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The Manila Times

Special Report on Quezon City

October 12, 1989

Quezon City: Then and now

By ARMANDO J. MALAY

THERE'S a bit of irony in the development of Quezon City.

Originally, Commonwealth President Manuel L. Quezon had planned to make the vast Diliman area a workers' housing project, to be known as Barrio Obrero. Quezon, a mestizo who came from a humble family in Baler, had launched a Social Justice program, triggered by the famous Cuevo-Barredo death compensation case. Manila had become crowded and slums were sprouting in many places.

Quezon asked his friend, Alejandro Roces Sr., if the latter could acquire, for the government, the vast Diliman Estate. Quezon's idea was to transfer about 200,000 families from Tondo, San Nicolas and other crowded areas in Manila so that each transferred family would own a house and a piece of land in an area which was not far from their place of work.

Roces went on his mission with a will. He started negotiating with the owners of vast tracts of land in Diliman. The Philippine Homesite and Housing Corporation (PHHC) was created, and it worked out a plan for housing projects, starting with what became known as Project 4 , now called Roxas District.

The idea of creating a city adjacent to Manila came later. All the big public buildings housing national offices were in Manila and to transfer these offices elsewhere would have cost a lot of money and taken time. Some persons close to Quezon said it was necessary to transfer the capital city because in case of a war Manila could be bombarded from Manila Bay, as what happened during the war between Spain and Britain.

War damage

The question of transferring the capital to a place outside Manila was finally solved when World War II destroyed many buildings in Manila, including the Legislative (now housing the Senate) and the UP buildings. By that time, Quezon was already dead. Presidents Manuel A. Roxas and Elpidio Quirino were the ones who recommended to the legislature the enactment of laws that would transfer the capital city to what is now known as Quezon City. It covers a much bigger area than the Diliman Estate which Roces bought, on behalf of the Commonwealth government, at about five centavos per square meter.



THE first students of the University of the Philippines in Diliman, arriving at the new campus. The first classes, as well as dormitories, were housed in quonset huts erected by the US army for its personnel. Today, imposing multi-story buildings have replaced the quonset huts.

(From the photo files of Armando J. Malay)

Even before the PHHC was organized, I had already gone to some places in what is now Quezon City. There was old San Francisco del Monte, for instance, which could be reached by carretela from Balintawak. As elementary and high school students, we went on excursions to San Francisco del Monte, to steal guavas, mangoes and other fruits. There was a big orchard owned by an American surnamed Buck, a haven for outdoors-crazy Manila boys. San Francisco del Monte is an old place, established in the Spanish regime and whose first parish priest eventually was canonized a saint.

Scattered in the vast area around San Francisco del Monte were orchards and grazing land. Diliman could not be planted to rice (it still can't) because it was covered by adobe and there was no irrigation system.

Balara is also an old settlement. In its environs the first Katipuneros gathered at night (tending carabaos and goats in the daytime) to plot revolution. Andres Bonifacio was said to be a familiar figure in those Balara Bivouacs.

Post-war era

After the last war, what eventually became known as Quezon City opened up. Ironically, not many of the poor in Tondo, Sampaloc, San Nicolas, etc. managed to move to Quezon City. The middle class (mostly professionals) were the ones who moved out, and Manila's poor districts continued to grow. Land values shot up so that the poor wage earners couldn't afford to move out.

Today's asking prices for land and homes in Quezon City are fantastic, compared to those when I moved my family from Sampaloc to what is now known as Heroes Hills. At a public bidding conducted by the PHHC, I managed to own

(Turn to Page 14)

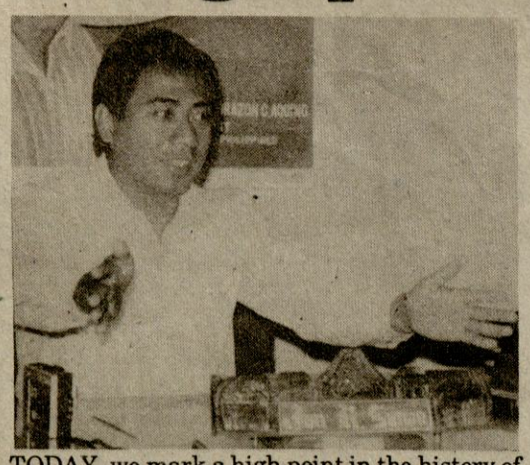
He envisioned a city for the working man



AS PART and parcel of his program of Social Justice, a great leader, President Manuel L. Quezon, once envisioned a city that would give homes to the working man and his family, and provide the ordinary citizen with economic, social and cultural sustenance. Death overtook him before his plans could mature and be realized to any substantial degree of fulness. But other hands picked up the orphaned dream, nurtured and cherished it, through a war, a liberation and a peace.

Project coordinator and editor: MA. ELOISA LAZARO

High point in history



TODAY, we mark a high point in the history of Quezon City – its 50th Foundation Day, thus making it a golden anniversary. The question is inevitable: After 50 years, how close has the city come to the golden dreams of its founder, the illustrious late President Manuel L. Quezon.

Quezon had dreamed of a "Workingman's Paradise" where the poor would each have a house and lot of his own to enable him to live with dignity as a "man and not like a hog." He dreamed of a "Magnificent Capital City" with wide avenues and big public squares as well as stately edifices, "the showplace of the nation...the epitome of the spirit and culture of the country."

It can not be denied that these golden dreams of Quezon have not yet been realized, but the progress that Quezon City has made during the past 50 years, starting as it did as a veritable wilderness of cogon, forest, rice paddies, and creeks, is tremendous and remarkable enough to merit the Golden Jubilee Celebration the city government in cooperation with all sectors of the city has put up to mark the city's golden anniversary.

Furthermore, the dreams of Quezon while not fully fulfilled have not been given up. The present city administration and the people of Quezon City continue to pursue those dreams with unrelenting zeal and vigor realizing that Quezon City has all the potentials to grow and develop into the golden city of Quezon's dreams. Towards Quezon's "Workingman's Paradise" dream, we have an ongoing massive socialized housing program for the poor and low income families and towards his "Magnificent Capital City" dream, our City Council has passed a resolution urging Congress to enact a bill restoring to Quezon City the capitalship of the country. We have also set in motion a Comprehensive Development Program designed to rectify zonal anomalies perpetrated during the past unplanned growth and development of the city.

And so to the good people of Quezon City, may I say: Even as we go into a joyful spree as the festivities reach their climax today, let us also pause a while and rededicate ourselves to the dreams of our city's founder and strenghten our resolve to continue striving for their realization working together in accordance with our city's motto: "QUEZON CITY ITO – TULONG TULONG TAYO." – **Mayor BRIGIDO R. SIMON, JR.**

Showplace of the nation

ON October 12, 1939, the National Assembly of the Philippines enacted Commonwealth Act Number 502 entitled "An Act to create Quezon City."

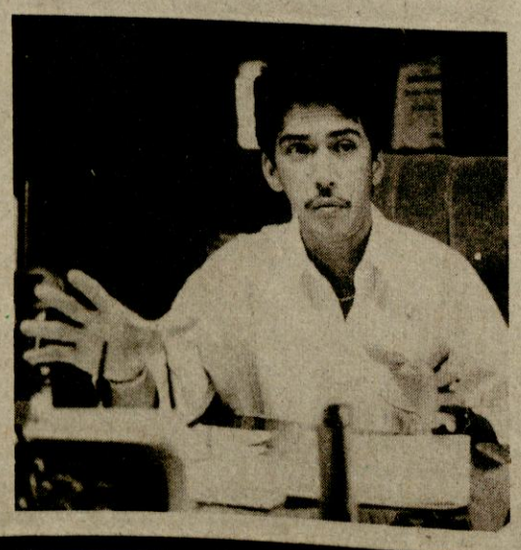
No less than Manuel L. Quezon has said "I dream of a capital city that, politically shall be the seat of government, aesthetically the showplace of the nation – a place that thousands of people will come and visit as the epitome of culture and spirit of the country socially a dignified concentration of human life, aspirations, endeavors and achievements and economically as a productive, self-contained community."

It is from his vision of a capital city that the present local administrations continue to draw inspirations. Fate has it that the man did not live long enough to see the emergence of a city "victorious from the trials and bitter strifes of a distracted world."

Today, as we celebrated the 50th golden anniversary of this premier city, Quezon's legacy still lives on. But we should not stop from here, the work must go on.

I appeal to all the constituents of this City to pool their resources and strength to help maintain and improve the status of Quezon City. Remain "courteous, brave, industrious, self-reliant and purposeful in thought as well as in action" and not to be idle but be a vital cog in the political machinery for the realization of the ultimate goal.

It is my firm hope that the citizenry will appreciate and enjoy the activities and festivities in store for them and most of all, imbibe to their minds the significance of this historical occasion. – **Vice Mayor VICENTE C. SOTTO, III**



At 50, QC is now No. 1

50th
1939 1989
QUEZON CITY
GOLDEN JUBILEE
OCTOBER 12 1989
(FOUNDATION DAY CELEBRATION)

Fifty years ago today, the late President Manuel L. Quezon, founder of Quezon City, envisioned the city to become the country's premier metropolis.

From a vast grassland, of thick bushes and lagoons, the city has indeed risen to unprecedented progress that it is now generally acknowledged to be the country's No. 1 city.

