

The Republic

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Editorials

ON CULTURE

Regardless of the destiny of the Philippines, one indelible effect of the present war will be of a cultural nature. Much as some may like it, it will be impossible to remove the cultural impressions stamped by force of the impact of war upon Philippine life. The emphasis given to Philippine and Oriental culture in educational and social endeavors cannot fail to have lasting effects upon all progress and upon the mentality of the people, particularly the young. And it is all very well that such emphasis has been given, for we, as a national unit and a distinct racial group, have long been in need of it and have always wanted it but we have never had full freedom nor did we have the will to embark upon the sweeping change that it involved.

However, when the ground was swept clean, plowed and harrowed, ready to receive the seeds with which to grow a new cultural crop, did we act like scientific farmers who know exactly what seeds to plant, what kind of soil needed, how to plant and cultivate the seeds chosen and what harvest to expect and in what quantities? Or did we, like our own unprogressive toilers of the soil, simply receive seeds as they came and regardless of where they came, plant them haphazardly as of old and then leave the rest to God and His elements?

There has been a very promising cultural movement, a momentary resurgence of the splendor of Philippine culture and a growing appreciation of such phases of Oriental culture as we do not have or may have already lost. There has been a comforting enthusiasm of response in many quarters and for a while, it seemed possible that we would really seriously undertake the great task of national cultural re-orientation and development. Yet today, after three years, do we clearly marked cultural trends, any cultural influences that may be said to pervade our life as a nation or as a race, any well-defined channels through which to course our cultural progress?

To our mode of thinking, we have been merely muddling through in this matter of cultural re-orientation and development. As a matter of fact, there are not a few who have readily and eagerly preached Oriental culture, but whose utterances clearly betray a hazy idea of what is true culture. There has been much confusion, even in the minds of the self-proclaimed evangelists of Oriental culture as to whether culture is civilization itself or just the implements of civilization or merely the visible marks of civilization. They cannot seem to grasp the thing at all unless it be something that is palpable and visible. There is even a tendency to reduce it to rules of conduct that some feel should be enforced or to certain select pieces of literature that should be committed to memory by young and old or to certain usages in speech, styles of attire, and decorative art. Admittedly, much of the inspiration for all of these has been eager and ambitious, but often uncertain of its own nature and meaning.

Both government and private undertakings have failed to afford our people direction and leadership. Efforts are dispersed and unorganized. Orientation is lacking. There is a Bureau of Oriental Culture but it is still apparently buried among its voluminous tomes and without wings, as it were, to make even only survey flights. There is a Cultural Federation that does not know exactly its field of action. There are many individuals, enthusiastic volunteers, but they all seem like rudderless ships floating in a vast sea towards nowhere. To say the least, it has been a rather chaotic situation in which too much good opportunity has been lost and our sea of culture remains uncharted.

What to do. Let our best minds in public life and private agree on the proper course to follow, on the tendencies to encourage and to develop and on the new phases of culture to promote for ourselves as a people and as a race. Then let our government declare a policy and define its own field, assigning what it cannot cover to private initiative, setting standards for those upon whom it may entrust cultural missions and affording facilities to make such missions succeed. Unity of purpose, clearly outlined objectives, systematized organization, coordination of activities, and proper choice of leadership will provide a good start. After all, a good start is at best what should be expected now, for no full flowering of culture can be possible in just a matter of years, particularly in war time, contrary to the hopeful assertions of those attempting overnight changes.

NO, NOT "PEACE AT ANY PRICE"

The Republic's campaign for national salvation has been geared to two lines of action, the spiritual and the physical. Under the latter phase, the war effort has been an important task, perhaps much more important than most of us understand as involving as it does not only lives but also principles and tenets of government and individual conduct for which men have always readily offered the greatest sacrifices.

Was the pacification campaign a success? It is unquestionable that much success has been achieved, although it is also undeniable that there was much failure. Peace and order have been established in all areas throughout the country except in remote communities and isolated mountain fastnesses and a sense of tranquillity has been infused into the minds and hearts of the vast majority, at least until fresh developments in the GE war situation came and seemed again to encourage new disturbances.

In viewing the success or failure of the pacification campaign, however, it is only proper to understand the fundamental policy of President Laurel, so that the results may be accurately assessed in their true significance. For instance, pacification essentially means the employment of physical force to compel submission to a regime or to bring about a state of peace. Nevertheless, President Laurel has preferred to use means other than the physical to achieve his aims. If certain phases of the campaign have failed, it was due largely to his desire that no more harm be done than has already been done, no lives be taken that have already been lost. He sought peace for his people but not at the cost of blood; he sought the return of order but not at the sacrifice of more of the very people whom he has pledged to help and protect.

To gain an insight into the President's mind on this matter of pacification, it is necessary to feel his heart, which one can do by reading the following quotation from his anniversary speech:

"We have taken care not to sow seeds of hatred in the hearts of our people through acts of gross injustice, such as the punishing of innocent persons or the unnecessary taking of lives. The Filipino people have unhappy chapters in their history when they had been powerless to resist painful injustices and had, consequently, been forced to nurse grievances over long periods of time. Not vengeful by nature, they have developed, by force of circumstances, a long memory for a wrong and lasting indignation against injustice. Knowledge of this peculiarity of our people, and the desire not to erect barriers to solid unity and a more inclusive brotherly love in the future have counselled the government against adopting an unmitigated policy of blood and iron in the pacification campaign."

