THE LONG-AGO TEACHER

REFLECTIONS ON PHILIPPINE EDUCATION

BONIFACIO P. SIBAYAN, Ph.D.

FOREWORDS
by
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and
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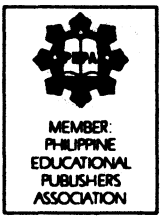

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Foreword

by Andrew Gonzalez, FSC

Bonifacio P. Sibayan's *The Long-ago Teacher* is composed of short essays he has been contributing during the past few years in his two monthly columns entitled Point of View and Did You Know . . . in the *Philippine Journal of Education.*

The essays selected and grouped into various headings represent the best among the monthly contributions to the oldest and most widely disseminated teacher's periodical in the Philippines, founded in 1918 by the late and much-admired Francisco Benitez, first dean of the College of Education of the University of the Philippines.

A career man in the Department of Education, the writer rose from the ranks from a grade one teacher to principal, supervisor, specialist at the General Office, professor and Graduate School dean at the Philippine Normal College (now Philippine Normal University), and eventually president, now professor emeritus.

More than the reflections of a career educator and public administrator, however, these essays are the reflections of one of the most creative and productive minds in the Philippine education and in language education problems. Even in his late seventies, Professor Sibayan continues to be prolific in his writings, which, like good wine, have become even more palatable over the years. He brings to his essays lighthearted humor and memorable anecdotes which form part of the collective lore of the Department of Education and, in his usual trenchant, sometimes amusing, often razor-sharp style, comments on the current and continuing problems of Philippine education and the life of teachers in general today.

Sibayan's life spans the major part of the century, and his intimate knowledge of the educational system and bureaucracy is a precious resource that has been building up over a period of more than 50 years. His insights into the Philippine educational system, by way of an

autobiography, will soon be available to enable the younger generation to understand why Philippine education is what it is today.

His monthly columns are more informal, bear the mark of common sense and practicality, and ask poignant questions which any serious professional public educator has to answer. His tracing of the evolution of the Philippine high school, the success stories of Philippine education, and his analysis of past movements are not only interesting but often insightful reminiscences that bear the imprint of a passionately committed person whose lifelong dream has been to see the system evolve into one of the best in the world. While the system has had more than its share of shortcomings, the most memorable essay in the whole collection is one on the "plusses of the Philippine education" which balances off the often negative comments and handwringing that goes around us today.

Teachers and administrators, both public and private, and students in colleges of education as well as educationally oriented nonspecialists interested in Philippine education, its past and future, will do well to read this volume which contains the observations of someone with over 50 years of active work in the system and whose insights go beyond platitudes. The insights provide a vital comment and suggestions for a system that is presently in need of amelioration and redirection, especially from creative minds like the author's which shun platitudes.

Manila
January 1992

Foreword

by Edilberto Dagot

I first met Dr. Bonifacio Sibayan (Boni to his friends) in 1962 at the Philippine Normal College. I was just starting a career in higher education after several years as elementary classroom teacher and principal. He was already the legendary big man on campus, one of the few Ph.D.'s at the time on the faculty roll and the only one in the very special area of linguistics. Having been a supervisor in the General Office and a mainstay in the summer institutes of the Baguio Vacation Normal School, he was well-known in the *field,* the term teachers use to refer to the public school system. And his name was a familiar by-line to subscribers of educational journals and readers of the prestigious literary *Philippine Magazine* edited by A. V. H. Hartendorp.

Even then Boni was very "energetic," to use an overworked yet apt Philippine idiom when applied to one whose day starts before sunrise and ends way past sunset, who has several things going on at one time and still could keep track of every strand, who gets impatient with pussyfooting colleagues and would propose projects which everyone else would say couldn't be done and would proceed to do them anyway—and succeed.

Those who know Boni's boundless energy even now can imagine his power and presence in the early sixties and in 1972 when he took over the presidency of the Philippine Normal College.

The home economics teachers, thrilled with his concept of elan and elegance, responded quite well during college tea receptions. The faculty-staff choir swelled its membership when Boni decided to join the bass section, and everyone who had a camera learned how to click with art and method under his tutelage.

Boni gathered around him people who did not mind his crazy schedule at the Language Study Center which he established, at the Graduate School when he was dean, and at the office of the president when he became the CEO. Some who could not keep up with his pace

dropped out. He spotted faculty members who had potential, nurtured them, and sent them out on scholarships, without contracts, relying mainly on good faith, believing that they would come back and help with the job that needed to be done. Some did not, "scoundrels" he called them, and were forever crossed out from his list. For Boni himself has said many times that he can be a very good friend but a terrible enemy. And this because of the discipline he has imposed upon himself and the expectation that others could do likewise.

He taught himself to do pen-and-ink drawings and has had a one-man show. He is forever writing articles for festschrifts honoring his colleagues in his select international field of sociolinguistics and language planning. All this, plus a rigid schedule of therapy before and after his quadruple bypass, the very thought of which would paralyze any one. Once he decided to program some principals majoring in school administration to take introduction to linguistics as elective and required every graduate student to enrol in statistics. That the students all survived and thanked him afterwards is further proof to his belief, predating the current slogan, that "the Filipino can."

Boni talks lovingly of his humble beginnings and can sit down to a *dulang* and eat red mountain rice with his hands and with gusto, but he can also give a discourse, with authority, on the qualities of this liquor and that liqueur, of high-grade stainless steel and silver, of crystal ware and all the other matters of manner and intellectual refinement we often attribute only to some privileged few.

This volume, a collection of his essays in the *Philippine Journal of Education,* gives a dimension of Dr. Sibayan. Through these passages, one can have a glimpse of his career as a schoolteacher during the prewar years spanning to the present as he moves toward the fourth score of his life, ever energetic and concerned over the state of Philippine education.

He transports his reader to the past, traces the footprints on the sands of time, retells myths and parables, wrestles with issues and concerns, explores the realms of language, and settles back to the basics.

To read him is to know him, but only partially, for one has to actually listen to him tell his jokes and anecdotes to know him even better. But one does not really get to know full well a multidimensional person—as even his wife, the ever-patient and supportive Mrs. Isabel Sibayan, would readily admit.

In the meantime, we should be content with this slim volume—*The Long-ago Teacher*—and hope that the next will not take as long on the production line.

Quezon City
January 30, 1992

To Isabel
Reg, Eya, Andi, Noel, Judy,
Carmen, Ted, Sonia, Bing,
Tiggie, Karen, Dennis,
Mabel, Corina,
Gus and Abo

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I owe a number of people in the writing of this book. I am greatly indebted to:

Dr. Patricia "Tatti" Licuanan, editor in chief of the *Philippine Journal of Education* (PJE), who graciously asked me to write for the journal starting in June 1983, which by happy coincidence marked the 50th anniversary of my entry into the teaching profession;

Dr. Edilberto P. Dagot, former president of the Philippine Normal College (now Philippine Normal University), who patiently and expertly arranged the essays under the various headings and chapters and suggested alternate titles to a number of those that originally appeared in the journal, and who wrote a foreword too;

Andrew B. Gonzalez, FSC, who went through the entire volume and made suggestions that resulted in the improvement of the essays, and who wrote a foreword also;

Professor Benjamin Pascual, who went through the columns in the journal and helped me select the "better" ones for inclusion in this volume;

Peter I. Galace, who painstakingly arranged the entire book in the computer and made the copy ready for the press; and

Angelita Alim, who typed some of the first drafts for editing.

CHAPTER ONE

The Past Recaptured

1.1 Even as a Donkey

In the past, one of the traditional practices that teachers, pupils, and parents looked forward to was the annual Christmas program. In many Philippine communities, the school was (and still is) the center of activities. It was (and still is, in many places) customary to hold a program where Christmas songs, recitations, playlets, or dramatizations were staged and gifts were exchanged.

These thoughts remind me of an incident that happened when I was an elementary school principal. One morning—I don't remember now whether it was the end of November or the first week of December—a parent came to my office. As he entered the room, I sensed that something was bothering him. So I stood up and greeted him. Ordinarily when a parent came, I sat on my chair, but this time I walked to the front of my desk and asked him to sit on one of the chairs in front of my desk while I took the other, facing him.

I asked what I could do for him. The conversation was in Ilocano and the English translation that I use here in reporting the incident somewhat fails to convey the beauty of our conversation. In substance, this was what the parent told me:

"You know, maestro, that I am a very good and cooperative parent. Whenever there is a call for contributions, I see to it that our children give their share. We are very good members of the parent-teacher association. We have three children in school and the oldest is now in grade five. As you know, Christmas is coming and the children are

again practicing songs, recitations, and dramatizations for the Christmas program. Do you know, maestro, that not one of my children is a participant in any of the numbers of the Christmas program? Every year for four years now, my wife and I attend the Christmas program. You know what, maestro, we see the same children year in and year out participating in the various numbers. None of our three children has ever been chosen to participate in any program for the public. Do you know that in the afternoons when those children chosen to participate remain in school to practice, our children sometimes try to remain in school so that they can walk back home with their friends? Sometimes they are asked by the participants why they are staying behind when they have no part to practice. Our children are not only embarrassed; worse, they feel unwanted. Can't the teachers select numbers in which our children can participate? In a play where there are angels, can't the number of angels be increased? Or, is there no play where my child can play the role of a horse or a donkey just so he can participate and belong?"

After that incident, our choruses became bigger and the angels were increased. No one knows how many angels there are in heaven anyway.

This may be an un-Christmas-like thought, but I have often wondered if the practice in government where the same people perform so many functions without giving a chance to others is something that has its roots in the selection of participants in school programs.

1.2 Panic Buying and the Ifugao

One Sunday before Christmas last year, our parish priest delivered a sermon on panic buying: that it is un-Christian, that those who could afford to buy all the laundry soap and other goods were not thinking of the poor who had to wait for payday before they could buy only a few bars at a time. While I sat there in the church listening to him, I was reminded of the very thoughtful Ifugaos in Lagawe where I was a district supervisor more than 40 years ago.

The Ifugaos, both men and women, love to chew betel nut—actually a mixture of usually a quarter slice of betel nut, a small piece of chewing tobacco (called *mascada* in Ilocano) and lime (*apog*) wrapped in a leaf that comes from a vine called *gawed*. By the way, there is a joke that mascada is not good enough for chewing unless the hawk flying over the tobacco drops dead because of the powerful odor. The Ifugaos produce all the ingredients except the tobacco, which usually comes from either the Cagayan Valley or the Ilocos provinces. The best chewing tobacco is *batek* in Ilocano because of spots the color of

copper about the size of a 25-centavo piece. The tobacco leaves measure about a foot or more in length and about 5 to 8 inches at the widest dimension.

When I went to Lagawe, on the advice of my friends who knew the Ifugaos, I brought some of this tobacco which I bought in the Baguio market. When the first Ifugao visitors came to my office, I offered them some of the tobacco. I proceeded to give them one leaf each. They were taken aback. They said, "No, no." Each Ifugao just wanted one little piece from the big leaf, the size that can be pinched off by the thumb pressed on the index finger (about one square inch or so). I insisted that I had enough tobacco and that each one could easily have one leaf each with plenty left over for others. They refused. With the help of Yogyog, the janitor, they explained that the Ifugaos think of others who would come after them; that if they got all the tobacco I had then others following would not have their share. Each one wanted just enough for one chewing.

I like the Ifugaos.

1.3 The Sarisari Store and Philippine Education

Ever since prices started going up (and that seems to have been a long time ago) there has been no instance when my wife arrives from the market and does not complain of prices having gone up since the last time she went, even if the last time was the previous day. She tells me of the increase in the price of pork, beef, chicken, bangos, and other items. Sometimes she shows me a very small piece of ginger which cost her a peso, something that would have cost one centavo before World War II.

Sometimes I join her in one of her favorite exercises. Aided by one of those small Japanese-made calculators, I help her figure out how much it costs to feed, clothe, and shelter a family of five or six. No matter how much we reduce their needs to the minimum, we could not see how teachers could possibly send their children to school especially to college, pay for medical expenses, etc. My wife never forgets that once we were teachers, so she invariably ends the expression of her woes with "How can the poor teacher of today ever make both ends meet with her salary?" And I remind her that there is one way and only one way: through loans—salary loans, life insurance loans, personal loans, loans from loan sharks—and through the generosity of the *sarisari* store owner at the corner.

Many people are not aware that the lowly sarisari store in many neighborhoods is one of the most important institutions that have supported Philippine education. This it has done by extending credit

to many people sending children to school, including or especially teachers, who can pay part of their *utang* or debts only after payday on the 15th and at the end of the month. Even the supermarkets have not killed these sarisari stores, for without these, many teachers and other low-salaried Filipinos could not afford to make both ends meet, much less send their children to college. One good thing about the sarisari store is that, unlike the IMF, it does not impose on the borrower many requirements before it gives sugar, canned goods, soap, and other items. All it requires is that one must pay a portion of one's debts after payday. The list of goods and their prices and the balance of one's debts are listed in small notebooks, one notebook for each customer. In retrospect, I wish that I had kept our notebooks; they would not only be a good record of our lives as teachers but would make interesting reading today, especially for comparing prices. Our grandchildren could hardly believe the prices we often tell them. They cannot understand that there was a time when a few centavos could really buy something.

1.4 Stations, Not of the Cross

Did you know that more than half a century ago a teacher did not know what school he was going to be assigned to until the very last minute? Incidentally, there are various ways of referring to time frames: (1) in our time, (2) before the war, (3) in the early days, (4) before or during the Commonwealth, (5) long ago, etc., all said with a deep sense of nostalgia and a hint of better times in the past. By "very last minute" is meant the closing session of the first teachers' meeting of the school year under the supervising teacher. I describe below how it was done in our time in what was then Mountain Province (now subdivided into Benguet, Mountain Province, Ifugao, and Kalinga-Apayao).

The teachers were called to a one-day meeting by the supervising teacher in his official station. The meeting usually took place one day during the week preceding the Monday for the opening of schools. The day was spent in taking up new regulations and requirements, methods of teaching, etc. All activities were preliminaries to the last number and most important part of the conference. This was the reading of the "stations" of the teachers. The school where one was assigned was referred to as "station." This reading of stations was awaited with bated breath. I can still see the supervising teacher, immaculate in his *dril de hilo* (Irish linen) suit, taking his seat in front with everyone very silent. He reads the names alphabetically. "Juan Abellera from Datakan Barrio School to Cuba Barrio School." All eyes are in the direction of

the teacher named to see how he is reacting. But the eyes are back to the supervising teacher almost immediately. After the reading of the new stations there might have been murmurs of disappointment, even from those not transferred but would have wished a change of station. Some subdued crying, but I do not remember anyone complaining to the supervising teacher. Teachers obediently went to their new stations.

Those who were transferred went back to their old stations to turn over their property responsibilities, if there were any, to their successors. Most barrio schoolteachers had no such obligations because they returned all books and official property to the central school principal at the end of the school year. The blackboards, desks, chairs, and teacher's table had been entrusted to the *teniente del barrio* (now they are barrio captains or barangay captains) who turned these over to the new teacher. Those teachers who did not expect to be transferred usually went back to the barrio to pack their belongings which usually consisted of some clothes, a couple of blankets, a mosquito net, a *kaldero* (iron pot), a teapot or coffee pot, some plates, forks and spoons, and teaching devices such as cutouts of animals, fruits, and objects, flash cards, pocket charts, a printing outfit of the capital and small letters of the alphabet, etc. Teachers usually had two *tampipis*, versatile rectangular boxlike containers woven either out of bamboo or rattan, the lower box being smaller in dimension than the top piece which is the cover. One virtue of the tampipi is it can contain much more than the modern suitcase of equal size because the cover is not anchored to the lower portion. If the lower portion cannot contain everything, all that is needed is to squeeze in the clothes and force the cover on. One can stand on the tampipi while a companion binds a piece of rope securely around the tampipi. Teachers usually had two tampipis, one for clothes and the other for teaching devices and cooking utensils. If the teacher was well liked by the people in the barrio, they usually came to bid him good-bye and there would be volunteers to carry his tampipis to his new station. Even in those days, news traveled very fast so that often the teacher's reputation preceded him in his new station and the welcome he received from the people was an index of that reputation. If he was new and was starting his teaching career, people in the barrio almost always gave him the benefit of the doubt by being kind to him.

In those days, a teacher had to have permission to leave his station. The rule on his staying in his station was very strict per Section 618 of the *1927 Service Manual* which appeared in the September 1983 issue of *Philippine Journal of Education* (PJE), pages 186 to 187. I quote:

> As a rule, teachers are expected to remain at their official stations throughout the school year, and employees on the accrued-leave

basis are expected to remain throughout the year except for authorized absences. The official station is the province, district, or town to which the employee is assigned. The main reasons for this rule are (1) the duties of almost all employees are such that they are liable to serve outside of the regular school sessions, and (2) the employee's usefulness is based partly upon his standing in the community which is impaired if he shows a preference for society elsewhere. Naturally, such a regulation, developed as a result of much experience, has to be applied with common sense.

1.5 The Stain of Indelible Ink

It is so symbolic of the times, this indelible ink on the cuticle and fingernail of my right-hand index finger. The teacher poll chairperson had greeted me "Good morning, sir. What are you doing in your retirement, sir? I am a Philippine Normal College (PNC) graduate, class 1974. You were president when I graduated, sir." She said these as she and the other members of the voting precinct committee looked for my name in the registry list. All I could say in response was "Oh yes, that was more than 10 years ago." One of the members of the board got hold of the bottle of indelible ink, removed its cap, and with her left hand she held my index finger which I had extended with the other fingers and the thumb curled into a loosely clenched fist. She carefully poured the ink on the nail and cuticle of my finger while saying, "Sorry, sir, I know you are not a flying voter but I am only following instructions."

As I walked out of the election precinct, I looked at my stained fingernail. What a shame, I thought, that a man like me should be insulted in his later years after having taught and tried to live as best he could the virtue of honesty. I saw again so clearly in a flash the maxim printed on manila paper and displayed above the blackboard in the little cogon-roofed schoolhouse in Bakun, Benguet, deep in Kankana-ey country in the Cordilleras where I went to school as a boy. My classmates and I memorized the maxim "Honesty is the best policy." Years later, as a young barrio schoolteacher, I had printed the same maxim and displayed it in my classroom. Other maxims we read and memorized as children were "Plow deep while others sleep and you shall have corn to reap and keep," "A stitch in time saves nine," and "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again." Never mind if we did not understand their meanings then. The experience of growing up took care of that. We don't see these maxims anymore in present-day classrooms. They seem to have disappeared after World War II. Oh

yes, we also committed to heart the golden rule, "Do unto others what you want others do unto you." Recently I saw a contemporary version of the golden rule. It was printed in red letters on the jogging shirt of a friend. The front of the shirt had "What is the golden rule?" The answer was at the back: "He who has the gold makes the rule."

But back to this indelible ink. I started this essay by saying it is so symbolic of the times. Its being on the index finger seems to deliberately point to the ills of the society today.

Why did we have to put this indelible ink? Why?

What happened to all the good things that we tried to teach in school for which men and women of my generation invested the best years of their lives? Where did we fail? But I also ask, is it really the school and the teacher who are to blame? What is wrong with this question is that it assumes (as practically most people assume) that only the schools are responsible for teaching values. We must not forget that there are institutions in our society who influence, perhaps even more strongly, people's lives. This indelible ink tells me and reminds me so forthrightly and so loudly that somewhere something went wrong with our people and their institutions. When a child goes to school and is told by the teacher to be good and honest, one doubts whether the child believes her because nearly everything around him seems to be a negation of those virtues.

This indelible ink makes me angry and at the same time sad. Angry because we have allowed this to happen. Somewhere something went wrong. Maybe not suddenly, but slowly dishonesty took hold of the society—oh, not everyone really, but those who can "impose" dishonesty on us. What is a flying voter if not the personification of dishonesty? A flying voter is a corrupted person. And it is tragic that those who have been responsible for flying voters are supposed to be the "educated ones"—the candidates themselves in many cases, the very people who aspire to lead us. And I ask myself, will the use of indelible ink be a permanent feature of the electoral process? When will the flying voter disappear? Is it possible to hope that someday the flying voter or flying candidate will belong only to a past that is best forgotten? A hundred years from now, political scientists and sociolinguists, among others, will be doing research on what a flying voter or flying candidate was.

It seems to me that the least that this indelible ink implies is that we are politically immature as a people. This indelible ink is a capsule summary of the sad times.

(NOTE: The foregoing was written in the afternoon of May 14, 1984, election day. I think it is still appropriate at this time and for some time to come.)

1.6 October in Barrio Karao

The best classroom supervision I ever received in nearly half a century in education took place in 1933, during my first year of teaching. At that time I was teaching grades one and two in Karao Barrio School in Bokod, Benguet. The division superintendent of schools, Alexander Monto—an American—and Luis Pawid—to my knowledge one of the very first supervising teachers, if not the first, from Ifugao—visited me. When a superintendent of schools and a supervising teacher visited a school, the official with the higher rank "dictated" what was to be done. Mr. Pawid, whose district was being visited, was as concerned and, in fact, as nervous as I was because naturally he wanted the work of teachers in his district to be the very best. If pupils were alert, the schoolhouse and the playground well kept, the garden green with vegetables, those were to his credit as much as to the teacher.

A couple of days before their actual visit, I got advance notice through the grapevine. We had a system of getting and giving information on the visits of supervisors especially of division superintendents so that a "surprise" visit was very, very rare. A barrio schoolteacher who got a surprise visit was generally one who had no friends or was disliked by his colleagues; such teachers were very rare. The system worked this way. When the division superintendent left his station, a friendly member of his staff saw to it that word got to the first school to be visited. The school personnel there in turn relayed (through a runner) the information to the next school and so on.

The information included such important matters as approximate time of arrival, number of people in the party, the meals expected to be served—breakfast, lunch, or supper. Supper meant the visitors would spend the night in the barrio, which meant not only the preparation of food but also of beddings. We teachers in the barrios were not as worried about our teaching (we were quite proud of our ability to teach then) as we were of what food to serve, what beddings (which included pillows, blankets, and mosquito nets) to prepare. Another source of worry was what to feed the horses of the visitors. Some supervisors were more concerned about what their horses ate than what they themselves ate, especially if the distances between schools were very far, as was the case in the Mountain Province. The barrio schoolteacher had to know what kind of grass or feed the horses ate. Some horses preferred palay soaked in water while others preferred *sagibo,* the young green rice shoots that sprouted after the rice had been harvested. There are stories (and old-timers in Philippine education have many variants of these stories, each region or province having its favorite tales) of

teachers who got promoted on the basis of their treatment of the horses of superintendents and supervisors.

But to get back to the best supervision I ever received. Mr. Monto and Mr. Pawid arrived not too long after the opening exercises. I was reciting with the grade two class, and the grade one pupils were having their seat work. When they entered, we continued with what we were doing. In those days, visitors were not supposed to disturb the class and besides I was not surprised to know that they were coming. The practice of having pupils stand up and all of them saying in unison "Good morning, visitors" is a much later development.

Mr. Monto and Mr. Pawid went directly to the teacher's table at the back of the room. Mr. Monto sat on the only available chair in the room, my chair, while Mr. Pawid remained standing. On my table were the standard requirements for school visitors neatly arranged: my lesson plan book all by itself so that it could easily be located as it was the first item that supervisors usually looked for; the register (Form 1) which contained the list of pupils and the monthly report of daily attendance; Form II which was submitted to the principal at the end of the month; the Observation and Suggestion book (Form 178) which was used by the visitor for writing, in quadruplicate, his observations, instructions, and suggestions. Other items on the table were the textbooks used in grades one and two and the Course of Study in the Primary Grades, the daily program which contained the time, number of minutes to be spent for recitation, and seat work for each subject or for other daily activities. It was not uncommon then for supervisors to chide teachers who were found teaching arithmetic when at that precise time the subject for study should be language.

The superintendent examined my lesson plans, the books, and the register. He whispered something to Mr. Pawid who then approached me and told me that the grade one pupils whose names were called should see Mr. Monto. The first pupil was called. Mr. Monto asked the boy to write his name and the name of our school. He dictated addition and subtraction combinations which the boy wrote and answered. He made the boy read from the textbook. In addition to these, he asked some of the other children to recite poems which he noted from my lesson plans had been taught and memorized. He made some of them sing songs that he found listed in my lesson plans.

It was a slow process. During recess, while we looked at the school garden, he asked me how I liked my work. When we resumed classes after recess, he continued "examining" the pupils. He never observed me teach. When I dismissed the class in accordance with the time schedule, he had not examined all the pupils. It was eleven-thirty. However, he asked that the few not yet tested to please stay. He tested

them. Fortunately Mr. Monto and Mr. Pawid were expected to return for lunch in the central school so I was spared one of the greatest difficulties that a barrio schoolteacher could experience, that of serving food to superiors. The teniente del barrio in the meantime had fed their horses with *zacate* (grass) cut the previous evening.

Before they left, Mr. Monto showed me the register. He showed me his comments opposite the children's names. He had identified those who could read and write well, those who could hardly do so, and those who could not read or write. Up to this day, more than half a century later, I can still hear him saying to me: "Mr. Sibayan, it is now October. I do not think I can come to visit you again. Mr. Pawid will come to visit you before the end of the year. He will examine your pupils as I did today. Many are doing well. I think you are doing a good job." We shook hands, and he and Mr. Pawid bade me goodbye.

Funny thing was, it was only much later that I realized he had not observed me. He did not even write on my Form 178, the Observation and Suggestion book. He had concentrated his attention on the pupils.

I told the children what the superintendent told me. I also told the teniente del barrio so that he would help me in getting the children to attend school. The parents had to be told to send their children to school regularly. This was one of the greatest difficulties of teachers then.

Before the end of the year, practically all the children could read and write and recite poems by means of methods I myself had invented. The children could spell all the words required, words in the Course of Study, and more.

In retrospect I think the reason we barrio schoolteachers could teach then was due to the fact that we were seldom visited (some of my less kind colleagues say "seldom interfered with") by supervisors so we were free to teach in whatever way we thought best. We concentrated on the pupils. Even Mr. Monto and Mr. Pawid, superintendent of schools and supervising teacher, did just that—concentrate on the pupils.

1.7 The Uncredentialed

Before World War II ("up to the year 1941" is another way of referring to the period), the great majority of teachers in the elementary schools did not have bachelor's degrees; in fact, many did not even graduate from high school and those who graduated from secondary normal schools were considered highly qualified. A teacher whose name was

followed by the initials PNS for Philippine Normal School (e.g., Juan de la Cruz, PNS) was highly envied. Many division superintendents did not have college degrees. Those with bachelor's degrees were rare and one with an M.A. was very rare. One of our instructors at the PNS who had just obtained his M.A. at the University of the Philippines spent a good deal of our class time telling us how he managed to obtain the degree. One who had a Ph.D. was so rare that we didn't even know what it meant; to use the art of exaggeration, one who had the Ph.D. came from outer space.

By the time our class completed the seventh grade, I think the highest academic attainment of any of our teachers was second year or third year high school; one of them finished grade five. In spite of this situation, however, practically all those who finished grade seven managed to learn elementary ratio and proportion and solve problems of percentage, knew how to use the dictionary, and best of all, practically all of us did not only know how to locate most places on a map of the world, but could also draw the various continents on the blackboard or on paper and indicate most cities or places dictated by the teacher. Practically all of us by the time we were in grade five could draw the map of the Philippines and indicate towns, rivers, mountain ranges, and the most important products of each province or region. We were proud of our penmanship (teachers could write beautifully in those days) and our ability to spell. In addition we had memorized poems and sayings about honesty and hard work. I repeat, this we managed to do with the teachers whose education did not include a college degree. (For an evaluation of the achievement of pupils during the first quarter of the century, the reader is referred to the volume popularly known in education circles as the Monroe Survey Commission Report published by the Bureau of Printing in 1925. In fact a rereading of this report is recommended to all serious students of Philippine education.)

In contrast, the minimum educational qualification of an elementary school teacher during the past quarter of the century is a four-year college degree. By 1956 the minimum requirement for elementary school teaching was a four-year college degree. Very many have acquired an M.A. and a Ph.D.

While comparisons may be unfair because of obviously differing conditions and factors, the observation may be made here that it is also during the last quarter of the century when the quality of education has been judged the lowest as evidenced by studies such as that of the Study on the Outcomes of Elementary Education (popularly known as SOUTELE in education circles) and by the results of the National College Entrance Examinations (NCEE).

It is hard to believe from these observations that the levels of achievement of pupils do not necessarily improve with higher educational qualifications of teachers, supervisors, and administrators. What the evidence suggests is very disturbing. This needs careful study. And *soon,* because of the current "retraining" of teachers for the new elementary school curriculum.

1.8 Literary and Academic Contests

Did you know that there used to be a practice in the twenties and thirties of holding contests among schoolchildren in arithmetic (computation and problem solving), spelling, reading, recitation of poetry, geography (map drawing and locating towns, rivers, mountains, and other geographical features), and other subjects? These contests which were held on the school, district, and district against district levels were eagerly awaited by the parents and other members of the communities. These contests drew the attention of the pupils and the parents to academic excellence and to achievement.

Some of these contests were held during athletic meets so that both the physical and mental prowess of the children were on exhibit. I have a very strong belief that a return to these competitions on a nationwide scale will help solve the present dismal state of achievement of our pupils. What I mean by nationwide scale is that all the schools engage in this competition for academic excellence among classes, schools, districts, and even division levels.

1.9 The Four Walls . . . in 1938

Did you know that in 1938 there were 894 permanent standard-plan buildings housing 5,666 classrooms, and 253 permanent special-plan buildings housing 1,319 classrooms? There were also 3,899 semipermanent standard-plan buildings housing 8,908 classrooms, and 1,937 semipermanent special-plan buildings housing 5,257 classrooms: a total of 6,983 permanent and semipermanent buildings of high or relatively high quality housing 21,150 classrooms. The national and local governments owned 6,716 temporary school buildings, many of which were constructed of cheap lumber, with bamboo floors and nipa-thatched roofs. Frequently the materials and labor going into such structures were voluntarily contributed by the people in the neighborhood in order to secure a new school or an annex to an old one (Joseph Ralston Hayden, *The Philippines: A Study in National Development* [New York: The Macmillan Company, 1950], 483–484).

1.10 The Master Teacher of Old

In the old days (and I repeat that the expression generally refers to the period before World War II) we knew who the "master teachers" were although they were not called such. They were simply called good teachers or often "demonstration" teachers. They were the teachers who demonstrated or showed other teachers, generally the new and less skillful, how good teaching was done. They were industrious to the point of abuse such that many of them contracted tuberculosis (in fact, there was a teachers' pavilion in the old Quezon Sanitarium for tubercular patients); they constantly thought of their pupils and how they learned. The classrooms of these excellent teachers were full of what were at the time called "teaching devices," those teaching aids such as charts, cutouts, pictures cut from magazines and carefully pasted on cardboards for story telling and for compositions, etc. Many of these devices were bought by the teachers out of meager salaries, which shows that the buying power of the small salary of the teacher long ago was much more than that of today's teachers.

These excellent master teachers may not have been the brightest but they had a way with children so that they were respected and loved. I don't remember anyone of them having a college degree. Many superintendents then only had Philippine Normal School two-year diplomas. A number did not finish high school but this was the time when the term *dropout* (I often wonder how that term originated) was unheard of. Many teachers were not embarrassed that they did not finish high school. They just withdrew from school and went to work. The stigma that is attached today to the term *dropout* is one of the saddest "developments" in Philippine education.

But back to the master teacher. Many of these master teachers went to the summer institute at Teachers' Camp in Baguio. (Baguio was then so beautiful because there were no squatters and the pine trees were not yet cut; the market was the cleanest one can find anywhere in the world; and in summer, flowers were in bloom. Baguio, ah, Baguio of old where one could get an education and rest at the same time.) The teachers from as far away as the Visayas and Mindanao and Sulu saved their money to go to Baguio's Teachers' Camp summer school to take courses for professional improvement but not for units towards a college degree.

Master teachers then were teachers who were recognized and acknowledged as such by their colleagues. They did not have to present any papers to show they were master teachers. Their peers knew. Teachers who were eager to learn how to teach well were eager to see teachers teach. These master teachers were sought by the less able

to learn from them. This was similar to the practice among doctors of medicine who work and study under superior physicians and imbibe the best from them.

Believe it or not, these master teachers were paid the same salaries just like other classroom teachers. There were no "differentials." Many were promoted to "higher" positions; some became supervising teachers, academic supervisors, and even division superintendent of schools. But many remained classroom teachers.

I often wonder how the master teacher these days is identified and defined. I am told there is a new definition.

1.11 The Master Teacher: A Rejoinder

I quote portions of a letter from Mrs. Leticia D. Cruz of Western Mindanao State University Research Center, Zamboanga City. Her letter is a reaction to my "The Master Teacher: An Old Definition," PJE, September 1986, pages 149 to 150.

> Reading your definition of a master teacher of old really made me nostalgic—bringing back memories of my grade school teachers including my mother now in her seventies . . . who retired after 45 years of uncomplaining service as a classroom teacher. Everyone who knows her knows that she was an A-1 teacher. I could still remember the time when the superintendent personally came to congratulate her for being the highest ranking teacher in the whole division. The officials knew the good teachers without making teachers submit certification . . . they were really monitoring teachers' activities then . . . not like the present policy of having teachers submit bio-data with certifications (which are fake sometimes) . . . (NOTE: Words in the parentheses in original letter.—BPS)

Apparently Mrs. Cruz knows what she was writing about. Her letter was written September and it was confirmed by a news report about 408 teachers from Zamboanga del Sur who faked their scholastic records between 1975 to 1977 to qualify for salary adjustments and increases (*Bulletin Today,* 16 Nov. 1986, front page; *Philippine Daily Inquirer,* 16 Nov. 1986, front page, box). The news report says further that the teachers were granted executive clemency by President Corazon Aquino, on condition, according to Secretary of Justice Neptali Gonzales, that they return whatever amount they received and they return to their original positions before the promotions were made.

While this column does not question the granting of executive clemency by the President of the Philippines, it is very disturbing to think of teachers who should teach honesty and integrity to children

doing exactly the opposite. How can children believe such teachers? How about the parents? What do they think? Also what happens to values education? This incident once more proves what I have been saying all along that promotions based on paper qualifications alone without considering demonstrated ability to really teach should be stopped. The DECS administration should seriously reconsider its promotion policy.

In this connection, I understand that there is a recent rule in state colleges and universities (possibly except at the University of the Philippines) that what counts in promotion to full professorship is a doctorate and not demonstrated scholarship, research, and ability to teach. I am told there is now a *mad* (that is an apt word) scramble for the acquisition of a doctorate for promotion and status in state colleges and universities. This even applies in a field like drama and theater arts where a Ph.D. is very rare and not required for teaching in many of the better universities in the world. In the arts, a doctorate may help but it is not a standard requirement.

1.12 We Knew How and What to Teach

More than half a century ago when I graduated from secondary normal school, I looked forward to teaching the following June. In fact only two in the graduating class went to the Philippine Normal School (PNS) the following June.

We were teenagers (I was 17 years and 4 months old) when we started teaching. For most of us, a college education was never a part of our dreams. In fact the secondary normal curriculum was designed in such a way that it was terminal education for the elementary school teacher because we did not take up algebra, geometry, and physics and other subjects which those who took the general curriculum and were expected to go to college did. (Later those of us who went to the PNS had to take algebra, geometry, and physics because these subjects were needed for graduation.)

What did we take up in secondary normal school? Mostly methods. The only nonmethods subjects were English and history. We studied arithmetic methods, language methods, and reading methods. We also learned writing methods. Hence, we practiced beautiful handwriting both on paper and on the blackboard—on paper the top of the pen had to point directly to the right-hand shoulder, and in writing on the blackboard one had to have the left hand with an eraser across the small of the back. We learned geography methods. We drew all sorts of maps from the map of the world to the various continents and the map of the Philippines and its 48 provinces, and located on these maps

anything listed by the teacher or dictated by him such as cities, towns, mountains, rivers, important agricultural crops in the various regions, etc. We learned industrial arts methods, etc. These methods subjects, however, were not all methods. In fact more important than the methods were the content. In arithmetic methods we first learned the content of arithmetic such as the relationship of whole numbers, fractions, decimals and percentage, the Pythagorean theorem, ratio and proportion, etc. We knew what we were going to teach and how to go about it.

1.13 The Sand Table of Time

Every generation of students (and teachers) has favorite recollections of schoolroom fixtures or practices. Some of these memories may evoke either positive or negative emotions. Whether positive or negative, they often become romanticized and some attain the status of minor classics in the recollection and retelling.

In this day of audiovisual technology with such sophisticated gadgets as overhead projectors and videotapes, I would like to recall here the saga of the sand table in Philippine classrooms. To anyone who went to school "before the war" (which means before World War II), no explanation is necessary about what the sand table is.

The role of the sand table in Philippine education is something that has never been estimated nor written about; this is therefore an attempt at doing something about the matter.

The sand table was one of the most important teaching devices in the twenties and the thirties. Almost every primary and, in some cases, intermediate classroom had a sand table.

What is a sand table? It is a table measuring about 30 inches square but in place of a flat top is a box with sides about 5 inches high. The height of the sand table varies from as low as 22 inches to 26 inches from the floor to the top edge of the table. The box is filled with sand, but if sand is not available good earth is used.

The sand table is one of the most versatile teaching aids next to the school desk, blackboard, pocket chart, and flash cards. The sand table is used for teaching in almost any subject. In language, one could arrange figures cut out of cardboard from ruled pad paper to tell the story, for example, of the three pigs, the three bears, the big bad wolf, etc. In arithmetic, one could arrange almost anything for counting, adding, subtracting, multiplying, dividing, etc. But the best use of the sand table was for teaching geography. Some teachers who were fortunate to have old newspapers and magazines made paper pulp by

shredding the papers and soaking the shredded pieces in water until the material was easily molded. Boiled cassava starch was mixed with the pulp as binder and this made the most beautiful material for making relief maps of Luzon complete with mountains, plains, rivers, and other geographical features. In some cases after the pulp had dried, the relief map was painted. The various features of the map were then labeled. The most important products of each region could then be indicated such as rice in Central Luzon, tobacco in the Cagayan Valley and the Ilocos, etc. When paper pulp was not available, local clay or even mud was used. Through the sand table, the child learned what a divide was, a fault, a delta and what caused or formed it, etc. By the way, why was geography eliminated and why can't it be returned to the curriculum?

It is funny but in recalling the sand table I feel nostalgic about the "old" and "crude" ways our teachers taught us and later as teachers we ourselves taught our pupils. I often wonder what took the place of the sand table or why it disappeared from classrooms. I guess modernity and progress has something to do with its disappearance.

1.14 Cat and Mouse

It was a beautiful, clear afternoon in February almost 40 years ago in a school on the Mountain Trail (now Halsema Road), that beautiful road built atop the Cordilleras leading to Bontoc. I was in my office paying attention to the correspondence and other paper work that usually piled up while visiting schools located in the municipalities of Tublay, Atok, and Mankayan. Most of the schools were accessible on foot, so I usually rested at my official station before I visited schools again.

My office as district supervisor was in the small room located at the left side of the Gabaldon-like building. I occupied the room that should have been the clinic; the clinic was located elsewhere. For the benefit of the reader who is not familiar with the Gabaldon schoolhouse, this type of building has a long front porch and on each end of the porch is a small room; one of the rooms was generally—and I think it was intended to be—used as the school clinic and the other was used as the principal's office.

In the Mountain Province, the school sites were often excavated from the sides of hills and mountains so there was very little playground space. Whatever playground available was divided among the various grades so that every grade had a portion for physical education activities. The portion directly visible from and nearest my office was assigned to the grade two class.

I repeat, it was a beautiful February afternoon and the pine trees cast their lengthening shadows as the sun set in the Lingayen Gulf to the west. The children came out for physical education class and the grade two pupils occupied the space in the playground near my office. I heard the teacher say, "Let us play Cat and Mouse, children." Several children said, "I want to be cat." The teacher pointed to one. Others said, "I want to be mouse." The teacher said, "You be the mouse." Automatically, the rest of the children joined hands forming a circle. The mouse was inside the circle and the cat was outside. The teacher gave the signal for everyone to start singing "Come, dear pussy, come and run . . ." and the pupils sang. The cat tried to break into the circle to catch the mouse while the circle of children prevented him from doing so. When the cat succeeded in getting into the circle, the mouse was allowed to go outside the circle. The object was to prevent the cat from catching the mouse. This went on with the children singing (actually shouting more than [and] singing)

> Come, dear pussy, come and run.
> Catch the mouse if you can
> Come and run, come and run.
> Catch the mouse if you can.

The word *mouse* was almost always pronounced /ma-us/ (two syllables). As soon as the mouse was caught, another pair of cat and mouse was chosen and the game continued until the teacher said it was time to go home.

That was Monday. The following day, Tuesday, the class played Cat and Mouse again. On Wednesday it was again Cat and Mouse. I told my clerk who was actually hired as janitor (district supervisors were not entitled to clerical help in those days so if the janitor was a good typist, he was assigned clerical and other duties including accompanying me in my trips to the barrios): "Did you notice that the grade two class played Cat and Mouse today, yesterday, and last Monday?"

The janitor said, "That's their favorite game, sir."

I said, "If they play that game again tomorrow, I will surely call the teacher and ask her why they can't play other games." The following day, Thursday, I could hardly wait for the physical education period. The children came out at last and they ran directly to their assigned place in the playground. I said to myself, not Cat and Mouse. But it was Cat and Mouse again. "Unbelievable. Tomorrow is Friday and I have plans to see the superintendent," I told my janitor-clerk. "Will you please listen if the grade two class under Miss Reyes (not her real name) will play Cat and Mouse again tomorrow?"

However, I was so curious that I postponed seeing the superintendent until the following week. That Friday was one of the longest days in my supervisory career. Actually, it was one of those idyllic cloudless afternoons in February. I never waited for a school activity with more eagerness than that physical education period that Friday afternoon.

The children came out at last. The teacher said, "Children, let us have ground improvement." "Ground improvement" was the euphemism for picking up the pieces of paper and leaves strewn on the playground. I was so disappointed. But my disappointment was short-lived. I heard the teacher say, "Children, let us play one game before you go home. Cat and Mouse."