Inspired by Quezon's vision, Mayor Brigido R. Simon Jr., together with Vice Mayor Vicente Sotto III, the City Council and the rest of the QC officialdom, pursues a program of government geared toward propelling QC to even greater heights. His 11-point program includes:

1. **Low-cost housing distribution project**
2. **Economic and livelihood projects**
3. **Systematical garbage collection and sanitation**
4. **Strengthening moral values**
5. **Speedy and efficient delivery of public services**
6. **Beautification and conservation of natural resources**
7. **Program for cooperation, brotherhood and unity**
8. **Meaningful social health services**
9. **Peace and order**
10. **Upliftment of education**
11. **Economic development**

"As we celebrate our 50th foundation anniversary and recall the memory of our founder, let us renew our commitment and strengthen our resolve to live up to the vision of President Quezon by working together for the restoration of Quezon City as the country's capital city."

— Mayor Simon

Together ... we do it better

QUEZON CITY Ito... Tulong-Tulong Tayo!

THE QUEZON CITY GOVERNMENT

G.C. PUBLIC LIBRARY
LOCAL HISTORY

Quezon City: Then and now



ON MARCH 18, 1949 President Elpidio Quirino received the report on the master plan of the Capital City from Juan Arellano, chairman and manager of the Capital City Planning Commission (CCPC). Looking on are then Mayor Ponciano Bernardo, Executive Secretary Secretary Teodoro Evangelista, Ernesto Rufino, Manuel Mañosa, Salvador Araneta and C.H. Concio, CCPC executive secretary.

(From Page 13)

a lot of 1,451 square meters, with a two-story house thrown in, for P36,000. This was in 1950, when houses of former officials and personnel of the War Damage Commission, headed by a Waring and ex-Sen. Francisco A. Delgado, were auctioned off after the commission's work was through. Today, the lots in Heroes Hills could easily sell for P5,000 per square meter.

The transfer of the University of the Philippines from Ermita to Quezon City, as well as the erection of buildings for agriculture, land reform, etc. draw thousands of families like a magnet from Manila and elsewhere. UP students today who also live in QC have a much easier time commuting than those living in Manila.

Phenomenal

Indeed, compared to Manila, Cebu, Iloilo and other cities established during the Spanish regime, the growth of Quezon City may be considered phenomenal. In only three decades or so, Quezon City has grown into a vast metropolis. Shopping malls, banks, schools and colleges, commercial establishments – and, yes, places of entertainment – figuratively "dance cheek to cheek" with affluent homes. Quezon City's roads, originally thought to be wide enough for motor traffic are now crowded at all hours of the day and night. Cubao, particularly, attracts thousands of young people who can spend a while day just gazing at window displays, cinema lobbies, shopping centers. Only Divisoria is probably as crowded as Cubao, but Quezon City residents find it hard to go to Divisoria because of traffic congestion.

In his grave, Manuel L. Quezon must be marveling at how his dream of a Barrio Obrero in Diliman had been transformed to a reality of an over-populated metropolis, with cars inching on its avenues bumper to bumper, and the price of land and houses going up every 24 hours.

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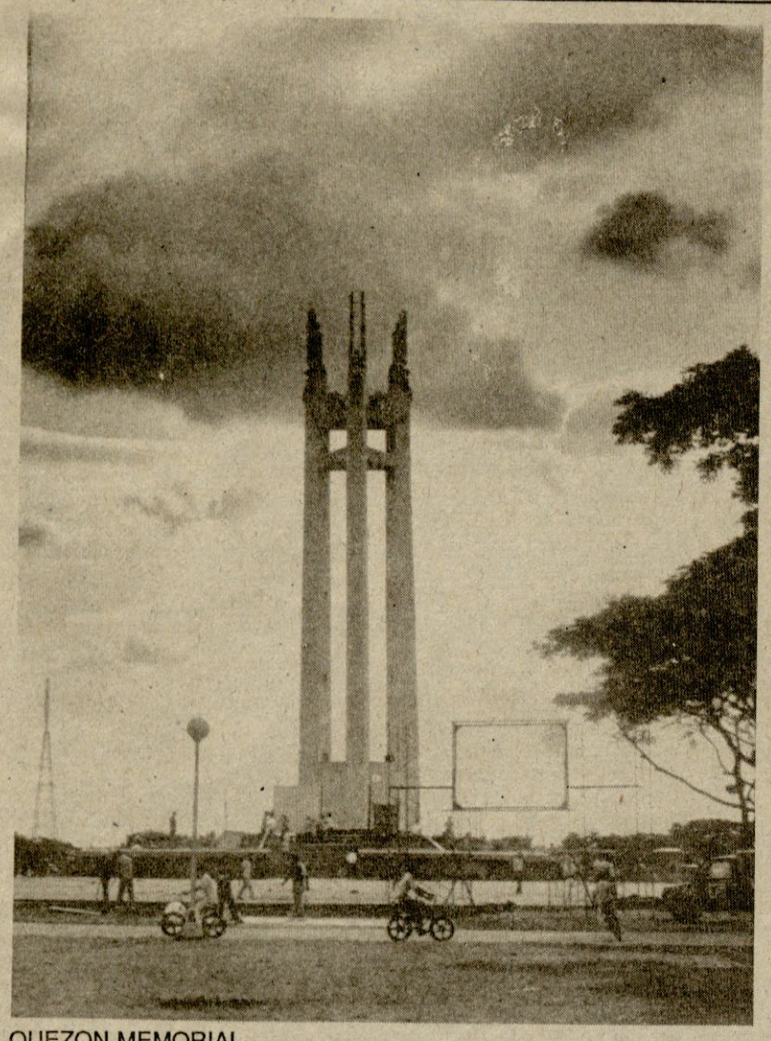
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THE WESTERN POLICE DISTRICT

Brig. Gen. Alfredo Lim
Superintendent

Col. Ernesto Diokno
Deputy Superintendent



QUEZON MEMORIAL

From cogon land to a premier city

By GRACE Q. BANGAOIL

FIFTY years ago, a great Filipino statesman dreamed of creating a "magnificent capital city" out of the vast cogon land and rice paddies to the north of Manila.

The dreamer envisioned that city to be the seat of Filipino government, a showcase of national culture and spirit, and a "dignified concentration of human life, aspiration, endeavors and achievement."

Thus, Quezon City was born on October 12, 1939, with the enactment of Commonwealth Act 502 by the National Assembly and was named after its visionary, President Manuel L. Quezon.

The city grew and developed as envisioned by its founder whose ideas were crystallized by the short-lived Frost Plan, and later by the Capital City Planning Commission created in 1948.

In 1949, or 10 years after the city's foundation, the masterplan was laid based on the same concept and direction, providing not only residential lots for the small employes but also jobs to be offered by the constitutional offices that were to be built.

Master plan

The master plan was partially implemented. As years passed by, the city administration followed a zoning ordinance that directed, controlled and regulated the city's development.

Unfortunately, Quezon did not live long enough to see the emergence of a city "victorious from the trials and bitter strifes of a distracted world."

From the cogon land and rice paddies emerged a premier city, although still far from the ideal city which Quezon dreamed of.

How close has the city to realizing those golden dreams, however, is measured by the progress the city made from the days of cogon wilderness and rice paddies to a relatively wealthy home of 1.89 million residents today.

But while wide cogon lands in the subsurbs have been developed into affordable and comfortable subdivisions for thousands of Metro Manila government and private workers, many residents are still without a home.

However, Mayor Brigido Simon Jr. assured that "the dreams of Quezon have not been given up."

Housing program

To prove this, he cited an ongoing massive socialized housing program for the poor and low-income families, and a comprehensive development program designed to rectify zonal anomalies perpetrated during the past unplanned development of the city.

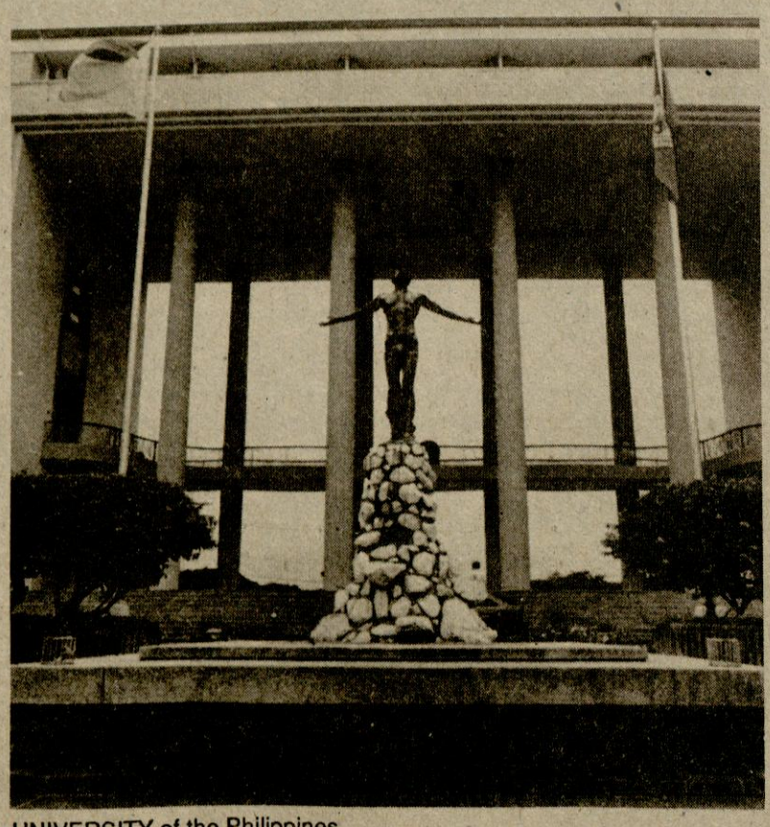
Simon also unveiled a plan that by the end of this century, two mini-industrial estates will rise in Quezon City to generate about 50,000 jobs for the estimated two million residents.

