

THE LETTER lay there. Its drabness in contrast to the white-starched linen sheets. Tear-drenched and crumpled but still showing the crease where it had been folded. Top edges as if torn and pinched by something thin and sharp. The date... December 24... Plain type-writing paper, the kind you can get at most office stationery stores. Typewritten. Firm and bold strokes. Clean and clear-cut lines. Determination and strength of will showed thru.

The fingers holding the letter were taut and strained. Slim fingers. The hand, pale, almost white but alive. Strained veins showed thru the well-formed forearms. Slim hands and fingers but not sinewy. Pale now

thing deep that only our two hearts can understand."

"My gift to you Lyd. Nothing much, but with it goes the glow of giving to someone so dear to me."

"The gift is meaningless, if the essence of the giving is not in the giver. Oh, Ric... it's the love that goes with it that is dearer to me."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Remember Darling how you used to make fun of me."

"When did I, Ric?"

"When you teased me about my handwriting. You used to say, but how can I understand what you mean? I can only read up to the third sentence. All the others are cryptograms. And the fun we had trying to decipher all. But as you used to say the ending is all I need

confided to her our dreams and plans. You should see the glow in her eyes, her very wishes for our happiness whenever I bring us up. The girls at the office are looking forward up to this party. Lucy, Carol, Fe and Pets, will be there and so with the others. Even Vic has consented to go. He'll carry you bodily, so he promised, if you won't go."

\* \* \* \* \*

The letter continued:

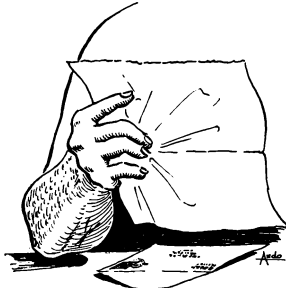
I had always my misgiving and doubts. Could this happiness last? You always knew best Lyd, and you were so set on that. I want your happiness and if it is this, so be it. I was uneasy of course, to the point of clumsiness. Who wouldn't be with those big names of the 400? Your mother, I love her for that, made me feel at home though.

You had always intrigued me. Those lapses of aristocratic mien and voice. The haughtiness you show inadvertently at times in front of our crowd. Sometimes you

•  
*Short Story*  
•

# NOCTURNE

by Patricia C. Reynes



but could have been creamy peach without the tension, the body not in agony.

The hand clutched and unclutched, as deep and heart wrenching sobs shook the body. Sheer agony from soundless sighs. The body shaking convulsively and the hand never letting go off the letter. Clutching it as if for life itself... Why?... The letter, yes, the letter... It began...

*Darling Lyd,*

*Fervent wishes to you for the joys and happiness of the season. This should have begun with a "Merry Christmas"... but let me hope that you are in your merriest mood when you read this. I know you will open this the last. The envelope is addressed to you in my handwriting, so you will keep this for yourself alone. Could I be with you now, but please read on.*

"Merry Christmas, Darling."

"Merry Christmas, Ric. You know, how I wished I were a poet. There is something that I want to say but the words are not with me to convey to you that which is in me. Some-

thing to know... I love you."

\* \* \* \* \*

I should not have come, Lyd, think of the time we spent. The time we spent trying to fit every minute of these few days to our plans. We should not have changed them... Now this... bitterness and regret.

"I know how you feel, Ric. But nothing will be taken away from our plans. Only the place will be different, and this would mean much more to us. Besides, the whole gang will be there. Mother will be disappointed if you wouldn't come. She had promised me this party, for us, for everything."

"Wouldn't I feel out of place, Lyd? With all the other guests? You might find me clumsy and not to your ways in their presence?"

"But we are no different from you. Mother understands that I know, she will be glad to see you. Do you think she doesn't know about us? Oh, how many times had I

make us feel rank outsiders. I could not understand you those times. I just couldn't get away from that feeling that you are not what you show to me, to us, to be. You are so high up, untouchable and unattainable. Only when together alone, and you snugly in my arms will that feeling pass away. At nights, I reassure myself that this all is not a dream, that it is real, and that you are mine... But I have always wondered.

I remember first meeting you at our annual office outing. Remember how I gaped at you openmouthed? You must have laughed at me then. You didn't show it though, but your eyes did. There was a challenge in them.

