

## THE MANAGEMENT OF NATIONAL GROWTH

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**D**URING THE PAST half century, this country was under American tutelage in the principles and practices of the democratic way of life. This institution is an example. From among the first American troops that were stationed in the islands came the first teachers of democracy. Then followed government officials, politicians and professional teachers, such as our late friends, Dr. and Mrs. Hibbard.\* They spread out all over the country and aggressively with a spirit of dedication, especially among the teachers, to impart the basic concept of a democratic way of life. The Filipinos were quick to respond and they learned rapidly. In fact, they learned so rapidly that, after three decades and a half of American rule, preparations began for a complete transfer of the reins of government to their hands.

Unfortunately, however, the Americans failed in at least one very important respect. It is true that they taught the Filipinos the mechanics of running a democratic government; but there was one phase, and a very important one, of the democratic way of life which, unfortunately, was not given too much importance nor emphasis by the American tutors, namely, training in the management of national resources. It was really not until after the war that this was given the attention it deserves. There was, however, no delaying the granting of political independence to the Filipinos. A promise had been made. It had to be fulfilled. It was fulfilled.

Immediately after the granting of Independence on July 4, 1946, economic programs were drawn up. The country had been badly ravaged by the last war. Industry, agriculture, transportation, the currency and the health of the entire nation were seriously impaired. The planning and execution of economic programs for the country's

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\* The Reverend David Sutherland Hibbard, first president of Silliman Institute. He started the school on August 28, 1901 on instructions from the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions, New York. The Hibbards now live in retirement in Duarte, California.

reconstruction and rehabilitation were of paramount importance, but, unfortunately, mistakes were made; excesses and delays plagued the planning and execution of these programs.

The lack of planning and managerial tradition and experience was, and still is, a big problem. Great progress has been made in spite of this handicap but a lot of improvement is still needed. A lot of work still lies ahead, and the rapid development of the proper **managerial skills** is indispensable if the Philippine economy is to prosper significantly.

The country is once again standing on the threshold of a major opportunity for social and economic progress. The enthusiasm for growth which flowered and blossomed during the nineteen-fifties but visibly declined at the beginning of this decade is again gathering force—a little slowly perhaps—but it is definitely increasing in strength and enthusiasm.

This revival of the national spirit was not accomplished on a hit-and-miss basis. It was achieved by a carefully designed program. To my mind, this is the strongest evidence that the highest authorities of this nation fully appreciate the utmost importance of sophisticated management in the handling of socio-economic affairs. Not only are they aware of this need but are actually exerting strenuous efforts to revise, amend and transform outmoded, age-old methods, procedures and practices so that they may better facilitate the attainment of programmed objectives.

All these moves are of course to be welcomed. It is only by competent and efficient management that we can hope to obtain the maximum national product from national resources. The time we could confidently say "bahala na" is past.

Already we are confronted by a population problem: at 3.5% increase in population annually, in about 30 years from now there will be 50 million Filipinos. Adequate provision must be made for their basic needs—for a fuller life than they have known before. The problem is not only to provide the present standard of living for 28 million but to provide for 50 million—to say nothing of improving the standard of living. Fortunately, the present population has been nurtured in the belief that only under a democracy can the infinite possibilities of the human endowments be fully realized.

The challenge the nation faces today is to prove that this belief is true and can be realized. The Philippines is fortunate in having been blessed with a climate that is relatively moderate, resources

that are bountiful, a level of education that equips the people with a quick adaptability to modern techniques, and a political system that encourages private initiative. If we should fail, with these blessings, these resources, to produce an adequate amount of goods and services to satisfy the expanding needs of the people, the fault can only be laid at the door of poor management and inadequate leadership and nowhere else.

The Government is harnessing fully whatever managerial talent is now available. Thus, a number of young faces now occupy positions in the Government which are vital to the planning of the national economy. Even in the Cabinet of the President, we have some very young men who have not been in the limelight before, but who now have a great deal to do with the implementation of the President's socio-economic program. There is the Honorable Rufino Hecanova, Secretary of Commerce and Industry; the Honorable Rodrigo Perez, Secretary of Finance; the Honorable Alejandro Roces, Secretary of Education; the Honorable Bernardo Abes, Secretary of Labor; the Honorable Sixto K. Roxas, of the ACCFA and the PIA. They are young, capable and dedicated.

There are many more, to be sure, presently serving our Government, though in relatively less prominent capacities, who are capable of, and, no doubt, are contributing effectively toward the over-all effort of national economic improvement.

In the private sector, there are also a number of young and capable men who, in effectively handling their respective assignments, are contributing toward a better economy for our country.