Asian countries, especially Japan, South Korea and Taiwan already agreed to open direct trade ties with the city following a trade mission last August sponsored by the city government and the Quezon City Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

These industrial estates will concentrate on medium and small scale industries.

Towards the dream of Quezon of having the city as the capital, the city council has passed a resolution urging Congress to enact a bill restoring the Quezon City as the capital of the country.

With all these bright plans, the city may be able to achieve the "Quezonian dream," even after 50 long years.



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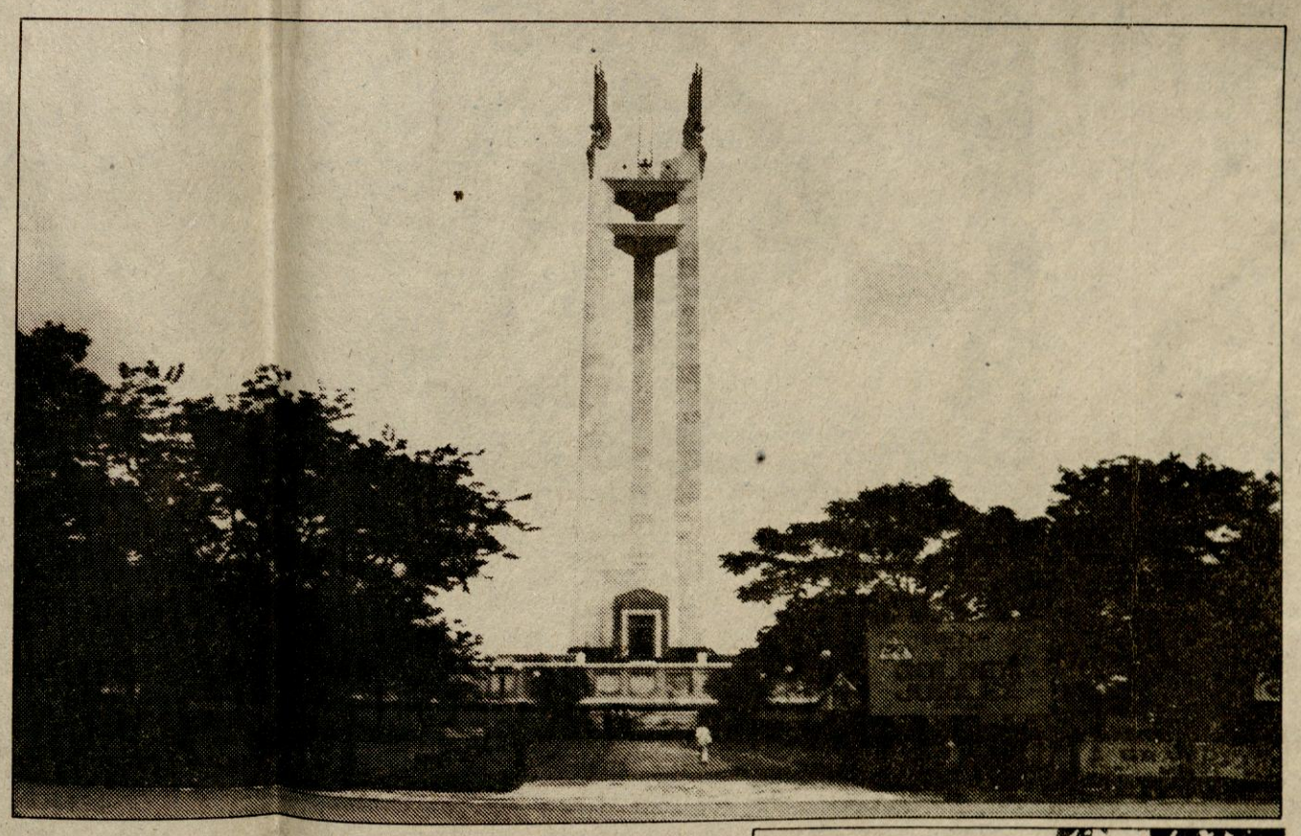
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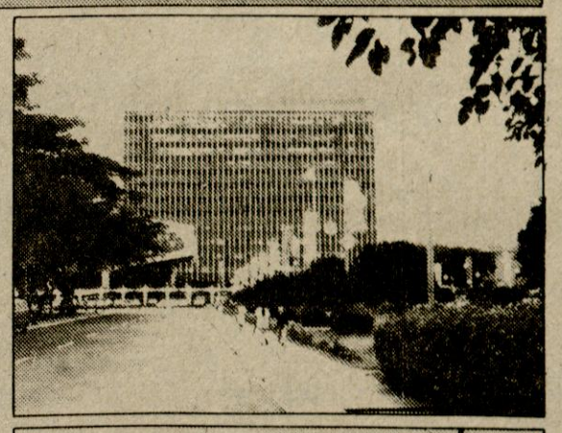
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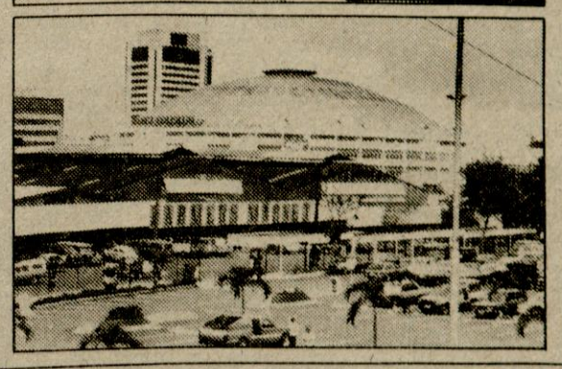
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on its Golden Jubilee



"I dream of a capital city that, politically, shall be the seat of the national government; aesthetically, the showplace of the nation — a place that thousands of people will come to visit as the epitome of the culture and the spirit of the country; socially, a dignified concentration of human life, aspirations, endeavors and achievements; and economically, as a productive, self-contained community."

— Manuel L. Quezon





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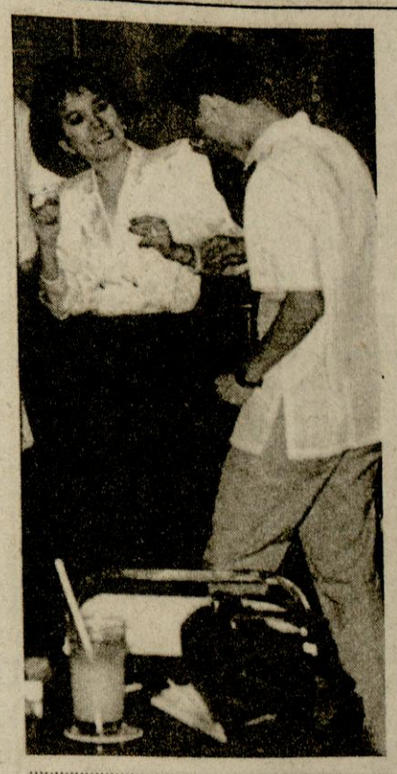
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SKOAL AD

Food, fun for leisure people





COUNCILOR Cielito "Mahal" del Mundo at Bistro RJ; street music and dancing.

BY DANNY MARAMBA

UNTIL the 50's there was nary a place for the leisure people of Quezon City to go whenever the need to escape from routine came around the bend. A handful of cozy dining and sleazy entertainment outlets that went up to serve this need fell short in giving this sad state of affairs a bouyant lift. Some found this change of pace merely sitting through a movie while others in nursing a drink or two or more at some bars or lounges tucked in a cul de sac.

Visited by pangs of hunger outside their homes when unarmed with the customary baon where do they run for that 30-minute coffee break or hour-long lunch and snappy afternoon snack or light evening meal? There were nook, sidewalk, sidestreet and backstreet carinderias that dished out "home-made" concoctions that were long on basic and tasty flavors but short on imagination and presentation.

But if there was time enough to spare, fine dining and better food were then already available at specialty restaurants or soda fountains that whipped up a variety of two basic flavors – Filipino and Chinese plus a dollop of cookbook-lifted continental cuisine.

There were D & E and Tres Hermanas along Quezon Boulevard with their popular countryside cuisine plus Ma Mon Luk with its siomai/siopao and noodle preparations. Moving deeper, there was Max's at Scout Tuazon for its crisp, tender and juicy fried chicken formula that stayed since its first jump from the frying pan just after the last world war. Nearby, there was Tropical Hut along Scout Borromeo for the still very popular hamburger. Within the Cubao area, most people trooped to A & W for its frothy root beer, the free appetizers that were trown in and the foot-long hotdogs that was the talk of the town. Native delicacies and more countryside food variations were available at Aling Nena's which had every order of bibingka coming with a free cup of tea and piping hot were the food from big Little Quiapo.

Expansion

The accelerated expansion and growth of similar establishments came in the next decade spearheaded by a colossal project that took the shape of a big dome – the Araneta Coliseum. Soon after, the surrounding areas rose from the ground into shopping malls and plazas which also housed food shops that introduced the fast foods era and other entertainment areas.

