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# Panorama

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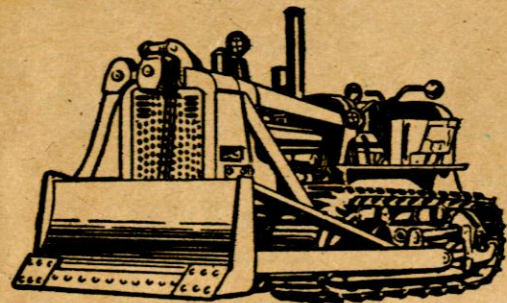
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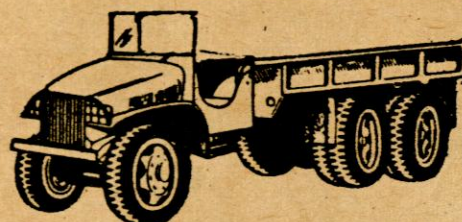
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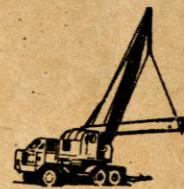
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## PHILIPPINE PANORAMA

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COVER: This mammoth mural on the facade of the executive building of the new Quezon City Hall depicts the life of the city's illustrious founder, Manuel Luis Quezon, whose 90th birth anniversary falls tomorrow. Executed by Eugenio Bunuan in adobe, it shows Quezon's humble origin in Baler (nipa hut, at left), his stint in the rebel forces, his meteoric rise as a politician highlighted by his fight for independence, his taking over the reins of the Commonwealth regime and his departure with General MacArthur for Australia and eventual government-in-exile in the U.S. New City Hall architect Ruperto Gaité said the mural is the biggest of its kind in Asia. Quezon, in his famous fiery speaking stance (center) is nine meters tall. For his almost-a-year work, Bunuan received P150,000.

OUR NEXT ISSUE will feature the late President Ramon Magsaysay as the only President of the Republic who was able to gain the full confidence of the people. An accompanying article will deal on what the past awardees of the RM Award Foundation are doing now. The new awards will be given in a ceremony by the close of this month that comes on the heels of the celebration of National Heroes' Day today. An article on the "Cobra Man" at the Vaccine and Serum Laboratory at Alabang will also be included.

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# Quezon championed common man's cause

## He remembered his humble origin while at the zenith of his career

By GIL CORPUZ DARANG

**M**ANUEL Luis Quezon, at the height of his political power and glory as the first elected President of the Philippine Commonwealth, looked back—he looked back at poverty from whence he sprang.



PRESIDENT QUEZON  
...he looked back

In the hectic grind of preparations for nationhood, Quezon did not neglect the uplift of the common man, giving birth to his program of Social Justice.

Significantly, one of the features of his multi-point program was land reform, revived in a much more systematic and bolder manner by former President Diosdado Macapagal and now being seriously pursued by his successor, Ferdinand E. Marcos.

Similarly, Quezon's land reform hinged on acquiring large landed estates by purchase and reselling them in small lots to the tenants on easy terms.

Quezon's doctrine of social justice was based on his belief that "human rights are above every other right, including property rights." He was after the betterment of the working class but not to the extent of "depriving capital of its rights."

Quezon was born of poor parents on Aug. 19, 1878 in the small town of Baler, Quezon, formerly Tayabas. His father, Lucio Quezon, was a farm laborer and a school teacher.

From Baler, young Quezon went to Pandacan to study in a parish school. In San Juan de Letran College, while completing his secondary course in 1887, nine-year-old Quezon had to work as a servant to Fr. Teodoro Fernandez in exchange for his board and room.

It was while Quezon was a law student at the University of Sto. Tomas that revolution against Spain broke out. At 25 Quezon joined the *Leales Voluntarios de Manila* as corporal. Placed under the command of Gen. Tomas Mascardo, Quezon was eventually promoted to major, seeing action in Baler, Pampanga. He was noted

for risky missions through the American lines.

Accused falsely of complicity in a murder after the Fil-American war, Quezon was imprisoned for six months in a military jail in Intramuros. Penniless after his release, Quezon worked as overseer of friar estates in Dinalupihan, Bataan. Returning to Manila, he worked as a lowly clerk in the Monte de Piedad, a savings bank owned by the friars. At the same time he resumed his law studies, passing the bar in April of 1903. He engaged briefly in practice.

Hopeful that what he failed to achieve in battle—freedom and progress for the country—could be achieved in peace, Quezon joined the government service. As a provincial fiscal he was first assigned in Mindoro, later in his home province. On Jan. 15, 1905 he was elected to the provincial board. Later he won the governorship of Tayabas.

When the first elections for the Philippine Assembly were held in 1907, Quezon was among the country's cream of brilliant men elected. In this hall and out in the political fields, Quezon had his trophy-making fights for loyalty to country over loyalty to party and for preference of a country run like hell, but by Filipinos. After serving as assembly floor-leader, Quezon was made resident commissioner in Washington to work for independence. He came back with the Jones Law passed by U.S. Congress on Aug. 29, 1916. The law promised independence. With the creation of the Senate, he was elected senator. Later the upper chamber elected him its president. In 1934 Quezon worked for the passage in U.S. Congress of the Tydings-McDuffie Act said to be better than the Hare-Hawes-Cutting Act which was then rejected in a 1932 plebiscite by the Filipinos.

On these achievements, Quezon walked to the presidency of the country, capping the

story of his rise from rags to glory.

Quezon remembered his origin. Exploiting the presidency as a vantage point, he translated social justice into action by directly alleviating the plight of the tenants and laboring class.

Land reform was his answer to the centuries-old agrarian turmoil then already exploding into violence in Central Luzon. Aside from making the tenants landowners, Quezon tried to improve the old tenancy system by promoting harmonious landlord-tenant relations. He enforced strictly the Tenancy Act which provided that contracts—concerning crop sharing and the care of land—be done in writing.

