

TOWARDS INTEGRATION—A REVIEW OF POLICIES AFFECTING THE MINORITY GROUPS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE MANGYANS (1901-1975)*

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The diversity of the peoples of the Philippines was readily recognized by the Americans as a potential source of societal conflicts. In particular, the new colonial masters focused their attention on the existence of a 'substantial' minority consisting of the "pagan" and Muslim groups. The keen awareness that these people were different and posed a problem similar to that of the Indians in the United States led them to work out policies that initially defined majority-minority relations.

Innovating on the Spanish classification of the inhabitants in ecclesiastical terms — that is, dividing the peoples into Christians, *in-fieles* (heathen), and *moros*, the Americans formulated the term 'Non-Christian' to

designate the pagan and Muslim groups in distinction from the Christian Filipinos dwelling in organized provinces and towns, for whom a frame of government had been practically completed as early as a year ago (i.e., 1901 — V.B.L.).¹

With this act, the Americans formally set the distinction between lowlanders and highlanders, 'Christians' and Muslims. In fact, the term 'Filipino' was solely used to signify the majority, lowland Christian groups. The term 'Non-Christian' however, was stripped of its religious understones or its literal meaning. In a Supreme court case, 'Ruby vs. the Provincial Board of Mindoro' involving the Mangyans, it was expressly pointed out that the term was intended to relate to the degree of civilization and not to religious beliefs. As defined in

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¹"Report of the Chief of the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes for the Year Ending August 31, 1902" included in the *Third Annual Report of the Philippine Commission 1902 Part I*, Bureau of Insular Affairs, War Department (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1903). p. 679.

the court decision, the term should refer particularly to geographical area, "and more directly to the natives of the Philippine Islands of a low grade of civilization".²

The colonial government took a further step by creating the Bureau of Non-Christian tribes on October 2, 1901. Its objectives, as stated in the organizing act, were: (1) to investigate the actual condition of the pagan and Mohammedan tribes and consequently make recommendations for legislation by the civil government and (2) to conduct scientific investigations in the ethnology of the country.³

Yet, as pointed out later by Merton Miller, the goal was not merely scientific but likewise political, since

. . . An acquaintance with the non-Christian tribes, with their customs and ideas, would make it possible to govern them better and more easily than would otherwise be possible . . .⁴

This new emphasis on the use of scientific findings for administration of 'minorities' was a lesson learned from the blunders made in administering the Indians. This was expressly stated in the initial report of Dr. David Barrows, a chief of the Bureau who wrote that

The variety of problem they present is equally for the ethnologist and statesman, and nowhere, it may be asserted, must the constructive work of administration be so dependent for information and guidance upon the researches of the expert . . . Out of mutual ignorance and fear have followed hatred, oppression and retaliation. In the establishment of order in these islands this government is attempting to rear a new standard of relationship between the white man and the Malay. The success of this effort will depend in a large measure on our understanding and scientific grasp of the peoples whose problem we are facing.⁵

Under instructions from the Philippine Commission, Barrows visited and made investigations in Indian reservations and schools in the United States. The trip was designed primarily to gain information concerning the results obtained by the administration of Indian affairs. On the basis of this study, Barrows proposed that since the new U.S. policy of breaking down tribal ties and dealing with the Indians as individuals rather than as tribes had failed, it could not work out as well in the Philippines. As he expressed it in his report,

² Edmond Block and H. L. Noble, *Digest of the Reports of the Supreme Court of the Philippine Islands*, Vol. 4 (Rochester, New York: The Law-years Co-Operative Publishing Company, 1927), p 3230.

³ *Third Annual Report of the Philippine Commission*, *op. cit.*

⁴ *Fourth Annual Report of the Philippine Commission*, 1904, Part 2, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1905), p. 571.

⁵ *Third Annual Report of the Philippine Commission*, *op. cit.*, p. 679.

