

COMMENTS AND REACTIONS

WINNIE MAGDARAUG

The rationale for the creation of the autonomous government in Regions 9 and 12 is the peace and order and a need for a rapid development of the area. This is the justification and as has been pointed out by Prof. Aguilar, the secessionist movement in Mindanao has been educating for certain autonomy which would render the national government practically without any supervisory power over the region. Thus, as a measure to make a happy arrangement, this autonomy grant has been made for Regions 9 and 12. My observation is that, the rationale, the justification, and the philosophy behind the granting of the autonomy to Regions 9 and 12 may not be true to other regions of the Philippines. The conditions for instance which the cultural, the philosophical and social participation of the people of this region is not the same with other Christian regions of the nation. It is my observation that in the granting of the autonomy to other regions of the Philippines, a study should also be made on the granting of more autonomy to local executives and local government because if the purpose is only to grant, to have a more rapid development, I believe that provincial governors in their respective provinces are more knowledgeable of the conditions obtaining in the area. A creation of say, Sangguniang Pampook or the LTP will of course narrow the gap between the national and local government. But in my observation this will not really be solving the problem as that in Mindanao besides, to consider that the local autonomy grant in Regions 9 and 12 is successful, is pre-mature. It will still take time for us to determine whether these autonomous governments in those regions are successful or not. In the meantime, we can not possibly

claim that the autonomous government in those regions are successful.

According to Dr. Brilliantes, the application of autonomy to Regions 9 and 12 is not really autonomy in the sense that these regions have been given absolute authority, control and supervision over their own area. While the functions which have been stated have been clearly defined that still belongs to the national government. Certain functions of the SP and the LTP are still under the supervision and control of the President. So, it is not actually autonomy in the sense that these people will have complete control over their own affair. They can make policies, programs and plans for the development within the framework of certain guidelines which have been made by the national government. Therefore, I would suggest, out of my humble observation that the extension of local autonomy should be the study of regional autonomy and should also be made side by side with the study of granting more autonomy to local government and local executives.

OBDULIA R. CINCO

I shall stick to my reaction on the organizational implications of the regional autonomy and I'll focus it on the structure of the autonomous government of Regions 9 and 12.

In this critical period of our nation or a period of crisis, I think what our country needs most is unity. If we shall look at the structures that are proposed you can make your own reaction, if there is unity in the decision making, in policy making and in the implementation of whatever goals are set in a nation, for the whole country and for the region. Whatever goals we have set for our country for its total development, are also the goals of Regions 9 and 12. These goals are within the context of development and within their limited capabilities and resources. We start with the two structures that have been superimposed or added to the structures of our ordinary regional government. The two legislative bodies are the SP and the LTP. I would like to show you the organizational chart, so that we can better understand and make our own comments or reactions.

Starting with the President, the Ministry of Local Government and Community Development, then we have the Autonomous Region — the head of the Autonomous Region. By the way in the organizational chart, the broken lines are lines of coordination only while super-

vision, control and authority are heavy lined. The first structures are the LTP and SP for the region. The RDC and the regional offices were already organized before these two structures were added because the reorganization was in 1972 yet and so all the regional offices were organized in all the regions of the Philippines. They were not excluded so they all have these MLGCD Regional offices and all the offices of the national ministry. I cannot see the relation of the regional offices after the LTP, which is the executive council, and you will find that the Chairman has line and control of authority over the regional offices also. Presumably, this is the one I wanted to find out whether these are new regional offices or different regional offices that has only broken lines. This has to be explained if there is no conflict that will arise in the implementation. This has to be understood by all or else the regional directors which are under the ministries of these different regional offices will really collaborate in the implementation of policies. If it is true that they are not going to make decisions on policies but will only implement, there could be a big chance of not really working together. As you look at this chart which is the basis of their organizational government you will see that the structures and the relationships are difficult to understand. So, these regional offices that have been supervised are going to be absorbed later on.

On the other hand, the itemized list of jurisdiction are not at all that rigid. On the contrary, they are likely sources of more conflicts. Take for example what is said here on planning, "after the plan is sanctioned by the President and the NEDA, the LTP then implements the plan." This is a very untainted statement, but loaded and you never can tell who or what agency is going to implement. Actually, the implementing agencies are the regional offices, local government and provincial government. It is not the LTP and we have no such thing as LTP but this statement which says that it's going to be implemented by LTP, is but going to create a lot of trouble. Anyway we are commenting on the structures of the regional autonomous government. If our views on that are going to create trouble for them, for being among the implementing agencies, it will really create confusion in us who are not the ones implementing this. I am just trying to point out that even on paper, which should not be the case, it is already difficult to see how all these will be implemented. So, my comments or reactions to this is that, the structure that have been superimposed stand in the way of good administration and therefore, they should also be better defined, they should be well

studied, so that the purpose for which the regional government was made would really be achieved. In fact, my reaction is this: the superstructures were only set up by the elite, by the highly intelligent people so they will have control over the . . . pardon my statement because as it is here, the structure is just a superstructure, superimposed, placed above all the other structures which could work well together harmoniously if properly guided. The reaction is that, the structures need further definitions, further re-alignment so that there will be fewer conflicts in the implementation of the goals of the regional autonomy.

Thank you.