

WORKING FOR PEACE THROUGH THE UNESCO-PHILIPPINE EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION.

GERARDO FLORES

The first of its kind, the UNESCO-PHILIPPINE EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION, known for short as UPEF, has come into being as a civic organization dedicated to helping the people attain peace and happiness through education, science and culture. What is UPEF? What are its purposes? What is its program of work? What has it done? Who are the men and women devoted to its mission? These questions will be answered in this article.

A. Beginning. To Senator Geronima T. Pecson belongs the credit for having first conceived the idea of establishing a foundation to help UNESCO implement its program of peace in the Philippines through education, science and culture. The Foundation was intended to bring together government and private organizations and individuals. On September 19, 1950, the Senadora held a luncheon meeting at the Manila Hotel with Undersecretary of Education Cecilio Putong, Director of Public Schools Benito Pañgilinan, and some superintendents of schools. The group decided to approach other educators to promote the idea of organizing a foundation. In pursuance of this decision a meeting with private school educators was held on September 22. Present at this second gathering were: Director of Private Schools Manuel L. Carreon, Assistant Director Daniel Salcedo, University of Manila President Mariano de los Santos, Philippine Women's University President Francisca T.

Benitez, Far Eastern University President Vidal A. Tan, National University President Domingo Jhocson, Vice-Chancellor Segundo Infantado of the National Teachers College, Dean Perfecto E. Laguio of the Manila Law College, Dean Helena Benitez, and President Tomas Mapua of the Mapua Institute of Technology.

Encouraged by the favorable response of the second group to the appeal of the first, a final organization meeting was held on September 26. Organizers included many who were present in the first two meetings, and representatives each of the University of the Philippine Alumni Association, the Catholic Education Association of the Philippines, the Association of Christian Colleges and Schools, the Philippine Association of Colleges and Universities, and the Philippine Public School Teachers' Association. Elected officers of the Foundation were Senator Geronima T. Pecson as Chairman of the Board of Governors, Mr. Benito Pañgilinan as Vice-Chairman, Dr. Manuel L. Carreon as Vice-Chairman, Mr. Francisco Dalupan as Treasurer and member of the Board, and the writer as Secretary and member of the Board.

On October 10, 1950, the Foundation held another meeting and approved its Constitution and By-Laws. Also elected as members of the Board of Governors in addition to the officers already mentioned were Dr. Manuel V. Gallego, Dr. Roxy Lefforge, Mr. Jesus

Paredes, Mr. Antonio A. Maceda, Mr. Federico Piedad and Mr. Hermenegildo R. Reyes. All officers of the Foundation serve without compensation of any kind.

B. Aims of the Foundation. Recognizing that government action, in making education, science and culture contribution to peace and well-being will not produce maximum results unless supported wholeheartedly by the people, the Foundation enlisted the active membership of educators and friends of education to help realize the following goals:

To contribute to the realization of the objectives established in the Constitution of the Philippines for education, science and culture.

To contribute to the implementation of UNESCO's program of peace and welfare through education, science and culture.

C. Program of Work. A meeting of the Board of Governors was held on December 7, 1950 to consider a draft program of work of the Foundation. At a subsequent meeting of the Foundation on January 11, 1951, the program outlined below was approved. For the year 1951 the Foundation has set as its focus of attention the promotion of fundamental and adult education.

1. Fundamental and Adult Education

a. Should the UPEF recommend a "Pilot" project on fundamental education and assist in carrying it out as a means of improving home and community living in a community in or near Manila, wherein private as well as public agencies may collaborate? If so what plan should be proposed? Should not the UPEF help arrange

for the holding of seminars or work shops on fundamental education?

b. A plan for a production center of audio-visual materials for fundamental and adult education... Is legislation on this necessary? If so a bill should be drafted.

c. Formulating other legislation on fundamental and adult education that might be recommended to Congress. Is the cultural mission of Mexico applicable to the Philippines?

d. Should the UPEF recommend a commemorative stamp to mark the golden jubilee year of the present educational system that was established by Act 74 of the Philippine Commission in 1901? ...Sponsoring a fitting celebration of the event.