. . . In spite of the excellent intentions behind these efforts, the policy . . . has not brought forth satisfactory results, and in a thousand cases has not done justice to the Indians. The process of chance has been pursued too rapidly. Great difficulties attend the disestablishment of the reservation system . . . *In general, it might be stated that the policy of the United States in dealing with American Indians contain little that can be followed in governing the backward races here* (Italics mine).⁶

In particular, Barrows proposed that in dealing with the minority the reservation system must be avoided and that "the government should not cede or grant any public land to a tribe as a tribe." He advocated isolation as a policy for the Negritos for a certain length of time, but believed that for the Mangyans and other tribes of "Malayan origin, on a lower cultural plane than the Christian Filipino. . . governmental efforts should tend to encourage admixture rather than to maintain isolation".⁷

He reasoned that these tribes had advanced to the point of understanding individual ownership of property. Yet, a closer look at the proposition would indicate a utilitarian end, as the assignment of individual land holdings itself would leave superfluous land open to settlement from the outside. As conceived, the goal was toward a peaceful co-existence of the majority and the minority groups, with regards to the use of land areas.

On the basis of his examination of Indian education, in the U.S., Barrows further proposed that the immediate objects which education should pursue among the tribes here should be the teaching of English coupled with reading and writing. He likewise recommended the establishment of boarding industrial schools to be planted in each major "tribe" and administered by the Americans.

On the other hand, Barrows strongly argued against entrusting police and judicial authority on any ethnic group — whether "Filipino Christian or non-Christian." Contrasting Indian society and the 'Malayan society' in the Philippines, he asserted that while the former was thoroughly democratic, the latter was

. . . . oppressively aristocratic. The power of the man of wealth position, or inheritance is inordinate. He is not only able to commit abuses, but is morally blinded to their enormity. Beneath him the man of poverty and unenlightened mind takes rank with animals that till the soil. I believe that this characterization is true of both Christian and non-Christian communities. The en-

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 684.

⁷ *Ibid.*

trusting of authority, then should be safeguarded and restricted in every possible way.⁸

Contrary to what Leothiny Clavel and Mamintal Tamano believe,⁹ the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes did not continually function up to the Commonwealth Period.¹⁰ It was changed to the Ethnological Survey of the Philippines barely two years after its foundation. While this revised set-up closely approximated the Bureau of American Ethnology which dealt directly with the study of diverse Indian tribes, the results of its work, as Merton Miller said, were only of scientific value, great this was. The problem of dealing with the "tribes" in the Philippines was in fact considered "much more important than was the problem in America." Aware that the Americans could never become a 'majority' in the Philippines, Miller called for a careful investigation of American policies concerning the "tribes". In these respects, he said, "the problem here differs from that which we had to solve in the United States, and from these facts, too, its relatively greater importance appears."¹¹ Concerning the work of the re-organized bureau, Miller reiterated the plain proposition that the more you know about a given people the better you could get along with them. The agency was conceived as practically useful "in the work of controlling and assisting in their progress the uncivilized people in the island."¹²

However, the actual task of governing the minority groups from the onset of American rule up to 1916 fell directly under the office of the Secretary of the Interior. As such, Worcester who was the Secretary of the Interior until 1913, exercised executive control over the affairs of all members of non-Christian tribes outside the 'Moro province.' Likewise, he had the power to approve executive orders and memoranda which once promulgated had the force of law for the minority groups.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 685.

⁹ Cf. Mamintal A. Tamano, *Needed: A Total Commitment, A Compilation of Writings*, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1968), pp. 1-17; and Leothiny Clavel, "National Integration: A Case of Planned Change", *Journal on National Integration*, Vol. I, No. 1, (Quezon City, 1968), pp. 19, 32.

¹⁰ In truth, Dean C. Worcester reports in 1903 that the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes was changed to "Ethnological Survey for the Philippines Islands" cf. "Report of the Secretary of the Interior," *Fourth Annual Report of the Philippine Commission*, 1903, Part 2 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904), p. 789.

¹¹ *Fourth Annual Report of the Philippine Commission*, *op. cit.*

¹² *Ibid.*

For instance, Worcester drafted and authored the so-called "Special Provincial Government Act" (Act No. 1396, Sept. 4, 1905) promulgated by the Philippine Commission of which he was also a member. This act directly affected the lives of the non-Christian groups as it provided for the organization and administration of the 'special provinces' inhabited by the minority groups. Prior to the passage of this law, Mindoro itself was detached from Marinduque Province and given a provincial government of its own by Act No. 500 (Nov. 10, 1902) of the Philippine Commission.¹³ In particular, section 18 of the same act authorized the governor of Mindoro, to deal with and provide for the government of the Mangyans.

