

## FOREWORD

The regionalization of the Philippines under the Integrated Reorganization Plan of 1972 was designed as an administrative reform measure "to promote simplicity, economy, and efficiency in the government, and thus enable it to pursue programs consistent with national goals for accelerated socio-economic development and to improve the service in the transaction of public business."<sup>1</sup>

Originally, it prescribed a more or less uniform structural and functional pattern to the eleven (later increased to 13, including the National Capital Region or "NCR") regions stipulated in the Plan. It soon became evident, however, that to follow such a uniform pattern would not be conducive to the effective pursuit of the goals stated above, owing to the fact that the people of the Philippines were not all that homogeneous and therefore the diverse natures of their needs and problems necessitated a more differentiated approach. An obvious case in point is that of the Filipino Muslims in Mindanao, whose culture and historical background were manifestly different from that of the Christian Filipinos.

By virtue of the mandate given by the results of the plebiscite/referendum on 17 April 1977, Presidential Decree 1618 was issued by President Ferdinand E. Marcos declaring Regions 9 and 12 as "autonomous regions," with a correspondingly different framework from that of the other regions in the country.

It is to this governmental change that the discussions in this issue of the *Philippine Political Science Journal* are addressed. It is a record of the papers and proceedings of what was in effect the second regional conference of the Eastern Visayas Regional Chapter of the Philippine Political Science Association (PPSA), and which was co-sponsored by the PPSA, the Regional Development Council (RDC) of Region VIII, and the Philippine Government

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<sup>1</sup>Ferdinand E. Marcos (President), Letter of Transmittal of the Integrated Reorganization Plan to the Congress of the Philippines, 3 March 1972.

Budget Administration (PAGBA). The conference was held at the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Regional Office in Palo, Leyte on 26-27 April 1980. Dubbed as the RDC-PAGBA-PPSA Dialogue, and revolving around the theme "Dimensions of Regional Autonomy," it sought to examine not only the administrative, but also the fiscal, economic, cultural-educational, social and political implications of the concept of regional autonomy in the Philippines. Specifically, among the political dimensions and issues considered were those of administrative efficiency, service delivery, political socialization and political integration, and even foreign policy.

It is hoped that the presentation of the discussions in this issue of the *PPSJ* will help to further inform our thinking regarding the alternatives that might be taken towards the attainment of the social and political development goals of Philippine society.

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Editor