

## *Counsel to the Young*

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In the seclusion of my retirement, I thought I could isolate myself from the outside world and enjoy the beauties of nature and inhale the cool and invigorating air that penetrates the ever green leaves. Men of my age, after having rendered more than 45 years of service to our country and people, may probably be excused from getting involved in the drudgeries of life and allowed a life of serenity free from cares and worries.

The problems facing our country today are so vast, so tremendous, if not grave, that I feel it is the duty of every Filipino citizen to lend a helping hand towards their solution. Indeed, the most dangerous of these problems is smuggling. It is gratifying that no less than our President has taken immediate steps to curb it. I am in full accord with the attitude he has taken toward this particular problem because smuggling, not only of blue seal cigarettes but also of narcotics, undermines the stability and the health of our nation. Collections of the treasury are on a downward trend mainly due to this nefarious scheme. Considering also the apparent apathy of our people to pay their taxes on time, if they pay at all, the threat to the financial stability of our nation is by all means serious. This seeming conspiracy to shake the very foundation of our government through the commission of crimes and flouting of our laws should caution the citizenry to be alert and vigilant. No amount of laws can eradicate these

crimes without the people themselves cooperating with our authorities.

But the situation is not yet hopeless. While a number of our people ignore the laws in their desire to accumulate wealth through all means, fair or foul, there is still a great majority who are law-abiding, conscious of their duties to God and country. If only we consider honor as above everything, if we are still imbued with a sense of patriotism, these crimes committed by our countrymen against their own country would not happen. These acts are equivalent to subversion which in other forms of government is punishable by death.

To the youth of our land, I appeal to you to observe the laws of our country. Love our Philippines not only in words but in good deeds. Help our President and other authorities to restore peace and order and thus strengthen the stability of our nation. In you, the youth of our land, who, no less than our patriot, Dr. Jose P. Rizal, called "the hope of the Fatherland," lies the future of our country. The Philippines is the only patrimony that God has given you to love, to cherish, to preserve and to die for if necessary. We of the older generation are fading away. We can only give you words of guidance; help our country to be great so that no people beyond our shores will ever aspire to dominate us nor attempt to obliterate the Filipino race. △