

The Philippine



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OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE *Philippine Public School Teachers Association*

APPROVED BY THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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Editorial

BENITO PANGILINAN, The Democratic Director

The September, 1951 issue of the Philippine Educator is gratefully dedicated to Director Benito Pañgilinan who will easily go down in Philippine educational history as The Democratic Director of the Bureau of Public Schools. It is fitting that this issue of the PPSTA magazine be dedicated to Director Pañgilinan because under his administration, the Bureau of Public Schools has made tremendous strides in implementing democratic ideas and practices in the Philippine public school system.

A high government official is democratic or undemocratic, depending upon (1) how he feels toward his subordinates and how he actually treats them in his personal relations with them, and (2) what policies, plans, and projects he implements in his official capacity indicating his policy of administration. It is easily possible for one to be democratic in his personal relationships but undemocratic in his official actuations. Those who have come to know Director Pañgilinan feel that he has a warm heart for his colleagues, that he is human and humane in his personal dealings with them, and that he would go more than half way to interpret school rules and regulations so as to benefit those who work under him. He seems to be guided by the principle that "if in doubt as to the correct meaning and implications of a regulation, and if it is within your discretion to do so, execute the regulation so as to benefit as many people as possible." He also believes in the innate capacity of the individual to be creative and to be potentially capable of contributing substantially to the improvement of school work.

For the first time in a half century, the Superintendents of Schools, for instance, have been given a free hand to help shape the philosophy

of the public schools through their planning for and carrying out what they believe should be the New Educational Orientation—the development of the community school. And for two years now, the Superintendents have been given the responsibility of making plans for and conducting their annual conventions.

In the Superintendents' Convention of 1950, Director Pañgilinan enunciated fundamental principles with respect to making the schools truly of, for, and by the people when he keynoted the Convention with the following statements:

“Since education is the joint concern of the school and the community, and draws its materials and problems from the life of the people, I wish to call your attention to the following principles which I believe should be recognized or further implemented:

“1. The community school service program is for the people. Progressive educational leadership requires that the people be led to understand the necessity and feel the need for this service.

“2. Community living cannot be improved without the indorsement and participation of the people in the community.

“3. The best possible way of helping the people understand the function of the school is to make the people participate in that function.

“4. The impact of community needs and problems, including those of the nation and the world, should penetrate the curriculum or otherwise reorient its content.

“The line-and-staff organization should yield to the democratic principle of group processes. The traditional one-way traffic, so to speak, in official relationship is not compatible with this principle. The trend toward decentralization should encourage teachers, supervisors and school executives on all levels to assume the corresponding responsibility and education leadership.”

These are transcendental pronouncements. Nowhere in the records of the last half century of public educational endeavours do we find a statement from the highest authorities of the Philippine public school system about the desirability of decentralization and of “the line-and-staff organization yielding to the democratic principle of group processes.” While it is true that the school system has advocated these many years that teaching and learning should be made as functional and practical as possible, there has been little headway in the implementation of this objective until the community school idea was conceived and blue-printed by the Philippine Association of School Superintendents, an idea that at once received the blessings of the Bureau directorate. Under other “regimes,” these liberal trends were never thought of as being possible or even desirable.

These ideas are echoed and re-echoed again in the instructions that have emanated from the Bureau of Public Schools during the incumbency of Director Pañgilinan. Bureau Memorandum No. 51, s. 1950 contains the following re-affirmations of these ideas:

“Since leadership is not confined only to the superintendent’s level, it is expected that supervisors, principals, and classroom teachers will exercise the same leadership as opportunities arise or as situations demand. Collaboration on all levels is the form and spirit of the democratic process which should pervade our educational endeavours.”

For immediate and proper implementation: “To make adjustments in the administrative machinery that will bring about democratic relationships among the teachers on all levels; between the pupils and the teachers; and between the teachers and the people. Group action is the keynote of school administration or practice; and the recognition of the dignity and worth of the individual is the basis of all democratic processes.”

“The superintendents, supervisors, principals, and teachers should feel free to initiate curriculum study and development to meet the local needs and problems.”