Using the power of example, he purchased a hacienda in Arayat, Pampanga where he practised what he preached: the need to exercise each one's responsibility and to respect each other's rights. He also established a show-window for successful tenancy in Buena Vista estate in San Rafael and San Ildefonso, Bulacan. Quezon used to motor to the estate



WITH MT. ARAYAT as background, Mrs. Francis B. Sayre (with shovel) plants tree at the Quezon hacienda in Pampanga. Looking on are (from left) Nini Quezon, President Quezon, Mrs. Aurora Quezon and U.S. High Commissioner Sayre. (Photo by Honesto Vitug)

during the planting season and exemplify the dignity of labor by joining the farmers stake beddings in the muddy rice paddies. He boosted the morale of the farmers.

Quezon championed social justice in line with the Constitution which provides that "the promotion of social justice to insure the well-being and economic security of all the people should be the concern of the State." It also provides that "the State shall afford protection to labor especially to working women and minors, and shall regulate the relations between the landowner and tenant, and between labor and capital in industry and agriculture."

Quezon thus inspired the enactment of laws granting the workingmen more rights and protecting them from slave-like treatment. The Eight-Hour Labor Law gave them more time for rest and recreation. Another law fixed the daily minimum wage in Manila at ₱1.25 and at ₱1 in the provinces. These rates were good by pre-war standards.

In enhancing the cause of

the laboring masses, Quezon drew inspiration from the papal encyclicals particularly the *Rerum Novarum* of Pope Pius XI which laid down on May 15, 1891 the foundations of social justice in the modern world. He issued proclamations turning public sympathy and respect toward labor.

For the urban workingmen, he envisioned a residential paradise—Barrio Obrero. He created the People's Homesite corporation (PHC) which purchased 1,600 hectares from the Tuason estate in Diliman at ₱0.05 per square meter. A starting project consisted of 35 hectares for 430 families in what is now Roxas district in Kamuning, Quezon city. Post-war Presidents continued Quezon's program and other low-cost housing projects followed under the People's Homesite and Housing Corporation (PHHC).

In contrast to today's winner-take-all politicians, Quezon, in taking over the reins of the Commonwealth regime, did not remove any employe for "voting the wrong way." He upheld the civil service rules pro-

tecting career employes and gave non-eligibles a chance to take the government examinations.

He retained Undersecretary of Justice Jose P. Melencio, son-in-law of Aguinaldo, Quezon's commander-in-chief in the revolution and later his bitter political enemy. Never vindictive, valuing friendship and recognizing justice above all, Quezon authorized ₱1,000 monthly pension for the revolutionary leader.

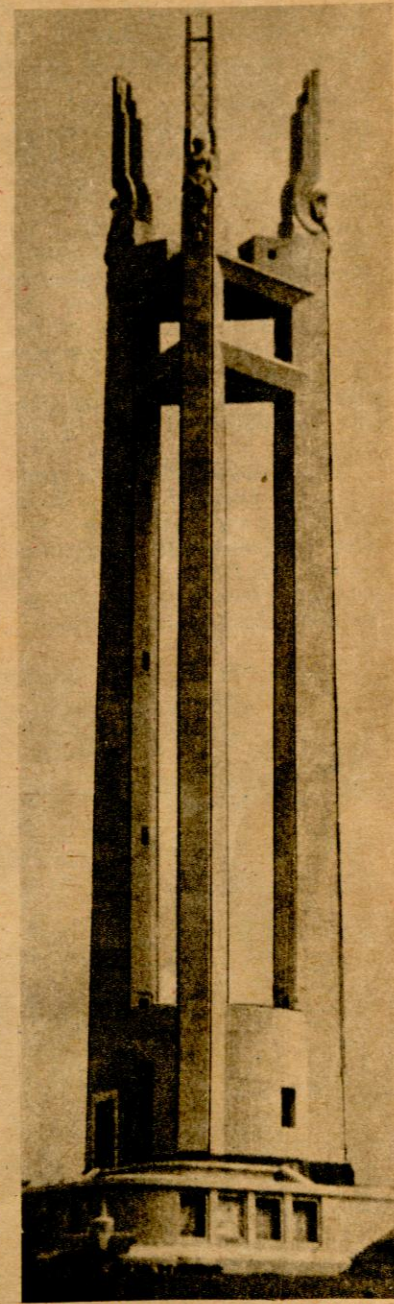
During the Commonwealth rites, just as Quezon walked down the grandstand, it was the common folk among the crowd that mobbed him and enthusiastically shared his joy and triumph. He never forgot the moment. While ascending the stairways of Malacañang, an idea struck him: he recalled the haggard figure of an old woman climbing the same stairways many years back and begging then Spanish Governor General Polavieja to stop the execution of her son sentenced to be shot at the Luneta at dawn.

Since then he abhorred capital punishment. During his

term, nobody was sent to the electric chair.

At another time, he ordered the release of a political prisoner, a bomb thrower. When Quezon found out that the prisoner was driver of a carabao cart and was earning only 15 centavos a day, he said: "This is ridiculous. No wonder, you are a bomb thrower. No one can live on 15 centavos a day."

To Quezon, it did not matter how social justice was exercised so long as it alleviated the condition of the common man. His whole life, including his fight for national independence, had been dedicated to that end. No wonder, he will always have a niche in the hearts of his countrymen.



THE QUEZON MEMORIAL, the imposing structure which dominates the circle bounded by the Elliptical road, marks the center of the Capitol city.



## MLQ envisioned Quezon City as 'workingman's Paradise'

Vision is still far from realization; City tackles squatter, garbage, crime problems

By SEBASTIAN CATARROJA

"OUR memorial to Manuel Luis Quezon should be the fulfillment of his vision of a Filipino city that shall be the embodiment of the hopes and dreams of the heroes of the race and will reflect the image of a modern, progressive Philippines. The development of Quezon city to make it truly the worthy capital of the Republic shall be our living memorial to Manuel Luis Quezon—leader, fighter, believer in men, beloved of his people."

