

# Education And The New Life

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**I**N Order No. 2 dated February 17, 1942, the Commander-in-Chief of the Imperial Japanese Forces in the Philippines enunciated the basic principles which shall govern the reconstruction of the educational system of the New Philippines. It is most important that not only the teachers but parents as well who are naturally concerned in the education of their children should know what they are and understand fully their meaning and their objectives. There are six of these principles which shall determine the pattern and the trend of our educational work. The wise teacher will use them as beacons to guide him in his activities in the school from day to day. They are:

“First, to make the people understand the position of the Philippines as a member of the East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, the true meaning of the establishment of a New Order in the sphere and the share which the Philippines should take for the realization of the New Order, and thus to promote friendly relations between Japan and the Philippines to the furthest extent.

“Second: To eradicate the old idea of reliance upon the Western nations, especially upon the U. S. A. and Great Britain, and to foster a new Filipino culture based on the self-consciousness of the people as Orientals.

“Third: To endeavor to elevate the morals of the people, giving up the over emphasis of materialism.

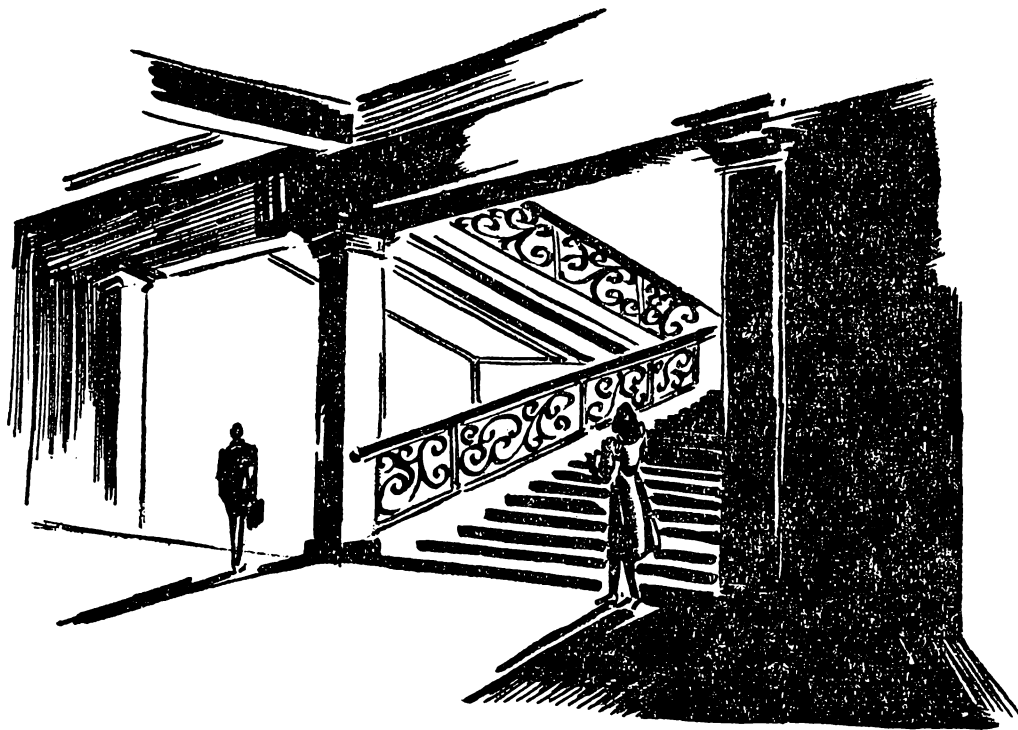
“Fourth: To strive for the diffusion of the Japanese language in the Philippines, and to terminate the use of English in due course.

“Fifth: To put importance to the diffusion of elementary education and to the promotion of vocational education.

“Sixth: To inspire the people with the spirit to love labour.”

## ***Educational Rebirth***

A careful and conscientious study of these fundamental principles will readily show that they demand not only a revision but practically a rebirth of education in the Philippines. We are to salvage all that



is worth saving of the old system but the new structure will be of a different architecture and the uses to which it will be put also be undoubtedly different.

A rebirth of education in the New Philippines will require that we discard our preconceived ideas and our prejudices; that we disassociate ourselves from feelings and thoughts which have in the past colored our views and

controlled our actions; and that we make a “realistic examination” of the momentous events that have recently taken place in our part of the world,—events that have already changed the course of history in our country.

