

The New Deal In Sulu: Its Business Aspects

A business man for lieutenant governor, and Fugate's experience at the head of things, augurs well

Governor General Frank Murphy has recalled James R. Fugate from the United States, where he has been on leave of absence during 3 years, and reinstated him as governor of Sulu. It is recognized that Governor Fugate gave Sulu a first rate administration during the period he was at the head of its affairs. The work impaired his health, now restored. He returns to Sulu both with better health and more authority than he had when his work recommended him for the post originally. To understudy him and be the agency through which consistent policy may be continued, Frederick George Roth has been appointed lieutenant governor at large of Sulu.

Roth's antecedents in the Philippine service are similar to Fugate's. Both have been school men and soldiers. Roth had two hitches at the schools, one prior, one subsequent to the World War, in which he was in the marine corps. He leaves a business position as a representative in the Philippines of the Columbia Rope Company (factories at Auburn, N. Y.) to reenter the government service; and he does so because the Sulu service attracts him. He has a bent for archeology and ethnology, has been interested all the time he has been in the islands in the problems presented by the minority peoples here. He is not now as familiar with the Sulu language as Fugate is, but knows something about it and will devote himself to mastering it: Murphy lays down the rule, a good one, that his appointees to executive posts among the minority peoples know the language spoken in their residencies.

It is a good indication in a governor general that young men are attracted to him and approve his policies. It stamps those policies progressive.

Murphy has given Sulu an entirely new administrative set-up with all authority rested in Governor Fugate. Announcing his policy, matured since his arrival here, until late in February, he made it include Lanao and Cotabato; except that for these two provinces he has not made new appointments. Here is the gist of his order:

"All heads of insular services in the provinces of Sulu, Cotabato and Lanao shall be assigned to or promoted within

the province only after consultation with the respective provincial governors; and all such officials shall serve on indefinite probation and be transferable out of the province without prejudice of record, upon the recommendation of the provincial governor."

From Governor Murphy's Announcement

"The resources and agencies of the Philippine government must be put behind the program of progress under conditions that will assure its ultimate success. So far as conditions within these provinces and the finances of the Insular Government permit, the Mohammedan Filipinos should be afforded opportunities for development equal to those given to the inhabitants of the other provinces through the public schools, the public health service, and all of the other agencies through which the government serves the people.

"In the administration of their respective services in these provinces, the several departments of the government should adapt their procedures to local conditions and select their personnel with special reference to the peculiar demands of the territory and the people to be served.

"So far as is compatible with the maintenance of law and order and with the attainment of economic, social and political progress among the Moro people, our policy should be to utilize Moros as officials and employees in those communities where they predominate.

"In a word, there must be a definite policy of attraction, vigorously carried out. Our attitude must be sympathetic but we must insist upon obedience to the law by Moros as by others. The legal rights, the personal dignity, and the special culture and religion of the Moros must be respected. We must understand that furtherance of the social, political and economic progress of the Moros is the best guarantee of the eventual satisfactory solution of their problem and ours."

Such plain language needs no amplification. Governors in Sulu, Cotabato and Lanao are very definitely to run their provinces, administratively; they are therefore to be held accountable for what transpires in them, and blame for what goes wrong will lie directly against the governor concerned.

If anything will provide Sulu good government, this should. Heretofore it has been possible to asperse a governor's popularity, governors have therefore defensively built up personal followings: administration has been far from even-handed on occasion, so feuds and resentments have been provoked and fostered. In Sulu there has been a Sultan's party; now there need be none. There has therefore been an anti-sultan party, if no more; now there need be none. Long ago the sultan's acknowledged authority was limited to his primacy in the church, and now it ought to subside, gradually at least, to that status.

The general problem in Sulu is complicated by schismatic defections. These should now be allayed, everyone having to look to the governor and he, in his turn, having to look to no one but the governor general in Manila. The real problem there is the material condition of the inhabitants, a problem of frugal husbandry. During a long period of diffused authority and uncertain executive tenure, industries among the Sulus have run down. They raise cattle, but have poor access to markets. They grow fruits, but have no good means of selling them. They have public lands to which no roads give access, where settlers are therefore at the mercy of the road agent, or where the long arm of revenge may reach him. Yesterday these people were sea gypsies and pirates, many of them are still smugglers. Today's task is to fit them into peaceful lives ashore, and to protect their pearling grounds and shell fisheries. A delicate adjustment is coordinating their land laws with the general land laws of the islands, their laws not recognizing private title.

Sulu produces fine qualities of Manila hemp. Opportunity offers to bring more of this hemp into the export market. The people are adept at many crafts, notably weaving, carving, inlaying and engraving. If nothing more is done now than to nurse these crafts along, probably the traveling world will soon find interest in the gifted people who pursue them—a tourist lane may touch Jolo, the capital, and provide a market for such curios. In these, and in many other ways, business should gain from a firm, kindly and consistent Sulu policy such as Murphy's order and appointments promise to establish. The order recognizes, as it should, the good work done during Fugate's absence by Governor Arthur Spiller, who stepped into the executive breach from superintendency of the schools and will now return to that position.

Vice Governor Ralston Hayden took the brunt of the work in formulating the new Mohammedan policy under Governor General Murphy, who charged him with its direct responsibilities.

WE PART WITH A BOOK

The following letter from W. S. Basinger, passenger traffic manager of the Union Pacific railway system, explains how the editor of this magazine is about to break a hitherto impregnable rule of steady accretion, fair means or foul, and actually part with a book:

Your letter of November 28 addressed to the Union Pacific at San Francisco has just reached me. I appreciate very much receiving the tear sheet from the Journal of September 1933, which carries an article entitled "The Railroad." Naturally I

can sympathize with your interest in the railroad problem in the Philippine Islands.

I believe it will be a matter of only a few weeks before our new streamline train will be completed and be ready to be photographed. As soon as a good photograph is available, I will see that a copy is sent to you. The only one I could send you now would be that of a scale model which would be very inadequate and I would rather wait and send you one of the completed train which would give you and your friends a much better impression of what the train really looks like.

In the first paragraph of your letter you mention "Croft's Trans-Continental Tourist's Guide." I fail to find that our Advertising Department library contains a copy of this publication although

we do have several copies of "Croft's Overland Tours". They do not, however, contain a reproduction of the famous drawing of the driving of the golden spike at Promontory Point, Utah territory, on May 10, 1869. Your offer to send us your copy of the Tourist's Guide is appreciated. If you care to do this we will see that it is given a permanent place in the Union Pacific Historical Museum. Gifts of this character have been made to us by a large number of people and that is largely the way in which our Historical Museum has been built up. If the book is sent please address it to me and I will see that it is properly taken care of.

Yours very truly,
N. S. BASINGER