This was how Ismael Mathay, Jr., concluded his speech four years ago during the 86th birthday anniversary celebration of the "Star of Baler" Aug. 19 in Quezon city. He was not yet city vice mayor then but already an active civic leader; he was bewailing the lack of public response to the fund campaign then being conducted for the completion of the Quezon Memorial dominating the Elliptical road in the city.

Vice Mayor Mathay's personal involvement in the fund drive was understandable. He was no stranger to the Quezon name. His father, who is now auditor general, was technical assistant to President Quezon's

auditor general and served with the Commonwealth-government-in-exile in the U.S. during the war.

We interviewed the young and active vice mayor recently for our Quezon anniversary issue and we both agreed that his statement four years ago had still relevance today. Indeed, we thought that his words would have relevance for many more years to come. For the Capitol city is far from being the "fulfillment of the vision" of its illustrious founder, who envisioned a "paradise for workingmen" in line with his famous Social Justice program.

Quezon, the farsighted leader that he was, foresaw the

population explosion in Manila, its residents, mostly workingmen in the private and government sectors, spilling over to the surrounding areas. And which better direction to expand than to the north toward the Sierra Madre hills where the air is cool and the atmosphere invigorating?

Forthwith, President Quezon approved the purchase of a 1,572-hectare area from the 4,000-hectare Tuason estate in Diliman, which area became the nucleus of the proposed city. The purchase was made by the People's Homesite corporation (PHC), incorporated by the National Development company on Oct. 14, 1938, at five centavos a square meter. As a bonus for the ₱780,000 sale, the Tuasons donated 493 hectares as the site of the University of the Philippines.

In pursuance of his plan to alleviate the lot of the workingman, Quezon, with the help of PHC General Manager Alejandro Roces, Sr., launched the construction of a housing project for 439 families in a 35-hectare lot which is now known as the Roxas district. This was done after a master plan for the city had been prepared and streets in Kamuning

### Tuason estate

How were the Tuasons of Quezon city able to acquire such a big tract of land during the Spanish regime?

The late Justice Secretary Pedro Tuason, who claimed no relation to the opulent Tuasons, told this story:

Son Tua, a rich Chinese merchant in Manila, financed an expedition to Mindanao against the "Moros." As a reward, the Spanish government decided to give him land outside the city, the size to depend on the area he could encompass while riding on a horse from sunup to sundown.

Son Tua, obviously an able equestrian, encompassed 4,000 hectares. Later he changed his name to Tuason when he married a Spaniard.

Unfortunately, a large portion of the area has been the subject of litigation arising from Torrens title dispute.

laid and paved. Upon completion, the houses were raffled among government employees—21 units per bureau or office—and sold to them on installments for as low as ₱8.05 a month, sans down payment.

When President Quezon signed Commonwealth Act 502 on Oct. 12, 1939 creating the City of Quezon, its charter declared its area to be 7,300 hectares, embracing portions of the towns of Caloocan, San Juan, Mariquina, Pasig, Marikina and San Mateo. Almost the entire area belonged to the Tuasons and two or three persons or partnerships, all Spaniards or Spanish religious corporations.

The city again expanded by 8,000 hectares when it was made the capital of the Republic under R.A. 333 on July 17, 1948. Most of the new addition was sliced from Caloocan, which municipality, as late as 1962, tried to get back the area but failed.

This last expansion increased the area of Quezon city to 15,106 hectares, five times that of Manila whose present population is 1.5 million, in contrast to QC's 700,000. This makes Quezon city the third largest in the country, only excelled in size by Zamboanga and Davao in Mindanao.

In point of real estate, therefore, Quezon city may be considered the richest city in the country, considering that the market value of lots have now risen to over a hundred pesos



SETTING A PRECEDENT, President Quezon grants annual pardon to deserving prisoners at San Ramon Penal colony in Zamboanga in 1939. (Photo by Honesto Vitug)

a square meter in many residential areas, and over ₱300 in business districts. A far cry indeed from the ₱0.05 a square meter paid the Tuason estate by Quezon's PHC.

But if this vast expanse of land has brought actual as well as potential wealth to the city, it has also caused a lot of headaches to its administrators. Foremost among these problems concern the squatters, garbage collection and peace and order.

Manila's postwar squatter population explosion has resulted in these itinerant dwellers arrogating unto themselves many vacant lots in the suburbs. One of these more attractive areas to squatters has been the 200-hectare national park near the Quezon Memorial circle, bounded by East avenue, Epifanio de los Santos avenue and the Veterans Memorial hospital. Early this year the number of illegal dwellers in this site had risen to some 7,000 families.

"This presence of a large number of squatters," Vice Mayor Mathay said, "posed not only peace and order, health and sanitation but other social problems as well."

Mathay reported that as of last May 3, some 6,000 squatter families had been resettled in Carmona, Cavite, San Pedro Tunasan and Sapang Palay. Only 1,000 families remain in the park site and they are due for resettlement shortly.

