

to the writer that in such a situation the rural high school plays a key role.

As noted, the rural high school often serves, inadvertently perhaps, as a center of "emancipation" and urbanization for rural youth. This then means that those who become reasonably well-educated and hence potential leaders of the rural community are those persons who are most likely to leave it. Therefore, as it now exists, the rural high school, (whether academic or agricultural seems to matter little), apparently serves as a syphon which draws off potential rural leaders and directs them city-ward. This of course handicaps the rural community improvement programs. Thus an increase in the number of rural high schools could quite conceivably result in a decrease of rural community improvement if the high school system and the general culture remain unchanged.

The implications then are two-fold. First of all come the problems of trying to make the rural high school less of an "emancipating" and urbanizing mechanism. Some may argue that such a change is neither desirable nor possible—that high school training by its very nature would and should always have an urbanizing effect. They may be correct in this argument; little or no research has been done on this subject as far as the writer knows. The other type of problem would be the question of trying to guide those who insist on leaving the rural areas. They are in need of special orientation to city life, particularly in finding employment, housing, and a satisfying group life in the urban environment. Such training could be afforded in the rural high school if it is deemed desirable.

The foregoing passages have tried to depict the social role of the Philippine rural high school as an agency of transition between the rural and urban culture patterns, and to relate this analysis to recent trends in rural community improvement. From this analysis it appears that the unique social role of the rural high school makes it the most critical area of education in regard to rural improvement in the Philippines today.

THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY OF AGRARIAN REFORM

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A Social Theory is Needed

Society is never static. It is always constantly changing, sometimes at a slow pace, and at times rapidly. Today we are living in an era of violent social change. In the Philippines this fact is accentuated by the terrible destruction of the last world war and by the gaining of political independence in 1946. Social change is not automatically a change for the better. Desirable goals are achieved only by intelligent social engineering. A willingness to work and to cooperate is most important, but it is not enough. There is need for a social theory to guide and to coordinate the various activities of the government, voluntary civic organizations, and individual citizens.

As a matter of fact, there are already on the Philippine scene two social theories competing for the opportunity to direct the much needed social reconstruction. These are the theory of class collaboration and the theory of class conflict, the latter representing the Communist viewpoint. Briefly stated, the Communist social theory is as follows: Present society is *class society*. The few, who own the instruments of production, have control of the total machinery of society, while the many, who do the actual work that keeps society alive, are denied their rightful share of the fruits of industry and their privilege to participate in the control and use of social power. To remedy this highly anomalous situation, Communism would organize the exploited majority to dislodge the privileged few from their favored position and to wrest social power from their hands. This entails violent *class struggle*. The victory of the working class may be long delayed, depending on how soon the masses of a given country can become class conscious and organized for a revolutionary action, but it will finally come. The victorious working class will then use its newly acquired power to smash the state machinery of the deposed exploiting class, and put in its place its own government. It should be the function of the new state to socialize all the property which has anything to do with production and exchange. It shall employ science and technology to bring production to its highest possible level. Under this new set up the fruits of industry will be enjoyed by all the creative members of society in the form of better wages, improved community services, and increased investments in projects that will increase productivity. The masses, thus freed from the fear of unemployment and assured of a just share in the fruits of industry, are for the first time truly free to attend to the cultivation of their higher and finer nature. When man learned to stand on his hind-limbs, thus freeing his fore-limbs to devise tools, what a forward step that was! When man will learn to control the social forces around him, thus wisely utilizing industry to provide for his material needs, then he becomes truly free to live as a man and to freely commune with his fellows.

The class collaboration social theory may be briefly presented as follows: The class nature of contemporary society is affirmed. But it denies the inevitability of class struggle, as pointed out and claimed by

Communism. The popes of the social encyclicals, Leo XII and Pious XI, declare that the social classes have need of each other, that capital cannot do without labor, nor labor without capital. Therefore, it is not class struggle, which this theory affirms, but *class collaboration* that will lead to a final solution of present social ills. To effect class cooperation two important reformations must be accomplished. First, of course, is the moral and spiritual renewal of both the rich and the poor. Without this, all efforts to direct social change would be in vain. Secondly, the state interference with various private activities should be reduced to a minimum. This move will have two good results: (1) It will free the government from unnecessary burdens, thus, it can give more attention to its legitimate functions; (2) It will restore to private (non-governmental) organizations their rightful share of responsibilities. Industrial enterprises, with very few exceptions, rightly belong to private individuals and non-governmental groups. To achieve the welfare of all members of society every social group must organize with a view to effective and unselfish cooperation. Each industry must constitute itself into an "order," an organizational set-up composed of representatives of the organized workers and employers. The "order" will seek to improve its own industry and at the same time it will seek to contribute to the common well-being of society. Such class collaboration will not only avoid the cruelties of class struggle but will also bring about prosperity and contentment to all.