Towards the end of the 60's there emerged an entertainment strip along Timog Avenue which had a generally unwholesome composite profile due to the proliferation of bars and cocktail lounges that produced titillating shows which were lit up and emblazoned on their marquees as "bold." Of late, the number of these establishment have been considerably stripped down for their popularity has waned. The advent of discos and theater lounges cleared the air and paved the way for an era of good, clean fun in the entertainment scene.

Theater lounge

One very popular theater lounge in the city is Bistro RJ, the bastion of live rock-n'-roll music played by the meanest bands in the country every day of the week. The bistro has been a consistent crowd drawer since it opened that discos, which generally make a killing only on weekends, can only sigh. Crediting the bistro's steady pull to the "main man" Ramon "RJ" Jacinto is not foolish because RJ's appeal dates back to the 60's when he and his band THE RIOTS stirred the youth scene into a frenzy with their own brand of good old rock-n'-roll music.

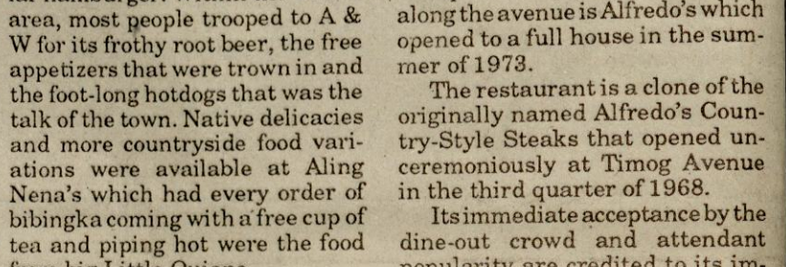
The growing excitement and wholesome trend wound its way along the Tomas Morato foodstrip which today maintains a reputation as one of the finest dining center in the metropolis. Already, plans are underway for the establishment of other restaurants in the area and sidewalk cafes that are envisioned to line the foodstrip from stem to stern.

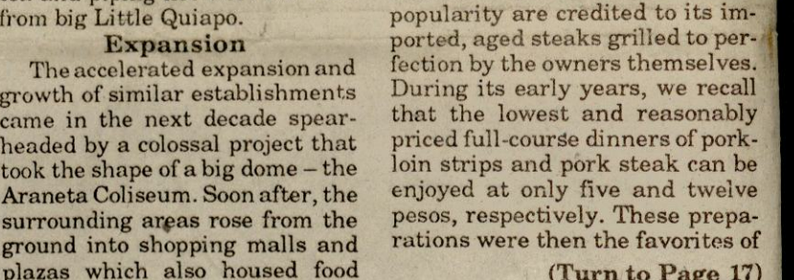
A premier specialty restaurant along the avenue is Alfredo's which opened to a full house in the summer of 1973.

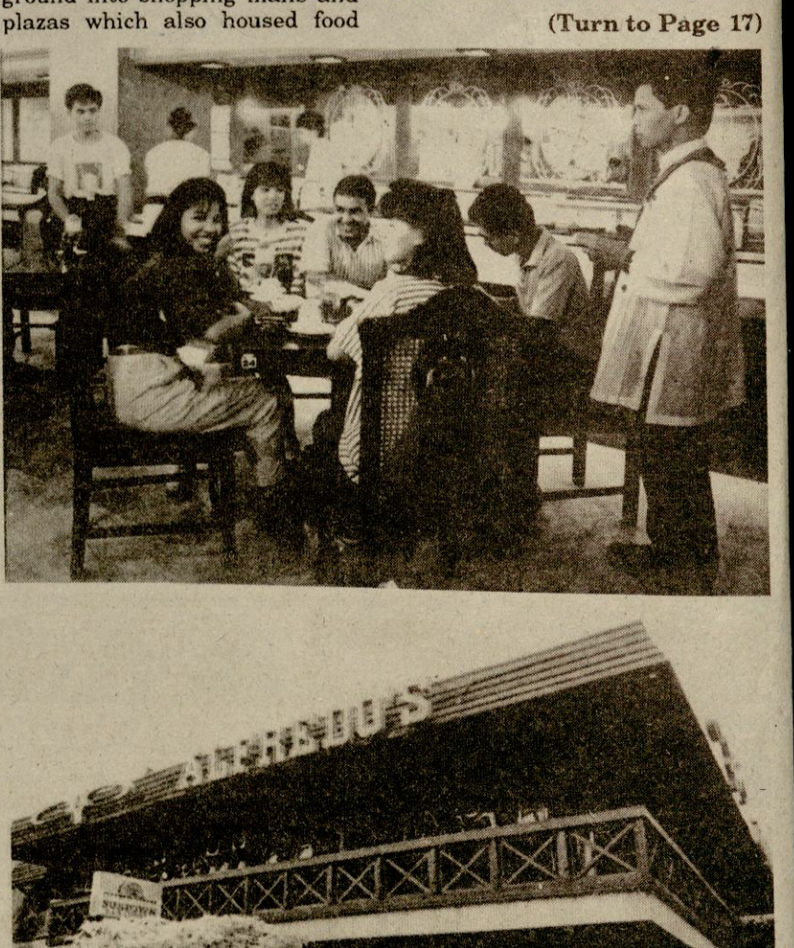
The restaurant is a clone of the originally named Alfredo's Country-Style Steaks that opened unceremoniously at Timog Avenue in the third quarter of 1968.

Its immediate acceptance by the dine-out crowd and attendant popularity are credited to its imported, aged steaks grilled to perfection by the owners themselves. During its early years, we recall that the lowest and reasonably priced full-course dinners of pork-loin strips and pork steak can be enjoyed at only five and twelve pesos, respectively. These preparations were then the favorites of

(Turn to Page 17)







FOOD and fun at Kamayan (top), Alfredo's and Mario's.

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TRIPLE-V pearl

Micro-businesses are thriving in the city

MICRO-businesses are thriving well in Quezon City.

Many enterprising residents are quick to spot a business opportunity offered by the neighborhood full of young and upwardly mobile professionals and students.

No wonder residents of this city are considered more prosperous than other Metro Manilans. According to the National Statistics Office, the average income of one family was P5,450 a month in 1985, more than 50 per cent higher than the P3,282 poverty line set by the National Economic and Development Authority for that year.

In one upper-middle class subdivision for instance, one business-minded college professor is selling *tocino, tapa* and other cured meat which she advertises by distributing leaflets to fellow villagers.

She hires a boy to stuff the leaflets containing the items and their prices into the letter boxes of the neighbors, and assures fast delivery–right at your door. She earns enough from this to buy her children some holiday luxuries.

One housewife saw to augment the family income by catering dinner and weekend meals of several boarders in the neighborhood for only P15 a meal.

Two universities

She never runs out of customers because of the thousands of students from the provinces enrolled in the nearby big universities and colleges. The Diliman-Loyola Heights area alone boasts of two prominent universities, the University of the Philippines and the Ateneo de Manila, in addition to several colleges and technical schools.

Some observers attribute the growth of micro-business and underground economy in Quezon City to the growing population of these schools. Students who usually have limited money to spend but are potential customers for necessary items like food.

Ice cream, fruits and other food vendors have an assured market of ever-hungry young people just outside school premises. When lucky, they may even be able to get a space inside the compound that is accessible to buyers.

In Quezon City, creative young professionals can earn their living without looking for an eight-to-five job in Makati.

Publishing

A newly-married couple living in one of those new villages on the outskirts of the city have set up a mini printing and publishing services proprietorship. They started business with only one computer, lots of guts and prayer, and hopes of making it big.

They advertised in the neighborhood that they are accepting all sorts of printing works–from typing research papers and theses, printing calling cards and flyers, to publishing school and association papers. The business is still considered "peanuts" but they do not have to go to Makati to earn a decent living.

Ditto with a talented young lady who goes around the neighborhood, offering tutorial services to students and foreign students.

With business opportunities practically in every corner, Quezon City residents are able to earn a little earnings here and there to augment the family income, thereby enjoying a relatively higher standard of living despite the low level of investments coming into the city.

– GQB

Fun and food for everyone

(From Page 16)

the young crowd when they go out on dates or even when dining solo soon as they saved enough from their pin money.

After twenty years, the time-tested family heritage remains strong at Alfredo's and will continue until there are enough steaks to grill.

In 1981, Mario's introduced palates to its cuisine of major continental repertoire along the same foodstrip. This was a decade after it opened in Baguio City and seven years after its transportatin to the lowlands at the Makati Avenue foodstrip. In 1986, the popular flavors of Mario's were exported to the United States under the roof of another trade name – Calesa at North Tustin Avenue, Sta. Ana, Orange County, California.

And if these are not enough testimonials to the popularity of wholesome entertainment and culinary quality of many such establishment in the city, consider the endless stream of guests that troop and pack them to capacity at any given day and the fact that they draw more revenue than some of their counterparts in other entertainment areas and foodstrips all over town.



The 60s

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Creation of Metro Quezon planned

METRO QUEZON, the new metropolis named after Quezon City's founder, President Manuel L. Quezon, is already on the drawing board.

Metro Quezon will be composed of Quezon City, Marikina, three towns of Rizal – San Mateo, Antipolo and Montalban – plus one town of Bulacan, San Jose del Monte.

Mayors of Quezon City's neighboring towns have favored the creation of the new metropolis to provide a basis for a more unified planning and implementation of urban development programs and projects.

Metro Quezon, however, is not an attempt to create a political subdivision similar to Metro Manila, Quezon City Economic Development Board secretary Emilio Festejo pointed out.

