

Notes from the Phillipines

October 20, 1964

To Members of the Administrative Council
From Mr. Albertson

Time to get another tape off to you. I hope the last two were received OK. I had a little difficulty in getting them in an envelope and APO thought they would get through alright. Anyway, this is number 3 and I'm all set now to give you somewhat of a detailed report with respect to the traveling I will be doing.

Of the five candidates, two, Mr. Bert Perlaza and Mr. Tibina, are located at Philippine Normal College here in Manila. I had the opportunity to visit with them and President Ramirez on Friday of last week, and both of these men are outstanding candidates and we would not go wrong in any way if either of them were selected.

Incidentally, this is being dictated at about 7:30 P. M. on Thursday night, 15 October. Tuesday, Wednesday and this morning of this week, October 13, 14 and 15, I traveled north to the Ilocos Norte Province and visited the third candidate, a Mr. Santos, who is teaching at the Northern Luzon Teachers College located in the community of Laoag. Mr. Santos is the director of student teaching at Laoag and again seems to be an outstanding candidate and could make a real contribution to the program. While at Laoag I had the opportunity to visit with three Peace Corps volunteers, all teaching at the Northern Luzon Teachers College, and all outstanding young men, two of them from New York State and one from New Jersey. The one from New Jersey has been here in the Philippines for about 30 months and plans to complete three years of duty. He returned to the United States this past summer for his leave and returned in time to start teaching here at the Northern Luzon Teachers College. His name is Melvin Beetle and is an outstanding example of what a young person can do if really dedicated to the program of the Peace Corps. Upon arriving in the Philippines he immediately set about learning the dialect of the Ilocos people and this has put him in good stead with them and with the work that he is doing at the Teachers College in Laoag.

I also had a fascinating visit with a Mr. Scott, an Episcopalian Missionary who is teaching in one of the other four colleges located in Laoag. Mr. Scott is an anthropologist and a sociologist, was at one time a missionary in China, and now is dedicating his life to the work of teaching in the college located in Laoag that is sponsored by the Episcopal Church.

I leave tomorrow morning at 7:10 to fly to Tacloban, a city in Leyte, and there will meet Mrs. Sinko, who is the fourth of the five candidates. On Monday and Tuesday of next week I will fly south to the city of MalayBalay in the Province of Bukidnon, the first landing at the Town of Cagayan De Oro and then flying over to MalayBalay. There I will meet the fifth of the five candidates and return by 8:00 P. M. on Tuesday evening.

To give you an idea of the rest of my schedule, I had the privilege this afternoon of spending an hour with Mr. Carlos Romulo, the President of the University of the Philippines, former President of General Assembly of United Nations, and one time Ambassador to the United States from the Philippines. Mr. Romulo is a fascinating person, highly regarded and respected here in the Philippines, and indeed throughout all of Southeast Asia. He is leaving next week for the United States, where he will have an opportunity to visit with some of the Foundations and also attempt to negotiate a loan through the World Bank. He indicated that he will go to St. Olaf's to receive an honorary degree and then go to Yale where he is to give an address. He seems to be constantly shuttling back and forth between the United States and the Philippines. When I return on the 17th of October from Tacloban I will have an opportunity to have a three-hour tour of Manila conducted by President Romeriz of the Philippine Normal College. President Romeriz extended the invitation to me last Friday and I am looking forward to seeing Manila with him as a guide. And then on Saturday evening the Philippine Normal College dance group is going to put on a special performance of the folk dances of the Philippines. This is to be done in my honor and other personnel of the AID Mission have been invited to attend this occasion. It will be held in the Philam Life Auditorium here in Manila. Philam is an insurance company here in the Philippines. Sunday morning I will be touring the facilities of the Philippine Historical Society with Mr. Verlaza. Mr. Verlaza, one of the five candidates, is the Dean of Instruction at the Philippine Normal College.