All the same, the diverse roles the governor assumed in his post, hindered him from doing full-time work among the Mangyans. Thus, efforts made to uplift Mangyan life was limited to the establishment of settlements which covered only a small sector of the Mangyan population. It must be added that settlements were established in spite of Barrows' prior recommendations against transplanting the 'reservation system' into the country.

The set-up in the settlement established in Mindoro was a miniature form of the municipal government at that time. In effect,

A presidente and a "consejal" were appointed, but no attempt was made to organize any form of township government. Orders were given these officials to keep the place clean, plant anything they saw fit, and to encourage others to join them.

The regular form of municipal appointment was given the presidente, to which was added brightly colored seals and ribbons, and it would be a matter attach as much importance to his position as do these savages.¹⁴

In brief, the Americans established a form of government for the Mangyans which entailed a chain of command from the governor to the elected lowlanders who 'supervised' Mangyan affairs. The Mangyans were not given a chance to govern themselves. Often, they were governed by 'Filipinos' who, in many cases were the major source of abuses. As Offley himself reported, the biggest rascal in the community was often the elected *presidente*, owing his power to the fear the people have of him.

By and large, the efforts of the Americans to organize Mangyan settlements turned out to be a total failure. The nomadic character

¹³ See *Report of the Philippine Commission*, Vol. XI, Part I, *op. cit.*, p. 542.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

of majority of the Mangyans as well as the absence of "tribal" relations were seen as a major barrier to the success of U.S. policies concerning them. As Offley lamented, "Each family is mortally afraid of the other, which makes progress with them exceedingly slow."¹⁵ It may be added that the attendant use of sheriff force in the establishment of such villages as well as the oppressive rule of the lowland *presidentes* made it doubly difficult for the Mangyans to trust the sincerity of the colonial masters. Worcester, the author of this scheme, blamed the failure of the settlement system on the attitude of 'Tagalog Filipinos' who, according to him,

. . . look with great disfavor on the gathering of the Mangyans into settlements where they can be protected, as it renders it difficult to hold them in a state of peonage. Whenever Gen. Offley got a little group together they did their best to scatter it.¹⁶

Notwithstanding Worcester's claim, the accounts of this period clearly show that the Americans were themselves exploiters of the Mangyans. Paul Schebesta, a German anthropologist who visited one of the settlements, noted how the Mangyans were cultivating abaca¹⁷ — a sign that they were to some extent integrated into the agro-commercial world system prevailing at that time. In point of fact, Offley himself revealed how one Mangyan settlement named Lalauigan produced a 'good crop' for the fiscal year 1904. For that year, he reported that

A good crop of corn and camotes was (sic) raised and cocoanut (sic) and hemp planted, and I am now requested to furnish them cans in which they can gather rubber. Mr. Manguian is not at all backward about asking what he wants. Requests for carabao, plow, and seeds are frequent . . .¹⁸

An outsider's view of the American scheme for the Mangyan development program is further provided by Schebesta. Speaking of the role of his informant, Kaig, in the American administration of Mangyan affairs, Schebesta wrote that

For a certain length of time, Kaig played the role of superintendent among the savage Mangyans. At that time, when the American government went about in a hyper-philanthropic way to build model schools among the Mangyans, Kaig was given the responsibility of overseeing the Mangyans in the north of the land. Kaig knew and fulfilled the responsibility given him. The enterprise which was extraordinarily expensive was in no

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ D. C. Worcester, *The Philippine Past and Present*, *op. cit.*, p. 464.

¹⁷ Paul Schebesta, *Menschen Ohne Geschichte* (St. Gabriel Modling, 1935) p. 137 as translated by Dr. Zeus A. Salazar.

