

The Anatomy of Graft and Corruption

By J. G. PLANAS

A NEW social cancer plagues the Philippines—this is the consensus among the articulate citizenry and the press. A move is rife among top leaders of the country to combat the disease, but the sons of the old Filipinos, who years not long ago took up arms to rid the land of the old social cancer, are asking themselves the question with searching frankness:

Is it actually possible to rid the country of this social evil?

Like the sinister cancer disease, the social cancer of graft and corruption is doubly sinister; like the cancerous cells that grow to abnormal proportions at the expense of the healthy normal cells of the human body, the plague of graft and corruption thrives upon the cadavers of its victims which are the people. In the manner that mere salves, ointments, drugs and pills are ineffectual against the dread disease, ordinary platitudinous "drives for clean government" and "social rejuvenations" are ineffectual. In fact, ordinary punitive measures are of no avail against the vicious carriers of this social disease; social palliatives like suspensions from positions and social ostracism do not subdue this social evil. In the same manner as the only way to remove the cancer disease is to eradicate or kill the cancerous cells, the cancer of graft and corruption can only be wiped out by eradicating the grafters and corrupt officials from the positions of responsibility and power they undeservedly hold. In fact, they should be placed in a position where they will not be able once again to rise to power. They must be punished and made to pay for their guilt.

In the relatively brief period of political autonomy enjoyed by the Philippines, the epidemic of graft and corruption has gained tremendous proportions and has become rampant. The law-abiding citizen encounters this evil from the lowest to the highest rung of public office in the course of his business. That this evil should be flouted in the face of the long-suffering people is an indication, moralists say, of national decadence. A survey of public opinion, in fact, shows a growing ambiguity in the concept of moral values. What is moral? What is amoral? What is immoral?

The old ideals following a rigid rule of morality appear vacuous in the light of practical experience. Juan is apt to ask himself whether it is still moral for him to fight for his small property against the landgrabbing of a big landholder. Wouldn't it be more practical to give in and take what offer the rich man makes? The big landholder believes it is moral for him to acquire the property of Juan in order to "protect" and consolidate his property. Pedro, the tax collector, asks himself if it is immoral for him to turn in the day's receipts if he takes a slight bribe; after all, high officials are wont to quash cases of big time tax evaders after receiving a sizable "cumshaw." Tested in the laboratory of everyday life, the old morality seems to lose its qualities. A new amorality or absence of morals appears to be more practical because its only gage of moral value is, "What is in it for me?" Official A rakes in a million from a filthy real estate deal; so Juan finds it

more sensible to take in a little on the sly and call everything else square. Wherein lies immorality?

To answer the question of whether it is possible to do away with graft and corruption, it becomes necessary to look into the cause and historical development of this social evil. It becomes necessary to ask, "Is it the product of lax state supervision? Is it the result of the frailty of human nature? Does the social system abet its growth? Is the root economic in nature?" The process of corruption in a public official sets in and develops gradually. An employee finds himself circulating in a social level that demands more expense than his regular income allows. The natural factor of solving his economic problems clashes with the factor of public service and the more pressing and immediate demand of meeting his economic needs wins. As the ardor of public service wanes, the flame of self-aggrandizement grows. The official or employe accepts bigger bribes for bigger breaches of public trust. Once the official hand is begrimed with "grease money" the official conscience seeks no longer to halt the practice but to justify it.

One justification is rationalization. A public official reasons thus: In order to serve the people well, the state must be strong. To make the state strong public officials must have stability. But stability cannot be achieved with the income given by the state. Therefore public officials must seek other ways of stabilizing themselves, particularly in finances, without necessarily resorting to out and out seizure. The official conscience is at peace provided the primary aim of the state is still served.

The second justification is religious in origin. Human nature, says religion, is weak and vitiated by "original sin." Man cannot tread the path of righteousness all by himself without constant divine support.