\* \* \* \* \*

"Enjoying yourself, Mr. Villar? "Huh... Why... er... I mean yes... Miss...?"

"Aragon... Lydia... call me Lyd for short."

"Tired or resting?... Fine weather for our picnic and ideal for outdoor dancing. You seem to be en-

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## Nocturne . . .

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joying this. . . . . must be a novelty to the rich to be with us. . . . the working class, I mean." "Seems to me, I have seen you somewhere. . . now. . . could that be you I saw featured in the issue of Pictorial Review?" Featured at the Manila Hotel or some other swanky place. Fashion girl of the years' debutantes."

"But I'm not what you are thinking of, Mr. Villar. Can I call you Ric?"

"Are you not Evelyn Orozco?" the Real Estate Magnate's daughter?"

"No, Ric. . . She's a distant cousin though. We look alike to be twins. But you flatter me though. . . comparing me to Eve. . . Evelyn."

I should have known then when you stammered thru that Evelyn business. You couldn't be any other. But I was dazzled by your nearness.

You had a patent on slacks. The way you filled your slacks with superb form and grace. The amiety, the grace you held your body. The unseemly tilt of your face towards me. Those eyes of mirth and laughter. Of challenge. Those lovely red lips, so near. . . to taste those half opened laughing lips. I held on to myself.

You must have noticed my agitation. Take it easy Ric, myself to me. You might get burnt fingers. You are just fun to her today. Tomorrow you are just of the train of admirers. You must have plenty of them then, even as you have now.

"There's the music again, you dance, don't you Ric?"

"Would you? It would be a pleasure. . . . May I call you that?"

"But you are."

I had you in my arms. I didn't dare count the seconds the music will last. I closed my eyes, lost in heaven. The very nearness of you. Near the end of the music, I opened my eyes, and your's were there, silently laughing at me, daring me. Mysterious and intriguing. Not of pity though nor of compassion. I love you for that Darling. How many times did we dance, Lyd? I was a bit clumsy at first, but you made me feel at ease. Easily and snugly you fitted into my arms.

Vic saw us and so with the others. Fe and Pete sat out watching us. At the end, Fe, called out "Ric, must

## An Appeal To All Students

A well deserved project offers itself to the University of San Carlos. The project would consist in building up a literary collection of the works composed by prominent Visayan authors. The execution of such a plan however is beset with a serious difficulty owing to the nearly complete destruction of Cebu City during the last war. In consequence of this obstacle, we appeal to all students of San Carlos requesting them to review the book collections of their parents, grandparents, other relatives, and friends in search of any preserve editions or manuscripts of Visayan authors. The knowledge as to whether such books and manuscripts exist, and where they are to be found would be of immense service to our information, for the time being. It is hoped that later on the USC may build up a microfilm collection of these works which are practically unavailable.

The expenditure of such effort is truly worthwhile, since valuable literary works may get lost completely. Incidentally it may be remarked that our Graduate School intends to make these works a special object of its studies.

Teofilo del Castillo's "Brief History of Philippine Literature" mentions the names of the following Visayan writers:

Fernando Buysar y Aquino	Manuel Laserna
Salvador Clocan	Angel Magahum y Merle
Valentin Cristobal	Jose M. Nave
Jimena Danato	Amado Osorio Naverate
Celestino Gallares	Herberto Remauldez
Erlerto Gumban	Serapion C. Torre
Cornelio Hiledo	Vicente Sotto
Jose M. Ingallo	Pablo Zorogosa
Peregrino Javalana	

Any information about the works of these and other Visayan authors will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you,

—The Dean of the Graduate School.

I remind you?" Your eyes looked up to mine with an unspoken query. . . Who is she? . . . I could see the relief in your eyes when I told you that she was a cousin of mine.

Fe and Pete who was with her were getting married by next June. She's working with us and she is getting the feel of an office with the hope that she can be of help to Pete in his law firm. That is after the honeymoon. You looked relieved. Lovely she is, you told me. All women are lovely when in love, I answered. Your eyes were quizzical. There was a hint of coquettiness in them. Could you mean me? Your eyes asked.