As for the garbage problem, Mayor Norberto Amoranto, in



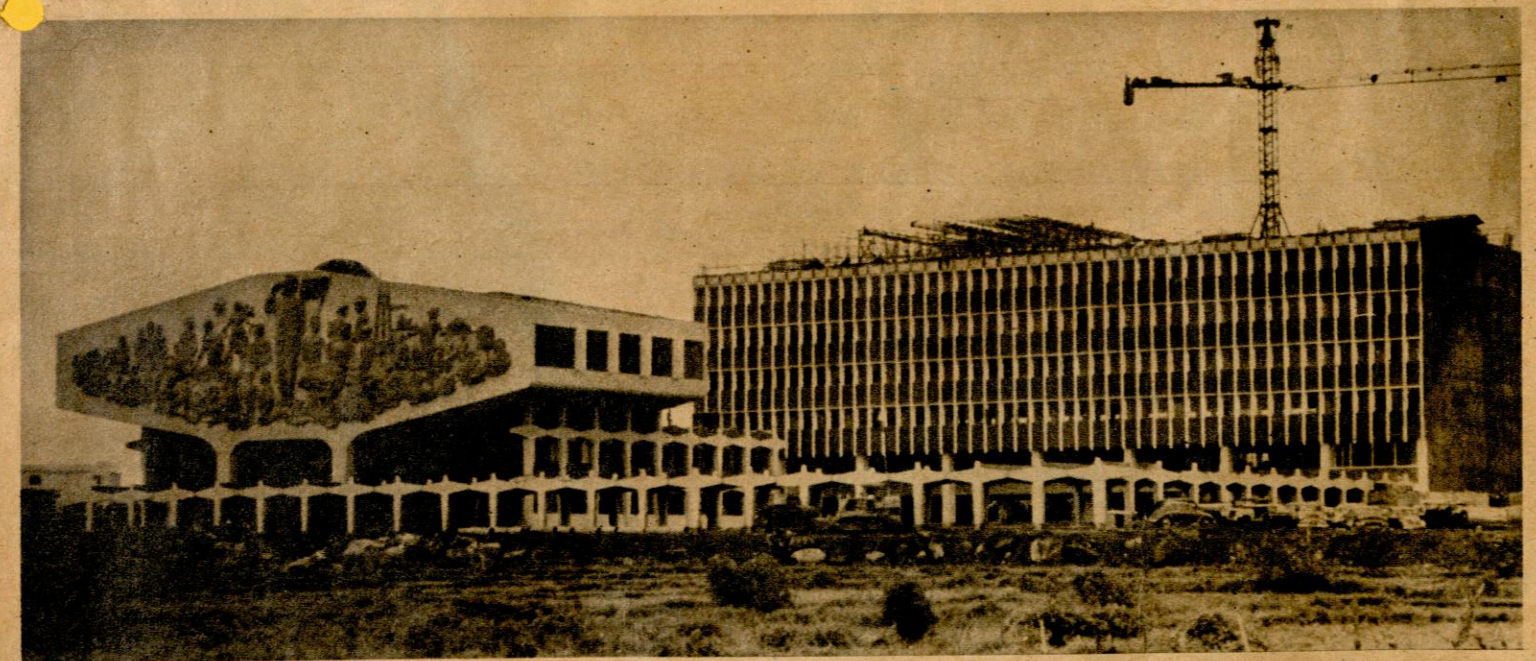
VICE MAYOR ISMAEL MATHAY, JR., at 36, is one of the youngest city executives in the country. At the time this picture was taken (in front of new City Hall facade), he was acting mayor, Mayor Norberto Amoranto having left for Honolulu. He got his BSBA from U.P. and LLB from San Beda. He is married to Sonia Gandiongco; they have two boys and two girls.

a move to improve the collection system, transferred the department of city public services (DCPS) from his office to the city engineer's office. According to Mathay, the move has a dual purpose: to mini-

mize politics in the detail of collectors, and to enable the engineer's office to utilize its dump trucks in collecting garbage in support of the DCPS trucks.

As we were interviewing the

youthful vice mayor in his well-appointed office at the new City Hall building facing the Quezon Memorial circle, one of his secretaries came in with several letters in hand (Continued on page 12)



NEW CITY HALL. Situated in a 12-hectare lot in front of the Elliptical road in Quezon city, the new city hall complex is estimated to cost ₱28 million. Considering that it will take about a year and a half year more to build, it could cost more.

Modernistic building with Quezon facade, at left, houses executive offices. Main building, a 12-storey affair, will house Hall of Justice, police and fire departments, and gymnasium, among others.



# Feminique

Evelyn A. Sebastian, Editor



Manila full of flowers



*Fresh beauties brighten the city's fashion ramp*

CLUSTERS of pastel-tinted paper flowers in hues of pink, orange, and yellow hung from the ceiling of the Manila Hilton's Coral ballroom, matching in shape the magnificent shell chandeliers. More flowers decorated the stage. While guests started to fill up the ballroom, a bevy of pretty girls gathered backstage awaiting their cue to go on stage and walk down that ramp where five judges would select one of them to be the recipient of the June Dally Watkins modelling scholarship. The girls were all young and pretty. To enhance their fresh good looks, Manila's talented hairdressers had arranged their hair in frothy curls and ringlets, added blossoms and bows. They were gowned by members of the Philippine Couture association who borrowed inspiration from the flowers for their Jeune Fille collection. Thus the creations carried the names Dame de Noche, Jazmin, Ilang-ilang, Sampaguita, Champaca, etc. In this spread, we bring you some of the young ladies whose flower-like beauty brightened the fashion ramp that evening. The theme was: Manila Full of Flowers. Proceeds from the ball went to the Philippine National Red Cross.

THE PETALS, reading clockwise, from bottom: SUKI CATOLICO a candidate of Aureo Alonzo, as Baby's Breathe; Cecile ARTADI, a Gilbert Perez model, as Jonquil; EMMA RUTH YULO, model of Eddie Ocampo as Chrysanthemum; MIN-DY BARREDO, model of Casimiro Abad, as Sampaguita; JENNIFER PERA, model of Aureo Alonzo, as Sweet Pea, and GLORIA ARRASTIA, an Emil Valdez candidate, as Bougainvillea.





# Land Reform **BREAKTHROUGH** in Central Luzon

*But inadequate funding  
can still bungle program*

By MAC A. FABIAN

**L**AST Augt. 8, the nation's farmers celebrated the fifth anniversary of the signing of the Land Reform code. Center of the affair was Nueva Ecija, where 22 of its 34 towns were recently declared a land reform district by the National Land Reform council.

