

Moving Up Day Address *

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This is my second convocation address at this College of Forestry. It is indeed fitting that the address today is made on what is known as "moving up day" since you who are moving up have just witnessed the "moving up" of the capital resources of this college. The investment put into the new college buildings, the Forestry Products Laboratory and the Forest Experiment Station would be useless without the trained human resources required to operate the new physical plant and thus contribute to the development of the Philippine economy. Similarly, the mere fact that the capital investment in these kinds of structures has been made means that the "moving up" of you students will be accelerated! For you now have more opportunity to learn how to apply your textbook knowledge to help solve the practical problems of Philippine forest care, management and utilization.

Before detailing the importance of the work this institution is doing, I should like to pay tribute to the retired Dean of this College whose vision and foresight initiated these structures inspite of many problems and headaches. He is a man all of you know. I speak of former Director and former Dean Tamesis. In the same breath, congratulations are in order to Director Amos and his bureau and college staffs for their determination to complete the building of these institutions.

At the risk of being shot by two of my own countrymen, I would like to tell you a little joke on some people whose contribu-

tions to your work in the College of Forestry and in developing the Forest Products Laboratory have been of real significance. One is my good friend and FOA colleague, Mr. Paul Bedard; the other is my good friend and UN colleague, Dr. George Hunt. The first draft of this speech was prepared by Paul Bedard. He, as you all know, is a forester. So his draft dealt almost exclusively with the problems facing you graduates in the College of Forestry as you move on to positions in the Bureau of Forestry;—the importance of forests in protecting Philippine soil from erosion, the need to protect existing forests, the need for better forest management, the importance of sustained yield and, in general, measures to preserve this priceless natural resource which God has given to the Philippines.

A week ago when Dr. Hunt was showing me around the Forest Products Laboratory, he mentioned having seen Mr. Bedard's draft of this speech. He observed it was written solely from a forester's point of view. He stated he had finally persuaded Mr. Bedard to add a couple of paragraphs dealing with the importance of the Forest Products Laboratory—that is, paragraphs that dealt with the utilization or productive side of this priceless natural resource.

I told Dr. Hunt I suspected my speech would concentrate neither on the protective nor on the productive point of view. Both are important, but both are means to a somewhat bigger end. Protection for the sake of protection could be harmful, and production

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for the sake of production could be wasteful. But if one combines a judicious amount of protection with intelligent production, no matter what your raw material is, you come out with an additional economic good. And it is from the point of view of economic development that I would like to talk about the importance of Philippine forests and their fullest possible productive utilization.

You can see right away that although I was born in the vast timber area in my country known as the Great Pacific Northwest and worked through high school and college summer vacations in logging camps and national forests, I am not an expert forester. Nor could I lay claim to knowing very much about the many gadgets which Dr. Hunt is helping to install in this beautiful Forest Products Laboratory. Yet as an economist working actively for the past three years in a program for Philippine economic development, I can lay claim to being something of an expert in economic planning. Now any economist, when he thinks in terms of countrywide planning, must first take an inventory of the resources available to the country. He must then concentrate on those techniques which will make those resources, when combined with human resources, productive in the sense of creating the most goods and services for the people in the economy.

Of all the natural resources available in the Philippines, the two most important from the point of view of producing more for the Philippine consumer are first, the land; and second, the great natural forests which cover a good share of the land. The reason the early planners in the Philippine-American joint program for economic development put a very high priority on the buildings and equipment we are dedicating at this "moving up day" is precisely because the forests of the Philippines are one of the biggest natural economic assets which the Philippines has available to it. Whether these forests will be protected and their production fully utilized to create additional economic wealth

for the people of the Philippines lies largely in the hands of the people who are attending this ceremony today. We in the joint Philippine-American economic development program can provide you with experiment stations, fire-fighting equipment, technical assistance for reforestation, pamphlets on sustained yield, or any number of testing and pilot plant machines in the Forest Products Laboratory. But it is you people who will have to determine whether this rich natural resource will be used intelligently for the benefit of your economic development, or whether it will be wasted and ultimately destroyed by thoughtless individuals who seek quick and immediate personal gain.

You men of the Bureau of Forestry and the College of Forestry, under the skilled leadership of the Secretary of Agriculture and Natural Resources and the President of the University of the Philippines, must insist that the Bureau is not merely the money-producing watchdog of the nation's forests. With the help of these newly-graduated students, you must make sure that the Bureau, as well as the School, is the management arm of your government responsible for developing the forest resources into making an ever increasing contribution to the Philippine economy.

At the stage of development of your economy, in many fields you can take advantage of the practices discovered and employed by the West. European and American technology can help you cover in a span of a few years what it took Western civilization 150 years to do. But in your particular field, do not, I beg, follow the history and practices of European nor, indeed of my own country in the use of forest resources. We in the United States today (and European countries even more so) are, by and large, following intelligent protective, productive and utilization practices with respect to America's forests and the products those forests are capable of producing. But this is a relatively late development in our own history in the States. So in the fields

of forest care and the most intensive utilization of forest products, do not follow the practices which we have followed in past years. Rather, learn as we are doing from our own past mistakes and apply within a Filipino context the practices we have found through great expense to be the most productive from the point of view of the nation's forest resources.