2. Youth Movements

a. Helping implement the UNESCO resolution to develop a world friendship flag and issuance of friendship postage stamps.

b. Exploring the possibilities of a united youth council in the Philippines to include representatives of youth organizations such as:

(1) Boy Scouts of the Philippines.

(2) Girl Scouts of the Philippines

(3) Junior Red Cross, etc.

c. Study possibilities of inter-organizational gatherings of youths.

d. Campaigning for the teaching among the youth of UNITED NATIONS and its specialized agencies.

3. Human Rights Propagation

a. Translating the fundamental declaration of human rights into vernaculars for distribution to different schools and libraries.

b. Celebration of Human Rights Day on December 10, 1950.

c. Historical study on the development of human rights in the Philippines.

d. Preparation of a brochure on "Let Freedom Ring" and distributing it to libraries.

4. Exchange of Persons

a. Disseminating information about study abroad to schools and colleges.

b. Survey of possibilities of exchanging professors between the Philippines and foreign countries and furnishing colleges and universities with the information.

c. Surveys of possibilities of exchanging students.

5. Utilization of Science

a. Study on the needs of colleges and universities of technical equipment with a view to urging the membership of the Philippines in the UNESCO Coupon Scheme.

b. Evaluation of nutritional data available in the Philippines.

c. Encouraging the organization of Science Clubs in schools and colleges.

d. Evaluation of data on food and people in the Philippines to show:

- (1) Surplus areas and deficit areas
- (2) Means of soil conservation
- (3) Means of conservation of

food resources in water areas

- (4) Means of increasing production in low production areas

6. Removal of the Causes of Tensions

a. Study of Filipino-Chinese tensions

b. Study of tensions caused by the Huk uprising

c. Study of religious tensions

d. Study of regionalistic tensions

e. Study of economic tensions

7. Utilization of Press, Radio and Motion Pictures and Other Means of Communications to Advance UNESCO Aims

a. Arranging a regular radio-cast for the UPEF... Preparing radio scripts based on the brochures produced by the Foundation.

b. Study of obstacles to academic freedom in schools in the Philippines.

c. Study of obstacles to the free flow of information in the Philippines.

d. Drafting legislation on mobile libraries in rural areas.

8. International Understanding

a. Compiling lists of curricular materials on international understanding for use in schools and colleges.

b. Preparing a brochure on "The Philippines in International Councils."

c. Preparing a brochure on UNESCO's work in the Philippines.

9. Cultural Growth

a. Studies of Filipino folklore or folk materials in music, myths, legends, costumes, games, etc.

b. Formulating a plan of encouraging the translation of great work of other nations into Philippine languages and translating Filipino works into English or Spanish.

c. Encouraging the establishment of school museums.

d. Preparing a brochure on "Great Men and Women of the Philippines."

e. Preparing brochures on "Ways of Living."

10. Membership and Promotion of Association and Fund Campaign

a. Formulating a plan for fund campaign for fundamental education.

b. Formulating a plan for increasing the membership of UNESCO-PHILIPPINE EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION.

11. Technical Assistance

a. Studying the possibilities of technical assistance in vocational education.

b. Studying possibilities of technical assistance in implementing the Municipal Library Law.

c. Studying possibilities of technical assistance in private school projects.

D. Progress Report. Work in the Foundation, being purely on a volunteer basis without compensation, is a work of love. Summa-

rized in the succeeding paragraphs are indications of the progress the Foundation has made since its establishment.

It has 33 charter members, 26 regular members, 1112 associate members, and 38 Junior associate members. Boosting its financial resources are 11 sustaining members. The total membership is therefore 1182.

In spite of its limited funds, which at present amount to ₱15,258.95, it has made an initial contribution of \$1,025.00 to UNESCO for its peace program.