His words should explain and justify not only what have seemed to be failures of the pacification campaign but also apparent weaknesses in the functioning of the government machinery for the maintenance of peace and order. The President is so deeply concerned over what the people have already lost in lives, property and sense of security that he does not want to add more for any excuse or under any guise. "Peace at any price" is not his kind of peace. Rather it is "Peace on earth and good-will among men."

Republic's Economic Progress Remarkable

By JESUS V. COLET

The war of Greater East Asia broke out on December 8, 1941, with Japan, the leader of Oriental peoples, a spirited drive for a New World wherein all races may enjoy real peace, happiness and prosperity, declaring war on Great Britain and the United States, and expelling, once and for all, after a short period of a few months, the Anglo-American-Dutch influence from the Orient.

True to her word and her sacred code of honor, Japan not only helped the Filipinos rise from the bloody, battered soil of the country, but promised the Philippines its independence, which materialized on October 14, 1943, asking in return only the destruction of all connections and entanglements with the past regime, the initiation of measures toward economic self-sufficiency, and the reorientation of the Filipinos spiritually and materially.

Since the establishment of the Philippine Republic on October 14, 1943, with His Excellency Jose P. Laurel as its President, almost a year has elapsed. In this short lapse of time, what has the Philippines achieved economically?

In the past, America offered the Filipinos independence with one hand while holding economic strangulation deftly behind her in the other. She made the Filipinos so accustomed to free trade and preferential tariff that with independence, the Philippines would have inevitably faced economic ruin.

The impact of the war brought in bold and terrible vividness this precarious structure of Philippine economy which rested mainly on the support of the American market, for which most of the principal export crops were being produced, almost 80 per cent of the total exports consisting mainly of agricultural products shipped to the United States. Sugar ranked first, comprising 40 per cent of the total Philippine exports, followed by abaca, which accounted for 14 per cent of pre-war exports.

On the other hand, the Philippines imported millions of pesos worth of clothing materials averaged about \$40,000,000 annually; livestock and meat products, \$3,000,000; dairy products, \$10,000,000; and vegetable products \$5,000,000.

The war, as a matter of course, paralyzed Philippine export industries, especially sugar, abaca and coconut oil, abaca and manufactures of abaca, and tobacco, as well as many others of lesser importance, the total value of which in 1940 amounted to more than \$305,000,000. In like manner, the cutting off of Philippine imports of essential manufacture goods, especially of prime commodities like foodstuffs, textiles, building materials, etc., worth over \$269,000,000 in 1940, caused some inconvenience.

The undue emphasis formerly placed on the development of agricultural crops for export to the neglect of industrial pursuits converted the country into nothing but a market for manufactured products from abroad. We were inept and indiscriminately imported and consumed a vast amount of goods that could have been manufactured locally, as subsequent developments have amply demonstrated.

An outstanding feature of the economic order now being evolved is the creation of new economic spheres over different portions of territory based on natural factors of geography and economic homogeneity. As a matter of fact, previous to the outbreak of the present world hostilities, the movement toward regional or hemispheric economic blocs had already begun to manifest itself in some parts of the world. The Empire of Japan has taken the lead in the establishment of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere which aims to so develop the material and human resources in each and every one of the various Asiatic countries as to enable them to find their proper places in the world, attain economic self-sufficiency within the Sphere, and establish co-prosperity among themselves.

In line with this program of co-prosperity, the new Philippine economy is enthusiastically mobilizing its material and human elements of the country for the attainment of a national industrial system capable of measuring up to the aims of the great humanizing program of East Asia co-prosperity. An Economic Planning Board, with Manuel A. Roxas as Chairman, has

been created to form the bulwark of the Government's effort toward overcoming economic difficulties, especially food problems.

Of the total Philippine land area of 29,740,970 hectares, only 3,954,000 hectares were under cultivation two years ago, more than 10,000,000 hectares of rich land still lying idle. These lands are now actively being put under cultivation to produce the much-needed staple crops.

New life has been injected into Philippine agriculture. Modern farming methods are being adopted by the Filipino farmers in an effort to so develop the available fertile lands that they shall be able to support a population of 80,000,000 people, or four and a half times more than the present 18,000,000 people. Long before the fall of Bataan, the far-seeing Japanese agricultural experts were already directing the planting and sowing of rice and other crops to forestall famine and hunger. With the new variety of rice seed, known as "Hori-Mai," introduced into the Philippines by the Japanese, the Filipinos will easily double their rice harvest, as has been witnessed from experiments conducted by Japanese experts at Montalban and Alabang.

The program for mass production of cotton initiated by the former Japanese Military Administration is offering a bright prospect to Philippine agriculture. The Philippine Cotton Growing Association has been incorporated. This huge five-year cotton development program expects not only to make the Philippines self-sufficient as regards its clothing requirements, which amounted up to \$40,000,000 worth of imports annually before the war, but also to cater to the cotton requirements of other countries in Greater East Asia. The absolutely new system of sharing instituted in the Philippine cotton industry, wherein 65 per cent goes to the tenant planter and as much as 30 per cent to the owner planter, is greatly instrumental in realizing the vast aims of the program.