The growth of the metropolis has always been radial from the heart of Manila to Quezon City and outwards to Kalookan, Mandaluyong and Pasig. But somehow, the development of areas in the northern and northeastern parts of the metropolis has been stymied because of the lack of financial capabilities on the part of the local governments and the lack of financial support from the national government, Festejo explained. "Now, we want to extend urban developments outside the fringes of Quezon City to such areas like Montalban, Marikina and San Jose del Monte, with the participation of the private sector."

The Quezon City government is preparing the blueprint for Metro Quezon, the second step toward the creation of the new metropolis. "We have already convinced everyone that Metro Quezon is a viable and attractive proposition," the QCEDB secretary said. "Now we are contracting the private urban planners group who will prepare the blueprint for Metro Quezon. The blueprint will show the major industrial sites, the marketing centers, housing sites, as well as the road networks."

After mapping out the blueprint, the Quezon City government will invite private developers to implement the initial projects needed. Mayor Brigido Simon has already started to sell the idea to business groups, such as those of Filipino-Chinese businessmen, developers and foreign investors, and the feedback has been positive.

The new metropolis will be expansive. Quezon City alone is almost one-fourth of Metro Manila in terms of land area and population. Metro Manila is composed of four cities and 13 municipalities.

Quezon City's area of 15,359 hectares is as large as the combined areas of Manila, Pasay City, Kalookan City and Valenzuela.

Under the proposed Metro Quezon plan, the Payatas area in Quezon City will be transformed into the economic hub of the new metropolis. Payatas, home of some 16,000 squatters, is 10 kilometers from the Quezon City Hall.

The plan also includes a socialized housing project in Payatas. The city government is building 5,000 housing units to benefit 88,000 squatter families this year alone. Simon said about 40,000 units will be completed by 1992.

The United Nations will provide technical assistance for the Payatas Estate Housing.

The development of Payatas is also aimed at speeding up the setting up of commercial and industrial zones in the area, as well as public hospitals, health centers, schools, parks and playgrounds, sports centers, and even a cemetery.

To be sure, the development of the area will also generate more employment opportunities.

City officials have asked the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. to provide telephone facilities in the area to further speed up its development.

A circumferential road called C-06 will link the Metro Quezon areas to facilitate the inflow and outflow of goods to and from the new metropolis. – EA

Ambitious road project bared

By EMMIE ABADILLA

SOON, all 600 kilometers of Quezon City's major roads will be concrete and its "missing national roads" will finally materialize.

Quezon City Mayor Brigido Simon's ambitious concrete road project alone will cost some P2 billion. It will be implemented in phases and funded by tax credits, loans and bond flotations.

City Engineer Norberto Cabigao revealed that big enterprises in the city will be tapped for the tax credit scheme for the project. He said the big firms will be encouraged to advance their taxes for five years.

By paying their taxes in advance, the firms can save a substantial amount of money, as the payments will be pegged at current tax rates, Cabigao explained. On the average, taxes increase at the rate of 10 per cent per year.

As an added come-on, the paying firm can choose a infrastructure project to "sponsor" and the taxes it advances will be channeled to this project. Thus, the taxpayer can have the benefit of seeing where his money goes.

Mayor Simon intends to raise P200 million for 1990, through the tax credit scheme which has already been submitted to the Department of Finance for final approval.

Quezon City is likewise negotiating for a P500-million loan to fund its infrastructure projects. The loan, which will be repaid over a 10-year period, will be sourced from the fund of the Department of Public Works and Highways for aids to local governments.

The move to convert major roads to concrete will save the city at least P10 million a year, said Cabigao. The sum represents the maintenance cost of asphalt roads. Concrete roads, although initially expensive, need no maintenance.

In all, of the P1 billion it expects to earn from revenues, Quezon City has allocated P300 million for infrastructure development in 1990.

Meanwhile, the city plans to cut on the cost of asphalt for the sidestreets it has to maintain by borrowing for its use the DPWH's batching plant, instead of sourcing its asphalt requirements outside.

In line with his move to decongest and improve the city's traffic system, Simon is also bent on opening 26 kilometers of "missing" vital roads within his term.

The missing national roads include Republic Ave., conceptualized since the 1950s but existing up to now only as imaginary dotted lines on the city's map; Congressional Ave., Mindanao Ave., Luzon Ave., Regalado Ave., Katipunan Ave. Extension and Visayas Ave.

Semi-rural

If these wide avenues are opened, the semi-rural portions of Quezon City will developed Cabigao said.

Republic Ave. will be a six-kilometer road, 98 meters wide. The city government envisions the road with four lanes at the right and four lanes at the left, flanked on both sides by commercial stalls and with a big shopping mall midway down the stretch. The



CITY Engineer Norberto Cabigao directs patching of city streets.

sight will be similar to the Shoe-Mart Complex on North Epifanio delos Santos Ave.

The eight-lane road will span 32 meters. The remaining 66-meter space will be leased to private businessmen who can shoulder the cost of building the road. The construction cost of the avenue is placed at P150 million.

Simon stressed that the private sector, in accordance with a recent government policy, should be allowed to participate in infrastructure development especially in projects which the government cannot pursue due to lack of funds.

Simon said the move to improve major thoroughfares is imperative considering the rapid increase of housing projects in Quezon City. He added that the development of the city roads will benefit not only the residents of the city, but also those of neighboring towns and cities.

Turnover

At the end of the lease period of the commercial establishments along the avenue, the structures will be turned over to the city government. The latter, in turn, has the option to lease the same to the original lot owners.

During the lease period, Quezon City can realize P50 million a year in rental fees and taxes from the participating business establishments.

To support its road program, Quezon City has likewise embarked on a P30-million flood control program. The objective is to make Quezon City flood-free within the next three years.

Railway system to ease traffic congestion

THE mayors of Quezon City and San Jose del Monte in Bulacan and a Singaporean engineering and management development firm are working on a plan to construct an $80-million (P1.65-billion) interurban railway.

The Quezon City government is also looking into the Singaporean group's proposal to install either a $195-million (P4.095-billion) Guided Rail Transit (GRT) system or a $180-million (P3.78-billion) Light Rail Transit (LRT) system to solve the traffic congestion problem along Epifanio de los Santos Ave. (Edsa).

The proposed interurban railway would link Quezon City to San Jose del Monte. From San Jose del Monte, it would traverse Novaliches, Fairview, Cubao and Edsa up to Camp Crame.

Quezon City Mayor Brigido Simon has invited the Singaporeans to build the 25-kilometer railway which is envisioned to transport some 20 million passengers a year, or 60,000 passengers a day.

Railway

If the railway project pushes through, San Jose del Monte would be fully developed and it could be on its way to becoming a city.

Quezon City, for its part would be able to relocate some of its two million squatters to San Jose del Monte where they would have good prospects of employment with the improved accessibility of the area to business.

Already, the government is assisting in the procurement of sequestered lots in San Jose del Monte to be converted to a socialized housing sites.

Traffic

On top of the interurban railway plan, Quezon City is also considering other transit system to ease the EDSA traffic problem. Normally, people spend up to five hours a day waiting for rides and traveling along EDSA. Many workers spend two hours or more getting to work and another two hours or more getting home after work.

The Singaporean group proposed to construct either a GRT or an LRT to solve the acute traffic problem.

The GRT requires a concrete trackway plus a guide rail, unlike the LRT which only requires ordinary railway tracks. Both transit systems can carry over 300,000 passengers per day per direction.

The Singaporean group pointed out in its proposal that almost every major city in the world already has, or is planning, its own GRT/LRT system. However, it cautioned the government from building a transit system similar to a "national monument," a syndrome of undoing of planners and authorities in other countries, who built extremely expensive transit systems in the first flush of enthusiasm for the GRT/LRT.

These planners and authorities, the Singaporean group explained, burdened themselves with heavy debts and discovered that although a fare structure acceptable to the traveling public could pay for the annual running cost of the system, there was no way to recover the capital cost of the project.

Expenses

To cover both operating and capital cost, the government can build commercial and even residential facilities, such as high-rise offices and residential units over the stations. The government can then derive an assured additional income from rentals. Unfortunately, in the case of EDSA, this solution may not be applicable, the group said.

Safety should also be a primary consideration in transit systems, it stressed. Hence, all possible efforts must be made to avoid building "skytrains" or going underground.

Should Quezon City opt for an LRT system, the Singaporeans offered good quality LRT coaches with life expectancy of at least 15 years. These coaches run on rail tracks of the same gauge as those used by Philippine National Railways trains. The operation and maintenance costs of these coaches, however, fare about 60 per cent more than those of the GRT system. However, if the city government would opt for a GRT system, all the vehicles would be new.