UNESCO's program was disseminated in the provinces and cities mainly through the active cooperation of the Bureau of Public Schools. The Chairman and other members of the Foundation made frequent visits to places outside Manila to promote UNESCO objectives. Among the places visited which featured important gatherings of educators were Leyte, Bohol, Cebu, Negros Occidental, Capiz, Pangasinan, Cagayan, Baguio, and Albay. In every place visited the response to UNESCO was one of complete and enthusiastic collaboration. Evidence of this fact is found in the nationwide interest in implementing the community-centered school idea which has brought adults within the reach of the influence of the school, particularly in citizenship training, functional literacy work, occupational improvement, health, and betterment of living conditions. This is fundamental education in action. The results have been especially fruitful in Cagayan, Bataan, Bohol, Iloilo and Oriental Negros.

A beginning has been made in coordinating the work of youth

associations. President de los Santos of the University of Manila has met with representatives of the Boy Scouts, the Girl Scouts, the YMCA, the YWCA, and the Junior Red Cross. Lines of cooperation were explored in the meeting.

UPEF has been keenly interested in promoting greater exchange of persons. It has helped in arranging trips and study abroad for deserving Filipino educators. Recently, the University of the Philippines granted 25 scholarships to foreign students. This placed the Philippines not only among the ranks of recipients but also among the donors of benefits.

The Universal Declaration of Fundamental Human Rights has been translated into Tagalog, Pampango, Samareño, Ilocano, Pangasinan, and Maranao. Other translations are in process of being completed. The Ilocano and Pangasinan versions have been reproduced for use in adult gatherings.

Brochures on various subjects like "Youth in Action," "Freedom from Want," "Literacy for Citizenship," "Boosting Your Income," "Health Is Wealth," etc. are being assigned for production. They will be used in fundamental education work. UNESCO pamphlets and documents have been distributed to many school libraries where a UNESCO COLLECTION is being built. Recently a program of building children's libraries has been arranged with CARE. The first donation was made recently in Quezon City.

A significant contribution was made by the Library of Congress of the UNITED STATES through

representations made by the Chairman of UPEF with Librarian Luther H. Evans. Ten thousand volumes on various subjects constituted the initial donation. Spain, too, is making a similar donation. These gestures of generosity have been received with deep gratitude by the Filipinos.

UPEF has been active in legislation. It is especially fortunate in having in Congress champions of education, science and culture. The law creating the UNESCO National Commission of the Philippines, which was authored by UPEF's Chairman Senator Pesson, was approved by Congress unanimously and was signed by the President of the Philippines on May 26, 1951. With an expanded membership of thirty and a larger appropriation of ₱120,000.00, the Commission is expected to boost considerably UNESCO's program in the coming fiscal year. Through its Chairman, UPEF pressed for a five-year health program for the nations, a financial aid for the Girl Scouts of the Philippines, a program for mobile library units, and an elementary education policy bill. The first two have become laws, while the last two measures are awaiting action in the Lower House.

At present UPEF, along with other educational associations, is promoting the "Golden Jubilee Celebration of the Establishment of the Philippine Educational System." Plans for a nationwide celebration have been prepared by a civic committee composed of well-known educators. The plans are now being carried out.

All in all, the first seven months of UPEF have been crowded with activities. Its organizational work has not prevented it from plung-

ing at once into promotion work, for many of the problems it has had to tackle cannot be postponed. Their urgency is accentuated by the struggle of democracy against communism right here in the Philippines. No free man can fall for the error of believing in the rosy promises of Red propagandists, if democracy can bring to him not only freedom but also a decent standard of living. UPEF is dedicated to the task of making peace an ideal to be cherished by helping the people achieve such standard of living through education, science and culture.

E. Looking Ahead. UPEF hopes to be able to raise ₱400,000.00 to enable it to contribute to the support of UNESCO's 12-year global program of fundamental education. It intends to spend part of its funds in financing local projects on fundamental and adult education. It is anxious to promote the idea of having a production center for adult education materials.