How they made fun of me on the way home. Specially Vic. He is my roommate. Don't be a fool chum, he admonished me. You should see the stag line. You know, Vic continued, the trouble with you is that you are grinding your nose at your work all day. You haven't even noticed her until now. Or have you. You haven't noticed the glances she throws at you at times.

Were these true, Lyd? Vic continued. . . Sometimes, I wonder. Mr. Montano, the boss shows a distinct difference to her. Could it be that her family owns this firm? Mr.

Montano is all hands when near her, or is he the favored one in the stag lines.

Oh, but I answered Vic. She's not the one you're thinking about she has just told me. Could be, countered Vic. But she definitely is an image of Miss Orozco. Vic had me there. It was both an answer and a question.

Monday after. All day and you didn't even give me a glance. Was Vic perhaps right? You were cruel that day. Everybody seemed to be expecting something from me, they were watching us. Fe was all pity. I couldn't get the courage to walk over and talk to you. So near and yet so far. Were you thinking of me then Darling? But you saved the day for me.

"Feeling low down Ric? You asked.

"Why No. . . I wanted to hurt you." Glad you still remember me. Though it all ended up yesterday."

"How can you say such? . . . There was a hurt in your voice.

"Please forgive me, Miss Aragon. Let me invite you to a coke to make up for my rudeness."

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## ON DA LEVEL . . .

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in a conference held at a local university. We have high hopes for this association because we believe that the CEGS means turkey in local college journalism. In fact, the different editors that compose the CEGS have come up with the maiden issue of their official organ, THE COLLEGE TEMPER. It is published once in every two months. For the record, it may be said that the CEGS out-CEGED the CEG of the Philippines. Please repeat the line and please examine your tongues. . . . .

At press time, the Catholic populace is still boiling over the revelation in the Sentinel, purporting to show that three top Education officials are hatching on a macabre plan of eliminating Religious Instruction. Tch, tch. . . If the charges be found to hold water, we respectfully suggest that these officials be awarded charity tickets to Moscow with our sincerest compliments!

Students are showing healthy signs of interest for newspapers. They are showing. Period. Just inch over to a serious-minded newspaper hog and you'll find him in inter-stellar hazards with Buck Rogers or Exmark. He doesn't give a dee about news items, you know. And what's more, if you just wait long enough, he'll tap you on your shoulder and borrow your pen. Don't frown. Just give with the pen so he will not purloin the crossword puzzle section. The writer knows whereof he speaks. . . . .

Many a recurrent theme of gripes from certain quarters is the alleged domination of law students on the pages of the Carolinian. The E-in-C himself was a law student, now turned Liberal for reasons unknown even to the missus. Ssssh!! Bulldozing for four grueling years of student-lawyering, he was just about to get the sheepskin when he found out that he wanted to be a loyal Liberal first. Wonder what took him so doggone long. In the present set-up of the "C", most of the pen-sloshers are Law students to boot.

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## NOCTURNE . . .

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There you were, with the voice I longed to hear all day. You smiled your forgiveness and the world was forgotten. Did I really hurt you that afternoon? There was fire in your eyes, that too ended suddenly. Your husky and soft voice always makes my heart go thumping and alfluter. . .

How many times had we been together after that? Or had you already picked me out. I was madly in love with you. You must have sensed it. Sometimes you were for from me. Sometimes so near and so enticing. Nights I slept listlessly. Wanting the morrow to come. The day's end seemed so long. Walking with you. Talking with you.

Yes, I had told you about my girl friends when you asked. Of Gloria, the daughter of the richest man in town and why I couldn't dare say to her how I felt. There was that unseen barrier that separated us with a finality. Gloria and their kind took it for granted that their life was the only kind. They don't know and care to know how the others lived. If ever that should come to me, it should come with a meaning. There has to be a reason for it. . .

How the days and weeks flew by. Nine to five weekdays. Eight to two Saturdays. I kept my nose to the daily grind for I wanted to learn more. Saturday afternoons. Sundays. Again with you. The surcease to the pace I have been setting for myself. Times when you begged leave not to be with me. Insane jealousy reared its head within me for no reason at all. You had headaches or you've got to be with your mother to the province. . .

And then December. Cool nights and balmy days. The world awakening to something joyous. The sense of anticipation in the children's eyes, the hustle and activity in everyone. Misa de Gallos. Our first Christmas together. The Office crowd's Christmas eve party. . . and you were mine. . . remember?