The occasion had distinct significance for the administration. After five years, land reform had made a breakthrough in Central Luzon, once the hotbed of agrarian unrest. This fact is something even the most zealous opponents of the program cannot dispute.

The Land Reform council has statistics on the progress of the program, but these figures hardly give any clue to the real transformation that has occurred. Since land reform is basically a social justice program, its success should be judged on how it has changed the lives and attitudes of the farmers involved.

An ocular survey of land reform areas could indicate to what extent land reform has touched the lives of the people. Consider the following:

Mamerto David, 51, of Paligui, Apalit increased his harvest from 350 to 500 cavans, with a rental of 75 cavans. His gross is 425 cavans. David is sending two children to college, has improved and painted his semi-concrete two-story farmhouse.

Gregorio Ramos, 41, barrio captain of Paligui, Apalit, harvested 320 cavans and paid a rental of 36 cavans or a gross share of 284 cavans.

Juan Lopez, 62, same town, harvested 189 cavans and paid 22 cavans as rental. He was able to buy a small irrigation pump to water his two-hectare farm.

Mariano Sunga, 56, of barrio Maniango, Minalin, harvested 1,050 cavans from a 14-hectare lot. He paid the landowner 175 cavans, leaving for himself 975 cavans. His two-story semi-concrete house cost him 1,000 cavans of palay.

Faustino de la Cruz, 45, of



**PRESIDENT MARCOS**  
...Improved image

Under land reform, all vestiges of tenant-landlord relationship are severed. As a leaseholder, the farmer becomes an independent operator—paying a fixed rental, taking orders from nobody, not even from the landlord.

Economic and social dealings between the farmer and the landlord are reduced to a minimum. Beyond paying his rental, the farmer does not have to kowtow to the landlord. His tenure no longer depends on the whims and caprices of the landowner.

This feeling of security and hope for a better life for his

family change the outlook and social behavior of the farmer. His obsession now is to increase his yield because any result of his industry now accrues to him and to no one else. He finds less time now for griping and idle talk.

Thus, we come to know why the dissident movement in the areas affected by land reform had met with disaster. In Pampanga's Huklandia, the most notorious Huk commanders met their downfall after the area was made a land reform district. Farmers themselves, not paid informers, reported to the military the whereabouts and movements of the dissidents.

The few reported skirmishes between government troopers and marauding Huk bands happen, not in the second district of Pampanga, but in Tarlac, Bulacan, and in Nueva Ecija.

Ironically, the success of land reform in Pampanga has vindicated the Huks whose origin is openly traced to the Socialists organized by Don Pedro Abad Santos, brother of the late hero and former Chief Justice Jose Abad Santos.

**BEFORE AND AFTER.** The change that land reform brings to the life of farmers is dramatized in the pictures of two houses (below) which belong to Jacobo de la Cruz of barrio Dawe, Minalin, Pampanga. At left is de la Cruz



The Huks fanned the fires of rebellion among the peasants during the Roxas and Quirino regimes on the promise of land for the landless. Progressive elements in the legislature, however, succeeded in passing a series of laws in favor of the tenants which culminated in the present land reform code.

Peace in land reform areas may either be temporary or permanent, depending on the consistency of the land reform program. For, in spite of the optimistic appraisal of the rabid land reform advocate, one thing stands out: land reform can fail.

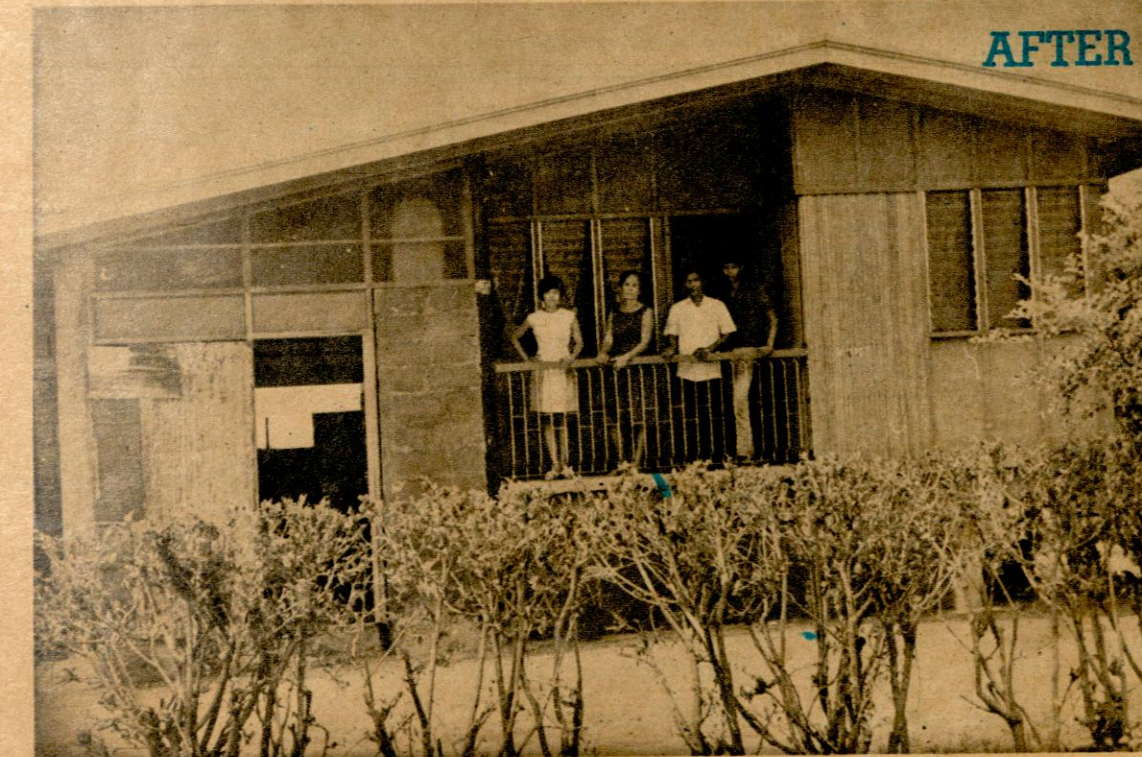
As Governor Conrado Estrella warned in a recent Rotary speech, the failure of land reform in Central Luzon will provide the advocates of communism the best argument against our constitutional form of government.