¹⁸ *Report of the Philippine Commission*, vol. I, *op. cit.*

way related, however, to the results which it showed. Kaig himself had a very pessimistic opinion of it; he was convinced that the desired goal could not be reached with the paid civil forces or servants . . .¹⁹

A growing demand that the administration of the non-Christian groups be turned over to the Filipinos caused the American civil government to re-examine their policies toward the minority groups in 1909. Worcester in his annual report noted how the demand "has been made so publicly and so persistently as practically to force its consideration".²⁰ In defense of the *status quo*, Worcester reiterated the oft-repeated point made by the Americans in justifying their policy — the question of the Filipinos

ability and fitness to dominate, justly control, and wisely guide along the pathway of civilization alien people . . . (i.e., the Non-Christian "tribes")²¹

Worcester argued on three major points to support his trenchant words against the Filipino demand for government of the non-Christian tribes: first, there existed a wide cultural gap between the 'Filipinos' and the minority groups; second, the Filipino had no just claim to ownership of the territory occupied by 'wild men'; third, the Filipino was ignorant of the hill tribes. "Mutual distrust and hatred" formed, according to the irate colonial master, "an insurmountable barrier between Filipino and non-Christian".²²

In effect, Worcester's view of majority-minority relations outlined the United States' policy on the ethnic problems in this period. As Secretary of the Interior, Worcester decided the tenor of the U.S. attitude toward the minorities — which at this stage favoured isolation rather than admixture of 'pagans', Muslims and Christians. In his view expressed in his annual report to the Philippine Commission (1910), Worcester expressed the opinion that

. . . to turn the control of the non-Christian tribes over to the Filipinos would speedily result in disaster. As the Filipinos have no just claim to the territory which the non-Christians occupy, I see no reason for pursuing such a course.²²

A staunch believer in Beyer's "Waves of migration" theory, Worcester propounded at length the American view that the 'Filipinos'

¹⁹ Paul Schebesta, *op. cit.*, p. 35, as translated by Dr. Zeus A Salazar.

²⁰ "Report of the Secretary of the Interior" in *Report of the Philippine Commission, 1909-1911*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, n.d.), p. 74.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*, p. 81.

comprised a distinct race and culture from the minorities. His arguments was that

it is true that the Filipino, the Igorot, and the Moro are of common racial origin, but so are the Anglo-Saxon peoples, and there exists between the Filipinos on the one side and Igorots and the Moros on the other, for greater difference than those which distinguish the Germans, the English, and the Americans. Indeed, the width of the gap between the Filipino, whose Malayan blood has been profoundly modified by intermarriage with people of other races, and who has attained to a degree of civilization far above that ever reached by any other Malayan people, and the wild man of the Luzon mountains, with his pure blood, his magnificent physical development, and his primitive customs and instincts, is very great²³

Ironically, merely a year after Worcester's solid pronouncement on Filipino non-Christian "diversity", the Philippine Bill of 1913 was passed, providing extended power of self-government to the Filipinos. This, of course also effected a radical change in the U.S. policy concerning the majority-minority relations. The change in the policy was in fact defined in the 1914 report of the acting governor-general. Significantly, the new policy provided answer to the issues raised by Worcester, who by then had resigned from his post as Secretary of the Interior. In part, the report stated that

By this policy the isolation in which the mountain people were left for so many generations will gradually be removed and the way opened for a more rapid spread of civilization. By this means, also the distrust heretofore reported to exist between the hill people and the civilized people of the plains will be eliminated and a feeling of mutual regard and respect will be engendered. *It is obvious that common feelings of nationality and common sense of responsibility among the peoples of the Philippines can only be secured by bringing them into association and contact with each other. Maintaining and strengthening the barrier which has in the past been erected between them will not serve* (Italics mine).²⁴

The idea of a common nationality, engendered by the propagandists and finding its most intense expression in the Revolution of 1896, reached at this point a form so distinct and vivid as to force the Americans to come to grips with it. Thus, in the 'Moro country', as well as in the Mt. Province, a new policy was inaugurated, that of 'cultivating confidence and goodwill between the non-Christians and

²² *Ibid.*, p. 81.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

²⁴ "Report of the Governor-General" in *Report of the Philippine Commission to the Secretary of War* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1915), p. 39.

their Christian neighbors'. In Mindoro, however, the death of Mr. Jesse D. Ward, the assigned Mangyan agent, momentarily hindered a change of policy.