You gave me your package. Each one of us had one. We were to exchange gifts together. Just a small one, with all the pretty ribbons. "Merry Christmas Ric." I took the package and opened it. Your eyes were on me. Queening eyes. Slowly I unravelled the lovely ribbons, inside. . . a handwrought!

## VACATIONS, AAAHHH! . . .

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like to talk about those days when Andres Bonifacio and Tandang Sora were still in circulation, or they talk about those days when swimming was had in balintawaks. Well. . . well, it's good to be re-viewed on Philippine history. Signs of city life are however shown there. Like for example, pedal-pushers and jeans. These are always in vogue but they are worn by old men while plowing fields and harvesting. With these various mountain sceneries, the international fair booths can start packing and leave for their respective countries. . . *sour grapes*.

However, I will bring along with me treasured copies of *The Carolinian* as souvenir to lessen the longing and yearning for the school and faces of dear Carolinians. It will also bring back memories of the serenading of dormitories, counting posts in the streets, the parties, jam sessions, excursions, picnics, born dances, and miscellaneous activities in school and out of school.

So, friends and classmates, graduates and undergraduates, ends another schoolyear. With a Shakespearean "Parting is such sweet sorrow" attitude I wish you all a very happy vacation. Don't grow too fat, for you might have a difficult time enrolling yourselves. You know what I mean. Just pack up your things and take it on the lam. Good-bye, I hate to see you go butaaaaa. . . have good time!! *Bueno . . . somos diferentes. . . er. . . er. . . Mi cafetal. . . hasta la vista!!*

heart-shaped locket of solid gold. "Open it Ric" you asked me. A cameo likeness of you inside and the inscription. . . From me to Ric, with love. . .

There was love in your eyes, lips half parted. I just took you in my arms. The hunger of you was in that kiss. You didn't resist. You kissed me back. "I love you" that was all that I could say. Soft and warm, you snuggled up to me whispered my name. Pushing me gently from you, holding me at arms length, your eyes shining with me. . . I'll never forget that night.

And now this. You are Evelyn Orozco. Evelyn Maria Lydia Orozco y Aragon. The year's debutant. (Continued on page 39)

## THE YOUTHFUL URGE

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with the gentleness of a dawn breeze, and to draw! with a permission *a-la* Patricia Neal. Finally if worse comes to worst, one can only go to the nearest dentist and with the cleanest of brand-new-teeth smile her way on to eternity.

There are those, however, who maintain that age not only can be restrained from passing by a clean, cool bath from the good, old Magic Fountain but also by sustaining the original form and symmetry of limbs and body. Thus the birth of Diet-ing. Those under this school start on a valiant mission of self-starvation and if one really likes to be a hero, one gets a coffin for a medal. Hero-casualties of this invention, however, are becoming less and less with the advent of another science aimed at achieving the same end—the preservation of the “morning glory.” Here many novelities are introduced ranging from coffee, chocolates, multi-vitamins, pills, massage, to early mornings and late evenings.

While it is true that this diet-ethical device for capturing perpetual exuberance really has its merits and possibilities, still there is to account the forever youthful fact that Nature always has her own way of showing no matter what, and considering that nowhere in this world is there a clime wherein everybody isn't crazy about eating, it is no small wonder to note why some would rather be funereally young than gastronomically old.

te, voted most lovely and charming by all society editors. You must have had your fun. Why didn't you tell me Lyd? Why did this have to go on?

I should have known when you give me the address yesterday. And I shouldn't have come. That would have been better. The full impact didn't fall on me until I was at the gate to your mansion.

I stood there, how long? Dizzily I heard you call me. Ric, Ric. You were radiant in all your beauty. You pulled me inside. You said you were waiting for me to be sure. My head hadn't cleared up then. You presented me to your Mother, your circle of friends. They acknowledged the introduction with an

## CAMPUSCRATS. . .

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light-footed dancers who pirouetted and lilted around this enchanted garden.

PHIL RUIZ entertained the audience immensely with his singing. He appealed especially to the teen-agers who were simply crazy over his rendition of modern hits.

