



Taking the oath of office before Secretary Vargas. In the picture are left to right, Mena Quinto, Assistant to the Manager Hilarión Henares, Assistant General Manager Benitez, Assemblyman F. Lavidés, General Manager Maximo Rodríguez and Secretary Jorge Vargas.

CONRADO BENITEZ, EXECUTIVE

AS much as any other man before the public eye in the Philippines today, Dean Conrado Benitez newly appointed Assistant General Manager of the National Coconut Corporation belongs to that select group of men known as liberal. For not only is he a man of wide vision and solid intellectual fitness but with him the sheer logic of calculating reason is tempered with the mellowing warmth of understanding.

Distinguished Career

He joins the National Coconut Corporation after a career of such distinction that notwithstanding the fact that he is far from being a politician, his eminence as a national figure was demonstrated by the spontaneous inclusion of his name in 976 ballots in the nation-wide poll of candidates for the Philippine Senate conducted by the chain of the T.V.T. Newspapers.

The eminence of Dr. Benitez is no accident. It is but the net result of a consistent record of personal effort and achievement. He is a noted economist, an educator of high reputation, an author and a newspaperman, a lawyer, a former delegate to the National Constitu-

tional Convention and now as a coconut planter with a record for integrity and ability he joins the National Coconut Corporation.

Love for Coconut Industry

In this new field of action he is certainly not a neophyte. "The coconut industry is my first love," he says, and anyone who knows the constructive and fruitful labors which he contributed as organizer, director and secretary of the Philippine Coconut Planters Association can not but agree that here is a man in his element.

He was born in the great coconut province of Laguna, and from the cradle the warm breezes of the tree of life fanned in his blood a passionate love for this unsurpassed plant—the pride of tropical lands. He therefore brings with him a knowledge of the coconut possessed by few and this, together with his vast comprehension of

the economic problems of the country, make him ideally the right man in the right place.

In the course of a discussion of his plan he

CONRADO BENITEZ

From "Distinguished 100" By S. H. Gueckoh

COLLEGIATE education for business in this country was started by the University of the Philippines, but it was not given its professional standing until in May 1934, when its school was converted into a college. Made dean of the new College of Business Administration was Professor Conrado Benitez, director of the old school and first dean of the College of Liberal Arts of the University of the Philippines.

At 23, Professor Benitez joined the University of the Philippines as instructor in economics. That was in July 1912. At the time he was already holder of the degrees of bachelor of philosophy and master of arts from the University of Chicago. In order to give him the broadest conceivable preparation not only in his teaching of economics but also in his college administration work and present connections with the outside world, he handled a variety of social science courses up to June 1917. This broad foundation was again extended when he got the degree of bachelor of laws from the University of the Philippines.

As a tangible result of this all-round academic preparation, Dean Benitez has written several books, principally the *Philippine History*, which is used by the fourth year high school students; *Economic Development of the Philippines*, used by the second year university students; *Philippine Civics*, used by the fourth grade elementary pupils; and *A History of the Orient* (as co-author), used by the third year high school students. Of equal importance were his editorial writings while first editor of the *Philippines Herald* and his *Food for Thought*, a daily column in the

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reminisced thoughtfully of the times when he was associated with General Manager Maximo Rodriguez in the Philippine Coconut Planters Association.

"The Philippine Coconut Planters Association," he said, "had practically the same objectives and plans as the present National Coconut Corporation, namely the alleviation of coconut planters and the rehabilitation of the coconut industry, but it was handicapped by lack of funds. The Philippine Coconut Planters Association had the will, but not the means. The National Coconut Corporation, however, has both the will and the means. With the funds placed at its disposal by the government and with reasonable foresight, ambition and planning there is no reason why it should not succeed in its mission."

Requisites for Success

According to him, success in this enterprise as in every other enterprise, may be attained by the observance of three fundamental points namely: Cooperation, control by men of the resources of nature and capacity for high ideals.

