

READING TIME FOR YOUNG FOLKS

LONG LIVE THE "NEPA"!

A Playlet In Four Scenes

By ERNESTO R. BARBOSA

CHARACTERS IN THE PLAY

MISS CRUZA Grade IV Teacher
 NITA }
 PEPE }Pupils of Miss Cruz
 MARIO }
 PEDRO }
 LILYA Friend of Nita
 ALING CELANita's mother
 A FILIPINO MERCHANT

are made in our country.
 PEPE: I didn't know that.
 MISS CRUZ: All right, children, I want you to practise what you learned today. Tomorrow, I will ask you whether you have begun practising what you have learned. (She dismisses the class.)

SCENE I

(The scene opens in a classroom. At the opening of the play, the teacher is explaining to her pupils the significance and meaning of "NEPA".)

MISS CRUZ: We celebrate "NEPA" day so that everybody may remember to use more goods made in the Philippines. We should buy from Filipino stores rather than from the Chinese, Japanese, and other foreign stores. By so doing, we help our own people.

NITA: (Raising her hand). Suppose I want to buy a box of matches. Do I have to go to the Filipino store although there is a Chinese store near our house?

MISS CRUZ: Yes, Nita. You must go to the Filipino store first even though it may be farther.

PEPE: Supposing I want to buy rubber shoes, where will I buy them? Only the Japanese make rubber shoes.

MISS CRUZ: You are mistaken, Pepe. Rubber shoes are also made in our country by Filipino manufacturers. Ask for "ELPO", "BAYANI", "MABUHAY" and other brands. They

SCENE II

(Mario and Pedro are conversing while walking on the street. They are on their way home.)

PEDRO: I am going to buy some paper first. (He turns to go to the Chinese store nearby.)

MARIO: Don't buy there. Let us go to the Filipino store.

PEDRO: Of course! I almost forgot what we learned today. (They go to the Filipino store.)

PEDRO: (On reaching the Filipino store.) Do you have any writing-paper for sale here?

FILIPINO MERCHANT: Yes, we have. This is "Señorita" brand. (Showing the pad of paper.) This is made in the Philippines.

PEDRO: Good! I will buy one tablet. (He buys one Grade IV pad of paper.)

FILIPINO MERCHANT: Thank you. Come again. We sell things made in our country, you know. (Pedro and Mario step out of the store.)

MARIO: I think I'm going home now.

PEDRO: So am I. (They part.)

SCENE III

(At Nita's home)

ALING CELA: (Shouting). Nita-a-a-a!

NITA: (Playing). What is it, mother?

ALING CELA: Buy a box of matches, please. And hurry.

NITA: Yes, mother. (She goes out for the matches. On the way she meets Lily).

LILY: Where are you going, Nita?

NITA: I have to buy a box of matches.

LILY: Why don't you get them from the Japanese store near your house? "BANDURRIA" matches are very good.

NITA: That is true, but matches are also made in our country. "RIZAL" and "SUNSET" matches are just as good as "BANDURRIA." (She turns away to go to the Filipino store, leaving Lily behind.)

(At home, Aling Cela is already angry.)

ALING CELA: Nita, surely takes a long time getting those matches. (Just then Nita arrives.)

ALING CELA: Where have you been all this time, Nita?

NITA: I had to go to the Filipino store, mother.

ALING CELA: So that's it! Why can't you buy from the nearby Chinese and Japanese stores?

NITA: I bought from the Filipino store because by doing so we helped our own merchants.

ALING CELA: (Still angry). How could you help if no one else bought from them?

NITA: I am not the only one doing it, mother. There is an association known as the "NEPA" or "National Economic Protectionism Association" which helps our merchants and manufacturers. If we buy from the Chinese, Japanese, or other stores owned by foreigners, they take our money to their

country.

ALING CELA: (Enlightened by Nita's explanation). I understand now. (Nodding her head). I think we must really help our own people.

SCENE IV

(In the classroom again the next day.)

MISS CRUZ: How many of you have begun practising what we have studied?

PEDRO: (Raising his hand)—I have.

MISS CRUZ: Tell the class what you did, Pedro.

PEDRO: I bought my pad paper yesterday from the Filipino store.

MISS CRUZ: That is good. Who else?

NITA: (Standing) Yesterday, I bought a box of matches. Instead of buying them from the Chinese store near our house, I went to the Filipino store which is farther down the street. I also explained to my mother what "NEPA" means.

MISS CRUZ: That is very good, Nita. I hope that the others, too, will explain to their parents the meaning of "NEPA" and "Nepa Day". Let us repeat what the four letters stand for. "N" stands for—

ALL THE PUPILS: NATIONAL

MISS CRUZ: "E" stands for—

ALL THE PUPILS: ECONOMIC

MISS CRUZ: "P" stands for—

ALL THE PUPILS: PROTECTIONISM

MISS CRUZ: And the last letter "A" stands for—

ALL THE PUPILS: ASSOCIATION.

MISS CRUZ: What does "NEPA" stand for, class?

ALL PUPILS: "NEPA" Stands for "National Economic Protectionism Association."

EVERYBODY IN THE ROOM: "LONG LIVE THE "NEPA"!!!

CURTAIN