

SPEAKOUT BICOLANDIA

BY
JUAN G. FRIVALDO

Mr. X, Manila businessman, was reportedly awarded 300,000 hectares of choice timberlands in Mindanao because he is putting up an integrated pulp and paper mill. Another Malacanang favorite went to the Palace and wanted 50,000 hectares of rich timberland as his price for big financial support in the 1965 elections.

"But there are no more vacant forest concessions," Malacanang said.

"Yes there are," Businessman No. 2 said.
"Where."

Mr. X Businessman has a 300,000 hectares concession. Actually his area is over 500,000 hectares. Threaten him with a perimeter survey. "We will see," Businessman No. 2 said.

Businessman No. 2 got his 50,000 hectares. Mr. X grumbled but what can he do. He would not risk a perimeter survey.

These two businessmen are mestizos. I did not say Chinese or Turkish. This just proves to you how corrupt our people can be -- with our patrimony.

Everybody loves local autonomy, including President Marcos. But Malacanang makes a farce of decentralization. For instance, the law authorizes 10 to 15% automatic retention by the provinces and cities of BIR collections. That would be good if the municipal and provincial and city treasurer collect the internal revenue taxes so that the treasurers automatically deduct the share of the local government.

The problem is municipal BIR collectors turn over their collections to the provincial and regional BIR collectors who in turn remit the funds direct to Manila. Naturally the governors and the mayors have to kneel and beg from Malacanang of BIR shares that are legally theirs.

But hear Marcos speak about local autonomy. He is the founder and angel of decentralization Hic.

Ask your governor and mayor if they got their BIR share. If they were given a morsel today, they were for those three quarters ago.

BIR friends leaked out the information that collections last year is 30% lower than expected. So is the customs. No wonder BIR shares of local governments are not remitted; salaries are delayed; retirement payments suspended; contracts not paid; trust funds abused; mayor projects stopped and public projects grounded to a halt.

Foreign banks must be miserly Jews. They would not lend us no more.

What did Marcos do to straighten the mess he brought us. He told Uncle Sam, "Give us loans and aid or I go to Moscow." Sukarno style.

Some friends have asked me why I started a syndicated column all over Bicolandia. Am I running for the senate? Of course not, I have had enough running. This time I would like to sit or fly.

An American newspaperman friend stopped four hours in Manila and asked me if it is true there are two forms of governments in Central Luzon. I said, "Yes, the Invisible and the Incurable."

Would the Parks and Wildlife conduct a perimeter survey of Bulusan Lake National Park? There were reports that somebody grabbed hundreds of hectares from the park. He had them titled too.

It would also be good if the office would send patrols. There are 17 new Kaingins in the virgin forest reservations. Choice lumber have been systematically cut from the park. While Marcos talk about conservation.

Ambassador Williams made a flying visit to Sorsogon recently. He visited only one project -- the Sorsogon dairy plant. Four months ago, British Ambassador Addis went to Sorsogon and visited only the Sorsogon dairy project. To think that when I was governor some Nacionalistas have been poking fun at that project. Hope they do not abandon that now.

Private Education Fund Established by Six Million Dollar U.S. Treasury Disbursement

A trust fund for private education in the Philippines will shortly be established following the disbursement by the U.S. Treasury of \$6.154 million. The disbursement was made Dec. 3. The fund, created out of the \$28 million Special Fund for Education by agreement between the Philippine and U.S. governments, will be under the trusteeship of a special Committee for Assistance to Private Education. Earnings from the fund will be utilized to provide assistance to private education in the Philippines. The committee administering the fund is composed of the following: the Secretary of Education, chairman, a representative of the National Economic Council, and representatives of three private education associations -- the Philippine Association of Colleges & Universities, the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines, and the Association of Christian Schools & Colleges.

Bulan, Sorsogon

Dear Mr. Editor,

I feel very glad Catholic priests in Sorsogon have taken active part in improving the moral fiber of our people.

Several preachers, notably the parish priest of Irosin, have delivered stirring sermons denouncing a 40-member burlesque group that have been staging shows in nine towns of the province. The priests appealed for more decency and constructive activities.

Truly yours,
JUSTINO GRANADO

U. S. Ready to Settle Disputes Honorably: Clifford

Washington -- Defense Secretary Clifford says the U.S. is ready to join "all men of reason" in settling international disputes with honor.

In a Christmas message to Americans in the armed services Dec. 17 Mr. Clifford said it is a season "of peace and joy and new beginnings."

While no man can bring about peace, the Defense official said, "all men of reason and rectitude -- whatever their differences -- can reap the greatest reward of all by settling their disputes with honor and honesty."

