

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY EAST LANSING

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS

November 2, 1959

Professor Wesley R. Fishel  
Department of Political Science  
403 Berkey Hall  
Campus

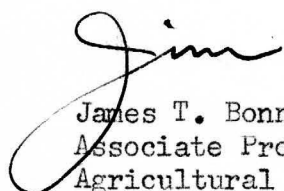
Dear Wes:

Dr. Amado A. Castro of the University of the Philippines will be on our campus from Monday, 16 November, through Friday, 20 November. I wish to confirm our telephone conversation with respect to his conferring with you. Also, I should like to provide you with information on Dr. Castro's background and as to what he will be trying to do here at Michigan State.

As we arranged by phone, Wes, you are presently scheduled to visit with Dr. Castro at lunch at 12:00 A.M., Tuesday, November 17th, meeting first in your office, 403 Berkey Hall. If for any reason it becomes impossible or inconvenient to confer with Dr. Castro at this particular time, just give me a call and we can arrange a better meeting time.

Enclosed is a brief statement of what I believe Dr. Castro is concerned with and wishes to discuss during his visit on our campus. As far as you, in particular, are concerned it would be very helpful to Dr. Castro if you could discuss with him the political and organizational problems of economic development which in your mind carry high research priority. I would also appreciate your bringing to Dr. Castro's attention any of the elements of your experience with Vietnamese problems that seem relevant to the problems of research in economic development.

Sincerely yours,

  
James T. Bonnen  
Associate Professor in  
Agricultural Economics

JTB:ar

30 October 1959

Dr. Castro's Background  
and  
The Purpose of His Visit to MSU

I apologize in advance for the looseness of this statement. Most of it I must pull from my memory and this is fairly foggy in spots.

Dr. Castro was born in Manila, Philippine Islands between 35 to 39 years ago. He is still single, I believe. He has a number of brothers and sisters who are in the professional middle class (one is an engineer, another an artist) of the Philippines. He has had a very fine educational background. His secondary education was obtained in an American Jesuit high school. He had a liberal arts oriented college education at (if my memory and spelling are correct) San Thomas, probably the finest private college (Jesuit, also) in the Philippines. Dr. Castro obtained his Ph.D. from Harvard University in 1954 or 1955. He was an excellent student of economics at Harvard. He did his thesis research with Professor Alvin Hansen on a problem of Philippine trade balance and economic growth. His primary fields of interest in economics are Economic Development, Money and Banking, and International Trade. He also presented fields in Economic Statistics, Economic History and, I believe, Industrial Organization. Other than as an undergraduate, I doubt if Dr. Castro has had much exposure to the other Social Sciences. Like many educated Philipinos of his age, Dr. Castro has been highly "Americanized" in values and outlook.

Dr. Castro returned in 1954 or 1955 to the Philippines and to his role as a professor of economics in the Department of Economics at the University of the Philippines. Since that time he has had some administrative responsibilities delegated to him by the Dean of the College of Business Administration and has, I think, participated in Philippine government trade policy affairs in addition to pursuing his teaching and research. Three years ago, Dr. Castro spent about a year (in a Southeast Asian country that presently escapes my memory) as a United Nations technical advisor.

Dr. Castro was appointed director of the Institute for Economic Development and Research, I believe when it was founded late in 1957. The purpose of the institute, its facilities and programs are outlined in the enclosed thermofax of a brochure Dr. Castro sent to me. In December 1957, the Rockefeller Foundation made a substantial grant to the Institute and in February 1959 suggested that the Director of the Institute, Dr. Castro, tour organizations of somewhat similar nature in Asia and also visit a number of universities in the United States in order "to gather experience on the work and organization of university and other economic research centers, and also to make post-graduate studies and research on the general problem of the Philippines in international trade".

Dr. Castro will be conferring with faculty at Michigan State on two general problems. The first is the question of how you organize an economic research center of the highest quality and avoid various organizational pitfalls. I know Dr. Castro is concerned over the problem of the multiple goals

of the Institute and has asked to discuss, as he put it, "the problem of maintaining a balance between basic research and application". It is not clear to me whether the Institute is an action agency to any extent. If it is, Dr. Castro has even more problems of this sort. Other organizational problems that I expect Dr. Castro faces include (1) his relationships with the regular academic structure of the University, (2) policy on relations with private business and (3) relationships with the government of the Philippines in the area of research, and policy on involvement with government action programs. One could go on, but I would appreciate your bringing to Dr. Castro's attention any experience and convictions you may have concerning the problems of getting under way and maintaining the quality and integrity of a research organization such as his Institute.

The other general problem which Dr. Castro is interested in discussing is that of what constitutes the most important areas of research within the scope of Economic Development. In terms of the general problem of development what are the questions that most need answering in our present state of understanding? Also, what type of research in development is likely to be of the most immediate value to a country such as the Philippines. Indeed, I suspect Dr. Castro is open to suggestions as to specific research hypotheses which his institute might pursue.

I shall tell Dr. Castro to be direct and frank in his discussions with you so that your conversations get to the important matters quickly. I ask you to be equally direct and frank with Dr. Castro.