

Our Fight

parent or guardian." But are these laws enforced? Ask the parish priests and the catechists throughout the Philippines, and you will hear a tale of woe that one can hardly expect of a vauntedly Catholic country, supposedly "the only Christian nation in the Far East"

IT IS a sad commentary on our educational system that despite the universal recognition of the need for religious instruction for our youth, the three highest officials of the Department of Education appear to be the very persons designated by a secret society with the task of eliminating religious instruction in the public schools. Caught in the web of their own duplicity, their fellow-Masons are now loud in their shrieks of "intolerance" against the Catholic hierarchy and leaders of Catholic Action who saw fit to expose the treachery of these three, and who did nothing more than assert their democratic rights to demand a redress of their grievances through due process of law.

The Catholics cannot do otherwise than to act now, because it is the Catholic youth which is most affected by the dubious policies of these highly-placed officials. This dangerous set-up cannot but call for militant action. When three public officials who swear to uphold the Constitution and the laws of our country in the open, pledge to subvert its aims in secret; when three trusted educators play the sinister role of Dr. Jekyll and his monstrous counterpart, Mr. Hyde, are the Catholics expected to sit tight and laugh at their dangerous antics? What kind of a shepherd is he who would not act to save his flock from wolves in sheep's clothing? Is a good parent or brother expected to do nothing when he discovers that his child or kid-brother is systematically drugged or poisoned by his enemies? Yet that is what is happening in our country today...

An artless president once called our Constitution "a mere scrap of paper." These three high officials of the Department of (Mis-) Education have made of one of its most vital provisions, in the angry words of former Justice Luis P. Torres, nothing but "a dead letter." It is a **dead letter**, because the very officials sworn to implement and uphold the law are precisely the "chosen few" who have been assigned the delicate mission of frus-

AGAINST SABOTAGE

by *Mario D. Ortiz*



trating the will of millions embodied in that all-important provision of the Constitution. The law is clear. Sec. 5, Art. XIV of the Constitution provides for optional religious instruction in our public schools "as now authorized by law." The law then referred to, Sec. 928 of the Administrative Code, in turn authorizes a priest or minister of any church or his duly authorized representative, "to teach religion for one-half hour, three times a week, in the school building, to those public school pupils whose parents or guardians desire it..." And lately, Art. 359 of the new Civil Code, provides that "optional religious instruction shall be taught as part of the curriculum at the option of the

Ask the parents and the school-children, and you will know that the law involved is best honored by the breach thereof, so that you will begin to wonder if you're living in the right country. Their complaints are a matter of record. They underscore the raw deal, the smug indifference, the arrogant hostility of local public school satraps who, however, are the least to blame because their big bosses are, after all, sworn "to eliminate religious instruction in the public schools."

In fairness, of course, to our local public school officials in Cebu, there are but very few isolated cases of discrimination or obstructionism reported here. But in a great many

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places in the Philippines, the general complaint assumes alarming proportions. We hear of the law at times thwarted by a technicality. Here we have a clear case of deliberate, calculated suppression of all good intentions underlying the law on religious instruction by three Masons sworn to eliminate religion in the public schools.

As a matter of fact, these "honorable gentlemen" do not (for they cannot) categorically deny their membership in the infamous "Special Committee For the Elimination of Religious Instruction in the Public Schools," nor successfully repudiate its chairman's report of their activities. That report was recently confirmed by the author and chairman of the said committee, Dr. Baradi, who virtually admitted the authenticity of the published photostats and the veracity of the contents therein, implicating Messrs. Putong, Trinidad and Pangilinan. For their activities, these three honorable Masons received a special commendation in the December 1951 issue of the "Cabletown," official organ of the local Masons. Yet, true to form, Putong and Co. now shout "Fresure" and "Persecution" against the din of the people's indignation that followed the exposé of their treachery. They want us perhaps to fold our arms and leave them to their worst designs. They would rather have us play the role of the legendary monkey who pretend to hear not, see not and know not — while the three wisecracks play their neat little trick of "The Vanishing Religion" upon the plastic minds of our youth.