The day is dawning, if it is not already here, when “freedom from fear” will have become a part and parcel of the professional life of the lower-category teachers. Fear from speaking their minds out; fear from making suggestions as to means of meeting the needs of children, youth, and adults; fear from diverging from prescribed “requirements” in the courses of study; fear from surreptitious disciplinary measures resulting from non-compliance of curriculum requirements; fear, we hope, from arbitrary persecution resulting in unnecessary inconveniences for school personnel who are transferred or who are given difficult assignments allegedly “for the good of the service,” when teachers do not prove to be docile and servile. “Recognition of dignity and worth of the individual is the basis of all democratic processes.”

Our featuring Director Pañgilinan in this issue is doubly significant: For one thing, he is the personification of democratic processes and relationships in the public school system. For another, this is the Golden Jubilee year of the Philippine school system, and Director Pañgilinan more nearly represents the growth and progress of the system, as he began serving as teacher in 1903. That was 48 years ago last June. From point of service therefore it may be truly said that Director Pañgilinan has grown up and lived with the system, and he therefore symbolizes the growth and progress of the public school system during its half century of service to the Filipino people. Would that Director Pañgilinan continue enjoying good health so that he can keep on serving the cause of democratic education in this country!

—The Editor

CAREER FACTS OF

Director Benito Pangilinan

- I. **Birthplace:** Apalit, Pampanga, January 12, 1886
- II. **Schools Attended:**
 1. Apalit Elementary School;
 2. San Fernando Institute of Aspirantes, later to become Pampanga High School;
 3. Philippine Normal School as Teacher Pensionado;
 4. Since there were no summer classes in the early days, in order to enhance his academic preparation, he took U.S. extension courses in Education, Commerce, and English Literature and Composition;
 5. Awarded the honorary degree of Master of Pedagogy by National Teachers College, 1940.
- III. **Government Positions Held:**
 1. Classroom Teacher, Insular, 1903-1904
Appointed, with four others, as a result of a division competitive examination in Pampanga in which he topped all competitors. Selected afterwards as a government pensionado to the United States, but failed to go.
 2. Principal Teacher, 1905-1908
 3. Supervising Teacher, 1909-1917
 4. Academic Supervisor, (Bataan), 1917-1918
 5. Division Superintendent of Schools (Bataan, La Union, Tarlac, Laguna, Rizal), 1918-1941
 6. Superintendent on Special Detail, 1945-1946
 7. Superintendent, Philippine Normal School, 1946 (May-August)
 8. Administrative Officer, 1946-1948
 9. Assistant Director of Public Schools, November, 1948-1949
 10. Director of Public Schools, July 8, 1949 to date
- IV. **Civil Service Examinations Passed**
 1. Filipino Teacher (later to be named Junior Teacher examination), 1904
 2. First Grade, 1907
 3. Senior Teacher, 1908
 4. Assistant (later to be named Division Superintendent examination), 1918

V. Other Activities

1. Past—

- a. Delegate to the World Conference on Education and to the International Conference on the Junior Red Cross in Tokyo, Japan, 1937
- b. Member, Group of Foreign Educators on Study Tour in the United States sponsored by the American National Red Cross, 1948
- c. Delegate to the Unesco Conference at Paris and to the International Bureau of Education Conference at Geneva, 1951
- d. Former President, League of the Philippine Public School Teachers Associations (now the Philippine Public School Teachers Association)
- e. Former member, National Commission on Educational, Scientific & Cultural Matters
- f. Former Executive Officer, School Medical and Dental Services

2. Present—

- a. Member, Board of Regents, University of the Philippines
- b. Member, Board of Trustees, Philippine Normal College
- c. Member, Board of Trustees, Central Luzon Agricultural College
- d. Member, Board on Textbooks
- e. Member, U.S. Educational Foundation in the Philippines, Screening Committee
- f. Member, Nutrition Council
- g. Member, Health Council
- h. Member, Radio Control Board
- i. Member, P.A.A.F. Executive Committee
- j. Member, Committee on the Restoration of Dr. Rizal's Home in Calamba and Dapitan Park in Zamboanga
- k. Chairman, Committee on "Tomb on Unknown Soldier," Fort Santiago
- l. Member, National Committee on Clean-Up Week
- m. Member, Fire Prevention Board
- n. Member, Advisory Board, Philippine National Red Cross
- o. Member, Board of Directors, Community Chest