

MORE GUBERNATORIAL POWERS

Provincial Governors perform two primary roles in local government administration: they supervise the municipalities and they serve the National Government. For the former role, the provincial governors exercise but an approximation of the popular meaning of the term **governor**. For the latter role, they serve as **transmitter** which, in fact, has been their major function since the Spanish regime.

It has been observed that provincial chief executives, like good children in a Victorian household, do what are expressly told they might do. This state of tutelage is no longer suited to the realities of modern local administration. The time has come when an increased measure of freedom and responsibility could with safety and advantage be accorded to the local authorities. Administration is practically a matter of social engineering and its essence is discretion. When solutions depend upon unforeseen contingencies, local differences, necessity of speed, and flexibility of administration, the administrator must possess discretionary and determinative powers; otherwise any blueprint of administration cannot be carried out.

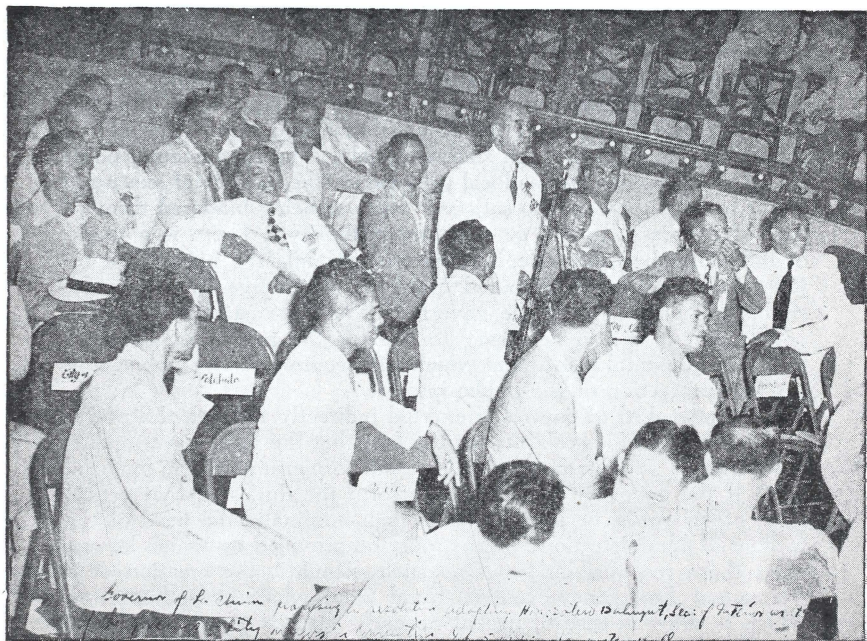
Government, which was once thought of primarily as a display of power through regulation and control, is now chiefly characterized by assistance and service. To fully attain these modern trends of government, the provincial governor should be prepared at all times to cope with the demands of public assistance and service instead of clearing the matters through state channels. The fundamental point is that where some obvious local need exists, the local chief executive ought to be empowered to satisfy it without being hindered through lack of express National or statutory authority. There is a world of difference between safeguarding from Manila the needs of a remote town and being prepared to tackle an emergency. It is desirable not only to keep the government as close as possible to the people, but it is also necessary to provide the provincial governor with governmental instrument which will secure effective public control and protection of the public interest.

A great deal of control is exerted indirectly through the power of the purse. This accounts for the fact that the local governments are constant suppliants to the National Government for financial aid. If the governor is really to perform the duties of that office, if, in other words, he is to be other than nominally the head of the provincial administration, means must be provided by which he can meet those responsibilities. One such means is the creation of a Permanent Emergency Reserve Fund from whatever source from which to draw in case of urgent needs.

The normal workaday processes of life depends upon internal peace and the enforcement of the law. While the governor is called upon to maintain peace and order and enforce the laws, what means

are provided to carry out these functions? None but to supplicate the aid of National agencies to succor. Meantime, red tape—delay due to numerous channels and regulations—is caused by the need to get the assistance of an armed force. Providing the provincial governor with a mounted or mobile provincial police force under his direct command may strengthen a weak strand in the provincial protective service.

The governor's role over the municipalities is the **father rule**: but under our existing laws he can not discipline or punish an erring local official, except to reprimand. It should be possible to invest the provincial governor with the power of direct disciplinary suspension. And there is need of strengthening the administrative powers of the governor and of providing in some way for the exercise of central control over the institutional activities of all the provincial operating services. Such an integrated provincial administration dovetails with the principle of looking to the provincial governor as the officer having general responsibility for the control of the conduct of affairs of the province. Only when management is unified is it likely to be spirited and progressive.—JFR.



Governor of S. China speaking to assembly of Hon. Sotero Baluyut, Sec. of F.A.T.H. on 10/4/48

The Provincial Governors and City Mayors while hearing Gov. Doroteo Aguila of La Union sponsoring on October 4, 1948, a resolution adopting Hon. Sotero Baluyut as FATHER of their association (See Res. No. 2, page 246.)