

Speech delivered by Sen. Dominador R. Aytona during the opening of the 1st Provincial Rural Congress, Aleneo de Naga Gymnasium December 9, 1968.

This Caceres Archdiocesan Rural Congress is another timely move of the church to work out and dispense social justice among the masses - the million of "Forgotten Filipinos." And the theme of this congress - "is truly appropriate and realistic. For now and in the years immediately ahead particularly in the decade of the 1970's the rural areas are and will be critical field of the contest between the Free World and Communism. And as we fortunately find ourselves aligned with the Free World against the godless forces of Communism, the dividing line between Church and State on matters of statecraft dissolves into a joint social commitment to alleviate the lot of the teeming masses. This commitment realizes only too well the overwhelming importance of the loyalty of the rural population in the preservation of our sacred institution and the grand strategy of the Communist of winning first the hearts and minds of the peasants and the workers, who comprise the vast majority of the population of most countries of the world, if not all.

Our Choice

Our choice therefore is clear: To achieve socio-economic progress in freedom. Otherwise we will have no more choice. Or this progress, if it may be called such, will be attained, not through self-sacrifice and voluntary discipline, but through state discipline imposed harshly and brutally by communist dictators. Progress in freedom will then be supplanted by human slavery for the materialistic advancement of a Communist state.

Difficulty of Task

Our task embodied in our choice to effect progress in freedom is difficult of achievement. This is so because our problems have multiplied and have become compounded through all these years. But it can and must be achieved. There's still time. But we must make every minute counts. The "social volcano" is seething and rumbling.

Our Problems

At the core of our problem is the so-called population explosion. Our present population of 1.5 million is increasing at the rate of 3.2 per cent every year, or more than one million. It is no wonder then that the financial resources of the government are strained for more educational and health facilities, infrastructures and housing projects and the creation of more job opportunities for the ever-growing legions of the unemployed, not to mention the requirements of national defense, and internal peace and order. Aggravating these problems are the stupidity, cupidity and immorality of politicians and their proteges. May their tribe decrease.

From Local To National

Since the national government is overburdened with basic demands from the people and with putting up economic and industrial projects, one way of solving our problems is to start locally, to appraise and utilize local values, to marshal and harness local talents and resources, like what this Rural Congress is doing. This is the sensible way to start, from the bottom to the top, from the local level to the national plateau. This admirably is self-help, not waiting for help from the national government, although help is welcome.

Works and Goals

The main goal of this Congress is the social and economic development of the twin provinces of Camarines Norte and Camarines Sur, including the cities of Naga and Iriga, as a means of improving the livelihood of the poverty-stricken masses, brightening their hopes for the future and strengthening their faith in our Christian traditions. The masses should be educated, guided and helped in developing their initiatives and exploiting the natural resources of their community. These can be done by you, the delegates to this Congress,



Sen. Dominador Aytona

through person-to-person contact the holding of seminars and the organization of credit and cooperative unions.

Projects

Individual or group projects, such as poultry, piggery, home or cottage industry, should be established after careful studies and plans are made, including the human and natural resources of a particular community, marketing and transportation of goods. The point to be considered here is the tapping of local values - manpower and indigenous resources. These projects should be started modestly and gradually expanded for effective control and supervision.

Training and Organization

The delegates to this Congress should initiate the putting up of small economic projects. They should organize and train workers for these projects. And they should bear in mind that the initial projects are the crucial ones for on them rest the hopes and encouragement of the rural masses for a productive life and active community participation.

Consult with Bideco, PACO, PRRM, Etc.

To cut down on studies and plans, the delegates and the project workers should consult with the personnel of the Bicol Development Company, the Presidential Area Community Development, the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement and other agencies. From the materials and counsel of these agencies and out of their own ideas and plans, they can fashion their own blueprint for socio economic development.

Accumulation of Capital

Capital is hard to come by. But those who are able to contribute to the formation of capital should be persuaded that they are investing, not only for monetary profits, but for the improvement, perhaps the saving of human lives Filipino lives - and for the preservation of our freedom and sacred institutions. In other words, this

Viet Cong terrorists killed 213 Vietnamese civilians, wounded 496 others and kidnapped 150 throughout the Republic during the two weeks ending Nov. 16.

Terrorists incidents during the period totaled 373.

These figures were compiled from reports made by the National Police and the combined Information Center, Vietnam, which collects for the record civilian casualties caused by Viet Cong terrorists and reported by free world military forces in Vietnam.

Since January 1, Viet Cong terrorists have initiated 8,332 incidents, during which 4,805 civilians were killed, 10,719 wounded and 7,601 kidnapped.