The first of the six principles enunciated implies not only the building of a New Philippines but also the formation of a family of nations of which the Philippines may become a worthy member. The building up of a nation and especially the building up of a family of nations at once calls to mind the picture of a useful, active life—a life of constant work, of unremitting vigilance and a continuous sacrifice on the part of the individual. We can not build up a New Philippines or hope to contribute our share to the formation and maintenance of the East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere unless our people are trained and accustomed to hard work, unless we learn not only to accept but even to welcome personal discomfort, inconvenience, and hardship in the knowledge that all these personal sacrifices are only a means to the prosperity and perpetuity of the nation. That country will be most enduring whose people can stand on their feet against all misfortunes and calamities.

## ***Our Contribution***

**W**HAT bearing then does all this have on our educational work? What contribution must we make to the active life called for by this gigantic task of nation building and by this family of nations which is in the making in Greater East Asia? It means that the schools through systematic training from the earliest grades must produce young men and young women vigorous of mind and body, capable of carrying on exacting and prolonged physical and mental work even under adverse conditions; young men

and young women with bodies that can endure injury, sustain suffering, and overcome disease. It likewise demands that we develop in our boys and girls a type of mind that can think straight, that will accept hardship and suffering as part of life and that will hold steadfastly to the belief that above and beyond all the vicissitudes of life there is a just Providence that watches over all mankind.

We must therefore give greater and more serious attention to all our physical education activities—the radio taiso, the athletic games, the boy and girl scout projects and such other phases of school work that may contribute to the physical development of the students. Through daily instruction in the schools and follow-up work in the homes, the children must be taught thoroughly and well to eat the proper foods, to sleep the right number of hours, to dress sensibly for health and comfort, and to develop those habits that will strengthen their bodies,—all these to produce not the superman but men and women capable of holding their own under any emergency and against all odds.

### ***More Food***

A nation in the making will demand a full contribution of the time, labor, and effort of every individual. While the country is young, and while it is trying to get on its feet, much of this contribution will have to be in a material sense. More food to be produced, more land to be tilled, more cloths to be made, more roads and bridges to be constructed, more factories to be built, and a more intensive and systematic development of our natural resources—these will be the immediate needs of a growing country. The schools may help to fill these needs through a bigger impetus given to the vocational schools and the vocational courses. Every student in school, irrespective of the course he may follow later on, should be well trained to use his hands as well as his head. He should acquire the skill while in school to do at least one thing well with his hands. Agricultural schools and trade schools should receive the general support of the government so that in time there may be no dearth of skilled farmers, skilled mechanics and other skilled workmen. The course in Home and Community Membership Activities was introduced in the elementary schools this year precisely to teach the boys and girls at an early age to work with their hands and to make them as useful as possible in their homes and in the communities where they live.

### ***Racial Pride***

**T**HE education for life in the New Philippines should make our boys and girls proud that they are Filipinos and Orientals. It should make them conscious that their country has a history of which they may well be proud, that our people, although under foreign domination for more than 400 years,

have produced statesmen, heroes and martyrs whose sacrifices are written in blood on the pages of our history. They shall learn that as a member of a great family of nations in East Asia their country has a glorious future—a future that beckons them to limitless opportunities and glorious achievements.

What then is the obligation of the schools in this exaltation of the Filipino as a Filipino and an Oriental? What must the schools do to erase the imprint of centuries that a brown skin is inferior; that one race is born to rule while another race is born to serve? The answer is clear and unmistakable. The history of the Philippines and of the Orient should occupy a most important place in the curriculum of our schools. From a very early age our boys and girls should begin the study of the history of their native land. They should read over and over again the accounts of the great deeds that our really great men, both the dead and the living, have accomplished. They should know that under a brown skin there is the ability to think, the will to achieve and the willingness to sacrifice and die. They shall learn that in the Orient there is the great and mighty Japanese Nation that has given irrefutable proof that an Oriental country is the equal of any other country on the face of the Earth. They should learn to pray and to thank God that in their veins is the blood of the ancient Malays and that providence has willed that they be born in the Orient where nature has been over generous and more than kind in showering her treasures and her gifts.

