

What do you Think...

Explanatory Note:

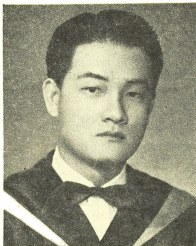
Subject of a chaotic debate before Congress today is the bill providing for the compulsory reading of Rizal's "Noli Me Tangere" and "El Filibusterismo." Merits of the bill are raised up on the issue of nationalism, patriotism and Filipinism. Proponents say that it would be treachery to the youth whom Rizal called the "Fair Hopes of the Fatherland" if his works, as brain-children of a national hero, are to be denied them.

On the other hand, it is being feared that once the bill is approved, religious controversy which would cause dissension among the people would militate against the peace of the country. This could be so because the compulsory nature of the bill itself violates the principle of academic freedom which is very essential in a democracy. The two books contain religious errors which Rizal himself later retracted, and that, if the youth be allowed to read them, they might make their own rush interpretations.

Here are a number of personal opinions from among the students who had their say about the controversial bill.—sbf

About the Bill providing for the compulsory reading of Rizal's "Noli Me Tangere" and "El Filibusterismo"?

conducted by: S.B. FABROZ



FRANCISCO CHIN

FRANCISCO CHIN
College of Law

Since the bill in question is still before the house of the Senate undergoing further deliberations, I think it is the right of every citizen to participate in the debate. As far as the constitutionality of the bill is concerned, it is respectfully submitted that the bill clearly violates the constitutional provisions of law on religious freedom. By reading the two novels, one will find that they contain passages which are against the teachings and laws of the Catholic church. To compel, therefore, the Catholic

youth to read these novels is equivalent to forcing them read doctrines attacking their own religion. Hence, the above constitutional guarantee is snatched from them.

The Supreme Court of the United States has gone far enough in expanding the above constitutional guaranty by upholding the rights of a certain group to refuse to salute the American flag because said act is offensive to their religious beliefs (West Virginia Board of Education, vs. Barnette, 319 U.S. 624). Since we don't have Philippine jurisprudence on this point, the case cited must be taken as authority to support my contention. It is recommended, therefore, that, in order to make the bill consistent with our constitutional provisions on religious freedom, the word "compulsory" be changed to "optional."

It is impractical to conceive that we appear more patriotic and nationalistic by simply reading the **Noli Me Tangere** and **El Filibusterismo**. If we ever want to inculcate in our minds the ideals of patriotism and nationalism, we should not only limit ourselves to the reading of these two novels which reveal only the life of one Filipino hero. Instead, Congress should pass a law compelling all students to read the different biographies of our heroes.

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NATIVIDAD ILAÓ

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College of Commerce

I am not in favor of the compulsory reading of the *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo* of Rizal in all public and private schools of the country.

Not all works of a hero are commendatory for study. Not all his thoughts reduced to writings are wholesome. There are portions of them which ought to be censored. Referring to the two books of Rizal, we see errors malignantly inconsistent with the dogmas of the church. There are passages which violate the teachings of the Catholic faith. Until we find the two books overhauled, making them consistent with Catholicism, they are simply of no use. They only light up religious controversy among the people.

JAIME E. LOZANO
College of Engineering

I am not in favor of the compulsory reading of Rizal's *Noli Me*



JAIME E. LOZANO

Tangere and *El Filibusterismo* in all public and private schools.

I do not mean to disregard the two novels of our national hero. In fact, I regard his works as the true and novel revelation of the actual events that happened during his time. He wrote them during the time when he was most critical of Spanish rule in the Philippines. His observations were, therefore, tinged by his own resentment against the alleged abuses of the Spaniards. It was natural that his writings, having been set down at a time when even his Faith was shaken, were biased and inaccurate.

It is shameful for us to claim that we are Catholics — that we are the only Christian country in the Far East and at the same time fold our arms when the very foundations of our religion are ridiculed. We can love Rizal without having to read all his works. As a matter of fact, it is possible that if we read the two controversial books, we might not regard our national hero in the same light that he is esteemed now.

TITO ESCARIO
College of Commerce

I am for the compulsory reading of Rizal's *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo* in all public and private schools.

As our national hero, Rizal should be honored not merely by remembering him but by reading his works and emulating the example he set. The fate of all martyrs has always been in all times to suffer so that those unborn will live under a happy atmosphere. What is strange is the fact that all the noble works of Rizal calculated to shed enlightenment would now be shelved because those books are said to be misleading and controversial.

The church will not be embarrassed if these books will be read because there is only one truth. If these be read as part of the school curriculum, the teachers can guide and give the proper explanation. Time will tell us in due course its real results, but certainly nothing can be arrived at reasonably if these books will be shelved.

It would be very funny if the books written by our national hero are not prescribed as reading materials in school. It is an insult to the Filipinos if aliens can recite passages from Rizal's writings and the Filipinos cannot. It will be a shame not to learn our lesson from



TITO ESCARIO

the sparks of truth which Rizal unselfishly hammered in the anvils of his books so that men later on shall enjoy the blessings of freedom.