Changes were also made to centralize the work of the Department of Interior among the non-Christians. Winfred T. Dennison, the successor of Worcester, introduced a bill in the Philippine Commission which placed the administration of the 'non-Christians' in the charge of a new officer, known as "Delegate of the Secretary of the Interior for the non-Christian people". However, direct supervision of the tribes was increasingly delegated to the provincial and municipal governments.

The apparent failure of the new system, as well as the general disorganization of the work among the minority groups, led to the reconstitution of the defunct Bureau of non-Christian Tribes in 1917. The underlying principle in its re-organization was the advancement of what the Americans characteristically described as 'backward elements of the population' to economic, political and social equality and unification with the majority group. The law creating the bureau gave it the duty:

... to continue the work for advancement and liberty in favor of the regions inhabited by non-Christian Filipinos and to foster by all adequate means and in a systematic, rapid, and complete manner and moral, material, economic, social and political development of those regions always having in view the aim of rendering permanent the mutual intelligence between and complete fusion of all populating the Provinces of the Archipelago . . .²⁵

The newly defined goals of the bureau constituted a clear departure from what it formerly stood for — an arm for tribal research and a policy-making body for the minorities. In a word, the bureau was revived to work for the eventual assimilation of all tribal groups into the mainstreams of the national life. As the Governor-General stated in his report of 1917, the final objective

... is obviously the eventual discontinuance of the bureau of non-Christian tribes by the passing of its territory to the jurisdiction of the executive bureau as regularly organized provincial territory as rapidly as the people by advance in civilization shall have qualified for such autonomous provincial and local government . . .²⁶

For the first time too, the supervision and administration of the work in Mindanao and Sulu was integrated into the totality of go-

²⁵ *Report of the Governor-General of the Philippine to the Secretary of War, 1917*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918), p. 29.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

vernment programs for the minority groups. The Department of Mindanao and Sulu was thus abolished and the domain of the newly reconstituted bureau expanded to include the 'special provinces' of Agusan, Bukidnon, Cotabato, Davao, Lanao, Mt. Province, Nueva Viscaya, Sulu and Zamboanga. Obviously, Mindoro was not classified as a 'special province'. This was presumably because the Mangyans, unlike the Muslims and the Mt. Province tribes, did not constitute a 'political voice' nor a threat to the security of the colonial government. On the other hand, the areas listed as 'special provinces' (where most of the non-Christians funds went) were all troubled areas — that is, the scene of armed conflicts and bitter struggles. Thus, the Muslims and the ethnic groups from the Mt. Province and Nueva Viscaya were the sole groups which truly benefited from the positive measures taken by the colonial government.

In the formulation of policies toward the non-Christians then, the Mangyans likewise suffered discrimination in the hands of the Americans. For instance, the Supreme Court's stand regarding Mangyan civil rights which figured in a court case in 1926, defined that the "Manguianes are not free as civilized men are free."²⁷ Though a "person within the meaning of the habeas corpus law", the Mangyans was not considered the equal of his lowland brother. This policy, of course, further aggravated the distinction between the lowlanders and the Mangyans.

In the 20's, the influx of migrants from other regions as a result of the incentives given by the colonial government led to the intensification of the growing land problems in Mindoro. To cope with these conflicts posed by 'Christian landgrabbers', Mindoro was included among the 'special provinces' supervised by the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes. This change in the policy prescribed that the bureau, through the provincial governor, should henceforth exercise control and supervision over the territory occupied by the Mangyans. Steps were also taken to reserve the lands inhabited by the Mangyans, but this effort, as may be inferred from the reports, was not extensively carried out.