These figures do not include the 7,424 civilians killed and the 15,434 civilians wounded during the Tet offensive last February nor those killed or wounded during the May offensive. Because of heavy, widespread fighting during these periods, it is impossible to determine how many of these civilian casualties resulted from regular military action.

New Association Organized

In a recent meeting of home owners in Naga City, a new association, the Home Owners Association, was organized. Those elected were Simeon S. Hidalgo, president; Jose Tejada, vice - president; Tomas Torres, secretary; Mario Sarte, assistant secretary; Mrs. Soledad D. Hidalgo, treasurer; Mrs. Victoria H. Bello, assistant treasurer; Felipe Imperial, auditor; Ernesto Dichoso, business manager; Jacinto Enriquez, assistant manager; Paulo Roco, press relations officer; and Judge Vicente Tuazon, adviser. The association is said to be still open for new members.

tapping local capital for local development. Contribution for the formation of capital can come from affluent members of the community, government officials and employees, priests and religious leaders to be channeled into a credit union.

Virtues of Production

The success of a project, even how modest it is, will draw the attention and admiration of the people to the virtues of reduction which will banish away apathy, indolence vice and other evils. This is specially important to children to emulate virtues of their leaders, not examples of laziness, immorality, corruption, drunkenness and what-have-you in the book of Satan. More or less, a strong and honest soul dwells in a socially and economically secured man. And finally, let us remember the words of Bishop Fulton J. Shean in the first paragraph of the first chapter of his book "Peace of soul": "Unless souls are saved, nothing is saved; there can be no world peace unless there is soul peace. World wars are only projections of the conflicts waged inside the souls of modern man, for nothing happens in the external world that has not first happened within a soul."

Editorial

The Filipinos should Understand their Geographical Position

By virtue of the special relation between the Americans and the Filipinos for a period of forty years, human nature bound us to feel as a part of America. This human feelings became universal in the relationship between a colony and colonizer.

In the case of the Philippines, it was also human nature that the gradual strangement between Filipinos and Americans had to take place from the day the Philippines was granted its independence by America.

However, in order to avoid abrupt curtailment of relationship, a treaty for mutual defense was approved by the two countries. But the dependability of that treaty becomes void once either of the contracting parties finally comes to realize that one is only a continuous burden to the other. And this means to be the attitude now of the new U.S. Administration under President Nixon. In conformity with this U.S. policy, the time has come for us to follow and stand firm on a policy that will insure our own survival. And our national survival is in our full comprehension of the fact that our country is in Asia which therefore, requires us to live in harmony and in peace with our Asiatic neighbors.

While it is true that within the perimeter of the Orient, China, North Korea and North Vietnam have embraced a communistic form of government, India, Pakistan, Burma, Singapore, South Korea, South Vietnam, Cambodia, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, the Republic of China and Japan are democratic countries. It would amount to a disservice to his country for any Asiatic nation to believe that co-existence among Asians is impossible because there is no such thing as impossible for any government if its concern is only the progress and happiness of its people. The viewpoint of President Marcos towards concentrating his efforts in building a new Asia on the basis of mutual cooperation and assistance among all Asiatic countries would be fully supported by our people.—A.G.D.

Hidalgo-Inocentes Nuptials



DR. LETICIA INOCENTES

The Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Quezon City will be the setting of the wedding of Dr. Leticia M. Inocentes and Dr. Erlin D. Hidalgo on Saturday afternoon, Dec. 21. The bride-elect is the daughter of Mrs. Laura Mariano Vda. de Inocentes of Castillejos, Zambales while the prospective bridegroom is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Simeon S. Hidalgo of Naga City.

The principal sponsors include: Rep. Ramon H. Felipe, Jr., Mrs. Dolores H. Sison, Dr. Miguel G. Zaragoza, Mrs. Lourdes C. Timario, Maj. Rufino R. Morales, Dr. Patrocinio B. Galvez, Judge Leonardo U. Afable and Mrs. Corazon A. Acayan.

In the bridal entourage are Mr. Cesar D. Hidalgo, bestman; Miss Lina S. Manzano, maid of honor; Mr. Nelson D. Hidalgo, usher; and Miss Nora D. Vasquez, bridesmaid.

Cristina M. Abdon, flower girl; Gerry A. Son'os, ring bearer; and Ronald B. Serame, coin bearer.

The secondary sponsors are: Dr. Amparo C. Isip and Dr. Romulo D. Magalita, candle; Dr. Lilian D. Madrid and Dr. Merlin Z. Hidalgo, veil; Miss Estrellita M. Abdon and Mr. Antonio M. Inocentes, Jr., cori.

Reception will follow at the Open Room, Aristocrat Restaurant, Cubao, Quezon City.