We liked to think we had only the Communists to reckon with in our fight for justice and truth. But these three top educators turn out to be just like Communists, for they operate in much the same way. They live upon our institutions, take shelter upon our freedoms, glibly quote our laws. . . . even as the devil would quote the Scripture to serve its own purposes. A Communist would infiltrate into a munitions plant, maneuver himself into some key position and, if you're lucky, you catch him all set to burn the plant down. These three public officials are, in their own surreptitious way, just as guilty of Sabotage as the Communist intruder. Like Greek warriors of old, they ride concealed in the wooden horse of liberalism and infiltrate unnoticed

Editorials . . .

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Why did Senator Abada try to grossly distort the issue more by asserting that the situation is that of the majority persecuting the minority when the Catholics are only availing of legal, justified and reasonable means guaranteed in a Democracy to petition for the redress of grievances as vouchsafed for by the Supreme Law of the Land? He is trying to pull the wool over our eyes, perhaps believing that we are too naive to detect it.

And why should we entrust into the hands of those who have secretly pledged themselves to expel religion out of the classrooms, the most delicate task of molding the lives and characters of our youth and generations of Filipinos? This should wake us up from our lethargy. Don't let it be said of us by posterity that we simply shrugged our shoulders with indifference or stupidly blinked our eyes with resigned unconcern at the very moment when the future of our youth and that of our children's children were at stake. Preposterous!

Emilio B. Aller

into the citadels of our faith, the better to perform their bizarre mission — the annihilation of a people's creed.

A Filipino, like all other men, is composed of body and spirit. Kill the spirit, and you have less than a man. Deny that spirit the nourishment for a healthy growth, and you will have at best an automaton, schooled in the three R's, but weak in morals — ruthless, hopeless, aimless. A nation of such men cannot last.

It was, to be sure, a measure of common protection, at once a credit to the vision and the genius of our founding fathers who moulded the Constitution, that the provision for optional religious instruction was included in our fundamental law. Surely they were not joking when they inserted that. A Constitution that invokes the guidance of Divine Providence in its Preamble cannot but reveal the sincerity of purpose and the loftiness of the spirit of its framers. The provision on religious instruction is certainly intended for just that — religious instruction, regardless of whether the religion to be taught be Catholic, or Protestant or *Iglesia ni Kristo*. But the triumvirate of Putong, Trinidad and Pangilinan, for what are now known to be obvious reasons, prefers to leave the youth free from religion in much the same way that a man with murder in his heart would leave a drowning child free of a life-guard's assistance.

Protestations of good faith or promises of reform from these people are entirely useless. Their dual personalities, their faithlessness to a public trust and disregard of a bounden duty, render them unfit for the positions they now hold. As

Masons, they took an oath to obey its laws and resolutions. As public officials they subscribed to another oath — to enforce the laws of the land "without mental reservation or purpose of evasion." Which oath is stronger to these men? Good Masons, the Masonic organ has cited them for "faithful and inspired service" . . . hailed them as "genuine sources of inspiration" for all faithful Masons. But what is their record as public officials? Did they not pervert the law on religious instruction when they subjected it to the option of public school officials rather than that of the parents? Did they not stifle its benign objectives when they considered religious instructions as an unwelcome extra-curricular activity instead of an optional subject intended to be taught "as part of the curriculum?" Which oath did they foreswear? As Masons, they complied with their assigned mission (to eliminate religion) . . . a mission which is inconsistent with their oath as public officials to uphold the laws of the land (including that which provides for religious instruction). Isn't there a case of perjury here? And is a perjurer an honest public official?

But where do we Catholics come in and what are we supposed to

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PASSING THROUGH . . .

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down vanishes. Or make one up yourself and mail me the tongue twister. And don't make it a twang tester!

It's been nice, showing YOU what a crackpot a joke like a Law freshman can be, eh.

S'long, people. . . hope you do better with your attempts at college than I did with my Roman Laws 1 and 2.

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 school-marm 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 . . .

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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."

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. . . . 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.

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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.