

IN THE MONTH of June this year, Cebu will witness one big momentous event . . . an event which, for its significance, will be long remembered in the history of social welfare movements in this province, if not in the entire archipelago. For after years of planning and working

by *MARIETTA ALONZO*

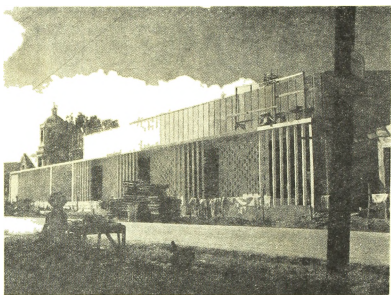
The PATRIA Story

on the part of the common mass, the Patria Community Service Center, undoubtedly the biggest and the most beautiful recreational center in the Visayas and Mindanao, will throw open its gates to commence its role of community building and spiritual crusading.

Positively the only one of its kind in these parts, the Center houses modern facilities for constructive and wholesome recreation, embracing almost all phases of indoor sports and games as well as such edifying and delectable arts as music, drama, creative writing and similar things.

This edifice, built almost entirely through charity, is a monument to the civic-mindedness of the people of Cebu; its success as a community project is a concrete indication of their altruistic nature and points out how great a faith they have in the Catholic youth upon whose dynamism and leadership they invested a part of their resources to help bring to realization this direly-needed structure for the common man.

But how did all this come about? How did it happen that the much maligned, much scorned members of the "lost generation" hitched upon such a noble undertaking as building a community center? The story of the exploits can now be told. The story of the Patria can now be disclosed. . . the real-life saga of courage and dynamism, of service and sacrifice, faith and devotion, as portrayed by the youthful band who were the advocates of the project. Well may those who look with derision upon today's youth read it, and well may other youths here and everywhere emulate what these silent workers have done.



A Section of the Patria Bowling Alley—Recreation Department.

The Germ of an Idea

IT ALL STARTED when a small group of eager students from the different colleges and universities in Cebu agreed to band themselves together and, with Christ as their light, to wage a vigilant war against the sagging morality of our young people. This group, bearing the standard of what is now the Cebu Student Catholic Action, found out in the course of their crusade that the misdirection and misguidance of young people or of any individual, for that matter, spring from the bad influences they encounter during leisure hours. Because of the absence of character-building recreational centers, the youth are compelled to frequent cabarets, if not gambling dens and other ill-reputed nooks where they

drink to the dreg the vapid influences of these places. The SCA members feared that as long as such places continue to attract the young elements of society, as long as facilities for wholesome pastimes are not provided them, their morality would sink, by gradual stages, into its lowest ebb. One big question, therefore, came to light: Could the organization provide such facilities? Among the student actionists, only the most determined and the most strong-willed did not consider the idea fanatically hopeless. The SCA did not have a cent in its coffers. How then could an organization as poor as the SCA undertake such a huge project? Impossible was the word that played on my lips.

But the actionists refused to
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Anything You Say

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Sir:

Why did you ever scrap the "campuscrats?" It was such a nice column — newsy, colorful, light, and just wonderful for "the little women." We were so much in the habit of reading it that you can fairly imagine what a let-down it brought us when it came out only during the first issue of the Carolinian last year.

I've heard that the column was discontinued because only a special group kept being mentioned and that it contained nothing but gossip. Well, these are not such serious reasons because they can be helped! With respect to the first, all the columnist has to do is look for other faces, write the human side of campus activities. As for the next objection, I don't see how innocuous gossip, if this is the right word, can ever hurt anybody. I mean, small talk about somebody having something new or unusual would not sound so gossipy. Things like these are allowed even in big magazines. But we certainly hope you will revive the "Campuscrats" minus the objectionable features, that is.

I guess everybody sort of knows what's wrong with the Carolinian. It lacks the real, honest-to-goodness feminine touch!

TITA CUI

What Do You Think

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are prone to believe the ideas suggested in the context because they have no time to investigate.

These novels are proper only for researchers and graduate school students who want to compile the works of Rizal and make a comparison of the different phases of his literary masterpieces. It is proper for them because they, unlike our young high school students, are already equipped with high understanding.

