

FOR AN INTELLIGENT MINORITY PARTY

BY VICENTE A. PACIS

As we continue to agitate the surface of our political life with a more or less innocuous discussion of whether or not our democracy is real or ritualistic, we have probably failed to notice a more profound and ominous stirring in its very depths which will clarify and purify our politics; but, again, it may prelude the eruption of the volcano that will belch destruction and death.

I refer to the slow but apparently steady consolidation of the discontented and misdirected factions under the bold banner of the Popular Front. On the surface, the situation presents nothing unique or unusual. Indeed the ordinary process of building a political party is to weld together the various factions that are antagonistic to the party sought to be displaced from power. Where a community of grievances of the one hand and an affinity of political ideals on the other hand exist, the recruiting is fast and the resulting combine substantial in strength and number. But even when only the ordinary resentment of being out against those who are in exists as the common bond it is still possible to get together enough men to keep up the good work of criticizing and denouncing.

When a marked success attends the work of consolidating factions hostile to the ruling party, however, there is ever present the danger of excess momentum. The horrible reign of terror when France was in the throes of being born a democracy was the result of men getting out of control and running amuck. Precisely, the popular movements in France and Spain which, however, are of a much later vintage, seem to be model of our minorities are in the process of coloring together. And, at least in these two countries, the pendulum is ordinary swinging too far: France is being threatened by persistent radicalism, and Spain is a flood of blood largely as the result, qualified observers says,

of the lack of prudence on the part of newly-consolidated and recently-emancipated minorities.

MOST HOPEFUL ASPECT OF LOCAL PHENOMENON

Those who hope that the local popular front movement will have a constructive influence on Philippine politics point to the presence of intelligent men at its vanguard. The hords that may be attracted under the banner of the new party may be excellent fuel for uprisings and revolutions, but if the leaders who now so loudly sound the bugle of union will keep their heads and the mob that they may gather will not get out of control, the movement may prove to be the beginning of the first Philippine opposition party to gain control of the government. On the contrary, if the leaders lose their heads and become drunk with success, or if their mobs overwhelm them, they will have started something that they will regret and for which posterity will never forgive them.

Let us enumerate the groups that are being attracted to the popular front camp. They are the sakdalists, the followers of General Emilio Aguinaldo and Bishop Gregorio Aglipay, perhaps the tangulans, and, of course, every brand of men who have fancied or real grievances against the ruling party or the present administration. Let me hasten to add that there will also be, as there have already been, men of convictions and ideals who will trek to the new consolidated party, either from the Quezon fold or from ranks

heretofore indifferent to politics.

The resulting aggregation will be fearful and unruly. Many in its camp will consider no remedy short of violence for the conditions that they denounce. The sakdalists and the tangulans have a bloody record, and most of the followers of General Aguinaldo once or twice resorted to revolution to effect the beliefs that they sought. Our communists of the Moscow brand will take little persuasion to take up bolos and bullets although the more thoughtful socialists will probably line up with the sane and prudent.

Overwhelming, therefore, the recruits of the Popular Front party will probably be ignorant, misinformed and misled citizens who approve of the primitive method of taking the law in one's hands. But their greatest need, fortunately, is sane and thoughtful leadership, and the leaders of the Popular Front party should, if they care, be able to furnish it.

SAKDALIST PLAN DEMONSTRATION BEFORE EXPERTS

Just a sample of the stupidity that the Popular Front leaders must contend with if they are to win faith and confidence for themselves and their group. There is current a report that the sakdalistas, urged by their fugitive leader, are planning to meet the joint committee of experts with a demonstration, resorting to violence if this is necessary to carry out their plan. But the point is not the threat but the false belief from which the plan derives its inspiration.

It is stated that Benigno Ramos was in Washington at the time that President Quezon was there; that he had overshadowed the Philippine President with his presence; that he had asked President Roosevelt to grant an earlier independence than the Tydings-McDuffie law provides; and that, in response to his plea, the American President is now sending the joint committee to see if the alleged Ramos plea can be granted. Because of this report, which the sakdalists are reported to believe implicitly, in spite of the fact that Ramos has not and cannot leave Japan for being arrested, they are bent on meeting the MacMurray committee if President Roosevelt is sending it in response to Ramos' plea, the sakdalists must simply meet the group and show that they approve Ramos' action with all their hearts.

If Ramos had set foot on American soil he would have been immediately collared and deported to the Philippines for trial and conviction. This should be proof enough that he has never been in America. As every intelligent person knows, the committee is the tangible result of President Quezon's work in Washington. It was formed following consultations with him. In fact, he appointed the committee's Filipino members who constitute about half of the entire group.

And the committee is not coming here to hear pleas for immediate or remote independence, but to make some inquiries regarding the most practical and equitable liquidation of Philippine-American economic relations, and in reference not only to the provisions of the Independence Act but also the Quezon Plan for independence in 1939. It will be a reflection on the understanding and judgement of those responsible if they were to publicly misunderstand or misconstrue the mission of the committee.