Under this cotton production program, envisaging a five-year plan from 1942 to 1946, inclusive, the area to be cultivated will be more than 111 million acres with a crop prospect of 1,000,000 tons. For the year 1942, the total yield of cotton in Luzon was estimated at 2,547,168 kilos of seed cotton, or 14,606 piculs.

Under the new regime, a great impetus was given to commerce and industry. In the early part of February, 1942, only two establishments were operating in Manila; in five months, there were 66 establishments allowed to operate, and by December of the same year, the number operating has risen to 1,200. Manufacturing has greatly surpassed pre-war standards. All the factories functioning before the war are now flourishing, and many new ones have been opened. The scarcity of imported products that have always been in great demand and the pressing need for substitutes have given such impetus to the manufacturing business that the once home-made products for domestic consumption are now being mass-produced under factory conditions, and what is most gratifying, they compare favorably with the imported ones.

The coconut industry is reaping substantial profits. In making an analysis, it is convenient to refer to the three main parts of the coconut: the meat, the husk, and the shells, and to show what new commodities have appeared in the market to satisfy the people's demands and needs. The striking feature of the coconut industry is the rise of the husk, an important material in the making of new commercial products, such as coil fiber, sacks, filters, doormats, household brushes, horse brushes, and helmets. The production of these articles from the coconut husk constitutes a new industry requiring the use of power-driven machinery and the employment of many laborers.

A second striking aspect of the coconut industry is in connection with the new uses made of the coconut meat, not for copra mostly as during pre-war days—but as important food-items of the people. The making of coconut food products is an important feature of the new material and human elements of special interest in the success of the coco-milk project, because from that process important commercial derivatives have been developed, such as the different kinds of coconut candy, and the coconut cream and butter.

In pre-war days, the coconut meat yielded important commercial articles like oil, lard, and many various kinds, but the new situation has led to new uses of oil, such as the running of diesel engines and refined oil for pharmaceutical uses, thereby giving a new aspect to the horizon for the coconut industry.

Although sugar production has been pushed into the background to give way to the cotton program, the sugar industry is being maintained and encouraged to meet the local demands. Considerable numbers of the existing factories are being operated and sugar cultivation is still being continued. The Philippine Sugar Association was organized to rehabilitate the sugar industry.

The abaca and tobacco industries are facing bright prospects, too. There is at present a great demand for rope and other allied products, but the cigarette industry cannot supply the demand of the Philippine public, with the result that great quantities of cigarettes are being imported from Japan and other countries of East Asia.

The dairy industry is being promoted in an effort to make the country self-sufficient in its supply of milk and other important products, while the animal resources of the country are being developed in order to do away with the considerable importation of animal products.

Fishing is another industry that fits well in the new economic setup. Philippine waters abound in fish and marine products which could easily supply all the needs of the country and also support a prosperous foreign trade, if exploited, in addition to being rich in marine products of commercial value, such as shells for the manufacture of buttons, window panes, lamp shades and screens, pearl and pearl shells, and sponges. For these reasons, fishing associations have been established and are doing much to effect such an idea.

Moreover, the tapping of hides by modern improved methods, the production of fertilizers, and the production of vaccines and sera for the control of infectious human and animal diseases are being conscientiously attended to. Furthermore, facilities for mining are being expanded with the improvement and expansion of hydro-electric power plants, such as that located in Laguna, while various light industries are also being promoted.

To control and supervise the sale and distribution of goods, especially foodstuffs, various agencies were created. Recently, the National Commodities Procurement and Distribution Corporation (NADISCO) was incorporated. The control agencies receive supplies of controlled commodities from factories and distribute them to the public through the retailers' cooperative associations. A federation of these retailers' associations is functioning in Manila, and similar associations and provincial federations are being organized throughout the country, this important activity being now largely in the hands of Filipino retailers. It being a matter of common knowledge that the Chinese have always monopolized Philippine trade, such facts are highly encouraging.

Thus, the essential features of the new Philippine economy embrace the following six points, as outlined by the Director of the Bureau of Commerce and Industries, Cornelio Balmaeda:

"1. Development of those lines of production which are based on the available natural resources and the essential needs of the country in order to bring about the desired state of national economic self-sufficiency.

"2. More extensive development and utilization of the natural wealth and resources of the country to establish a strong economic foundation.

"3. A well-balanced program of agricultural and industrial development that will provide a diversity of employment for the effective utilization of the human resources of the country.

"4. Development of the foreign trade to take care of surplus production and the supply of articles needed for local consumption but which cannot be locally produced, and to enable this country to accomplish its part as a member of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere.

"5. Establishment of a well-organized system of distribution for the domestic trade.

"6. Establishment of a system of rationalization and control of industry and trade to avoid waste, ruinous competition over-production, undue concentration of wealth, and other known defects of the laissez-faire and capitalistic systems."—Domei News Agency