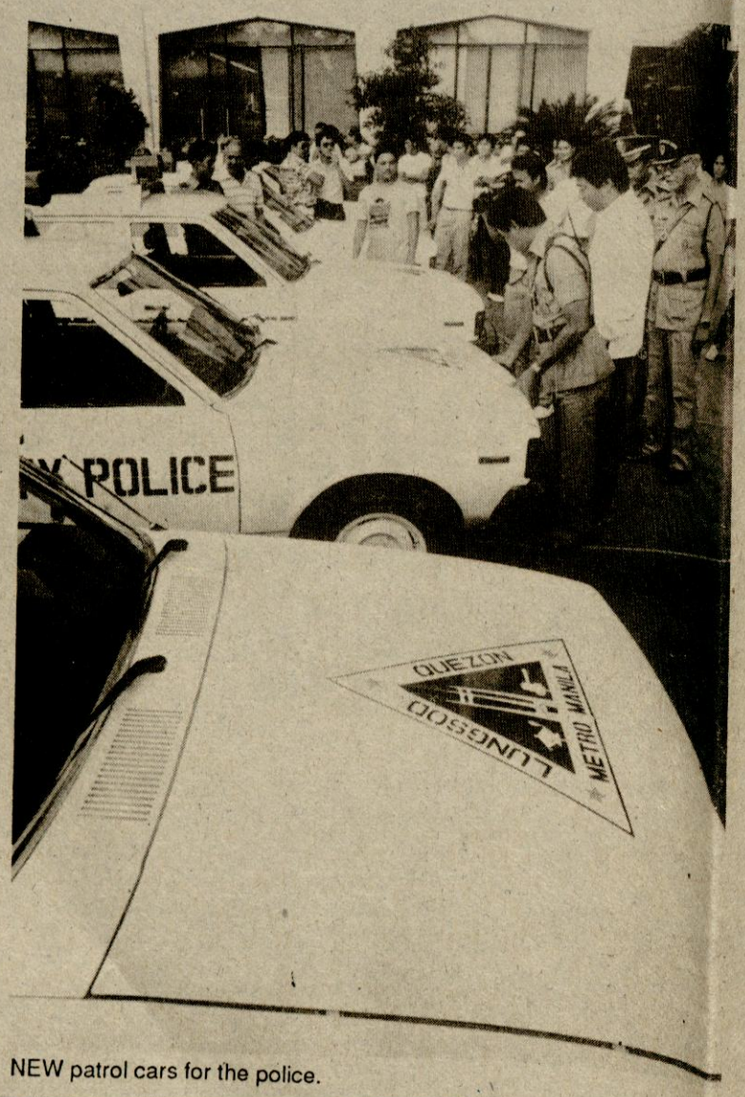
EDSA plan

Before any of the two transit systems could be constructed, however, the government must provide a center railway along EDSA, or two railways – one on each side of EDSA.

It should also permit flyovers over EDSA at all crossings, except one over which the GRT/LRT would travel, or even close off certain roads. The Singaporean group foresees little difficulty in installing the transportation system, provided the problem of the roads crossing EDSA can be solved.

If the government can satisfy the requirements of the transit system by December 1989, the construction project can start in early 1990 and the system can be in commercial operation by mid-1991 or mid-1992 at the latest.

– EA



NEW patrol cars for the police.

Keeping peace and order

By ORLY P. ORTIZ

THE Quezon City police station of the Northern Police District has an operational land area of 166.22 square kilometers and about 2,225,214 inhabitants. It is bounded by Montalban, San Mateo and Marikina in the East; Pasig and Mandaluyong in the south; San Juan and Manila in the west and Kalookan and San Jose del Monte, Bulacan in the north.

The Quezon City police station has a total force of 91 officers 1,526 non-commissioned officers; 116 civilian employes and 50 police aides. The local police force is headed by Col. Rodolfo M. Garcia, a lawyer, with Lt. Col. Godofredo G. Ruiz, as deputy station commander.

At present, the Quezon City police has nine sub-stations to carry out its assigned task of maintaining peace and order and prevent the commission of crimes. These are the Cubao sub-station under Capt. Augusto Perlada; Galas sub-station headed by Capt. Elmo San Diego; La Loma sub-station under Capt. Roberto Ganias; Baler sub-station headed by Capt. Renato Bugarin; Anonas sub-station led by Capt. Oscar Abaya, Novaliches sub-station under Capt. Enrique Robles; Fairview sub-station headed by Maj. Raul Medina; Sangandaan sub-station under Capt. Arthur Navarette and the newly created Proj. 4 sub-station headed by Capt. Benjamin Fortuna. Each sub-station can be reached through telephones and are inter-linked with various police units in the city through a VHF radio network.

Garcia is assisted by a coordinating staff composed of Lt. Col. Igmidio Cahanding, administrative branch chief; Lt. Col. Zorobabel Laureles, chief of the operations branch; and Capt. Alexander Rivera, chief of the services branch.

Maj. Pepito Campos is the city's police chief of detectives with Lt. David Noora as deputy. The two are assisted by Lt. Col. Fluto Casayuran, homicide chief; Lt. Jaime Peralta, chief of the theft and robbery section; Lt. Lolito Ramos, chief of the general assignment section; and Lt. Alex Casanova, chief of the anti-carnapping unit.

Capt. Cesar J. Dalanon, a bemedalled police officer, is the incumbent jail warden, looking after the welfare of 562 males and 40 female inmates, while Capt. Cesar Agacer heads the warrant and sub-poena section which serves some 42,138 warrants and subpoenas yearly.

Tasked with intelligence data gathering as well as special operations is Maj. Rogelio G. Rosales, chief of the intelligence and special operations division. The bomb disposal unit as well as the special weapons and tactics unit headed by Sgt. Philip Buencamino is also under the ISOD.

Lt. Carlos Marquises Jr. heads the police criminal records identification bureau tasked with the issuance of police clearances as well as identification of criminals unidentified and dead persons through fingerprints.

Tasked with the duty of "trouble shooting" is the mobile patrol division headed by Maj. Nicanardo Mendoza with Lt. Eduardo Tabao, as deputy. They have a fleet of eight old Toyota cars and 30 1987 Lancer cars acquired by the city government through Mayor, Brigido R. Simon Jr. Only 28 of here 30 are being used as two cars serves as back-up for the security of Simon while the third is being used by Brig. Gen. Edgar Dula Torres, superintendent of the Northern Police District. The fourth is being used by Col. Emiliano Templo.

Maj. Celestino Leano is the traffic station commander with Capt. Jose Magno as deputy. Working under them are 120 traffic policemen and 50 traffic aides.

Lt. Antonio Diaz, heads the city anti-narcotics unit. Diaz is credited for the arrest and busting of big drug pushers in the city.

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The beginnings of Quezon City

(From Page 20)

I had to tie my working hours in Malacañang, to coincide with those of Mr. Vargas as I was in the Executive Building from 10:00 a.m. to 1:30 or 2:00 p.m., and from 6:30 to 10:00 p.m. at night those being the working hours of the Secretary to the President.

The work was heavy, the work hours were harrowing, but I was proud of my added duties.

I had hardly sat one morning about 7:00 o' clock at my desk in the Quezon City Hall, when our offices had already assumed a certain degree of settled routine some six months after its organization, when the telephone rang. It was the Malacañang switchboard and said the President wanted to talk to me. I was wondering why he should want to talk to me and so early in the morning. Then over the wire the President's voice sang out "Pedrosa!" he called. I answered with alacrity, "Yes, sir, good morning, sir." "Good Morning!" he said. "Will you come right away!" I answered, "Yes, sir." And he hung up.

I took my car and drove forthwith to Malacañang. I am sure I was paying little attention to my driving as I was trying to recall carefully all that I might done, and was analysing what boner I might have committed, to have been summoned that early and by him personally.

The President was on the west porch of the Palace, and with him were Speaker Yulo, Secretary Abad Santos and Secretary Vargas. "Come, Pedrosa, have your breakfast," said the President. "Thank you sir," I answered, "I have had my breakfast," "Well, sit down," he said and motioned to a waiter to give me coffee.

Without any further preliminaries, he said: "What is this I hear that you are offering ten centavos per square meter for the properties to be cut by the Aurora Boulevard extension?"

"Mr. President," I said, "that is twice the price for which we bought the People's Homesite, and five times the assessment for tax purposes that the land has." The Aurora Boulevard extension referred to was an extension of the then Aurora (now Magsaysay Boulevard), and merging with N. Domingo Street and its extension to Marikina a little before where the Magsaysay Boulevard now intersects with Highway 54 or Epifanio de los Santos Avenue. The area affected was part of the Magdalena Estate, several sections of which had been converted into sub-divisions. The sub-division lots were being sold at from P2.00 to P5.00 per square meter, at that time!

I had been having stormy meetings with the various lot owners in the sub-division the new Aurora Boulevard extension was cutting, because of the obviously low price per square meter I was able to offer compared with the purchase price the subdivision lot purchasers had paid the Magdalena Estate for their home lots. In one of those meetings, Mr. Jesus Dineros of Insular Life was the principal spokesman, "We are not asking for a profit," he was saying. "Just pay us the same amount as that which we have paid the Magdalena Estate."

"That may be so," said the President, "but where have you heard of subdivision lots in that section being sold at ten centavos?" I answered that in expropriations of private for public uses we were limited by law to paying a price equal to the assessed valuation for tax purposes regardless of commercial value. I was offering more, much more than the assessment of the properties involved. I said the assessment was at P200.00 per hectare, or two (P0.02) centavos per square meter.

"They have not been reassessed since 1902," I continued, "and that 1902 assessment classifies these properties either as 'inculto' or as 'zacatal,' and, in the latter case, the assessment is P300.00 per hectare or P0.03 per square meter."

"Is that what it is?" the President asked, and his eyebrows were beginning to go up and down. "Do you mean to say that Doña Magdalena has been paying all these years taxes on an assessment of P0.02 per square meter and selling the same property at P2.00 to P5.00 per square meter?"

"It amounts to that," I lamely answered.

"Joe," he said, addressing Mr. Yulo, then Speaker of the then unicameral National Assembly, "I want you to pass a law which shall declare that in expropriation proceedings the assessed valuation of property shall be prima facie evidence of its commercial value."

