

Republic of the Philippines  
Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources  
**BUREAU OF FORESTRY**  
Manila

Arbor Day Celebration (1954)

September 11, 1954

# MESSAGE

Today, September 11, is Arbor Day. This is an occasion which comes only once a year to salute man's most faithful friend—the trees. Personally, I do not think a particular day should have deserved to be honored for just one day—only to be forgotten afterwards.

Few people realize the importance of trees in our daily existence. From time immemorial, trees have been loyal to mankind whether in time of peace or in war. Yet, we have failed to reciprocate them properly. While they have been constantly faithful to us, we have been unfaithful to them. No nation on earth can long exist without trees. Our country has been endowed with majestic towering trees. But it is sad to note that some people recognize the utility of trees only from the commercial point of view. In their desire to make money, they have exploited our forests to the prejudice of this and future generations. Various forms of vandalism are being perpetrated in our forests today.

On this day, let us turn our thoughts to the trees and other things which spawn verdantly in this land of ours. Let us start a nation-wide campaign to stop acts of commission and omission destructive to our forest. Every farmer should plant trees or maintain a woodlot not only to supply his needs for forest products but also to keep the fertility of his farm. But it is not enough to plant trees. It is even more important that we protect what we already have. We should utilize our forests wisely and not destructively so that nature will automatically reforest for us our cut-over areas. We are depleting our forests at a rate much faster than we could plant. If we could only stop *kaiñgins*, prevent forest fires and practice more conservative methods of logging, we shall have solved our major problems in forest conservation.

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