques Rousseau, Montesquieu and Napoleon Bonaparte, especially on the universal rights of man. These ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity are represented in the equilateral white triangle of the Philippine flag.

On June 26, 1947 the Philippines and France signed a Treaty of Amity, which established diplomatic relations between these two countries. Underlying this alliance is a historical and cultural background between the Philippines and France.

This bill seeks to declare the 26th of June of every year as Philippines-France Friendship Day to remember and celebrate the shared history and friendship between the Philippines and France, and further serve to cement good relations between our two peoples.


BELLAFIOR J. ANGARA-CASTILLO
Representative
Lone District, Province of Aurora

FIFTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)

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Introduced by Honorable BELLAFLOR J. ANGARA-CASTILLO

AN ACT
DECLARING EVERY 26TH OF JUNE OF EVERY YEAR
AS PHILIPPINES-FRANCE FRIENDSHIP DAY

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. Declaration of Policy. It is the policy of the State to strengthen the relationship between the Philippines and such countries with which it shares historical, cultural and trade relations, in order to bring their respective peoples into closer contact and better understanding of each other's history, culture and economy.

SEC. 2. Philippines-France Friendship Day. The Twenty-Sixth of June of each year is hereby declared a national working holiday known as "Philippines- France Friendship Day" to commemorate the cultural and historical ties, friendship and cooperation between the Philippines and France.

SEC. 3. Implementation. The National Historical Institute (NHI) shall be responsible for the implementation of this Act. For this purpose, it shall, upon consultation with the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), formulate and issue the implementing rules and regulations necessary for the proper implementation of this Act.

SEC. 4. Appropriations. An annual budget for the celebration of the Philippines-France Friendship Day in the amount of Fifteen million pesos (Php 15,000,000.00) shall be included in the General Appropriations Act of the year following its enactment into law, fifty percent (50%) of which shall be devoted exclusively for research and development, publication and information. Thereafter, the expenses for its continued implementation shall be included in the subsequent General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 5. *Separability Clause.* If any section or provision of this Act is held unconstitutional or invalid, the other sections or provisions not affected thereby shall remain valid and effective.

SEC. 6. *Repealing Clause.* All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations, or any part thereof, which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 7. *Effectivity.* This law shall take effect within fifteen (15) days from publication in the Official Gazette or two (2) newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,