I scribbled a note and told my janitor-clerk to give it to Miss Reyes. I got the volume of *Academic Bulletin* containing the description of 100 indigenous Philippine games suited to children in the elementary school. Miss Reyes came with her lesson plan notebook which she handed to me. I asked her to sit down in one of those chairs that are placed in front of every office table in the Philippines.

I asked her, "What game did you play today with your class, Miss Reyes?"

"Cat and Mouse, sir," she said.

"How about yesterday?"

After a slight hesitation she said, "Cat and Mouse, sir."

"How about Wednesday?"

She paused and said, "I don't remember now, sir."

I said, "Cat and Mouse. How about last Tuesday?" She couldn't remember. I said softly, "Cat and Mouse. How about last Monday?" Before she could answer I said, "Cat and Mouse." I looked at her plans. She had planned other games, the titles I do not now remember.

I finally said, "You know, Miss Reyes, you have no more mouse to catch. When I was in grade one in the 1920s, we already caught that mouse!"

I gave her back her lesson plan book and the *Academic Bulletin* that contained the description of 100 indigenous Filipino games. She said, "Thank you, sir." She smiled and stood up. She quietly left the room.

1.15 Options: Open and Closed

Would I be a teacher all over again? A couple of my walking friends asked me: Suppose you were to live life all over again, would you be a teacher? Quite honestly, I said, the answer to your question is not a "Yes" or a "No." The better answer is that there are years and

events in my life as a teacher that I would happily repeat or live all over again and there are a number that I would not. For example, I would be very happy to repeat my first year of teaching in Karao Barrio School in Bokod, Benguet, where I taught grades one and two. I was fresh out of secondary normal school bursting with all the enthusiasm of youth ready to put in practice what I had learned. I especially enjoyed teaching the grade one pupils who, before the year ended, learned how to read and write, sing songs, recite short poems, and tell stories.

But I would not want to repeat my second year of teaching in Ambuclao Barrio School in the Ambuclao Valley (the valley has since gone under water in what is now Ambuclao Dam). I was made to teach grades one, two, three, and four, yes, all four grades in a one-room schoolhouse. I did not know what to do. I could not write all the lesson plans for every subject for all four grades, prepare teaching devices, do the board work, and really do a good job. I needed a supervisor to show me (demonstrate to me) how to do all these things. I wrote to the principal of the central school and to the supervising teacher and pleaded with them to please come and help me and show me how to teach almost a hundred children and be a successful teacher. They never came. All they said was that I should try my best. That made me lose confidence and respect for my supervisors. To add insult to injury, the supervising teacher and academic supervisor came to visit me before the end of the year and they found many blanks in the block lesson plans. I planned only the lessons in reading, arithmetic, and language and skipped the rest because that was all that I really had the time and energy for. For this, I was fined half a month's salary. That instant I almost died.

I would like to repeat the years when I taught English in third and fourth year high school and was adviser of the high school paper, the *Mountain Breeze.* I taught my boys touch typing, the use of the inverted pyramid in news writing, the writing of editorials and feature articles, etc. I still recall the nights we spent in the printing press to read the galley proofs, lay out the paper, help select the most appropriate and pleasing fonts, and sleeping on tops of tables to catch some sleep—all these I recall with fondness. I can still see ourselves now, eagerly looking at the first copies of the paper come off the press still fresh with the smell of printer's ink.

I accompanied four boys to compete in the Philippine Secondary School Press Association competitions held at Torres High School in 1949. One of my boys made quite a name in the Philippine newspaper world in the sixties and during the martial law years but died under mysterious circumstances. The second is a bishop in the Anglican Church of the Philippines. The third became an educational adviser

of UNESCO in Bangladesh and in other countries. The fourth is now a superintendent of schools. I would gladly repeat the years I taught those boys as adviser to the high school paper.

I would rather forget the first Christmas vacation and the first long vacation of my first year of teaching (14 days of Christmas and 70 days of long vacation). I received no vacation pay because I was a temporary teacher in my first year of teaching. In those days temporary teachers were not entitled to vacation pay. During the long vacation in 1934, I joined a surveying party in the mountains of Benguet to earn one peso a day. I needed the money the following June to help my brother attend the University of the Philippines. (I often wonder how teachers today can help brothers and sisters go to school with their salaries!) Teachers are luckier these days, though, because they get paid the whole year round. They even get paid when they go on mass leave of absence; they only have to teach on Saturdays to make up for the lost days for the benefit of the pupils.

Funny, the foregoing thoughts on the teacher and teaching seem to trigger a stream of consciousness in me . . . the welfare of the child is paramount, the child is the raison d'être of the teacher . . . but that was a long time ago . . . and now looking forward to her retirement, the teacher has bought a few hectares of land, maybe 10 or 15 hectares and she has remained unmarried because during the years of teaching there was no time for thinking about marriage because there was the teaching to do, the writing of the lesson plans, the sending of brothers and sisters and some nephews and nieces to school . . . but now the land was to be "land reformed". . . something she does not understand at all . . . is this part of her being invisible again . . .

1.16 In the Beginning

Regular courses of instruction were prescribed for the first time in June 1904. Prior to that date, courses were determined by the superintendents of schools in their respective divisions or areas of influence. In 1904 two aspects of training were prescribed, namely, *mental training,* which consisted of the English language (reading, writing, conversation, phonetics, and spelling), nature study, arithmetic, geography, and citizenship training for older boys; and *body training,* which consisted of singing, drawing, handiwork, and physical exercises. The primary grades consisted of one, two, and three and the intermediate grades of four, five, and six. In 1907 the primary curriculum was made into four grades. Grade seven was added to the intermediate curriculum in 1909.

1.17 Back in the Twenties

Did you know that in 1925 the main work of the division superintendent of schools consisted of seven kinds, namely, (1) appointing and assigning teachers, (2) doing field work largely through the supervisors and supervising teachers, (3) taking charge of finance, (4) constructing and maintaining buildings, (5) submitting reports and general correspondence to the central office, (6) investigating charges against teachers and pupils, and (7) managing the teacher's institute? (For detailed discussion, see *Monroe Survey Commission Report* [Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1925], 545–548.)

1.18 The Kankana-ey Guard

When I was a boy, the Amburayan River—that river that marks the boundary of La Union and Ilocos Sur—was wide and deep that even during the dry season one needed a bamboo raft to cross it. The months of August, September, and October were referred to among the Ilocanos in that part of the world as *panagipon* (season for catching *ipon*). Panagipon is now practically unknown because the Amburayan River has almost disappeared due to indiscriminate logging and mining in its watershed and forest cover. The ipon is the fry of various kinds of fish that go up the Amburayan River in large numbers (during good seasons, several *burnay* of ipon may be caught). The ipon is about half an inch long, almost transparent, when caught at the mouth of the river with very fine fish nets called *sayot*. By the time the fish reaches about a kilometre from the mouth of the river upstream, it has become about three-fourths of an inch long and is spotted with black dots.

The ipon is a delicacy among Ilocanos. It may be eaten raw with vinegar and pepper, or it is simply boiled in water with sampalok (*sinigang*), a recipe favored for its broth. It may be mixed with ginger and the right amount of strong Ilocano vinegar and wrapped with banana leaves and steamed as *tamales*. The best preparation of ipon, however, is that of *bog-go-ong* (Ilocano; *bagoong*, Tagalog) which is aged in Vigan burnay (*tapayan*, Tag.). Ipon bog-go-ong is exported to the United States west coast mainly for consumption of Ilocanos there.

When I was a boy, panagipon was awaited with great anticipation by Ilocanos of Tagudin, Ilocos Sur, and Bangar, La Union. The catching of ipon was a major activity. The river was dammed. Bamboo stakes were driven in the riverbed across the river. Split bamboo similar to that for making sawali and banana trunks were then put against the

stakes to make a dam. The dam was topped with ***ub-bak ti saba,*** peeled-off sections of fresh banana trunks. The water flowed over the banana trunk installation. When the ipon swam upstream, it had to hurdle this artificial barrier. Instead of successfully negotiating the dam, however, the thousands upon thousands of ipon (must have been millions in a good year) swam to the right (or left depending upon the device installed for the direction of the ipon) following the edge of the ub-bak ti saba and through a device dumped into a waiting net. Through this method, almost all the ipon were caught. Very few got away to become big fish upstream.

In order to have fish for people in towns upstream, this method of catching ipon was either prohibited or allowed only for a short period by the authorities in the twenties and thirties. Philippine Constabulary guards were posted on both banks of the river to prevent the making of a dam. The Ilocanos who prized the ipon naturally did not like the prohibition. They did everything including bribing the guard to allow them to build the dam. The guards who were often either Kankana-eys or Bontocs would tell off the Ilocanos in anger in their language (most Kankana-eys and Bontocs spoke both their language and Ilocano, but it is the exceptional Ilocano who is bilingual in Ilocano and Bontoc or Kankana-ey): "What is the matter with you? I have been given my orders by my superiors. Who are you to give me other orders? If you insist, I am going to shoot you." The Ilocanos knew that the guard who was, more often than not, unlettered but thoroughly honest and faithful to his sworn duty and a crack shot meant what he said. They obeyed and respected him for doing his duty.

1.19 Where Have All the Maxims Gone?

There was a period in Philippine education (old-timers often refer to this period as "peacetime" or "our time" or "long ago" often with nostalgia) when the maxim "Cleanliness is next to godliness" was printed either on white cartolina or manila paper and displayed often above the blackboards in the classroom. Another favorite was "Honesty is the best policy." Is it possible that their disappearance from Philippine post-World War II classrooms has something to do with the piles of uncollected garbage and the prevalence of graft and corruption that we read about daily in our newspapers these days?

1.20 Two Styles of Pupil Promotion: Prewar Promotion (Passed/Failed) vs. Postwar Acceleration

Filipinos who were in the elementary school before World War II will recall that exceptionally bright children in the grades were promoted to the next higher grade during the school year based solely on the judgment of the classroom teacher and approval of the principal. No acceleration tests were conducted. These superior children were generally known by almost everyone, teachers and pupils alike, as really deserving of being promoted to the next higher grade. Even the people of the community knew who these children were and did not question such promotion. Most promotions were made early in the school year rather than after the first semester to give the child enough time to do the work of the next higher grade. The term *promoted* was used for midyear and *passed* or *failed* at the end of the year. Thus pupils passed or failed a grade.

The foregoing system is in contrast to the practice today in the DECS where a national examination is conducted by the Bureau of Elementary Education under an Acceleration Learning Program for Elementary Schools (ALPES). Under ALPES only children in grade four who must not be less than nine years old and in grade five who are not less than ten years old may be qualified to take the examinations. All public and private schools may select three examinees from each grade with high "scholastic ratings" [sic] in the previous grade and during the first grading period of the present grade (four or five). Names of successful examinees are then submitted to a district selection committee "which determines the number of candidates based on the number of grade four and five classes in every district."

The present highly centralized system is a very complicated procedure for a very simple thing. Under the prewar decentralized system, teachers and principals knew the requirements for passing any grade and their judgments were respected. I do not know of any instance where the old system did not work or was the subject of any complaint or constituted an anomaly. The old teachers and principals were like wine tasters; the expert wine taster knows what excellent wine is. I am not sure that the present acceleration system which is highly centralized is better.

I know of a boy who completed grade seven at the age of ten and a half years and went on to graduate first honorable mention (third in rank) from the then Mountain Province High School (now Baguio City High School) at the tender age of fourteen and a half years. He went to the University of the Philippines where he did very well. I

am sure many older people or younger ones who have relatives know of successful men and women who were promoted under the old system.

1.21 Cash and Carry

I know a husband and wife (both teachers) who took up a 20-year joint life insurance policy in a private insurance company many years ago. Later they needed money for tuition fees and books of their children. They borrowed money from the insurance company, the only institution at that time that would lend them money. (Borrowing from the bank and from friends and relatives was out of the question.) Most of the time, the couple was not able to make the necessary installments to repay what they borrowed. When their insurance policy matured, they had practically nothing to collect. But the money they borrowed came in handy when they needed money most. The five children of that couple are now all professionals.

I see nothing wrong in payroll deductions out of teachers' salaries as long as teachers voluntarily ask for such deductions and they are not pressured into taking life insurance by their superiors. The couple I cite above would possibly have opted to have payroll deductions had the practice been in effect at the time.

Many of my friends who are outside the teaching profession have told me that what is highly questionable is the payment of "incentive" pay to the superiors of teachers for such deductions. I agree.

As this is being written, there is a furor on the so-called "incentive" pay or commission, as it actually was, received by top officials of the DECS on insurance premium deductions from teachers' salaries. The news has caused embarrassment to many—embarrassment even to those who served the department of education long ago.

Is it possible that the news may have caused an unnecessary drawback to the thrust on values education of the department?

1.22 The Books Are Coming

Did you know that before the Second World War elementary school pupils, even in the most remote barrios, were able to read many stories? How?

The government used to buy sets of supplementary readers which went around from school to school in a school district on set schedules during the year. I do not recall now exactly how many books were in a set, but there generally was one book for every two pupils. At

the time, the maximum number of pupils was 60 in the primary grades and 52 in the intermediate grades.

For example, 30 copies each of the following supplementary readers (one copy for every two pupils in a class that enrolled the maximum of 60 pupils) prescribed for grade three would be made available in a municipality with several schools that had grade three classes: *Philippine National Literature Series, Book III,* by Fansler and Panlasigui; *The Insular Second Reader* by Gibbs; *The Winston Readers, Second Reader,* by Firman and Malthy; *Child-Library Readers, Book II,* by Elson; *The Learn to Study Readers, Book I,* by Horn and Shields; and the very popular *The Progressive Road to Reading, Book II,* by Burchill and others.

A schedule would be made by the principal of the central school so that these books would be made available to the grade three classes of the municipality on a rotation basis. Suppose there were six schools in the municipality; one central school and five barrio schools each with a grade three class. Each school would have one supplementary reading title at the beginning of the school year. After about six weeks, the classes would have finished reading the books as the six sets of supplementary readers would have gone around the six schools before the close of the school year. Thus in one year, every class in the municipality would have read the stories in six supplementary readers.

Suppose there were seven or eight grade three classes because the central school would often have two or three grade three classes and there were only six sets of supplementary readers. The reading classes in the central school were scheduled at different hours so that they could use the set available in the central school. The sets were split when there were small grade three classes in some schools.

As a grade three classroom teacher, I remember seeing to it that my pupils read all the stories before the books were to be transferred to the next school. There were conveniently two reading periods daily, one in the morning and another in the afternoon. This was also true for arithmetic and language. The morning period was usually devoted to reading the basic reader and the afternoon period was for the supplementary reader.

I often wonder whether such a practice can be done today. I am afraid the answer is "No" because there is not even enough money for basic readers. It looks like the good practices were good only for the good old days.

1.23 The Price List . . . 1924

Did you know that in the late twenties, the following American-made cars were sold in the Philippines at the following cash prices: Buick Four Touring—₱2,000; Buick Four Sedan—₱4,400; Buick Six Touring —₱4,000; Buick Six, seven-passenger—₱4,500; Ford Touring—₱1,275; Ford Runabout—₱1,200; Ford Coupe—₱1,675; and Ford Sedan—₱2,150?

Grade six pupils at the time including those of us who lived in very remote places where there were no automobiles were asked to solve problems involving percentage like the following:

> Dealers in automobiles give 5% off, sometimes more, if the customers pay cash. Find the net cost of the [cars listed above] when the discount is 5%. (John C. Stone and Eva Grant Winkel, *Arithmetic, Intermediate, Book Two* [New York: Benj. H. Sandborn & Co, 1924], 106)

So that we would understand the problem, our teacher showed us pictures of automobiles and tried very hard to explain what *dealer* and *customer* meant. The teachers of long ago seem to have had all the time to do teaching and while they were very strict and got angry sometimes, in retrospect, they appear to have had patience, dedication, and love for teaching which, it seems, not so many teachers of today possess.

1.24 A Historical Footnote

Did you know that the English language was first introduced as a medium of instruction in the Philippines by American soldiers in seven elementary schools in Manila on September 1, 1898? And did you know that more schools were opened because the American military authorities found that the schools were more effective instruments than the gun in the so-called pacification campaign against the Filipinos who fought the Americans in the fight for independence after the Spaniards were defeated?

1.25 Stark Contrasts or Don't Throw the Thermometer Away

Did you know that up to the outbreak of World War II, high school graduates from anywhere, repeat, anywhere where there was a high school in the Philippines could come to Manila and study at the

University of the Philippines or the then Philippine Normal School and compete with high school graduates from Manila? This is in stark contrast to today's high school graduates from the provinces who cannot qualify for entry to college in the very, very easy NCEE.

Why is this so? Because up to 1940, the standards of provincial high schools were equally very high nationally for they were taught by highly qualified teachers led by highly qualified principals who knew excellence and who were proud of their abilities and competence. As important, the provincial high schools then took in well-taught elementary school pupils because at the time the quality of elementary schools was also very high.

The above facts refute the claim by many people, including a senator of the Philippines, that the NCEE should be abolished because pupils who come from the provinces are disadvantaged.

The solution to the problem of students from the rural areas of not being able to qualify for admission to college through the NCEE is not to abolish the NCEE but to have a program of making our schools in the provinces meet high standards of achievement which was the practice up to 1940. It is admitted that the NCEE is not a perfect test (no test ever is) but it is a very easy test and any high school graduate who cannot pass it will not be able to do university work.

When a person has a high fever and is sick as shown by the thermometer, the solution is not to throw away the thermometer—which is what some advocates of the abolition of the NCEE are in effect saying.

1.26 The Long-ago Teacher

The many persons in me have been agonizing with the rest of the Filipino people who have a stake (all of us should have a stake) in the education of our children. I say *many persons in me* because there are a number of persons, human beings if you please, who reside in my psyche, in my being.

One of the persons in me is the elementary classroom teacher, the teacher who taught the children of the poor long ago and whom I call the *long-ago teacher,* the teacher who reported religiously at least fifteen minutes before classes started in the morning, the teacher who never left the barrio school where he taught without the permission of his central school principal, the teacher who always wore a coat and tie while teaching except when he was teaching physical education and gardening when he could remove both coat and tie. This long-ago teacher feels very uncomfortable when he sees the way most present-day male and some female teachers dress.

This long-ago teacher lived by the code (a code observed at another time and under different circumstances, a time that now apparently belongs to a past) that if the teacher did not like the rules and the practices in the teaching profession, the honorable thing for that teacher to do was to resign first and then criticize the organization as an outsider.

This long-ago teacher did not exactly like the harsh rules and practices during his time but he did not resign because it was difficult to get another job especially during the years of the Depression; this is the teacher who promised his father and mother that he would help educate his brothers and sisters because he was the oldest. This long-ago teacher experienced the many penalties that poverty imposes on the poor.

This long-ago teacher obeyed the rules and followed the accepted practices then; for example, the practice that if he was given tickets to sell to raise funds for the Boy Scouts or the Red Cross or an athletic meet, the tickets were considered sold by his superiors. Because all teachers and their relatives were selling tickets and the buyers were not too many, he always had unsold tickets which he paid out of his meager salary otherwise he would have a very low "efficiency rating."

It is this long-ago teacher in me who fully understands and appreciates the difficulties of, and fully sympathizes with, the teachers. He understands that practically all of them came from poverty and are still there. This long-ago teacher knows the privations and frustrations brought about by an inadequate salary.

This long-ago teacher envies today's teachers for the freedom they enjoy. Present-day teachers can talk back to their principals and other superiors; they can even defy them. This is in contrast to long-ago teachers who feared their superiors. Principals and other school administrators, especially superintendents, were little gods to teachers then. Some administrators and supervisors still behave that way today because they know no better and teachers allow them to do so. It is strange, however, that many good teachers suddenly metamorphose into little gods, some into tyrants, after they get promoted to higher positions.

However, because this long-ago teacher was bred, both at home and at school, in such virtues as dedication to duty, service above self, good manners and right conduct, it is very difficult for him to understand the present-day teacher who does not seem to exhibit these manifestations.

The second person in me is the school administrator, the "person in authority," the person who saw to it that pupils got taught by the teachers, that things got done. While the long-ago teacher had self-discipline, the person in authority "imposed" discipline. The administrator worked for efficiency and results.

This person in authority is the person who understands the very difficult position of the Secretary of Education. This is the person who appreciates the value of respect for the law, the need for rules and regulations. This is the person who knows that the education of the child suffers without discipline, without order. This is the person who knows that without teachers in the classrooms education will not take place in spite of all the principals, supervisors, coordinators, and other nonteaching personnel. This is the person who, in his day, looked after the welfare of both the teacher and the child. When there was a conflict as to which should come first, the welfare of the child or the welfare of the teacher, the child's came first. But this person in authority also fought for the welfare of the teachers. He saw to it that those who were good teachers were promoted in salary and if possible, also in position. He fully understands the plight of teachers because he was one for many years.

This person in authority has an unexplainable suspicion that the leader-activists of the present-day teachers do not seem to actually have the welfare of the teachers and the pupils at heart. That these leaders seem to have motivations other than the welfare of the teachers they are "fighting for." That they seem to have what is referred to as a "hidden agenda." This person in authority always put the child above many considerations; present-day teacher-leaders appear to have forgotten the child.

The third person in me is the parent, the parent who helped rear and educate five children. This is the parent who pulled out his oldest son from grade one because the teacher punished the son for some perceived fault by twisting the boy's ear. The parent did not think that his son's teacher was fit to teach him. This is the parent who taught his own children how to read and write and recite poetry and tell stories, do their arithmetic and other lessons, got them interested and excited on many things because he knew that what was taught in the schools by overworked teachers was not enough.

This is the parent who knew that it is the classroom teacher who made school education take place, that it was the school principal he had to see if he had any complaint about teachers and how the school is being managed. This parent seldom, if ever, dealt with supervisors.

The fourth person in me is the pupil, especially the pupil in elementary school who loved his teachers. Somehow this pupil has remained a pupil, a student excited about learning new and interesting things. This pupil intuitively knew the good teacher who loved teaching. This pupil did not know the meaning of duty then; but he constantly remembers that when the teacher was a good teacher he and his classmates missed the teacher; when the teacher was not a good one, he and his classmates were happy if the teacher was absent.

Finally there is this fifth person in me, the retiree, the person who retired after almost half a century of teaching and doing other duties. When the retiree looks at the pictures of teachers on strike who are absent from their classes splashed in the newspapers or in TV, he has mixed feelings. The retiree often wonders what has become of the teaching profession. What a contrast to his own time. He is bewildered by what is happening in the Philippines today. He feels so helpless that he cannot do anything about the situation; he can only write what he feels, hoping that what he writes may be read.

So when I write as I am doing here about the dismissal and suspension of teachers, it is very difficult for me not to agonize trying to reconcile the seemingly conflicting positions of the five persons in me. I often recall what my New York Jewish cardiologist told me when I went to thank him and bid him good-bye after my quadruple coronary bypass surgery ten years ago. This very wise physician advised me: "Now that you have retired, you should develop new interests and cultivate new friendships; try going into a second career. Avoid joining associations composed exclusively of your contemporaries in the education profession with whom you spent the longest and best years of your life. It is my experience that the old people who belonged to the same profession spend too much time worrying and trying to solve the problems that should be left to younger ones."

The retiree in me is sure of one thing: problems cannot be solved by adding more problems.

1.27 The Lost Policy

When we were young and later when we started to teach, things were quite simple. In every classroom all over the Philippines, printed on a strip of cardboard and posted in a conspicuous place which was usually above the blackboard for everyone to see, was "Honesty is the best policy." I can still see that admonition very clearly in my mind. Even more important was the fact that as far as I remember people were honest, and those who were not were punished. In many homes that I know, including our home, children were punished, for example, if they broke a plate or cup and lied about it but not if they volunteered or told the truth. Somehow we learned both at home and in school that dishonesty did not pay. This simple formula may have worked long ago but I wonder whether it would still work today?

What I am wondering about is where, when, how, and why did all the dishonesty that is so rampant these days begin? What is the family and socioeconomic background of the dishonest people, etc.? This should be a good study for a team of sociologists, psychologists, educators, and newspapermen.

CHAPTER TWO

The Realms of Language or the Domains of Language

2.1 The Deterioration Syndrome

Among parents and educators, there is widespread discontent and criticism of what is often referred to as the "deterioration" of the spoken and written English of the younger generation of Filipinos. Often blamed by the people and the press for this unhappy situation are public school teachers and the school system. In a strongly worded editorial of the *Times Journal* (5 June 1983, p. 4), this criticism was expressed in the following words: "It was this same educational system that for more than three decades turned out grade school pupils who can write only their names, high school graduates whose grasp of the principles of mathematics is limited to the number of fingers on their hands, and supposed degree holders who cannot even speak a straight sentence, whether in English or Pilipino, their own native tongue."

Actually the English language itself has not deteriorated. If any deterioration has taken place, it is the people who have deteriorated. To put it more accurately, the standards acceptable to most Filipinos with regard to English have become much lower. But this is true not only with English; it is also true with practically all subjects. This situation holds true for other areas which are concerns of the people as a whole. The schools and their products are only as good as the people who support them. Or as good as the government.

But this kind of talk is not productive. Blaming people or institutions cannot improve things. A more fruitful approach should begin with an examination of the conditions that brought about this deterioration in order to understand the situation and know what needs to be done.

Up to 1938, only English was allowed in classrooms and school premises. Filipinos were immersed in a monolingual school in English.

If there were any Filipinos who objected to this imposition, they were ignored. At that time, to speak good English was the accepted norm—many families spoke to their children in English. There even developed a prestigious form of English, the so-called "Arneow" accent of the Ateneo de Manila.

In 1939 the nationalist Jorge Bocobo, in his capacity as secretary of Public Instruction, ordered that Philippine languages (or vernacular) be used by teachers to explain what was being taught in English if the children could not understand the lesson. A year later the national language based on Tagalog was introduced as a subject in the senior year of teacher education institutions. During the Japanese occupation, the national language was greatly encouraged while English was downgraded. After World War II, with the advent of the community school, the use of the vernacular as language of instruction in the initial education of the child became the "in" thing. In the meantime, the national language, renamed *Pilipino* in 1959, *Filipino* in the 1987 Constitution, gained more ground. These twin movements, the use of the vernacular in the first two grades and the strengthening of the teaching of Filipino—movements in the search for national identity through language—naturally weakened the teaching and use of English.

One of the most significant developments in language during the last twenty years is the use of a mixture of English and Filipino often facetiously referred to as "Taglish" or "Engalog." The use of this "mix-mix" or the switching from English to Filipino back and forth in conversation and other forms of speaking activities has become so widespread that it is now acceptable across all social levels. In fact, it is rare to find an educated Filipino in the Metro Manila area and in bigger urban areas who does not code-switch (to use the technical term in linguistics). Code-switching is an, if not the, acceptable way of signaling that one is in the mainstream of Philippine life. An educated Filipino today who speaks only English (except with foreigners who do not speak Filipino and in very formal occasions when everything has to be said in English) is looked upon with an uneasy feeling. The ability to code-switch in English and Filipino and the quality of the switching depends on how much one has mastered the two languages. A speaker who is proficient in both is better at code-switching. The student, therefore, who has not learned English well seldom switches to English, preferring to use more Filipino. On the other hand, a non-Tagalog Filipino speaker who knows more English than Filipino will have a preponderantly English speech, switching to Filipino only now and then.

These developments naturally have caused the lowering of the standards for acceptable English.

But why this outcry especially on the part of parents on the "deterioration" of English? The answer is simple: to get a good education in the Philippines at the present time, one has to know English well.

The Filipino has to admit the sad fact that one cannot get an education through Filipino alone because Filipino is not an intellectualized language. An intellectualized language is that which makes the world's knowledge available and accessible. All the highest fields of knowledge of man—for example, physics, chemistry, astronomy, biology, mathematics, science, philosophy, law, medicine—are available in intellectualized languages such as English, German, French, Japanese, and Russian. Unfortunately, Filipino still has to be intellectualized. This is what is meant by some people who refer to Filipino as an "infant" language of education. Filipino has to be intellectualized so that it may be able to handle most of the subjects in the domains of language such as (1) the courts and the law, (2) science and technology, (3) business and industry and international trade, (4) mass communications, (5) government, and (6) education. In its present stage of development, Filipino is more than capable of handling the affairs in the domains of the home, religion (although one who studies for the priesthood or the ministry must study in English or another intellectualized language), entertainment (here Taglish is more appropriate as demonstrated by the TV and movies), and the ordinary day-to-day activities. In the domain of the imaginative or creative life or literature, Filipino has the beginnings of excellence.

The language of education is one of the most important factors because it determines the language used in many other domains and subdomains of language. It determines the language of the sciences, the courts and the law (for example, it was only in 1930 when English could be declared as one of the official languages of the courts after lawyers were educated in the law in English), the language of the learned professions such as medicine, accounting, engineering, agriculture, theology, etc.

With the foregoing explanation, it is easy to understand why English needs to be learned well. English is needed to educate the Filipino while he awaits the intellectualization of Filipino. English cannot be learned well unless Filipinos are determined to learn the two languages separately. Teachers and students, backed up by the citizenry, should insist that when a subject calls for the use of English, only English should be used and when a subject calls for the use of Filipino, only Filipino should be used. This kind of discipline and arrangement is needed in schools, colleges, and universities. There are some who will consider this suggestion undemocratic. But how else can the two languages be

learned well so that English may be able to make the subject matter required of an intellectualized language available and Filipino may be intellectualized?

The theoretical concept of language domains is useful in making us realize that a language that is capable of handling the affairs of the home need not necessarily be capable of handling the subject matter in other fields such as those of science and technology.

2.2 The Domains of Language

One of the most important implications of the notion of language domains is that what is acceptable in one domain may not be acceptable or useful in another domain even if the language is the same. For example, the variety of English that is acceptable and useful in the home domain may not be acceptable or appropriate in the domains of science and mathematics. The language variety that is acceptable for entertainment such as the "mix-mix" or code-switching of English and Filipino now becoming popularly known as Taglish (or Engalog) such as that used in TV programs may not be used in most disciplines in higher education or in many subjects in the elementary and secondary schools.

It is thus easy to understand the fact that the use of an intellectualized language makes it mandatory that students go to school to be educated in their own native languages. The spoken language that is adequate for home use in practically most cases is not adequate for higher intellectual processes. The speakers of English, German, French, Russian, Japanese, and other intellectualized languages have to go to school to learn how to use their native languages in the various disciplines.

An understanding of the concept of domains of language by teachers, supervisors, administrators, and especially students and parents—the entire community—should make it possible for the schools to teach the kind of English that is capable of conveying the important concepts in various educational subjects where English is needed, because Filipino is not capable (as yet) of conveying these subjects due to the fact that these subjects are not accessible in Filipino. Filipino has not yet been intellectualized for practically most university courses. This is a statement of fact and is not intended to downgrade Filipino.

An erroneous idea that the Filipino should abandon is the notion that it is unpatriotic or un-Filipino or unnationalistic to speak good English. As long as this idea prevails, the learning of good intellectualized English for the difficult subjects that are available or accessible in English (but not in Filipino) cannot take place.

However, a mere return to English as sole medium of instruction in the schools as the solution to the low quality of education in our schools, as suggested by certain persons, will not automatically improve education. As proof of this, the contrasting cases of the United States and Japan may be cited. A science test was given in 1970 to 10 and 14 year olds in 19 countries all over the world. The Japanese, learning in Japanese, came out number one. The Americans using English were number 15, well below the median. It is obvious that the use of English did not make American education superior. There are other factors that determine excellence in education.

In the Philippines, one of the things we need to do is to teach high-level subject matter, not the very low-level subject matter being taught in Philippine schools today. Low-level or very simple subject matter will not require the use of intellectualized English, and as long as intellectualized English is not used and, therefore, high-level subject matter content is not taught, the use of English will not improve our educational product. The reason Filipino cannot be used for difficult subjects is that the body of literature in these disciplines is not available in Filipino. This is the justification for the use of English. This holds true not only in the domain of education but also in other domains such as the courts and law, science and technology, and practically all the learned professions.

While we do not advocate returning to the pre-1939 practice of using English alone in schools (abandoning Filipino would be a terrible mistake) and penalizing children for using their local language, we need to make all Filipinos realize and admit that there are certain domains and subdomains in life where English is needed because Filipino, as yet, does not make the knowledge available. It is easy to see, for example, that one cannot learn subjects like physics, chemistry, or computer science in Filipino. We cannot afford to make learning stand still while Filipino is being intellectualized.

If Filipinos—especially teachers, parents, and students—realize and admit this fact, then it should not be difficult to accept discipline in the classroom to learn and use intellectualized English. The entire society should support such a move. I don't think teachers alone can enforce the necessary discipline. It has to be the entire nation—all of us, those in government and in the private sector—believing in it, demanding that the necessary will and discipline is enforced for the good of every one. What is needed is a national understanding, national will, and national discipline.

By the way, what happened to that motto that teachers and pupils and all Filipinos tried to memorize and which we began to believe (and, fortunately, some still do) which runs this way: "*Sa ikauunlad ng bayan, disiplina ang kailangan*"?

2.3 The Intellectualization of Filipino

Now on the intellectualization of Filipino. As long as Filipino is not intellectualized and therefore the world's knowledge cannot be learned through it, especially in science and technology, all the learned disciplines—law and jurisprudence and other intellectual fields needed in today's modern world—it (Filipino) will be good only for limited domains such as the home, the marketplace, and the entertainment (where Taglish may run supreme). Perhaps the only domain where Filipino has reached its highest (and still can reach higher levels of) achievement is in the imaginative and creative life, the realm of literature.

The claim of some people, some of them highly placed, that because Filipino is now more widely understood and spoken than English in the Philippines and therefore we should now use it as the sole medium of instruction in the schools stems from a lack of understanding of language domains.

How should Filipino be intellectualized? Two important steps need to be taken: (1) translation of definitive works now available in English and other intellectualized languages such as German or French into Filipino and using such translation in colleges and universities, and (2) writing in Filipino of original research in all fields. Intellectualization must start from the top: scholars in colleges, universities, and research centers, and those writing privately. We do not expect intellectualization of Filipino to start with grade one children.

A word here must be said about publishers and the publishing industry. Unless there are publishers who will undertake the publication of translations and original works (which often do not "sell" for profit), intellectualization of Filipino will not gain much ground.

2.4 Minding Your Ps and Fs

August being the month in which Filipinos are reminded about the national language, I would like to write something about its development. The 1973 Constitution declared Pilipino (please note the *P*) as one of the official languages but not as the national language pending the "formation" of one based on all Philippine languages and not just Tagalog. The future national language shall be called Filipino (with an *F*).

It is my professional and personal opinion that eventually the national language will be an elaboration of the present Pilipino. A way will be found to transform it or name it Filipino with an *F* if that is what the people want. The keen observer will note that many Filipinos

in referring to themselves as citizens of the Philippines invariably call themselves *Filipinos*, often quite careful in pronouncing the word with an *F* especially when speaking in English. In filling out forms, I think most Filipinos, if not all, write *Filipino* where citizenship is called for and *Pilipino* when referring to the language. Hardly does the non-Tagalog refer to Tagalog as language. However, the advocates of the formation of a "future" national language to be called Filipino may have a point when they claim that Pilipino, being based on Tagalog, excludes the participation of non-Tagalog Filipinos in the formation process. Inasmuch as a national language also performs a symbolic function (like the national flag and the national anthem), Filipino conveys the sentiments and participation of other Filipinos as expressed by the framers of the 1973 Constitution.

The debate on *P* and *F*, however, does not seem to engage the average Filipino who goes ahead and learns and uses Filipino without caring about its having as forefather Tagalog. The time will come, I predict, when Filipinos will no longer care about the origin of Filipino; they will not even know that the *P* in Pilipino was based on poor scholarship with the claim of the original proponents that Filipinos cannot pronounce *F* because there is no *F* in the language, which, of course, is not true.

Sometime in 1969 I read a paper on a 100-year plan for the development of Pilipino. Practically the whole audience laughed at the idea and even some of my colleagues in linguistics and language teaching had a good time ridiculing my plan. Anyone, however, who has studied the growth and modernization of a language knows that it takes more than a hundred years to really modernize a language. By modernize is meant having the language make available to users of that language the world's store of knowledge such as science and technology, physics, chemistry, medicine, law, etc. Anyone interested in the experience of other nations in the modernization (or intellectualization) of a language is referred to the case of Norway which got its independence from Denmark (in Einar Haugen, *Language Conflict and Language Planning* [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966]), or that of Israel in the modernization of Hebrew (see for example Chaim Rabin, author of the paper "Spelling Reform—Israel 1968" which appears in Joan Rubin and Bjorn Jernudd, *Can Language Be Planned?* [Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1971], 95–121). To get nearer home, see the case of Bahasa Indonesia (BI) which had earlier beginnings than Filipino. Up to now BI has not become fully modernized, i.e., much of the world's knowledge is not available in BI, contrary to the claim of S. Takdir Alisjahbana (see his "Planning Processes in

the Development of the Indonesian-Malay Language," in Rubin and Jernudd 1971, 179–187).

In spite of the seemingly slow progress in the development of Filipino, however, we have done well. But we can do better. In 1925 the Monroe Survey Commission wrote that none of the Philippine languages appeared to be a candidate for development as a language of instruction. The members were proved wrong. By 1974 or in a period of 38 years (from 1936 when the Surian ng Wikang Pambansa was established under Commonwealth Act no. 184), Pilipino was declared as language of instruction in subjects other than science and mathematics in a bilingual education program. However, the unbiased observer will admit that Filipino has a long way to go before it can become the language of instruction in all fields including those of law, medicine, chemistry, physics, and the social sciences such as psychology, sociology, economics, philosophy, theology, etc. The scholars in these fields have to work hard to bring about this development. It is only in the domain of the home and that of daily life including entertainment where Taglish, not intellectualized Filipino, may be considered adequate.

2.5 The One-Hundred-Year Plan

The work toward that objective, what I constantly refer to as the intellectualization of Filipino, requires the better part of more than a hundred years from 1936. Anyone who says that that span of time is too long simply does not know the facts on the history of the development and modernization of a language. While there is a need for language nationalists to "needle" the rest of the population to hasten the use of Filipino eventually replacing English in the national life, the work toward that end demands not rhetoric or diatribe but hard work such as support of translation of definitive works in all branches of human knowledge, and the writing in Filipino of original research in all fields. The time spent in rhetoric and diatribe by Filipinos who seem to have exclusive claim to nationalism is better spent in the work suggested above.

I repeat. There is much work to do and there is work for everyone. The 100-year time allotment is running out. There are just 52 years before the year 2036 to complete the 100 years. If the effort and the experience thus far are any indication of future success in the modernization of Filipino, I am afraid that 52 years will pass without our ever attaining our goal.

2.6 The Advocates of Linguistic Nationalism

The impression given by a number of nationalists who espouse the use of Filipino but write in English is that while they write in English and were themselves educated in English and in fact are English dominant, they are exceptions to the misfortune that other less fortunate Filipinos, who were educated in English and not Filipino, have suffered. Those educated in English, except themselves, are forever the victims of this colonial language. There are some who want to totally abolish English and have the entire educational system switch to the monolingual use of Filipino, not next year but tomorrow. Some have no sensible nor workable plans on how to do it. Many of them have no experience in running a school system nor have they written any teaching material. These advocates of the immediate monolingual use of Filipino in all levels of the school system remind me of Noel Epstein of the *Washington Post* who was requested to write his impressions on the conference on the international dimensions of bilingual education held at Georgetown University in 1978. Epstein was disturbed by "the tendency of some scholars, in their eagerness to influence policy, to confuse rhetoric and research, to blur the critical distinction between their scholarship and their ideologies, between what they know and what they believe" (James A. Alatis, ed., *Georgetown University Round Table on Language and Linguistics* [Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1978]).

2.7 The Spanish Legacy

Did you know that the Spaniards made three important policy decisions on language which affected Philippine languages and Philippine life?

The first decision was the use of the Philippine native languages in the Christianization of the natives (who were referred to at that time as *Indios*). From their experience in North and South America, the friars discovered that it was easier to preach the Gospel in the natives' own language. It was also easier for a priest to learn the native language and preach in it than for the natives to learn Spanish and learn Christianity in Spanish. This missionary procedure was extended to the Philippines in 1582 by the Ecclesiastical Junta.

The second decision was to use Spanish terms for certain key concepts not only because most of these terms did not have equivalents in the native language but in order for the natives not to equate them with their pagan beliefs. So key concepts such as God, Holy Trinity, Holy Ghost, Virgin Mary, the Pope, grace, sin, cross, Hell, Holy Church, Sunday, and the names of the sacraments were retained in Spanish

in the Tagalog text in the first book, the *Doctrina Christiana,* printed in 1593. This decision to use Spanish words in the text of the native languages was the beginning of the irreversible mixture of Spanish with the Philippine languages that came under Spanish Christian influence. This decision has since affected Philippine languages in the domains of religion and the home and everyday life. This decision made the common people learn "some Spanish." (For the Spanish mixture in Philippine languages, the interested reader is referred to *Hispanismos en el Tagalo* [Madrid: Oficina de Educacion Ibero-Americana, 1972].)

The third decision was the use of pure Spanish in the domains of higher education and in government and law. Very few Filipinos learned good Spanish as evidenced by the fact that the University of Santo Tomas, for example, conferred only 2,169 degrees from 1634 to 1865, a period of 231 years. The few *ilustrados* who did learn Spanish went on to exert an enduring influence in Philippine life. Toward the end of the Spanish regime, only an estimated 2.46% of an adult population of 4,653,263 spoke Spanish (based on the De La Cavada 1870 Census Report). What is interesting here is that while there were very few speakers of Spanish, these were the people who used the language in the domains of higher education (hence, the learned professions), law, and government.

The lesson that this experience teaches us seems to be quite clear: that the influence of a language on the life of a people depends upon what domain the language is used. To mention just one example of the enduring hold of a language learned by only a very few in the dominant domains of higher education and law and government, Spanish was an official language up to 1986.

The more important lesson is that Filipino should be used for higher education, law, and the courts so that it may attain the influence that Spanish (and English for that matter) has had in Philippine life and society. (The interested reader is referred to the following: (1) Evergisto Bazaco, *History of Education in the Philippines* [Manila: University of Santo Tomas Press, 1953]; (2) Andrew B. Gonzalez, *Language and Nationalism* [Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1980]; (3) John Leddy Phelan, *The Hispanization of the Philippines* [Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1959].)

