

Helpful Tools of the Bureau of Forestry

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Just what does Public Relations mean? According to Mr. Lyle H. Seymour, Resident Forester, Roaring River Tree Farm, Scio, Oregon, "Public Relations are those functions of an enterprise that acquaint the general public with its activities, purposes, policies, and accomplishments."

In discussing it, he propounded on the ways by which a forester can promote public relations within a local community, one of which is by taking interest in the people and their community affairs. This is of paramount importance to foresters and rangers who commune not only with big lumbermen, concessionaires, and government officials in carrying out their work, but also with the greater mass of people in the rural communities. Accordingly, the following are the ways a forester can take interest in a community of farmers, part-time farmers, farmer-mill workers, farmer-loggers, berry growers, and bean growers:

1. Learn something about the cultivation of the soil, breeding and raising of farm animals to enable you to listen intelligently to someone's problems.

2. Join local organizations and clubs as this is a faster way of getting acquainted with people in the community than by meeting them one at a time. Associating with a group of people in a little friendly "bullfest" promotes public relations.

3. Accept a responsible position in an organization because turning down offers will lead people to think that you are not interested in their community affairs but rather only in your personal well-being.

4. Give talks to the local grade and high schools and get together with teachers and offer to put on various types of programs for the school children, as getting them interested in a project is always good public relations.

5. If you have "tree farms" or "woodlots" sell some of your products such as posts, poles, firewood and other construction materials to supply the needs of the people, if this is fitted to your management plans.

6. Never enter into local feuds not directly concerning you, and if one ever concerns you, be as tactful as possible. Listening to both sides with no comments, either publicly or privately, can be done without degrading yourself.

With these pointers in mind, the forester and ranger may be able to strengthen their knowledge in public relations work. In our attempt to scan a few activities of the Bureau along this line, the following may be mentioned:

Propaganda work of the Bureau of Forestry dates back to the time of its first Director, Major George P. Ahern, who in his Annual Report in 1908-1909 mentioned that Forestry, although practiced in the Philippines since 1863, has never been well understood by the people. They realized neither the value of the forests nor the benefits derived from them if properly managed. As an endeavor for the proper care of the forests without the aid of the people was a difficult undertaking and that forest laws and regulations were of little avail unless public sentiment sanctioned it, it was conceived to

start a systematic campaign of propaganda. A Filipino forester, graduate of Yale Forest School was detailed to give a course of illustrated lectures in awakening the forest consciousness of the people and interest of high school boys in the forest service. This work consisted of 61 illustrated lectures delivered by forest officers, with 41 newspaper bulletins issued to 36 newspapers and other periodicals printed in English, Spanish, Tagalog, Visayan, Bicol, and other vernaculars creating widespread interest.

Public relations work was not only confined within the bounds of the archipelago but was extended also to foreign countries by distributing to the various educational and scientific institutions in Europe and in America about 2,400 wood specimens in the early stage of the Bureau's organization. From then on the Bureau of Forestry has spurred an intensive information campaign and relentless drive under the new administration apprising the general public of its objectives, policies and accomplishments.

It is probably difficult to evaluate the work that has been done and is being done by the Bureau along this line in terms of cash dividends, but it might be said that various information media such as magazines, pamphlets, and dailies have been disseminated and circulated here and abroad. During Arbor Day and other celebrations, posters and mimeographed leaflets showing the "Eight Mortals Sins Against Trees", "Plant Trees and Conserve the Nations' Wealth," "13-Point Forest Conservation Program" and many others have reached all and sundry. Students from public and private schools in the city visit annually the Bureau of Forestry Office in Manila for its various exhibits open to the public. In addition, the *Forestry Leaves*, official organ of the alumni, faculty and student body of the College of Forestry in Los Baños, has become a good medium of information and a connecting link among lumbermen, alumni, friends, different local and foreign institutions of learning. "The Forester", official gazette of the Society of Fil-

ipino Foresters, has also been a source of a great deal of information regarding forestry research through its scientific articles. Co-operative planting has likewise been extended to both public and private enterprises. From the radio broadcast to the showing of films depicting the importance of trees, a good number of people have at long last come to realize the role of the Bureau of Forestry.