An over-all change in the American policy toward the minorities is apparent with the beginning of a new era in Philippine history in the 30's. At this point, the embryonic concept of a total national community acquired a more definite form which, in turn, paved the

²⁷ Edmond Block and H. L. Noble, *op. cit.*

way for the creation of the concept of integration. One of the first acts passed in the inaugural session of the 'First National Assembly' under the Commonwealth was one which abolished the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes. This action is significant as it showed the keen desire of the pioneer Filipino lawmakers to foster national unity and solidarity by abolishing any trace of distinctions set between 'Christians and non-Christians'. The whole tenor of the Filipino policy toward the minorities in fact centered around the idea of integration. Justifying the act, the late President Manuel Luis Quezon declared to the First National Assembly that there was no longer a need for the continued existence of 'specialized rule' for the minorities of Luzon, including Mindoro and Palawan. "Whatsoever may have been the reasons for instituting this arrangement," he announced,

. . . they today no longer exist to an extent sufficient to justify the continuation of the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes. Considering the marked advancement in the civilization and general progress of the special provinces, the so-called non-Christian problem has been reduced to one of solidification and development and our present effort are directed towards the simplification of the governmental agencies so as to insure efficiency.²⁸

Under the Commonwealth government then, the work of administering the minority groups was merged with the Department of Interior, thus "insuring a better coordination of the development work that may be authorized by the national government for said region".²⁹ Recognizing the difficulty of integrating the Muslims in the South, the Commonwealth government created the Office of the Commissioner for Mindanao and Sulu to direct the development work for the said area. This office continued to function until the outbreak of World War II in 1941.

The brevity of the Japanese Occupation of the Philippines did not leave any indelible mark on the Mangyans of Mindoro. Conklin for instance mentioned in an article written shortly after the War, that the Hanunoo had virtually no contact with either Japanese or American troops during the Occupation. "When an occasional dog-fight took place over their territory", he reported, "they ran to the family burial caves for safety and to be near their ancestors."³⁰ Except for this reference in Conklin's work, there seems to be no other

²⁸ *Messages of the President*, Vol. 2, Part I, Revised Edition, (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1938), p. 200.

²⁹ *Op. cit.*

³⁰ Harold C. Conklin, "Bamboo Literacy In Mindoro", *Pacific Discovery*, Vol. II, No. 4, (July-August 1949), p. 7.

existing account of Mangyan life during the Second World War. Macario Landicho wrote of mass evacuations into the interior as a consequence of the Japanese occupation of Mindoro,³¹ but he made no reference to the Mangyans. One is left then merely to suppose that in this new movement inland of coastal residents, reminiscent of the days of piracy when the same thing happened, the Mangyans were again pushed farther into the depths of Mr. Halcon.

The end of the War brought to the fore the existing undercurrents in Muslim-Christian relations in Mindanao and Sulu. In the early 50's this broke out into armed conflicts between the government forces and 'Moro bandits' — a fact which further underscored the age-old problem of Muslim integration into the national community. To resolve this major threat to the peaceful co-existence of Muslims and Christians in the region, a congressional committee was formed in 1954 to investigate the problem. The findings of the Committee revealed that the problem had deeply rooted sources, transcending the question of 'peace and order' in the South. It was found out that the problem had assumed historic, economic, social, educational and political significance.

One of the primary achievements of this committee was the creation of a commission charged with the specific mission to enhance the progress of the Muslims and the other minority groups. Specifically, the law creating the Commission on National Integration (R.A. 1888) on June 22, 1957 declared that henceforth the government's policy toward the minorities was

To effectuate in a more rapid and complete manner the economic, social, moral and political advancement of the non-Christian Filipinos or national cultural minorities and to render real, complete and permanent the integration of all said national cultural communities into the body politic . . .³²

Among the more important functions of the newly-created Commission as specified in section four of the said law were the following:

- a. To engage in industrial and agricultural enterprises and establish processing plants and cottage industries to lead communities of national cultural minorities in engaging such pursuits and, upon the attainment of this objective, to sell such enterprises or industries to them at cost.
- b. To construct, operate and maintain irrigation systems and dams, power structures or generating plants, electric transmission and distribution lines or systems for the furnishing of electric light, heat and power to the inhabitants in the areas not receiving the service of such plants or systems.