2.8 Arriba, España

Now that the teaching of Spanish is optional, I predict that it will attract and gain genuine lovers of scholarship. I personally and professionally think that Spanish is needed by students who major in Philippine history

because there are so many documents in this field of study available only in Spanish. For this reason, anyone who majors in history should at least have a good reading knowledge of Spanish.

Others who should have a good knowledge of Spanish are those who take up foreign service, those who take up law, and those who want to really become good teachers of literature.

Finally, all those who are serious in the development, standardization, and the intellectualization of Filipino should have a good knowledge of Spanish. This was demonstrated by Bro. Andrew Gonzalez, executive secretary of the Linguistic Society of the Philippines, in a paper entitled "An Outline of Grammar of Sixteenth Century Pilipino."

2.9 And Now . . . a Word from Our Sponsors

On radio language of broadcast: Did you know that there are 305 radio stations in the Philippines (263 commercial and 42 noncommercial)? The number includes 14 government radio stations.

Did you also know that there are 13 languages used for broadcasting and these are English, Tagalog, Chinese, Cebuano, Ilocano, Hiligaynon, Bicol, Waray, Pampango, Pangasinan, Chabacano (Zamboanga), Kinaray-a, and Maguindanao?

What this means is that speakers of Philippine languages other than the 13 languages of broadcast have to be bilingual in those languages to be able to benefit from radio newscasts and other forms of radio broadcasting.

2.10 Filipino-speaking Households

Did you know that of the 8,600,000 households in the Philippines, only 2,552,561 (29.7%) use Filipino as their household language? Of the 651,070 households in the Ilocos provinces, only 10,502 (1.6%) speak Filipino; while in the Cagayan Valley, of the 404,037 households, 17,461 (4.3%) speak Filipino. Of the 1,996,093 households in the Visayas, only 4,036 (two-tenths of 1%) speak Filipino; that of the 1,903,541 households in Maguindanao, 10,502 (1.5%) use Filipino as household language.

Note that the number of households in Mindanao and Cagayan Valley (areas that accept immigrants) that speak Filipino are more than those of the Visayas and Ilocos where practically no immigrants are received.

2.11 The Handicap

In 1925 when the achievements of the Philippine educational system were evaluated by the Monroe Survey Commission, the following was written on the English language:

> The difficulties which have beset it (Bureau of Education) have been many, but no other single difficulty has been so great as that of overcoming the foreign language handicap. A quarter century ago, the officials who undertook to solve the Philippine problem concluded that the greatest need of the people was a unifying language. Whether rightly or wrongly, they decided against the widespread use of any one or several of the dialects and began to organize instruction in English. From that day to this, all educational problems in the Philippines have been foreign language problems. (The Board of Educational Survey, *A Survey of the Educational System of the Philippine Islands* [Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1925], 127)

Twenty-five years after the foregoing was written, an American educator, Clifford H. Prator who observed classes all over the Philippines, wrote the following:

> He (the Filipino child) indeed has a lot to learn! His country's hopes of making democracy work, resisting communism, raising the standard of living, and becoming a modern progressive nation depend largely on what the educational system can accomplish through him and millions like him. Society is always demanding that the schools concern themselves with the development of some additional phase of his mind or character . . . Yet he must be able to communicate in a new and difficult language which is very, very foreign to his own before he can approach the substance of education. It is as if an American child had to learn Turkish before he could be taught anything else. It is indeed a disheartening experience to visit a barrio school in the Islands, see this average child, sense his many imperative needs, but find him devoting most of his efforts to learning a distorted smattering of a language for which he *has little need and which he will probably soon forget.* [Emphasis supplied.] (Clifford H. Prator, *Language Teaching in the Philippines* [Manila: U.S. Educational Foundation, 1950], 12–13)

2.12 Taglish Not Spoken Here

Last summer I had the opportunity to come in contact with nurses in General Santos City whose education from the primary grades to the completion of their nursing courses were all given in schools in the Cotabato and Davao areas. Many of them had portions of their education secured from the Notre Dame chain of institutions in that area. What surprised me was their proficiency in speaking both English and Filipino, keeping the two languages quite apart, seldom mixing the two languages. When they spoke, it was generally all English and when they spoke Filipino (which all of them spoke well) it was all Filipino unless there was no term easily available, in which case the English term was inserted. Practically all of them were the children of emigrants from Cebuano and Hiligaynon areas in the Visayas; a few came from the Ilocos provinces.

2.13 Values and Language

I was invited recently to speak on Filipino as a language of instruction in values education before a group of secondary school teachers who will be involved in the revised secondary school curriculum program as "pilot" teachers.

As a general rule, a language can be used for educating the child if that language can make available the subject matter to be taught. For example, the native language of a child is used to teach him the various activities that make it possible for him to function in the home. The same language, but not the same register of the language, may be used for teaching physics—for example, an English-speaking child learns to do all the necessary activities in the home and its surroundings in the English register appropriate to the home domain but to learn physics, he has to be taught in the register of the language that is peculiar to physics. The subject matter of physics is available in English. All Philippine languages are used to teach the child activities for effective home life, but not all Philippine languages, in fact, for the present not even Filipino can make available the knowledge in physics, especially higher level physics. Filipino has to develop a register or language for physics so that this subject matter can be taught in Filipino.

Now, how about the teaching of values? The main difference between the teaching of physics and that of values, it seems to us, is that while physics has a definite subject matter that can be taught directly, values education can be taught mainly indirectly. One does not talk about values as values except sparingly. For example, perseverance as a valued characteristic of a person may be taught

indirectly through a story, like that of a man who, while being pursued by his enemies, took refuge in a cave. Before his enemies could catch up with him, a spider made its web across the mouth of the cave. In making its web, the man observed that the spider failed many times to anchor its web on the other side of the cave's mouth; it was only after several attempts that it succeeded. The spider's efforts inspired the man. He had tried many times to defeat his enemies but failed and was now being pursued. Incidentally the web saved the man's life because when his enemies came to the cave they decided that the man could not be inside the cave because the web would have been broken if he went in. The man eventually resumed his fight and succeeded in defeating his enemies. Out of this story is deduced the maxim, "If at first you don't succeed, try and try again."

There are many maxims in Filipino and in many other Philippine languages which can be used to teach values. For example, the saying *"Aanhin pa ang damo kung patay na ang kabayo"* can be used to teach a host of values such as the value of anticipation and careful planning in order to avoid waste. Note, however, that the value of a maxim depends upon the interpretation, just as the beauty of a musical composition depends upon the orchestra conductor's interpretation of the piece.

Aside from maxims, there should be collected for classroom use legends, myths, epics, folk tales, and other Philippine literature rendered in appropriate Filipino. This should be learned by the children and retold by them in class in Filipino just as children of earlier generations of Filipinos learned to tell stories and recited poetry and maxims in English.

One value that should be taught is that of scholarship and excellence. Scholarship and excellence should dominate school life especially in high school and in higher education. If we value scholarship and excellence, we would be proud of our knowledge and abilities as the most important qualifications for applying for a job instead of depending on "connections" and *padrinos*. The reason so many applicants need padrinos is that often they do not have the necessary qualifications.

All values can be taught in Filipino if the necessary materials are available in Filipino. We need these materials in the higher fields so that teaching materials such as textbooks and teachers guides may be written by curriculum writers in Filipino. We need a systematic body of knowledge in Filipino from maxims and various kinds of literature to intellectual subject matters. Filipino cannot be used as the language of instruction in values and other matters until such a body of literature is available and teachers have learned to teach through them. Teachers

cannot just improvise teaching off the top of their heads. Mere speaking knowledge adequate for the home and ordinary affairs of life is not enough. This should be quite obvious by now.

2.14 Auxiliary Medium . . . Two Meanings

The term *auxiliary medium of instruction* first came into Philippine educational literature and usage in 1939 when Jorge Bocobo, then secretary of Public Instruction, issued an order that the native language of the child (sometimes referred to as the vernacular) may be used by the teachers to explain anything difficult for the child to understand. Prior to the order, only English was allowed to be spoken, read, and written in classrooms and school premises. The net result of this new policy was the use more and more of the native language in teaching. The original idea was to continue the use of the English language as main language of instruction, with difficult concepts to be taught in the child's native language. We shall call this style of use of the child's native language as the "Bocobo meaning" of an auxiliary language as medium of instruction.

The second meaning, which is an expanded one, started when classes resumed after World War II in the late forties. One of the most important educational innovations in the late forties and especially during the fifties was the community school movement. A central thesis of the movement was that if the child was taught in his native language in the initial stages of his education, his education would not only be easier and faster, but even more important, his parents and other people in the community would profit from his learning. The school therefore became an institution for both child and adult. After a series of experiments in various provinces especially that one held in Iloilo, the entire Philippine educational system (with the exception of a number of private schools) used the native language of the child as the main medium of instruction. We shall call this the "community school" meaning.

The question of auxiliary medium of instruction is important because of the provision in the Constitution that the "regional languages are the auxiliary official languages in the regions and shall serve an auxiliary media of instruction therein." (See Article IV, Section 7.)

Related to the problem of auxiliary medium of instruction is that of "regional language." What is a regional language? The Philippines is divided into 13 political regions. In some regions, a number of languages are spoken. Take Region I which is composed of the two Ilocos provinces, Pangasinan, La Union, Benguet, and Mountain Province. The languages spoken are Ilocano and Pangasinan (two major

languages), and Ibaloi, Kankana-ey, and Bontoc (three minor languages). The regional lingua franca or "trade language" in the region, however, is Ilocano. What would be the regional language that would be used as auxiliary medium (media?) of instruction? Who will determine the answers to these questions? the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports (MECS)? or the National Language Commission?

Which meaning of *auxiliary language as media of instruction* shall be adopted—the Bocobo meaning or the community school meaning? If the second is adopted, we will return to the use of the native languages (regional languages?) as the main media of instruction in grades one and two. Personally and professionally, I am in favor of the community school interpretation.

2.15 Language and the Boat People

I had the pleasure of visiting the Philippine Refugee Processing Center (PRPC) in Morong, Bataan, on July 21 to 22, 1987, in the company of Dr. Minda C. Sutaria, undersecretary of Education, Culture and Sports; Dr. Fe T. Otanes, dean of Graduate School and director of the Language Study Center, PNC; Dr. Anne H. Dykstra, field director, Center for Applied Linguistics Philippines, who made the arrangements for the visit; Irene Gaston of CAL (Phil.); and my wife as one of the guests. We observed Vietnamese, Lao, and other refugees (the so-called boat people although many of them came by plane to the Philippines) learning the English language in preparation for their eventual permanent relocation in various parts of the United States.

We observed 6- to 7-year-old children learning arithmetic; 8 to 11 year olds learning shapes, colors, and fractions; 16 to 19 year olds in Preparation for American Secondary Schools (PASS) classes learning factorization in English (it was obvious they knew the concepts in their own language); a group of adults educated in their own language and in French learning how to write compositions in English with the aid of paintings and other art pieces made by artist-refugees; and a class of illiterate adults painfully learning how to speak, read, and write English. It was obvious that the last class was the most difficult to handle and the observers agreed that the teaching was a work of love.

All the classes we observed were taught by Filipino teachers and supervised by both Filipino and American supervisors. While many of those who were employed to teach and supervise are graduates of teacher education institutions (some are Philippine Normal College graduates), a number were graduates of other courses such as development communication in Los Baños, mass communications in U.P. Diliman, and other nonteaching courses. All of them, however,

were trained right at the PRPC in the Teacher Training Techniques and Practices component of the program.

The teachers in the lower grades in what is known as the Preparing Refugees for Elementary Programs (PREP) use what they call the "natural" method of teaching and learning. Both the content and language were learned at the same time without the aid of translation. We noted that the children who were reluctant to participate were allowed to simply listen. There were assistants or aides from among refugees who speak English to help explain instructions when needed in the lower classes. But we did not see any giving such assistance.

During the interaction period between the teachers, supervisors, trainors, and administrators with the visiting group, we were asked in what way would the training and experience of the Filipino teachers be of use in teaching in Philippine schools later. I told the group that the experience of the Filipino teachers in teaching without resorting to translation (similar to that done by Filipino teachers when only English was allowed for teaching in Philippine schools) would be useful. In fact, in a bilingual education program such as the program in Philippine schools today, it would be very desirable and ideal if the two languages, English and Filipino, were really kept as separate codes. What the World Relief Commission (WRC) people call the "natural" method of teaching language is similar to what the Canadians call "immersion" in learning a language. There is no resort to translation. The teachers and supervisors in the PRPC understand, however, that the motivation for learning English on the part of the refugees is very high because they realize the value of the language in the United States later on.

One caution must be given to the Filipino teachers when and if they return to the Philippine school system: they must be prepared to accept much lower salaries than what they are receiving at the PRPC. Otherwise, they will be very unhappy. Unhappiness can be detrimental to themselves and to the children they will be teaching.

Our visit to the PRPC was made pleasant and educative by Jon Darrah, director; Joyce Wilson, deputy director of the International Catholic Migration Commission; Lois Purdham, training and evaluation specialist, WRC; and other members of their staff. I think they are doing an excellent job of helping refugees prepare themselves for the life in the United States.

2.16 The Case of Grammar

There is a mistaken belief in education circles today that a knowledge of English grammar is not needed in learning the English language well; hence, teaching English grammar is downplayed and in some cases

neglected. This idea seems to have been brought about by a misunderstanding of second language teaching which emphasized oral proficiency. Of course, knowing grammar terms and rules is very important especially to a Filipino whose first language is not English. The native speaker of English internalizes the rules of Maguindanao grammar from the time he begins to talk. A native speaker thus knows "intuitively" the grammar "rules" of English grammar from the time he starts talking at home just as the native speaker of, say Maguindanao, internalizes the rules of his first language. But not the nonnative speaker who has to learn English as a second language. To give just a simple example—the Filipino nonnative speaker of English has to learn what a noun, a verb, an adjective, an adverb, a preposition, etc., are and the function of each in a sentence.

Often he has to rely on good knowledge of these rules especially in writing. As important, it is not possible for anyone to use a dictionary of English intelligently without knowing the parts of speech and how these various parts of speech are used or how they function in a sentence. For example, the student (or even the adult who has finished his schooling) looks up the word ***drift*** and the dictionary defines it as a noun (n.) and farther on defines ***drift*** as an intransitive verb (v.i.). How will the Filipino nonnative speaker of English know how to use the word ***drift*** if he has not learned some of the most important rules of grammar, such as in this case what an intransitive verb is and how it is used?

2.17 Grammar Once More—Those Who Know Grammar Write Better

Andrew Gonzalez, FSC, former president of De La Salle University and currently executive secretary of the Linguistic Society of the Philippines, is one of those rare administrator-scholars who engage in serious research in education, linguistics, and other subjects. He tells me that he and one of his associates found out in a recent study that their subjects who knew English grammar wrote better compositions than those who did not.

Brother Andrew's findings confirm what I have been saying all along—that English grammar rules need to be taught especially to a second language learner because he has not "internalized" the grammar rules of English, unlike the native speaker who "intuitively" knows the way English works which he learned from childhood. The second language learner has to depend on rules to help him "straighten out" his written English.

Brother Andrew now advocates a return to the teaching and learning of the most important facts and rules of English grammar. I fully agree with him.

2.18 A Word on Taglish: "Those Things" vs. "Them Things" ("Correct" vs. "Acceptable" English)

There is this story about a man who got a job in a shipyard. During lunch break the men usually gathered in groups to enjoy taking their lunch together. He noticed, however, that everyone avoided his company. When he could not stand it any longer, he asked one of the more friendly men why no one seemed to like his company especially at lunchtime.

"Do you want to know the truth, brodder?"

"Yes, please."

"Can't you see it, brodder? All of them guys in this here outfit sez 'them ships'. You's the only one saying 'those ships'."

The anecdote illustrates the difference between what is referred to as "correct" English and what many post-World War II linguists and grammarians call "acceptable" English. The notion of acceptability seems to have been started by Charles Carpenter Fries of the University of Michigan with his study of spoken American English and the publication of his book *American English Grammar— The Grammatical Structure of Present-day American English with Special Reference to Social Differences as Class Dialects* (New York: Appleton, 1940).

The notion of acceptable speech has been studied by many linguistic scholars, and its respectability has been discussed and advocated especially by many sociolinguists.

One of the important developments in American education after World War II was the influence of linguists in language teaching, especially the teaching of English as a second language. (The reader will be interested to know that Noam Chomsky, one of the best contemporary American linguists, said that linguistics has nothing to say about the teaching of language. His position is extreme. However, it is also an admitted fact that transformational generative grammar, which he started, has not contributed much, if any, to language teaching.)

One of the notions of the new advocates of language teaching is that there is no such thing as "correct" speech; there is only "acceptable" speech depending on the social group. Thus the man who said "those ships" was speaking a language in a setting where "them ships" was the accepted variety of English. The "those ships" speaker was

perceived as showing off his education and superiority and was not accepted in that "them ships" social environment.

This notion of acceptable speech was carried over into many American classrooms and in other parts of the world where English was taught. Another idea of the nouveau linguist-educators is the notion that the rules of language, i.e., the grammar of a language, is not learned by memorizing rules but by orally learning to speak the language thus "internalizing the rules." The new pedagogy which was sometimes erroneously called the linguistic method practically abolished the teaching of grammatical rules of English. This was an unfortunate development because the nonnative learner of English needs grammar rules to guide him, especially in writing English.

Some linguists and a few educators have even taken the extreme position that it is not right for the schools to impose a certain variety of English to another societal group whose dialect of the same language differs. Some of these linguist-educators, for example, say that it is violative of the language rights of black Americans to be "forced" to learn the white man's kind of English in order for him (the Black) to get educated, i.e., it is okay to have him educated in black English. Most educators have rejected this notion, however.

Many teachers (sometimes labeled as reactionaries or at best as conservatives) have intuitively resisted the movement of acceptability and have continued to teach correct or prescriptive grammatical English or what is generally referred to as "educated" English.

The best example in the Philippines of the notion of acceptable speech is the phenomenal growth and use of Taglish, the mixing or code-switching of English and Tagalog. Practically every Filipino who speaks English and Filipino today speak Taglish. Even (in fact) the "lead society" (educated members of society who should be imitated for the elegance of their language) now speak Taglish. There is practically no Filipino today, even the best educated, who does not speak (and even write) Taglish. Even English teachers who at first fiercely resisted Taglish have given up fighting the practice and seem to have adopted the attitude of "If you can't fight 'em, join 'em." Today there is hardly any teacher, including English teachers, who do not code-switch in their classes. (As I write this, I recall Laura Oloroso, chief English supervisor of the city schools of Manila, vainly fighting Taglish up to the time of her retirement.)

An important problem today is what variety of English or Filipino should be taught to our children in schools? In my view, it should be the educated and elegant variety. One does not have to go to school to learn what passes for the so-called acceptable variety.

(NOTE: Because this is the month of November, the traditional month for the dead, I was tempted to entitle the above piece "The Death of Correct English." I did not because there is a place, in fact many places, for correct English, for example, in textbooks, newspapers and magazines, scholarly writing, business correspondence, and many others.)

2.19 Literacy—A Redefinition

One of the most important concerns of Senator Santanina Rasul is the high illiteracy rate in the Philippines especially in the southern provinces. The type of illiteracy that the good senator is worried about is the non-attainment of the UNESCO definition of *literacy* which is the ability to read and write simple sentence in one's native language or, as in many cases among ethnic groups, a second language which is used as the language of education.

There is an article entitled "Illiterate Japanese?" in *Newsweek* (28 November 1988, p. 16) which discusses "computer illiteracy that afflicts what is arguably the most technology-oriented country [Japan] in the world. While Japanese primary and secondary schools earn praise for their students' performance in math and science, they lag behind the United States and Europe in computer education."

What the article points out is something I have said in many of my classes and in some of my writings, namely, that the working definition of *literacy* by UNESCO is a very inadequate operational definition of the kind of literacy that schools and a country like the Philippines (and most Third World countries) should strive to achieve.

What the Philippines needs today are various kinds and threshold levels of literacy. It is the kind of operational definition that is implied in the *Newsweek* article cited above. By this concept of functional literacy, *functional* means the possessor of that literacy is capable of operating and competing in the field and level of knowledge under question. For example, in the field of mathematics, there are various levels of knowledge from very elementary to the highest international levels. This definition also means that there are various segments of our population who will possess certain specific types of literacies, i.e., not everyone will be computer literate, not everyone will be math literate at the highest levels of math knowledge. It is obvious that there should be more at the lowest threshold levels and less and less as the difficulties increase. What is important is that as a nation we must have these various kinds and levels of literacies. By this newer and better definition of *functional literacy*, many Filipino high school and college

graduates are in fact illiterate. A high school graduate who cannot read and understand and therefore cannot pass the NCEE examination is to all intents and purposes illiterate. So is the college graduate who cannot pass the licensure examination in his profession.

By the above definition we need various and all kinds of literacy: mathematics literacy, science literacy, computer literacy (if Japanese computer literacy is not good enough, then what is ours?), and organizational literacy to combat our so-called crab mentality. This lack of literacy in many fields is not due to the fact that we are using English either.

Our illiteracy in many fields of knowledge is even more alarming if we consider literacy in the various fields of knowledge in Filipino. There is practically nothing to read in intellectual fields of knowledge (with the possible exception of creative literature) in Filipino. This is a statement of fact and is not a deprecation of Filipino; rather, it is intended to urge all those who espouse the development of Filipino as the working language of Filipinos in the domains of government (administrative, legislative, judicial), higher education and the professions, business and industry, science and technology to write and support programs for the production of books and other written materials that will make the world's knowledge accessible and available in Filipino. Unless this is done (and we must be patient because it will take a very long time), espousing Filipino will remain in the realm of rhetoric summed up in the *"kailangan natin ang wikang pambansa"* state of thinking. Former Education Minister and U.P. President Onofre D. Corpuz loves to tell the fact that it took the Italians seven hundred years, repeat seven hundred years, to develop Italian as the working language of Italy.

Uulitin ko ang palagi kong sinasabi: Ang kailangan natin sa pagpapaunlad sa Filipino ay literatura sa karunungan na maaaring basahin at ituro sa Filipino. Sa madaling-sabi, ang kailangan natin ay ang intelektwalisasyon ng Filipino. Tapos na ang panahon ng paulit-ulit na pagbabanggit ng maraming proponents *katulad ng isang kolumnista sa isang pahayagan na "kailangan [daw] natin ang wikang pambansa." Dapat nating itigil ang ganitong pag-iisip.*

2.20 Measures of Literacy

Then Senate President Jovito R. Salonga made the following observations on Philippine literacy:

> National literacy has been variously reported at from 89.27% (National Census and Statistics Office or NCSO 1975) to 93% (*Manila Times*, 19 November 1986), making the Philippines the most literate

among the developing countries in Southeast Asia, the rate being equal to many Eastern and Southern European countries and the same level as Italy.

Yet the Department of Education, Culture and Sports' National Literacy Committee, which recently conducted a study of the literacy situation in the Philippines, reported that there are over 2.5 million illiterates in the 15-years-and-above age group (*Philippine Daily Globe,* 17 November 1988).

This situation is aggravated by the dropout problem in the elementary schools, where at least 240,000 pupils, out of an average enrollment of one million first graders (or 24%), leave before completing the four-year primary education course. Of these dropouts, at least 50,000 (or 5%) revert to illiteracy, swelling the illiterate population.

The NCSO gives a bigger number of the country's illiterates. In the 15 to 24 age group alone, the NCSO recently reported 3,077,873 illiterates out of a population of 24,194,237 or 12.7% in that age bracket. And of the 10 to 17 years of age, the NCSO recorded 5,820,233 illiterates out of a total population of 33,681,424 (or 17%) in that age group.

At least 70% of the 3,977,873 illiterates in the 15 to 54 age group or 2,628,055 are in the rural areas; 30% are in the urban communities, mostly in squatter areas. Male illiterates slightly exceed their female counterparts.

[Salonga quotes from the *Daily Globe,* 17 November 1988, p. 3] "Thus, while thousands of students graduate from college every year, illiterates mushroom in the countryside."

[Salonga then asked] . . . *how was literacy measured in these regions? . . . quantitative considerations aside, what is the quality of Philippine education?* [Emphasis supplied.] (Jovito R. Salonga, "Our Education Agenda," speech delivered at the Second Round Table Discussion on a Legislative-Executive Agenda for Educational Development, 10 March 1989)

We rephrase Senator Salonga's question to "How is literacy really measured?" or "What is the measure of literacy?" To answer his question and our rephrased versions, we tell a story.

The story goes that Juan had a terrible case of sore eyes. He had gone to all the best eye doctors but not one could make him well. Desperate, he was standing in the street corner considering seeing a faith healer when he felt a tap on his shoulder. It was his friend Pablo who asked, "What are you doing here?" Juan explained his predicament.

"That's simple. There's a book in that bookstore completely devoted to the treatment of all eye ailments," said Pablo.

They hurried to the bookstore and there was the book. Juan bought it. They opened the volume to the chapter on sore eyes. They read rapidly eager to find the section on cures. There it was, last line at the bottom of the page. It said, "Lime is good for sore eyes" They closed the book. Pablo said he knew a place in the same street where lime was sold cheap. Both literally ran to the lime store.

Pablo applied the lime in Juan's sore eyes. Result? Juan became blind.

Nervous and sad, Pablo reread the book, this time very slowly and carefully. He came to the crucial sentence. "Lime is good for sore eyes [there was no period because it was not the end of the sentence so he turned to the next page and read] if you want to become blind."

2.21 Angry with, Angry at, Cat, Cot, Cut, or the Wasted Years

Those were the wasted hours, the *sayang* hours of our teaching careers. I say "our" because there were many like me all over the Philippines. In those years we were closely supervised in our teaching (in present education lingo, what we did as teachers were "monitored"). We followed the course of study and the textbook.

We taught our grades three and four children that one was *angry with* a person as in "I was angry with Juan" and *angry at* the dog and all others. Thus we taught and drilled ("drummed into" is the better expression) and drilled "I was angry at the dog," etc. That was correct grammar.

For pronunciation lessons, the one that took hours and hours of our teaching time was the correct pronunciation that differentiated *cat, cot,* and *cut.* The favorite illustration of the danger of mispronunciation was illustrated by many stories. My favorite is about the American at Teachers' Camp who told his houseboy to please transfer his cot from the tent to the cottage of a friend. The boy dutifully said, "Yes, sir." When the American asked the boy where the cot was, he was shown a beautiful cat.

In spite of all the drills that we made, teachers and pupils could never get them right. Somehow the three words were the same to us. It was only when our American superintendent came that we were careful not to have any lesson on *angry with* and *angry at* and *cut, cot, cat.* Woe unto the teacher who had the misfortune of having lessons on these difficult subject matters in grammar and pronunciation when the supervisor visited him. (I use the pronouns *him* and not *her* because in those days there were more male teachers than women teachers.)

It was only years later, after I had retired, that I had the satisfaction of making up for all those lost hours and years. I read a paper in an international conference stating that when one is really genuinely angry, one doesn't care whether one is angry "with" or "at" Juan. One is simply angry.

As for *cat, cot,* and *cut,* the three words can be homonyms in Philippine English. There are so many homonyms in English anyway such as *there—their,* etc. One can understand the meaning of the three words through context. The pronunciation does not really matter. (I know that many English teachers will not like this and my friends Jean Edades and Naty Rogers will object to what I write here but then I am for Philippine English, not American English.)

2.22 Two Kinds of Literateness

Which brings me to asking the question "Who is a literate person?" The definition of *literacy* as merely the ability to read (for example, the UNESCO definition of *functional literacy*) is a very deficient definition. Most people who possess functional literacy cannot read many things. Many even revert to illiteracy.

There are two kinds of literacy skills. The basic kind is that which should be possessed by all literate persons which may be called general knowledge reading skill (*gkrs*). This skill enables the reader to read and understand simple instructions, ordinary news accounts, etc. The other skill may be called specific subject reading skill (*ssrs*).

Examples:

With my *gkrs* I can read most news accounts, short stories, novels, popular versions of scientific matters such as those by Isaac Asimov, etc.

Recently, when I read the Letter of Intent submitted to the IMF, I could not understand most of the content. I lack the *ssrs* to understand it. No wonder even members of the Senate had to be briefed on it.

Richard Tucker of the Center for Applied Linguistics said in a recent lecture at the Philippine Normal College that recent scientific studies show conclusively that the relationship between *gkrs* and *ssrs* is zero, meaning that a general knowledge reading skill is no guarantee at all that one can read specific subject matter content. We of course know by experience that unless one is a physicist or a physician one can't understand scientific articles on the two subjects. What we don't know which the studies tell us is the relationship or correlation of the two skills which is zero. (By the way Tucker used other terms for the *gkrs* and *ssrs* that I use here.)

The foregoing fact is the proof that it is the teacher of a content subject like physics, mathematics, biology, or woodworking who should teach the student how to *read and write compositions* in these subjects and *not,* repeat *not,* the teacher of English or of Filipino.

I am sure that the reader of this page can give many examples of subject matter that he or she cannot read that are written in English. Teachers and schools must teach children both skills but especially *ssrs.*

The problem of *ssrs* is especially relevant in reading texts written in Filipino. *Ang suliranin o problema natin sa Filipino ay ang kakulangan o kawalaan ng karunungan na naisulat o nailathala sa Filipino.*

2.23 Diksyunaryo ng Wikang Filipino

Ang unang-unang diksyunaryong monolingual *sa wikang Filipino ay inilunsad o inilabas* (launched) *noong ika-24 ng Pebrero, 1989, sa* PHILCITE, Cultural Center Complex, Manila. *Ang diksyunaryo* (969 + xix pp) *ay gawa ng* Linangan ng mga Wika sa Pilipinas (*dating* Surian ng Wikang Pambansa), Instructional Materials Corporation, at National Book Store (publisher).

Kung maaari, lahat ng mga paaralang elementarya, hayskul, at unibersidad ay mayroong kani-kanilang kopya ng diksyunaryong ito. Malaking tulong ang magagawa ng diksyunaryong ito sa mga gurong Tagalog o hindi Tagalog man.

All teachers, instructors, and professors, whether Tagalog native speakers or not, should have a copy of this dictionary. Even Tagalog native speakers need to learn how to write their own native language.

Inuulit ko na lahat ng mga guro, instruktor, at propesor, Tagalog man o hindi, ay mangangailangan nito.

Good companion volumes to the monolingual dictionary especially to non-Tagalog speakers who are learning to be proficient in both spoken and written Filipino are Leo James English's two bilingual dictionaries *Tagalog-English Dictionary* distributed by National Book Store and the *English-Tagalog Dictionary* published in Australia.

2.24 More About Filipino (Nee Pilipino)

Did you know that Filipino language week is celebrated in August in honor of Manuel Luis Quezon whose birthday falls on August 19? Did you also know that the Tagalog-based national language, now called Filipino, was first taught in the senior year of teacher education courses and in the senior year of high school on June 19, 1940?

Is it possible that the decision to start teaching the national language on June 19 which is Jose Rizal's birth anniversary was one way of honoring the hero? I tried to find out and there is no one who knows nor is there any record on the matter.

2.25 Linguistic Panic

When teachers were informed sometime in 1940 that they would have to learn the national language because they would be required to teach it later, many non-Tagalogs (especially Ilocanos in Northern Luzon) vowed that they would resign if made to do so. The wonder of it all is that no one, and absolutely no one to my knowledge, has ever quit teaching because he or she was required to teach Filipino or use it for teaching.

2.26 You've Got to Have Rhythm

Did you know that one of the most important characteristics of Filipino that a learner should learn is the *rhythm* of the language? In 1961 I saw a group of Boholano teachers and supervisors in Tagbilaran trying to learn the national language. They had great difficulty reading a sentence beginning with the word *ipinakikilala* because they could not get the rhythm. They were like a high jumper who could not go over the bar because he could not get the proper rhythm in approaching the bar. Have you ever seen a high jumper approaching the bar zig-zagging, hopping in a peculiar way, maybe slightly hesitating, etc., and then stopping in his tracks because somehow the proper rhythmic approach is wrong? Speaking a language is like that. In fact, it is the improper rhythm, no matter how slight, that gives away the nonnative speaker of a language.

2.27 The Elite in Filipino

Some facts about Filipino. There is a mistaken notion held by many people including a number of staunch advocates of Filipino who are well educated (some of them are in academe and in the highest circles of government) that the advantage of Filipino over English is that Filipino will make us *pantay-pantay,* that English is for the elite whereas Filipino will be for everyone. This is not true. The fact is that all languages, especially the more developed and intellectualized ones, for example, German, French, Russian, and of course English, produce their

own elite. There will always be many levels or varieties of a developed language—the uneducated variety, the more educated variety by those who attain a certain level of education, and the very elegant and scholarly variety used by the elite: the intellectuals such as writers, the professionals such as physicians, lawyers, engineers, and scientists. The highly sophisticated variety of the language and the material treated in it will not be accessible to the less educated.

As Filipino is developed and is used in more domains of language, there will be the elite in Filipino. There will be those among us, especially non-Tagalog speaking Filipinos, who do not leave their ethnic places, who will know just enough Filipino to "get by." When Filipino becomes the language of higher education (as is the dream of those espousing the replacement of English with Filipino as language of instruction at the University of the Philippines, especially at the Diliman campus), Filipino will produce its own elite. This is so obvious that it is surprising that many well-educated persons peddle the erroneous notion that with Filipino we will all be *pantay-pantay.*

CHAPTER THREE

Issues and Concerns

3.1 Questions Without Answers

There are many issues in Philippine education. Some are age-old and enduring, for example, the issue on quantity versus quality. Others are new, brought about by contemporary events such as the issue on tuition fees. These two issues are actually related in more ways than one. In fact many issues are sub-issues as will be pointed out later. And some, on closer analysis, are actually pseudo-issues. The analysis and resolution of an issue depends upon asking the proper question. The questions asked should not only be relevant but should also be of the highest quality. Very often issues are unresolved because the people asking or answering the questions become emotional and unreasonable.

Before one can ask questions, certain statements must be accepted. For example, as of the school year 1988-1989, there were more than 15 million Filipinos in elementary, secondary, vocational, and in higher education. We all agree that everyone is entitled to the best education available. How is the "best education" made available? by the government, by the private sector, or by a combination of both? If by both government and private sectors, what is the proportion of the contribution of each? Is the best education available in Filipino alone, as some would suggest? English alone? or in Filipino and in English? at what levels? How about the vernacular?

Suppose, for the sake of argument, that we say the best is a combination of education in the native languages and in English. Who will finance the production of teaching and learning materials in the native languages? Remember that during the years 1957 to 1974, when the native languages were used as medium of instruction in grades one and two, most of the effort and money used were furnished by the teachers. Poor teachers. The DECS and the Summer Institute of Linguistics produced preprimers and primers and some readers in 66 minor languages but they could not be mass-produced; there was no

money. How about Filipino? How soon can non-Tagalog provinces produce sufficient teachers capable of teaching in Filipino? Should everyone be taught in English, even pupils in the barrios who do not seem to have a need for it after they drop out from school after a couple of years of schooling? How about teaching and learning materials? Do you know that we have to borrow money from the World Bank and the IMF to finance the production of books? That question is a thorny matter. If we don't borrow money, where shall we get the money? by raising taxes?

See what I mean? I just started asking some questions that need answering. These are just a few emanating from the issue of quantity versus quality. And already some of the sub-issues make emotions rise and start to produce animosity. We have not even touched on quality in higher education, both public and private; on such questions as, "Should we convert more schools into state colleges and universities?" And the answer to this question given by a high-ranking member of government (in fact, a cabinet member!) is "You can't stop the assemblymen from filing and passing bills to convert schools into state colleges and universities and you can't tell the President not to sign these bills into law either."

See what I mean? How thorny is just this one issue, that of quality versus quantity. We don't even know who should answer the questions.

3.2 Footnotes

Most of the research in Philippine education is done in graduate schools by students working for master's and doctor's degrees. There is very little research done by educators in the field. Notable exceptions were those done on the use of Hiligaynon in primary education in Iloilo by Jose V. Aguilar and his associates in the fifties, that on nontraditional role of teachers by a team from the Philippine Normal College in cooperation with the Center for Innovation and Technology, INNOTECH, of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO) from 1978 to 1983 and, very recently, the experiment on the relative effectiveness of five schemes of "immersion" in bilingual education conducted by the city schools of Manila under Dr. Josefina Navarro.

There are two schools of thought regarding research by graduate students. One school thinks that a student who works for an M.A. degree and especially for a Ph.D. and even an Ed.D. the latter being traditionally a nonresearch degree—strange indeed that it is only in education where a doctorate may be awarded without doing good research—should not be allowed to graduate unless the research done

is a contribution toward the advancement of human knowledge. Under this school of thought, the student who graduates is more likely to continue to do research in the field. The other school of thought thinks that a thesis or dissertation is an exercise on how to do research. Under this thinking any topic will do for research, the easier the better. In fact under this thinking those who advise do not necessarily know the subject or topic being researched on. Most of the research done under this school of thought line shelves upon shelves in school libraries. I also understand that those who advocate this second school of thinking on research prohibit graduate students from doing research on a topic that "has been researched on" before. How funny and how tragic. These people think that the researcher does research to end all research on a topic. It is like saying no more work on cancer should be done because others have done so before!

We understand that there is a program supported by the Fund for Assistance to Private Education (FAPE) to teach faculty members in graduate schools how to advise students to do research. We also understand that the program has not been evaluated as yet; not thoroughly, anyway. It is our experience, however, that such a course is almost useless, especially if it is just one of those conducted under the workshop-seminar system. Why? Because a person who has not done any research cannot be taught to advise student research unless he does research himself. The best (and it seems the only) way to teach a student is to have that student do his thesis or dissertation under one who is doing research in an area of his scholarly interest, specialization, or expertise. In graduate schools today, there are just too many doing advising work who have not done research themselves (except perhaps their own thesis or dissertation which was the last one they ever did). Not only that, there are also many who are advising students on a topic that they are not familiar with, not their area of specialization or expertise. If it were in medicine, it would be like a doctor whose specialty is internal medicine advising a student to do research on the brain, or vice versa.

Readers may be asking why I wrote the foregoing. Simple. All over the Philippines, teachers are enrolled in graduate schools to "improve" their education. But does "improvement" ever take place?

3.3 Comparison: Public and Private Schools (1)

Before the war (that expression almost always precedes a nostalgic recollection of better times and things that were good), most parents tried their best to have their children sent to the public schools. Public schools then were generally superior to private schools (with notable

exceptions, of course). Today the situation seems to have changed quite radically. Many parents now think (and this seems to include public school teachers who send their children to private schools) that the private schools are better than the public schools. My walking companions often ask me why the public schools are no longer as good as they were before the war. Invariably, my answer is "The people are to blame for the sorry mess the public schools are in; they support the belief that the public schools should do many things aside from teaching children in school." I must add that that is just part of the answer.

Early this year I wrote something about the bilingual education program being evaluated by the Linguistic Society of the Philippines (LSP) with the cooperation of the Center for Educational Measurement, trained accreditors of the Philippine Accrediting Association for Schools, Colleges, and Universities (PAASCU), the Research Center of De La Salle University, the Research Center of the Philippine Normal College, and the Language Study Center of PNC. Consultant in the study is Fr. Jose Arong, statistician and computer expert. The DECS commissioned the LSP to conduct and coordinate the evaluation.

One of the things that we did during the evaluation was to ask DECS regional directors and superintendents of 17 ethnolinguistic regions (all the 13 political regions of the Philippines were represented) to give a list of what they consider good or excellent public and private schools and another list of what they consider poor public and private schools. The final lists from each ethnolinguistic region consisted of 12 excellent schools (three elementary and three high schools from the public and the same number from the private sector).

Tests were given in English and Filipino as subjects, in arithmetic and science in English and *araling panlipunan* (social studies) in Filipino. An equal number of excellent and poor schools, both public and private, in the 17 ethnolinguistic regions were tested. It should be emphasized here that the decision to classify excellent and poor schools was left entirely to the judgment of the regional directors, superintendents, and their staff.

Initial findings of the study show that in terms of subject matter achievement, the order of excellence, nationwide, is the following: first, good private schools; second, poor private schools; third, good public schools; and last, poor public schools. In other words, pupils from the poor private schools achieved better than those in the good public schools. This is a very serious and sad finding. When I told this to Dr. Minda Sutaria, director of the Bureau of Elementary Education, her first reaction was, "We found that out in SOUTELE." Her remarks have very serious implications. SOUTELE was carried out about 10 years ago.

The findings of SOUTELE showed that the public schools were doing very poorly. After 10 years there seems to be no improvement; in fact, the pupils in the public schools have become worse in achievement. Why? As one of the research team members said upon learning of the findings, "We have not learned at all from the findings of SOUTELE." The question is "What have we done to remedy the sad state of the schools as revealed in SOUTELE?"

3.4 Comparisons: Public and Private Schools (2)

Did you know that in the nationwide evaluation of the bilingual education program, of the 52 categories on which the schools were judged, the average "poor" school (both public and private) was found to be substandard on practically all of the 52 institutional features or qualities evaluated for the school profile? "Excellent" public schools were found substandard in two-thirds of the areas while "excellent" private schools were found to be substandard in about a third of them. Interesting is the finding that on the use of Filipino, on a scale of 5 with 1 = poor, 2 = fair, 3 = good, 4 = very good, and 5 = excellent, the average ratings were excellent private = 2.6; excellent public = 2.48; poor private = 2.29; and poor public = 2.28.