LORETA CACHO College of Education

I am for the compulsory reading of Rizal's *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*.

That the bill would violate the principle of academic freedom and natural right of parents to send their children to schools of their choice is absurd because the prohibition of the two novels for public reading is, by itself, a violation of academic freedom.

The proposal of some Senators to make some alterations of the said books or publish footnotes in the unexpurgated versions of the two books is thoughtless if we are to admit and say that Rizal is our national hero and that he was truthful in writing them because they were taken and based upon actual facts that happened during the critical period of the Spanish rule in the Philippines. As Senator Laurel said: "Expurgating the *Noli* and the *Fili* would be disfiguring Rizal."

The Legend at Mt. Tempoong

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lovers. And the promise, too — oh, so sweet indeed is the tongue of love. Or so they thought.

But the king got wind of the whole affair and became mad as a tornado. He cursed Lawin for the encroachment the lad made on his royal household.

In his fit of anger he unleashed all the fury of his pagan birth. The sky darkened and rain fell in torrents, drowning all the inhabitants of the island, except Lawin who was transformed into a big white whale and was cast into the lake at the summit of the mountain. This was made as his watery jail to punish him for his unsolicited intrusion. Alimyon was turned into mountain ranges bordering Mt. Tempoong, gazing night and day at the sky but never on the lake where Lawin was transformed into a whale.

To this day, passengers aboard ship passing around Camiguin Island could see the outline of the buxom Alimyon in the silhouettes of the mountain ranges. This has been said to be the sleeping beauty of the Camiguin mountains.

Lawin who was turned into a white whale in a lake nearby, can be seen by hunters every full moon, appearing on the surface of the lake, hugging and kissing the shadow of Alimyon cast on the lake by the light of the full eastern moon.

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THE PATRIA STORY

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shrink from the challenge. They chose, as their critics branded them, to be fanatical. But not hopeless. Inspired by the enlivening influence of their Adviser, the Rev. Fr. Bernard Wrocklage, SVD, of USC, and fired by the youthful spirit to dare and do big things, they resolved to push through their project at all cost.

The Initial Action

With the idea conceived, the organization started making arrangements. His Grace Archbishop Julio R. Rosales of Cebu was consulted for his approval of the project. With the approval secured a formal resolution was adopted for the construction of the Patria as the organization's 1955-1956 Archdiocesan project. This resolution was unanimously approved by the SCA Executive Board on February, 1954 in a meeting held at the University of the Visayas with then Rev. Fr. Epifanio Surban, who represented the Archbishop, attending.

The next move concerned the site of the building. The building had to be located in the very heart of the city and, because of its purpose, had to be accessible to transportation facilities. After several deliberations, the spacious lot of 6,800 square meters in front of the Cebu Cathedral Church was chosen as the project site. Through the good Offices of the Archbishop, the lot, owned by the Archdiocese of Cebu, was finally obtained on lease. Then, as the land was occupied by squatters, efforts were made to relocate them. In doing this, the SCA encountered difficulties as some of the settlers refused to vacate the place. Only after considerable effort notably on the part of Mr. Anastacio Fabianca, one of the SCA executive officers, were these people successfully ejected from the area.

The Fund Campaign

Even as the site was yet undecided, the Student Actionists, from the lowest members to the highest officers, started girding themselves for a head-and-heel effort to raise the enormous sum called for by the project. This hectic campaign was waged through such means as person-to-person approaches, holding of musical concerts, benefit shows and games, appeals to wealthy citizens, and appeals to various social and religious or-

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you mean?" Aling Sisa asked in surprise.

"Your one plus one here is always two, isn't it?"

"Sure. How else will it be?" answered Aling Sisa.

"That's wrong. To us, philosophers, one plus one can be three."

"Three???" the father stood up in astonishment and relief.

"Yes, three," the son replied assuringly.

"Then find the third, my son. These two slices will be Sisa's and mine," the father answered, at the same time nibbling hastily at the slice. He consumed it before the "bakya" of Aling Sisa took a swift landing on his bald head.