That this support is often absent maybe deduced from the fact that the lot of the transgressor is the lot of many. Because of his "weak" nature man falls occasionally, if not often, into the quagmire of "sin." Thus the very ideals held aloft by the apostles of religion are undermined by the religious tenet that mankind is prone to wickedness. Idealism becomes truly idealism in the sense that it is impractical in the satisfaction of man's material needs.

The third justification is rooted in the kind of politics prevalent today. A public official's rise to power is accompanied by much expense, effort and many commitments. Once in office, the official thinks of recovering his investment, with profit, and of abiding by his commitments. A prominent politico gave voice to this justification when he made the classic utterance that to the winning party belongs the spoils, meaning jobs, commissions, allotments, junkets, etc. The cost of a political career under the present set-up forces the politician to make hay of the people's wealth while the sun of official tenure shines.

The common justification of official conscience, be this high or low, is economic in origin. Banned from engaging in private lucrative enterprise, the public official finds himself always behind the eight ball because of his poor salary. His personal needs and those of his family prey

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RETURN

(A Short Story)

The possibility of life lies in the forgetting.

J. Middleton Murry

By E. D. ORELLANA

AFTER the child was dead, they were silent and still for a long while. Quietly they looked at its face already grown whitely pale during rush of air, The ruddy light of the wick lamp blue in the lips and the brow.

The man rose rigidly to his feet, and moved toward the farthest window. He sat down upon the clothes chest beneath it and pushed open the sliding shutter noiselessly. The dawnlight flooded into the one room of the hut and in the accompanying rush of air, the ruddy light of the wick lamp upon a table in a corner quivered fitfully. The man breathed deeply into his lungs and gazed outside.

Webs of dew that had gathered in the night on the moist earth below sparkled in the wan light of the morning, and for a moment the man likened them to ornaments of bright beads he had seen of a Sunday in the marketplace in the far village. Then he looked at the brown cornstalks that rose tall above the bamboo fence, bending but slightly with their weight of large ears of the grainfruit, and running in rows for a distance away until they ended where began other stalks severed into short stumps; it was the midst of the harvest season. He hovered with his gaze over the cornfield, taking in the scarecrow-lines with their tatters of red clothing and the trees that fringed the far edge of the clearing, where a bull carabao grazed industriously. Then he followed with his eyes the hillsides sloping ruggedly away, far to a spur that reared blue cones in a cloudlaced sky. He beheld the far blue hills intently.

When he stirred himself it was to turn around in his seat as it were startled. He looked at the woman seated on the floor beside the dead child. She was weeping, but quietly except for the moan he had only a moment ago heard. Her head was bent over her breast which heaved even in her effort to still it, and tears filled her downcast eyes. Her hair hung in dishevel over her shoulders.

The man rose to his feet and stepped a pace near her. She did not move, and he made a movement as if to speak. But instead of being so he turned on his heels and stepped to the door. He unfastened the bar that held the door shut and propped it against the wall, then pulled the shutter slowly open. The room became more light as

the door squeaked in its hinges. He glanced back at the woman, then stepped forward and descended the narrow rickety stairs.

Some time later he came back, stepping up the ladder that led into the kitchen lean-to behind the hut. He stepped lightly across the slit-bamboo floor to the table in the corner, and casting a look at the woman, who was seated still but was now quiet beside the dead child, he reached his hand for the lamp. Then silently as he had come he went back down the ladder into the lean-to, his other hand cupped round the flickering light of the lamp.

Bending under the low roof over his head he started a fire in the clay stove, a spark from the lamplight kindling the dry sticks. The fire soon crackled into life and he placed a pot of water over the stove to boil. He snuffed out the lamplight, and then took down a pot of rice and a plate of roasted fish that hung from the ceiling inside a coil of rattan. The food were the remains of the supper of the evening before. He shook the rice out of the pot onto an empty plate. When the water over the fire began to boil, he brewed coffee well mixed with ground roasted corn. He was soon sipping

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Report of the WCC

Claims For Personal Injuries And Property

(A Summary)

The intent of Congress to secure a comprehensive view of the total problem of war claims is clearly stated in Section 8 of the War Claims Act. There is ample precedent in international and domestic law for recognition and reparation of war damages but the legislative and administrative approaches in the past have been piecemeal and often confusing, especially for individuals with small claims. Section 8 of the Act marked the first time that a Congress had sought an overall picture of war claims before attempting to legislate for their settlement. This report still does not achieve the goal set by Congress, since the scope of the study was sharply limited by the length of time and number of staff available for the work.