The 52 institutional features on which the schools were judged were the following:

1. Special rooms and services
2. Laboratories
3. Instructional materials center
4. Use of Filipino
5. Use of English
6. Guidance services
7. Student services average
8. Personnel administration
9. Cocurricular activities
10. Classrooms
11. Proficiency in Filipino
12. Proficiency in English
13. English: Nature of offerings
14. Filipino: Nature of offerings
15. English department average
16. Science instructional ability
17. Buildings
18. Instructional average
19. Filipino instructional ability

20. English instructional ability
21. Financial administration
22. Development program
23. Science: Nature of offerings
24. Mathematics: Nature of offerings
25. Mathematics organization
26. Administration
27. Filipino department average
28. Mathematics instructional activity
29. Social studies instructional activity
30. English organization
31. Faculty average
32. School and community average
33. Fluency in English
34. Fluency in Filipino
35. Administration of records
36. Attitude of English faculty
37. Administration organization
38. Science organization
39. Characteristics (physical)
40. Selection of faculty
41. Professional preparation
42. Attitude of parents
43. Filipino organization
44. Social studies: Nature of offerings
45. Social studies organization
46. Administration officers
47. School and community
48. Academic preparation
49. Location
50. Evaluation of length of service
51. Attitude of principals
52. Attitude of Filipino faculty

3.5 Enroute to the Top

In a conference on higher education sponsored by the Phi Delta Kappa, Philippines Chapter, two experts on higher education spoke on the current status of education in the Philippines. Dr. Milagros Ibe, statistics expert of the U.P. College of Education, spoke on the competence of students who enter college. She analyzed the results of the NCEE for five years. Some of her more important findings are (1) that the quality

of student performance has been deteriorating in all subjects especially mathematics; (2) that high school graduates taking the NCEE can answer correctly only an average of 3 out of 10 questions, or roughly 30%, which means the great majority know very much less than half of what they should know to do work in college; (3) that the best performers in the NCEE come from the examinees of the National Capital Region; (4) that there is a direct relationship between the amount of schooling of fathers and the achievement of children—the lowest in performance are children of those who have little or no schooling, and the best performance from those whose parents received higher education; (5) that performance is also directly related to the income of parents—the poorest performance are from the children of parents with lowest incomes and the best from more affluent families. Findings 3, 4, and 5 are not surprising at all. I shall not comment on them here.

I would like to say more on findings 1 and 2. Before I do that, let me comment on what Brother Andrew Gonzalez said on faculty and staff qualifications in institutions of higher learning. I want to show the relationship between what Dr. Ibe found out about the NCEE and the qualifications of faculty and the work in graduate schools of education which Brother Andrew discussed.

According to Brother Andrew, there are very many faculty members of colleges and universities in the Philippines who do not possess a master's degree. He cited the fact that in Singapore and Malaysia, no one can teach in college without a master's degree. The same is true in Indonesia where the equivalent of the master's degree according to the Dutch system is required for teaching in institutions of higher learning.

In the Philippines, during the academic year 1972 to 1973, the year for which data is available (*FAPE Atlas,* vol. 1), there were 14,905 (67%) instructors in colleges and universities with only a bachelor's degree and 938 (4.2%) with less than a bachelor's degree. No wonder the quality of education of those who graduate from college is so poor. During the same year, only 4,555 had master's degrees (20%) while 965 (4.3%) had doctor's degrees.

The state of graduate education in this country is even worse, according to Brother Andrew's findings. He had a project where he and several others examined the quality of research in graduate schools done during the past 10 years for a publication on the state of the art in graduate education under the sponsorship of the Philippine Association for Graduate Education (PAGE). He examined more than 400 theses done in graduate schools all over the country. According to him, the quality of the theses and dissertations is so low and that the work is just repetitive and the great majority have not or do not

contribute anything to knowledge which is the purpose of a research activity. It should be mentioned here that practically all those enrolled in graduate work in education are teachers.

During the open forum, I advanced the observation that in some way the DECS (not necessarily the current staff because the practice and policy started many years back and the present administration just inherited the practice) is responsible for the sad state of affairs. The present policy is to promote teachers who obtain master's or doctor's degrees or even for units obtained toward such degrees. In fact even attendance at seminars and workshops are credited for promotion purposes. Consequently, teachers, supervisors, and administrators attend graduate school for master's degrees for upgrading their salaries and/or positions (this is confirmed in interviews with graduate students) but not to improve the quality of their teaching so pupils can learn more. I want to make it clear that I am not against teachers working for graduate degrees. In fact I consider graduate education very important: very important for the right purpose. I think, however, that the policy or practice of DECS to promote teachers on the basis of graduate degrees or units for such degrees is responsible, in many ways, for the situations where teachers pay more attention to accumulating units and neglect the learning of pupils. I think teachers should be promoted on the basis of the results of their teaching. It is a sad commentary that now that we have better qualified teachers (at least on paper), the achievement of our pupils has gone down.

In the past (this expression refers very often to pre-World War II days) the promotion of a teacher was based mainly on the achievement of her pupils, not on what degree she possessed or obtained. In this connection, it is my observation that teachers who obtain an M.A. or especially a Ph.D. or an Ed.D. have feelings of embarrassment if they do not get promoted to a higher position, meaning a supervisory or administrative job, *not* classroom teaching. It is also the consensus among those in the field, and I believe it, that as far as classroom teaching in the elementary school is concerned, especially in the primary grades where good classroom teaching is very critical, a master's degree is often irrelevant. A master's degree may be much more relevant for teaching history in high school. A good master's degree in history would be very useful for such purposes. And in college, it is a must.

Promotion in salary in the elementary school should not be based primarily on the acquisition of graduate degrees but on the quality of the teaching as evidenced by the achievement of pupils.

The foregoing are very strong words but the kind of education being obtained by children today as documented in the SOUTELE, the results

of the NCEE, the various professional examinations (the bar, the medical, and the CPA examinations—in these cases, the cumulative effect of very low level quality instruction from the primary to secondary school and to the university is altogether evident) demands strong language.

In the same forum that I referred to earlier in this essay, then Deputy Minister of Education Abraham I. Felipe told the audience that the DECS is going to do something about the situation. We believe Dr. Felipe, but this remains to be seen.

In the meantime, may I respectfully suggest that we put a stop to giving a premium on the acquisition of graduate degrees. Instead we pay attention to high levels of achievement of pupils as basis for promotion. The promotion of supervisors and principals and superintendents should be based *mainly* on the high levels of achievement of pupils, schools, districts, and divisions. This will make teachers and other school personnel pay attention to pupil achievement and not to the acquisition of higher academic degrees.

3.6 The Challenge and the Response

As a people we are quite proud of our ingenuity, citing what we did to the jeep to make it a "world-famous" contraption called jeepney as one proof of this ingenuity. We are proud of our resiliency, of our ability to meet any challenge. We love to point out how we survived the Second World War and the Japanese occupation. We have faith that we will survive today's economic crisis and other difficulties. I agree.

But I ask, is surviving enough? Should the Filipino's life just be surviving (in fact many, very many, don't)? Should we not have something to spare? I ask this in connection with some of our responses to the challenges that confronted us during the past 45 years.

Using Arnold J. Toynbee's challenge-and-response theory that he employed in writing his monumental *A Study of History* (I recommend for the teacher-reader's reading D. C. Somerville's two-volume abridgment in paperback edition by Dell Publishing Co., Inc., New York), I would like to comment on two responses of the Filipino people through their executive and legislative bodies in terms of the curriculum of the schools during the past 45 years. Toynbee's observation is that the societies or civilizations that did not issue the proper response went into decline and later into decay.

In the late thirties, during the period of transition from that of being a U.S. colony to having political independence, our nation was faced by, among others, the twin problems of a rapidly increasing school

population which put a tremendous burden on the government and the perennial "lack of funds." These problems posed challenges to the executive and legislative leaders of this country. How did they respond? Our leaders decided in 1940 that the best way to meet the challenges was to shorten the seven-year elementary curriculum to six years. Another solution was the adoption of the double single-session plan where the primary school child went to class only half-day so that two sets of children could be accommodated using the same school facilities, one set of 40 in the morning and another set in the afternoon. The double single-session plan made it possible for one primary school teacher to teach 80 pupils instead of the maximum 60 in the primary grades. In contrast, many countries using their own language provide at least 12 years of pre-university education compared to our 10 years conducted in a second language—English—and in Filipino—a language not yet modernized and intellectualized and also a second language to the majority.

These responses to the challenges posed by the increasing school population and the "lack of funds" were responsible for the decline and deterioration of the education of the Filipino, especially that of the poor and underprivileged, as we will show later.

The shortening of the elementary school curriculum with the elimination of grade seven and the use of the double single-session plan wrought havoc on the education of the poor and underprivileged of this country. The more affluent members of our society, somehow, could take care of themselves with the availability of enrichment programs for their children in the home and in better private schools. Many could afford private tutoring. Preschool education which often consists of two or even three years is an opportunity and a privilege available to the rich but denied the poor.

The cumulative effect of the damage done to the education of the poor and underprivileged sector of this country started to be noticed in the sixties and was so evident by the seventies. The formation of the Presidential Commission to Survey Philippine Education (PCSPE) in 1969 was a recognition of the low quality of education. This very poor quality of education, especially in regions outside the National Capital Region, was documented by SOUTELE and published in 1976 by the Ministry of Education and Culture.

The teachers of this country are often blamed for the poor quality of education. This is grossly unfair. The blame should be put squarely on the Filipino people, especially the leaders.

The overwhelming majority of the teachers of this country come from the poor and underprivileged. Teaching is very seldom the first choice for a professional career. We do not need to recite here the well-known reasons why the brighter high school graduates do not

go into teaching. Consequently, the least educated college graduates go into teaching. We therefore have a case where the children of the Filipino people are being taught by the least and often ill-educated segment. Oh yes, there are some bright and good ones, but they are the exceptions. Many of them soon leave the teaching profession. Many of those who were bright and were especially educated to teach mathematics and physics supported by a grant from the National Science Development Board (NSDB) at the Philippine Normal College during my presidency at that institution left teaching to go into industry.

The situation will become worse. The elimination of grade seven and the implementation of the double single-session plan which were and still are economic measures do not benefit the poor. I say again, the cumulative effects of the responses by our leaders in 1940, which we are not willing to remedy, will make the distance between the rich who can afford a good education and the poor who have to put up with a school system taught by the teachers who came from that system even farther. Our school system has become the very instrument that is responsible for the stratification of our society.

There was a law passed in 1953 that "authorized" the return of grade seven but the law made the return optional; for example, there is a grade seven at the Ateneo de Manila University elementary school. Again, it is the affluent who are extended the benefits of a longer education.

Like a broken record, I repeat that the main source of our teaching profession is the least educated sector of our society. It is therefore easy to understand why only 22.59% (roughly one out of four) of 260,528 elementary school teachers surveyed by the MECS Program for Decentralized Education (PRODED) in six regions of the country were found proficient in teaching the subjects they handle. What then do our people expect from our schools?

The responses of the Filipino people to the challenges in 1940 which continue to be our responses today were, and are, not only inadequate; these have further disadvantaged the disadvantaged segment of our society.

3.7 For Life: For Now, for Later

Is education life itself or is it a preparation for life? There was a time when the philosophy of education taught to Filipino teachers was dominated by the American philosopher John Dewey. One of the favorite educational philosophies was that education was life itself and not a preparation for life. The trouble with the theory was that many

did not know what life was, especially for the child. It seems that the basic defect was there was no body of educational philosophy by Filipino educators. It was assumed that what was good for Americans was good for Filipinos. The idea that education was a preparation for life was rejected.

However, if one thinks seriously about what teachers are educating children for, one cannot escape the fact that the grade one child who enters school in June this year will be an adult about 15 years from now. That carries us into the year 2000. What would life's demands be in the year 2000 and especially during the first half of the twenty-first century when the seven year old of today takes his place in the world of work and in life itself? It is quite obvious that if we are to properly educate the child today for life during the first half of the twenty-first century, education becomes a preparation for life. What would life be during those years? And what can the schools do to help the home and other institutions of society to prepare the child of today for the demands that are sure to come?

Will he need knowledge of the computer? What is needed so that he may know what good computer knowledge is? Will he need more mathematics? How about science—what kind and how much should be taught? How about language or languages? and poetry and the world's literature? How about a philosophy of life and values? We often hear of teaching age-old Filipino values. What are they? Is respect for elders an age-old Filipino value? How about honesty and integrity? Where should these be taught? in school, at home, or both? How about sacrifice and thinking about others? How about human rights? Which human rights? and responsibilities? Are these, too, basic?

It seems to us that for the child to be taught these and other things that are to be part of his life as he grows and prepares for the future, he should also know many of the things that he sees and hears around him.

3.8 The Right to Excellence

Did you know that as a Filipino you are not guaranteed the right to education in either the 1935 or 1973 Constitution? (See "The Right to Education—Somewhere in the Bill of Rights" by Ceferino P. Padua, former delegate to the 1971 Constitutional Convention, *Manila Bulletin,* 9 July 1986, p. 7.)

The subject of what to write into the Constitution on education was the topic of a symposium held at the Philippine Normal College on July 14, 1986. Then Education Minister Lourdes R. Quisumbing, who

delivered the main address, emphasized that education should pay particular attention to the 70% of our population who live below the poverty line. She also said that schools, especially institutions of higher learning, should offer quality education.

I made the remark that I was interested in only one word to be written into the Constitution in connection with the Filipino's right to education, and that is the word *excellent* to modify the word *education.* The wording of the constitutional right to education of every Filipino citizen may read something like the following (which is a revision of Padua's suggestion):

> The right of every citizen to excellent education shall be recognized and enforced by the government.

A provision requiring excellent education in the Constitution would make it unconstitutional for anyone or any institution to offer substandard education that is practically "next to useless," to use a worn-out cliche. A provision requiring the government to demand excellent quality education would eliminate the present kind of education and it would necessitate government to put education as the number one priority in its program of expenditures.

And even if I sound like a broken record, I must insist that it is the poor who need excellent education because education is the most important, if not the only, tool they can possess to compete in the world of work. Was it George Bernard Shaw who wrote that the greatest crime is poverty? If so, then poor education can only make the case worse. Low-quality education, therefore, is a crime against the poor. Such a crime should be made unconstitutional.

But what is excellent in education? Who will determine what excellent education is (and therefore what substandard education is)? Quality education is expensive; who will finance it? Shall we ask for more foreign loans? And most painful of all, what shall we do with the institutions that now offer substandard education, most of them the public schools where the children of the poor go? close them? In the elementary school, that won't solve the problem. How about substandard high schools which give diplomas that proclaim that graduates have satisfactorily completed the curriculum prescribed for secondary schools, and imply, for example, that the student is ready for university work but actually is not?

(This reminds me of a conversation with Dr. Pedro T. Orata, the father of the barangay high school, where he asked me: "Which is better, an educated unemployed or an uneducated employed?" And I told him it is doubtful if the person who cannot get employment or become self-employed is really educated. An illiterate, i.e., one who cannot read

the printed word, is not necessarily uneducated. Some of the best minds and the most effective members of the community I met in my stay in Mountain Province, especially in what are now Benguet, Bontoc, and Ifugao where I went to elementary and high school and where I later served as barrio school teacher, principal, and district supervisor, were not capable of reading but they had useful and satisfying lives. I must say here, however, that I am not against literacy—I am for useful and effective literacy.)

How about substandard institutions of higher learning, many of them run by the government itself? What do we do with them? I think it is easier to close substandard colleges and universities especially if they are run by the government. But it is easier said than done mainly because of politics. Most of the substandard colleges and universities were established through the influence of, or because of, politicians and by educators who wanted to "improve their lot and status," I am told.

The foregoing questions and considerations are just a few of the mainly difficult questions that need to be answered in order to achieve the objective enunciated in the Constitution. How will the Filipino people achieve quality education that will be the pride of every Filipino and comparable with the best in the world?

3.9 A Matter of Access

One of the current concerns of the Board of Higher Education according to former MECS Deputy Minister Victor Ordoñez, who was also chairman of the board, is the democratization of access to higher education especially for the poor. I would qualify *poor* by the words *brainy* and *talented.* The reason for the modification is that quality higher education demands ability and brains.

In order to understand how difficult it is for the poor and underprivileged to have access to quality higher education, a recounting of some of the beginnings of the school system may help.

When the public school system was established at the beginning of this century, all Filipinos were equal vis-a-vis the schools because at the time practically the entire population knew no English. All the children, rich and poor alike, went to the same public schools making it very democratic indeed. As a general rule, the quality of education available to everyone was more or less the same—many of those in the barrios reached high school and the university because they possessed the necessary qualifications—that of talent and brains. There was a program of identifying boys and girls of ability even in the barrios.

There was a time, for example, when through what was then called the *Pensionado* system, the brightest and the most talented from all parts of the Philippines, regardless of their socioeconomic situation, were sent as *pensionados* to the Philippine Normal School. Some were sent abroad for advanced training and education.

In each province there was a provincial high school which had the best educated teachers where every barrio school boy or girl could dream of going to someday. Many of these boys and girls brought to the provincial capital their own firewood and food for the week; they cooked the food themselves. Many walked from their barrios to the provincial capital, some following the railroad tracks because they were the shortest access routes. Many of these barrio boys and girls of ability became leaders in Philippine life. They knew they had to excel and compete in the provincial secondary school and were proud of the fact they could compete.

The dream and the goal and the pride in ability and hard work and competition have since died. I do not see these anymore in the eyes of the children in the countryside. The pride in excellence is no longer there. The present school system and the people running it, with the exception of a few dreamers, no longer value excellence. I know of several highly placed educators, some of them regional directors, who used to say that a former minister of the MECS was dreaming impossible dreams when he spoke of excellence as a goal in Philippine education. I was witness to one of the meetings held by this former minister at the Palacio del Gobernador (former MECS national office). In attendance were presidents and deans of colleges and universities. One dean of a graduate school said that we cannot afford excellent education in the Philippines because we are poor. I can still see the shock registered in the face of the minister.

Because we are poor, we should have excellent education since it is quality education that will make it possible for the disadvantaged to be able to contribute not only to their personal well-being but also to the country.

It is clear then that if we want to democratize access to higher education, we must have the mechanism to make that possible. If the kind of education that the poor get (for example, that given in most barangay high schools and in many poor rural schools) is substandard, there is no hope for them to gain entrance to the institutions of higher learning because they will certainly fail the college entrance examinations. The very schools that are supposed to help them gain access to higher education are the same institutions that will prevent them from doing so. This is undemocratic.

I must close this essay by saying that I realize that there are many aspects of the question that need solution. Matters like increasing teachers' salaries; ensuring the availability of teaching materials; making radical improvement in the education of teachers, supervisors, and administrators; encouraging the more affluent members of our society to support the schools through grants and other aids; and finally knowing what quality education is by all of us, yes, every Filipino, so that we may know what we want and what it can do for us—these and many more need our attention.

3.10 Whither, Graduate?

Where will all the graduates go? The month of March is a month of happiness for parents and relatives of those who graduate. Where do most college graduates go? The papers are full of stories of many Filipinos abroad who are college graduates and are working as domestics. I personally know a couple of teachers who quit teaching to go to Hong Kong and Singapore to work as housemaids. With their earnings, they are able to send their children to college. Imagine getting a college degree to work as housemaid! It is sad. It is even more so since we seem to be the *only* country in the world that suffers from this tragedy.

3.11 Making the Score: Voc-Tech Education

It has always amazed me that no one in the vocational-technical field has ever protested when responsible people, including some members of the press, say that those who do not make the cutoff "score" (I enclose "score" in quotation marks because the so-called score in the NCEE is not a score but a percentile rank, a technical term for which we have no space to explain) should take up vocational or technical education. In effect, the "rejects" or those who are not "bright" who cannot be admitted to the so-called professions should take up vocational-technical subjects.

This attitude is unfortunate because it gives a stigma to those who go into vocational and technical education and does not bestow the vocational-technical people the credit that is due them. One only has to visit a museum that shows the glorious history of a past civilization to realize that the great civilizations may be judged by what their people have accomplished with their minds and hands. The artifacts such as pottery, tools, etc., were the products of the "vocational and technical skills" of the people of that civilization.

If we want to progress as a nation, we had better realize the importance of real vocational and technical education. We must stop telling that those who cannot make the cutoff "score" in the NCEE should take up vocational-technical education. I wonder whether this is one of the *values* emphasized in the present values-saturated curriculum!

3.12 What Is Right with Philippine Education?

When I was invited (see note at the end of this essay) to speak in a symposium on What Is Right with Philippine Education? I was struck by the uniqueness of the topic. The usual question is "What is wrong with Philippine education?" but never, to my knowledge, what is right.

Instead of discussing what's right, I thought it would be more fruitful if I discussed the plusses or assets of Philippine education. This way I could make an estimate on how much Philippine education has accomplished in each particular asset or plus. I used a five-point scale of +1 = very little, insignificant; +2 = poor to fair; +3 = average or passing; +4 = very good or much has been accomplished; and +5 = fully exploited for good or very much has been accomplished in the area. I cite 11 plusses below. Following each plus or asset are comments on how the plus (asset) may be taken advantage of, what needs to be done, and so on.

I consider the following as some of the most important plusses in Philippine education. No attempt is made to arrange the plusses in the order of their importance.

1. The people have faith in education. It has become a part of Philippine tradition that the poor farmer will sell his carabao to send his children to school. The schools are overflowing with children. Everyone is eager to attend school. This has not always been so. More than half a century ago when I started teaching, I used to go out during school hours to persuade or even literally catch children with the aid of the teniente del barrio.

   +3. We still have to provide these over-eager children, especially those in the barrios and remote areas, the best means for education. The number of children withdrawing from school before they can really profit from schooling is too large. Perhaps as important, we need to think more seriously of controlling our population growth.

2. There are some excellent schools, some very good ones, especially in Metropolitan Manila and in a few places outside Manila where fortunate bright children can get a good education.

These schools serve as examples of what good schools are and where good teaching can be seen.

+2. There are too few of these schools, most are private schools oftentimes accessible only to affluent families. We need to have more of these schools in the provinces, especially excellent public schools for the poor.

3. Many Filipinos still want to go into teaching even if teaching is not a good-paying profession.

+2. We need to have a vigorous program that will make teaching have its share of the cream of our young men and women who go into the so-called prestigious professions. This is the kind of social engineering that the Filipino people must seriously address themselves to.

4. Quality education is mandated by the 1987 Constitution as a right and that it should be made available and accessible at all levels to all Filipinos.

+1. We have a long way to go towards the accomplishment of this constitutional mandate. There is a need for a reorientation of Filipino thinking towards the goals of education from the purely personal advantages of a good education to include the higher, and perhaps more important, national advantages. We also need to have the political will to overhaul Philippine education if we are to accomplish this very important constitutional mandate. The Filipino people must demand and support quality education. In my view, this provision in the Constitution makes it unconstitutional for schools to offer low-quality education.

5. Education has the best organizational network nationwide, whether government or nongovernment. There is a representative of education in the remotest parts of the Philippines with the presence of the barrio schoolteacher.

+3.5. This should get a perfect +5 but I did not assign this rating because this virtue or strength of Philippine education has been and is also one of its greatest weaknesses. This plus has been, and continues to be, abused by all kinds of pressure groups. Almost any group that wants anything done in Philippine society uses the schools and the teachers. All these demands on the well-organized teachers take away their attention from teaching the Filipino child.

6. There are very many dedicated teachers who try their best against almost impossible odds such as lack of teaching materials, low pay, too much work, lack of recognition, loneliness, etc.

+4. The number is dwindling and this should be cause for alarm by parents and the government.

7. Education is open to evaluation and criticism. We have, perhaps, the most evaluated school system in the world.

   +2.5. The attention paid to the findings and recommendations in these studies has been either minimal or passive, if not outright neglected. Most of the action taken, if any, have not been very effective. There is a need for greater national concern on the results of these evaluations.

8. There are many Filipinos, mostly ethnic groups, who do not wait for the government to construct school buildings for them. For example, in the provinces of Benguet, Mountain Province, Ifugao, and Kalinga-Apayao, many schoolhouses and cottages for teachers have been built entirely by the people at no cost to the government.

   +3. The majority of Filipinos wait for the government to build and even to repair school buildings for their children. A sad example is the story carried recently in the newspapers about President Corazon Aquino finding a school building in one of the Eastern Visayan provinces not having been repaired long after classes had begun. There is a need for more Filipinos to follow the example of their brothers in the ethnic groups.

9. Teachers today have much more freedom than the teachers before the fifties. There was a time when there was a rule that teachers had to resign first before they could criticize any practice that they did not like in the schools.

   +1. If, in some cases, this newly found freedom is abused, it is because like all new complicated toys, one has to learn how to "play" with it correctly. Many teachers still do not know, and still have to learn, what to do with this freedom. Teachers must be wary of outsiders who take advantage of this freedom for their own hidden agenda.

10. The private school system is definitely one of the most important plusses in Philippine education. The private schools save the government a considerable amount of taxpayers' money. Higher education in the Philippines would not be as extensive and available without the private colleges and universities.

    +3.5. Some of the very best colleges and universities in the Philippines are private institutions. There are many, however, that are substandard. There is a need to either upgrade or close substandard ones. I believe in government subsidy to good private schools and to weak ones that can show improvement.

11. The increasing use and acceptance of Filipino as medium of instruction in the schools is one of the most important plusses in Philippines education.

    +1. It is hoped that the time will come when the chief language of those who govern and the governed will be the same through the use of Filipino. For the present, it is difficult to see how this can be accomplished. The attainment of this objective is very difficult because of the explosion of knowledge and the extensive and almost exclusive use of English in the controlling domains of language (the language domains that dictate the desired language) such as government administration (bureaucracy), legislation, and judiciary, education (especially higher education which dictates the language of the professions), science and technology, business, commerce and industry, mass communication, and international relations. In spite of the seemingly insurmountable difficulties, we must not give up. (There was a time in England when French was the language of those who governed. It took some time before English could take over.)

(NOTE: The foregoing is a revised and enlarged version of a paper I read before the members of Pi Lambda Theta (PLT), honor and professional association in education. The PLT is the women's counterpart to Pi Delta Kappa (PDK) which used to be the men's honor society [fraternity] in education. PDK [Philippines Chapter] now accepts women so it has ceased to be a fraternity. PLT accepts only women educators; many of the members are some of the most distinguished women educators in the Philippines.)

3.13 Notes on Two Conferences

There is one faith that almost all Filipinos share and it is this: faith in education. This faith is manifested, for example, in the often-cited Filipino tradition that the poor farmer would sell his carabao to send his children to school. It is also manifested in our government's giving the largest budget allocation to education.

There is one belief that practically every Filipino, especially the educated, seems to share about Philippine education: that it needs to be *reformed* if it is to help improve the life of the Filipino. There is, however, one failure, a national failure, that all of us must acknowledge and it is this: we have failed miserably to institute any national reform to improve Philippine education. Finally, we must realize that we need

someone or a body to synchronize the uncoordinated, oftentimes contradictory and often discordant, voices of so many groups trying to reform Philippine education.

The last educational reform on a truly national scale took place 49 years ago with the passage of the Education Act of 1940 which eliminated grade seven. The overall cumulative results of that Act have been disastrous especially to the poor. That educational reform had for its main goal giving education to all Filipinos but because of lack of funds (our national leaders' favorite excuse) which prompted the Act in the first place, it emphasized quantity at the expense of quality.

Our people, especially the poor, continue to suffer from the ill effects of the Education Act of 1940. I am afraid that not even the provision in the 1987 Constitution to make quality education accessible and available to all our people will ever be achieved. The rich can always have, as they always had and continue to have, access to the best education available in this country and abroad. The constitutional provision is obviously meant for the poor and disadvantaged who constitute the great majority of our population, the people labeled as belonging to the 70% who live below the poverty line.

What educational reform or reforms have the Filipino people and our leaders taken to remedy the cumulative and disastrous effects of the Education Act of 1940? On a comprehensive national scale, practically none; on a piecemeal basis, plenty. These piecemeal efforts have been characterized by a lack of a grand design for the overall improvement of Philippine education.

To understand what this lack of coordination means, it is necessary to know who the people or groups of people trying to "reform" Philippine education are and some of the "reforms" that they advocate or are trying to do. There are four major "reform" groups. These are (1) the legislators—congressmen and senators; (2) decision makers in government; (3) pressure groups, mostly nongovernmental organizations—the latest sector of which are the so-called cause-oriented groups; and (4) educators and their allies. These groups do not necessarily work independently of each other. Some sectors seek the aid of other more influential groups. Many times, however, they are at odds with each other (often in objectives and activities). Their views, proposals, and activities on how to improve Philippine education can easily remind one of the six blind men and the elephant.

It seems to me that what is needed is an authoritative body that will coordinate all the efforts of the various groups for a grand design of educational reform. This body should be able to look at quality education from various points of reference. I suggest that some of these views be (1) from the three main levels of education—elementary,

secondary, tertiary—for there can be no quality tertiary education without quality secondary education, and there can be no quality secondary education without quality elementary education, something quite obvious (for example, one of the complaints of a number of the technical panels in higher education is that the quality of students in higher education, e.g., in medicine, engineering, and teaching is very poor and the reason for this is that the quality of elementary and secondary education is so poor); (2) from the viewpoint of the existence and availability of good (excellent) schools in all geographical areas, including, if not especially, remote areas (for example, several studies have amply demonstrated that good schools are located in and around Manila and in some urban areas, and that quality education is not available in the greater part of the country); (3) from the standpoint of a good countrywide identification program where the gifted, the talented, and the able, especially from among the poor, are identified and provisions are made for their education in excellent schools both in, and especially outside, the Manila area.

Right now various groups are valiantly looking for solutions to the difficult problem of making quality education accessible and available to all. I am not aware of any authoritative body orchestrating the various efforts of the four "reformist" groups cited earlier. For example, senators and congressmen are doing their own thing by filing so many education bills and sometimes succeeding in passing laws that may not actually improve education; nongovernmental organizations (pressure groups) especially cause-oriented groups are making their own noises. In some cases, it seems that some cause-oriented groups are succeeding in disrupting quality education from taking place. Educators continuously meet to make recommendations and more recommendations in congresses and seminars and workshops, etc. (Before I am misunderstood, I favor such conferences and workshops provided intelligent and workable solutions are achieved as a result of the exercises.)

Let me comment on two conferences on education reform that I attended in October 1988. These were (1) the National Conference on Education Reform sponsored by the Ateneo Center for Social Policy and Public Affairs (ACSPPA), and (2) the forum on The Board of Higher Education and the Technical Panels during the Assembly on Education and Culture sponsored by the Philippine Fulbright Scholars Association.

The theme of the Ateneo conference was Access to Education. Invited to participate were senators and congressmen from the committees on education (Senator Teofisto Guingona and Congressman Margarito Teves came on the second day), DECs officials, representatives of parent, teacher, and student groups, school administrators, members of a nongovernmental organization that may be classified as a pressure group, and distinguished guests.

There were two things that struck me in the Ateneo conference. It was the speech of Senator Guingona where he revealed a plan for the revision of the high school curriculum with the filing of a bill in the Senate providing for the establishment of Don Bosco-type of high schools, at least one in each region, because what is needed most by our people, according to him, are jobs. It reminded me of the fact that the Presidential Commission to Survey Philippine Education (PCSPE) conducted at great expense in 1969 proposed that comprehensive high schools be established. Nothing happened. It also reminded me of the secondary school two-two plan of unhappy memory. These schemes were designed to produce graduates with manpower skills.

The other thing that I noticed in the Ateneo conference was the discussion on language which revealed that there is a need for better information and knowledge on the development of Filipino, especially its intellectualization, so that it may be used for communicative competence in the language domains of higher education, the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government, science and technology, and other fields. There is a mistaken belief that it is easy to build a language to perform all functions including highly intellectualized functions.

There were many good proposals in the Ateneo conference that need to be followed up in conjunction with proposals by other groups. The ideas and proposals should be refined, and all the efforts of the various groups should be taken up by a coordinating group.

The panel discussion sponsored by the Philippine Fulbright Scholars Association (then president of the association who was former Chief Justice Marcelo Fernan stayed up to the very end of the day's panel discussion) on the problems and proposed programs for the improvement of higher education in the Philippines was participated in by representatives of the technical panels in business education, health-related programs, legal and criminology education, maritime education, teacher education, medical education, arts and sciences, agricultural education, and engineering education. (There was no panel on vocational-technical education apparently because there is a Bureau of Vocational and Technical Education in the DECS.)

The technical panels in higher education are "composed of experienced experts from the various sectoral linkages and shall be maintained in an on-call basis." Listening to the reports and proposed programs of the technical panels is an experience that is difficult to forget. I personally got overwhelmed and bewildered by the problems and the proposed programs of reform. I came out of that technical panel discussion wondering how the problems of higher education could ever be solved. The report on medical education seemed to sum up the main problems of higher education: the need for (1) quality

curriculum, (2) qualified faculty, (3) textbooks, and (4) quality students. Also, there are enough doctors to serve Filipino needs but the problem is one of distribution—physicians are concentrated in the Metro Manila area so that the majority of our people do not have access to doctors. As for the nursing profession, 98% of those taking up nursing want to go abroad.

Those who are in accountancy and law education worry about the fact that very few pass the CPA and bar examinations. Those in agricultural education complain about the lack of money for research. Those in arts and sciences worry about the job objectives of their graduates. Everyone wished higher education could have more money.

But of all the revelations in those higher education technical panel reports, the one that jolted me was the report on maritime education: that in a country of more than 7,000 islands and with one of the longest coastlines in the world, there is not a single school for advanced navigation. Is it possible that this is one of the reasons for such maritime tragedies as the MV *Doña Paz,* MV *Victor,* and MV *Doña Marilyn* of recent memory?

The two conferences (and other conferences I have attended on similar matters) reinforced my belief that ***we need to have an authoritative body to orchestrate our efforts.*** The DECS is valiantly trying its best but it is understaffed, underfinanced, too overwhelmed with details (it has its nose too near the grindstone, so to speak), and too overworked to do the job. It probably needs help.

3.14 Launching the SEDP

After almost seven years of planning and preparation including four years of trying out (experimenting with) materials, methodology, time frames, and other arrangements such as teacher retraining, and at great expense, the new high school curriculum called Secondary Education Development Program (SEDP) is going into effect with first year classes starting in the school year 1989-1990. (I tried to secure data on how much was spent in the development of the SEDP but various units in DECS to whom I was referred could not give me the total amount spent in the development of SEDP. The only figure given me by Mrs. Blanquita Bautista, DECS chief accounting officer, is ₱103,397,000 released for funding SEDP in fiscal year 1988.)

The SEDP was tried out all over the Philippines in 80 secondary schools of various types: vocational, national general, provincial, municipal, barangay, city, and in private sectarian and private nonsectarian high schools. The tryout (two years for every curriculum year) which

started with first year classes during the 1985-1986 school year was completed during the 1989-1990 school year.

The secondary school level has always been seen by many people, including responsible educators, as the weakest link in the educational system. According to the DECS, the old 1973 secondary school curriculum [was inadequate] so it had to be revised (DECS uses the term *reform*) because it

> left much to be desired in terms of (1) strengthening acquisition of knowledge, habits, and attitudes; (2) developing secondary education graduates who are development, work, and productivity oriented; (3) developing critical and analytical thinking skills through multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches in the classroom; (4) developing the total human person committed to a set of universal and Filipino cultural values; and (5) producing citizens equipped for effective participatory citizenship. (*Secondary Education Development Program (SEDP): Curriculum in Focus,* DECS)

It is the thinking of the architects of the SEDP that the defects or shortcomings of the old curriculum cited above will be remedied by the new SEDP. Truly a very tall order. It is the hope of many, including some who have seen so many revisions and reforms in the educational system, that the mountain did not labor and bring forth a mouse.

Some observations on the implementation of the SEDP are worth discussing here.

On the 40-minute periods for all subjects, except technology, Dr. Bellarmine Bernas, OSB, president of St. Scholastica's College, says that the DECS is very strict on the time allotment for most subjects. Sister Bellarmine thinks that high schools that have worked out successful styles or programs of implementing curricular practices, such as St. Scholastica's College which has developed modules for handling various subjects, should be allowed the freedom to deviate from such a strict rule. She gives cooking as an example. Even the 60-minute time limit is not enough for conducting a worthwhile cooking lesson. It may take as much as three to four hours which would roughly be a whole morning session.

Using the modular style of teaching, the time allotment in other subjects for the day would be used up. Time "taken from other subjects" during the four-hour cooking time would be made up during the rest of the week when cooking lessons are no longer observed. Requiring schools to strictly observe the 40-/60-minute rule may not work to the best advantage of students.

I fully agree.

I talked with Dr. Esperanza Gonzalez, former director of the Bureau of Secondary Education and previous to that chief, DECS Curriculum

Division, on how strict the 40-/60-minute time allotment should be observed. (Dr. Gonzalez may be considered the "mother" of the SEDP because it was under her incumbency that the SEDP was developed.) She said that as far as she knows, there is no specific instruction or provision for flexibility because, and I quote her, "if that were allowed then every high school would be doing what it wants and there would be no national program." *Which confirms Sister Bellarmine's fears.*

Dr. Gonzalez, however, admitted that there are a few high schools that may be allowed to deviate from such a rigid rule. She cited the request that "accredited" high schools should be allowed to deviate from certain rules and regulations. But this should be rare exceptions, she added. She gave me the impression that it may be better if no provision for such flexibility is included.

It is rather strange that while one of the most important features of the SEDP (I quote from p. 5 of the DECS handout cited earlier) is "On the whole there is emphasis on critical thinking to promote creativity and productivity at all levels," secondary school administrators and teachers are denied the exercise of critical thinking and creativity and productivity in the administration of curricular programs. One cannot teach what one does not practice or is prohibited from practicing.

Sister Bellarmine told me that she intends to write the DECS for permission to deviate from the strict observation of the 40-/60-minute-per-subject rule.

3.15 More on the SEDP

If the goal of the SEDP to emphasize "critical thinking to promote creativity and productivity at all levels" is to be realized, a system should be devised to allow qualified high schools to exercise flexibility and to deviate from rigid programs without the need for the heads of such schools to request DECS permission. The right to exercise freedom, however, demands that the administrator and faculty members are capable of exercising such freedom.

The success or failure of SEDP (or any curricular program for that matter) depends mainly on the ability and creativity of the faculty and administrators and secondarily on all other factors.

The following scheme is suggested in determining schools that may exercise flexibility (deviation) in the implementation of curricular and other practices prescribed by DECS.

Classify high schools into A (excellent), B (average), and C (poor). It may be difficult to have finer classifications. High schools should be judged by competent authorities, for example, by recognized

accrediting agencies or other appropriate bodies. The bases for judging excellence are generally (1) faculty, (2) instruction, (3) library, (4) laboratory facilities, (5) physical plant, (6) student services, (7) administration, and (8) outreach or extension services.

Readers may be interested to know that PAASCU uses the following nine-point rating scale in rating the eight areas cited above: 1 — provision is missing but needed; 2 — very poor: the provision or condition is very limited and not functioning; 3 — poor: the provision or condition is limited and functioning poorly; 4 — fair: the provision or condition is limited and functioning minimally; 5 — good: the provision or condition is adequately met; 6 — very good: the provision or condition is moderately extensive and functioning well; 7 — superior: the provision or condition is extensive and functioning very well; 8 — outstanding: the provision or condition is very extensive and functioning very well; 9 — excellent: the provision or condition is very extensive and functioning perfectly.

If the foregoing rating scale is adopted, it is suggested here that schools that are rated at least 7 in faculty, instruction, and administration and at least 5 in the other areas should be allowed the freedom to deviate from ordinary rules governing average and poor schools.

There are many advantages of such a system. Supervisors will now concentrate on helping average and especially poor schools to work towards excellence. Excellent schools will be visited by parents, administrators, and teachers to see excellent teaching.

3.16 The Rise and Decline of Philippine High Schools (Part 1)

Did you know that the first public secondary schools at the beginning of this century were free? That they were established not so much to give education to the poor but "to [reach] the more desirable type of pupils, the children of the rich and the influential who preferred attending private schools to enrolling in the public schools, which they regarded as schools for the poor"? (Benigno Aldana, *Philippine Public School Curriculum* [Manila: Philippine Teacher's Digest, 1935], 98).

The first secondary public schools were financed largely by the provinces, hence, they were called provincial high schools. On September 1, 1902, there were 23 such schools with a total enrollment of 1,400 students (Aldana 1935, 99). The insular (now national) government furnished only textbooks and paid the salaries of some of the teachers. Practically all insular teachers were Americans.

The curricula of the first high schools were not uniform because they were directly under the division (provincial) superintendents. The curricula offered were *academic* to prepare for university or college work to be offered later in Manila; *normal* to prepare Filipino teachers; *commercial* to educate for clerical positions; and *industrial* and *agricultural* to prepare graduates for trades and farming.

The academic curriculum became the most popular and overshadowed the other types of high schools. One high school offering the academic (later called *general*) curriculum was eventually established in every capital of the 48 provinces and were invariably named after the province, e.g., Tarlac High School, Pampanga High School, Iloilo High School, La Union High School, etc. These provincial high schools later became the pride of every province. These were the high schools which many graduates and the people who supported them recall with pride and nostalgia.

The reader may be interested to compare the subjects of the first public high schools in the city of Manila in 1902-1903 with those of the SEDP of 1989. The 1902-1903 curriculum consisted of two years preparatory work and four years of regular high school work. For first year preparatory the subjects were English, reading, arithmetic (as far as division of fractions), geography, music and drawing; second year preparatory, English, geography, reading arithmetic (fractions and percentage and their applications), spelling, music, and drawing.

Subjects in the regular high school were

1. First year—arithmetic, advanced grammar and composition, United States and Philippine history, physical geography, physiology; elective—Spanish
2. Second year—algebra (as far as quadratics), composition and rhetoric, universal history, botany, Latin, music, and drawing; electives—zoology and Spanish
3. Third year—algebra (quadratics, radicals, and geometry), American literature, universal history, physics, Latin, music, and drawing; electives—French and German
4. Fourth year—geometry, English literature, civics, chemistry, Latin, music, and drawing; electives—trigonometry, French, and German (Aldana 1935, 97-105)

That was quite a curriculum. Does the reader ever wonder that high school graduates in "the old days" were considered as good as university graduates today?

3.17 The Rise and Decline of Philippine High Schools (Part 2)

When one speaks of high school graduates before 1940, however, one must remember that there were several types of high schools, namely, academic, normal, trade, agricultural, and home economics. In 1935, 65% of those enrolled were in the academic high schools. Academic high school graduates were prepared to go to the university, while the vocational high school graduates of the other types were prepared to go to the "university of work." Not all those who graduated from the academic high school curriculum, however, went to the university. Many were absorbed by business, industrial, and commercial establishments. Many others joined the civil service.

Many of those who entered government service rose to occupy very high positions even without securing a university education. It is these men and women (mostly men then) who stood out in the various communities and became the "representatives" of the successful high school graduate. These were the men and women who were meant by those who say "In our time, high school graduates were good; they are better than university graduates of today."

In addition to the five types, there were special schools that offered technical instruction: the Philippine Normal School, the Philippine School of Arts and Trades, the Philippine School of Commerce (from 1933 a department of the Philippine Normal School), and the Philippine Nautical School. The School for the Deaf and Blind offered both elementary and secondary courses. Later, the general high school was introduced on an experimental basis in a number of selected provinces. By 1935, the Philippine Normal School, the Philippine School of Arts and Trades, and the Philippine Nautical School offered courses on the collegiate level.

