

# Introduction of the Theme and Participants

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Ladies and gentlemen, good morning!

My task as overall Coordinator and Conference Chairman is to present the theme and the participants as well as acknowledge the valuable help of our sponsors and people who make this Conference possible.

I was practically forced to accept the chairmanship of this Conference as the only member of the National Executive Board of the PPSA representing Iloilo, particularly the University of San Agustin. After the Board had decided on the holding of four regional conference, the PPSA President gave us Regional Coordinators the blanket authority to decide on the theme, the site and other arrangements.

In our case, fillers were sent to friends in Iloilo late last year and on January, 1978 the preparation for this Conference started when I came home for my rural service. Preliminary meetings were held at the University of San Agustin with representatives of the sponsoring universities here in Iloilo. After consultations with these sponsoring institutions, "Development Politics: Focus on Western Visayas" was temporarily agreed as the theme of this Conference.

The original plan was to ask local paper readers to expound on some aspects of local issues with only two or three paper readers from Manila. However, due to the fact that people from the Region whom we thought could speak on regional issues were not available because of other commitments, we had to slightly revise the theme of our Conference to "Development Politics: Philippine Perspectives."

The rationale behind the choice of this theme is based on our observation that the Philippines in the last few years has massively overhauled its political and socioeconomic traditions. Government structures have been reorganized, a new setup in decision-making has been established, and there is a shift of responsibilities as well as a redirection in social commitments. The country's desire to equal

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Conference Chairman and Mindanao Coordinator.

the rate of growth of industrialized states is caused by its bid to reach a certain level of self-reliance and self-sufficiency.

In view of these recent trends, a closer look into the dynamics of the national drive for development is in order. We believe that the efforts of both the public and private sectors to attain a certain degree of advancement is commendable. The extent of material progress in terms of infrastructure projects as well as industrial and commercial ventures in a short span of time is quite impressive. However, like a hollow cake with an appetizing top, we still discern the great gap between what we see as apparent growth and the misery of Juan de la Cruz. We cannot help but inquire whether in our struggle for a place in a new international milieu, we have ignored the common man.

We concede that change is inevitable and development is a way to survival, but economic and political development must be accompanied by a corresponding concern for individual freedom and dignity. As progress continues in its twisted ways, let us pause today to review its course, always to remind ourselves that the pursuit of the welfare of the many is the pursuit of the good of society.

Today, I also wish to welcome the participants of this Conference in behalf of the Regional Conference Staff and the national officers of the Association. A look at the registered list of participants shows that some of you came from as far as Silliman University in Dumaguete City. We have also representatives from colleges in Roxas City and, of course, the universities and colleges in Iloilo. The University of San Agustin tops the number of delegates with 35 representatives. Other educational institutions represented here are the University of Iloilo, Central Philippine University, University of the Philippines in Iloilo, Western Institute of Technology, Iloilo School of Arts and Trades, Colegio de la Purisima Concepcion, Colegio del Sagrado Corazon de Jesus, St. Paul's College, San Jose College and the St. Vincent Seminary.

From the government sector, the following agencies are represented: Office of the Provincial Governor of Iloilo; National Economic and Development Authority, Region VI; Department of Local Government and Community Development, Region VI; Department of Education and Culture, Region VI; Department of Social Services and Development, Region VI; Department of Public Information, Region VI; and the Office of the Provincial Probation

Officer of Iloilo. There are 105 registered delegates excluding those who are observers.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the valuable support and generous contribution of the National Science Development Board for the grant given us to finance this Conference; the University of San Agustin through the Father Rector, Rev. Father Ambrosio Galindez and the Chairman of Co-Curricular Activities, Father Juan Manuel Chaguaceda for the free use of this air-conditioned Conference Hall and other facilities; the University of the Philippines in Iloilo through the Dean, Dr. Dionisia Rola and Professor Teodoro Ledesma for their wholehearted cooperation as well as for sponsoring a lunch for the delegates; Central Philippine University through President Agustin Pulido for snacks and refreshment; Mr. Cornelio Panes for donating the certificates of attendance and appreciation; Mr. Ramon Locsin and Mr. Francis Derayunan for snacks as well as the use of their cars during the Conference; the Iloilo Bottlers Inc. and the Iloilo Coca Cola Plant for the softdrinks.

As Regional Coordinator, I'd like to mention here that this Conference is made possible by the wholehearted cooperation of the chairmen and members of the Regional Conference Staff, particularly Prof. Teodoro Ledesma and Miss Maria Luisa Mabunay of UPCI, Atty. Olegario Santisteban, Mr. Julius Elvas and Nelson Oberas of San Agustin for doing the legwork in preparation for this Conference, Mr. Francisco Tapiculin, Jr. for publicity and Mr. Frank Divinagracion for the stage decoration and physical arrangement.

Lastly, to Governor Conrado Norado of Iloilo for obligingly key-noting this Conference in spite of his tight schedule, to the paper readers, the moderators and the national officers of PPSA who grace this momentous occasion, thank you and welcome!