

The Beijing Press Conference of President of the Philippines Rodrigo Roa Duterte with Foreign Press

At a press conference in Beijing on Oct. 19, Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte delivered this indictment of the war crimes of the British and the Americans over the past century and continuing today. His remarks have been edited and subheads added.

We've always been allied with the West. In terms of entertainment, education and all, it was all western. As a matter of fact, I am more articulate in talking in English than in my own dialect. Sometimes I have to grope for words. There is one language, Tagalog, which they say is an international dialect, but they have not *perfected* anything. That is why even in the movies, and even in the histories, things were not properly put in place, in the proper perspective. That is even why in the surveys Filipinos placed their trust more with the Americans than the Chinese. During the Cold War, China was portrayed as the bad guy. All of these years, what we read in our books in our schools were all propaganda by those in the West.

I cannot blame the Filipinos for being so indebted, because everything indebted them to the West. Even the reasons for life were placed there, as a war against the Philippines, against the [Japanese] enemies during the second world war. We were hit hard. In the battle of Manila there were 200,000 people killed. The carpet bombings—they were not really made by the Japanese, but by the Americans, to retake the city.

There is no question that in the propaganda, as we grew up, we only read the propaganda of the West. There was the Cold War at the time, and so we could hardly get any news from China and Russia. Those are the realities of life. And so, our foreign policies, up to now, up to this point, were geared toward the people accepted [by the West] in the contending ideologies of the world.

Now that I am President, by the grace of God I read a lot. I am a lawyer, and I study geopolitics and all, and also I am a graduate of the Foreign Service, so I got to



Philippines Government
President Duterte at his press conference in Beijing, Oct. 19.

know how to balance these contending ideas. I have now the proper perspective to judge whether this foreign policy is good for us or not. I said a few days ago, a few months ago, that I will charter a new course, changing the direction of our foreign policy. I have been friends with everybody, and with no enemies to contend with, no enemies to hurt, no friends to serve.

The War on Drugs

Unfortunately this started with the war against drugs. And I give you the hard numbers. It's four million [addicts] all in all. They are scattered all over the country. There are about six thousand policemen involved it.

What is really very alarming is that my country has already been contaminated with narco politics. I know why you guys are interested in me, because while I was explaining the quandaries of my country and the sheer number and the danger imposed on the next generation, that it will be a failed state, just like in Latin America and even Mexico. On that border between Texas and Mexico, there are about 60,000 deaths. But I never heard of the State Department of Obama and the EU complain about it. They are focusing on me. That issue was already an issue against me when I was Mayor. And they kept hammering on me, criticizing me.

But when I was President—that is something else. Because I represent the country, and if you misrepresent me on the international scene, all the networks here, your networks, and you show it in your own country, it will put shame to my country. And you have something to answer.

Of all the networks, they were only interested in my life, my statement, when I said, internationally, publicly, "If you destroy my country, I will kill you." I was addressing myself to all the drug syndicates, and the drug pushers and all. I said, if you destroy the youth of the land, deprive us of the resources of tomorrow, I will

kill you. And it kept on happening, that they said, “The president has been heard saying that he will kill people,” because they did not understand the statement, because they were dumb idiots.

You know, China, America, Russia can perfectly say it, and it is very legitimate. “If you kill my country—*if*!” It is conditional! I don’t know what has happened to these guys and their grammar. We are not that sophisticated in our English-acquired culture. *If*? So if you do not destroy my country, then I will not kill you! But they kept on hammering on the issues of killing, alone.

They are threatening me with going to the International Criminal Court. I said, that was enough. I said no. Because nobody was listening to me, I gave the word: Bullshit, all of you! Then they suddenly heard, “somebody bullshitting us—who is this guy?” Now they are hearing.

What’s wrong with saying I’m going to kill all the criminals? When you are ordering the police — look, the soldiers of my country go to a four year course at the Philippine Military Academy. The police go to the Philippine National Police Academy. They study four years before they become full-fledged law enforcement.

They all know that when you say, “you kill them,” it is like in the Old West. It is not our words, it is the words of the American cowboy in the movies! Billy the Kid, wanted, dead or alive! And if you do that in my country, it is not all right. But if they do it in their own country—the funniest thing is it is even at the movies, without the caveat, “warning, this is just movies.” Go for them, dead or alive. And when I say I am going to protect my country because I am the President, and I have every right, that is certain. If that is not understood by EU and America, I am sorry for that. . . . When I said, capture them dead or alive, the policemen and the military know that there has to be some sort of resistance, and that resistance must be violent. Therefore if there is a violent resistance, that is the time that they can use force. If that resistance endangers the life of the police and military, if they believe that they are already in the process of losing their lives, that is the only time they can kill. No need to repeat what they have been taught for four years and has been imbued in their minds. That is the same story for the FBI and the police and everybody. . . .

Why the Change in Foreign Policy?

So, what prompted me to change foreign policy is that the EU signed a manifesto and they told me it was prepared by the lawyers. It said that the lawyers warned me that I can be prosecuted, and then I realized that what

is happening now, in the EU, is because they have stupid lawyers. And they can not even agree to let in, let out the migrants. They were so benevolent at first. Now they say, drive them back to the sea, do not accepted them in bondage. So they will die there, and rot in the cold.