There are several factors that made the high school graduates of this period good. Among the most important are

1. *The selection process.* By the time the student enrolled in high school, he had undergone a very rigid selection process. The number of pupils who were "failed" due to "academic deficiency" was very high. Those who reached high school were the cream of the crop, so to speak.
2. *Few high schools.* Before 1940, there were not too many high schools. In most cases there was one provincial academic high school and one trade school in each province. For example, there was the La Union High School (academic) and the La Union School of Arts and Trades in San Fernando, La Union.

Some secondary normal schools were attached to academic high schools; an example was the secondary normal school curriculum at the then Mountain Province High School at Teachers' Camp in Baguio City.

3.18 The Rise and Decline of Philippine High Schools (Part 3)

The decline of Philippine high schools started after the close of World War II. Many factors contributed to the decline, the most important being (1) the destruction of many of the prewar high school buildings and equipment; (2) the death of many high school teachers during the war; also, many of those who survived the war, especially the men, chose not to return to teaching; (3) the entry into high school of those who completed the six-year elementary school curriculum; (4) the abandonment of the one excellent-high-school-in the provincial-capital idea in favor of the idea of a high school in every municipality which was available especially to the poor because of the rapid growth of the population which necessitated the adoption and justification of the then so-called principle of equity.

Perhaps one of the most devastating developments that led to the decline of high school teaching was the abandonment of the prewar practice of paying high school teachers much higher salaries—on the average, twice that of the elementary school teacher's pay. For example, prewar high school teachers generally received ₱100 a month compared to the elementary school teacher's ₱50. Because of this "unhappy" (to the high school teacher) development, teachers in most high schools which were supported either by the province or the municipalities received less pay than elementary school teachers paid by the national government. Many teachers transferred to the elementary schools. This development contributed to the removal of the relatively high socioeconomic status of the secondary school teacher.

High school teaching no longer attracted the best high school graduates. The availability of many high-paying professional careers, other than high school teaching, to young men and women made the situation worse. This situation is best exemplified by the College of Education of the University of the Philippines. Before the war, that college used to attract some of the best minds that went to the university. By the late fifties and especially the sixties, that was no longer true.

We cannot overemphasize the fact that the quality of high school education (or any level of education for that matter) depends upon the quality of those who teach.

3.19 The Rise and Decline of Philippine High Schools (Part 4)

In previous issues of the PJE, we wrote of the rise and what may be called the "golden age" of Philippine high schools. In the September 1989 PJE, we wrote about the causes of the beginning of their decline. We now write of the cause of the further decline (and here we hope it is not *decay*) of Philippine high schools.

The appearance of community high schools (in contrast to the one excellent high school in every province and one good high school in big municipalities) and finally that of barrio high schools contributed further to the decline.

It is an exceptional municipality or barrio that has the money to support and maintain an excellent high school. It is not possible for the vast majority of municipalities and especially barrios to support and maintain good or excellent high schools because such schools cost too much money for buildings, equipment, and faculty.

The recent move to pay the salaries of all public high school teachers, including those in barrio high schools, out of national funds is a partial, inadequate, and even doubtful solution to the problem. The practice of naming secondary schools *national high schools* may be even worse; it actually takes away the responsibility of supporting high schools from the people of the locality. It does not square with the Program for the Decentralization of Educational Programs. Why should small local high schools be called national high schools?

I repeat what I have written before: *the now legendary and often pined-for high schools of the past that produced real high school graduates were supported mainly by the people from the provinces where they were located with a minimum of help from the national government (called insular government then)*. This increasing dependence on the national government for the support of our high schools and too many state colleges and universities is not doing education and the people much good.

3.20 Landmark: Private Education Subsidy Loan

Good-bye to lip service. The signing into law by President Corazon C. Aquino of the subsidy law known as the Government Assistance to Students and Teachers in Private Education Act (Republic Act 6728) is an educational landmark. The people of the Philippines, through the lawmaking and executive bodies, finally threw away the habit of paying

lip service to private education. The subsidy law is the first really concrete step in recognizing and assisting Filipinos in the private education sector.

This writer sees in the subsidy law many opportunities for the attainment of quality education as embodied in the 1987 Constitution. Those who are in a position to implement the law should recognize these opportunities and exploit them to the utmost.

For the benefit of readers who may not have a copy of the law, we quote Section 4, Forms of Assistance.

> Assistance to private education shall consist of
> (1) Tuition fee supplements for students in private high schools, including students in vocational and technical courses;
> (2) High School Textbook Assistance Fund, *provided* that students in public high schools shall be provided a comprehensive textbook program under the Secondary Education Development Program (SEDP);
> (3) Expansion of the existing Educational Service Contracting (ESC) Scheme;
> (4) The voucher system of the Private Education Student Financial Assistance (PESFA) Program;
> (5) Scholarship grants to students graduating as valedictorians and salutatorians from secondary schools;
> (6) Tuition fee supplements to students in private colleges and universities;
> (7) Education Loan Fund; and
> (8) College Faculty Development Fund.

We discuss below some provisions of the law that we consider opportunities for the attainment of quality education through private education in the Philippines.

1. *College Faculty Development Fund.* The fund is established "For the purpose of improving the quality of teaching in higher education . . . to provide for scholarships for graduate degrees and nondegree workshops or seminars for faculty members in private colleges and universities . . . The scholarship shall be in priority courses as determined by the Department of Education, Culture and Sports in coordination with the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) . . ." (Sec. 13).

   In our opinion, properly financed and implemented, the College Faculty Development Program is one of the most important provisions of the subsidy law.

The number of faculty members who do not possess the minimum qualifications for teaching in Philippine institutions of higher learning is simply appalling. This is true in both public (especially notorious are the institutions recently converted into state colleges and universities) and very many private higher education institutions. There is also the matter of faculty members being unable to update themselves on the important developments in their fields of scholarly concern. Many faculty members teach the same subject matter they taught when they started to teach, year in and year out, without even realizing that a lot of the things they are teaching have become obsolete. What is sad is that faculty members have practically nothing to read because of the prohibitive cost of books, magazines, and other learned publications.

To make matters worse, the great majority of institutions of higher learning do not have the funds nor the programs for faculty development. With very few exceptions, faculty members cannot afford to go on personal leave without pay to study in order to secure first class in-service education.

The foregoing facts were again brought to light in interviews in Manila, Cebu, and Davao with applicants from Luzon, the Visayas, and Mindanao for scholarships under the United States-Republic of the Philippines Faculty Development Program jointly administered by the Philippine American Educational Foundation (PAEF) and FAPE.

We cannot overemphasize the fact that quality education cannot be obtained without highly qualified faculty members.

2. *Priority courses.* The subsidy law emphasizes support of priority courses that will be determined by the DECS. The various provisions in the law on priority courses, such as (1) that faculty development scholarships are to be awarded only to college faculty members who enroll in priority courses and (2) that students may be allowed to enroll in colleges and universities outside their regions of domicile only if such priority courses are not offered in colleges or universities in their regions of domicile, will help eliminate the proliferation of many courses that are overcrowded or not needed for national development.

We must point out, however, that the determination of priority courses must be done with extreme care by qualified men and women who know what priority courses are. For example, there is the danger posed by the thinking in many quarters that the priorities of the country lie only on science,

mathematics, and technical-vocational courses to the neglect of the social sciences and the humanities.

3. *Encouragement of students to undergo tertiary education in the same region where their families reside.* The criterion that college students to be assisted must enroll in colleges or universities in their region (exception is made where the priority course is not offered in any educational institution in his region of domicile) offers one of the greatest opportunities for the development of private university centers of excellence in the various regions outside the Metro Manila area.

   As the population increases, it becomes more and more necessary that quality education be obtainable in colleges and universities in the regions outside the metropolis.

4. *Attention to poor but deserving students in private education.* There are many bright and talented among the poor who cannot afford a good education. They are seldom identified for their potential. If their talents are not developed, the country is made much poorer by the neglect. Not all those who attend private schools are rich; in fact, the majority are poor. The subsidy law will correct to some extent the situation where private school students are placed in the unenviable position of paying twice for education: first, through taxes to support the public schools; second, by the cost of their private school education. The rich may not mind this, but to the poor it is certainly painful, if not unjust.

3.21 Needed: Filipino Maintenance Ethic

Except in very backward communities in the Philippines, the sight of "self-maintaining" pigs and chickens running around the neighborhood is gone. But it seems that the mentality that nurtured that "culture" of self-maintenance continues to linger in government offices. It is amazing to see so many pieces of expensive equipment lying idle and are not being used in many government compounds because of lack of maintenance.

The most notorious facility that lacks attention and maintenance in public (government) buildings is that facility euphemistically referred to as "comfort room," more known by its acronym CR. The well-maintained CR in government buildings is the rare exception. One gets the impression that those who work in government offices expect these equipment and facilities to be self-maintaining.

So much can be saved by the government out of the taxpayer's money if government personnel are educated and trained to maintain equipment and facilities.

As a people, we need to develop a maintenance ethic.

3.22 Literacy—Which Kind?

We are supposed to be one of the most literate nations in Southeast Asia. But literacy is the kind that may be characterized as nondynamic, noncooperative, noncollective (individualistic), and often selfish, and therefore, greatly nonproductive kind of literacy.

A good example of the individualistic and selfish kind of literacy acquisition (a person is literate in a subject or specialization and not simply literate—thus a medical doctor's literacy is different from that of a lawyer's). This is apparently sanctioned by the great majority of colleges and universities and the people and the government of this country as evidenced by the uncontrolled acceptance of so many students for the study of such courses as accounting or law. Students think only of themselves, and universities think only of more enrollment.

A good example of noncooperative, selfish, and therefore nonproductive literacy is the existence of hundreds of Filipino clubs and associations in the United States.

Another example of the nonproductive and destructive kind of literacy (from a national point of view) is the "production" of so many Doctors of Education (Ed.D.'s) and Ph.D.'s in education by inadequately staffed and sorrowfully equipped graduate schools of education. These "doctors" may profit materially and perhaps socially from their promotions in their jobs but contribute nothing to the improvement of students and education. *Batu-bato sa langit, ang matamaan ay huwag magagalit.*

In contrast, in countries where there is a cooperative and collective sense of literacy, where excellence is recognized and valued, such as for example Japan and Singapore and most other countries with good economic and social planning, the number of slots or places for various courses are controlled and students are advised and channeled into various courses for which they have the ability and are beneficial to themselves, the country, and the society.

Dynamic, cooperative, collective, and productive literacies are seen in the NICs or NIEs (newly industrialized countries or newly industrialized economies) of Asia like Singapore, Hong Kong, Korea, and Taiwan. The best example in our part of the world is Japan and in Europe, West Germany.

3.23 Solutions in Search of a Problem

It was raining very hard and the windshield wiper of my car got stuck so I took it to a car repair shop. I had to wait because the only "electrical man" in the shop was busy with a Lancer that had its parking lights on which refused to be turned off. The mechanic examined the switch for turning off the lights and tried it several times but the lights wouldn't go off. He opened the hood, then the trunk, and went through a number of operations. He spent a lot of time tinkering with all sorts of electrical connections. The parking lights simply would not be turned off. He tried many solutions all of which failed.

The owner of the car and the mechanic agreed that if they disconnected the battery, the light would go off but they agreed that that was not the solution. They did not disconnect the battery. Finally, the mechanic told the owner, *"Hindi ko alam kung anong problema,"* and gave up.

His many solutions were obviously in search of the problem. He turned to my car and asked me, *"Ano bang problema?"* I said in my best Taglish, *"Hindi ko alam kung bakit na-stuck ang* windshield wiper." He told my driver to open the hood. He addressed himself to a cylindrical thing which apparently controlled the wiper. He adjusted something. He told the driver to turn the windshield wiper on and it worked. It was obvious that he knew what the problem was with the wiper of my car, so he knew the solution. In the case of the Lancer, he did not know the problem. All the solutions that he tried were in search of the problem.

The case of the car electrician with the Lancer is typical of much that we see around us today. We see many people, many highly placed, especially in government, perhaps less in private industry if any, applying solutions that are in search of a problem.

Let me give an example in education. During the 1983 and 1984 Educators' Congress in Baguio, the cream of the education fraternity was convinced that the cause of the poor quality of Philippine education was the bilingual education program, i.e., the use of two languages, English and Filipino, as medium of instruction. The majority agreed that the solution to the problem of poor education was a return to an all-English curriculum. Of course that answer was not new because the same remedy was recommended by the Swanson Survey Committee that was supposed to have "studied" the "ills" of the Philippine educational system in 1960.

Fortunately the participants in the two educators' congresses recommended that the bilingual education program should be studied in depth. This was done. The study found out that the children who were taught by competent teachers, who were supervised by competent

supervisors in good and excellent schools administered by competent administrators, who saw to it that there were good instructional programs backed by adequate teaching materials and other favorable learning conditions, were good in both English and Filipino and learned their subject matter content in both languages very well. On the other hand, those children who did not have the benefit of the foregoing were poor in both English and Filipino and in subject matter content.

The evaluation of the 11-year bilingual education program conducted in 1985-1987 showed beyond doubt that the solutions to poor-quality education suggested by the educators in the two congresses and the Swanson Survey Committee were not the proper solutions because they were solutions in search of the problem.

I am sure that the reader can give many examples of solutions that were tried in classrooms, in schools, and in other situations that failed because they were solutions in search of a problem. How many of us teachers try many methods and procedures that we think would teach a child or a class only to find out that we need to try another method, and still another, and yet fail to teach a child or a group of children? Often under these circumstances most teachers resort to the final method: punishing the child. *Before the teacher administers the final method, I suggest that she calls for a supervisor to help her search for the real problem so that the proper solution may be applied.*

A good idea to remember is this: What would happen if you go to a doctor who starts to apply various solutions to a problem (illness) that he has not diagnosed and identified correctly?

3.24 Favorite Whipping Boys

Did you know that there is always a favorite whipping boy or scapegoat for the shortcomings or failures in Philippine education?

There was a time when the removal of grade seven from the elementary curriculum was "it." Another is the use of the vernaculars. One of recent vintage is the continuous progression program of former Bureau of Elementary Education director Dr. Liceria Soriano. But did you know that the Japanese practice continuous progression, that no Japanese is failed during the first nine years of schooling, that every Japanese—no matter how dull—completes nine years of education? And Japanese education is excellent! The most recent whipping boy is bilingual education.

We never seem to run out of scapegoats. Isn't that rather strange?

3.25 And More to Blame

Earthquake + typhoons + floods + teachers' strikes + oil shortage + what else? = uneducated children

That equation almost sums up why children are not getting the proper education they should be getting. We have no control over earthquakes and typhoons, but even these two natural calamities are made worse by those Filipinos who steal relief goods. When relief goods are stolen, children suffer more than adults.

Floods? We are to blame. Most floods in the Philippines are caused by the lack of forest cover (to stay the rushing rainwater) due to deforestation by illegal loggers and kaingineros. Many people of power and influence are also to blame for participating in the rape of our forests.

Floods in Metro Manila are a different story, however. The average Metro Manila resident is a garbage anarchist, if there is such a term. Aside from causing a lot of sickness, the garbage Manilans throw in the roads and esteros clog the drains. Metro Manila government officials are unable to collect garbage and the Department of Public Works and Highways is unable to unclog the drainage system. Two hours of continuous rain can easily flood Manila's streets. Inevitably, classes are called off.

Teachers' strikes? As of this writing (*Manila Bulletin,* 29 September 1990, p. 1), 1,448 teachers have been put on preventive suspension by the DECS for striking. I had a talk with some striking teachers on what they were striking for. It seems that they are striking not only for the immediate payment of their delayed salaries and allowances but also for their frustration and resentment over the way the government has been treating them. One of them asked why is it that when it comes to teachers' salaries and allowances, there is always no money, whereas there is ready money for junkets abroad and big allowances of high government officials, money for government cars and gasoline being used for personal purposes, etc. I could feel the deep resentment and anger harbored by the teachers.

When teachers feel that way, they cannot teach. The losers are the children.

Oil shortage? The shortage of oil results in the rise of the prices of food, transportation, practically all commodities, and tempers. The rise of food prices aggravates malnutrition among the poor. Because of the rise in the cost of everything, many poor children quit school to help their parents earn a living. When jeepney drivers strike, pupils do not attend classes.

What else? Add to the foregoing the other causes of non-attendance of classes by pupils such as sickness (as of this writing there is a World Summit for Children at the United Nations in New York City to take up, among other things, poverty, disease, and malnutrition) or hunger (when a pupil is hungry even if he is present in school, he cannot think, so he is practically absent from class). And how about the teachers who themselves are hungry and cannot concentrate on the teaching process? Add to this loss of interest. I know of pupils who have lost interest in school because of the innumerable interruptions of classes.

This school year has been especially bad. Already it is the end of the calendar year and there are barely three months left for going to school. Fortunate are the few, mostly the children of the affluent, who still get a good education because they do not suffer from the many difficulties that confront the ordinary student.

3.26 Dropouts and Stay Ins

One of the most important obstacles to the achievement of excellence in Philippine education, especially in the rural areas, is what I call the "dropout philosophy" of education shared by both educators and many laymen. It goes something like this: the great majority of children do not go beyond elementary school. They drop out. So they should be given an education that is good or useful—the current term is relevant—to them when they drop out. What does one expect from a low-level dropout curriculum?

The sad thing with this kind of thinking and the resulting program is that many do not drop out. We find many of them in high school and in college. Their level of achievement which has been geared to dropout achievement is what we have been complaining about these many years. Even more tragic are those who actually drop out. The dropout education they received is barely useful and hardly relevant in their lives.

3.27 Return of Grade Seven

In a symposium held under the auspices of the Center for Integration and Development Studies of the University of the Philippines under the leadership of Dr. Carolina Hernandez, director, and Dr. Leslie Bauzon, dean of the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy, I recommended as highest priority legislation the return of grade seven (which means the lengthening of the elementary school curriculum).

This should be done if the mandate in the 1987 Constitution for quality education is to be fulfilled. The reasons for this recommendation are quite clear and compelling.

The elimination of grade seven by the Education Act of 1940 was the beginning of the deterioration of the quality of Philippine education nationwide. By nationwide, I mean the majority of the population who are poor. The rich can afford to have a shorter curriculum because they have the advantage of better facilities for giving their children education outside school. A more recent development is the proliferation of preschool education (nursery, junior kindergarten, senior kindergarten, and prep school) for the privileged few, thus automatically lengthening the pre-university schooling of the rich and near rich. The great majority of Filipinos, especially those who are in the rural areas, are deprived of this lengthened period of education. It is obvious that the distance between the rich and the poor has become much wider.

The return of grade seven will give the poor and underprivileged an opportunity for a longer and better preparation for high school and university. The legislation for its return should be considered.

3.28 The Take-over Almost

The proposed take-over of the University of the East (UE), the largest university in the Philippines, by a foreign religious group, the Maharishi, was not only alarming but the saddest chapter in the history of higher education in the country. I shall not dwell here on the merits of the claims of this company on their being able to stop natural calamities like typhoons or, in the opinion of many learned Filipinos, unsubstantiated claim of physics. I shall write here about the fact that it is wrong for a foreign corporation to be allowed to take over such an important institution as a university. As alarming is the possibility of their taking over other colleges and universities. This should not be allowed by the government and the Filipino people. Institutions of learning are so important that Filipinos should have full control of them in their own country.

Certain quarters want the government to bail out the UE. The reasoning for a bailout goes something like this: If the government can bail out a bank such as Banco Filipino, there is more reason for bailing out a university that serves the interests of the people. I agree, and I might add, that a good university is a national resource because the greatest resources of a nation are its young men and women, when properly educated.

I have long advocated government subsidy to private higher education institutions. I believe in subsidizing private colleges and

universities that offer genuine higher education. The trouble is that too much of what passes for higher education in this country is not really higher education. There are too many colleges and so-called universities that cannot offer genuine higher education that meet international standards, not even national standards, because of two very important reasons: lack of qualified faculty and lack of facilities. And the tragedy is that this is not only true of private colleges and universities but also of a good number of state colleges especially those recently converted from lower-level schools. Some, in fact, are pathetically inadequate in all aspects.

One big problem that has to be met squarely in considering government subsidy to private higher education is how to select deserving colleges and universities. It is our experience that in any talk about government aid, it is almost always the very poor and very substandard institutions, schools that should not be operating, that want subsidy; precisely, according to them, because they are the institutions that need help. The government is faced with a dilemma: there are too many of these institutions that if it started subsidizing one, where will it stop?

I suggest that instead of the government converting so many lower-class schools into state colleges, good private colleges and universities in strategic places in the provinces and cities away from Manila should be subsidized so that they can offer more and better courses. By doing this, the government saves money in terms of buildings, facilities, and operational costs. The government should subsidize consortia (such as that among the University of the Philippines, Ateneo de Manila University, and De La Salle University; the Inter-Institutional consortium among De La Salle University, Philippine Christian University, St. Scholastica's College, St. Paul's College of Manila, and the Philippine Normal College; the Mendiola Consortium of Centro Escolar University, College of the Holy Spirit, La Consolacion College, and San Beda College—to name four of the more successful consortia) in the provinces. If this is done, good colleges and universities, both public and private, are strengthened and are saved from the possibility of collapse and takeover by foreign groups.

The case of UE suggests very strongly the need for a very capable and strong board of higher education in this country to put more sense and order and to give assistance to higher education. Such a board should not only be composed of knowledgeable men and women but, even more important, men and women who are imbued with a very high sense of nationalism. We recommend the formation of such a board as soon as possible. This suggestion takes a note of *urgency* not only because of the UE experience but also because of the precarious state of higher education in this country.

We emphasize here one caution on the formation of such a board: it should strengthen, not stifle, academic freedom.

3.29 Did You Know?

Did you know that we are one of the very few nations in the world that make education, especially higher education, a business for profit? And did you know that this is one of the causes of the difficulties of private institutions of higher learning? Did you also know that there are too many colleges and universities that depend on tuition fees for their continued operations? Also, did you know that one of the important reasons why there are so many colleges and universities is due to the fact that there are so many young men and women (teenagers actually) who have nothing else to do but go to college? After graduation from high school, the great majority do not know anything worthwhile in terms of earning a living. They are also too young to join the world of work.

Did you know that our ten-year pre-university education is responsible for this situation? We are one of the very few nations in the world that have a ten-year pre-university educational program. Most nations, including those that use their own language as medium of instruction (for example Germany, Japan, Great Britain, and the United States), require twelve years of pre-university education in their own language. And here we are, Filipinos using a nonnative language, English, doing it in just ten years! Only the exceptionally bright can do that. The great majority fail. You can, therefore, understand some of the difficulties we are in.

Worse, did you know that we haven't had the national will to correct this situation? Sad, very sad.

3.30 The Money Pot . . . in 1923

Since one of the hottest issues in Philippine education today is that of finances, the following statement on the expenditures for education in the year 1923 should be of interest to everyone because of the change in "perspective" that it so tellingly implies: School Revenues—in 1923.

As we have observed, the total governmental income from all sources was not far from ₱108,000,000. Of this, all but ₱5,000,000 was expended on various public enterprises. The schools received something less than ₱24,000,000, or approximately 23% of the total. Did the schools get their share of the public revenues? Can the educational needs to which we have referred be met by more equitable distribution of the

funds already available, or must new sources of revenue be tapped by the government? To these questions, no positive answer can be given, but certain facts which bear upon the problem can be presented.

Since 1913, educational expenditures have increased much more rapidly than other governmental expenditures. During the 10-year period following 1913, while the noneducational expenditures increased by 77%, the annual amount of expenditures on education increased 230%. Thus with the passage of the years and the development of the school system, education was receiving a larger and larger proportion of the public revenues. But even today (1923) the percentage of the total governmental expenditures going to the schools is about one-seventh less than it is in the representative states of the American Union. It may therefore be anticipated that some additional funds for educational purposes shall be secured through a better distribution of the public revenue.

At present by far the greater portion of the government revenues of the Philippines, as we have observed, accrues to the insular government. Consequently, comparatively little support is given to education by local political divisions. Although during the last 10 years the provinces and the municipalities have borne increasing share of the burden, almost three-fourths of the revenues devoted to school purposes continue to come from the insular government. In the American states, the situation is exactly reversed. There the local governments provide almost three times as large a percentage of all educational revenues as does the central government (Paul Monroe, chairman, *A Survey of the Educational System of the Philippine Islands* [Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1925], 83-85).

3.31 Tuition Fees: Conflict and Dilemma

Educational administrators, especially those who manage private schools, want to raise tuition fees. Most students, especially the radicals, and many parents oppose such a move. Herein lies not only conflict but dilemma. Educational administrators want to raise the salaries of teachers. They want to update equipment and facilities. They want to improve education. All these need money. Most private schools in the Philippines depend on tuition fees to continue to operate. Without tuition fees, many private institutions would close.

On the other hand, students and parents want the best education possible but refuse to pay for it. Administrators say quite correctly that it is not possible to give even the semblance of good education without raising tuition fees, their main source of support. Quite obviously, there is a conflict. How is the conflict to be resolved? That is the question and the dilemma.

Good education needs good teachers who need to be paid good salaries. There was a time when some of the best high school graduates went into teaching. But that time is gone. Even the not-so-good teachers want bigger salaries. Good education needs good facilities and equipment which cost money. Where will the money come from? the government? The government can hardly subsidize public education. Teachers are underpaid. There are no books and other teaching materials. There are not enough classrooms and buildings.

The people want good education but do not want to pay for it on the claim that they cannot afford it. And yet these are the same people who complain about poor education.

In the meantime, there are some first-rate schools where the rich send their children. Tuition fees are high which they are willing to pay. The cost of education in these institutions is high, but the parents and the students do not mind because they get the quality of education that they pay for.

If we want good education, we must be willing to pay for it. There is no alternative.

3.32 More on Tuition Fees

The problem of tuition fees brings out two conflicting desires on the part of many Filipinos: one, the desire for quality education and, two, the desire to pay as little as possible (if possible nothing) for that quality education. The question is, who will pay for it? the government? But the government, at least for the present, is broke. On the other hand, the great majority of students belong to families who cannot afford to pay high tuition fees. Even more important, in my point of view, is that it is precisely the poor student who needs a good (if possible, first class) education, because a good education is his most important, if not the only, tool for competing and succeeding because the rich can always take care of themselves. So what is the solution? The dialogue among sectors—parents, students, administrators, teachers, and others—involved in the schools concerned to determine whether to increase or not to increase tuition fees, it seems to us, is not only in accordance with the democratic process but also a most sensible one. The charge that some school administrators increase fees without consultation is another matter.

3.33 Yes, We Don't Eat Bananas Anymore

As I write this, I see in the papers that the minimum monthly salary of teachers has been raised to ₱3,000 plus a 13th-month pay for a total

of ₱39,000 a year. Very good.

But wait a minute. How does that compare to the ₱50 monthly (₱600 yearly) salary of an elementary classroom teacher in the thirties in terms of buying power?

In the thirties ₱50 could buy 10 to 12 cavans of rice. Today ₱3,000 can buy 6 to 9 cavans. Rice as a measure of the buying power of a teacher's salary gives us the idea that ₱3,000 is not bad.

Let us consider other measures. In the late thirties, tuition fee at the then Philippine Normal School was ₱4 a year. Today PNC tuition is ₱640 a year, one of the lowest if not the lowest in the Metro Manila area. During the 1939-1940 academic year, I spent about ₱300 for board, lodging, laundry, and miscellaneous expenses or roughly ₱30 a month. Today board and lodging at Normal Hall is ₱250 a month with the evening meal free. The boarder has to buy his own breakfast and lunch outside. The cheapest breakfast costs ₱10 and lunch is roughly ₱15 so that means ₱25 a day; times 30 days is ₱750. This amount plus the ₱250 for board and lodging totals ₱1,000; no miscellaneous and transportation expenses. In our time we never rode, we walked.

To send a child to the PNC today would cost parents about ₱1,500 a month or at least ₱15,000 a year (I am informed that ₱20,000 is the more reasonable amount). That is approximately one-half of the teacher's gross salary of ₱39,000 a year. Approximately one-half of the teacher's projected salary (projected because the teacher still has to see the ₱3,000 really given to her) is needed to send a child to the PNC today. In the late thirties, many students went to school spending only about ₱200 a year which was one-third of the teacher-parent's salary. Many teachers could send two children to college in the thirties. I wonder how many they can send today. If they do, how much sacrifice do they have to make?

The answer to the foregoing question, according to my wife, is "Teachers do not eat bananas anymore." How can they afford the smallest banana which costs one peso each? Impossible.

3.34 More Conflict

I do not see the logic in the demand for quality education and the rejection of increase in tuition fees especially in colleges and universities. The price of almost everything has gone up. Quality education cannot be an exception. Quality education is not cheap.

Where will universities get the money to pay decent salaries to faculty members and support personnel? Many colleges and universities need to have their library and laboratory facilities improved. Very few

institutions of higher learning in the Philippines (one can count them on the fingers of one hand) can meet international standards in terms of faculty, buildings, library, laboratory, and other requirements. And we want quality education!

3.35 Who Should Pay for Quality Education?

Which brings us to the question above: Who should pay for quality education? Elementary school education which everyone should have must be, and is, completely free; the government pays for it. How about quality education in the high schools? Our government has committed itself to giving free public high school education. Practically all studies, however, show that what is available in the overwhelming majority of public secondary schools is not quality education (as contemplated in the 1987 Constitution).

Elementary, high school, and college/university education in private schools is totally paid for by parents, private organizations, and their friends. The parents of private school pupils and students thus pay twice: they help pay taxes for the support of public schools in addition to the full support of the private schools where they send their children. It is for this reason that private schools deserve government subsidy.

3.36 Funny Solution

There are a number of people, including a legislator, who want to abolish the NCEE because it "discriminates" against rural high school graduates. But that is exactly one of the purposes of a good test: it should separate those who possess certain competencies from those who do not. Take mathematics, one of the greatest causes of failure in the NCEE. A high school graduate is expected to know certain fundamental notions of mathematics regardless whether he comes from city or rural high school, or any high school for that matter.

Abolishing the NCEE because it discriminates against rural high school graduates who do not make the cutoff score (percentile) is like saying one should eliminate laboratory blood tests because the tests differentiate patients who are sick with certain ailments from those who are not.

A high school graduate who does know what a high school graduate should know will not be better because he did not take the test.

I suggest that high school whose graduating students do not make good in the NCEE be identified. I am almost sure that these high schools are substandard. They should either be closed or upgraded.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Organization

4.1 The View from the Top

Did you know that when the public school system of the Philippines was organized in 1901, the law (Act no. 74 of the Philippine Commission) provided that the whole system was to be administered by a general superintendent of schools located in Manila? This was the beginning of a centralized school system for the entire country. The centralized system established by the Americans in the Philippines is in direct contrast to the system of administration of the public school system in the United States. In the U.S., the various cities and countries have their own school systems which are not directly administered by the federal government, not even by the state government except in a very loose way. The local systems are administered by school boards which are very jealous of their independence in running their schools, so jealous of their independence from Washington, D.C. In fact, for a long time, they resisted federal aid (aid from the national government in Washington, D.C.) because they were afraid of being dictated to. In recent years, this has somewhat changed but, as a general rule, the cities and the counties have independent school systems.

The reverse is true in the Philippines. The entire country is practically dependent on the national government not only in terms of funding of the elementary and secondary schools and the public state colleges and universities but also in terms of direction in such matters as curriculum planning. (Lately, for instance, even the curriculum in teacher education was formulated at the MECS, and the colleges and universities were tasked to just implement it. I have more to say about this in another article especially in relation to academic freedom which is guaranteed by the Constitution to institutions of higher learning in Art. XV, Sec. 8 [2].)

The centralized school system and the way it has been administered have spawned many undesirable practices and traditions which in turn have become some of the most important causes of the shortcomings of Philippine education.

One sad result of this is the armylike type of organization and the armylike style of doing things. It has been claimed that the system is efficient, as for instance, in getting things done by the teachers. All that is needed is for the central office to issue instructions to regional directors and superintendents of schools, who in turn transmit the same to district supervisors then to principals, who see to it that classroom teachers carry out the instructions without question.

The centralized system of running things produced a breed of teachers whose main characteristic is that of obedience to authority which went by the term "devotion to duty" or "loyalty to the service." It is this characteristic which made the teacher accept any nonteaching duty and other activities. Worse, with the exception of a few, the centralized system produced teachers who could not think on their own for fear of being marked inefficient. One of the most dreaded vocabulary items in the teaching world is the word *efficiency* when combined with *rating*. This, too, has roots in the history of the system.

4.2 The Powers That Be

Did you know that there is a provision in the *1927 Service Manual* that the division superintendent has the power to dismiss teachers from the service and that one of the causes for dismissal was inefficiency? And did you know that the efficiency of a teacher upon which the superintendent of schools based this decision was made by the supervising teacher, later called district supervisor, in the provinces and by the elementary school principal in independent city systems that have no supervising teacher, such as the city of Manila? This made the supervising teacher very powerful.

While this power of dismissal has since been removed from the division superintendent of schools, the efficiency rating that is given by the principals and district supervisors still remains today. It is this efficiency rating (now called performance rating or evaluation) that strikes fear into the heart of the teachers. It is so "persuasive" in its effect upon teachers that with the exception of a very few, teachers will do things (many nonteaching) even if they don't feel like doing them. I have known many teachers who complain about their lot and the work they have to do almost against their will but who dare not complain against their superiors or in front of them.

Tradition really dies hard, and in the public school system the tradition of fear of superiors never dies; it just lies dormant to surface again and again to dominate teachers' lives. Sad, isn't it? And to think that all of these have roots in the past!

4.3 The Team (What Team Teaching Should Be)

The kind of pupil achievement that I write about as a basis for promotion can be achieved much more effectively if teachers, supervisors, and administrators work as a collaborative body in what is known as team teaching. At present the style that seems to prevail in the education profession is one where teachers and supervisors or administrators are in adversary positions: teachers on one side and administrators (as superiors) on the other side. This situation especially holds true in the matter of moves on the part of teachers for increased salaries. But why should members of the same profession working for one goal be adversaries? Why?

The practice of supervisors or administrators of simply telling what teachers should do without showing how (some of the things they tell they cannot do themselves) seems rather an untenable position. I realize, however, that actual teaching and supervision and administration require different skills, but often, actual classroom teaching is a more difficult process as any teacher who has become a supervisor or administrator will tell you. If this is so, then it should be possible to pay real master teachers higher salaries than principals and supervisors as is done in some school systems. I know that supervisors and administrators think this is heretical but they should consider the following: eliminate teachers and retain supervisors and principals and what education can take place? On the other hand, if many supervisors and administrators are eliminated and more genuine master teachers are retained, I am sure that pupils will learn and education will take place.

So, in order to justify the position of everyone, team teaching should take place and equal responsibility for the achievement of pupils should be placed on members of the team. In fact, if failure takes place, administrators should assume greater responsibility on the principle of command responsibility.

4.4 Decisions, Decisions, Decisions

When Dr. Lourdes R. Quisumbing, as new minister of Education, Culture and Sports, was interviewed on TV soon after her appointment, she remarked: "Had I known that I have to make so many decisions, I would not have accepted this job." I know one former MECS minister who took a long time making decisions. Often by the time he made the decisions, they were either not good or they were already stale. In contrast, one of the best ministers made decisions which made the object of the decisions quite unhappy.

In addition to initiating and following through bold and imaginative educational programs, the most important job of a MECS minister (which is true with all ministers) is making the right decisions. One difficulty of the MECS minister is that there are so many matters brought to her that require a lot of listening and dialogue, leaving her little time for reflective thinking, planning, and executing plans to improve Philippine education. This is one reason why very few ministers, if any, leave a mark of greatness after their stint in the ministry. I am not even saying anything here on her being prevented from becoming effective by pressure and interference from individuals, organizations, and other parties, political and otherwise.

4.5 Much Ado About Many Things

I read in the papers that among the organizations that will be attached to or taken over by MECS are the Boy and Girl Scouts of the Philippines. I have nothing but praise for the two organizations. I offer as a proof the fact that two of our sons were Boy Scouts when they were in elementary and high school; one of them participated in the World Jamboree held in Los Baños years ago. A third son chose to spend his off-school spare time tinkering with automobile engines and is now a competent auto mechanic. The older of our two daughters was a Brownie (that was the term used then) and a Girl Scout when she was in elementary school. The second daughter chose to spend her spare time teaching young children in the neighborhood to read and write so that before they went to school, her pupils could read and write well. I tell these facts as background to the main subject of this essay, i.e., on the MECS taking over the two organizations (among others) as part of its responsibilities.

Boy and girl scouting should be the responsibility of private individuals and organizations and not the MECS.

The best boy scout troop in Baguio City in the late forties and in the fifties was a privately sponsored and managed troop by Mr. Abando (I cannot recall his first name as I write this) and it was known as the Abando troop. Every year there were competitions among the boy scout troops in Baguio, and every year the Abando troop won the championship, except one year when the troop of Pacdal Elementary School (a public school near the Mansion House in Baguio) under Florencio Buen as scoutmaster won the championship. Buen later became superintendent of schools in Pangasinan and Baguio City. To achieve this, however, meant certain sacrifices. As principal of the school, I had to be lenient by allowing Buen and the boys to be excused

from their classes not only to prepare for the competitions but also for other scouting activities. That was the only year the Abando troop lost the championship and naturally we were very proud of the achievement of our troop. In spite of this achievement, however, I knew and many of us knew that the best managed boy scout troop was the Abando troop. Mr. Abando gave freely of his time; his boys did their activities in their spare time and they paid attention to their regular school activities. Most important, the schools where the boys came from did not have to sacrifice teacher and school time and energy for boy scout activities. Boy scouting was purely volunteer work on the part of all those concerned.

The MECS (with special reference to the public schools) has a lot of work to do. Worse, it does not have the necessary finances to really do boy and girl scouting. Its energies should be concentrated on its primary function of bringing the intellectual achievements of elementary and secondary school children (and to some extent those of the tertiary institutions) to a level where academic achievements are comparable to first-class countries. The MECS can do this if it focuses its energies to this primary responsibility and not take in more than what it can "chew," so to speak. It should not yield to pressure groups that want the schools to do the work that they should be doing.

Another reason why the private sector in the community (individuals and organizations such as the Rotary, Jaycees, Lions, and other civic organizations) should take over boy and girl scouting activities is that there is now a good segment of the population to do the job. The schools and the schoolteachers are simply overloaded with so many nonteaching activities that make it impossible for them to do a decent job of giving our children the kind of education that parents want. This has been said before by so many people, and the MECS is not doing anything about it. Substantially and effectively, that is.

I am sure that the ends of boy and girl scouting can be best served and achieved under private auspices. If one of the goals of the two organizations is the teaching of character and values, these goals can be achieved much better by individuals and organizations outside MECS. The MECS then will also be able to do a better job of what it is supposed primarily to do—teach language and reading and arithmetic and social studies—so that the children of the poor may have better chances of competing with the more privileged in the society who often have all the opportunities for a good education, which in turn give them all the advantages of what society can offer for the more abundant life.

4.6 The Career Person

There are several classes of persons serving the government. There are elective officials whose term of office is generally fixed, political appointees who serve at the pleasure of the appointing power, persons who hold highly confidential positions who are exempted from the nepotism rule (such as private secretaries of highly placed government officials), people who serve on contractual basis, casual workers whose services may be terminated anytime (or hired for a few months), and finally those in the career service—the many men and women who dedicate their lives to government service, owing their allegiance only to the government and to the people, and not to any politician or government official. It is those in the career service to whom I want to devote the rest of this essay because the question of their being retained or being separated from the service in the new government came up recently.

Theoretically, those in the career service are protected from the whims and caprices of politicians or other people high in power or influence. Career people serve the government on the strength of ability and merit based on civil service examinations and efficiency. Theoretically, they are appointed to positions in government without the need for padrinos and are promoted because of merit and efficiency without the benefit of political backing and "pull." In practice, this was true during a certain period in Philippine history. But not during the present and the recent past. Old-timers in the career service often recall with pride and nostalgia the time they were promoted without lifting a finger, so to speak. They just worked hard and honestly and they got their promotions; seldom were promotions contested because the most meritorious were promoted. But those days are gone. Forever? Today it is practically impossible to get a job or promotion without a "strong backer" or padrino. This practice has contributed to graft and corruption.

In theory, those in the career service may be removed only for a cause. It is this provision that protects people with integrity and honesty from being harassed and being removed. At the same time, however, this provision has been the shield of quite a number of career service personnel who are not exactly desirable or meritorious. It is difficult to prove "cause," even if it is "common knowledge," for instance, that a career service person is engaged in questionable practices or dealings. Witnesses or those who are in possession of "common knowledge and everyone knows" would rather keep away from trouble. The protective provision for career employees has, in a number of cases, worked against the interests of good government.

Because of the padrino system, the less desirable career employees have often remained in the service and, unfortunately, this is often "common knowledge" too.

4.7 Which Side of the Fence?

When Minister Quisumbing "threatened" to lead the teachers' demonstrations if the 10% salary increase was not granted teachers, I thought to myself, here at last is the highest education administrator on the same side of the fence as the teachers. On a number of occasions, I had decried the situation where teachers and administrators are adversaries on such matters as teachers' salaries and other forms of advantages for the teaching profession. I even cited the case of Malaysia where the teachers and administrators belong to the same union or organization fighting for the good of the entire teaching profession instead of fighting each other. Minister Quisumbing's decision to side with the teachers augurs well for the teaching profession. We hope she will also side with public school teachers in their efforts to put a stop to so many demands on their services most of which have nothing to do with teaching. If she succeeds in liberating the teaching profession from the onerous demands on the teacher, and have teachers' salaries brought to a level that will make them live decently so that they may be able to do a decent job of what they are supposed to do, she will have accomplished much. We wish her success.

4.8 So Deep the Sorrow

"Corruption in MECS bared; execs linked," headline, *Manila Bulletin,* 16 October 1986, page 8. I am reminded of what the late Dr. Dalmacio Martin, former chief of the curriculum division of the old Bureau of Public Schools, once told a group of general office supervisors in the fifties that if graft and corruption by the more highly placed educators in the field were exposed to the public, many people would be shocked. According to the news report, the corrupt officials are those high in office such as division superintendents, assistant superintendents, division supervisors, and district supervisors. In the June 1986 PJE, I wrote that "the school superintendency is one of the most sensitive positions in the MECS, that it gives the honest, hardworking, and brilliant administrator and scholar unlimited opportunities and the necessary power and influence for high achievement by pupils, teachers, and other school personnel and the people of the province

and the city." With corrupt officials (the report says 40% of those in high positions in the MECS; it is possible that the percentage is higher), how can the program on values education be achieved? and how about excellence?