To introduce something novel and radical some commerce studes decided to transform the stage into a cotton field in ol' Virginia.... they gave us a picture of the niggers breaking the monotony of work by top-dancing. Brother! it was so hard to recognize the real identity of the dancers. You know who those pink-mouthed, colored folks were? Here they are: GEORGE ARCILLA, LOLONG PASCUAL, ELIZA STA. CRUZ (star-dancer) ROSARIO REYES, ANNIE RATCLIFFE, ADELAIDA, LILIA CORCUERA, AURELIA JADULCO, INDALECIA ANDO, and ESTRELLA ZAPANTA.

"Tummy" Echivarre... he thought the parade to be too short. "Gosh!" he said "It took us only a few minutes speeding 'round the City."

A coed and a rogue introduced for the first time Ballet Moderne here in USC. The dance which was entitled: "She is working her way thru College" was danced on toes by ESTERLINA MAN-CAO and EDDY PASCUAL. It was certainly an entertaining repertoire.

Now it is not only going to be a mere so-long but a good-bye to you all. Say how about joining us in saying: Vacation here we come!!... Exams!... pooh! why think about 'em? Pooh! Pooh!

## Nocturne

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indulging mien. Did they acknowledge the man? the unknown one? Could this be the latest plaything of Eve? What they had in mind, I don't know and don't care to know.

Now I understood all with the full impact. The nights you pleased headaches. The days you were away. Then that day, a year ago before two days before Christmas. That could not have been anybody else but you coming down the car. You were with your society clique. I rushed up to you, calling you.... Lyd... Lyd... You just stared at me and thru me. In a haughty voice you asked me if I was addressing you. I felt so small.

## ON DA LEVEL. . .

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However, through no fault of our own, some students got cold feet. Others didn't give two chips about unveiling their journalistic talents. We assure our readers that we (not I alone) would only be too glad to eat our words (bunk!) if we come back next year and find windfalls of contributions—not sickly doggerels and smelly prose like we have in this column.

Pentong, our flash-happy photographer, perks on the same sour tune ever since the USC Day Parade was over. With the agility of a chimp, he had the temerity of staging an acrobatic one-man show by climbing a concrete post just so that he could give an unusual angle to one of his shots. In so doing, the poor joker crushed his watch against the post, to the sadistic delight of the other staffers. Poor Pentong, tch, tch! Later, he went to the extent of requesting the other staffers to chip in in paying his bill for the repair of his ailing gadget. No dice, no soup, ergo, drop dead!

Before we end this drive, we'd like to know if Flor Bombawa from out there in Pangasinan still scans the pages of The Carolinian.

And to our McKinley-bound boys, we give this parting advice. Remember that Armi is explosive stuff. BASTA...

Again I had mistaken Evelyn Orozco for Lydia Araoz. That was just unbearable, I fled from the scene. I could imagine the fun your friends had. How did you explain that to me the next day? You are a borned actress, your eyes were expressionless and questioning when I related to you what happened. You looked surprised. Is this a game amongst you?

A clock chimed eleven o'clock. Almost midnight and the midnight mass. Church bells merrily ringing. The night was clear and cool. The air was soothing to the tired mind and body of Ric plodding to nowhere. Shoulders down and feel!

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ures in the Manila SMB Accounting Dept. Not to be outdone is four-some's youngest, **Nena**, an RFC bookkeeper in this City. On March 7 of last year, she decided to cast her lot for good with an HS alumnus, **Fernando Lozada**, a chemical engineer at the Bois Central in Negros. To date, Clarita has not yet

## Do You Know...

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presented Father with his "little dividend" — neither has Nena.

That talking of sisters, the **Hubahs**, **Espananza** and **Exaltacion** have their own share of marital bliss? **Fansang** has changed her

name to **Mrs. Medardo Martinez** and is presently running a rooming house near the Pontifical U. On the other hand, **Naring**, a schoolmarm in Cagayan de Oro, wears on her third finger, left hand, the ring of Dr. **Pacifico Casilo**. Keeping the home fires burning? for another

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## DETAILS

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"Slimnastics for molding the body beautiful" were shown. Also there was a military competition for the different units of the USC ROTC.

And now, swinging the lens to the different exhibits put up by different departments...

The College of Engineering did a good job in putting up the best exhibit. The Senior Civil Engineering Class of 1953, skillfully rigged up the scale-model of irrigation, water supply, hydroelectric project and town planning, complete with power plant, commercial and residential houses, hospitals, airport, green rice fields, etc.