In this exaltation of the Filipino as an Oriental, our educational institutions must take a leading part in reviving those Filipino customs and virtues which time has shown to be of priceless value to our people. The melody and the sentiment in our native songs, the wisdom hidden in many a proverb in the native languages, and the aspirations, the hopes, the longings and the high ideals expressed in our native literature must be brought within reach of every boy and girl in school.

### ***The Family Spirit***

**T**HE relationship among members of a family as well as the relationship among neighbors in the Philippines has a cohesion so strong that foreigners have at times claimed it is a real hindrance to the development of the individual. That a person has died of hunger or for want of help is practically unknown in this country. Family sentiment is so strong that the relatives or the neighbors if need be, come to the rescue even without the asking of the one in need. This family solidarity and this mutual sympathy and ready aid among the neighbors are worth preserving because family and neighborhood solidarity lends itself to national strength and national unity.

In this family of nations that is in the making under the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere,

Japan, the country best prepared and the country that has sacrificed the most to free the Orient from Occidental influence even at the risk of her national existence, will naturally assume the position of leadership. It is important then that we promote friendly relations between Japan and the Philippines as best we can. It is almost axiomatic to say that two peoples, whether they be individuals or nations, in order to live together peacefully and harmoniously, must understand each other. A lack of understanding leads to misunderstanding. The less we know of a people the more likely we are to misunderstand them. If we are to be a member of this great family of nations that is now in the making in our part of the world, would it not be plain common sense to try to understand the other members of the group and especially the leader and protector of that group? The schools should make it possible for our students to learn as much as possible the history of Japan and the development of that country from its humble beginning to the power and the influence that it is today. Our students should be thoroughly familiar with the high and noble aims that that great nation has in the building up of a Greater East Asia. The study of the history of Japan and the study of the Japanese language should therefore be a part of our school curriculum because only thus may we begin to understand the spirit, the culture, the civilization, and the way of life of the Japanese people.

### *Spiritual Renovation*

**L**ASTLY, education in the New Philippines must give more time and greater attention to a really effective training of the character of our youth and thus bring about a spiritual renovation in the rising generation. Teachers are essentially builders of men. Although apparently their work in school is to teach the 3 R's and other school subjects, we know without question that their most valuable service is in character training. Of what particular good, you may well ask, is a young man whose training in school has merely sharpened and accentuated his anti-social traits? Such a man would be a greater menace to society than one with similar tendencies but without benefit of school education.

The war that is still raging in all its fury has taught us many lessons but perhaps the most valuable of these is that a nation stands or falls as the character of its people is strong or weak. A people with a character weakened by vice must sooner or later yield to the superiority of another whose character

has been carefully trained and nurtured by the virtues which have been handed down from father to son and which time has shown to be invaluable to the nation. Japan has until now furnished the biggest surprise in the present war because her people have exhibited certain traits of character that have probably no counterpart among the people in other countries. Handicapped before the present conflict by a lack of resources with which to wage a long war, it has conquered some of the most strategic positions and now occupies territories that are very rich in minerals and other war materials. Many have asked the question again and again. How has Japan been able to accomplish what she has so far achieved in the present war considering the handicaps that she had to overcome? There is probably no one single answer to this question. We can say however with reasonable certainty that part of the answer lies in the character of her people and naturally of her soldiers. A strong discipline, unquestioned obedience to their superiors, the ability to adjust themselves to almost any condition, the acceptance of hardships and even of death if necessary, a high ideal of service to the country, and an unshakable faith in the justice and righteousness of their country's cause have made the Japanese people and Japan's fighting men a formidable foe. The character of the Japanese Imperial Forces and of the Japanese people as a whole has drawn the admiration of the whole world.

As educators we can profit immensely from the lessons furnished by Japan. We must train, mould, and nurture the character of our boys and girls in school so as to bring about a spiritual rebirth among our people. Courage, honesty, devotion to one's duty, service to the country, disregard of one's self and even willingness to die for a cause that is just and right—these are character traits, the presence or the lack of which determine the fate of a people.

Much of our character training has been vocal and theoretical. Much of it has consisted of verbal discussions in the classroom. We must make our character education really and truly effective. Just as we harden and strengthen our pupils' bodies through regular physical exercises so must we devise a series of activities the systematic performance of which will bring about a stiffening of the moral fiber in our youths. This we must do if we want to exist as a people because a people without character are like a people without vision—"they perish". Thus must education in the New Philippines be geared up to the tempo and the demands of the New Life.