"The U.S. remains at the ready to do just that," Mr. Clifford said.

U. S. Warns Hanoi of Consequences if Attack on Cities Renewed

Washington -- The U.S. warned North Vietnam Dec. 19 that "serious consequences" would follow any resumption of communist attacks on South Vietnam's major cities.

Robert J. McCloskey, State Department spokesman, told newsmen the U.S. warning was based on intelligence information and was conveyed by Cyrus Vance, number two U.S. delegate at the Paris talks, to this North Vietnamese counterpart, Colonel Ha Van Lau.

Pictorial Directory of Local Govt. Officials Coming Out Soon

The Biographical Researchers Society of the Philippines (BRSP) will publish early this year THE PICTORIAL DIRECTORY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS -- from provincial governors down to barrio councilmen -- Prof. Wilfredo P. Valenzuela, BRSP chairman, announced.

The first of its kind in the Philippines, the Directory will be published in a souvenir book form as a sequel edition of Volume 4, 1969 edition, of KNOW THEM, an approved book of biographies of contemporary Filipino leaders.

The Directory will be printed in offset process, containing about 300 pages, measuring 7 by 10 inches, with a beautifully-designed and colored cover.

Assistant Executive Secretary Flores A. Bayot of the Local Governments and Civil Affairs Office of Malacanang will write the Introduction.



monkey business

By PETE L. AMPOLOQUIO

Some AD solicitors are lousy. They give the editor of the Star only 15 percent. They keep 85 percent. If the editor approves my plan, I will handle the business for him. I will keep 100 percent to save him the trouble of worrying how to spend his money. I will spend it for him.

Governor Armando B. Cledera need not worry about criticisms leveled against him. Criticisms are only effective if people believe them. All he has to do is do what he believes good for his people. If the people are convinced that he is doing good, they will not believe the things that are said about him.

Of course he must also see to it that the people are properly informed. That would be the job of his Information Office. And, another thing the information office should also see to it that their press releases are believable. When people find out that a lie was told somewhere, they will not believe future press releases.

The good plans reported after the last big Maga fire will probably remain just plans. The beautiful skyline envisioned in those reports may not see actual existence after all. Those burned buildings are being retouched and prepared for business again. We are back where we staid-preparing Naga for another fire. We are forgetting probably about those much needed "callejones" for our fire trucks.

Secretary Antonio V. Raquiza will soon step out of the Marcos cabinet. Mr. Raquiza, reports claim is a victim of intrigues from the "Imelda boys." Raquiza's ouster may turn out to be the most costly error of the Marcos administration. The man is admitted in the Marcos camp to be the President's most loyal man, and yet he had to go. Embittered, his loyalty can be converted into violent hate. He can wreck the President's reelection plan. The man knows many things.

Six months ago, President Marcos was believed to be unbeatable. Today, I am beginning to notice that the President's popularity is going down. I blame it on the quarrels within his circle. Cliques are actively fighting among themselves. If the President does not look out, he will be a goner before he knows it. The Liberals will only give the finishing blow when the time comes.

The Nacionalistas in the province of Camarines Sur will always be in trouble as long as Ambassador Fuerdebella considers the party as his personal property. He is now in trouble with Gov. Cledera over the chairmanship of the party. Why can't he just leave the party to the younger elements?

While it is true that he sacrificed so much for the party, he can continue to help it by just helping along as adviser. In that case, fights will be unnecessary.

Atty. Fred Tria has been attacked from various sources for his open criticism of anomalies in the government. I feel that the right thing would be for the aggrieved parties to answer the issues raised by Mr. Tria. It will be for the good of the people to know both sides.

Dr. Jose P. Rizal and Bicol Martyrs Honored in Naga City Dec. 30, Jan. 4

Naga City in a simple manner but with profundity celebrated the 72nd anniversary of the execution of Dr. Jose Protacio Rizal last December 30 and the Fifteen Bicol Martyrs last January 4. Dr. Rizal was executed Dec. 30, 1896 in Bagumbayan. Of these 15 Bicol martyrs, 11 were also executed in Bagumbayan (now Luneta) field, Manila on January 4, 1898, namely, Fr. Inocencio Herrera, Fr. Gabriel Prieto, Fr. Severino Diaz, Manuel Abella, Domingo Abella, Carmelo Jacob, Tomas Prieto, Florentino Lerma, Macario Valentin, Cornelia Mercado and Mariano Magsajero. The other four of the Bicol martyrs died in prison or in exile in Fernando Po, Africa, namely, Leon Hernandez, Ramon Abella, Mariano Arana



DR. JOSE RIZAL and Mariano Ordenanza. (Continued on page 7)