Land reform, as it is now being implemented, bears several Achilles heels.

Lack of adequate financing may yet prove to be our biggest national tragedy. Central Luzon farmers who cannot borrow enough loans from the Agricultural Credit administration may not understand why President Marcos author-

izes ₱35,000,000 for the Philcag in Vietnam, ₱4,000,000 for a national shrine in Bataan. ₱20,000,000 for military intelligence and several million more in other less important undertakings.

Under a land acquisition plan of the Land Bank, from 1966, a total of 42,830 hectares of private agricultural land



**LIFEBLOOD.** There are now more than 400 irrigation pumps installed in the second district of Pampanga, like the one shown above being inaugurated by Gov. Estrella in barrio Mandasig, Candaba, hotbed of dissidents. Irrigation has doubled the rice yield under land reform.

was scheduled to be purchased. For this, the Land Bank board requested ₱104 million but reports reveal that only ₱10-million was released by the Central Bank.

No wonder, some fiscal planners of Mr. Marcos have openly remarked that our progress in land reform has been too slow to be really felt by the

body politic. Failure may also be caused by lack of managerial talent among the farmers. The leasehold system placed the burden of managing huge tracts of land on the farmers' groups. It remains to be seen whether they can perform the services of the displaced landlords in the intricacies of managing a farm.

Another factor that may scuttle the best in government programming is the corrupt public servant, whether he is in the payroll of the government or of farmers' associations. Closely related to this problem is the incompetence of some land reform personnel. The latter a mild form of corruption which is being remedied by Governor Estrella of the NLRC.

Opposition from landlords could also sabotage the smooth implementation of land reform in many areas of Central Luzon.

In spite of all these odds, land reform is making definite headway in Central Luzon. Its success is due in large measure to several people in the executive branch. Laws are only as good and effective as the men charged to implement them.

President Marcos has given the program the stamp of his personal imprimatur. He has



left no doubt in the minds of his subordinates as well as the masses that he is 100 per cent for land reform.

The President's choice of Governor Estrella to carry out the program was the first proof of his sincerity. He could have chosen one among his many hacendero friends whose sympathy for the tenants' lot is doubtful to head the Land Authority.

As it turned out, Estrella proved to be the biggest single boon to land reform in the Marcos administration. Two major assets make him click in his vital and delicate job: his political savvy acquired in his native Pangasinan, and an inborn passion for achievement. Only a tactful politician like Estrella can reconcile the various elements in this age-old conflict.

Estrella's compassion for the poor farmers is genuine, but this does not blind him to the rights of the landowners. He himself is a landowner; this enables him to conduct an honest dialogue with his fellow landowners. When he tells a group of Pampango hacenderos about the advantages of shifting capital from land to industry, he could cite figures backed by his own experience.

But Estrella's force is rallying the masses to support an almost abstract program. He hates red tape and incompetence. As an achiever, he measures his subordinates with the yardstick of his own performance.

President Marcos is improving his image in Central Luzon mainly because of the success of the land reform program. There are now 51 towns declared land reform areas involving 84,000 farmers tilling 210,124 hectares. Four landed estates have been bought under the land reform code while 16 others are under negotiation.

The average production before land reform was only 39 cavans per hectare. This gradually increased to 49 cavans in 1965-66, 64 in 1966-67, and 77 in 1967-68. #

## MLQ envisioned...

(Continued from page 7)

requiring urgent action. He shifted them over and said:

"You see, all these are complaining about uncollected garbage." One of the letters was from Stella Maris college.

As for the peace and order problem, Mathay said Quezon city was not yet congested and had not been having as much difficulty as Manila. He dis-

closed, however, that the city had allocated a fifth of its annual budget to the police department. The outlay includes sums to purchase 20 mobile units to augment the 26 already in use, and to hire 75 more policemen to bolster the 900 already in the force.

"The idea is to have a mobile striking force," said Mathay, explaining that the size of the city and its still limited income required such an arrangement.

One of the aims of the Amoranto administration, Mathay said, was to balance the annual budget. He disclosed that the city treasurer had just certified to P28,862,000 as the city's income for fiscal year 1968-69, which means that the next budget would be based on that amount. Last year's budget was P21 million, no comparison to Manila's P115 million, but the latter city employs a 2,800-man police force to keep order among a 1.5 million population.

In a bid to improve the peace and order situation, Mathay also said that the city had standardized the pay of its policemen. The starting basic monthly salary has been raised to P250.

Mayor Amoranto, whom we failed to interview having just left for Honolulu, is now on his 15th year at city hall and, according to Mathay, he had several projects in line for the improvement of the Capitol city.

One of them, he said, is the incinerator with thermal plant for the proper disposal of garbage, similar to the one being planned by Mayor Villegas in Manila where the garbage problem is more acute.

And of course Amoranto's major project is the new City Hall which will be housed in a 12-hectare compound dominated by a 12-storey edifice whose construction is already underway. There will be a Hall of Justice and the courts will occupy the 6th and 7th floors. The city jail will also be moved to the compound. The whole project will cost some P28 million and will take another one and a half years to complete.