That was the romance and the birth of Commonwealth Act No. 520. Secretary Joe Abad as he was often called, to distinguish him from Speaker Joe Yulo, offered to help me so that the lot owners affected could be reimbursed the price they had paid for their lots.

But this is advancing the story, I must tell you of our first police force.

One late afternoon, about 6:00 o'clock, when our City was only three or four days old, I was preparing to leave Quezon City for Malacañang. We had taken the old and dilapidated building of the Afable family which had housed their former Manila City Hospital as our City Hall. Behind the main building was an equally dilapidated wooden structure that had served as the former hospital's nurses' home. We had no thought of using it.

Please remember that all around then was glassland, mostly cogon. In many places talahib was luxuriant. I had about twenty-five carpenters, masons, electricians and plumbers reconstructing the main building of the erstwhile hospital and making it fit for use at our new city offices.

As Mayor Morato and I were standing at the door way of our impromptu city hall, there emerged a line of soldiers, thirty of them as I found out later, led by a Constabulary lieutenant, from behind a tall patch of talahib in the corner of what became Mrs. Nini Quezon-Avanceña's gasoline station. I believed that gasoline station is no longer there. There was no Highway 54 or Epifanio de los Santos Avenue as yet in that part of our new City crossing the old N. Domingo street that projected itself from San Juan into the Marikina road in front of our City Hall.

The lieutenant saluted my Mayor and introduced himself as 2nd Lieutenant Alfonso Torillo from Camp Crame. Mayor Morato, who could not understand and much less speak English, asked me what the men wanted. I told him they were reporting for duty. We had our brand-new police force of Quezon City together with the temporary Chief of Police, the young Constabulary lieutenant. The Mayor was getting tense. I told the lieutenant the Mayor was asking what we were supposed to do. He answered that the men were enlisted Constabulary soldiers and should be given barracks. It turned out that barracks meant also beds, blankets, pillows, mosquito nets, and on top of all food rations. And it was six o'clock in the afternoon and the night was fast coming on, the Mayor instructed me to do everything I could.

An old woman named Aling Laura was cooking the meals for our city hall carpenters and other work-men. She had her shack across the street that at that time had been christened the "June 19th Boulevard." After the war this name was abandoned and this principal avenue of Quezon City became the Quezon City segment of the circumferential road from Pasay to Caloocan called Highway 54. Now the whole road is called Epifanio de los Santos Avenue.

I called Aling Laura from her shack and inquired how much she was charging the carpenters per meal. She answered P0.25. I told her she had thirty new patrons. She was to provide meals for the Constabulary soldiers beginning that night until I would tell her to stop. She was most profuse in thanking me for the added clientele.

Meanwhile I had sent two of my Treasury clerks to Calle Tabo-ra, near the Divisoria Market, to buy 30 blankets, 30 pillows and 30 mosquito nets.

We had had our telephone line connected that very day. It should be historical fact, if history were also to record the unimportant events in life, that the first official call made from our Quezon City Hall over that telephone line was to Gil Puyat, of Gonzalo Puyat & Sons. He was a kid brother of an old friend of mine in my University days, Deogracias, who was a fraternity-fellow in the Upsilon Sigma Phi. The telephone call was to ask Gil what the price was of the iron beds displayed in their Rizal Avenue store.

He said P11.00. I told him to send thirty right away. The electrician we had, had already washed himself and was preparing for the supper to be served by the old lady. I told him to extend a light connection to the old nurses' home building.

That night, when Mayor Morato came back to see what had happened, he found that the soldiers had had their supper, each one had a brand new iron bed with mat, pillow, blanket and mosquito net to match, in place. Some who were not on duty were already preparing to go to sleep; others were reading the Liwayway.



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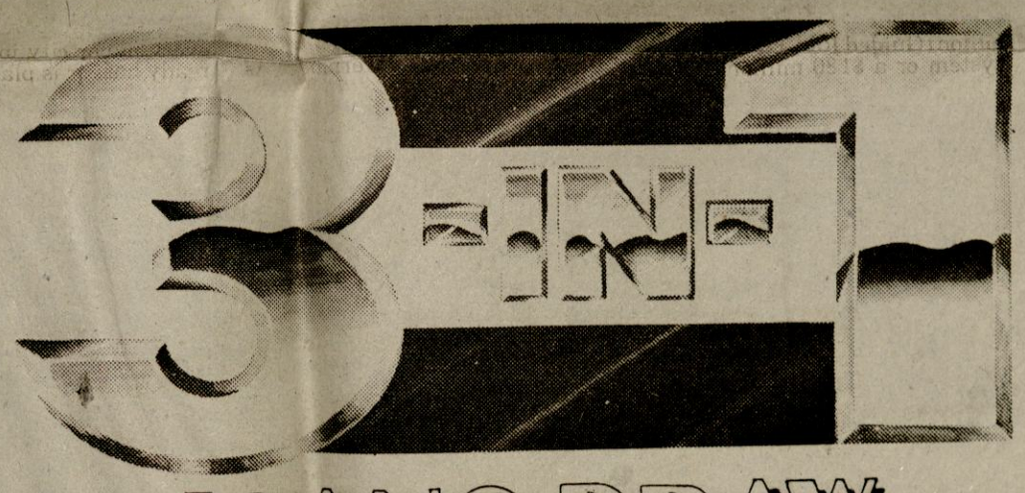
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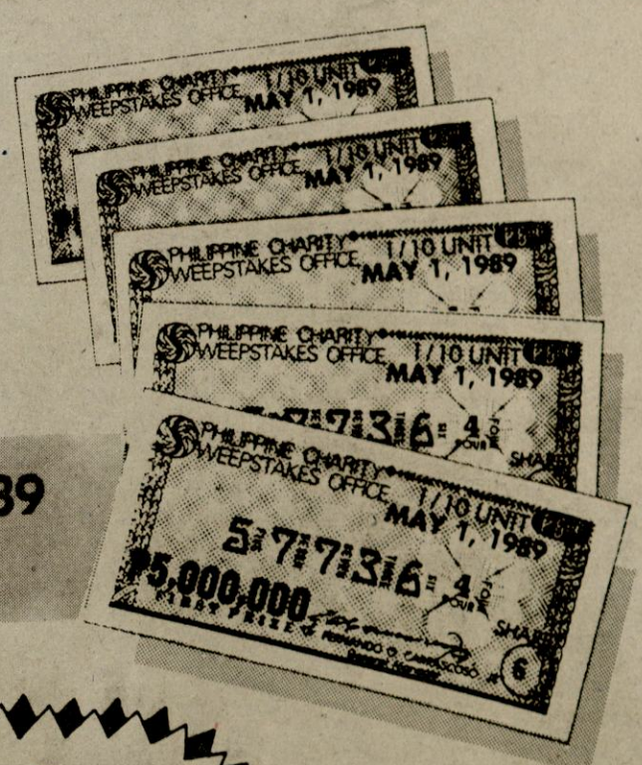
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The beginnings of Quezon City

By PIO PEDROSA

(Culled from a speech before the Thursday Club of Quezon City on the occasion of the 1974 anniversary celebration of the founding of Quezon City, at the D & E Restaurant, Quezon City – Editor).

THE year was 1939. I was financial assistant in the Office of the President of the Philippines. Meralco's Emilio Abello, later to become Executive Secretary to the President and several years afterwards Philippine Ambassador to Washington D.C., was legal assistant. A young lawyer, Felino Neri, who was later ambassador to Japan was my assistant in the allocation of export quotas under the Tydings-McDuffie Act. FEU's deceased President Teodoro Evangelista was foreign affairs assistant. Our immediate chief was your one time Quezon City Councilor, former U.P. Dean Conrado Benitez. The overall headman was of course the then "Little President" Executive Secretary Jorge B. Vargas.

The proposed national capitol of the Philippines had, as long as any one could remember, been planned to be erected on the former Wallace Field, the north portion of the Luneta extending now to Taft Avenue. The huge edifice was to face the Rizal Monument and the Bay beyond what was then called the Burnham Green. It was to be flanked at its back and right and left sides, along Taft Avenue, P. Burgos and San Luis, by five executive department buildings, all of the same plan and design, and standing side by side in a semicircle of which only two, the Finance and the Agriculture buildings, of the five proposed, had been constructed when the stop-order was given. The capitol was to be moved elsewhere.

Rumor had it that someone was said to have whispered to President Quezon that Wallace Field and Burnham Green were not a good site for the national capitol. In case of war, it was said, and the defenses at Corregidor should be unavailing, as they were unavailing when the Japanese invasion came and enemy battleships should succeed in entering Manila Bay as did Admiral Dewey, Wallace Field and Burnham Green would be the easiest targets for naval bombardment.

That was before the development of air power in World War II.

The real motive, I think, was to have a capital city that would be away from the commercial and industrial center of the country. It was desired, it was said, that the nation's capital should be a beautiful, placid,and sedate metropolis, crisscrossed by wide, tree-lined and side-walk-bordered avenues and boulevards, where the public buildings and the residential areas would be interspersed between and inside public parks, and which would, as much as possible, be free of the noise and hurly-burly of commercial and industrial traffic.

It was observed that world capitals had served, in the course of time, to encourage accelerated development of their surrounding hinterlands. Then, as in the cases of Australia, Brazil, Turkey, and others, national capitals had been moved from time to time from place to place, as a magnet to attract developmental enterprise into the areas where they would be located. It was for these reasons, it was said, that President Quezon was in constant consultation with friends about the advisability of converting either Baguio, Tagaytay, or Dansalan in Lanao to become the capital city of the Philippines.