As a footnote to this, a former regional director of the MECS, in commenting on the news report, said that graft and corruption in the MECS is nothing compared to that taking place in other ministries. He seemed to justify or forgive those in the MECS.

4.9 It Started in 1902

The first public secondary schools in the Philippines conducted in the English language were authorized to be opened on March 6, 1902, by Act no. 372 of the Philippine Commission. On September 1, 1902, there were 23 provincial high schools in the Philippines with a total enrollment of over 1,400 students. These provincial high schools were established (1) to accommodate the increasing number of elementary school graduates, and (2) to attract the "more desirable type of pupils, the children of the rich and the influential who preferred attending private schools . . . [sic]" and this was not "conducive to the establishment of a democratic society, one of the avowed aims of the administration." (See Benigno Aldana, *Philippine Public School Curriculum,* 1935, 98-105, for an extended discussion on the characteristics of the early provincial high schools.)

It is a matter of historical record that the provincial high schools of which there was generally one in each province, the high schools that men and women of a past generation often recall with nostalgia, were very good high schools. Melchor P. Aquino, writing in his columns in the *Manila Bulletin,* described the excellent offerings and activities and accomplishments of the La Union High School in the twenties and thirties.

The provincial high schools produced the leaders not only for the provinces but for the nation as well. The most important characteristic of the prewar provincial high school is that it was supported mainly by the province or the city. Every province was proud of one provincial high school usually located in the provincial capital. The national government's support consisted of textbooks and the salaries of the insular teachers who were practically all Americans in the beginning. The salaries of Filipino provincial or city school teachers were quite high. I remember that the average high school teacher's monthly salary was ₱100 which was twice that of the elementary school teacher's salary of ₱50. After World War II this situation changed drastically and became the reverse.

The foregoing is written because on June 11, 1987, high school teachers were put under the national government through Executive Order no. 196 signed by President Corazon C. Aquino. The *Bulletin* report says, "Nationalizing the position of public high school teachers means giving them the status of national government employees with higher salaries and allowances and more benefits than those given to local government employees, the former status of public school teachers."

Times have really changed. I am in favor of paying all teachers very high salaries. What I am wondering at is why everything has to be shouldered by the national government. It seems to me that this is retrogression rather than progression. The local people, both municipal and provincial, should be proud of some degree of independence, proud that they can support good to excellent high schools (there was a time when some rich municipalities and cities even paid the salaries of intermediate school teachers), for such a very important activity as education is good for the people. I believe people in the province or city should take pride in their ability and independence. If this could be done in the past, and the discussion at the beginning of this essay proves so, I don't see why it cannot be done today when the provinces have progressed and are in a much better economic position than they were at the early part of this century.

It seems to me that a better plan would have been for the national government to give a certain amount to secondary schools, for example one-fourth of the teachers' salaries. This system would encourage the province/city/municipality to raise funds for salaries. This system would encourage provincial/city/municipal governments to raise more funds so they can get more assistance from the national government.

I don't believe that the provision in the 1987 Constitution (the protection and promotion of the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels by the State) means that the responsibility of supporting such education is the sole responsibility of the national government. Surely the term *State* includes all the people and the various levels of government, and this means the provinces and municipalities, too. The more the people take responsibility in the attainment of excellence in their regions, the better for all Filipinos. Neither is it good for the national (Philippine) government to be too dependent on foreign sources (e.g., IMF and World Bank) in funding our educational system.

I think making the provinces and cities responsible for the larger part of the cost of high school education will make the people prouder of their institutions and of themselves.

4.10 A Word of Commendation

I understand that there is a proposal now being considered by DECS for the designation of at least one elementary school and one high school in every city and provincial division to serve as centers of excellence. The centers will serve at least two purposes, namely, (1) as a place where teachers, supervisors, administrators, and parents and supporters of the schools can observe good programs such as the use of Filipino and English for teaching, and (2) as a place where talented pupils in the province or city can be sent so that they can be developed to their highest potential.

I think the plan is an excellent one, and it should be carried out and sustained. Both educator and layman should have access to an excellent school in every division where they can see good teaching. Parents should be shown what a good school is. The quality education that the 1987 Constitution mandates, which should be accessible to every Filipino at all levels, should be demonstrated. One cannot just describe and imagine what quality education is. (Our government sends Filipinos abroad yearly to see what good education is, so what should prevent us from making Filipinos here at home see excellent schools, at least one in every division?)

One excellent elementary school and one excellent high school (centers of excellence) will go a long way in demonstrating to the people what is mandated in the Constitution. Also, there will be a place where talented pupils may be sent so that their talents may really be developed not only for themselves but also for the country. When people see what quality education is, I am sure they will support the program for acquiring such education.

This brings us to the subject of manageable units or places for the attainment of excellence or quality education. After spending more than half a century in education, I am convinced that the units that lend themselves best to manageability for excellence are the classroom, the elementary school, the department (high school and college), the center, and the college. Beyond these units, it is difficult to achieve excellence to its highest degree.

The importance of the classroom hinges on the teacher. One can easily see this demonstrated in schools where there are several sections of the same grade, for example, six sections of grade four. The best sections are those with the best teachers. That is why parents seek and value good teachers. The next unit that lends itself to the attainment of excellence is the elementary school where there is a good or excellent (long ago we used the term *strong* but not *dictatorial*) principal. The same is true with high schools, with the addition of the unit called

department; there are strong mathematics, English, Filipino, science, etc., departments. (If one were to take an example from music, the largest unit for attaining excellence is the orchestra or the band with a good conductor.) Without excellent classroom teachers and excellent principals, any other staff member—district supervisor, subject supervisor of whatever level, superintendent and assistants, and regional directors—cannot do very much. These upper-level supervisors and administrators can only help those in the lower levels, but even the best upper-level supervisor or administrator can be as good only as the best collection of lower-level personnel in the units I discuss here.

In institutions of higher learning, the individual professor is still the best guarantee for excellent learning. Then there are excellent departments, centers, and colleges. One gets a degree from an excellent college of law or an excellent college of medicine in this or that university. A great university is a collection of excellent colleges staffed by great professors. In the graduate school, the question asked is "With whom did you study?" In the graduate school, the graduate student seeks a scholar-teacher to study with. Good scholars tend to congregate in good graduate schools. Because graduate schools are white elephants unless heavily endowed, many universities in the Philippines tend not to support graduate school education. Consequently most graduate schools operate to give the student a graduate degree to serve as "union card," i.e., for promotion or employment. This accounts for the lack of a high quality of scholarship in many Philippine graduate schools. In the opinion of many, the graduate school of the University of the Philippines at Los Baños approximates international standards of excellence.

I reiterate that we should pay attention to classroom teaching in elementary schools and high schools. A child goes to a good elementary school under a good teacher or to a good high school under a good principal whose teachers are good in their respective subject matter fields. No child says he went to the district of (blank) under supervisor (blank) or to division (blank) under superintendent (blank). In college one remembers the excellent professors and the excellent scholar-teacher-advisers in graduate school. Before one can be proud of the university, one must be proud of the college and so on down the line. One does not say one went to universities in a certain country although often the quality of universities depend upon how much the people of a country value higher education, which in turn depend on the quality of their lower schools.

The point I am trying to make here is that the quality of education depends upon the quality of the lowest levels of educational units and the people who work in them. To support this idea we need money, but money needs a national will to produce it and spend it wisely.

4.11 Rotation

I had the pleasure of attending the 15th meeting of the Secretary of Education, Culture and Sports (Dr. Lourdes R. Quisumbing) with regional directors on October 9, 1987, at the Development Academy of the Philippines in Tagaytay City. I was invited to brief the participants, which included the four undersecretaries of Education (Drs. Minda Sutaria, Victor Ordoñez, Clodualdo Perez, and Adrian Arcelo), four assistant secretaries (Drs. Diosdado Tuazon, Aurelio Elevazo, Jesus Manipula, and Marcial Salvatierra), and a number of assistant regional directors and other members of the DECS staff, on the gathering of data for the action program on bilingual education.

A number of important topics were taken up. One topic that struck my attention was on the rotation of district supervisors and principals. No mention was made of the rotation of superintendents and assistant superintendents or other regional personnel. I gathered from the discussion that it is difficult to get district supervisors and principals rotated; it seems that some supervisors and principals want to stay put in their assignments while others want to be reassigned (rotated).

I was reminded of the time before the Second World War when a superintendent could expect two things: the possibility of reassignment to another station but not to his native province. Even academic supervisors were treated in the same way. If I remember correctly, supervising teachers (the title was changed to district supervisor after the war) could be reassigned anywhere in the province but not in their own hometowns. This seemed to have held true with high school principals.

Reassignments seemed normal even in other departments and bureaus of the government then.

In retrospect it seems to me that there were many advantages in the practice of having superintendents assigned in provinces not their own: it made our people realize that we are all Filipinos regardless of our ethnic origins. As a boy I remember Isabelo Tupas of Rizal and Benito Pangilinan of Pampanga being admired as division superintendents in my home province of La Union. I think the practice contributed to our consciousness as a nation. As important, I think the practice prevented inbreeding.

4.12 The PASS Orchestra

I had a very pleasant dialogue (that was the word used by Dr. Martha Mogol, director of Secondary Education and former president of the

Philippine Association of School Superintendents, PASS) with provincial, city, vocational, and technical school superintendents and their assistant superintendents and members of the staff of the secretary of Education during their midyear convention held at the Philippine Columbian Club in Paco, Manila. We took up the matter of the data needed for the action program on the revised bilingual education program of the DECS.

What surprised me was the number of superintendents and their assistants. There were about 400 who attended the conference. I understand that there are 127 city and provincial superintendents and more than 70 voc-tech superintendents. If the teachers, principals, supervisors, and other administrators in a school division are likened to the members of a symphony orchestra, those who met at the Philippine Columbian Club were the conductors and assistant conductors. The quality of the "music" produced by "division orchestras" depends to a great extent upon them.

A number of the superintendents were my former students, and some were teachers who worked with me when they were very much younger. On seeing them, I felt once more that indefinable feeling of joy that only a teacher can feel and understand.

Incidentally, Dr. Mogol told me that she was one of those who decided that the conference should be held at a more elegant place than where superintendents generally meet. Superintendents should also experience the feeling that better surroundings can evoke. It can add to their refinement and education.

I fully agree.

4.13 Towards Social Engineering

Did you know that in the late twenties there were more men than women taking up courses for elementary school teaching? And they were *men, real he-men.* This is in stark contrast to the situation in the public elementary schools in 1985 when, according to a DECS study, out of 261,397 teachers, only 42,632 (16.31%) were men and the rest, 218,765 (83.69%), were women. The fear is that there might come a time when only women would be teaching in grade school. Personally and professionally I do not share this fear. In retrospect three of my best teachers who influenced me intellectually and professionally were women. One of the best gardening teachers when I was a district supervisor was a woman. Some of the best teachers and supervisors I had the pleasure of working with are women. On the other hand, many male teachers, supervisors, and administrators do not possess qualities desired in the teaching profession.

More important than whether a teacher is a man or woman is the brains, knowledge, integrity, industry, and other virtues that the teacher

has. There is hardly anything in teaching that a man can do which a woman cannot do as well. Except perhaps boy scouting which should be the responsibility of educated members of the community rather than of the schools.

But why don't men take up teaching today? The most important reason is that the pay is not competitive. Another reason is that the feeling is prevalent that elementary school teaching is for women and not for men. Perhaps the worst reason is that elementary school teaching (even high school teaching) is not for those who are bright. This kind of thinking when shared by the general population, especially by parents, accounts for the low quality of education that is made available by "dull" teachers, whether men or women. This accounts for the finding in a recent study that most teachers know only the easier half of the subject matter content of five subjects, namely, English, Filipino, *araling panlipunan* (social studies), mathematics, and science.

Did you know that there is practically no program designed to bring into the teaching profession the desired kind of teacher, whether man or woman? Let's stop worrying about men not joining the teaching profession. We should rather work for a genuine and vigorous program to bring into the teaching profession bright, honest, industrious persons, whether men or women. This is where we need the proper social engineering in our society today.

4.14 High Schools: A Typology

Did you know that there are more than 5,000 public and private high schools in the Philippines? that there are 10 types of public high schools under four groups as classified by the DECS Bureau of Secondary Education? The groups (capital letters) and types (numbers) are

A. State college and university (SCU) high schools
   1. main
   2. satellite

B. 3. National/general/comprehensive high schools

C. Vocational-technical
   4. agricultural
   5. trade
   6. fishery

D. DECS high schools under E.O. 189
   7. provincial
   8. city
   9. municipal
   10. barangay high schools

There is just one type of private high school under the DECS classification. Private high schools, however, may be classified in turn into

A. Religious-affiliated (more popularly referred to as sectarian schools)
    1. Roman Catholic
        a. exclusive schools
        b. parochial
    2. Protestant
    3. Muslim
B. Nonsectarian schools that are privately funded

It is difficult to understand the DECS classification. It would be better if the classification took into consideration the (1) main source of funding support, e.g., government—national, city, provincial, municipal, barangay (although barangay high schools are no longer supported mainly by the barangays) and nongovernment—foundation, religious, others, etc.; and (2) curriculum, namely, trade, agricultural, fishery, general, comprehensive, etc.

The second classification of DECS—national/general/comprehensive—is difficult to explain. I understand that the old high schools located in the provincial capital of the original 48 provinces, the high schools often recalled by an older generation with nostalgia, are now called "national high schools." What a general high school is, is not quite clear. And what are classified as comprehensive high schools do not really offer comprehensive curricula in the sense that genuine comprehensive high schools do.

Did you know that as of April 1989 there were 56 regional leader schools for secondary education in the 13 regions of the Philippines? The National Capital Region and Region II have five leader schools each and the other regions have four each.

What is a leader school? In concept and purpose, it is a school similar to my idea of *center of excellence for quality education* which I have written about on a number of occasions. Each leader high school is associated with a college or university for teacher training. For example, in the NCR, the Pasay City West High School in F. B. Harrison St., Pasay City, is a leader high school where good teaching of English and Filipino is supposed to be available for observation. It is associated with the Southern College, Pasay City, where good teacher training is supposed to be available. In Region XII, the Kidapawan National High School in Kidapawan, Cotabato, is a center for the teaching of science and mathematics. It is associated with Notre Dame College of Kidapawan for good teacher training.

4.15 Satellites in Off Orbits —Misplaced High Schools

I had occasion to look at the data on secondary schools recently. There is one particular information that struck me. It is the number of high schools that are under state colleges and universities of which 107 are classified as "main" and 71 as "satellites."

It is difficult to understand how 78 state colleges and universities (SCUs) can have 178 high schools. The SCU-supported high schools outnumber the SCUs by a whopping 100. The figures reflect the story of the conversion of many high schools into state colleges and universities.

The budgetary appropriation for SCUs has ballooned to several billions. The great majority of those SCU high schools cannot be justified as part of higher education. They are misplaced, to put it mildly. Money spent on these high schools should be spent on legitimate higher education.

I understand that many of the SCU high schools are being transferred to the Department of Education where they belong.

4.16 Higher Than the Principal

Newspaper headline:

SUPERVISORS AIR APPEAL;
SAY TEACHERS NOW HAVE HIGHER PAY

The supervisors and principals of public elementary school teachers in Manila have appealed to authorities for equalization in pay, claiming that the "salaries of their classroom teachers are now higher than theirs" (*Manila Bulletin,* 2 December 1989, p. 1).

In the summer of 1954, I joined the orientation program for Fulbright scholars from various parts of the world at the University of Washington in Seattle. A number of us had occasion to visit public schools in the Seattle area. I distinctly remember my surprise when we were told that some of the older classroom teachers received higher salaries than their principals and supervisors. We asked for the rationale, and I have since been convinced of the justification of the arrangement.

The principal who briefed us said that the work of a principal and that of a classroom teacher are two different jobs.

The skills required by the two jobs are different. There are people who are excellent classroom teachers but may not make excellent principals. There are principals who may be excellent principals (as

managers of schools) but may not make good classroom teachers.

In order to retain excellent classroom teachers (unfortunately there are so few of them) who really do actual teaching that affects pupils' learning, good and excellent teachers must be paid good salaries. It stands to reason that excellent and experienced classroom teachers may have higher salaries than young principals. This would also make classroom teachers proud of being classroom teachers instead of being apologetic as "mere" classroom teachers.

If this arrangement is made, excellent classroom teachers do not need to aspire for supervisory and administrative positions to be paid well.

In the Philippines, teachers are always at the bottom of the totem pole. It is the consuming ambition of most bright and excellent teachers to be "promoted" as administrators and supervisors. This is a mistake.

When a teacher is absent, classes can't go on as proven by the Manila teachers' strike. When a principal or a supervisor is absent, education can go on provided the teacher is present.

By all means, let us have a salary scale that rewards excellent classroom teachers without their having to be promoted to supervisory and administrative positions. If the fear is that too many highly paid classroom teachers may eat up the budgetary appropriations, two remedies can be instituted: (1) retire classroom teachers earlier, say at age 50 or at the latest at age 55, and (2) reduce the number of supervisors and administrators. Retain principals, however.

Excellent teachers do not need close supervision. Excellent teachers need not be interfered with in their teaching by supervisors. On the other hand, it is doubtful if poor teachers can profit from supervision. Both ways the supervisor, I am afraid, is superfluous.

There is no incontrovertible proof that good education can be attributed to the work of supervisors. Rare is the teacher who can truthfully say that her teaching has been improved by supervisors. In fact the vast majority of teachers fear supervisors.

I am not saying that all supervisors are not needed. There are some really good supervisors who help teachers by concentrating on the problem of pupils and helping teachers find solutions to their learning problems. But these are the very rare exceptions rather than the rule. In fact teachers welcome and appreciate those who can *demonstrate* how to teach or how to solve a difficult situation but not those who just *tell* them what to do. Ask any classroom teacher.

I know that many supervisors will not like me for what I say here. But it is a statement of fact. The excellent supervisor will not resent this.

4.17 Evolution

Historically, the present educational system was administered by the then Bureau of Education. Under the American regime, the vice-governor general who was an American was ex-officio secretary of Public Instruction but was almost, if not in fact, a figurehead. This arrangement was more or less observed under the Commonwealth period (1935-1946).

After World War II, rapid changes took place. The Bureau of Education was abolished and in its place, the Bureau of Public Schools and Bureau of Private Schools were established. Later, the Bureau of Vocational Education (later Bureau of Vocational and Technical Education) was established. The heads (called directors) of these three bureaus were powerful heads because they had what is called line functions. The best interpretation of the meaning of *line function* is "the power to appoint, transfer, and discipline" school personnel from division superintendents to teachers.

In contrast, the present directors of the bureaus of Elementary Education, Secondary Education, Vocational and Technical Education, Nonformal Education, and Higher Education have no such powers. Of the five bureaus, the function of that of Higher Education is somewhat odd in the sense that it has to do only with private tertiary education but not with public (state) higher education.

The five bureaus only have what is called staff functions which are supervisory in nature, the duty (not power) of giving assistance mainly on curricular matters.

Where the director of the Bureau of Education used to be the most powerful personage in Philippine education, today the secretary of DECS has taken over that role. There is one big difference though between the two. The then director of the Bureau of Education did not have to contend with politicians.

4.18 If Qualified Please Apply

A couple of months ago, there appeared in one of Manila's leading newspapers an article on the qualifications of a state college president. The article cited all sorts of qualifications except the one most important qualification that a college president should possess, that of scholarship. If there is one qualification that a college president should possess, it should be that of scholarship which guarantees that the president appreciates quality and excellence and will support its pursuit.

4.19 Oldest State College

The oldest government educational institution (state college affiliated with the Philippine Association of Schools, Universities, and Colleges, PASUC) is the Philippine Merchant Marine Academy (formerly Philippine Nautical School). It was established during the Spanish regime in 1839 by the Board of Commerce to educate "pilots of merchant marine." It was taken over and reorganized under the American military governor in 1899.

The aim of the school as reorganized is quite interesting:

> It was designed to educate young men for the merchant service. Owing to the mountainous character and the small size of the islands, transportation by water must always continue to be the principal and almost exclusive method. This school is intended to fit Filipinos to take control of their own shipping instead of permitting it to be controlled by people of other nationalities. ("Report of George F. Cooper, Lieutenant, U.S. Navy, dated August 6, 1900, to the Military Governor" in Benigno Aldana, *The Philippine Public School Curriculum* [Manila: Philippine Teachers' Digest, 1935], 239.)

Today, graduates of the school do not only serve in Philippine inter-island shipping but in international shipping worldwide. The Filipino sailor is not only world famous; he contributes to the advancement of his family, relatives, and his country through his dollar remittances.

4.20 Why Not Ten Outstanding Schools?

I am not against the practice of various organizations or banks of selecting Ten Outstanding Young Men or Ten Outstanding Teachers or Ten Outstanding Women or ten outstanding (blank) individuals. I think the practice achieves a certain purpose. What I object to is the emphasis on individual effort rather than team effort.

I wish some organization or bank would put some good money on the selection of the Ten Outstanding Elementary Schools or Ten Outstanding High Schools or Ten Outstanding Colleges or Ten Outstanding Universities in the Philippines.

Institutions like schools are composed of many people. Their success is due mainly to the effort of many, called team effort, rather than to the effort of a single person.

In my opinion selecting institutions would do our society and our people more good than the selection of individuals. Individuals do not just succeed by themselves. No man is an island. There is no individual who has risen to greatness without the help and support of others. I think there is something wrong in the undue emphasis on the accomplishment and celebration and "worship" of individuals. I think it encourages the so-called crab mentality of the Filipino.

What are the arguments in favor of selecting schools (institutions) rather than individuals?

1. It is an outstanding school or college and university that parents look for when they send their children to school. Parents do not send their children to get educated because of a single outstanding teacher. Even in graduate school where a student should study under the guidance of a great teacher-scholar and researcher, the great scholar is usually found in an outstanding graduate school.
2. It is schools that pupils owe allegiance to. Pupils may remember great individual teachers who may profoundly influence their lives, but it is the school that remains as an institution where future generations of pupils go to. Individuals soon fade away but great institutions that nurture great individual teachers remain. It is the good school or university with its tradition of greatness and excellence that remains long after individuals are gone.
3. It is outstanding schools or universities that attract people from other towns, other regions, other lands. People do not attend a school just because there is this one outstanding teacher. They go to a school that has many good teachers, one or two of whom may be outstanding.
4. It is good schools, especially the outstanding ones, that attract good teachers.
5. When outstanding schools or universities are recognized and awarded for their accomplishments, we reward cooperation rather than selfish individuality.
6. Much of the greatness of a school depends upon many individuals, some of whom may not be great but without whom the individual teacher or professor cannot succeed.
7. A recognition of the school or institution recognizes the work of the many. The award is in effect an award to the community that supports it.
8. When schools, not individuals, are recognized, support from the people becomes more meaningful.

9. It is the school that nurtures genius and takes care of the average and even the below average so that they may achieve their highest potentials.
10. People can return to a school again and again physically and spiritually.
11. With the selection of schools or colleges or universities, it is very hard to *fake* achievements. The scandals that have taken place in the selection of individuals by some organizations are too well-known and do not need repeating here. I personally know a number selected as outstanding individuals in some fields who do not deserve the honor.
12. The monetary award, especially if it is substantial, will redound to the benefit of many people. Monetary awards to individuals benefit only that individual and perhaps the few immediate members of his family.
13. The recognition of outstanding schools can have greater "multiplier effect" compared to that of individuals.

While I do not advocate the elimination of selecting outstanding individuals, it is about time some sponsors emphasized cooperative effort in institutions by selecting outstanding schools or colleges or universities for the reasons stated above.

The selection should be done by region so that centers of excellence may be built in the regions and not only in Manila. It is possible, however, that in some regions there may not be an outstanding school.

The selection of outstanding schools may be done every two or three years.

4.21 Preschool and the DECS

I continue to wonder why institutions of higher learning especially private colleges and universities are under the strict supervision of the DECS, while preschool education of various levels and labels such as junior kindergarten, senior kindergarten, prep, etc., many offered in schools that go by the name of Montessori, are not. This is especially true as regards the payment of tuition fees. Many preschools charge very high fees (₱10,000 to ₱15,000 is not uncommon), some charging very much more than the best universities in this country. And they get away with it because the DECS has no power or control over them.

What is wrong with this state of affairs? For one thing, it makes the gap between the education of the poor and the rich even wider. Many of the best private elementary schools do not admit pupils who

have not undergone kindergarten education. The difference in the quality of education between public and private elementary school is very big because of this practice. Only those who have money can send their children to good preschools.

4.22 Other Alternatives or Modes

As this is written (August 2, 1990) many schools are closed and classes are suspended because of damage to schools caused by the killer quake of July 16.

Now is the time to put into practice innovative procedures of teaching and learning for the benefit of pupils who cannot return to school. Learning and education must go on even under the most trying circumstances.

If members of the teaching profession and members of the community are willing to take some unsolicited advice, we offer the following suggestions:

1. *Volunteer study groups.* Under the leadership of principals, supervisors, teachers, and parents, study groups should be formed to have volunteer college students help high school students, and volunteer high school students to help intermediate students, and volunteer intermediate students to help primary school students in the neighborhoods. Principals and supervisors may enjoy helping plan the series of lessons with the volunteer "teachers" in these study groups.

   The books and other teaching and learning materials from the unusable schools may have to be brought to certain centers for use by the study groups. Some more fortunate families may offer the hospitality of their homes for these study groups.
2. *Radio and television lessons.* Various lessons may be aired over radio and television stations. Now is the time for experts in distance education to make their knowledge in the use of the radio and television for education to good use. It should not be difficult to find sponsors of TV programs for such a worthy purpose.

Was it Abraham Lincoln who wisely said (Slightly revised version.—BPS) that because the problem is unusual, the solution should also be unusual?

4.23 Two Time Spans Compared

If one were to use the years of the Second World War as dividing and intervening period between two time spans in Philippine education, the first time span would cover the years 1898 to 1941 or prewar period (43 years) and the second the years 1946 to 1989 or postwar period (43 years). Note that the two periods cover the same number of years.

If we were to compare the two periods in terms of qualitative accomplishments in education, I have the feeling, which I am sure many share with me, that the accomplishments of the Filipino people during the prewar period are greater.

This is cause for sadness because whereas the prewar period had to literally begin from scratch, the postwar period had the accomplishments of the prewar period to stand on. It stands to reason that we should have accomplished more during the postwar period. The general feeling, however, is that education has deteriorated. What this actually means is that it is the Filipino who has deteriorated in terms of the capacity to achieve.

4.24 Whose Side of the Fence

Administrators and supervisors can help in freeing teachers from overwork. Anyone who has really done classroom teaching knows that it is so tiring one can hardly do anything else at the end of the day. To make teachers do other things can only result in the neglect of their primary responsibility—that of teaching children the basics, especially the three Rs. That, according to official studies and reports, is not being done. See for example the SOUTELE.

A friend of mine once wondered why most school administrators and supervisors behave as adversaries instead of being on the same side of the fence on teachers' problems. If this is true, and it seems to be, it may be worthwhile for administrators, especially by those in very high positions, to help articulate and espouse teachers' causes. Why not?

4.25 The Quest for Optimal Learning

A news item headlined "New school plan bared: MECS program to involve parents" in the front page of *Manila Bulletin,* 17 October 1986, describes a program that will be implemented gradually nationwide starting in the school year 1986-1987. Called "joint innovative project

of raising achievement level (JIPRAL) the program is supposed to have been experimented on for a year in four places in the Philippines with funding from UNESCO." The tryout ". . . revealed that pupils from grades one to six, who received parental guidance and support in their learning activities, performed academically better in the achievement tests than those who were left alone by their parents." That is something not really startling nor new, is it?

The news item does not give important details on the experiment but mentions "parental supportive activities" which "may come in the form of parents encouraging more diligent study by their children; nurturing their children's curiosity, creativity, and self-confidence; and helping their children understand that optimal learning can be achieved only through intellectual and moral integrity coupled with hard work and commitment . . ."

Beautiful words. Let me comment first on the quoted portion of the report, which is characteristic of the wordings of educational literature: beautiful but doesn't mean much. And even harder to understand and carry out. What does optimal learning mean? What does "can be achieved only through intellectual and moral integrity" mean? Education is unfortunately notorious for the use of such high-sounding and beautiful expressions but which are never translated into workable programs.

Speaking of optimal learning, how can this be achieved when tests administered to teachers (representative sampling nationwide among teachers in grades four, six, and ten [senior high school]) show convincingly that teachers know barely more than a half (if the passing grade is 75%, then everyone practically failed) of what they should be teaching in English, Pilipino, mathematics, science, and araling panlipunan? It is quite obvious that teachers themselves have not attained "optimal learning."

This program of the MECS to involve parents in the education of their children reminds me of a quotation that I saw in the Diaspora Museum at the University of Tel Aviv campus. I paraphrase the quotation because I failed to take a photograph of it, as photography inside the museum was prohibited, and I even failed to note it down: The most important duty of parents is the education of their children.

It is a sad commentary on the thinking of many (if not the majority of) parents in the Philippines that the primary responsibility of the education of their children is left to the schools. When pupils cannot read or do their arithmetic or cannot speak English or Pilipino well, even educated parents blame the teachers and the schools. The new JIPRAL program of the MECS should shift the greater responsibility to parents. Operationally this should mean that if the teachers and the

schools are to take greater responsibility for the education of children, then the people and their government should have better support for teachers in terms of decent salaries, better working conditions, more books and school supplies, and the like.

4.26 Monitoring the Monitors

It seems a universal cultural tradition that every generation, teenagers and adults alike, has a favorite word or expression that characterizes or identifies that generation, group, or period. Some of these expressions are more enduring than others. Some are soon forgotten or are found in the written literature of the period. Thus there was a pre-World War II generation that had its "istambay" members, a postwar generation of "jeprox," etc. I am sure that the reader can easily name one or two.

This characteristic has not spared workers of government, those in the private sector, and other groups.

The current word in government circles is the word *monitoring*. This is heard in workshops, seminars, conferences, ordinary meetings, and sometimes even in casual conversation. It seems everyone, especially in government circles, is monitoring which means "seeing to it that the work is being done by others or certain people."

I just wonder who is doing the actual work, project, or needed activity that is being monitored. I once asked a high-ranking government official in a seminar at the Development Academy of the Philippines "Who is doing the work in government when everyone apparently is doing nothing but monitoring?" This riled the government official. The official spent almost two hours explaining what monitoring meant. The explanation confused the audience.

Which brings us to the point I am trying to make. As I write this (June 2, 1988) the headline in practically all the Manila papers is the postponement by one week from June 13 to June 20 of the opening of schools. This is due to the delay in the repair and construction of school buildings.

If the proper monitoring was done by all officials concerned—municipal, city, provincial, regional, and national—how come the opening had to be delayed by a week? Somewhere monitoring must have bogged down. Or was everyone engaged in monitoring?

4.27 A Modest Proposal

Any important or radical change in the school requires the retraining of teachers (included in the term *teachers* are supervisors and administrators), and the MECS has correctly required the retraining of teachers. We understand though that the burden of the retraining program is on attitudes and values.

While we do not underestimate the importance of such reorientation, in our opinion, as important if not more important if we are to achieve intellectual growth is retraining in subject matter content. A teacher cannot teach what she does not know. For purposes of retraining in subject matter content, we suggest the following scheme. It is simple; it does not require getting teachers away from their classes and therefore schoolchildren are not deprived of precious teaching-learning hours. Not only that, the amount of time devoted to retraining will depend upon the ability of the teachers.

A test on subject matter content should be given to teachers. The test should find out what teachers know and do not know. Naturally a test in math should really find out whether the teacher knows math. (It goes without saying that a teacher should know more math or more geography or more science than what he is expected to teach.) The results of the test should not be used for efficiency rating. The ***main*** and ***only purpose*** of the test is to reveal what a teacher does not know but should know. After the test results are out, the teachers will be willing to learn what they do not know. A program of retraining (learning) should be instituted which should result in the teachers' knowing what they should teach.

I don't think teachers will object to a program where they are to learn what they should know in order to teach for intellectual growth. I talked to a number of teachers last summer on the scheme and all agreed that such a program would be welcome.

4.28 More Modest Proposals

Dr. Victor M. Ordoñez, chairman of the Presidential Reorganization Commission Survey Team for MECS, wrote various organizations to make suggestions on how to reorganize and for "ideas and suggestions on how MECS operations and structure should be improved in order to promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the delivery of its services." Individuals were also asked to send suggestions. A good suggestion is good anytime so I am making just a couple which have to do with (1) teacher education and (2) graduate education.

1. Teacher education should be improved by allowing and supporting only colleges and universities with qualified faculty and adequate facilities to offer teacher education. All substandard teacher education institutions should be closed.
2. A competent body should be formed to examine the graduate school programs on education all over the country. All substandard programs of which there are simply too many should be closed. Educational leadership is exercised by those who obtain graduate degrees. We should be worried by the fact that it is so easy to obtain an advanced graduate degree in education from a large number of institutions.

The foregoing suggestions are made on the basis of the findings of the recently completed evaluation of the Bilingual Education Program where tests on knowledge of subject matter administered to teachers showed that if the passing grade is 75% in tests on science, mathematics, social studies, Pilipino, and English, practically all the teachers of grade four, six, and ten tested all over the country failed to pass except in Pilipino. It is not surprising that pupils are intellectually poor because teachers do not know enough of what they should be teaching.

4.29 Summertime

Did you know that evening classes, Saturday classes, and vacation school classes are some of the oldest forms of improving teacher education and competence in Philippine education? The first evening and Saturday classes were conducted by American teachers who taught English and the content subjects to Filipino teachers. The first vacation institute for teachers was held in Manila from April 10 to May 10, 1901. It was under the direction of Dr. David P. Barrows, city school superintendent. Over 600 teachers from nearly every province in the Philippines attended. American "model" teachers demonstrated how to teach the various subjects. Classes in geography, English, and arithmetic were organized.

The first summer classes were offered in 1908 in the Baguio Vacation Assembly. It was attended by 250 teachers, mostly principals and supervisors. Courses offered were Shakespeare's plays, general anthropology and ethnology, general psychology and educational tendencies (the term *trends* replaced *tendencies* by the 1950s), government of the United States and contemporary problems in government, and heredity. The courses were taught by American professors from the University of Chicago, University of California,

Teachers' Training School in Albany, New York, and the Philippine Medical School.

The Baguio Vacation Assembly, later renamed Baguio Vacation Normal School, was held at Teachers' Camp. It used to be the most popular summer school attracting teachers from all over the Philippines. Its popularity declined after World War II when many teachers' colleges, public and especially private, started offering summer classes in many parts of the Philippines.

Summer classes for teachers were offered at the University of the Philippines in 1917, anticipating by a year the founding of the U.P. College of Education which was established in 1918 by Dean Francisco Benitez.

Did you know that the education and teaching expertise acquired in these evening, Saturday, and summer classes were mainly for what was then referred to as "professional advancement"? It was only after the 1950s that teachers and the other school personnel attended summer and evening classes to obtain units mainly for promotion in salary and position.

4.30 Free and Poor

Starting in June 1988 Filipinos were given free public secondary education in accordance with the provisions of the 1987 Constitution and the necessary enabling laws passed by the lawmaking body of the Philippines. This marked a historic first in Philippine life.

There are several exit points in Philippine education: these are primary (grade four); intermediate (formerly grade seven but became grade six in 1941 when grade seven was eliminated by the Education Act of 1940; in some schools such as the Ateneo Grade School, grade seven is still the exit point for entry into high school); high school or secondary (fourth year); and the various post-secondary exit points, of which the four-year bachelor's degree course (some degree courses require five years) is the most popular; and of course the most prestigious courses that lead to the various professions such as those of medicine, law, engineering, and the like.

These exit points have important socio-psychological-economic meanings and implications. In educational literature, the term *dropout* applies to persons who withdraw for any reason before completion of an exit point, for example, one who does not complete grade four is a dropout but one who completes the exit point is not. One who completes grade six but does not go to high school is not considered a dropout; on the other hand, one who withdraws from high school

without graduating or completing fourth year is a dropout. Those who complete the exit points are primary school graduates (with subtle emphasis on the word *graduate*), elementary school graduates, high school graduates, normal school graduates (this used to mean at various times, secondary normal graduates), two-year normal (elementary teacher's certificate) graduates, trade school graduates, and of course those who complete the courses leading to the various professions and pass the examinations for the practice of such professions belong to the cream of the crop. Thus for one to say "I finished law" is different from "I am a lawyer," etc.

There was a time in the history of Philippine education when the term *dropout* was unknown. Filipinos simply withdrew at various points in the curriculum and got employed. There was even a time when it was not necessary to finish a law course and one could take the bar examination for the practice of law.

One serious disadvantage of being a dropout is the fact employers seldom employ dropouts.

The truly free education from the very beginning of the present public school was primary education. Up to the outbreak of the Second World War in 1941, pupils in the intermediate grades (grades five, six, and seven) paid a matriculation fee of ₱2 and they were made to rent books. It was after the war when free education was extended to the intermediate grades. Matriculation fees were no longer collected, although there was still the practice of having books rented at the rate of one-fourth of the price of the book, thus a book costing ₱4 was rented for ₱1 a year. In many provinces in the Philippines, many books were kept in the property storerooms because pupils could not afford to rent books.

The principle behind free education is that the exit level that is free is considered the minimum requirement for effective participation in the life of the people. It implies that any level of education below that which is free is hardly adequate for full membership in society. In my opinion, it is not so much high school graduation that is important; more important is the quality of the education secured. Various studies point to the fact that the quality of secondary education available in the majority of high schools in the Philippines is very poor. I just wonder whether offering poor secondary education free is worth it. I am for free quality education.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Teacher: From All Angles

5.1 Patience and Endurance

Teachers are known to be the most patient people. But there is a limit to patience. The recent mass leaves by teachers of the city schools of Manila and by the faculty members of state colleges and universities, including those of the sedate Philippine Normal College, are signs that teachers are finally doing something about their plight. This time, it might be good for the Filipino people, particularly those in government and those in the private sector, to take the teachers seriously. Attention should be paid to these signals of awakening. The old practice of reminding teachers of their responsibilities and their noble mission of educating the young may have worked in the past, but not anymore under the present mood and circumstances. Teachers have always discharged their responsibilities and often beyond what they are hired for. Teachers believe that they have been neglected and taken for granted and that "not even germs can live on their salaries" and that the "works are too many and the salaries are too few." They have endured the abuse too long and cannot endure it any longer.

Something must be done or the worst will come about.

5.2 Variations on a Theme

During a recent visit to Los Angeles, California, I noted that the main cause of the teachers' strikes in the states of Washington, Rhode Island, Michigan, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Missouri, New York, and New Hampshire was teachers' salaries. In Los Angeles, before the strike, teachers' salaries ranged from $13,000 to $28,880 per year, with an average of $24,500 for elementary teachers and $26,000 for high school teachers. The school board offered a 7.8% increase. Most school boards offered from 5% to 8% increase. The smallest offer is that of the University of Hawaii,

in Honolulu, where a strike of the faculty was being considered and the offer of the state to UH faculty was no wage increase for the first year and 2.88% increase for the second year.

Another demand is for smaller classes, from 35 to 25 pupils, so teachers could teach better. In the Los Angeles city schools, one of the causes of the strike was the rejection of the school board's right to mandatory transfer of veteran teachers to inner city schools (schools that are predominantly black). It is interesting to note here that, in the Philippines, teachers cannot be transferred without their consent, a right decided by the courts years ago.

What caught my attention regarding the effort to improve teachers' salaries in the U.S. is that teachers and administrators work together, not against each other. On this point, I quote a portion of an editorial in the *Los Angeles Times* of 14 September 1983: "Teachers and administrators worked together admirably during the drive in California Legislature to win key school reforms, including more money for beginning teachers' salaries. No strike must be allowed to undo those gains."

5.3 Then and Now

Did you know that almost half a century ago (in June 1936), the following editorial appeared in *The Primary Educator* edited by Florentino Cayco, one of the Philippines' finest educator-thinkers? Entitled "The Teachers' Right of Petition," part of the editorial is worth quoting today:

> The public school teachers' lot is indeed an unhappy one. Going under the stress of a heavy work load, they are constantly harassed at every turn with obnoxious measures devised and concocted to make their strangulation complete . . . Before the teachers lurks this situation full of uncertainty and insecurity. No profession can long endure if its foundations are not laid deep in honor and dignity . . . How long shall we have to bear discrimination against teachers because they are teachers? (*The Primary Educator,* vol 1, no. 1 (June 1936): 3-4)

In the June 1983 issue of the *Philippine Journal of Education,* we wrote that those in government and outside should pay attention to the teachers' problems. The recent two-week walkouts by Manila teachers and some teachers in the provinces, I am afraid, are just the beginnings of what the editorial quoted here said is "the teachers' right of petition."

Also if teaching is to be a profession, it had better have its foundations laid in honor and dignity. We cannot overemphasize this fact.

5.4 The Roving Mind

The most disastrous effect of the teachers' plight is the lowering of the quality of education. Teachers cannot concentrate and give their best with all their economic problems and other difficulties. I remember that when I was a classroom teacher, whenever we had money problems my mind was not in my teaching. And I write of a time when the teacher was relatively much better off, a time when many of those who graduated from college and became professionals were the children of teachers.

5.5 Teacher Unbound

How important is the classroom teacher?

The answer to this question was highlighted by Minister Jaime C. Laya in his speech during the concluding ceremonies of the conference-workshop on priorities in Philippine education held in Baguio on February 10 to 11, 1984. Minister Laya emphasized the positive and the bright side of the educational process by citing about a dozen examples of his observations in visits to various parts of the Philippines. Every single observation was on the work of classroom teachers. I don't think he would minimize the need for administration and supervision, but it is obvious from his examples that education obtained in the school system is anchored on the work of the classroom teacher. Among his observations were that of the teacher in Fuga island who rode on horseback to go to teach grades one to six in her multigrade school; of children sitting on tin cans while being taught by an engrossed teacher; of students taking instruction on the steps of a high school in Manila; of the innovative teacher who made two tablecloths with labeled sewn-in pictures, one tablecloth in Filipino and the other in English.