Give me a sensible answer. We need to decide here, I will not even have to go to Manila.

America and Britain invaded Iraq, with all the hulabaloo and pronouncements that said “weapons of mass destruction.” After killing so many of the soldiers and the republican guards of Saddam—and killed Saddam in the process—they found out, with all its might and technology and human intelligence, that there were no weapons of mass destruction.

If somebody could explain it to me that it was right, stand there in front of me right now, I am willing to listen, and if you do it right, to convince everybody, that after all it was right to invade Iraq, even without the weapons of mass destruction, undermining Libya, wanting to destroy Assad, putting in turmoil Egypt. Now tell me if it is a bright idea of the West, tell me now, justify that it is correct, I will listen and I will resign as the President of the Republic of the Philippines. Was there an explanation? These guys are really convoluted idiots.

You want to prosecute me for what? It is not a crime in my country, especially a President, to warn—or even any President for that matter—“do not do it because I will kill you. Do not enter my boundaries, because if you hurt the people there I will go to war.” I just don’t know what’s happening with the idiots on the other side. My foreign policy goes to where there are people who are sane. Why should I mix my country with very convoluted and almost insane theories of how to run civilization?

Tell me, any one of you—tell me that it was right to invade Iraq, even without the weapons of mass destruction. That was the only thing that kept them going, the weapons of mass destruction. How many died, how many children died in the bombing of Afghanistan? How many died in Vietnam, only to lose it after several decades? And to burn the families there? How many times must this be repeated? Look at Aleppo—when they could have just stopped it, but because earlier they were supplying the arms to the rebels against Syria. But the Chinese government and Russia supported Assad, so you had the longest war there.

So, from where was this ISIS? When was it born? It was born of the desperation of the radicals and rebels of Libya and Syria. That is the beginning of ISIS. America imported terrorism into their territories.

And who was the first to enter the land and took off with the fat of the land, oil? British, American, French, Italians. After so many troubles they partitioned the Middle East, according to tribes, and not of kingdoms. And that is why you have until now fighting amongst themselves. And ISIS became the rallying point. Who imported violence? America. To their lands.

My country, it was occupied by Spain for 400 years. Then it was occupied by the Americans for 50 years. And you think that because that was around a century ago—you should see the pile of bodies where the Moro Muslims of Mindinao, their bodies were dumped there. And they say, “it was 100 years ago, Duterte.” No. It still is now.

Why? Because of your convoluted ideas of how to run this civilization.

So, why don’t I go to China? What kept us from China was not of our own making. We were almost a vassal state of America. Our foreign policy adopted the policy of the United States and of the West. If they said they hated Russia, we said Amen, and also China. And if they say to go to war in Vietnam, for no reason at all, eventually to lose, we will say, “Yes, we will also send our soldiers there.” It is kind of stupid, don’t you think?

The Hideous Toll of the Drug Scourge

Now all has been said and done. What gives? Me? Drug war. It is going up to 4 million [drug addicts] now, growing at 700,000 every year. By the end of my term it will reach the 4 million mark. So we will stick with the two-year survey done by General Santiago, a military man of the Drug Enforcement Agency. He said there are already 3 million addicts. Okay.

The mining industry is all over, cutting holes my country, degrading the environment and all. How much does it give my country in taxes? Seventy million U.S. dollars.

There are 3 million Filipinos taking drugs. At one

hit per day, that is 6,000 pesos per person per month. If you multiply it by the 3 million, that is 18 billion pesos per month. If you multiply it by 12, that is P216 billion [over \$4 billion —ed.] a year. Money, which the father of a family needs to buy rice, medicine, school.

You have girls raped, one-year-olds, two-year-olds, people dying because they were perceived to be devils in front of the addicts. Rape, and even the crime volume, before I was President, puts me to shame.

There are some killed who choose to fight the government. And I said I will have no mercy on you guys. You fight the authorities, you die. It’s good for you. You asked for it. I told you before, it will destroy my country. And yet you go in and persist in doing it. And so I said, if you fight, kill them, especially if your life is in danger. Verily I don’t want to see military men and policemen die. It should be the bad boys who do the dying. Not my soldiers and police.

So, we’re talking about what is right and what is wrong in this

world. We’re talking of what is moral and what is not. I said I challenge any one of you to come here. We can debate until midnight. Just tell me what was really good when they started to destroy the Middle East. And until now they bomb the hospitals. Patients are dying, and those in the mortuary are dying again. And they go about moralizing the righteousness of the world. I’m sorry. I had to say this.

Why are you veering toward China? Why should I not veer to China? China is good. It has never invaded a piece of my country all these generations. All they want is to do business, barter trade, even before the arrival of the Spaniards. There are a lot of Chinese-descendant Filipinos. Almost every one. We have not seen any wars or atrocities committed of late. There were wars with Genghis Khan and Kublai Khan—that is another thing, for the history books.



Nick Ut/Associated Press

“How many died in Vietnam, only to lose [Vietnam] after several decades? And to burn the families there? How many times must this be repeated?”