³¹ Macario Landicho, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

- c. To cooperate with government agricultural experimental stations or demonstration farms (*sic*) and agricultural supervisors assisting farmers to acquire knowledge of modern farming or better methods of cultivating of farms.
- d. To effectuate the settlement of all the landless members of the National Cultural Minorities by procuring homesteads for them or by resettling them in resettlement projects of the National Resettlement and Rehabilitation Administration.
- e. To cause the establishment of more public schools in regions inhabited by the National Cultural Minorities and encourage them to attend the same.
- f. To assist in the training of the National Cultural Minorities in the different fields of education and to help them secure employment in private establishments or offices in the civil service.
- g. To authorize lawyers of the Commission to assist indigent members of the cultural minorities accused in criminal cases involving their landholdings.³³

While the work of the CNI appears impressive in print, its actual performance among the Mangyans in Mindoro does not appear equally laudable. Since its inception in 1957, no breakthrough has been made in the total integration of the Mangyans into the national community. Hitherto, only one Mangyan settlement could be rightfully said to have received regular assistance from the CNI.³⁴ As a matter of fact, work and rehabilitation programs in Mindoro have been for the most part, uncoordinated. The Social Welfare Administration, missions and private social action groups continue to do their work individually. No effort has been made by the CNI to integrate these and other existing Mangyan welfare programs. Thus, development work among the Mangyans is largely *laissez-faire* in character — each “social action” group is left to interpret what is best for the Mangyans they are dealing with. Of course, not all ‘civic-conscious’ groups come up with positive programs for change. The SWA, which initiated social welfare work among the Irayas in Bayanan, Mayabig, have encouraged dependency on “aids” and dole-outs rather than encouraging self-sufficiency among the villagers.³⁵

³² From the true copy of Republic Act No. 1888 (As amended by Republic Act No. 3852, 1973 Constitution, P.D. No. 193), p. 1.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

³⁴ This is one Buhid settlement located in Batangan, Bongabon. Development work among the Hanunoo was initiated by Fr. Antoon Postma and recently supplemented by independent projects undertaken by the Mangyan Integrated Development Program and the Elizalde group, PANAMIN. Welfare work among the northern groups has been very minimal — only those living in the foothills have received occasional help from the SWA and Catholic and Protestant missionary groups.

³⁵ The SWA’s welfare project in Bayanan, Mayabig is sporadic in nature — no long-range projects has been instituted and the continuance of the work relies heavily on the commitment of the individual social

As defined by law, the CNI was to serve as the government's arms for national integration. While this concept acquired greater prominence in recent years, its operations have been confined mainly to the 'majority group' among the minorities. The Muslims, being large in number and constituting a political force, have received considerable attention from the government. On account perhaps of their generally passive and withdrawing character, the Mangyans have never been accorded the same or even remotely similar assistance and support. To make matters worse, the government agents sent to work among the Mangyans, in a number of instances, have been the source of fraud and treachery themselves. The first CNI representative to the Mangyans (a Kalinga man and thus a member of a cultural community himself) did not only swindle hundreds of Mangyans of their small earnings, but likewise illegally had reservation lands surveyed and sold to lowlanders.³⁶ It was only with the concerted action of Mangyans and missionaries that this man was relieved of his post. In other cases, municipal officials themselves take advantage of the Mangyan's ignorance in the ways of lowland culture by over-charging them in the payment of their taxes and other governmental fees.³⁷ All this is quite discouraging to the Mangyans who are eager to do everything, even pay taxes and file all sorts of bureaucratic forms, just to secure titles for their lands before avaricious lowlanders take over them.

Though the present government policy theoretically provides for opportunity and freedom for the Mangyans and other minority groups to preserve their cultural identity, the onslaughts of lowland pressures and the undirected (and, sometimes, misdirected) introduction of changes have led some Mangyans groups into social dysphoria. Unless the government takes a more active part in meaningful projects for these people, the continuous influx of lowlanders and their modernizing influences may soon bring an end to a culture which is of immense importance to our understanding of our history as a people.

worker assigned in the area. Several attempts were made to introduce cottage industries but this did not last long as the Irayas were more concerned with their *kaingin* which provide them a sure source of food.

³⁶ Cf. Caroline Stickley, *op. cit.*, p. 193. Interviews were also made both with OMF missionaries, and Mangyans who were involved in this case.

³⁷ In Pinamalayan and Batangan, Bongabon, some Mangyans were made to pay as high as ₱150.00 for their income taxes. Considering the meager income the Mangyans make out of their 'kaingins' the fee is really unreasonable.