TERESITA REBECCA F. ALCARES
College of Education

Rizal wrote his novels while he was yet a Mason. He was, at that time, out of the fold of the Faith he embraced since boyhood. His resentment against what he believed as the excesses of the Spaniards and his differences that time so embittered him that he made light of the Catholic religion.

Adopting these books as part of our high school curriculum endangers the future of our students. A great majority of our high school students are still very young and immature in understanding. They have the tendency to make hasty judgments, thus, make conclusions of their own without making a careful scrutiny and broad understanding of what they have read. They

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TERESITA REBECCA F. ALCARES

Anything You Say

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Sir:

Why did you ever scrap the "campusrats?" It was such a nice column — newsy, colorful, light, and just wonderful for "the little women." We were so much in the habit of reading it that you can fairly imagine what a let-down it brought us when it came out only during the first issue of the Carolinian last year.

I've heard that the column was discontinued because only a special group kept being mentioned and that it contained nothing but gossip. Well, these are not such serious reasons because they can be helped! With respect to the first, all the columnist has to do is look for other faces, write the human side of campus activities. As for the next objection, I don't see how innocuous gossip, if this is the right word, can ever hurt anybody. I mean, small talk about somebody having something new or unusual would not sound so gossipy. Things like these are allowed even in big magazines. But we certainly hope you will revive the "Campusrats" minus the objectionable features, that is.

I guess everybody sort of knows what's wrong with the Carolinian. It lacks the real, honest-to-goodness feminine touch!

TITA CUI

What Do You Think

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are prone to believe the ideas suggested in the context because they have no time to investigate.

These novels are proper only for researchers and graduate school students who want to compile the works of Rizal and make a comparison of the different phases of his literary masterpieces. It is proper for them because they, unlike our young high school students, are already equipped with high understanding.

LORETA CACHO College of Education

I am for the compulsory reading of Rizal's *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*.

That the bill would violate the principle of academic freedom and natural right of parents to send their children to schools of their choice is absurd because the prohibition of the two novels for public reading is, by itself, a violation of academic freedom.

The proposal of some Senators to make some alterations of the said books or publish footnotes in the unexpurgated versions of the two books is thoughtless if we are to admit and say that Rizal is our national hero and that he was truthful in writing them because they were taken and based upon actual facts that happened during the critical period of the Spanish rule in the Philippines. As Senator Laurel said: "Expurgating the *Noli* and the *Fili* would be disfiguring Rizal."

The Legend at Mt. Tempoong

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lovers. And the promise, too — oh, so sweet indeed is the tongue of love. Or so they thought.

But the king got wind of the whole affair and became mad as a tornado. He cursed Lawin for the encroachment the lad made on his royal household.

In his fit of anger he unleashed all the fury of his pagan birth. The sky darkened and rain fell in torrents, drowning all the inhabitants of the island, except Lawin who was transformed into a big white whale and was cast into the lake at the summit of the mountain. This was made as his watery jail to punish him for his unsolicited intrusion. Alimyon was turned into mountain ranges bordering Mt. Tempoong, gazing night and day at the sky but never on the lake where Lawin was transformed into a whale.

To this day, passengers aboard ship passing around Camiguin Island could see the outline of the buxom Alimyon in the silhouettes of the mountain ranges. This has been said to be the sleeping beauty of the Camiguin mountains.

Lawin who was turned into a white whale in a lake nearby, can be seen by hunters every full moon, appearing on the surface of the lake, hugging and kissing the shadow of Alimyon cast on the lake by the light of the full eastern moon.

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THE PATRIA STORY

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shrink from the challenge. They chose, as their critics branded them, to be fanatical. But not hopeless. Inspired by the enlivening influence of their Adviser, the Rev. Fr. Bernard Wrocklage, SVD, of USC, and fired by the youthful spirit to dare and do big things, they resolved to push through their project at all cost.

The Initial Action

With the idea conceived, the organization started making arrangements. His Grace Archbishop Julio R. Rosales of Cebu was consulted for his approval of the project. With the approval secured a formal resolution was adopted for the construction of the Patria as the organization's 1955-1956 Archdiocesan project. This resolution was unanimously approved by the SCA Executive Board on February, 1954 in a meeting held at the University of the Visayas with then Rev. Fr. Epifanio Surban, who represented the Archbishop, attending.

The next move concerned the site of the building. The building had to be located in the very heart of the city and, because of its purpose, had to be accessible to transportation facilities. After several deliberations, the spacious lot of 6,800 square meters in front of the Cebu Cathedral Church was chosen as the project site. Through the good Offices of the Archbishop, the lot, owned by the Archdiocese of Cebu, was finally obtained on lease. Then, as the land was occupied by squatters, efforts were made to relocate them. In doing this, the SCA encountered difficulties as some of the settlers refused to vacate the place. Only after considerable effort notably on the part of Mr. Anastacio Fabiña, one of the SCA executive officers, were these people successfully ejected from the area.

The Fund Campaign

Even as the site was yet undecided, the Student Actionists, from the lowest members to the highest officers, started girding themselves for a head-and-heel effort to raise the enormous sum called for by the project. This hectic campaign was waged through such means as person-to-person approaches, holding of musical concerts, benefit shows and games, appeals to wealthy citizens, and appeals to various social and religious or-

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