The presence of a large number of squatters in the Greater Manila area, which Quezon declared an "open city" during the last war to prevent widespread destruction, shows that the government housing program which he started has lagged far behind the population growth. Had Quezon lived longer and taken over the helm after the war, it is safe to assume that the picture would be very much different today. His concern for the workingmen,

# 'Great debate' rages over language in schools

## Move to install Pilipino as medium of instruction heats up old controversy

By QUINCIANO ATAVIADO

(Published on the occasion of National Language Week)

**T**HE public debate on the public schools system's nagging language problem was re-heated recently by a move to replace the vernacular with Pilipino as medium of instruction in the primary grades.

The dispute will not end with whatever decision education policy makers will make possibly early next year. The status quo will delay the development of Pilipino. The installment of Pilipino might hurt education and will antagonize some regionalistic sentiments. A decision for English, which seems remote, will arouse nationalists. Some sectors want English to improve the quality of college education.

With vernacular as medium at present, English and Pilipino are subjects taught in the first two grades. English becomes the medium from Grade III until and after college. Pilipino, the national language, remains a mere subject throughout.

The move to have Pilipino introduced gradually in Grades I to IV, is motivated chiefly by nationalist sentiments. Eventually the overall plan is to install Pilipino throughout the school system.

under his Social Justice program, would spur him to build more low-cost housing for them.

He would do this especially since the prices of home lots have risen far beyond the reach of the ordinary employe, whose only hope of fulfilling his dream of owning a home is through government housing.

But by the look of things, Quezon city, far from becoming the "workingman's paradise" that Quezon envisioned, is turning into a "land speculator's paradise." Those in the government will do Quezon proper honor if they try their best to check this trend to show their sincere concern for the common worker.

Only then will Quezon city become a fitting monument to its noble founder.

Probably because of the ticklish situation, Acting Education Secretary Onofre D. Corpuz, concurrently chairman of the policy-making board of national education (BNE), appears to favor a middle course, promising to consider the preferences of parents, teachers and pupils. The BNE will make the final decision.

The wisdom behind vernacularization—despite claims it set back education by years in producing "substandard" students unable to express themselves in English adequately—has been sold on public school men. It followed experiments started in 1948. A 1960-66 Rizal province experiment boosted the cause of English, but the dialects were found to have generally enabled children to learn and read and write faster.

"In two months," says Public Schools Director Juan Manuel, "children can read with reasonable speed when they are taught in the vernacular." Children can also compose and write sentences earlier and are considered literate, by United Nations standards, younger.

Some 50.89 per cent of 6,431 Grade IV pupils tested in eight major linguistic regions in 1964 were literate in the vernacular; they could read with understanding and write simple sentences about their everyday lives. Only 43.69 per cent were literate in Pilipino and 33.41 per cent in English.

Thus, despite the difficulties that still cry for solution after 10 years, the vernacular has proven its advantages. It has enabled students to absorb the so-called "substance of education" faster.

And English? "What would rural graders, so few of whom reach high school and fewer college, need English for?" asked a member of the BNE curriculum committee which

voted to gradually install Pilipino in the lower grades starting in 1970.

The dialects may have their advantage, but there are other considerations. One is national unity and the development of a common, national language. The Philippine Constitution asks that a Tagalog-based tongue be fostered and nurtured. Nationalists have been crying about this.

Public schools, as government agencies, should follow the constitution. Some government educators are concerned over the public school's failure to play a part in the development of a national language. So far, the public schools have left the task to "irresponsible"

Considering the problems and the role schools must play, surveys were again conducted.

Apparently, the most telling part of these surveys was the finding there was a "transfer" in skill from Pilipino to vernacular when Pilipino is used on non-Tagalog pupils. In other words, non-Tagalog schoolchildren, because both Pilipino and their dialects are phonetic, learn to read and write in their dialects at the same time they learn in Pilipino. Significantly, the reverse was not found true.

The use of Pilipino will kill two birds with one stone. And save money and time. English, whose deterioration over the years has been making college

installation of Pilipino will not arouse sectional sentiments. "When Pilipino was made a compulsory subject," he said, "there was no protest against it." Despite the 87 dialects used in the country, "there is a spirit of national unity."

Resolutions recently passed by non-Tagalog parents and teachers appear to bear out Manalo. But some vital considerations seemed to have been left out in the PBS surveys and studies.

The road for Pilipino is not going to be smooth. The curriculum committee took nearly a year of heated discussions to come to a decision. It will not discard the vernacular entirely, recommending that the dialects

ers? And teaching materials? Pro-Pilipino quarters have an answer to these. The shift will be gradual, one grade each year starting 1970. Simultaneous with it will be a training program for teachers. Qualified teachers will increase with the demand. So will teaching materials and aids needed.

Private educators fear the introduction of English as medium in Grade V will be late and damaging. When they reach high school, where English is medium, students will not be adequately grounded in it.

The popularity of private schools, where English is the medium, among the well-to-do is thought provoking. Would



**A VOTE FOR PILIPINO.** The committee on curriculum of the board of national education (BNE) meeting last July 2, voted finally to install Pilipino gradually as the medium of instruction in the grade schools starting 1970. The vote heated up anew the language controversy in public schools. From

left: Cipriano Saga (back to camera), BNE secretary; Dr Maria Lourdes Ruiz; Sesonando Caboso, chief, elementary school division, BPS; Dr. Cresencio Peralta; Hermogenes Belen; Dr. Gregorio Borlaza, and Dr. Alfredo Catedral, committee chairman (back to camera).

media, like newspapers, magazines, movies, television and, of all things, comics.

Vernacular affords children to learn with speed, but this also works the other way. The lack of vernacular publications has reverted many dropouts to illiteracy after a short while. So what use is the teaching of the vernacular?

The government has also found it impossible to produce teaching materials in all the dialects. In areas where people speak different dialects, like Cotabato, schools have to use Pilipino.