It is interesting to note that our government thru the Office of Agricultural Information of the Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources has spent the amount of ₱20,000.00 to implement the information campaign of the Bureau for a documentary film entitled "Our Heritage" depicting the importance of our forest and the evils and disastrous effects of *kaiñgin* and destructive logging. (This film is now being shown at the Fourth World Forestry Congress in Dehra Dun, India).

The proclamation by the President of the Philippines of the "First Philippine Forest Conservation and Reforestation Conference" which was held in Manila from September 30 to October 1, 1954, attests to the growing concern of our government for our forests. In that conference, public relations through the Press was, among other things, emphasized. With a veteran newspaperman, a civic-minded leader and Vice-President of the *Manila Chronicle* in the person of Mr. Roberto Villanueva, heading the Committee on Educational Campaign, it is expected that a more effective public relations work will be enhanced through the long years in bringing forestry closer to the people.

In the past, public relations work was belittled by many, who, at that time, did not realize its importance in the dissemination of forestry knowledge and awakening in the public an interest and appreciation of the work being done by the Bureau of Forestry. Today, we may exultingly say that both public and private concerns recognize the gigantic task of the Bureau, and this is a healthy

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sign indeed. As a public service and in cooperation with this line of endeavor, the Philippine Chamber of Agriculture and the Binalbagan-Isabela Sugar Co., Inc. have published in the *Manila Chronicle*, October 9, 1954 issue, the Resolutions and Policies of the Bureau of Forestry approved by the First Philippine Forest Conservation and Reforestation Conference.

The writer has also observed that despite his busy hours in Office, Director of Forestry, Felipe R. Amos, since he assumed the directorship, has buckled himself to work and has exerted every effort to meet all kinds of callers: senators, congressmen, lumbermen, concessionaires, small and big sawmill operators so he can stress to each and every one of them the imperative necessity of Sustained Yield Management by the "Selection System of Cutting" to insure future reproductions. Some of them probably may have been at variance with our Director's present views and clear-cut policies for these to them would entail a great deal of sacrifice on their part. To them these policies would mean a retarding of the immediate financial returns which they expect from their heavy investments. But by and large these policies if effectively carried out will redound to the welfare of the whole nation.

It is hoped that this year will mark the beginning of a reawakening of greater and more genuine interest of the general public in the conservation, protection, and wise utilization of our forest resources by cooperation with or full support of the administration's forest policies.

After a lengthy, heated debate in Congress, one Representative stalked out of the House only to meet his tailor on the street.

"Excuse me, sir," said the tailor, "but did you get the bill I sent you last month?"

"Certainly I got it," came the dignified reply. "And it has already received its first reading."

—Contributed by Peter Agure

FROM THE MAIL . . .

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Municipal Mayor

Aglipay—4
Alicia—4
Angadanan—4
Cabatuan—4
Cauayan—4
Cordon—4
Diffun—4
Echague—4
Jones—4
San Agustin—4
Santiago—4
San Mateo—4
Reina Mercedes—4

District Supervisor

Aglipay—12
Alicia—20
Angadanan—20
Cabatuan—40
Cauayan—20
Cordon—26
Diffun—12
Echague—92
Jones—40
San Agustin—40
Santiago—40
San Mateo—40
Reina Mercedes—40

Private Schools

Echague Chinese School 4 copies
Legarda Memorial High School 4 copies
Northeastern College, Santiago 4 copies
La Salle High School, Santiago 4 copies

Public High School

Principal, Echague Farm School 4 copies

Very respectfully,

(Sgd.) TORIBIO V. MANZANO
Officer in Charge

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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources
BUREAU OF FORESTRY
Malaybalay Reforestation Project
Malaybalay, Bukidnon

October 22, 1954

The Editor
Forestry Leaves
College, Laguna

Sir:

The Malaybalay Reforestation Athletic Club, Malaybalay, Bukidnon, respectfully requests for the Musical Notes of the song "Men of the Forest We". The members said that it is worthwhile knowing the song inasmuch as we are Forestry men. This song is especially important during celebrations and programs.

For this reason, I request that the same be published in the *Forestry Leaves* the next issue.

Very respectfully,

(Sgd.) CATALINO AMA
President, Malaybalay Ref. Ath. Club

Ed. Note: *We are publishing the "College of Forestry Song" at inside back cover of the LEAVES in this issue.*