

LETTER OF INSTRUCTION NO. 408, May 29, 1976

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TO:

The Secretary of Public Works, Transportation and
Communications, and the Heads of Agencies and
Corporations attached to it
The Secretary of Public Highways
The Secretary of Agriculture
The Secretary of Local Government and Community Development
The Secretary of Economic Planning
The Secretary of Finance
The Commissioner of the Budget

The severe damage wrought by the recent floods in Metropolitan Manila and large areas of Luzon make it urgently necessary to review and update thoroughly the flood control and drainage plans and programs of government.

You are hereby directed to examine the parameters of these plans in view of the varied changes that have taken place during the last 30 years in the conditions and characteristics of our land and water resources, in the urban and rural environment, in the drainage systems, and in climatology and technology.

In view thereof, the concept of dikes and other protective systems of structures as a "last line of defense" for floods must now be circumscribed by a more comprehensive and meaningful "first line of defense" in the upper reaches of the watersheds, by developing a system of multi-purpose catchment basins, impounding reservoirs, and the like.

This concept harmonizes the ecosystem's delicate balance with the handiwork of man and the country's total developmental needs. Hence, flood control and drainage programs shall be formulated considering our requirements for irrigation, power, and water supply vis-a-vis positive forest and watershed management.

An integrated plan of action shall, therefore, be evolved by your coordinated and reinforcing efforts, viz.:

- The Department of Public Works, Transportation and Communications (DPWTC) shall be the overall coordinator in the preparation and implementation of the plans and programs required herein. For this purpose, the DPWTC shall create a Task Force directly under the Office of the Secretary with the Bureau of Public Works Water Resources (Hydrology) Division as the nucleus and supplemented by the necessary multidisciplinary technical staff from any government and private agency which has the appropriate expertise. The Task Force shall, inter alia, (a) prepare a 10-year program for the development of catchment basis or impounding reservoirs. for multi-purpose applications, with emphasis on flood control, irrigation, power and water supply, in the major basins of the country, including Pampanga, Agno, and Cagayan; (b) review, update, and revise the Metropolitan Manila Flood Control and Drainage Program; and (c) build, test, and operate appropriate physical and

mathematical models to simulate and evaluate the effects of alternative schemes.

- The Department of Public Highways and the Philippine National Railways shall coordinate their programs with and advise the Task Force. Their actions shall be guided by the most recent and relevant information and advice from the Task Force on the appropriate elevations, openings, and drainage capacities of bridges, culverts, inlets, and related structures so as to allow smooth passage of floodwaters and avoid constriction and clogging of waterways.

- The Department of Natural Resources, particularly the Bureau of Forest Development, and the Department of Agriculture, particularly the Bureau of Soils, shall jointly mount an effective soil conservation, reforestation and erosion control program, especially in the major watersheds. These shall be properly orchestrated with the initiatives of the other agencies, notably that of the Task Force. For one, the provision of fish culture shall be integral to the design of impounding reservoirs.

- The National Economic and Development Authority, in coordination with the Budget Commission and the Department of Finance, shall allocate to the program the sum of five billion pesos (P5 billion) over the next ten years, with an initial outlay of one billion pesos (P1 billion). All efforts must be exerted to mobilize local and foreign sources of funds for this program.

- The Department of National Defense, through the Philippine Air Force and the Bureau of Coast and Geodetic Survey, shall provide all available necessary maps and survey data and, when necessary, conduct an aerial mapping of the designated areas.

- The National Irrigation Administration shall provide effective drainage systems in and around their irrigation networks.

Local government entities, especially the barangays, shall be consulted by all concerned so as to factor local conditions and indigenous experiences related to flooding, erosion, and lack of water into their programs.

All expenditures to be incurred for the above purpose shall be borne by the resources of the respective agencies and reflected in their appropriations.

Done in the City of Manila, this 29th day of May, in the year of Our Lord, nineteen hundred and seventy-six.

35 VITAL LEGAL DOCUMENTS, 88 (1976—)

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