Vernacular also made administrative and supervision difficult. The lack of a common language also posed social complications. And so on...

mentors squirm, will be given more time and be boosted by improved teaching aids. Weak from disuse and neglect, Pilipino will perk up and begin its road to development and national acceptance.

Pilipino has other advantages. Because parents will learn it from their children, Pilipino in the grades will hasten the spread of the national language. With Pilipino in greater use, illiteracy will be "liquidated" speedily. The tendency to equate education with the facility in using a foreign language will be gradually corrected.

Isabelo Manalo, chief of the research, evaluation and guidance division of the bureau of public schools, holds that the

be used as auxiliary media apparently to placate regionalistic sentiments.

But Pilipino, regardless of claims, is considered by many as Tagalog and some regionalistic quarters will simply not have their own dialects relegated to the background.

Many responsible educators also feel that Pilipino is inadequate for teaching purposes. However, committees of experts now compiling vocabularies and looking into the adequacy of Pilipino disagree. For them, Pilipino is sufficient for the lower grades. Nevertheless, the feeling runs high that Pilipino will prove short in the sciences and mathematics. Even if Pilipino is adequate, what about the teach-

parents who cannot afford private schools prefer English for their children too? Was vernacular rammed down the throats of the unwilling? Will Pilipino also be rammed down their throats?

The decision of the curriculum committee, of course, is far from final. The BNE will review the decision. Because it sanctioned a study of the foundation-endowed Language Study center of the government-run Philippine Normal college, the board will have to await the results of the study.

The LSC research project will not be completed until January. Until then the public schools system's nagging language problem will be gathering fire.



# ENTERTAINMENT

## Personality

By AMELITA REYSIO-CRUZ

**H**E is the country's most eligible bachelor from the entertainment world. He is the hottest name on the marquee. He is a self-made man, whose business ventures come up to an impressive sum. He is Fernando Poe, Jr.

Named the "best actor of the year" by the FAMAS, Fernando Poe, Jr. is not his real name off-screen. As a matter of fact, a brother of his is named Fernando Poe, Jr.

Poe, who started his film career about a dozen years ago, took the name because the movie-going public already had a definite notion about it. His late father was a movie idol before the war. Poe, Sr., a dentist by profession, joined the movies and his generous good looks and refined manners won for him hordes of movie fans.

Poe, Sr., had many pretty leading ladies, including the wife of the late Speaker Eugenio Perez, the former Consuelo Salazar, who was a music student at the prewar U.P. conservatory of music.

The elder Poe married the former Bessie Kelley, and the young, handsome movie idol today was their first son.

When Poe, Sr., died unexpectedly from a puppy bite, his son and his widow were left to tend their property and six other Poe children.

Fernando, Jr., started out as a member of the popular movie teen-age team, Lo Waist Gang, at the Premier studios in Grace Park, and not until he tried free-lancing and producing his own films did he actually gain steady limelight attention.

At first, he concentrated on "action roles" along the tin pan alley heroes type. He became the symbol of a clean-cut, young man, who'd rally to the defense of the oppressed, with raw courage and boyish good looks for his only assets.

Poe, Jr., eventually took other roles, but always with the same charm, physical prowess and chivalry people simply loved in his tin pan alley epics.

He introduced locally-made cowboy pictures, with him doing the good cowboy part—al-

ways aggrieved, never offensive, perfectly modest and perennially the symbol of justice.

Apparently, Poe, Jr., knew how to endear himself with the public that, thereafter, all his roles projected him as the



SUSAN busses RONNIE at awards ceremony  
...an obvious romance is unconfirmed

self-effacing hero.

Whether as a cowboy or as a simple, rugged but virile, young lover, Poe, Jr., is most careful about his screen image. He guards it jealously. He will never try an off-beat role even for the sake of professionalism. And, in this respect presumably lies his shrewdness as a movie producer.

Thus, the FPJ Productions, which he owns, has come up with great money-earners, and at the same time has been cited by movie jurors for quality outputs.

As a movie idol, Poe, Jr., has become even more jealous about his private life. As prime breadwinner of his orphaned brothers and sisters, he has remained distant from the movie-going public, and this has been misconstrued either as arrogance or extreme shyness.

Poe has never been known to discuss his private life,

which has resulted in so many speculations, particularly about his love life. Although his screen and off-screen romance with movie queen Susan Rocas is the hottest news on flickerville today, he has neither come up with a denial nor a confirmation of it.

In public appearances, he would be seen with Miss Rocas and attending to her needs in the same chivalry associated with him by his fans on screen.

Recently, before the FAMAS awards night, he made the front pages of the newspapers because of an alleged incident with garbage collectors in a truck bound for Pasay city.

The publicity somewhat shattered the movie image of Ronnie Poe as a defender of the poor, and he did everything to clarify the report. Right after he received his first "best acting" trophy during the awards night, he again made news by allegedly having a movie scribe mauled by an associate.

Ronnie Poe, again, made explanations—not to the general public but through some friends in the press, who never fail to spend reams of newspaper on anything he says or does.

Since he joined flickerville, he has been linked with several actresses and starlets, but his romance with Miss Rocas is something their hordes of fans clamor to become a reality.

Speculations say they have been married secretly; a few others claim all is over with them, and several optimists ones say they will tie the knot sometime in October.

Whatever it shall be, Fernando Poe, Jr., a self-made star and businessman, will go on entertaining his fans with his modest, crusading and virile roles.

Maybe no other producer can afford to pay Ronnie Poe today, since his asking price, some say, is P50,000 per picture; but for as long as movie fans want this horse-loving, trigger-happy, swashbuckling movie hero, he will be there to give them what they want

Some movie producers want to bring Liza Lorena and Eddie Gutierrez together in a film. What for? Isn't it bad enough their off-screen romance ended that-a-way? A film starlet, "Monique," has reportedly consulted a psychologist about feelings of depression, which occur when she reads about the Poe-Rocas romance.

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