

Editor's Notes

The politico-administrative context within which the Aquino administration has been operating may be characterized as largely transitional towards the general goal of reestablishing the democratic structures and processes that were abolished by the dictatorship. Because of its very nature, the bureaucracy has been thrust to play a major role in such transition and the redemocratization (as it admittedly played a role in the establishment and legitimation of the dictatorship.) This seeming contradiction is both the strength and the weakness of the bureaucracy. After all, most bureaucracies have been primary pillars of stability and continuity in political systems that have undergone political upheavals, including revolutions.

Almost two years after the installation of the Aquino administration through the so-called "people power revolution," the UP College of Public Administration and the Philippine Society for Public Administration sponsored the Third National Conference on Public Administration from September 28 to 30, 1987. The conference, which had for its theme "Public Administration and Redemocratization," focussed on the state and developments in public administration within the context of the redemocratization and transition from authoritarianism to a more open and structurally democratic system. The 1988 issues of the *Philippine Journal of Public Administration* (Volume XXXII, Numbers 1 to 4) feature the papers that were presented during that conference.

This issue of the Journal features the fourth and fifth modules of the Third National Conference on Public Administration. (The first three modules namely, "New Challenges to Teaching and Research in Public Administration," "Post Revolution Administrative Reform," and the "Private Sector and Public Administration" were featured in the January - April 1988 issue.)

The fourth module entitled "Decentralization and Local Government," includes four articles focussing on the general theme of decentralization as an alternative to effective decision-making processes and improved delivery of services. Raul P. de Guzman in "Decentralization as a Strategy for Redemocratization in the Philippine Political System," addresses the concepts and issues involving decentralization of government operations as a strategy towards enhancing political institutions including various approaches to operationalize it.

The issue of metropolitan governance has gained the attention of our legislators. The concern on how the administration of Metropolitan Manila could be made more responsive to the needs of urbanism is addressed by Perfecto L. Padilla in the article "Restructuring the Administration of Metropolitan Manila." Professor Padilla proposes several alternative organi-

zation patterns which could be adopted by the government giving due consideration to significant issues such as accelerated democratization, enhancement of decentralization and promotion of economic and social development.

Regional autonomy, particularly in the Southern Philippines is discussed by Manuel Valdehuesa in "Regionalization and the Special Autonomous Regions: Political and Institutional Issues." He argues that regional autonomy could be the vehicle that could bring about peace in the troubled areas of the country and likewise provide these areas with an equal opportunity to participate in the political processes and socio-economic development programs of the government.

A significant national strategy for manpower planning and development is to train present and incoming local officials in order to upgrade their performance in the pursuit of traditional functions of government. To operationalize such a strategy, Felipe V. Oamar in "Breaking In the New Guards: Training for Local Government and Regional Administration," underscores the need to initially review past training programs with the general objective of assessing and redefining their scope and coverage and to plan strategies to improve their delivery.

The conference's fifth module zeroes in on the "The Politics and Administration of the Transition." It is divided into two subsections: the first is the "Politics and Administration of Procedural Democracy," and the second, "Substantiating Redemocratization." In the first subsection is an article on "Elections and the Crisis of Legitimacy in the Philippines: A Comparative View of the Marcos and Aquino Regimes" co-authored by Luzviminda G. Tancangco and Roger Mendoza. Tancangco and Mendoza examine the four political (primarily electoral) exercises that took place from 1984 to 1987, and compare how the Marcos and Aquino regimes managed to survive the crisis of legitimacy that surrounded them.

Wilfrido V. Villacorta, a former member of the Constitutional Commission that drafted the 1987 Constitution, writes on "The Dynamics and Processes of Writing the 1987 Constitution." He illustrates the balancing of the relationship between constitution-making and economic class interests and points out the pressures of the imperative for the fundamental law to accommodate the different class interests articulated by its framers.

The second sub-part of the module entitled "Substantiating Redemocratization" is introduced by Luzviminda Cornista's article, "The Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP): An Analysis of its Policies and Processes." Professor Cornista sees the CARP as one strategy to correct the inequitable relationship in the agricultural sector. She compares the CARP with Marcos' land reform program, and concludes that the CARP is

definitely more comprehensive and flexible, based on the expanded area of coverage, large target beneficiaries and offers differing options both to the landowner and beneficiary.

Alex Brillantes, Jr. in "The Insurgency and Peace Policies of the Marcos and Aquino Regimes" compares the approaches adopted by both administrations. He concludes that there is no fundamental difference between the two, with both adopting hardline militarist policies. He underscores the significance of the intervention of the United States in its attempts to contain the growth of communism on a global scale.

Raul Manglapus' article "Redemocratization Process in Comparative Perspective" is based on the speech he delivered during the conference. Manglapus situates the Philippines' redemocratization process within the context of the redemocratization and transition processes of other countries that went through a similar period.

Jose Abueva whose article "Prospects for Redemocratization" is based on the address he delivered during the conference, describes the process of redemocratization taking place in the country and asserts the positive gains that we have already achieved since the February Revolution of 1986.

o o o o o

For the Documents Section, we are featuring the controversial Republic Act No. 6675, also commonly known as the Generics Drug Act of 1988. The Act whose overall goal is to "promote, require and ensure the production of an adequate supply, distribution, use and acceptance of drugs and medicines identified by their generic names," hopes to assure that the people will get safe, effective, high quality and affordable drugs. The passage of the act saw a heated debate among the various concerned sectors of society, from the health and medical and allied professions to the association of drug and pharmaceutical industries. The debate also was marked by an exchange of letters between American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines Inc. President A. Gordon Westley and Health Secretary Alfredo Bengzon. We are featuring the Westley and Bengzon letters because they provide, among other things, an excellent insight on the various pressures (internal and external), public policy makers and decision-makers are subjected to in arriving at far reaching decisions. To a certain extent, the experience in the decision-making processes of the public officials from the health sector is not different from that experienced by the other sectors, such as agriculture, education and even agrarian reform.