Section 8 of the War Claims Act of 1948 directed the War Claims Commission to inquire into and report on numerous matters involving personal injury and property damage arising out of World War II. The report was submitted to the President on March 31, 1950 and transmitted to the Congress on May 3, 1950.

Aim and Scope

The report of 135 typewritten pages, exclusive of charts and other supplementary material, is a limited survey of the types and categories of World War II claims and a review of existing means for satisfying them. Included are recommendations for appropriate legislative action and suggestions for administrative methods for re-enforcing the recommendations. The Commission recommends giving priority to legislation which would authorize the satisfaction of personal injury and death benefit claims. It also urges that authority be granted to receive and adjudicate claims for real or personal property losses, while evidence is available, although there is no immediate prospect of payment of such claims.

The War Claims Commission takes full responsibility for the recommendations made in the report. However, at least six of the eleven legislative changes recommended had been introduced in some form in the House or Senate, as amendments to the present War Claims Act, before the report was submitted and several before the Commission was organized.

Bases for War Claims

The term 'war claims', purposely not defined in the Act, made it necessary for the War Claims Commission to arrive at a working definition broad enough to apply to modern warfare but specific enough to permit reasonable adjudication. The definition adopted recognizes a distinction between "war losses" and "war claims". War claims, therefore, include loss, injury, or damage which would not have occurred except for the existence of a state of war; and, such loss, injury, or damage must be the result of action not normally incident to the conduct of hostilities. United States nationality at the time of the loss, injury or damage, must also be established, with certain exceptions.

As an aftermath of hostilities, war claims are not new. The new elements are the techniques of modern warfare which blur the line between combatants and non-combatants. International law has held as fundamental the distinction between combatants and non-combatants and the obligation to keep non-combatants from harm.

World War II claims have at least two other bases, in addition to the implicit principles known as international common law: international agreements to which the United States is a party, and existing United States domestic law.

Method of Study

Besides reviewing the necessary historical background for war claims settlement by the United States Government, for purposes of the report, it was decided to:—

- (1) Analyze and classify representative samples of "war claims" accumulated by the Department of State during World War II;
- (2) Secure further information by means of questionnaires, letters and depositions;
- (3) Review existing local remedies for satisfying war claims by United States nationals by examining a negotiated Treaty of Peace (Italy), an enemy country without such a treaty (Japan), a country with which we were not at war and which was well advanced in the recognition and settlement of war claims (The Netherlands); further, this method permitted study of two European countries (Italy-The Netherlands), an Asiatic country (Japan), and a country with far-flung territories and possessions (The Netherlands).

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Personal Injury Extensive

The lingering after-effects of malnutrition and maltreatment in enemy prison camps cannot be fully appraised as yet, but the Commission collected case studies and medical opinions which indicate strongly that no prisoner has entirely avoided permanent physical and/or mental injury.

The few thousand personal injury cases studied for the report cannot be considered an adequate sample but approximately 70 percent of those submitted involved persons who were prisoners of war or internees at the time they say they sustained injuries. About 68 percent of the alleged offenses were charged against Japan, about 28 percent against Germany. Nearly 25 percent of these claimants have received other payment, such as workmen's compensation, insurance, veterans' benefits and the like.

Property Loss and Damage

Since proof or notarization was not required, the information received for the report on the valuation of property loss or damage is probably exaggerated. Of the cases studied for the report, 43 percent cited Japan as the offender, 38 percent, Germany. Approximately 29 percent of those alleging loss had made a previous claim through other channels and, of those, about one-third had received some degree of settlement.

