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The Philippines: An Economic and Social Geography

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crooked casino: "*Nemo tenetur ad impossibile.*" Precious energies and ingenuity which might have been used in production were squandered in beating the system. That almost no one had a good word to say for government in general or for congress in particular surely contributed to the present autocracy and to the unregretted extinction of the legislature. Professor Baldwin can be excused for this omission; he did not live through it.

Michael McPhelin

THE PHILIPPINES: AN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL GEOGRAPHY. By T. M. Burley. London: G. Bell and Sons, 1973.

The title of this book is misleading, as it does not truly describe what the volume contains. The book both falls short of being a geography and goes beyond it unto becoming a general commentary on life in the archipelago. In the introduction, Burley writes that the book "is designed for reference purposes, for the student and the educated layman." The educated Filipino will not learn much here.

After the introduction, the book takes up the urban scene, glancing at Manila, the national center, and at five other towns representative of smaller and diverse settlements. Then a chapter is devoted to the rural scene, a consideration of the principal farm crops and of fishing, forestry, and mining. The author acknowledges his use of the work of Wernstedt and Spencer and of Robert Huke. Too bad he did not refer to Ellsworth Huntington.

Chapter 4 gets more geographic and opens with the statement that "the line of demarcation between Oriental and Australasian zoological regions (the so-called Wallace Line) is perhaps the outstanding feature of the country's physical environment." Hardly. The outstanding geographical fact about the Philippines is its being a tropical archipelago adjacent to continental Southeast Asia in the monsoon area. The country is made up of tropical, archipelagic, continental islands affected annually by the big monsoon and antimonsoon. Mr. Burley's indifference to the potent influence of tropical climate on economic activity is a large defect. He says "rainfall is the most important climatic factor" (p. 104). Actually it is the combination of heat and humidity which leaches the soil, multiplies the pests which waste and consume plants, animals, and men, making a good diet harder to get and draining away precious human energies. This is where Huntington would have helped.

No mention is made of petroleum. Coal is named once. Important points are touched upon only incidentally: conservation of natural resources, especially of soil, forests, fresh water and fisheries, inadequate irrigation, the importance of chickens and pigs, interisland shipping, railroad, ports, and the airlines.

Michael McPhelin