Minister Laya gave the impression that he does not share the prevailing pessimism on the part of many people on the deterioration of teaching and education in this country. I sensed from his talk that he has great faith in the classroom teacher.

I agree that without the classroom teacher, the educational process would not take place. The mass leave by teachers during the past school year proved this beyond doubt. The formula for education in schools

(in contrast to education obtained outside the school) seems simple enough. Get a good teacher, one who knows what to teach and how to teach it. Supply her with the basic teaching materials in a classroom that does not leak. Get her a good principal who sees to it that the basic school supplies and other teaching materials are made available by administration. See to it that she has enough time to rest so that she can do the chores that have to be done after school hours such as correcting papers, planning of lessons (not merely writing lesson plans for inspection by supervisors), reading a book or important magazine article, or listening to music, preparing teaching aids, and similar activities. Make her do nonteaching duties very sparingly, if at all, so that she can conserve her strength and energy for teaching. And, the most important part of the formula, see to it that she is paid well so that she can buy nourishing food not only for herself, but also for members of her family, remembering all the time that the great majority of teachers come from poor and large and extended families. Pay her well so that she can continue to educate herself. Give her a decent clothing allowance which does not need to be spent on a uniform so that she may be an individual personality, rather than looking monotonously like everyone else.

I repeat: The greatest hope of education lies in well-educated, well-paid, creative teachers who do not need to be told what to do because they know what to do and how to do it well. All others such as coordinators, principals, supervisors, superintendents, regional directors, directors, assistant secretaries, deputy ministers, the minister of education, and the president of the Philippines are support personnel. In this connection, I am tempted to suggest that positive and definite steps should be taken to build a climate in education which emphasizes that the supervisory and administrative staff are not so much the superiors of teachers, but colleagues and support personnel. It is my fond hope that this should not be lost sight of as one objective of the recent militancy of teachers.

5.6 Freed to Teach

We understand that Minister Jaime C. Laya recently deplored the use of public school teachers by government agencies "for practically everything," thereby reducing their effectiveness. Dr. Laya spoke before a workshop conference on drug abuse in Sta. Cruz, Laguna. According to the news report, he emphasized that teachers are teachers first and foremost. Very true and we fully agree.

May we suggest that one of the experiments to be undertaken by the ministry is to have a group of teachers *fully freed* from all kinds of work except teaching. We are sure that teachers will not only be happy but, more important, the achievements of pupils will rise to unbelievable heights. One further suggestion: That administrators and supervisors not tell teachers what to do but instead assist them in every way to help pupils learn. Supervisors should help diagnose difficulties of pupils, help secure materials and references for teaching, and the like. In other words, team teaching in making pupils learn will be practiced with the "superior" knowledge of supervisors put to good use.

If Minister Laya succeeds in having teachers freed from all extraneous duties, he will have accomplished what no one else in Philippine education has done. We believe that this is so important for the improvement of Philippine education and Philippine life.

5.7 The Turning Point

I am fully aware that the teacher and the teaching profession after the school years 1982-1984 will never be the same again. The Education Act of 1982 has given the teachers the right to form or join unions to protect and defend their interests. These past two school years saw the teachers going on strikes to air their grievances and demand better treatment from the government and indirectly from the society. These two school years, therefore, mark turning points in Philippine education. To a certain extent, teachers found a sense of liberation.

It is difficult to predict what this will lead to, but it is our hope that someday teachers will not only be respected but treated well. When that time comes, it will no longer be necessary for them to go on strike.

5.8 A New World View

There is a very interesting hypothesis in linguistics called the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis (sometimes called the theory of linguistic relativity) advanced by Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf. Edward Sapir was a linguist and anthropologist who "had a phenomenal knowledge of languages—Indo-European, Semitic, West African, and American Indian languages (his specialty). Sapir's genius was enhanced by the scientific precision of his work and by his deep theoretical insights which convincingly revealed language as a window into the mind. A common thread that binds his broad interests in linguistics and anthropology was his concern for meaning—whether in the sense of the formal

features used to convey meaning or in the sense of the meaning of language itself in the lives of those who use it, and as an expression of the cultures which they share" (*Linguistic Society of America Bulletin* no. 103 [March 1984] 8, insert). Benjamin Lee Whorf, while not an academically trained linguist, was one of the most original thinkers on language and linguistics.

According to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, and here I put it in layman's terms, a person's view of the world is influenced by the language that he first learns as a child. An extension of the interpretation of the hypothesis is that we behave the way we do because of the language that we know and speak.

The foregoing are preliminary statements to our topic which has to do with the new vocabulary in the teaching profession.

In the old days, and in the teaching profession (in the Philippines, this usually means the twenties and the thirties), the vocabulary of exhortation that teachers grew up with and believed in were such words as

1. *dedication to service,* which meant, for example, reporting to class promptly at least 15 minutes before classes start;
2. *self-sacrifice,* which meant doing things at the expense of one's comforts;
3. *discipline,* which meant obedience to one's superiors and if one disagreed with their demands or with policy one should resign first before complaining;
4. *resourcefulness,* which meant that if the government could not furnish the necessary teaching materials, the teacher bought them or made them herself; sometimes being resourceful meant finding out beforehand what kind of grass the supervisor's horse ate and producing it; and
5. *initiative,* which meant the ability to do something that the supervisors did not tell the teacher to do or what the supervisor herself did not really know how to do, like how to write lesson plans for all the subjects including opening exercises and teach all those subjects in a multigrade class of four grades, i.e., complete primary school in one classroom.

Other expressions that the teachers and administrators of the "old school" believed in were "rose from the ranks" and "sheer merit" which meant that a teacher got promoted because he deserved it, that he did not lobby nor did he have someone lobby for him to get promoted.

One of the vocabulary items that is perhaps the most enduring is *honesty* which usually goes with *integrity.* These two words are almost always invoked to make teachers accept poll duty during elections,

for without them elections cannot be clean and free. And the teachers of old believed this. So they went to their election booths and worked the whole day and the whole night and up to early morning. Isn't this a sad commentary on the maturity of the Filipino people? Is it really possible that only teachers possess honesty and integrity?

It is not uncommon to hear conversations among the older generation along the following lines: "What happened to the old virtues of discipline, of self-sacrifice? Where are the teachers going?"

The trouble is that people who talk like this do not know that the world has changed and that the rules of the game are no longer the same. There is a tendency, in fact a compelling urge, on the part of the old to judge the present in terms of the practices of the past.

So today, the vocabulary has changed, and in accordance with the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, the teachers' view of the world had changed. Teachers of today join the "struggle" for their "emancipation" from the "shackles" of the past. The teachers of old could not and did not strike because that was prohibited. Teachers of the present do not go on strike either; they go on "mass leave" of absence. Teachers now fight for their rights because they have rights embodied in the Magna Carta for Teachers and in the Education Act of 1982. And by the way, there are so many promises in that Magna Carta. The teachers of old hardly had any rights and the *Service Manual* did not seem to indicate any. The teacher of old only had duties and obligations.

The teachers of old received salaries that "even germs could not live on." The teachers of today have salaries that are below the poverty line.

Many decry the change in vocabulary. I do not share that view. I believe that in the end it will be good for the teachers and the Filipino people. This nation will be a much greater one when we treat our teachers well. We have not done so for so long.

5.9 Those Were the Days

Did you know that in the 1937-1938 school year 46% of the teachers employed for the newly opened classes were only high school graduates and a few had not even completed the high school course?

In school year 1938-1939 nearly 70% of those placed in the newly opened classes possessed only a secondary education. About 75% of these beginning teachers had received no normal school training, and a considerable number of the remainder had no specific preparation for the teaching of small children.

In contrast, by 1956, practically all teachers were required to have bachelor's degrees or the equivalent of a four-year college education as the minimum qualification for elementary school teaching.

5.10 At the End of the Road

I have a cousin who opted to retire from teaching in the public elementary schools at the age of 57. She was widowed when her children were quite young, so she was both father and mother to her children besides being a full-time teacher. She must have been 21 or 22 years old when she started to teach in a barrio school of Ifugao. Later she transferred to La Union. She decided to retire because all her children were through with college education and were now on their own. She taught for almost 35 years.

Thirty-five years of classroom teaching is a long time. At age 57, after more than 30 years of teaching, one should really retire. There are a number of very good reasons for doing so. It gives a chance to younger men and women to teach. More important is that classroom teaching is a very difficult work. I know of many teachers who continued up to age 65 and they looked pitiful. It is easy for principals, supervisors, superintendents, and other administrators to go on working up to age 65 and beyond. It is not uncommon for superintendents and directors, for example, to request for extensions of their service. But have you heard of a classroom teacher wanting to have her services extended?

I am writing this essay for one very important purpose. Recently this cousin of mine came to Manila to "follow up" her retirement papers. It is a sad commentary on our system of government—some unkind people would call it misgovernment—that people have to follow up all sorts of papers: retirement papers, appointment papers, promotion papers, and the like. When I was a general office supervisor in the fifties, I remember that one of the things practically all of us general office supervisors did after our visits to the provinces was to follow up appointment papers, promotion papers, retirement papers, etc., in response to requests from our hosts. On other occasions, we had to accompany teachers and other officials who left their work in the provinces to come to Manila to follow up papers. The attendant *evils* (yes, that word is a plural noun) I do not need to write here.

But back to the retirement papers of my cousin. She came to us because she did not know anyone in the GSIS and did not know anybody who could possibly help "speed up" her papers so she could get her retirement pay. We knew someone so my wife accompanied

her to the GSIS. (Note to the reader: We accompany only very close relations.) Imagine her disappointment when she was told that, according to the law, she must wait until she is 60 years old before she can collect her retirement pay.

She could not understand, and neither could we, why she has to wait until she is 60 before she can collect her retirement pay. There seems to be no justifiable reason for retiring a person at age 57 or whatever age and then making her wait three years before being paid retirement benefits. My cousin told me that had she been given that money she would have invested it in a piggery or some other income-generating project. If the money is made available to retirees upon retirement, regardless of age, it would not only help the retiree but those who work in the enterprise.

We should encourage classroom teachers to retire at age 57 and give their retirement pay immediately. I am even in favor of giving some kind of retirement bonus to those who retire at age 57 or even 55. For classroom teachers, age 57 and for administrators, age 60, should be mandatory retirement ages. The Armed Forces of the Philippines retire their officers in their early 50s with handsome pensions. Many go into second careers.

5.11 Hope Springs Eternal

With the change in administration, it is the teachers' hope that there will be more money to be allotted to education and, correspondingly, increase in teachers' compensation. I often wonder how a teacher, as lone breadwinner, can make both ends meet. When I started teaching more than half a century ago, my monthly take-home pay of about ₱45 (out of a basic pay of ₱50) could buy at least 10 cavans of good rice. In those days, we wore coats and ties; a drill suit (white) cost four or five pesos—yes, complete coat and pants—and a Gandara pair of shoes could be bought for a peso and fifty centavos. As late as 1936 when we had a postconference party in the central school, we bought a young cow with horns of about an inch or two in length for six, repeat six, pesos. Those were the days. Many teachers sent their children to college who became professionals. Somehow, teachers still manage to do this feat these days. Or do they? Of the many problems in education today, that of teachers' salaries is still one of the most serious.

5.12 A Vow of Poverty

I have a photocopy of a teachers' payroll containing the details on the salary deductions of five teachers. It is a most interesting and revealing document that practically bares the teachers' very difficult lives. The basic salary (BS) of two teachers is ₱1,197 each, salary adjustment (SA) which is 10% of the BS is ₱120, and COLA (cost of living allowance) is ₱350 for a gross income (GI) of ₱1,667. Two teachers have a BS of ₱957, SA of ₱96, and COLA of ₱350, for a GI of ₱1,403.

The most revealing data in the payroll are the deductions. One of the teachers with GI of ₱1,667 has twenty-five (repeat twenty-five) itemized deductions. Eight are automatic, meaning the teacher does not have to file any application papers for their deduction, such as GSIS Life/Retirement, Medicare, Pag-ibig fund, etc. The 17 other deductions require the filing of application papers and in many cases need following up in Manila. One can imagine how much time this teacher spends in securing the application forms, filling them up, filing and following up the papers in various offices. Anyone who has followed up loan papers, even with the help of friends, knows the difficulty, the expenses (what is euphemistically referred to as "facilitation fees"), and the time and energy spent. Even cashing the checks takes time. I know a teacher who sought out a relative in Manila to encash the postdated check so she could have money for going back to the province. To say the least, the process leaves very little time and energy and, least of all, enthusiasm for teaching.

I understand that teachers who contract loans (and the teacher who does not secure a loan these days is as rare as a hen's teeth, to use a cliché) continuously renew loans made possible by many lending institutions, for example, the GSIS, even before the previous loan is fully repaid. The teacher is thus continuously in debt.

It looks like the teacher, by joining the teaching profession, takes a vow of perpetual poverty.

5.13 Users and the Used

Almost immediately after the announcement in the papers that teachers would get their 10% increase in their salaries instead of the 20% previously promised, one of the more militant teachers' organizations announced that the teachers would go on mass leave, this time to force the government to put education back as its number one priority in government expenditures. This prompted a couple of my walking companions to ask me whether teachers are ever satisfied. They also

asked whether this is the demand of the teachers or of their leaders. They cited the fact that the teachers' association could not have met immediately after the announcement of the increase to make a decision for another mass leave. They also wondered whether teachers are not being used by certain left-leaning persons for their own purposes.

I said that teachers' needs are so many that somehow they will always find a reason or an excuse for demanding more benefits. Now that the teachers and their leaders have found out that they can get what they want through strikes or threats of striking or going on mass leave, I am afraid the demands and threats will continue *provided* the teachers really back up what their leaders articulate as their demands.

I think teachers should and will know when their leaders are no longer fighting for their legitimate needs. They should express such a decision by not going on a mass leave when their leaders tell them to do so. They should know when they are being used by their leaders to destabilize the government, for example. They should know when the education of the young should take precedence over the demands of their leaders. They should know when it is the greatest good for the greatest number that is being pursued. If they don't, they do not deserve to be teachers because then they will just be no worse than persons being led by the nose.

5.14 As Tally Persons

While it is flattering for public school teachers to serve in election polls, it is a sad commentary on the Filipino people as a whole that only teachers can be trusted to keep elections clean. As long as we cannot trust other Filipinos such as those in the civil service, members of the private sector such as those who work in banks and other corporations, and plain literate citizens to help man our election precincts, we will remain immature and not really ready to exercise the full responsibilities of a democratic people.

I don't believe that honesty resides only among public school teachers. Teachers may serve but only on a voluntary basis. Other responsible citizens of this republic (and there are many in the private sector, I am sure) should be asked to serve. Until that time comes, I repeat, we are immature as a people. Not only that; I think one reason why many Filipinos do not want to become teachers is that aside from the low pay, they are made to do things that they should not be doing. During the last elections, we saw teachers who were so tired especially during the counting of the votes. It is a wonder they did their duties so well, and this, for a measly ₱200 a day. I respectfully suggest that we start trusting other Filipinos in running our elections.

Congratulations to the teachers who served faithfully and beyond the call of duty.

5.15 The Invisible

As I write this, the newspapers carry the news that the secretary of Education, Culture and Sports has decided that the teachers in Manila who went on mass leave at the start of the school year would not be administratively dealt with. In other words, they would be forgiven because the department "understands" why they did what they did. This brings up two things in my mind. First, the teachers and the administrators were not in adversarial positions but were on the same side of the fence because the administrators understood and sympathized with the teachers in their economic plight. (The administrator and the teacher may be interested to know that in 1949 the UNESCO mission to the Philippines to study Philippine education observed that teachers' incomes have not kept pace with either the national income or the cost of living and that was almost 40 years ago; and it is surely worse now.) Second, and this seems to be more important to the Filipino people, the teacher is an invisible man like the chief character in Ralph Ellison's now classic novel *Invisible Man* (New York: The Modern Library, Random House, Inc., 1952).

The allusion to the teacher being an invisible man can be understood through a quotation from the prologue in the novel:

> I AM AN Invisible Man. No, I am not a spook like those who haunted Edgar Allan Poe; nor am I one of flesh and bone, fiber and liquids—and I might be even said to possess a mind. *I am invisible, understand, simply because people refuse to see me.* (Emphasis supplied.)

This invisibility of the teacher is manifested in many ways in Philippine life. One of the best examples is the fact that education is not a recognized sector in our society—education is *not* one of the sectors that should be represented in the New House of Representatives. It looks like our present-day teachers have to go out into the streets so that they may become visible.

(The reader who has not read Ellison's *Invisible Man* may be interested to know that the story ends—(chapter 25)—in a riot by the invisible people.)

5.16 The Visible (or How Much Is Enough?)

For a very long time, teachers were visible only during election time when they had to serve as poll clerks, and during athletic meets when they had to sell tickets to raise money to support athletics and other sports activities. Otherwise they were invisible.

As this is being written, the teachers are very visible and this time almost on a nationwide scale with thousands of them in the provinces joining those in Manila in the mass leave (a.k.a, strike) for a minimum salary of ₱4,500 a month. Their leaders have refused to dialogue with President Corazon Aquino. They insist that they need ₱4,500 to live decently.

Even before President Corazon Aquino could sign the salary standardization law known as Compensation and Position Classification Act of 1989 (R. A. 6758) giving public school teachers a minimum monthly salary (hiring rate) of ₱3,102 (other government workers will get a minimum of ₱2,000 a month), the price of basic commodities (the Filipino term *pangunahing bilihin* is more apt) rose in anticipation of the higher salaries. Even if the teachers are given what they are asking for, the advantages of their increases in pay are already practically wiped out.

We pray that what happened in Argentina and Brazil and other countries on what money can or cannot buy will not happen here.

5.17 Anatomy of a Strike

For someone like me who grew up in the teaching profession at another time under very different circumstances, when idealism, dedication to duty above personal comfort, discipline and obedience to authority, and other physical "Non-Eatable" values were part of our creed and way of life, it is very difficult to write an objective and balanced view on the teachers of today.

As I write this, some Manila high school teachers are on mass leave and are threatening to go on a hunger strike unless their demands, mainly the adjustment of their salaries, are granted by the government. According to the papers, the teachers are protesting the fact that their differentials have not been given as promised by the secretary of DECS and that the salary standardization law has reduced their salaries. Also, according to the papers and TV, their leader was almost arrested by the police.

The DECS and the department of budget management (DBM) are trying to meet the legitimate demands of the teachers.

When the last strike was declared and settled and the teachers returned to their classes, I said to myself, "Aha, the striking teachers have gone back to their classes but I am quite sure that they will again find a reason for going on strike later on."

So when they again declared a strike, I was not surprised. And I will not be surprised if they will find another reason for doing the same thing again in the future.

The reason for my saying this is that while the teachers' lot in life is now somewhat improved because they have called the attention of the authorities and the public to their plight, public school teachers during all these years have never been really treated as professionals.

I am not saying that I approve of teachers' strikes. The teachers' problems need much deeper study and analysis. We need to find the causes of the teachers going on mass leaves so we can apply the right solutions.

Pupils are not being taught and that is what teachers are paid to do. I think one of the most important problems is that while parents and the public want first-class teachers, they have not really genuinely taken steps to get such teachers by paying attention to their needs. Have parents worked for this kind of teachers by demanding from government (which means themselves because the government is the people) the best kind of treatment? Have they helped to demand the best kind of teachers by having them paid in accordance with their professional competence and preparation?

The answer is "No." Parents have never really helped teachers toward making them real professionals.

Have high government officials, especially politicians, really paid attention to the needs of teachers? Have they stopped requiring teachers to do a lot of dangerous work, for example, such as serving during elections? Have those who are high in government and who make decisions ever asked why the teaching profession is not attracting the "best and the brightest"?

The answer is "No." Teachers have been neglected and taken for granted.

The result of this in the past is that it produced subservient teachers who in turn produced, with the exception of a few, subservient pupils.

But times have changed. There is now a militant group of teachers.

Now that a certain portion of the teachers have found that going on strike is the most effective way of getting the attention to their plight, I am afraid they will always be able to find something to complain about.

As long as they have the numbers (they are claiming that so many schools in many parts of the country have been paralyzed by their

strike) and they know they can get what they want by going on mass leave, what will prevent them from leaving their classes again in the future?

The problem will remain as long as our society, parents and parents' organizations, and those high in government, especially politicians and other decision makers, do not pay attention to teachers, but at the same time expect them to do a first-class job of teaching.

While most teachers are reasonable, I see a certain section in the teaching corps today that does not seem to consider their mission as teachers. This section sees only its side and does not seem to realize the welfare of children as important.

Sometimes when I read about teachers' strikes in the papers, I ask myself, "Where have all the idealism, the dedication to service, the discipline gone?"

And I answer my question with "Times have really changed."

But, maybe a little of the "Non-eatable" creed of old carefully mixed with some of the new-found freedom and newer virtues may be the answer.

5.18 Years of Neglect

As the academic decade of the eighties (1980-1981 to 1989-1990) comes to a close, it is worth noting that the most important change in education has to do with the attitude and behavior of teachers toward their work and the education of children. The decade marks the almost abrupt transformation of a segment of the teacher corps from an obedient, uncomplaining, and almost docile group of individuals to seemingly disobedient, complaining, and militant group, almost heedless of authority. On the surface, this change seems to stem from their being paid almost starvation wages (*below the poverty line* is the official term).

Underneath the surface, however, it is more than that. The change is due to teachers getting tired of the years of neglect. To make matters worse, it seems outsiders with an agenda other than the welfare of teachers and the children are leading the teachers. As a result, the profession can no longer attract the best qualified to be teachers. The rewards, both financially and socially, are no longer there.

5.19 Probably the Best Modes

I must keep repeating this: The best in-service education for teachers who do not know the subject matter content of the subjects they are teaching (one cannot teach what one does not know) is guided or

tutorial study under someone who knows the subject. If a teacher, for example, does not know mathematics (and most don't, as revealed by study after study), the best way of learning the subject is for the teacher to study and learn under one who knows the subject. This can be done on Saturdays and during the teachers' spare time.

The DECS and the Civil Service Commission should consider the institution of subject certification. Under this system, teachers will be required to pass an examination on knowledge of subject matter content and methods of teaching every subject in the curriculum. Teachers will get certified as qualified to teach specific subjects.

5.20 All Things Considered

As this is written, the front page news in almost all newspapers is the decision of the Supreme Court sustaining the action of DECS Secretary Isidro Cariño dismissing or suspending about a thousand teachers for going on strike in September 1990.

The Supreme Court ruled that "The belief in the righteousness of their cause, no matter how deeply and fervently held, gives the teachers concerned no license to abandon their duties, engage in unlawful activity, defy constituted authority, and set a bad example for their students."

We fully agree with the Supreme Court decision.

While the Supreme Court decision puts back discipline into the teaching profession, does it put back dedication to duty and love of teaching, and the all-important thought on the part of teachers, that the education of their students is paramount?

For while it is true that the striking teachers lost in the Supreme Court and, we repeat, we fully agree with the decision, it does not mean that what they went on strike for is wrong. Even the Supreme Court acknowledged the legitimacy of the teachers' complaint.

Teachers in this country are underpaid and are not treated well. The Supreme Court decision only means that the manner by which the teachers tried to secure what they were entitled to is illegal—that teachers and other government employees cannot use a strike as a weapon for asking what they want, no matter how legitimate their position may be, because one wrong cannot right another wrong.

However, teachers will always be resentful as long as they are not treated right in this country; as long as they see that minor functionaries in government, whose jobs can even be abolished without impairing service to the people, are treated better than they. As long as teachers see that there is money for government officials to misuse government

cars with government-paid gasoline and government-paid drivers, as long as they see government officials spending government funds in junkets abroad while they almost starve and are unable to educate their children properly, the Supreme Court decision will not remedy the matter.

Teachers may be forced to stay in their classrooms because of the Supreme Court decision. But if they believe that they are not treated well by government, their presence in the classrooms will not result in the proper education of the children.

An angry and hungry teacher cannot teach well. In fact, his presence in the classroom with all his burning anger and resentment will produce pupils who will be like him.

When another government employee is absent from work or takes long coffee breaks, his act is not very noticeable. When a teacher is absent, the whole class knows. And parents complain.

And yet we do not treat our teachers well. Is it any wonder that the quality of teachers we get today worsens every year?

It is about time that we give better attention to our teachers and pay them well. The teacher has been mistreated too long.

I disagree with Justice Hugo Gutierrez on his dissenting opinion that only the leaders of the striking teachers should be punished while the followers should be forgiven. Teachers should be responsible for their acts. Teachers should not be mere followers.

5.21 The Nonpro

In the Philippines, teachers are not professionals. Lawyers, physicians, engineers, certified public accountants, nurses, and some others are allowed to practice their professions only after they pass appropriate qualifying examinations given by a body of highly qualified members of the profession that they expect to join. Examples of such bodies are the Medical Examination Board for physicians, the Board of Accountancy for CPAs, the Committee of Bar Examiners for lawyers, and similar groups. The Committee of Bar Examiners is under the Supreme Court while most of the other examining bodies are under the overall supervision of the Professional Regulatory Commission.

Note that the professional in the above examples can practice his profession only after qualifying in the board or bar examination.

By the foregoing definition, the teacher in the Philippines is not a professional at par with other professionals. In contrast, anyone who completes a four-year bachelor's degree course in elementary school teaching, or a B.S. in secondary school teaching with a so-called major

or majors in two subjects is allowed to teach without passing an appropriate examination comparable to those required of physicians, lawyers, engineers, accountants, nurses, and others. Is this one reason why teachers generally feel inferior to other professionals?

Why should not those who want to join the teaching profession be subjected to a rigorous examination comparable to that required of other professionals? The work of the teacher is no less important. In fact, the work of the teacher affects the lives of all the people in the entire society. I wrote the following joke long ago but it is a joke worth repeating because there is a lot of truth in it: The doctor's mistake gets buried, the lawyer's mistake is put behind bars (although there is common belief that in the Philippines only the poor get behind bars), but the teacher's mistake goes around to spread more ignorance.

I often wonder that while parents want their children to be taught by excellent teachers (I have yet to meet a parent who wants his children to be taught by ignorant teachers), there is no strong parent organization working for a law that will bring into the teaching profession only the very best and with the highest compensation.

The answers I have received to the question I pose above vary from the apologetic to the indefensible, some often bordering on the ridiculous.

Examples of the answers given are (1) "If you require strict requirements for admission to the teaching profession such as those required of physicians and lawyers and accountants, then there would be no teachers because the pay is too low for such requirements." Countercomment: The salaries of nurses are no higher than those of teachers. (2) "Those who join the teaching profession are from the poor and they cannot afford to spend as many years in college as those in the other professions." Countercomment: I know many lawyers, accountants, engineers, and a number of physicians who were equally poor. (3) "We need many teachers and if we waited for those who passed stiff board examinations, there would be no teachers to teach in the schools." Countercomment: There is no proof to this claim.

And here's a ridiculous one: (4) "To require the same standards as those required of physicians and lawyers is not justified because elementary school teachers do not need to be bright, since teaching, especially teaching elementary school pupils, is easy."

5.22 Whose Child Is This?

The term *school dropout* or simply *dropout* is a label that is now used by both educators and laymen, including those in the media, often with

a negative connotation. There was a time in the early years of the educational system when to leave school after a few years of schooling was considered normal. Some of the most respectable citizens in many communities all over the country did not finish elementary school or high school. Today school dropouts are seen not only as failures, but also as that segment of the population that causes huge losses in government appropriations. For example, school dropouts during the 1982-1983 school year totaling 285,159 grade school children were considered responsible for a government loss of over ₱570 million according to a news item (*Bulletin Today,* 29 August, 1983, p. 8) quoting from a report of the MECS.

There is something very disturbing in the way school dropouts are labeled and treated by both educators and laymen.

I think it is not correct to treat all so-called dropouts (a better term is *school leavers*) in the same category. There are many jobs in our society that do not need a college education, not even high school education. As the sociologists have so correctly pointed out, men are free because they are dependent on others; many of us are free to do our work because we do not have to do our driving, our own cooking, our own washing of our clothes—important work that are done by many who do not have a college education. Many of these jobs cannot be done by machines.

In the discussion of the causes of why children leave school, it has become almost a tradition in the education world—by those writing the reports anyway—to attribute the causes to (1) poverty, (2) poor health of children, (3) inefficient teaching, (4) ineffective classroom activities, and (5) loss of pupil interest. To solve the problem, it has also become the tradition for those writing the report to recommend that the problem can be solved through (1) elevation of teachers' competencies, (2) teachers' visitation of pupils' homes, and (3) use of effective instructional materials.

The reader will note that the first cause of leaving school is poverty. Many of us are ready to grant that. In discussing this problem, however, with teachers or students who have reached college, I have asked how many of them were rich or at least not poor, and practically everyone, especially teachers or those studying to become teachers, claimed they were poor. Maybe they were exceptions rather than the rule. The second cause, poor health of children, is so closely associated with poverty that the two may be put together.

The third and fourth causes, inefficient teaching and ineffective classroom activities, are directly attributed to the classroom teacher. I am afraid that this is a suspicion on the part of administrators and supervisors but not backed by solid research data. The poor classroom teacher has not only been made to shoulder most of the burden of

education, both teaching and nonteaching, but has been turned into a convenient scapegoat for many of its ills and shortcomings.

Note that in all these reports (a reading of this and past reports should be standard requirement in courses in administration and supervision and rigorous research made to check on these claims), administrators and supervisors—now getting to be better known as managers (after courses were undertaken by administrators at the Development Academy of the Philippines)—are never pointed to as at least partly responsible for the ills of Philippine education including that of pupil dropouts.

Take inefficient teaching. How can a classroom teacher teach properly without the materials and other facilities that should be made available by management? In fact, one of the traditions in Philippine education from the very beginning to the present (especially before World War II) is that teachers have been spending their own money for teaching materials such as blackboard curtains, manila paper, cartolina, etc. If the present teacher does not do this as much as her pre-World War II counterpart, it is because her salary is not enough for maintaining life itself. As for ineffective classroom activities and loss of pupil interest, many of their causes can be traced to teachers being overworked. Pupils lose interest when teachers do not pay attention to them because they (the teachers) have to pay attention to activities other than teaching. Clearly it is a management problem.

Now let us look at the recommended solutions. Nothing is said about poverty and the poor health of children. Those are beyond the schools' powers. The solutions suggested are put squarely upon the teacher: elevation of her competencies and visitation of her pupils' homes. I would like to repeat the observation that the higher educational qualifications of teachers, administrators, and supervisors during the past three decades, compared to the education of their pre-World War II counterparts, have not resulted in better achievement of pupils. In fact pupil achievements have deteriorated.

The third solution, the use of effective instructional materials, is clearly a management function (rather than a fault of the classroom teacher) which may in turn be traced to government finances, partly, at least.

5.23 Parents and Homework

Did you know that one of the most effective ways of making parents (and the other members of the household) participate in the education of the child is through the assignment of homework? Good homework,

however, should be well planned. But did you know that there was a period in Philippine public school education when the homework was abolished because some educators who came from the United States said that the latest trend (the education profession is fond of trends and innovations) in education in the U.S was the absence of homework? This was one of the dark periods in Philippine education. If at present no homework is assigned to pupils, then the dark period is still with us.

Let me elaborate on the subject in connection with the finding in a study by the MECS that pupils who received parental guidance and support performed academically better. Did you know that most pupils are actually silent in class, many seldom saying a word during the whole day? Classroom teaching time is dominated by teacher talk. This is especially true in classrooms where a language, not the native language of the learner, is used as a medium of instruction. (Caution: Before those who advocate the use of the native language or the national language jump to certain conclusions, the kind of talk that is desirable in a class is not just talk for the sake of pupils' talking. The subject matter being handled should be high-level subject matter, unlike much of the subject matter that is observed in many classrooms using the local language or Filipino where the pupils just talk about what they already know and no new knowledge is being learned at all.)

One of the current interests in research is that of classroom interaction. Practically all the research available, both here and abroad, shows that the average classroom is dominated by teacher talk. The question then is: If the pupils do not talk (recite) or seldom do in class, how do they learn or, better still, where do they learn?

I recall that some of my most successful pupils were not the talkers but those who seldom talked. It was obvious that they were learning. Where? Outside the classroom—mainly at home with the help of parents and other family members. Many discussed their homework or lessons with classmates before and/or after classes. Thus the necessary interaction on what is needed to be learned occurred outside the classroom. The actual learning and practice and the making of ideas clear occur many times under the direction and influence of persons other than the teacher. It is thus that most classroom behavior and interaction of children can be likened to the performance of actors or musicians on the stage. The pupils who prepare and practice outside class perform better in school. And better still in after-school life.

This is not to minimize the influence of the excellent teacher who teaches and makes things clear in class and whose talk is planned not just off the top of his head.

Let us make the homework one of the most important activities in the life of a child and those around him outside the school. This calls for good parent education.

5.24 Too Little, Too Late

Even now that I am no longer active in teaching, I still feel something contradictory regarding the new year and the work of a teacher. Just when everything is beginning, the teacher's work is ending. Every practicing teacher knows that the last three months of the school year (the first three of the new year) are spent in reviewing, that the most important period for learning the year's work is practically over. If the child has not learned the most important portion of the subject matter of the minimum requirements that are prescribed for the year (for example, a child in grade one cannot read—reading being the most important skill that a grade one pupil should learn), it is practically too late to teach him what he should have learned during the first six months.

The mistake of many teachers is that they know that a pupil is failing a grade only before the end of the school year. It is appropriate to recall here that the time to know that a pupil may fail because he may not learn the work for the year is at the very beginning of the school year. That, in fact, is one of the very first things that the school administration and teachers should know about children. Those who are identified as weak may then benefit from a program instituted to really make them learn. I understand that this is the essential characteristic of the Japanese school system and this is the reason why pupils do not fail during the first nine years of schooling. No Japanese child, I understand, repeats a grade before high school.

5.25 Thirty Thousand Teachers Sick of Tuberculosis

I suspect there are more teachers sick of tuberculosis than the reported number. Why do teachers get sick of tuberculosis? The answers are simple: overwork, worry, malnutrition, harassment during election and from overbearing superiors—these are some of the possible causes of teachers' getting sick of tuberculosis.

A newspaper story states that the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office is ready to help the sick teachers. I am sure the help is welcome, but why can't more money from the sweepstakes agency be devoted to the prevention of teachers' getting the dreaded disease both for their (teachers') and, as important, the children's sake?

5.26 Teachers and Teaching Everywhere: (1) Japan

In connection with intellectual growth and excellence, it might be profitable for us to look at Japanese education. We have always looked to other nations that are successful. Japan is one of them. In a very informative and fascinating book *Japan as Number One: Lessons for America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979), Ezra V. Vogel details why Japan has achieved what few nations in the world have achieved. In the chapter on Basic Education: Quality and Equality, Vogel writes on page 159:

> In 1970 international science test given to ten-and fourteen-year-olds in nineteen countries, Japanese youth performed comparably well. Among ten-year-olds, the Japanese were first in the subtests for earth sciences, chemistry, and biology. Although they ranked fourth in the formation, they ended overall in first place because they were first in understanding, in application, and in higher mental processes.

Why was this possible? One reason is that Japanese have very high and uniform national standards. The kind of mathematics taught to a child in Tokyo is also good for the child in the remote parts of Japan. In other words, excellence is good for every Japanese.

The world envies the achievements of the Japanese in science, technology, and industry. Why have the Japanese arrived at such high levels of achievement? Among other things, their public education system which was developed mainly after World War II is, according to an account in *Newsweek* (9 May 1983, p. 46),

> . . . probably the best in the world. That's the verdict of many experts who have conducted tests with Japanese students. A typical Japanese ninth grader, for example, has learned factorization and quadratic equations as well as the notions of deviation and probability in math. Also well versed in the laws of Pascal and Newton, he enters senior high school with the basic knowledge of biology and geology—and a transcript that boasts the equivalent of Chem 101.

The *Newsweek* account says further,

> There is nothing esoteric about Japan's philosophy of education; it rests mainly on discipline and hard work. The academic year runs 240 days, compared with 180 days in the United States. . .

(Note that our school system and the number of days we attend school in the Philippines are based on that of the United States.)

5.27 Teachers and Teaching Everywhere: (2) Malaysia

Filipino teachers may be interested in the following facts which we gathered in a recent trip to Kuala Lumpur about teachers and the teaching profession in Malaysia. There are 26 teacher education institutions in Malaysia. There are no private teacher education institutions as only the government may educate teachers. All teachers, whether in government-run or those that are privately run, such as religious schools, are paid by the government.

The teachers in Malaysia have a very strong union. According to a faculty member from the Philippine Normal College, who is on a visiting professorship at the University of Malaysia, one of the most important characteristics of the teachers' union there is that teachers and administrators belong to the same union working for the rights of those in the teaching profession. This Filipino professor also told us that Malaysian teachers are better paid and have more fringe benefits than their Filipino counterparts. Compare the situation in the Philippines where teachers and administrators have adversary roles.

5.28 Teachers and Teaching Everywhere: (3) Israel

I would like to comment on the success of Israel. What the country was able to achieve in agriculture and other industries is amazing when one considers that it was achieved in such a short time in a rather not exactly the most favorable conditions. I cannot forget what a Filipino sent by a labor union from Mindanao to study the labor conditions and the operation of kibbutz told my wife and me about the success of the people of Israel. This young man, whom we met after mass at the St. Anthony's church in Jaffa (Yafo), the old city just outside Tel Aviv, was a member of a group sent to observe what features of Israeli agricultural and industrial operations could be adapted to Philippine conditions. He said that if Filipinos could only do even a little less than half of what the Israelis have done, considering the fact that we have much more fertile land, we would be very much well off.

We were all amazed at the fact that Israel was producing and exporting avocados and bananas (yes, avocados and bananas). The Israelis also produce and export oranges and other fruits, poultry and eggs, turkey, and dairy products. We saw what were formerly desert lands now lush with vegetables and fruit trees. Israelis have a big and

successful reforestation program. We were told that the number one source of national income was diamonds. They import rough diamonds from South Africa and they cut and polish them for export all over the world. They are one of the biggest users of solar energy; one sees buildings even in the new settlements equipped with solar energy installations.

Before we parted, we were agreed that perhaps one of the most important reasons why the Israelis have accomplished so much in so short a time, is that practically all those who returned to Israel were very well educated. And they have such institutions as the Technion (Institute of Technology) in Haifa, the modern port city and industrial center, and the Weitzmann Institute for study and research by senior scientists in Rehovot, in addition to a couple of universities.

5.29 Teachers and Teaching Everywhere: (4) Hong Kong

I went to Hong Kong to read a paper at the 5th International Conference of the Institute of Language in Education (ILE) on language use, language teaching, and the curriculum being held at the brand-new Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre. Participants came from countries in South and Southeast Asia, Japan, China, the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, Greece, Australia, New Zealand, the Middle East, and Nigeria. I was the only one from the Philippines.

(Participants in the conference from Indonesia, Brunei Darussalam, and Singapore asked me whether it was safe to visit Manila after the failed December 1989 coup, and I said it was. The nine Indonesian participants had originally booked a couple of days' visit to Manila on their return from Hong Kong but had to cancel their bookings because of the coup attempt. Nine tourists may not be a large number but the damage to the tourist industry and our reputation as a tourist destination hurts.)

The bilingual education program (Chinese and English) in Hong Kong is a hotly debated problem. What struck me is the worry of a number of parents and educators that Hong Kong school children are not learning well in both languages. As a member of a panel that answered questions at the last plenary session of the conference, I told the conferees that this is the same kind of worry that was expressed by high-level Filipino educators in the 1983 and the 1984 Educators' Conferences in Baguio regarding bilingual education in Filipino and English. When I told the predominantly Hong Kong educators audience that the two-and-a-half-year study conducted to evaluate the bilingual

education program from 1974 to 1985 in the Philippines showed that it is not the bilingual education program that is the cause of the deterioration of pupil learning, but factors such as lack of competent teachers and administrative and supervisory personnel, lack of teaching and learning materials, and inadequacy of school facilities, many of those in the audience clapped their hands.

The toilet facilities of the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre are so modern that the flushing of the urinals and toilets are computerized (i.e., automatically, when one leaves the spot).

5.30 A Sad Footnote

I met a Filipino domestic helper at Hong Kong's Kai Tak Airport who was helping a Filipino family of four that was returning to the Philippines after nine years in the United States. The family failed to make proper airline connections from Seoul, Korea, to Manila and they were getting passage on Cathay Pacific Airways.

The domestic told me that she was a former public school teacher in a province not too far from Manila. She said that her earnings as a domestic in Hong Kong made it possible for her to support an aging father and mother and to help send her brothers and sisters to school in the Philippines. She said this would have been impossible with her teacher's salary. She felt embarrassed and showed signs of sadness.

CHAPTER SIX

The Basics

6.1 In Small Doses

Almost in direct contrast to the emphasis on work education during the past several years, the New Elementary School Curriculum (NESC), which is introduced in grade one this school year, has for its thrust the ***intellectual growth*** through which human/civic/economic/cultural development of the child ***is enhanced*** (emphasis supplied). This is perhaps one of the most important programs of the MECS in a long time. The NESC is the MECS' response to the widespread dissatisfaction of the citizenry over the very poor quality of education in the country. For the first time in many years, a program is designed purposely for intellectual growth. To achieve this purpose, the "NESC is a return to the basics" (Memorandum no. 6, series 1982, dated 29 January 1982, of the MECS).

I would like to make a few observations on the new curriculum and the kind of thinking that has been prevalent in Philippine education regarding what should be taught to the Filipino child.

A disturbing feature of the NESC is its gradual introduction, that is, one grade per year which means that only those who enter grade one this year and the succeeding years will benefit from the new curriculum. Those who are enrolled in grades two to six this year will never benefit from its virtues. These children will go through the old curriculum which suffers from many defects including overcrowding of subjects. I think the NESC should have been designed in such a way that it is introduced in all grades so that everyone enrolled in the elementary school starting this year benefits from its advantages.

Another observation is that the time for mathematics is too short. Mathematics education is very important because it is the basis for thinking in an industrial and technical world. If the program is a "return to the basics," the number of hours devoted to mathematics should be increased. Something like 300 minutes per week (similar to the two languages, Pilipino and English) should be the minimum. More would even be better.