"The constructors of this set-up are what the nation needs," said some sightseers.

Marked as the second best exhibit, was the one shown by the Home Economics department. Different types of houses, beautiful yards, gardens and lawns, home arts display, products of handicrafts, shell craft, embroidery table setting for different parties and cookery were featured. If I were to say something about it, I shall say that the exhibit really proved that home is really the place for the woman and its wholeness results from her influence.

The Elementary Department showed the indomitable spirit of Baby Carolinians by ranking third on exhibits. Congratulations to these young people and to their teachers too! Their clan can teach those who still are suffering from lack of it.

But those were not the only ones that impressed the spectators. There were other exhibits put up by the Zoology, Botany, Chemistry, and Physics Departments.

Although they were not able to get prizes, their booths evoked a lot of praises. They also deserve kudos and congratulations for their efforts.

With the USC Day past, Carolinians go back to their serious role of professor, teacher and student. But they look back with pleasant thoughts to all the glamour, gaiety

## NOCTURNE

(Continued from page 39)

ing dejected. Hands in his pockets. Listlessly drifting along with the crowd. Mind benumbed with grief. Ric stopped beneath a street lamp, pulling out matches and cigarettes. A piece of paper crumpled around a small package fell down.

He stooped down and pick it up. He opened the piece of paper. Inside, a small daintily ribboned package. He caught sight of his signature on the paper. What is this? he asked himself. He smoothed the paper. It was the last page of his letter he gave to Lyd just this evening. He opened the package. Inside a man's gold bracelet. Two hearts pierced by an arrow within a Cupid's bow. Two names... Ric and Lyd... He turned it over "FOR-EVER DARLING."

\* \* \*

...Ting... Ting... the mantel-clock chimed in eleven o'clock. Outside church bells ringing merrily... Lyd stood up. Began dressing listlessly for the midnight mass. Choosing a simple dress from among the dozens... Lyd sat down in front of the dresser... turning... looking out unseeingly thru the window... A soft cooling breeze drifted in... playing hide and seek among her tresses... now touching her face... caressing her lips... softly drying away the tears. Unfeeling she sat there.

Why must this be... Oh my God... but why?... Sometime... someday... somewhere a woman must sit down and wait... waiting for that loved one... Heart at breaking point... reaching out with her thoughts... perhaps... why oh why... Dear God in Heaven... \*

"Lyd, Lyd, I haven't realize, forgive me..."

"Ric, oh, Ric, my love... You have come back... nothing matters except that you have come back to me."

and magnificence of USC Day, 1953 brand, with both gladness and nostalgia in their hearts.

## OUR FIGHT

(Continued from page 33)

do? Well, I suppose we are still living in a democracy — a constitutional democracy, if you please, where the voice of the majority is, barring emergencies and fraudulent elections, the Voice of God. We Catholics form that majority. Hence we can and do demand that we be heard in the all-important issue of religious instruction. "We ask no special favors" for our group. We merely seek to vindicate a hard-won right to be free to teach our religion in the public schools where the Filipino youth need religion most of all. In order to achieve this end, we need the support and encouragement of officials who are sympathetic with our cause — impartial, able, free officials (and I don't mean Free Masons), consistent, honest and patriotic; officials who will give life and substance to the law on religious instruction with an eye single to the greater good of all rather than the predominance of a sinister minority's dubious purposes. We seek to eliminate from their vantage point those very people who have, in the ugly fashion of fifth-columnists, undertaken the infamous mission of eliminating religious instruction.

It is high time for us Catholics to assert ourselves... to fight Sabotage with all our resources... in self-defense. The principle of separation of Church and State has been unfortunately construed today as separation from the Catholic Church only... a divorce from God in our public school system. The times call for action — active, militant, determined Catholic Action. We're not doing this for ourselves. We're fighting for the moral and spiritual survival of this and succeeding generations. It's our duty — the duty of every man, woman and child baptized in the Catholic faith, noy, the duty of every citizen, to work and fight, through democratic processes, for the recognition and vindication of our trampled rights. We must act now or it will be too late. It would be tragic folly to lose our best legacy — our father's Faith, by default.