FIRST JOB OF POPULAR FRONT

(Continued on page 13)

GIRLS, HAVE YOU SELECTED YOUR PROFESSION?
YOUR BUSINESS?

Enroll at the

"VISAYAN SCHOOL OF MODIFIED HAIR SCIENCE"

ENTRANCE FEE: ₱10.00 ONLY.
Instructor: MRS. V. DE MORANTE
Experienced & Aguinaldo Graduate

Juan Luna Corner Manalili Sts.

Cebu City

For An...

(Continued from page 8)

IS EDUCATIONAL.

Thus it is evident that the first tasks of the Popular Front party, after it has capitalized the credulity of potential followers, will be to displace mythical and bankrupt direction with sane and responsible leadership. The new party must recruit followers, it is true, by baiting them with a semblance of affinity in political beliefs and ideals. But once recruited, the recruits must be educated and converted. The various factions, after they have converged, must themselves be integrated or there will be war among themselves.

This job will be difficult. But there are men in the Popular Front who should be able to do it. It will be in its accomplishment that the statesmanship of Sumulong, the judiciousness of Abeto, the foresight of Jaranilla, the generalship of Alejandrino, the spirituality of Bishop Aglipay, and the unifying genius of Aguinaldo will serve the party in good stead.

"It is safer for the country," a thoughtful public official said just the other day, referring to the Popular Front party, "for intelligent men to take our radicals of all brands under their wings. I shall feel much safer with the sakdalists, the Communists, and the tangulans under the influence and leadership of Sumulong, Abeto, Alejandrino and Jaranilla than under the spell of Ramos."

The sentiment he expressed, it is safe to assert, is representative of that of every thoughtful citizen. Self-seeking, irresponsible leadership by agitators has been behind our radical movements. If the

Popular Front party succeeds in replacing it with something truly sane and responsible, it will quickly win public gratitude.

UNIFYING ISSUE INITIAL NEEDY OF NEW PARTY

It has been stated that United States High Commissioner McNutt's July 4 dissertation on democracy has given the Front its rallying cry. If this is true, the High Commissioner has contributed something of lasting value to Philippine politics. He has thus not only created an issue; he has shown that there are political issues lying around waiting to be picked up.

The Popular Front party needs a platform that not only will attract followers but will also serve as a program of constructive accomplishments once given the reins of government by popular vote. And this is the time to select the timber for its planks. The coming into fore of a National Constitution is the time to define a cleavage between political thought and norms, it was during the first years of the American Constitution that Jefferson and Hamilton evolved the respective philosophies of the Democratic and Republican parties and their forerunners.

So far, however, the new party's acts have been characterized by exaggerated criticisms and pointless polemics. If it waste away its energies on nonsensicals and nonessentials, it will have no strength for a worthy cause. It is time that it draft a program of constructive activity and the husband its energies and resources for its accomplishment.

Independence as a political issue is passé. Our voters know by now that it is far more important that we prepare ourselves properly for

independence than cry for its grant at the earliest date. A new party that can present no better issue than independence at an early or late date has today no excuse for being.

How shall we solve our economic problems? How shall we allow our government to develop under the Constitution; shall it be centralized or decentralized? Shall we observe the coordination of department and the system of check and balance, or shall we give supremacy to the Judiciary, Executive or Legislature? How shall we best secure international security? How can we effectively carry out the objective of free universal education required by the Constitution?

These and other equally important matters could serve as the basis of a comprehensive platform. The Popular Front party must explore them thoroughly for promising planks.

AGITATION AND CONSTRUCTION GO TOGETHER

It is true that parties out of power must create discontent against the party in power. But it is an opposition party's responsibility and duty to satisfy, when given a chance, the very discontent that it may thus create. To fail to do this is to be short on the constructive side of politics.

The Popular Front party has been most efficient in creating discontent against Quezon administration. It has, however, shown no evidence that it will be able to satisfy the discontent that it is creating. And it needs not be said that it is such a discrepancy as this that has been responsible for every political chaos resulting from a change party, regime or order.

Let us take care that we do not lead the country into chaos—that the profound stirring among our masses will not become a national commotion, a fatal convulsion.

* * *

EUGENIANO O. PEREZ

ATTORNEY-AT LAW

Tel. 787

Corner Martires & Manahili Streets.

CEBU, CEBU, PHILIPPINES



IGNACIO TAILORING
AND
Dry Cleaning

66-68 JUAN LUNA St.
Cebu City, PHILIPPINES

PROMPT, EFFICIENT
AND COURTEOUS
SERVICE ARE GUARANTEED BY THE
MANAGEMENT.

TRY AND YOU
WILL BELIEVE IT.

Antonio K. Ignacio
Mgr. & Prop.