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ATENEO DE DAVAO

# Birth of Davao City recalled

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Forty years ago on March 1, 1937, late President Elpidio Quirino, then Secretary of Interior in the Commonwealth government, inaugurated the newly-created City of Davao whose charter was authored by Assemblyman Romualdo C. Quimpo, Davao's first elected representative to the National Assembly.

The instruction of the late President Manuel L. Quezon to Quirino was sent from Washington through Executive Secretary Jorge Vargas who was then Malacañang caretaker.

The Quirino party aboard the coast guard cutter "Banahaw" was met by a flotilla of colorfully decorated launches organized by Alfonso Angliongto, president of the Davao Navigation Shipping Co. at about 8:30 a.m. on Monday, March 1, 1937.

After a military review, the formal inaugural ceremonies followed. Rev. Fr. Joseph Reyes delivered the invocation. Assemblyman Quimpo, in his speech, recalled his fight for the approval of the Davao City charter. He said that despite the endorsement by the committee on Mindanao and special provinces, and the committee on Manila and chartered cities; oppositions were registered, interpellations made, and amendments offered "tending to defeat the bill or otherwise make it so that it will not be passed, or if passed, will be vetoed." But, Quimpo said, he was backed up by President Quezon.

Manila City Engineer Santiago Artiaga, who was appointed earlier by President Quezon, was inducted by Quirino, together with the members of the municipal board.

Quirino lauded Quimpo and extended his felicitations to the people of Davao. He predicted a big boom on tourism as he cited great tourism potential of the city by the gulf.

Lunch was served at the Philippine Constabulary reservation after which the first city council was convened. The first act of the council was to adopt the ordinances of the defunct Davao municipality and Guianga dist. as the ordinances of the newly-chartered Davao City. In the evening, a reception and ball was held at the puericulture center attended by Davao's "400." The first news dispatched to Manila was wired by Correspondent Nick V. Pacifico.

Meanwhile, from Malacañang, Secretary Vargas telephoned Mayor Artiaga to transmit the message of President Quezon. The message was:

To the people of Davao: The inauguration under its new charter of the City of Davao, important in international trade, brings to realization one of my long-cherished plans of affording your city every opportunity to make great strides in the political, social, and economic development. I have selected as your mayor-a man long tried in municipal administration and I am confident that your city officials with the whole-hearted cooperation of the elements of the community will succeed in making Davao a progressive and model urban center. From the United States I send you my greetings and felicitations."

Among the prominent VIPs who attended the Davao City

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inauguration were:

Major General Paulino Santos, Commissioner Marcial Kasilag, Gov. Teodosio Diño, Jose S. Perez, Aurelio Cecillio, Assemblyman Miguel Tolentino, Assemblyman Juan S. Alano, and Major Joe E. Stevenot of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.

Major Stevenot announced that next to Cebu, Davao was the second city to get in touch with Manila and also predicted that Davao "would equal in commercial importance with Cebu and Iloilo in five years' time."

The following day, Quirino, accompanied by Quimpo and Alano, motored to Santa Cruz to inaugurate the Davao-Cotabato highway. It was here, again, where Quirino predicted that Davao City would be a tourist's center.