Then on Wednesday of next week, that's the 21st of October, I will be going to Los Banos with Dr. Rork, who is the Higher Education Specialist in the AID Mission, and Dr. Williams, who is the Chief of the Education Division of the AID Mission here. Los Banos is the agricultural college of the University of the Philippines and among several interesting projects has a major investment in the research and development of rice. The International Rice Institute is located in Los Banos and I have heard of it for a number of years. I am looking forward to a chance to see it first hand. Then I am tentatively scheduled to go to Baguio, which is the "Summer Capitol" of the Philippines. Baguio is located at approximately 5000 feet above sea level and is some 200 miles north of Manila. That is the setting for the summer teachers institute program sponsored by the Bureau of Public Schools and is purported to be a rather interesting set-up.

There are so many interesting things to comment about that it is difficult to know where to begin. This is certainly a country of great contrast - contrasts in the people, in the things they have to work with, in the climate, in the terrain, in their industry and their agriculture, in fact in any area of human endeavor. Just a few comments on some unrelated, yet interesting things. I can expand when I get home. For instance, I need to tell you about the taxicab driver who took me out to the airport Tuesday morning. He did not know a word of English and I needed to use the guard at the hotel as a translator in order to get him to take me to the Domestic Airport here in Manila. We had a minor accident on the way out which brought out a beautiful statement of profanity expressed in perfect English. I also need to tell you about the Peace Corps volunteer in Northern Luzon who is teaching modern mathematics, of the Episcopalian Missionary, Mr. Scott and the houseful of boys that he has who are living with him and attending the college in Laoag. In addition to the six boys and two of their younger brothers, he also has two monkeys, a dog and a cat, and I am sure several other animals that I didn't see (nor cared to). Mr. Scott is a devoted person and one of the interesting sidelights is that he is also somewhat of a town character, spending his Sunday afternoons at the local hotel having drinks with the "natives" and engaging in conversation with whoever is available. Another interesting sidelight is the way they drive here in the Philippines. I have heard stories of the way the taxicab drivers carry on in Paris and Tokyo, but I am sure that they do not equal the carelessness and recklessness that you find demonstrated here in Manila. There seems to be no regard for property or human life and one's life is indeed in jeopardy either as a pedestrian or as an occupant in one of the vehicles. I can well understand why the American Embassy prefers that its personnel do not drive Embassy vehicles, but rather hire local or Philippine drivers for them. I also need to tell you about the occupants of the room next to mine here at the hotel and the apparent activities that have been going on in conjunction with their frequent trips to Hong Kong and other points here in the Far East.

I have been very fortunate in having as my traveling companion for the trip to Ilocos Norte and also for the trip tomorrow and on Monday and Tuesday of next week a Mr. Juan Augstin. Mr. Augstin is the Teacher Education Specialist for the Bureau of Public Schools and he makes a very fine introduction for me in meeting the people out in the provinces. He epitomizes the courtesy of the Filipino. Today coming back from Laoag he turned to me and said in his Filipino English "You will pardon me, doctor, while I become air sick", upon which he promptly did. Some more comments - last night I stayed at the Texicano Hotel in Laoag - a hotel built and operated by a Texan who came to the Philippines during the war and married a Philippine girl. Icano is the Ilocos word for "An American from",

hence "An American from Texas" is the name of his hotel. It was a very stark and somewhat primitive situation. Now tonight I am in my room here at the Filipinas Hotel, the air conditioner is going, the television set is on with some Philipino program, and I am dictating into an electronic device developed in the 20th century. Yesterday I rode in a calash, a horse-drawn carriage, and today I flew back in a DC-3 and passed a DC-8 on the runway as we were coming into the Manila airport. Again an example of the contrast one finds here in the Philippines. While in the north I ate native Philippino food, never really certain what it was, and hopeful it would not upset my stomach. Tonight I had a hershey bar and a coke. I am enclosing with this tape a copy of a map of the Philippines showing the primary areas where I am visiting.

More later.