These are not new ideas, he confesses, yet as in the case of the person who looks but does not see, they are often overlooked and neglected. He says that "cooperation is the binding force that unites the efforts of many into a common channel. Where there is dispersion of labor, the results are inconclusive and the goal, however definite, may eventually appear farther off instead of coming nearer attainment. Hard work is admirable but where the common goal is as vast as the

one before us the toil of individuals must be united with that of others; otherwise it will be aimless."

Dr. Benitez used a common and effective simile to give point to his words. He cited the example of

a team which must pull together to win. The captain of the team directs it but unless the individual players give him a helping hand, unless there is teamwork, the team cannot win.

It is no flattery to state that Dr. Benitez himself possesses to a high degree the rare gift of evoking in others the spirit of cooperation. With quiet tact and resourceful handling of men, he attracts in others the willingness to give freely of their best efforts. Of such stuff are leaders made.

Warns recalcitrants

For those, however, who will not cooperate he has harsh words.

"We do not need people who do not want to harmonize their work with that of others. They are a liability and will deter us in our march to progress. If we ever have such people in our midst, we should get rid of them immediately and tell them that they are free to go elsewhere. The organization must function like a well-oiled machine, each cog doing its part to make the machine be on the move."

Harness Nature Through Science

The harnessing of nature through the medium of science is the second fundamental that Assistant General Manager Benitez lays down in assaying the Elements of success for the organization. This carries particular importance for the National Coconut Corporation which is embarked on
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Tribune for several years, which reflect his deep understanding of human nature and the social process.

In recognition of his scholarly work, he was made dean of the College of Liberal Arts of the University of the Philippines on May 3, 1918; then director of the School of Business Administration, and dean, when it was converted into the College of Business Administration.

His thirst for knowledge cannot be satisfied. In November 1913, he did research work at the Philippine Assembly so as to give him "that broad experience which one does not acquire from the classroom alone." Again, in October 1916, he became legislative researcher in order to enrich his theoretical knowledge of economics with governmental problems. He went to Japan in the summer of 1917 to continue the study of that country's economic development started by him a year before; twice he made trips to Mindanao to enhance his knowledge of the economic conditions in that region.

Professor Benitez attended the Farmers' Congress in 1915. He was appointed technical adviser to the First Philippine Mission by President Quezon and Speaker Osmeña in February 1919. A good deal of his time in the United States was devoted to the study of American college administration. Aside from his work as technical adviser, he also organized the publicity work in Washington, of which he became the first head.

In 1919 he pointed out to President Villamor of the University of the Philippines the need of a survey of the institution. President Benton ordered the survey two years later. He was likewise instrumental in the appointment of a registrar. His suggestion for the university to have a permanent source of income unaffected by the whims of politics, such as mill-tax, formed the basis of Dr. Benton's proposals to the Philippine Legislature.

Through his efforts, experts on higher education in the Bureau of Education of the United States have included the University of the Philippines in their educational surveys since 1919, thereby giving the university a formal recognition in the United States.

Another important feature of his work was in getting help for research from the Carnegie and the Rockefeller Foundations, and for this purpose he succeeded in contacting Dr. Vincent. He also looked in the possibility of taking advantage of a Congressional law that awarded the sum of \$50,000 a year to graduates of agricultural and mechanical arts colleges.

Although he was dean of the College of Liberal Arts for two years only, yet he accomplished a great deal in stimulating the growth of certain activities. He started the first weekly convocations of his college, an institution which Dr. Benton continued and enlarged. Finding that the college was receiving the miserable sum of P500 a year, he asked for an appropriation of P10,000 and got it. He also succeeded in getting bigger sums for technical equipments.

As director of the School of Business Administration, he lent the services of students and faculty to the business firms that needed their services.