When he attended the dance held that night to mark the vesper of the fiesta, he was the object of the laughter of all. He was wear-

ing an old white coat, rumpled at every square inch, mottled with stain all over the back and the sleeves. His black tie was a PMT cravat which was loosened and dangled about his breast. His pants were also of white sharkskin cloth but riddled with moth holes, two on one leg and four on the other. His footwear consisted of a pair of rubber shoes, originally white but turned brownish by the dirt and mud that clung to it. The girls were ashamed to dance with him. Not only because of his comical attire, but also because of his ugly and age-worn figure and his unorthodox stroke in dancing. Almost always, he would step on the girls' innocent and naked toes (the girls were only wearing sandals).

He could not dance for long because he was snatched by an old bachelor friend who begged him to write a love letter to the lovely girl, Rosita, the belle of the evening. He could not disappoint the friend he just met.

So, for his friend's sake, he wrote:

"My everlasting dearest Rosita,

Of all the queer birds I ever did see, you, Rosita, are the queerest by part to me.

Yes, Rosita, deer, sweet, U R always N my heart. Even thought you are not awakad.

I was planning to dance over you but I felt ashamed very great. Besides, you are very dancing with pretty men.

Please visit to me, Rosita.

Thank you. You are welcome.

Your very own,

Ritss"

They could not give the letter to Rosita while she was yet at the dance. So they accompanied her up to her house. Even during the long walk to her house, Isidro and Rito could not muster the nerve to hand over the letter to her. So when Rosita was inside the house, they serenaded her, deciding to hand the letter the moment she looked out of the window. But she did not, even at the tenth repetition of the only song Isidro had learned in the city. Instead, her window was slammed in a final gesture of annoyance the minute Isidro aped Johnny Ray.

The prospect of giving the letter looked bleak and dim, so Isidro

decided to climb the window and whisper to Rosita about the letter. This he did. But before he could bring up his other foot, Rito, who was half-sprawled under the house mapping out the location of Rosita's bed, stepped on a sleeping pig which squealed in anger and in pain. Rosita's father, who was awakened by the noise, quickly looked out of the window and saw Isidro climbing up. He tapped Isidro's dome with a "garrote" which sent Isidro diving into familiar, solid *tierra firma*.

That brought him back to the city for hospitalization! #

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ganizations within and outside the country.

On the occasion of the celebration of the first Archdiocesan Marian Congress in Cebu, the SCA, realizing the splendid opportunity offered by the affair, obtained permission from the Archbishop to collect donations from the many persons who attended the celebration. The permission granted, a Patria Crusade was immediately organized under the leadership of Mr. Lindy Morrell who conducted the drive so competently that no less than two thousand pesos were collected.

The barangay Raffles, the Candle Guessing Contest, the Patria Collection Sunday, the Asian Festival, and other special events were some of the features sponsored in conjunction with this fund-raising effort.

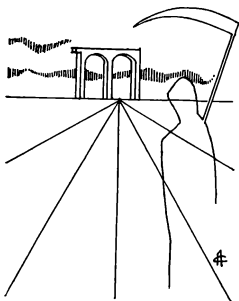
The various activities continued throughout the months during which the Center was in the process of construction. The drive attained its maximum success with the participation of several prominent city residents who were organized into the Patria Fund Drive Committee with no less than Mrs. Luna Brienes herself, the Governor's lady, as Chairman. Among those who took an active hand in the drive were Don Gil Garcia, Don Mariano Gonzales, Mr. Francis Lim, Doña Esperanza Osmeña, Mrs. Celerina del Rosario, Mrs. Luisa Pido, Mr. Ismael Lim Kakeng, Mr. Miguel de los Reyes, Mr. Felipe Pareja, Mrs. Loreto Victorino, and many others. The Rev. Fr. Wrocklage who used to go out soliciting for donations as early as seven o'clock in the morning and as late as nine o'clock in the evening, should be credited for being the most enthusiastic, the most zealous, and the most untiring of all fund solicitors.

The proceeds of these efforts, in addition to bank and private loans, satisfied to a certain extent what amount of money was demanded for the construction of the project.