Despite these illustrations, however, the talents available appear pitifully small, when compared to the tasks at hand and the more gigantic tasks that lie ahead. Indeed, the American tutors failed to initiate and lay the foundations for discovering and training management personnel.

I am not speaking of a quantitative problem. As is true in other nations, where the economy is in the initial or take-off stages of development, manpower is plentiful here. The Philippines has a reasonably large labor force. The quantity is available. It is the quality that is lacking.

Economic development could perhaps go on with the utilization of only unskilled manpower. However, progress will be at a very slow pace, assuming it progresses at all. Mistakes will occur. There will be a substantial waste of resources. I am not at all sure that

the nation can wait—that mistakes and waste can be tolerated. We must not forget Indonesia and China. Unskilled manpower must be led by well-trained men if progress is to proceed at a reasonable pace.

Now, how does a nation get a sufficient number of trained men who can meet the challenges presented by a struggling economy? It cannot be done overnight. But a start has to be made—and made now. The costs of delay can be disastrous.

The inculcation of the attitudes, the discipline and the habits that characterize a good manager and creates the social climate most favorable to the development of good managerial talents must begin in youth. They need to be deliberately implanted, encouraged and developed. Neatness, orderliness, truthfulness, sincerity, self-reliance, industry, prudence, thrift, fairness, studiousness, respect for other men's rights, genuine concern for social welfare, and many more similar traits must be taught and learned in the early years.

Good management is not an obligation of the highest government authorities alone. It is an obligation that must be shared by all authorities—all along the line—down to the level of the barrio lieutenant.

And in the private sector it is an obligation that must extend to and be shared by not only the heads of businesses and civic organizations but by the heads of families, schools, and religious institutions. I believe that the biggest and foremost job of all is to instill a general awakening on the part of all the people of the responsibility each one has for conserving resources and economizing in their use; for doing one's part as an individual, at all times, in this gigantic social effort of maximum utilization of the nation's resources.

Let me cite some very humble examples: The throwing of refuse on the roads or of waste paper and other materials on public parks increase the burden on the community for cleaning expenses and expenditures for the maintenance of health. The careless handling of books and reading materials in public and school libraries increases the burden for replacement on the part of institutions concerned. The construction of obstructions to public rivers and canals and the wanton denuding of forests result in a tremendous public loss when floods occur. The careless use of clothing, utensils, and household furniture and fixtures reduces the amount of increment to capital that the family builds.

In other words, the discipline and obligations necessary for good

management, in the final analysis, must be shared by every individual in the community. Each one has the paramount duty to the community of being able to manage himself, to pull his own weight, not only in his self-interest, but also in the interest of the whole community and nation itself.

The appreciation of the importance of self-discipline in the maintenance of community welfare unfortunately is not inborn in human beings. It is a habit that is taught; it must be learned. The process begins in the home and is continued and reaches its refinements in church and school. The indoctrination of human beings in the ways, beliefs, practices and mores of the society he lives in and the world he forms part of, as well as the development and sharpening of those traits and qualities that make him a potential leader among his fellowmen, is the sacred obligation of our colleges and universities; and I pause here to congratulate Silliman University for its wonderful part in leadership training.

More than ever before in this country colleges and universities are challenged to turn out men and women who are not only technically skilled, but who are imbued with a deep feeling for the welfare of their people, who are alert to the possibilities of their own country, and who are deeply conscious of their obligation to assist in the effective management of the social resources that constitute their patrimony.

It is the obligation of colleges and universities to produce men and women who are painfully aware of the shortcomings of their political economy, and of the superior blessings of more advanced and older societies, but who would use this awareness to fortify a determination to improve their economy rather than to question and abandon it. It is only by meeting this challenge and buckling down to it that the colleges and universities can justify their existence.

There is a great responsibility, indeed, in the hands of our educational institutions. They are responsible to a great extent for turning out the sorely needed leaders who can manage the resources of the nation.

The educational institutions, the faculty members, and the students must, therefore, hand in hand, attend conscientiously to their respective responsibilities and obligations to the nation. Silliman has proven, by its accomplishments, since its inception, a high devotion to the performance of its obligations. I am sure that Silliman will continue to undertake and push through this noble program with

renewed zeal, because the objectives you are serving are very challenging ones. The cause of freedom is involved.

If prosperity cannot be attained because of lack of management, democracy will wither on the vine in this country and its place will gleefully be assumed by an ideology foreign to our beliefs—and we shall come under a fascist or a communist dictatorship. We cannot allow this to happen. The consequences would be fatal to the democratic way of life for which your fathers and ancestors and my fathers and ancestors have fought and died.