All of you — students and faculty and guests alike — have sat through many conferences listening to many experts raise the red flag of waste in the handling of your forests and watersheds. Many of you attended the National Conference on Forest Conservation a short time ago. From this kind of conference you can get all the expert advice you need on the ways your forests need more protection and the current cutting practices need revision.

It was pretty well brought out at the conference that two major threats to the well being of the forest resource exist. One threat lies basically in the unwise use of the land that should remain forested. Nobody would argue that agricultural expansion is needed to support a growing population and to raise the level of living, but it is equally true that there is a limit beyond which land cultivation should not go. Not all soils of the Philippines are fertile. Many cannot be made sufficiently fertile to support permanent farming. Still, in many areas the limit has been and is being exceeded. One look at the steep slopes of Cebu, parts of Luzon and Negros and even in the new areas of Mindanao is convincing.

It is quite natural to be misled by the illusion that there is unlimited fertility in the soil of forest areas. After all, most agricultural soils were once forest lands. In addition, the accumulation of organic materials and the presence of other favorable conditions on the forest floor give a temporary fertility sufficient for one or two crops.

Such an illusion leads to the harmful practice of "shifting agriculture," or "kaingin." The result of this, as you know better than

I, is that watersheds are stripped and then abandoned. That is the most immediate and increasingly dangerous threat to one of your greatest national assets — the forests of the Philippines. What a price to pay for a small temporary personal gain!

The second threat lies in the mishandling of the resource itself. In the Philippines as in other countries, harmful methods of exploitation are being used in some areas. The forests' capacity to renew themselves is being destroyed and areas are going out of production. However, I shall not here attempt to out-expert you experts in this area. All I can hope to do is point out the importance to your economic development of protecting this resource and at the same time making it more productive for the national economy.

Turning for a moment to the productive side, the forest resource of any country is dynamic in the sense that the resource is continually changing. As the Forest Products Laboratory nears completion and begins its task of testing Philippine woods for their more intensive utilization, you will have added a tremendously important step in your task of making Philippine forests contribute more to the economy of the Philippines. Protective measures in a forest do not become productive unless that which is protected is used to produce. And it does little good to your economy to cut the cream of your lumber and ship it in the form of logs to Japan, there to be manufactured into consumer products. Why not do the processing of your timber resources into consumer products right here in your own country. This is where applied industrial research comes into the operation. And it is because of the importance of applied industrial research to the economic utilization of your forest resources that we in the joint Philippine-American development program have supported this Forest Products Laboratory. While I give you a word of encouragement, let me at the same time add a word of warning. This Laboratory is potentially as important as any facility in the Philip-

pires to your future economic and industrial development. Yet its full contribution to the raising of the living standards of your citizens will never be permitted unless the Philippine Government continues to give the laboratory adequate financial support. Even more important than financial support is the selecting of trained scientists who will spend their lives in the Forest Products Laboratory searching out new and more economical uses of Philippine forest products. Your Government, I am sure, will continue to provide the necessary financial support to keep this Laboratory in operation. We hope to see private industry play an increasing part in contributing to the financial support of this industrial research facility, but before industry will do this, you who work in the Laboratory must convince industry that you have a real contribution to make. Even with financial support assured, the contribution of the Laboratory to your economy will be in direct proportion to the calibre of Filipinos who will run the Laboratory.

From what I have been saying, this much should be obvious: that the best national policy on forests is one that permits the fullest judicious use of this forest resource with due regard, at the same time, for preserving the forest's protective capacity.

How does the Philippines stand with respect to such an objective?

Before we can answer that question, we should take a look at the forests of the Philippines. This country is fortunate in possessing a substantial area of forested land. It covers about one-half of the total land area. It has been calculated that the total land area that should remain as permanent forest is about forty-two per cent of the total, or about twelve million six hundred thousand hectares. This calculation is based on the nature of the soil and terrain and the needs for both protection and production. The present forest land contains protection forests that should never be cut. It contains

inaccessible areas. It contains large, unknown volumes of non-commercial tree species. There are some forest areas that should be converted to other uses. There are some areas outside the forests that should be put back to forestry use.

Here are some other facts that the forestry technicians have learned: Some of the most accessible and productive forest areas are going out of production as the result of squatting, shifting cultivation and improper exploitation. Some of the most serious denudation occurs on important watershed areas. Finally inroads are being made on the forest resources through illegal destruction, including "kaingin." The simple fact is that Philippine forests are being overcut.

Perhaps we can now attempt an answer to the question, "How does the Philippines stand with respect to a sound forestry program?"

Philippine forestry stands at a crossroad. The forest are still there, but they need protection, development and management. I am sure anyone who has studied Philippine forests will agree that a decision must be made: whether the forests will be developed to attain the greatest benefits to the country or whether they will be allowed to deteriorate and lose their respective and productive benefits.

And so we come back to 'moving up' day. Given a priceless natural resource and given the tools to protect and develop that resource into something productive to the economy, one still finds the most essential ingredient to be the human resource. That is why so much of our joint Philippine-American economic development program is concentrated on training in the many priority areas in this economy where we can make a contribution. And that is why this convocation today with the "moving up" of you students and the graduating of you seniors is so vitally important to the future economic development of the Philippine Republic.