The Construction

Approximately fifteen months after the drafting of the resolution to construct the Patria and after accumulating a saving of about ten thousand pesos, the SCA decided to start the construction. August 15, the Feast of the Assump-

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To Wait Forever

night is a blackbird in a hollow mind
and the mind tiptoes in a penumbra . . .

it cannot use the sight for
groping is a habit of death —

a red ember that waits in the dark;
its darkness-light an end, a beginning.

there are no footprints
in the sand of time —

silly, there is no sand, no time . . .
only the waiting, the long, timeless

waiting and wishing
for the beginning to end

and for the end to begin.

EDITHA A. OCANTE

The PATRIA

tion of Our Lady, was the date on which the cornerstone was laid by Archbishop Rosales in a simple but solemn ceremony graced by the presence of prominent citizens and leaders of various community organizations. The venerable ex-President Sergio Osmeña, Sr., was among those present.

The actual construction work started on September 12, 1955, with Engr. H. del Rosario as the construction engineer and Jose Mercado and Teodoro Trinidad as architects. Employment of an average number of 80 laborers continued throughout the more than 35 weeks of construction, resulting in what is now the completed Main Unit of the structure. This finished portion sheltering the 10-alley bowling hall, the billiard rooms, the chess and pingpong rooms, the spacious lobby, and the different sections for offices. At the time of writing, the gross expense of the Patria amounts to no less than one-hundred thousand pesos.

Students' Participation in the Project

Probably no other student organization can boast of a stronger loyalty and a more unflinching devotion to a cause than the Student Catholic Action at the time when it undertook the building of a gigantic project. Catching the thrill of seeing the building gaining form, everybody rallied behind the cause and rendered every sort of service they could offer in behalf of the project. When the construction was threatened with lack of funds, the SCA members went out, individually or in groups, soliciting for aid from one house to another. The courage and enthusiasm with which they performed this tenuous job should be taken as a merit of the character of these young student actionists. The youthful and brave crusaders approached even people who did not sympathize with the aims behind the establishment of the Patria, explaining the urgency of having a community center. Undoubtedly, it was this spirit of certainty and enthusiasm which finally won for them the support of the people to the project. But what probably was

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the most concrete portrayal of genuine sacrifice by the Student Actionists was their hollow-blocking-making activity. Sacrificing their classes, they buckled down and sweated hard in molding and shaping thousands of the much-needed hollow blocks. Each of these blocks, carrying the imprints of bruised young hands, gives shape to the Patria that you see today.

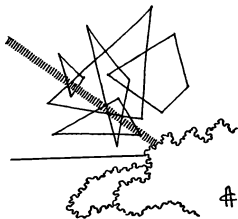
In this connection mention should be made of the Patria Committee, a special body composed of the top leaders of the Cebu SCA. Acting as the core of all student activities relating to the Patria, this committee served as the policy-making body of the organization and directed every deal which the body transacted in behalf of the project. It was the intelligence circle, the rudder, of the organization. Chaired by Mr. Bartolome de Castro, the Patria Committee had Francis Zosa, Johnny Mercado, Fe Mendoza, Felix Matuguina, Anastacio Fabiana, Jr., Lindy Morrell, and Jesus Solon as members.

Patria and the Community

It is hard to recount the innumerable benefits which the Patria has in store for the individual and for the community as a whole. Far from being merely a recreation center, it aspires to attain something big, something valuable for the community. To be sure, the Patria is an institution which radiates with ambitious plans for the man in the street. Although its ultimate aim is his spiritual uplift, it doesn't spare any effort towards the attainment of his material welfare, believing that "a certain modicum of material comfort is necessary for the practice of virtue."

These words of Mons. Julio Rosales strike the keynote to the real nature of the Patria as an institution:

"The Patria serves our people by providing recreational facilities, leadership training, intellectual and cultural development, social work and labor union services, Catholic publications, cooperatives for the poor, credit unions, and offices for Catholic organization." †



The Second Rainbow

Let me but explain
in adjectives and tears . . .
The feeling is a hurt
thing that chokes
and brings a sob
among the ruins of dreams,
and hopes and laughter.

Let me but behold the
color of red clouds
Because when the clouds
are red no more —

I shall look in the sand
for fragments of glass
and build me another rainbow.

VIOLETA P. DEJORAS