ON APRIL 8, 1949: President Quirino, in the presence of members of the Capital City Planning Commission, signed the master plan of the Quezon City.

It would seem that the area now occupied by Quezon City offered the compromise solution. It was near enough to Manila to overcome the disadvantages of distant Baguio, Dansalan or Tagaytay; and far and wide enough to permit the development of urban areas along the lines dreamed of by the old President.

The elliptical circle where the Quezon Monument now stands was originally planned as the new site of the national capitol building. As a matter of fact, the foundations for that proposed edifice had been sunk when the last war broke out. Later, even that area – although I think it was no longer the so-called, military strategy, that motivated the move was not considered good enough. It was abandoned after the Liberation for the site near La Mesa reservoir.

The transfer of the capitol from Wallace and Burnham to Diliman, if it had truly been planned on the basis of naval strategy did not take into consideration the range of sea artillery and much less the potentials of aerial and nowadays of missile, warfare.

One evening, about the middle October, 1939, my phone in the Malacañang Executive Building rang, I was to go up to the Palace. I went up and came upon a gathering of people at the porch overlooking the Pasig. The big shots at the time, as well as the yacht "Casiana" cronies of the President, were there. Don Alejandro Roces. Mr. Jacob Rosenthal, Don Jose Paez, Health Director Eusebio D. Aguilar, Public Works Director Vicente Fragante. Mayor Tomas Morato of Calauag, and of course Mr. Vargas, Justice Abad Santos, Speaker Yulo, Mr. A. D. Williams, Mr. Abello Mr. Evangelista, Dean Benitez, Civil Service Commissioner Jose Gil, and others of the Malacañang staff were there.

My diffidence at getting into this crowd was not improved at all when, upon approaching it, Mr Vargas said: "Mr. President, here is Pedrosa."

The president looked at me from under those unstable eyebrows of his *and he said: "Oh, Pedrosa* you are treasurer. Jake here is the assessor. You teach him how to assess." He was referring to Mr. Rosenthal.

I nodded my head, not knowing what to say. Then I sat near Mr. Abello and whispered to him what I was treasurer of. Abello whispered back: "Ano ka?" he said, "You are Treasurer of Quezon City!"

Then I asked, "Where is Quezon City?" Abello said, "Oh, never mind," I persisted: "Why me? How about you?" "Why," Abello said, "don't you know? You are no talking to the City Attorney."

I said, "Oh! And who is our Mayor?" He answered, "Morato, that one!", pointing to a florid Spanish gentleman, "and Don Vicente, there, is the Vice Mayor," he added, referring to Director Fragante.

I knew mayor Morato by hearsay. He it was who, during a visit of President Quezon to Calauag, and while the President was strolling on the main street of the town, had been telling the President that sanitary conditions in the town had been improved, that there were no more pigs on the loose. Right at that very moment, a mother pig, followed by a litter of nine small pigs, very sedately emerged from one side of the street and went across right in front of the strolling President, and entered under a house on the other side.

"Look, Fabella!" the President called Health and Welfare Commissioner Jose Fabella who was with him, "Tommy says there are no more pigs on the loose in this town." Dr. Fabella laughed, to the great discomfiture and unspeakable annoyance of the Mayor Morato forthwith had the pig-catching squad with its large net out, and got the mother pig and her litter, impounded.

The Mayor's embarrassment before the President and the Health and Welfare Commissioner was nothing, however, compared to what followed. Upon reaching his house, where the President was to have merienda and to stay for the night, word was given Mayor Morato that his father-in-law, who it turned out, was the owner of the pig, was demanding that the pig an the piglets be returned to him, or else ... The poor Mayor himself had to pay the fine he had asked his municipal council to promulgate, and had the pigs returned to his father-in-law.

Mayor Morato thus became our Quezon City Mayor. Don Alejandro Roces then publisher of the T-V-T (Taliba, Vanguardia and Tribune), was appointed president of the City Council, with the Mr. A. D. Williams, the President's public works adviser, as City Secretaries. Mr. Paez, then President of the Manila Railroad, and Dr. Aguilar, Director of Health were sworn in as city councilors. The Mayor, the Vice Mayor, the City Attorney, the City Engineer, the City Health Officer, the City Assessor and the City Treasurer were ex-officio members.

As the president had intimated, Jake Rosenthal, whose previous experience was that of shoe-manufacturer in Paco, became the City Assessor. A young US Army lieutenant-colonel who was sharing the east room of the ground floor in the Malacañang Executive Building with Mr. A. D. Williams, as presidential adviser on public works, and myself, as financial assistant, barely escaped becoming the first Quezon City chief of police. His tour of duty in the Philippines under General Douglas MacArthur, then the President's adviser on the organization of the Philippine Army, had ended, and he was being transferred home. His name was Ike Eisenhower.

Mr. Manuel Diaz, formerly an engineer of the Sta. Clara Lumber Company, was the City Engineer. But the real engineer and city planner who roamed around the grasslands of the new city with President Quezon and Mayor Morato, beginning four o' clock every morning after they would have had their coffee brewed by Mayor Morato was Don Alejandro Roces. It was widely talked about that Don Tomas Morato could brew coffee better than any professional cook.

Because of my new duties as Quezon City treasurer in addition to my work in Malacañang, my working hours had to be split between the two places. I was therefore in Quezon City from seven to 10 in the morning, and again from three to six in the afternoon.

(Turn to Page 19)

Take another look at the

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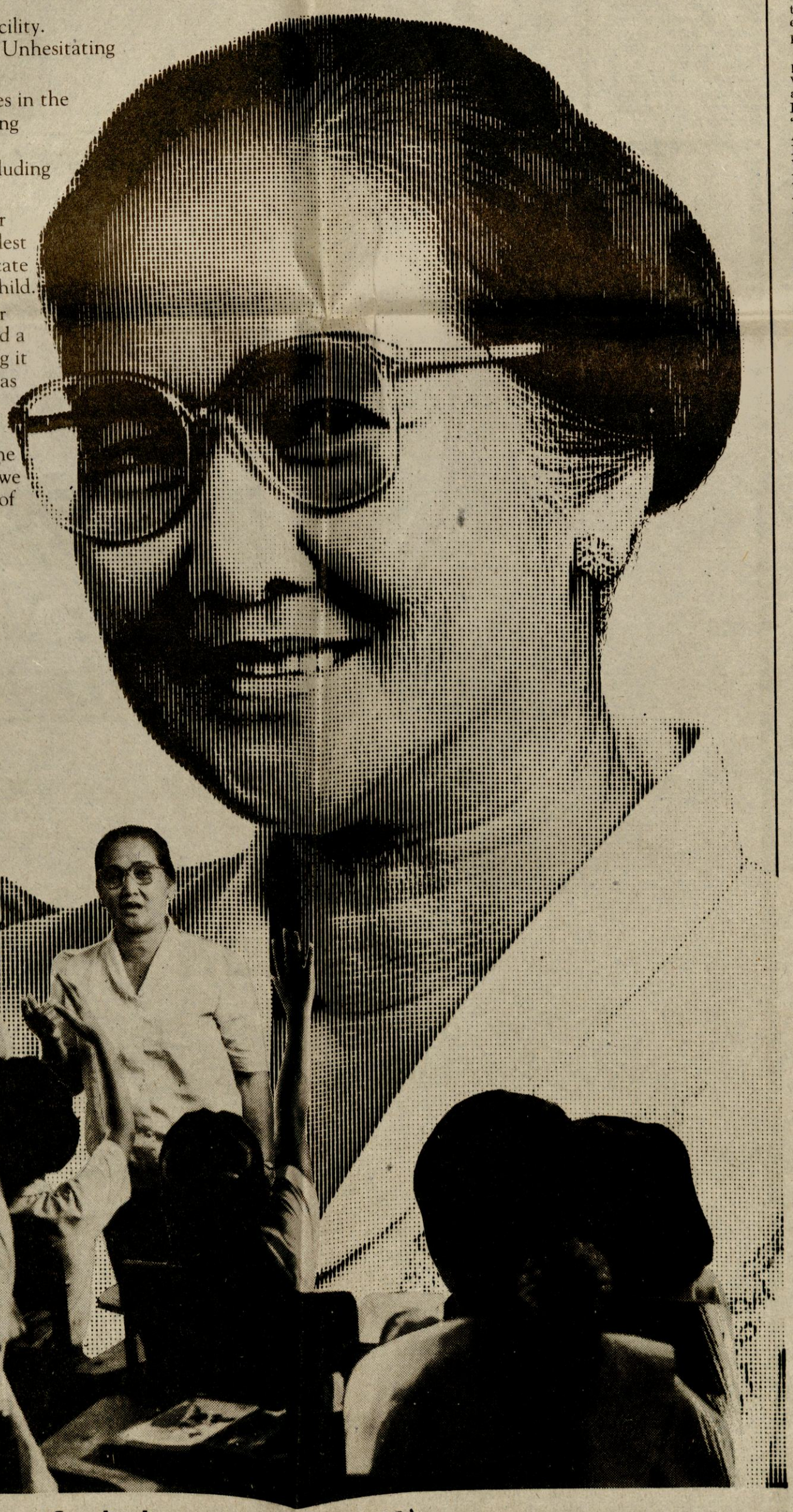
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