A concise critique of both social theories with reference to the contemporary Philippine situation is now in order. The violent class struggle of Communism is opposed to the moral standard and the Christian nurture of the majority of Filipinos. The Philippine Constitution positively repudiates war as a national policy. With the country still suffering from the terrible destruction caused by the last World War, a continuance of internal warfare would be most tragic. On the other hand, class collaboration, while it may soften the hardships of the poor somewhat, will according to my analysis, not greatly change the *status quo*. The rich will continue to appropriate the lion's share of the profit of industry and to monopolize social power. Both theories are alien to the Philippine situation, and they both fail to really come to grips with the basic problems. Hence, a more adequate social theory is urgently needed.

The Proposed Social Theory

The presupposed social philosophy of the theory of social reconstruction here being proposed is *Personalism*. Personalism affirms the supremacy of personality over society, while it recognizes that personality cannot exist apart from society. Communism holds the supremacy of society over personality. Personalism objects to any type of collectivism. It also corrects the extreme individualism of Western capitalism by its affirmation that personality comes into full bloom only in community.

For its methodology this proposed social theory subscribes to the *democratic process*. It does not believe in the violent radicalism of Communism or in dogmatic authoritarianism. It believes and trusts the common people. It holds that common people have a capacity to learn to think for themselves, to work and carry out their plans, to cooperate for common ends, and that they can be trusted with social power. The democratic process is preferred to any other method because it gives due

respect to the human personality, it affords him ample opportunities for free and responsible participation, and therefore, opportunities for growth and development.

In its actual application, the theory here proposed would confront the *individual in his village context*. From the historic-sociological point of view every Filipino, with a few exceptions perhaps, belongs to a *barrio*. Even the ones living in big towns and cities still carry with them the *barrio* feelings and attitudes. Next to the family, the *barrio* is the most basic social unit in the Philippines. It is to be wondered at that after almost four hundred years of direct and indirect violation of the *barrio* nature and welfare, Philippine villages still flourish! The municipal, provincial, and national machineries of government have been superimposed on these *barrios*, taxing them to the utmost and yet giving them back very little social services. Schools, both public and private, have trained village folks in such a way so that when they get an education they refuse to go back to the village but flock to Manila or to other big towns seeking for white-collar jobs. This and all other violations of the *barrio* must stop if the Philippines is to survive and be rebuilt into a strong and prosperous country.

The villagers must help to help themselves. This help will come from various sources: from the government, civic organizations, churches, schools, and civic-minded individuals. The most urgent aid most villagers will need is to help them acquire lots where to build permanent homes. Next is to help them acquire farms which they may own individually and/or collectively. Credit must be extended to *barrio* people, for without it they fall prey to usurers. Producers' and Consumers' cooperatives are next in importance in the development and uplift of the village life. Community recreation is another important factor in the *barrio* rehabilitation. In addition to these basic items many other aids can be added to the list, but this additions would be superficial if the above-listed fundamental needs are not given primary attention. To illustrate: artesian wells are needed in the *barrios*, true, but a greater need than artesian wells is the revision of the land tenure and tenancy systems now obtaining in the Philippines. The rebuilding of the rural areas of the country cannot be done by remote control from Manila and provincial capitals. Personnel of agencies entrusted with the job must go to the *barrios*, learn to understand the rural people, and work not only for them but with them. If the *barrio* is expected to help itself in this program of rural uplift, and not just rely on outside aid, it must be given more political autonomy than it is enjoying now under our present governmental set-up.

A better way of rebuilding the Philippines is not through a political party, or a church, but by lifting up each and all Philippine *barrios*. In this all political parties, churches, and civic organizations can and should participate. Prosperous *barrios* make for a prosperous Philippines. By focusing attention on the individual in the community, Personalism transcends the question of a class relationship. Class differences may tend to persist but the emphasis is not on the individual's role as a member of a social class but his place as a member of a community. We have talked about class conflict and class collaboration but we have ceased to be concerned about the task of creating a community in which individual

personality may reach its highest development. In the Philippines this means that the efforts of all must be directed to the reconstruction of barrio life.