Most of the property claims received by the Commission are relatively small, frequently under \$1,000. A few claims allege losses running into millions of dollars.

Recommendations

The Commission's recommendations, presented in both general and specific terms, cover a wide range of considerations. Without going into details, the principal recommendations include:—

- (1) Amending the War Claims Act to authorize payment of personal injury and death claims caused by illegal actions of an enemy arising out of World War II.
- (2) Amending the Act to authorize receiving and evaluating real or personal property claims arising out of World War II.
- (3) Authorizing extension of benefits to military personnel who evaded capture or escaped from enemy prison camps.
- (4) Extending the eligibility of parents to become beneficiaries and removing the dependency clause.
- (5) Extending authorization to cancel obligations owed the Department of State by civilians, based on amounts furnished by the Department to pay repatriation expenses, and to refund amounts which have already been paid by civilians to satisfy such obligations.
- (6) Extending the civilian coverage to include all U.S. civilians who were interned, regardless of the place of capture.

- (7) Equalizing the internee detention benefits payable to adults and children at \$60 a month, instead of the present differential of \$25 for children.
- (8) Extending eligibility to U.S. citizens who were taken prisoner of war while serving in the Armed

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The annual charity bazaar of the Association of Philippine-American Women was held recently at the Philippine Embassy in Washington, D.C., with a fashion show and displays of Philippine handicrafts as outstanding features of the program. The photograph shows three models in dresses they wore at the bazaar (left to right): Miss Gertrude de Castro, a member of the Philippine Embassy secretarial staff in Washington, who is wearing a satin cloth costume; Miss Mary Hamilton O'Neal, daughter of Emmet O'Neal, former U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines, and Mrs. O'Neal, who is displaying a black formal terno with white appliques; and Miss Josephine Manzanillo, a student at Georgetown Visitation Convent in Washington, who is dressed in a costume fashionable among Philippine women during the Spanish era from 1521 to 1898.

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COOPS:

Are They The Answer To Vets' Problems?

By MACARIO T. VICENCIO

THE problems of Filipino war veterans far from being solved, have not been met squarely and adequately. Veterans have found government efforts to aid them tragically wanting despite loud repeated protestation in forums as well as in the press that "everything would be done, nothing would be spared to help improve their lot".

Veterans have realized that what were received in the form of backpay and pensions are fast being spent as the cost of living steadily mounts. With the ominous rumblings of another world cataclysm patently gathering force and momentum, the Filipino war veteran finds himself a most bewildered human being.

The vast majority of these veterans come from the ranks of the workingmen. He is either an industrial worker or a farmer, while others with the amount they have received have gone into a little business all their own. Rather than improve the veterans's living condition, the forces of the economic system have so reacted upon him in such a manner as to place him ever at a disadvantage.

Viewed in this light, the veteran may find it well for him to consider seriously the need for organizing with his fellow veterans into cooperatives to stave off prices and of a national economy which, many are agreed, is fast deteriorating.

To define a cooperative is not altogether a simple matter although it is easy to say that to cooperate means to work together. Aside from being too simple, this definition is inadequate; it fails to show the distinctive enterprise. Technically a cooperative has been defined as "that joint action which seeks to obtain for a relatively weak group all or part of the profit and interest which in the ordinary business enterprise are taken by a small and different group." In the cooperative form of organization, the profit goes to the members either as cooperative producers who have pooled their individual capital and labor, or to the members without regard to the capital invested and according to the products they have used. Hence, a cooperative is an organization or a group of people who band themselves together to produce something, to sell something, to buy something for themselves, or to pool their financial resources for credit or loan purposes." When a group of individuals band themselves together to produce something they form what is known as a **producers cooperative**. When a group bands together for the purpose of selling something, they form a **marketing cooperative**. This latter type of cooperative is common among American farmers. A group of individuals uniting pool their resources for loan purposes form a **credit cooperative**. Finally, if a number of people unite for buying or purchasing purposes, we have what is known as a **consumers cooperative**. It is this last type that is held of vital interest to the veterans.