With this rich experience and these educational thoughts, Professor Benitez assumed the deanship of the College of Business Administration. Indeed, he is more than a mere head of his college; he founded the collegiate course in business; he developed it; he got the School of Business Administration to administer the course; he built the business library for the school and the business community; and finally, with the support of Regent Carlos P. Romulo, he succeeded in having this type of university
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a vast program of industrialization of the coconut and its by-products. The nearly illimitable reservoir of industrial riches which the coconut tree holds in its various parts fill one with amazement at the potentialities which the industrialization of this plant holds. Scientific experimentation and research along this line be said to be still in their swaddling clothes in the Philippines, yet we are already attaining surprising results. What scientific research will unlock in its advanced stages in future years may well be something to marvel at.

He considers the ability of our coconut people to adopt themselves to a changing environment in their attitude towards the coconut a challenge to their education and progressiveness.

"It is a real challenge to the capacity of our people," he says. "I say it is a real challenge to our capacity, because it constitutes a trial of our ability to adjust ourselves to a changing environment. An essential pre-requisite to that utilization is training and experience. I believe whole heartedly in the value of scientific research and I believe that every encouragement should be given to scientists in their effort to utilize various coconut by-products. And not only is the application of scientific methods valuable to the exploitation of the by-products of the coconut but also to improvement in our methods of coconut farming."

Because one of the main objectives of the National Coconut Corporation is the greater utilization

of coconut by-products he feels that it should lead the way in the search of scientific methods whereby the potentialities of these by-products will be more fully exploited. The best means of assuring this, he says, is by having a strong and progressive scientific department which shall unceasingly labor on the scientific problems involved and reflect its progress in a continued expansion of its field of research.

The Need for Ideals

Speaking of the objectives of the Corporation, he came to the subject of ideals. It might appear at first blush that ideals have no relevant connection with the activities of the Corporation but Dr. Benitez quickly disabused the listener of any such notion. Ideals cannot be dissociated from every worthy enterprise, he said, and in the case of the National Coconut Corporation, the task entrusted to it is a noble one. That task, according to him, is a heavy responsibility in itself.

"We who are entrusted with the task of carrying out the work of the Corporation must never forget that the Corporation has a mission. That mission is the rehabilitation of the coconut industry. It is a trust reposed in us. Therefore we should make the realization of that mission our ideal."

—G.Z.

CONRADO BENITEZ...
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work given by the college of business.

Because of his wide interest in educational matters that vitally concern the University of the Philippines, his name was mentioned when the Board of Regents was engaged in the task of selecting a successor of the late President Ignacio Villamor.

He is well-known in Japan, China, and Canada for being twice delegate to the conferences of the Institute of Pacific Relations, and for being the executive secretary and director of the institute in the Philippines.

Dean Benitez was member of the Filipino participation in the Joint Preparatory Committee on Philippine Affairs appointed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt of the United States in consultation with President Quezon of the Philippines, for the purpose of studying the trade relations between the United States and the Philippines with a view to an orderly and adequate adjustment of the Philippine national economy.

Once president of the Jose Rizal College, Dean Benitez was formerly partner in the Abad Santos and Benitez law firm at Manila, and alumni regent of the University of the Philippines.

In the National Constitutional Convention he was chairman of the committee on industry, and member of the committees on public instruction, national defense, agricultural development, sponsorship, and selection of the resident commissioner under the Commonwealth. He was also member of the committee of seven that drafted the Constitution.

He is member of the Historical Research and Markers Committee, Board of Indeterminate Sentence, Pardon Board, Philippine Economic Association, and of the executive council of the Philippine Academy of Social Sciences. He is editorial correspondent of the *Pacific Affairs*; Philippine representative of the World Alliance for International Friendship; secretary and director of the Philippine Coconut Planters' Association; adviser of the International Club, U.P.; and organizer of the International Relations Club of the Philippines.

UNLOCKING THE . . .

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Thus the coconut shell has been unlocked, mostly through the efforts of the National Coconut Corpora-

tion Officials, who had faith, vision and dared to attempt.