

# Tranquilino “Frank” B. Aquino

*Filipino Economist*



Counterparts, 27 Aug 1954.

The U.S. Census Bureau continually strives to ensure an accurate count of the people of the United States. For this reason, it has always embraced the hiring of a diverse workforce representative of the local communities. In the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the United States expanded west into areas formerly governed by Spain and Mexico. Since many of the citizens and local officials only spoke Spanish, the Census Office quickly realized that it needed to employ workers fluent in the language. The establishment of a permanent Census Bureau in 1903 and increased immigration from Cuba and Central and South America expanded the need for Spanish-speaking employees both in the field and at headquarters.

Tranquilino Bautista Aquino, called Frank, was born on July 6, 1907, in the Philippine municipality of Binmaley, to Alipio and Juliana Bautista Aquino. In 1929, Frank immigrated to Berkeley, California, where he attended the University of California. At UC Berkeley Frank earned his B.A. in political sciences in 1934, followed by his

master's degree in political science in 1935. Following his graduation, Frank worked as an economist for the Works Progress Administration (WPA), where he focused on the Filipino economy using information from the Department of Commerce. When the WPA became part of the Federal Work Agency in 1939, Frank went along, and soon found himself helping to standup America's wartime economy as the clouds of World War II gathered on the horizon.

Historic census records are maintained and released by the National Archives and Records Administration, not the U.S. Census Bureau.

Visit <http://www.archives.gov> for more information about publicly available records like the one shown here.

Frank's 1930 census, as a student in Berkeley, CA.

## Wallace Order Gives Veterans Better Jobs

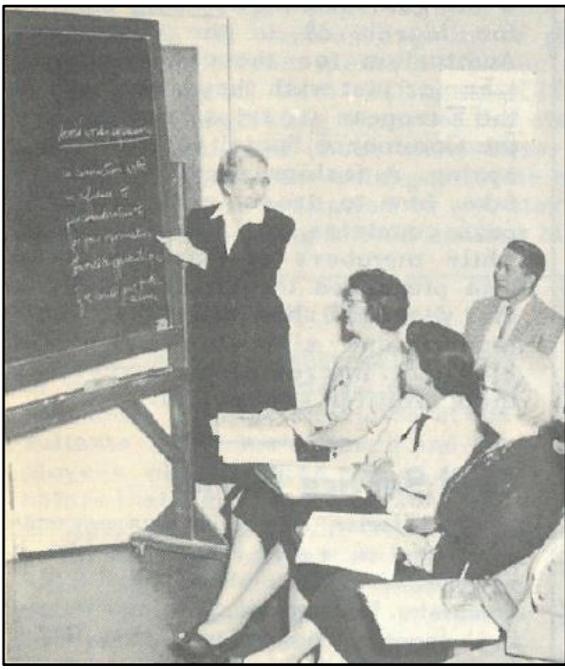
**Widespread Effect On Federal Service Expected as Result**

By Jerry Kluttz  
Post Reporter

A precedent-breaking decision that is certain to lead to better jobs for thousands of veterans who have returned to the Federal service was made yesterday by Commerce Secretary Henry A. Wallace.

*The Washington Post*  
(Washington, DC) 9 June 1946.

By 1941, Frank had relocated to Washington, DC, where he courted and wed fellow government employee Virginia Everett. Frank continued working towards the war effort—at the Office of Price Administration and the War Production Board—until it was his turn to serve. In July 1942, Frank enlisted in the U.S. Army Signal Corps. He rose to the rank of Staff Sergeant and worked mainly as a trainer in the Signal Corp Replacement Training Center in California. In 1945, Frank returned to the newly redesignated Civilian Production Administration, the peacetime incarnation of the War Production Board.



**Frank, upper right, in a writing class.**  
*Counterparts*, 23 Mar 1956.

By 1946, wartime production and services ended and Frank, by this time an experienced statistician, came to the Industry Division of the Census Bureau. Frank's timing was fortunate, in 1946 the Secretary of Commerce, Henry A. Wallace, outlined new benefits for returning U.S. Commerce Department veterans. Although the Selective Service Act guaranteed returning employees their previous jobs, many had missed promotions and raises by being absent for several years. Secretary Wallace's directives set the stage for veterans to receive broadscale, in-grade, and replacement promotions upon return.

During his time at the Census Bureau, Frank worked in both the Industry and Foreign Trade divisions. After spending 10 years in five different government organizations, Frank's 10 years at the Census Bureau finally allowed him to stay in one place. The employees of the Census Bureau gladly welcomed Frank, not only because of

his knowledge of international economics, but because of his prowess as a bowler. Within his first year, Frank was known as one of the best bowlers in the building, and served as the team captain of the Industry Division men's bowling team. When he changed divisions, the Census Bureau's newsletter noted, "Foreign Trade's men bowlers welcome Tranquilino Aquino like the Washington Senators welcome a home run."

In 1937, Frank began working towards a second advanced degree, this time in economics. He attended a variety of universities in the Washington, DC area, including George Washington University, American University, and Georgetown University. In 1955, Frank completed his dissertation on the Philippine economy and earned his PhD.



**Frank, right, receives the Major C.M. Zepp Trophy as the captain of the Industry Division men's bowling team.**  
*Census News*, May 28, 1948.



**Frank, right, receives a bowling trophy.**  
*Counterparts*, 24 Aug 1956.

Following his domination of the Census Bureau bowling league in 1956, Frank left the Census Bureau and headed to the U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC) as a supervisory statistician. He then became chief of Statistical Services in the Bureau of Economics at the FTC until his retirement in 1971. Although Frank devoted almost his entire life to his adopted country, he remained proud of his heritage. As a young man in the late 1930s, Frank served as an officer of the Filipino Students Club in Washington, DC, and later he would take part in the Philippine-American Association. When the *Washington Post* wrote incorrect or politically slanted articles about the Philippines, Frank would send a letter to the editor to ensure Filipino voices were heard. In addition to his work with Filipino groups, Frank enjoyed membership in the American Statistical Association and the American Economics Association. On November 6, 1971, Frank passed away in the Washington suburb of Falls Church, Virginia, where he and his wife raised two daughters together. The Census Bureau is thankful for Frank's contributions, both as a statistician and a sportsman.