Underlying consumer cooperatives are certain definite principles that must be followed if the cooperatives are to be genuine, well-knit, and successful. Many of these principles are commonly known as the Rochdale principles they were originated and followed by a group of cooperative pioneers at Rochdale, England. The germ of this

movement emerged from the almost inhuman working conditions of the workers in the textile mills of Rochdale almost a century ago. The principles evolved from a strike wherein the workers lost and from their loss they realized that it is only through concerted collective and cooperative action, that they could ever hope to bring about the much-needed reforms. The Rochdale workers organized themselves with objects and plans to make arrangements for the pecuniary benefit and improvement of their domestic conditions. They raised capital to bring into operation their plan. To the present day this has come to be known as the Rochdale plan. The principles and objectives enunciated have been tested and found. What were these objectives?

1. The establishment of a store for the sale of provisions and clothing, etc.
2. The building, purchasing or erecting a number of houses for members desiring to assist each other in improving their domestic and social conditions to reside in.
3. The manufacture of such articles as the society may determine upon, the employment of jobless members.
4. The purchase or rent of an estate or states of land which shall be cultivated by the members out of employment or poorly paid.
5. The arrangement of the powers of production, distribution, education and government as soon as practicable, or in other words the establishment of a self-supporting colony of united interests, or assisting of other societies in establishing such colonies.
6. The promotion of sobriety through the opening of a temperance hotel in one of the society's houses, as soon as convenient.

But even with the above principles as a guide to action in the establishment of cooperatives, it must be admitted that the movement has not been able to evolve a clear-cut theory of cooperation. The modern cooperative movement has not produced an authoritative literature of its own. It has not produced great thinkers or teachers. It finds itself inarticulate when it tries to explain itself, and either seeks refuge in an obsolete Utopian phraseology or finds comfort in columns of statistics. This is not for want of inspiration from the past or due to any lack of continuity between the past and the present.

The fundamental principles with which the movement began have remained unchanged today. A need is felt to elaborate and adapt the old principles to current practice and conditions. No attempt to do this has been made; it has been allowed quietly to slip into the background, to remain as a kind of religious fervour among the few. This failure to work out a new and purposeful ideology, capable of influencing action and policy has been in no sense deliberate. It has been one of the penalties of growth. As the scale of operations grew larger, the available energies of the movement were absorbed in business activities. These came to be of importance for their own sake, and

their ultimate meaning tended to be lost. The task of reviving the earlier sense of purpose and of directing it to solve the problems of cooperative development is becoming more and more urgent.

The movement it is held, must beware again of Utopian theorizing; it must have a clear purpose. It must show these principles that distinguish it from an ordinary capitalist enterprise. It must determine the scope of its operations and influence, both in the economic and in the political sphere. It must plan its guide to future expansion and determine forms that will most favor its ends. It is essential, in any attempt to give meaning to cooperation or to envisage its future place in the life of the community, to define its present character and in the process of doing this, to lay bare the general principles which may serve as guideposts when there are further advances to be made or obstacles to be overcome. Hence, the need to bear in mind at all times the basic principles of the cooperative movement as enunciated by the Rochdale pioneers.

Cooperation is in itself a complete system of economic organization, arising out of the direct interest of the associated consumers in the goods and services they require for the satisfaction of their wants. It is different from a system of organization which achieves the satisfaction of wants indirectly and only to the extent to which profits are yielded in the process. It is clear that there must be opposition of interests between the cooperative system which aims at the elimination of profits, and a competing system of supply, the mainspring of which is the profit motive.

The cooperative enterprise differs fundamentally from the ordinary capitalist business. The latter puts the interest of producers in the forefront. All are consumers from the cradle to the grave, though most people it is true, are producers also. But production misses its true purpose unless it is directed to the fullest possible satisfaction of the wants of consumers, and therefore the consumer interest should predominate. Experience shows plainly enough that under the capitalist system, producers may by achieving monopoly of supply, or through selling agreements, raise prices against consumers, or that they may, by the power of advertisement, deliberately persuade consumers that their interest are other than they are. Thus there is a standing temptation to sectional and unjustifiable gain. The cooperative system offers a way of escape from this danger.

