

Needs of Barrios*

From the McMillan-Rivera Report, "The Rural Philippines"

IN general, the barrios surveyed reflect serious inadequacies in many community facilities: roads, marketing, credit, irrigation, water supply, health, sanitation, housing, recreation, reading centers, farmers' organizations, and community improvement groups. *Many of these weaknesses in local facilities stem from the lack of barrio autonomy* rather than from limited natural resources and technology.

Frequently the needs of barrios are ignored or neglected by government officials. The hope is that programs of amelioration functioning at barrio level can strengthen the Republic by *broadening the opportunities of people to develop resources available in the barrios*. The citizens of the barrios visited expressed a genuine interest and strong desire to cooperate in any activity of community improvement provided the benefits are shared fully by all income groups.

Suggested Lines of Action

Social planning and action involve the decisions of many persons or groups with diverse interests and motives. Therefore, induced changes occur at unequal rates of speed. In some problem areas, rapid change may be effected; in others little or no change can be discerned. Piece-meal treatment of social problems is better than none, although such an approach sometimes creates more problems than are solved. A unified approach involving several related problems at once definitely is more effective in the long run.

It is proposed here to indicate several suggested lines of social action which would contribute to the solution of existing rural problems in the Philippines. These desired changes in natural resources, technology, social organization, and population should achieve *greater production of goods and services*, higher incomes, and improved levels of living for people in all occupation groups:

1. Reduce holdings of large landowners by transferring land ownership to tenants and farm laborers.
2. Establish more equitable sharing-practices between landlords and tenants.
3. Survey and classify land for agricultural uses.
4. Resettle population voluntarily on unoccupied lands.
5. Classify land titles and facilitate their transfer to new settlers and other new owners of land.
6. Provide more adequate credit facilities to farmers and other business enterprisers.
7. Improve techniques of producing farm plants and animals and of reducing pests and diseases.
8. Increase the application of organic and commercial fertilizers.
9. Develop gravity and pump irrigation facilities.

*Page 46. The italics are the editor's.

The American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, thanks to the cooperation of the then Acting Secretary of Labor Aurelio Quitariano

The "Blue-Sunday" and of Mr. Cecilio L. Lim, Assistant, Wage Administration Service, had the opportunity to be of considerable service to its members in securing needed exemption, strictly under its provisions, of the so-called "Blue-Sunday" Law,—"An Act to Prohibit Labor on Sunday, Christmas Day, etc." (R.A. Act No. 946).

Last month, the newspapers having carried an official release to the effect that all previous permits of exemption granted by the Department of Labor would be cancelled.

10. Use terraces and contours on farm land to save soils.
11. Develop a program of reforestation along with one of prudent use of existing timber.
12. Increase home and mass-production industries to furnish employment and goods needed.
13. Increase productivity and income of farmers, salaried workers, and wage laborers.
14. Improve the quality and the quantity of handicraft output.
15. Develop better methods of marketing farm and handicraft products.
16. Encourage development of fisheries.
17. Apply progressive property, income, and inheritance taxes to limit more concentration of wealth and income in the small upper economic class.
18. Improve the effectiveness of tax collections.
19. Prevent malnutrition by increasing the consumption of enriched rice and by other direct measures.
20. Intensify nutrition-education among children and adults.
21. Institute a school-lunch program to improve health and mental alertness of children.
22. Consider techniques of controlling population growth.
23. Reduce deaths through better health measures.
24. Increase trained health-personnel and provide medical kits at the barrio level.
25. Increase the amount and quality of formal education with greater emphasis upon agricultural, mechanical, and social sciences.
26. Encourage research in the sciences to accumulate useful knowledge in all aspects of human behavior.
27. Develop and coordinate facilities for educating children and adults to build better communities.
28. Utilize the community-improvement organizations sponsored by the public schools to achieve better living conditions at the barrio level.
29. Improve housing through better planning, better materials, and better construction.
30. Enforce the minimum wage law and develop more adequate public assistance and social security programs.
31. Increase the political autonomy of barrios.
32. Enable barrios to obtain more adequate roads, water supply, electricity, schools, reading centers, and recreational facilities through taxation, credit, cooperatives, and other means.
33. Develop more adequate means of communication, —press, radio, and mail service.
34. Stress the role of churches in promoting the social as well as the spiritual welfare of the population.

Mrs. Virginia Gonder, Executive Vice-President of the Chamber, called on Acting Secretary of Labor Pantaleon Pelayo on the matter and was informed by him that new requests for permits had to be submitted as of February 1, which permits, however, would cover the rest of the year instead of merely half a year as previously.

The Secretary assured Mrs. Gonder that upon submission of these requests from members, through the Chamber, as before, the permits would be granted as expeditiously as possible. The Secretary appointed Mr. Lim as Chairman of a committee to take immediate steps to set up the new forms to be used.