UPEF looks forward to the day when the UNESCO National Commission of the Philippines is organized to associate elements interested in education, science, and culture and invite them to pool their human and material resources in the great adventure of fostering peace and promoting human welfare. The Foundation feels optimistic in anticipating a greater impetus to UNESCO work in the Philippines in the years ahead.

Members of the Foundation. The charter members of the Foundation are: Dr. George L. Adamson, Mr. Jose C. Aguila, Mr. Martin Aguilar, Jr., Mr. Alfredo Andal, Mrs. Francisca T. Benitez,

Mr. Elias M. Caray, Dr. Manuel L. Carreon, Mr. Francisco Dalupan, Mr. Gerardo Flores, Mr. Segundo Infantado, Mr. Abdon Javier, Dr. Domingo L. Jhocson, Mr. Florentino Kapili, Mr. Perfecto E. Laguio, Mr. Gregorio Lardizabal, Dr. Roxy Lefforge, Mr. Roman F. Lorenzo, Mr. Antonio A. Maceda, Mr. Tomas Mapua, Mr. Alfredo T. Nicdao, Mr. Jesus Paredes, Jr., Mr. Benito Pañgilinan, Senator Geronima T. Pecson, Dr. Cecilio Puntong, Mr. Federico Piedad, Mr. Mariano P. Quiocho, Mr. Hermenegildo R. Reyes, Mr. Daniel Salcedo, Dr. Mariano de los Santos, Dr. Vidal A. Tan, Mr. Venancio Trinidad, and Mr. Vicente de Vera.

Sustaining members that have given substantial financial support to the Foundation are: Mr. Amado Araneta, the Asturias Sugar Central, Mr. Chick Parsons, Speaker Eugenio Perez, Far Eastern University, Go Kim Peng, Hawaiian Philippine Company, Luzon Surety Company, Pogo-Medellin Milling Company, and the San Carlos Milling Company.

Regular members now include: Senator Melecio Arranz, Mr. Marcelino Bautista, Mr. Vitaliano Bernardino, Mr. Tito A. Clemente, Mr. Tomas A. de Castro, Congressman Cesar Fortich, Mr. Vicente Garcia, Mr. Juan B. Gonzaga, Congressman Jesus Ilagan, Dr. Antonio Isidro, Mr. Renato Lichauco, Senator Enrique Magalona, Secretary Ramon Magsaysay, Mr. Jesus Martinez, Mr. Arcadio Matela, Senator Justiniano Montano, Mr. Macario Naval, Senator Macario Peralta, Jr., Mr. Matias Perez, Dr. Pedro T. Orata, Mr. Emiliano C. Ramirez, Mr. Luis F. Reyes, Mr. Mariano Salazar, Senator Lorenzo Sumulong, Mr. Fran-

cisco Tonogbanua, and Mr. Jose Y. Tuazon.

Associate members enrolled come from: Aurora District Teachers, Baguio City Residents, Cagayan de Oro City Teachers, Cagayan Teachers' College Faculty members, Cebu City teachers, Central Luzon Agricultural College faculty members, Infanta teachers, Initao Elementary School teachers, Lanuza Elementary School teachers, Lopez Jaena Elementary School teachers, Manila City School supervisors and principals, Noveleta Elementary School teachers, Pitogo Elementary School

teachers, Pinamalayan District teachers, Philippine Normal College faculty members, Philippine School of Commerce faculty members, Quezon City Public School teachers, San Isidro Elementary School teachers, San Quintin Public School teachers, Rosario Elementary School teachers, West District teachers, and the Zamboanga City teachers.

Junior associate members include students from the Philippine School of Arts and Trades, and the Infanta Junior High School, Infanta, Quezon.

—oOo—

Gould

Latest in:

SPORTS EQUIPMENTS

Manufactured by

THE EDUCATIONAL DISTRIBUTORS

1818 Pedro Guevara

Manila