With the foregoing, it is possible to deduce another. Cooperation stands for the control by the general body of consumers of those economic activities which are directed to the satisfaction of their wants, and must be opposed to control by sectional interests. The starting point of the cooperative system is the consumer and consumer wants, not the producer and the desire for gain.

Because of the economies inherent in the cooperative system it will be noted that theoretically it must have a continuous capacity for expansion. But farther than this, the larger the body of organized consumers, the greater the benefit which each derives from the system and the greater the capital resources which can be set aside for further expansion. Between different producer interests there must be competition and wasteful friction; this leads to monopoly and the restriction of the gains to fewer people. Cooperation, on the other hand seeks to bring in the largest possible number of consumers to share in the increasing benefit of the common enterprise. Broadly speaking therefore, if the principles & aims of the cooperative movement were clearly enunciated and were planned and directed along the right lines, it would ultimately supersede a system which operates to the disadvantage of the ordinary consumer.

Pains have been taken to go rather into the above

The Anatomy of Graft...

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on his mind as his pay envelope inevitably fails to meet them. The civic-minded employe, for instance, is sadly aware that in spite of the theoretical equality of opportunity in the present social system, wealth is unevenly distributed, wages are inadequate, unemployment looms forever as a threat and money is being thrown around by the rich folk and the ruling class.

On the other hand, justified or not, the corrupt officials and grafters seem more and more secure in their position. In its mode of handling justice, current society cannot mete swift punishment to the wrongdoer especially if he is a "big wheel." Petty grafters are also invariably secure because they are protected by these big wheels, or "padrinos." Justice, the observant citizen finds out to his sorrow, is reduced to a poor arm of the state machine, which is itself an instrument under the control of unscrupulous officials and of those interests to whom they are shamelessly beholden.

It appears that under the present environment obtaining, this social cancer of graft and corruption thrives. It thrives so luxuriantly, in fact, that it has come to the notice of observers not only locally but abroad. The social evil has so smeared the prestige of the country that it has dimmed all prospects of getting foreign aid. The U.S. Administration, for instance, is loth to give aid to the Philippines because it finds the normal requisites for giving aid to any foreign country such as clean government, balanced budget, public confidence, absent. The role of the Philippines in the Far East world—to show how democracy works—is becoming a farce to observant Orientals who can see beneath the veneer of high-sounding slogans and the tinsel of official pomp and splendor.

While the disease wracks havoc in the national fabric, actual conditions demand even more its prompt eradication. Already some conscious elements in the top echelons of the government hierarchy have become aware of this urgent necessity for official reform. Some top officials are even now poised to wield the broom to rid the government of corrupt officials. But will the move succeed? Must the will to eradicate graft and corruption come from above, from below or from both sectors of the government? Must it be motivated by ideals? Must it be motivated by practical reasons of self benefit?

On the success or failure of the "drive for clean government" rests the capacity of the government to stem the tide of social unrest. To the observant citizen, for reform to be successful, no one no matter how highly placed must be spared if actually guilty. Proofs must be dug at all costs for this. Justice must be swift and not dilatory. The state laws must be plugged of loopholes. Society must be so tailored beyond the theoretical equality of opportunity there is actual equitable sharing and no citizen suffers from want. Public officials must be made to earn and live commensurate with their status, and the individual citizen must be made to realize he will get nowhere by bribing his way because the official does not need the bribe money. Failing in these, the Herculean task of cleaning the stables of graft and corruption is bound to fail, too. The futility of the movement will invite doubt on the validity of the social system.

details because of foreknowledge of what is to be expected in the process of organizing a cooperative will help very much the veterans in being able to meet the various problems as they crop up. Discussion on what the movement will eventually bring about has likewise been emphasized to show conclusively that within the present economic system, the much-needed reforms can be realized.