Hand in hand with the introduction of the NESC is the retraining (*reeducation* may be a better term) of teachers and administrators. It would seem, however, that the main burden and responsibility of carrying out the NESC is put on the teacher. As long as administrators and supervisors continue to focus on the teacher and not on the pupil, and as long as teachers continue to be overworked, the NESC will not produce the desired excellence lacking in Philippine education.

6.2 The NESC Item

The NESC which was launched during the school year 1983-1984 by the President of the Philippines is, in his words, the "authentic beginning of a truly Filipino educational system." The NESC has been hailed by practically all the metropolitan newspapers as an important milestone in Philippine education. The elimination of many frills from the curriculum and the emphasis on a return to the basic subjects of arithmetic, reading, writing, and values have made the retraining of teachers necessary. Because the NESC is introduced into the school system one grade per year starting this school year, only grade one teachers were retrained, although we understand that not all the grade one teachers underwent retraining.

Because we believe that MECS is open to suggestions, we are making the following observations and suggestions on the subject matter content of the three Rs and on the retraining of teachers.

The main thrust of the NESC is intellectual growth. This calls for very high level of subject matter content in all subjects. This is especially true in mathematics and science. A return to the basics should emphasize much more difficult subject matter content than is presently being taught and even contemplated in the NESC.

The subject matter content that we teach our children should not only be good in terms of a Philippine standard. What we teach should also measure up to international standards. Nothing less should be the goal if we expect to compete internationally in terms of what we are to produce with our thinking as Filipinos. And we think that we can do it if we address ourselves seriously to this goal.

6.3 The Return of Geography

I attended a meeting recently of the Division of Social Sciences of the National Research Council of the Philippines where Dr. Telesforo Luna of the U.P. Department of Geography pleaded support for the conference that the Geographic Society of the Philippines is sponsoring sometime this year. One aim of the conference is to interest and

influence people to have geography returned as a separate subject in the elementary school. I am all for this. The problem, of course, is what subject should be replaced because the elementary curriculum is overloaded with subjects. I suggested social studies. This is a heretical opinion in the eyes of the social studies people.

But what is social studies? In practice, it is a subject where a little of everything, a little bit of this, and a little bit of that are taught. The advocates of social studies believe that many topics are integrated, including some geography. Unfortunately, the student does not have a good idea of what is being included. In my opinion, it is better to learn a subject well, such as geography, instead of a little of this and a little of that which we expect pupils to integrate in their minds. Pupils simply cannot be expected to put together and understand the relationship of so many disparate things.

Integration is possible with more mature students who are in the university or perhaps even those in high school. Integration, or the putting together of many things, requires a good knowledge of what are being put together. For the younger student, such as those in the elementary grades, a good knowledge of arithmetic, a good knowledge of the important notions of geography, for example, should be the aim. Integration will come in time if we teach the child something solid in fewer subjects in the beginning.

How about history? Philippine history used to be a separate subject in grade seven before the grade was eliminated from the elementary school curriculum in 1940. There seems to be no place in the present elementary curriculum for history. Bits of historical facts or events are integrated in social studies.

Because the elementary school is the "university of the masses" (there are more of our people who do not go to high school and the university), history should have a place in elementary education.

There seems to be popular consensus that geography should be returned to the schools. Why don't we ask parents what they think of the subject? A referendum seems to be a good idea. Should we not consult the parents on what they think should be taught their children?

6.4 The Return of Geography: Iteration

I take pleasure in acknowledging a two-page letter from Erlinda B. and Joaquin G. Clemeña of Legaspi City on the return of geography and history in the elementary school curriculum. The couple wrote the chairman of the Committee on Education of the Senate suggesting that a resolution be passed designating a geography consciousness week. They have also written the Philippine Geographical Society (PGS) in

support of the proposal of the PGS to make the study of geography compulsory in the elementary schools. I note that they are readers of the *National Geographic Magazine.* I commend the interest in geography and history and the letter-writing activities of the Clemeñas. We need more of their kind.

6.5 The First R

Did you know that of the four skills in language—speaking, listening, reading, and writing—the most important skill to teach a child is reading? Even a native speaker of a language that is used in school (native speakers of English learning in English) has to learn to read in that language. While it is important for the child to learn how to speak a second language and, in fact, it is difficult to learn to read in a language that one does not speak, it is learning how to read and read well that determines whether a child succeeds or fails in school. The child who fails in reading practically fails in everything in school.

Did you also know that the most researched subject area especially in the American educational system is reading? And yet today, there are many nonreaders among American schoolchildren. I am afraid this is being duplicated in the Philippine school system. This is doubly more serious in the Philippines because the child is expected to read in two languages, English and Filipino.

It might interest readers to know that in the experimental project called IMPACT (Instructional Management of Parents, Community and Teachers) carried on in Sapang Palay in Bulacan, all grade one pupils could read before the end of the school year. There were no nonreaders in Project IMPACT in Sapang Palay. One of the reasons for this is that pupils were taught not so much by regular classroom teachers but mainly by older pupils from the higher grades who could read well.

6.6 More on the First R

Einar Haugen, the distinguished Scandinavian scholar in language planning and professor of linguistics at Harvard University, so aptly said that in second language learning, the written form of language is more important than the spoken form. I think that for the purposes of modern-day life and education, the written form is more important whether it is in first language or second language education.

The main business of going to school is to learn and learn well the written word—which means mastery of reading. Speaking is important, but more important than speaking is reading. Reading is an important prerequisite to talking about any topic. If the schools were

to do just one thing well, that one thing should be to teach the child to read and read well. By reading well is meant a number of things such as (1) one does not just read; a child must be taught and must read subject matter well—the subject matter, for example, of mathematics, history, geography, sciences, current events, etc.; (2) one must be able to read with discrimination—it has been said that we should read only excellent books—there is simply no time to waste for useless subject matter; and (3) one must really have a love, a great love, nay, a passion, for reading.

If the child does not learn how to read, the result is frustration and dropping out of school because inability to read results in failure.

One of the tragedies in Philippine education, however, is the lack of anything to read, not even the required textbooks in many cases. This is made even more tragic by the fact that many teachers themselves do not read. (NOTE: Did you know that newspapers are very difficult to get in many places? In General Santos City which I visited last summer, the *Manila Bulletin* and the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* sell at five pesos each, yes, five pesos each for the daily; I don't know how much the Sunday edition costs.)

While I have said this before, may I say it again: Classroom work is so difficult and tiring that after a teacher has taught in class for even less than half a day, she is tired, and I mean tired. Of all the tasks in education, classroom teaching—really good classroom teaching—is the most difficult. The work of a supervisor or a principal or a superintendent of schools is easy compared to the demanding task of classroom teaching. I know and I know it from experience.

6.7 Again the First R

The term ***beginning reading*** is used here in a much larger sense than it is ordinarily and traditionally understood by reading teachers and in the literature of reading methodology and research. In my opinion the period of beginning reading should cover the entire elementary education. Beginning reading is so important that a pupil who is not taught to read properly during the beginning period is almost sure to fail in his schooling and by extension the rest of his life in a modern world where the proper kind of literacy is needed.

In the Philippines where English is not the people's native language and Tagalog is not the first or home language of most non-Tagalog Filipinos (see *Census of the Philippines 1985*), the two languages are learned as second languages. The vast majority of Filipinos, therefore, are second language learners of both English and Filipino.

In learning to read in a second language, there are four stages in the larger and extended sense of beginning reading, two of which are discussed here:

The first stage is the acquisition of the sound-meaning system of English (and with non-Tagalog speakers, that of Filipino, nee Tagalog), which means that reading cannot be started without the child having some speaking and listening knowledge of English and Filipino. A child (or even an adult) cannot read what he does not speak and understand orally. This concept is so important that I will give a simple example here. As you read this article, can you follow or execute what the following sentences command you to do? *"Umayadeng ka kud." "Tumukdo ka."* I am sure that the reader who does not speak or have a rudimentary listening knowledge of Kankana-ey cannot read and execute the instructions. The non-Kankana-ey reader can only call out the words but not really read them. In English the sentences mean "Please stand up" and "Sit down."

When English was the only language of instruction in the schools (up to 1939), the first 12 weeks in grade one were devoted to giving the child this speaking and listening knowledge of English. A manual, the exact title of which I cannot now recollect, containing the instructions and suggested activities for the first twelve weeks of school was so well written that if faithfully followed by the grade one teacher, the pupils were ready to read in English. I know because I taught grade one for two years as a barrio school teacher.

There was a lot of what is called incidental reading during the first 12 weeks of school so that by the end of the period children will have read and understood all the labels of practically everything in the classroom such as desk, table, blackboard, window, door, floor, and similar items. And of course by this time the pupils will have sung and committed to memory all the letters of the alphabet and looked at both the capital letters and small letters in script because they were displayed above the blackboards in the classroom.

The second stage is called the transfer stage where the understanding of the sound-meaning system of the language is transferred to understanding the same through print. This is the most critical stage in beginning reading. Failure to achieve this stage practically means failure for the child the rest of his school career or reading life. This is the stage when the child is taught to read and write the alphabet, the spelling system, and the patterns of spelling of the language.

While it is obvious that the spelling patterns of English are very different from the spelling patterns of Filipino, it is necessary that the teacher of beginning reading knows how the various sounds of English

are represented graphically through its spelling system. (For an excellent treatment of the spelling system of English, the reader is referred to Charles C. Fries, *Linguistics and Reading* [New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1963]. See especially chapter 6, English Spelling: Background and Present Patterns. Even the reader who is uninitiated in linguistics should be able to understand and profit from a reading of this chapter. I recommend this book to all teachers and supervisors of reading instruction.)

If the sound-meaning patterns of English or Filipino are not mastered, there is not much to transfer to the spelling patterns of the two languages. This fact explains why children who are taught to read well in English can later read their native language: they can transfer the sound-meaning patterns of their native language to the printed representation.

This reminds me of what former secretary of education Juan L. Manuel once told me during one of our discussions on the bilingual education program and the use of the vernaculars in the initial stages of the education of the Filipino child. He said, "We do not have enough money to print books in both English and the native language. We should just make children literate in English, because like all of us who were taught and made literate in English, they will be able to read their native language later on." Note the very important fact that the reverse process does not hold true, that is, the Filipino child who is made literate only in his native language will not be able to read English unless he knows how to speak English.

This transfer stage is so important that elementary and high school teachers should inform themselves more on the subject. I am very sure that much of the failure of high school graduates in the NCEE examinations is due to failure of transfer. Most high school students can hardly speak English and if they can't speak and understand spoken English (the main language of the NCEE), naturally they cannot read and understand the examination. Add this to the fact that they do not know the subject matter of the examination.

6.8 The Sounds of Silence

Did you know that the great majority of pupils get their education more through silence than through speaking? In a tape-recorded study of classroom interaction in 30 elementary schools north of Manila, Andrew Gonzalez, FSC, of De La Salle University, found that, on the average, the teacher talks 73% of the time with the members of the class talking (mostly one-word response or sometimes "I don't know") only 27%

of the time. Many pupils do not recite the whole day and, if they do, it is only what Brother Andrew calls formulaic responses.

In a study that we (Sibayan, Dagot, Segovia, Sutaria, and Sumagaysay) did in 1979 to 1982, we found that class interaction is dominated by teacher talk with pupils responding with one- or two-word expressions or were reading orally subject matter on charts or on the blackboard.

One reason why there is too much teacher talk is that teachers do not plan (go through and think through) the lessons they conduct. In a well-planned lesson (not the writing of lesson plans which often has nothing to do with good teaching), the teacher plans what she is going to say and what answers (including acceptable variations) or responses she expects from pupils. A good teaching event (a teaching event is one integrated piece of teaching, say a complete lesson on electromagnetism in grade six) has a body and structure almost similar to any good discourse, for example, a short story in literature. The teacher does not just talk off the top of her head. Teaching time is very precious and so everything has to be thought through. It is hard work, of course, but it is the only way to make teaching worthwhile for both teacher and pupil.

6.9 Values and the Scholar

One of the main thrusts of MECS is values education. I think one of the most important values that should be inculcated (i.e., taught persistently and earnestly) in our society is the value of scholarship. We cannot attain quality education without attention to scholarship. As important, it seems to me, is that graft and corruption do not go hand in hand with genuine scholarship. I emphasize the adjective *genuine.* One cannot be a genuine scholar and at the same time be a cheat or corrupt person. Scholarship requires respect for data and the truth. Scholarship requires integrity. Also, brilliance does not necessarily make a person a scholar. Is it possible that it is one reason why it is difficult to find a grafter and a corrupt person among a genuine community of scholars? Oh yes, there may be some scholars who are petty, but not grafters and corrupt ones. Come to think of it, the best scholars whom I have personally known in Philippine education were honest men and women with great integrity.

6.10 The Basics, According to Cory

I quote below portions of President Corazon Aquino's commencement address before the graduates of the Philippine Normal College on March 31, 1987.

> Today, in particular, I want to address the problems of basic education. This is appropriate, I think, in the circumstances. For I address today the 1987 graduates of the Philippine Normal College, the unchallenged leader in teacher training for our elementary and secondary schools.
>
> When a child is brought to you for education, it is at its most malleable age. When the child leaves your care, it is permanently fixed in the ways you have taught it. All it can do thereafter is build on the skills it has learned. Your work is foundational and therefore critical to the future of the child—and that of our nation.
>
> I want that foundation solidly built, well grounded in the basics of education—reading, writing, and mathematics in the two languages of our country, English and Filipino. These are the basic skills that liberate the tremendous potential of the average Filipino child—to contribute as an adult to the liberation of the country from underdevelopment and to his own liberation from poverty.
>
> That is why I believe in a leaner but harder curriculum. This is the strength of the Japanese. They are taught few subjects, but well. All the rest are learned through experience. Civic virtue and nationalism, for example, are not taught as subjects. They grow spontaneously out of the genuine achievements of the Japanese nation.
>
> Back to basics will be the thrust of Philippine educational policy.

Like all policy pronouncements—and I subscribe fully to the policy—what is needed is a program for implementation. I am in no position to help plan the official program of implementation but as a citizen of the Philippines and as one who has devoted the best years of his life to the pursuit of excellence in Philippine education, I believe I am entitled to the privilege of making suggestions on how the policy enunciated by the President of the Republic may be implemented.

First I would like to recall here that before the Education Act of 1940, arithmetic, reading, and language (at the time English was the sole subject of instruction) were taught twice a day, i.e., these subjects were taught in the morning and again in the afternoon, using different subject matter, of course. The third of the three Rs, writing, was taught mainly in the language class. I also remember that the general curriculum of the high school then had only four important subjects:

language and literature, history, one math or science subject (algebra, geometry, or physics). The curriculum then was, in the words of President Aquino, a "leaner but harder curriculum."

If we are to have a more difficult curriculum, it is absolutely necessary that our teachers know higher-level subject matter. This recommendation is based on the findings of the recently concluded evaluation of the bilingual education program (BEPE) to wit:

> In subject proficiency tests, grade-ten teachers did better than their peers at the lower levels, except in science (in which grade-four scored better than grade-ten teachers); in most subjects, however, grade-ten teachers did not score significantly better than grade-six teachers. By and large, teachers at all levels scored poorly (less than 50%) in all subjects except in Filipino (in which they scored 68%). Put in layman's language, the teachers did not know the subject matter or content of what they are teaching; it is not possible to teach what one does not know. When measured against their peers, Filipino teachers were significantly lower in most attributes and in Filipino proficiency, their specialty, they were not significantly better than their colleagues. (See *Eleven Years of Bilingual Schooling in the Philippines (1974-1987): A Summative Evaluation* [Manila: Linguistic Society of the Philippines, 1986], 5–6.)

The implication of the words of President Aquino—"When the child leaves your care . . . " is that emphasis should be placed in strengthening the elementary school. This means putting more money to provide facilities and teaching materials, better teachers who need to be paid better salaries, and necessarily, better supervisors and administrators.

As of this writing (April 1987), a number of candidates for the Senate are talking about improving Philippine education. One candidate proposes that to give quality education (which the Constitution mandates should be made accessible to all citizens), merit scholarships should be established for the poor but deserving students who want higher education. This won't work and the basis of this opinion of mine is the finding of the BEPE that the poor go to the "academically poor schools" which are mainly public schools. Merit scholarships require passing examinations and interviews. How can the poorly educated elementary and high school pupils qualify for such merit scholarships? They will never have a chance. The best schools which give basic (elementary and secondary) education are "excellent private schools" and some good public schools where only the rich and the privileged go.

Clearly, the emphasis should be on excellent elementary and secondary education being made accessible to the poor. If this is not

done, then the poor will not have a chance to acquire quality education.

Because the gift of brains and ability is not equally distributed, a talent identification program should be instituted in all elementary schools, especially in the barrios, so that those who have the brains and the ability will be helped in the development of their talents. This makes it necessary that there should be at least one excellent elementary school in every municipality for the talented to go to. There should also be at least one excellent secondary school in every province and city for the same purpose. A program like this will make it possible for the poor but deserving students to really get quality education. This is the kind of program that needs legislative and administrative support.

6.11 Honesty in Research and Thesis/Dissertation Writing

Last summer I gave a lecture on research and thesis/dissertation writing to graduate students at the PNC whose specialization is administration and supervision. Most were doctoral students, many of them supervisors and administrators in the public and private schools. In the open forum, a supervisor asked me what can be done with graduate students who do not actually write their thesis or dissertations themselves but hire professional thesis writers to write for them. It is pure and simple dishonesty, the supervisor said.

I told the student that that would never happen under me as thesis/dissertation adviser. Advisers who allow this undesirable practice must shoulder the blame. A graduate student who hires someone to write her thesis or dissertation is not only dishonest, but worse. Why worse? Because research is an activity that is undertaken for the sole purpose of finding the truth.

What is tragic is that these same graduate students (educators??) who are dishonest are often the most vociferous in proclaiming the need for teaching honesty and other values in the schools. Isn't it tragic and sad, I asked, that many educators who should teach values through example are themselves the crooked ones?

6.12 Children of Lam-ang

I recently visited the Textbook Board Secretariat (TBS) located at the U.P., Diliman campus. Mr. Pacifico Aprieto, editorial director, and I had a very interesting conversation on books that the TBS is producing for Philippine public schools. We also talked about the plans for the

publication of an encyclopedia for children which I shall also comment on separately below.

Professor Aprieto gave me a copy of *The Children of Lam-ang,* a book on the folk culture of the Ilocos region. It is the first volume of the Kalinangan Series. "The Kalinangan Series consists of instructional materials on aspects of the culture of the 13 national regions of the Philippines in support of the teaching of civics, culture, history, geography, and work ethics of the official curriculum. The series is produced by the Textbook Board Secretariat (TBS) . . ." (quote from p. iv).

The Children of Lam-ang purports to provide "a comprehensive picture of the people of the Ilocos Region through their geography, history, beliefs, customs and traditions, crafts and industries, food and medicine, music, dance and games, and folk literature. What emerges is a regional portrait of a hardy people—patient, frugal, industrious, ingenious, and persevering—who have managed to carve a rich and meaningful existence from a naturally hostile environment" (quote from the jacket).

The jacket is a beautiful full-color reproduction of the painting *Binyag ng Panganay* by National Artist Fernando Amorsolo (1892-1972). The scene shows a young couple coming from church after the baptism of their firstborn. The setting is the Santa Maria Church, now a national shrine, in Santa Maria, Ilocos Sur. It must be the month of May because the flame tree is in full bloom. At the bottom of the steps, Ilocano women vendors are busy making a living in front of a cogon hut.

The book is about the folk culture of the traditional Ilocos provinces of Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, Abra, and La Union; in addition, the provinces of Pangasinan, Benguet, and Mountain Province are taken up. The seven provinces compose Region I. I do not understand why the book devotes many pages to the folk culture of Ifugao which belongs to Region II. There is even a two-page illustration of the Ifugao rice terraces. On the other hand, Abra is mentioned in only four pages, Pangasinan in three, and La Union also in three pages.

I suggest that teachers using this book should simply disregard anything on Ifugao when dealing with Region I. However, the Ifugao matter may be taken up when Region II is under discussion. In spite of the obvious error pointed out above and some other inaccuracies in spelling and in the illustrations (for example, the town of Balaoan in La Union is misspelled as *Baladan* at the inside back cover or end paper and the illustration of a burnay in "Burnay making" on p. 37 is not that of an Ilocano burnay; the book is illustrated with some pretty good pen-and-ink renderings, I must add), the book is a welcome

volume in our effort to go back to the roots that make up our culture as a people.

The book is intended as a reference book for teachers and supposed to be distributed loan free to public school teachers. The MECS must be congratulated for publishing this book. It is hoped that the books on the remaining 12 regions of the Philippines will be completed and published soon. And not necessarily in the order from II to XII, with NCR last.

6.13 Awaiting the Ensiklopedia

Note that I spelled the Filipino rendition of the English *encyclopaedia* much more economically and simply than the Surian ng Wikang Pambansa (SWP) "approved" spelling of *ensayklopidiya* (or is that the right spelling?). But let me go to what I want to write about before I get into an argument on the still unstandardized spelling of Filipino which we should not worry about too much because even the Norwegians have not yet solved their spelling problem in spite of the fact that they started not too long after 1814 (almost 200 years ago) after they got their independence from Denmark.

I understand from Director Aprieto of the TBS and from Director Ponciano Pineda of SWP that there is (was?) a plan to publish an encyclopaedia for children. The idea was approved but it seems that what is holding the plan from being implemented is the question "In what language(s) should it be published? in English? in Filipino? or bilingually in English and Filipino?"

My personal, professional, and "biased-experience" choice is that it be published in Filipino. Why? Simple. If it is published bilingually in English and Filipino, the chances are that, at least at present and for a long time to come, the Filipino version will not be read by most teachers and pupils. If it is published in English, Filipino will never get a chance to be modernized and intellectualized.

However, if it is published in Filipino, there will be two advantages. First, because there is no other version, everyone will have to read the Filipino version and make an effort to understand it. If the subject matter is interesting, as practically all children's encyclopaedias that I have seen are, children will really make an effort to read the text. In fact, even teachers who do not have a good command of Filipino will read and profit from it. That is how we learned English when we were children in a monolingually conducted school in English. We struggled to understand what was strange to us very often with the aid of a monolingual dictionary in English. I now recall that all schools, even

in the remote school in Bakun, Benguet, where I secured my elementary school education, had copies of the maroon-cloth-bound school edition of the Webster's dictionary. I think we succeeded somehow. If we succeeded with English, how much more with Filipino now that there are so many aids for learning the language?

The second advantage, and a very important one, of publishing the encyclopaedia in Filipino is that it will be an important step in the modernization and intellectualization of Filipino. I must repeat, like a broken record, and I must insist that even if Filipino will be the spoken language of the entire Filipino people as long as its written intellectualized and modernized version is not made available, it will never be used for educating our people.

So my suggestion is that we go ahead and publish the *ensiklopedia para sa mga bata* in Filipino. This should be a *must* PRODED project. While I am now retired and am very busy with so many things that I should have done a long time ago, if asked, I will be happy to help plan the publication of the children's encyclopaedia. I consider it that important.

6.14 A Reason to Rejoice

I consider the publication of *Bayang Magiliw: Ang Pilipinas at ang Mamamayang Pilipino, Gabay ng Mag-aaral, Aklat I A-E* a milestone in Philippine educational publishing. It is easy to point out many of the faults in the book, but these faults are more than made up by the fact that this book, which is the first in its field in the Philippines, will go a long way in making it possible for the Filipino child, especially the nonnative speaker of Filipino, to learn to read and be interested in things Philippine through the Filipino language.

The book is the first school encyclopaedia in Filipino about things Philippine. It is published in both Filipino and English but "the two editions are not translations of each other, but rather, books developed independently by separate groups of writers and researchers. Thus they represent what two different groups of historians, geographers, and educators believe to be the minimum basic information about the Philippines that the schoolchild needs in order to develop an early appreciation of his identity as a Filipino" (Publisher's Note, p. IX).

Personally and professionally I believe that the encyclopaedia should have been published only in Filipino and the number of entries would have been longer than just the five letters of the alphabet *A* to *E*. I have two reasons for this opinion: first, there is very little to read in Filipino that is interesting, there is much more in English;

second, a reference book like this is a self-motivating material to make the Filipino child, especially the nonnative-Filipino(Tagalog)-speaking child, to read the book repeatedly. Most textbooks in reading today are good for only one reading because they are "dry" and "uninteresting." It is the reference book and the book full of interesting stories that a child returns to again and again. The best books that really make a difference in the education of a child or an adult are the books that one returns to. I remember that that was the virtue of the famous *Philippine Readers,* more popularly referred to as Osias readers named after the late Camilo Osias—one of the Philippine's giants (a real giant) in Philippine education.

I recommend that a copy of the Filipino edition of this book be made available in every classroom. The English edition may be made available in the library.

6.15 A Komiks Education

Did you know that there are 46 ***komiks*** publications and that all of them are in Filipino? The audited circulation of the first (or largest) 25 in 1977 to 1978 was 1,831,908. Did you know that these komiks are read by both children and adults, and that it is through them that the written form of Filipino is read more than any other publication except Filipino textbooks in schools?

Did you know that there are only 13 publications devoted to entertainment, sports, and fashion, and that these are published only in English and Filipino?

6.16 Audit of Print

Did you know that the audited circulation of *Bulletin Today* (Monday-Saturday and Sunday editions), *Daily Express* (Monday-Saturday and Sunday editions), *Times Journal* (Monday-Saturday editions) all in English and *Balita* in Tagalog, throughout the Philippines, is 1,172,193? Compare this to the circulation of two of Japan's biggest newspapers, the *Yomiuri*—which sells nine million copies of its morning edition—and *Asahi*—with its circulation of about 7.5 million.

6.17 Folk Culture of the Central Visayas

Any elementary or high school that does not have a copy of *Folk Culture of the Central Visayas* should secure one from the Instructional Materials Corporation (IMC), A. Ma. Regidor St., Area XI, University of the Philippines Campus, Diliman, Quezon City 1101, Post Office Box 211. At least one copy should be available in the library. The book is a very rich source of information on the beliefs, customs, and practices; agriculture and other industries; food and medicine; music, dances, and games; folk literature such as myths, legends, fables, folktales, proverbs and riddles; famous men and women; and historical and cultural sites of the Central Visayan provinces of Cebu, Bohol, Siquijor, and Negros Oriental.

6.18 Osias and Fernandez

Did you know that the written word is more important than the spoken form of language in education, that reading and writing assume very great importance in education, and therefore, textbooks and other reading materials in education are of utmost importance? A simple proof of this is the fact that even native speakers of languages (for example, German and English) who use these languages in their school systems have to go to school to "get an education" especially higher education. If speaking a language is enough, there would be no need for the schools which depend on stored knowledge in books and other materials.

Information on the development of Philippine textbooks and supplementary materials is not only interesting but worth knowing.

Did you know, for example, that the first textbooks in the public schools of the Philippines were first officially prescribed during school year 1907-1908? Prior to that year, books printed and produced in the U.S. were selected and prescribed by the various division superintendents. All the books prescribed in the 1907-1908 school year were for the primary grades. (See *Bureau of Education Circular* no. 66, s. 1908; also Benigno Aldana, *Philippine Public School Curriculum: Its History and Development* [Manila: Philippine Teachers' Digest, 1935]).

6.19 Osias and Fernandez (Jteration)

Did you know that the first textbook written in English by a Filipino author to be adopted for use in the public school system of the Philippines was *A Brief History of the Philippines* by Leandro Fernandez?

The book was a basic textbook in history for grade seven pupils. It was approved in 1918 and was used for the first time during school year 1919-1920. Three books written by Camilo Osias, a graduate of Teachers College, Columbia University, and who was to become one of the Philippine's most distinguished educators, were adopted at the same time as supplementary readers. These were the first three volumes in the Philippine Readers series for use in grades five to seven. Later the series of books became textbooks in grades one to seven and were fondly referred to as Osias readers. By coincidence, the year 1918 was the year two Filipino superintendents of schools were appointed as members of the advisory committee on school textbooks. Five Americans completed the seven-man advisory committee. Previous to the year 1918, all members of the advisory committee on textbooks and supplementary books for use in the Philippine public schools were Americans. The first advisory committee was formed in 1906 and the second in 1913.

6.20 Two Books on English Idioms

This note is especially addressed to a group of teachers who attended the 1987 summer seminar-workshop on English language teaching at Notre Dame of Dadiangas College, General Santos City. They requested for reference books on English idioms. I recommended two excellent references: Harold C. Whitford and Robert J. Dixson, *Handbook of American Idioms and Idiomatic Usage* (New York: Regents Publishing Co., Inc., 1953). The handbook lists and illustrates their use in sentences. The other book is Thomas W. Adams and Susan R. Kuder, *Attitudes through Idioms* (Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House Publishers, Inc., 1984). This book is a very practical one because it contains exercises designed to teach the student the use of American-English idioms. These books are available at the PNC library and the Thomas Jefferson Cultural Center Library in Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., Makati.

6.21 The Greatest Tool of All: The Dictionary

Did you know that in the twenties when we went to grade school, every classroom from grade four up, even in the remotest parts of the Philippines had a supply of the maroon-covered abridged Webster's dictionary purposely published for use in elementary and high schools at the time? More than 60 years ago, we had dictionaries all over the Philippines. We were taught how to use the dictionary starting in grade four, the grade we were taught the first rules of English grammar.

Of all the tools (or *educational aids,* to use a pedagogical term) that should be given the child learning a second language, one of the most important—if not the most important—is the dictionary. Up to now, after having practically lived with the English language for over a half century, I still consult the dictionary; hardly a day or week goes by without my consulting this very important tool! What I write here about the need for dictionary skills in English goes for dictionary skills in Filipino or for non-Tagalog speakers (Ilocanos, Cebuanos, Hiligaynons, and others) trying very hard to learn Filipino not as lingua franca but as an instrument in learning intellectual subject matter.

Filipino and English dictionaries should be considered must books in all classrooms from grade four up.

6.22 Jncidental Jntelligence

I speak Philippine English which makes me identified as a Filipino but not as a Japanese or as a Singaporean, which is fortunate according to Einar Haugen, the Harvard sociolinguistic scholar, because if I spoke English exactly like an American, it would signal the fact that I have lost my identity as a Filipino and gone over to the other side.

6.23 Towards the Highest Potential

At the beginning of the school year, teachers, administrators, and supervisors should immediately try to classify pupils into (1) self-propelling pupils who need a minimum of the right kind of teaching and help from the teacher; these pupils may help slower pupils; (2) average pupils who need help but not as much as those in (1); and (3) slow pupils who need all the help of teachers, parents, and self-propelling pupils in order to "pass" the grade. With such a system in place right at the beginning of the school year and pursued relentlessly throughout the year, the educational objective of developing pupils to their highest potential has a good chance of being achieved.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Checkered Shade and Sunshine

7.1 Dalagang Bukid

I must apologize to Dr. Doreen G. Fernandez for writing something in her area of scholarship. The *sarsuela* is not my area but I must write about a most enjoyable evening that my wife, our *bunso*, and I spent at the Cultural Center of the Philippines' Little Theater. We went to see *Dalagang Bukid*, a Tanghalang Pilipino Production starring Noemi Manikan Gomez as Angelita, Pablo Molina as Cipriano, Lou Veloso as Don Silvestre, Cynthia Patag as Jacoba (Kobang), Gamaliel Viray as Paco, and a splendid supporting cast.

Being an Ilocano, I always try to get the most out of any money I spend, especially when it goes beyond ₱50. The ₱50 amount is symbolic to me because I started with a ₱50 monthly salary, and even at today's inflationary prices I still think ₱100 is a lot of money. Before the Second World War, I never had the pleasure of ever owning a Magellan, the pre-World War II ₱100 bill with the picture of Ferdinand Magellan in it.

But I have digressed. Seeing and enjoying *Dalagang Bukid*, the sarsuela that was especially composed for the great Honorata "Atang" de la Rama in 1919 when she was only 14; listening to the 20 songs, the most famous of which is "Nabasag ang Banga" which became Atang de la Rama's signature song in the operetta; enjoying this wonderful play which evoked many pleasant memories of an earlier era was worth the ₱100 that each of us paid. The three-act sarsuela was worth at least ₱300 or ₱100 for each act. I wish, however, that *Dalagang Bukid* and other sarsuelas were available at affordable prices for general patronage especially in the provinces.

7.2 Remembering the Dead

It is November and it is time for remembering the dead. Of the two events in a person's life, that of birth and death, it is death that calls for the most elaborate and expensive rituals all over the world, past and present. Sending away the dead and remembering them have resulted in such magnificent monuments as the Taj Mahal in Agra, India (no picture can convey the magnificence of this work of art; one has to see it to appreciate its grandeur and beauty), and the pyramids of Egypt. I am not aware of a single building that is dedicated to the birth of any person. In many places today, in place of monuments, some of the most beautiful land called memorial parks are devoted to the dead. I first heard the term *memorial parks* in 1954 in Longview, Washington, when my host took me around the city to show me the sights; the beautifully manicured rolling land was surrounded by wooded hills.

Remembering our dead brings out the humanity in us. It also reminds us of our mortality which surely must make us humble.

7.3 Towards a Second Career

I once made the observation that whereas many administrators in education (and in other government departments) often request extension of their services, especially if they hold very high positions, I have never heard of a classroom teacher ever requesting that her services be extended beyond the mandatory retirement age of 65. In fact, classroom teachers look forward with eagerness, often accompanied by impatience, to the day when they can retire from teaching. I also made the observation that one of the reasons for this is that classroom teaching is not only paid poorly, as against most administrative positions, but it is also a very difficult job. In contrast, most administrative and supervisory tasks can be carried on in much more leisurely manner. Administrative positions carry with them generally more "power and prestige."

Considering the above observations, I think classroom teachers and even administrators and supervisors should be retired at the age of 55 or after 30 years of service, whichever comes first. Most teachers start teaching at the age of 20 or 21. At 55, the average teacher shall have served 34 or 33 years. That is a long time especially for classroom teaching. I have also observed, both as a teacher and as a supervisor myself, that most teachers are too tired (burned out) to do any effective teaching long before they are 60. It is a very exceptional teacher who

still enjoys the daily routine of classroom teaching, especially elementary school teaching, beyond the age of 55, after doing the same job for more than 30 years. This is even more true with teachers who did two full-time jobs, that of teaching and raising a family at the same time.

I strongly urge the secretary of Education, Culture and Sports to take this up with the appropriate members of the Senate and the House of Representatives to consider this for possible legislative measures.

This is where the regulation in the armed forces requiring officers to be retired relatively young is good. If the same is practiced in the teaching profession, many younger men and women could rise to the top while they still possess energy and imagination. This is why I am surprised with the case of a certain administrator whose tenure of office (mislabeled *services*) has been extended so many times that he has prevented the promotion of younger people who should have replaced him a long time ago. To use a favorite Filipino expression, it is unfair not only to those who have been prevented from promotion but also to the service.

The question may be asked by the reader: Where will those who retire "so early" go and what will they do? They should go into second careers. They should go into other areas of human endeavor. If teachers know that they will be mandatorily retired at the age of 55 or after 30 years of service, they can prepare for retirement. I am sure that if a law is passed to this effect, the teaching profession will improve immensely.

7.4 Needed: An Educational "Cursor"

I recently acquired an IBM PC compatible (to the uninitiated, *PC* stands for personal computer and *compatible* means what is politely called a clone: it works almost like a real IBM machine in the sense that it accepts and uses programs intended for IBM PC). I proceeded to teach myself with the aid of the manual and the *Wordstar Tutor* how to use the Wordstar 4.0 word processor program, a program that is designed for writing manuscripts such as letters, speeches, essays, biographies, novels, memoranda, and the like. Now that I have become quite proficient in using the computer for doing practically all my writing, I wish I had this machine years ago.

I recently went over a number of my manuscripts and I was amazed at the amount of drafts that I had to make, the endless retyping of corrections, the quantity of paper wasted, and the duplicates and the carbon papers used. Just looking at the piles of the evolution of my manuscripts from the handwritten notes of the ideas, to the first draft,

the second draft, and the final draft (sometimes some of my more important papers such as those that are for international publication or speeches go through four drafts) made me tired. I wasted a lot of my life retyping. Any typist will tell you that the most unpleasant thing about retyping corrected manuscripts is typing portions that are correct to make the document really "clean." No office today should operate without a computer. The advantages are so many that they do not need detailing here.

There is one important feature of the computer that I wish were present in our lives today. This is the *cursor.* In learning how to operate the PC, one of the first things to learn is how to move the cursor to any place in the manuscript on the monitor (the TV-like screen). The proper placement of the cursor is so important that it is practically impossible to do what a computer can do without knowing how to move the cursor around to the proper position. If you want to insert a word or phrase, letter, or whole line, the cursor must be in the proper position. The second thing to know, and it is a harder thing to make, is the proper command or series of commands to make, so that the computer can execute what you want it to do.

The point I want to make here is that in much that we do in life, there is a need for a "cursor" in its proper place. This "cursor" will show the point where we have a problem which needs the proper command for a solution. We need an "education cursor" in the minds of educators to pinpoint where problems lie or where important things need to be done and, more important, after locating the place where something could be done, to know exactly the proper command or commands to accomplish what is needed to be done.

There is one thing I note, however, which was pointed out to me before I learned to operate the computer but the truth of which I now know too well and it is this: The computer is only as intelligent as the fellow operating it. The expression used to describe this fact is "garbage in, garbage out." But of course this is true with all instruments. We need to know what and where the problem is and the proper "commands" (read *solutions*) to solve most of our problems.

7.5 Wants and Needs

It is an exceptional teacher who can say with the psalmist in the revised modern English version of the 23rd Psalm: "I have everything I need." The reader must carefully note that the psalmist does not say "I have everything I want." Just to illustrate the difference with a personal example, I need a car to go around. I have one of the most inexpensive models of a car, a Toyota Corolla. It satisfies my need for a car. But

I want a Mercedes Benz. My wants are many, so obviously I cannot have everything I want. But it is possible to have everything one needs. Now that my wife and I are retired and all our children are engaged in their own careers and have their own homes, my wife and I have everything we need because our needs are very few. We had to retire to be able to say this.

Before our retirement and when the children were growing up and going to school, we had many needs. I think that is exactly the situation of the great majority of teachers today. They need money for food, clothing, and shelter. They need money to send their children to school. They need money for medicine and hospitalization when they or their children get sick. They need money for many things. It is the exceptional teacher who has private means for these things and does not depend on her salary. During earlier and happier times, the need of teachers for money was not as acute as it is today. This may explain much of the restlessness one sees among teachers today, especially in the city of Manila where life's demands are greater than in other parts of the country.

As important as the need for money, teachers have certain needs that are often not recognized and satisfied. Some of these are the need for time to rest and to reflect; the need for attention; the need for promotion to satisfy self-esteem, perhaps the need for much higher social status; the need to be remembered not only when their services are needed, etc. These psychological needs are as important as money. Sometimes even more so.

7.6 Afloat with Humanity

Several years ago my wife and I took an inter-island vessel from Manila to Iloilo. We decided that we would enjoy the trip leisurely in a first class air-conditioned cabin. Some time after midnight, we decided to go to the deck to take in the fresh air. We could not go to the deck. It was impossible to do so because the corridors of the ship were full of sleeping people. Back in our cabin, we recalled that when we presented our tickets to the guard, we noticed many passengers who did not have any tickets let in by the guard. When we arrived in Iloilo, we had to wait about two hours before we could disembark. We could not believe the number of people who boarded that boat. After that experience, we vowed never to take an inter-island vessel again. We took the plane back to Manila.

7.7 Questions Without Answers

My essay on the Kankana-ey/Bontoc Philippine Constabulary guard of long ago and the Ilocano delicacy *ipon* and my account on the ship corridors as sleeping quarters are intended to serve as background material to the following comments on the maritime tragedy where about two to three thousand Filipinos (the exact number will never be known which, by itself, is a tragedy) lost their lives in the collision last December 20, 1987, of the MV *Doña Paz* and the tanker *Vector* in Tablas Strait in the Sibuyan Sea.

The educator and all thinking Filipinos are asked to compare the behavior of the unlettered PC guard of long ago with that of the maritime guard who is lettered and therefore presumed to be much better educated. Perhaps the guards are just products of their times. Is it fair to ask, "What is the difference between the values of the society that produced the old PC guard and the society of the present day, a society that is supposed to have acquired a much higher level of education than that of the older one?"

What has education done to improve the values and behavior of our people? Or, is that question unfair to education and educators? We must seek the answers to the causes of the tragedies of our times.

I repeat the question: Does education have a role in the MV *Doña Paz*–MT *Vector* tragedy? If so, what is it?

7.8 The Rest of the Season

It is October again! It is my experience as a teacher that the end of October marks the dividing line between what I call "intense" learning and "making up" or "catching up" learning. The first five months of the year (June to October) are the months best devoted to intense learning because they offer the least distractions to both teacher and child.

The next five months (November to March) are full of breaks and distractions. December is devoted to the Christmas season and March is practically lost to preparations for graduation and the preparation of reports on the part of the teacher. That practically leaves only November, January, and February for catching up or "solid" learning of the basic subjects, so necessary in both life in school and outside school.

7.9 How to Spend Money

The first thing to teach a child about money is how to spend it, not how to earn it.

Many people believe that a child should learn how to earn money before learning how to spend it. I believe otherwise. Learning how to spend money first is not only logical but very sensible as well. Logical because spending money is actually almost always the first thing a child does with money. It is difficult to see a small child earning money.

I think there are three areas where a child should be taught how to spend money. First is the artistic or aesthetic, the second is the practical, and the third is the spiritual. Generally the three are taught and should be experienced by the child simultaneously. The first two are not difficult to teach but the third is very, very difficult. Many are not taught the third at all and, even if they are, it is extremely difficult to practice it.

Let me illustrate. When the child is told stories, taught to recite rhymes and poems, sing songs and listen to beautiful music, read and appreciate good books, look at beautiful pictures and works of art, and especially the works of nature, the groundwork for the appreciation of the beautiful is being laid. This is the beginning of the aesthetic education of the child which should be continued, refined, and intensified in adulthood. The appreciation of the beautiful leads to a desire for the beautiful.

The practical is somewhat easier to teach. A child who accompanies his mother to market, for example, can be taught how to buy fresh fish by looking at the eyes and the gills of the fish. The various cuts and qualities of meat can also be taught to the child quite early. Children can also be taught to differentiate health foods from junk foods. The child can be taught how to buy his clothes, shoes, and school supplies. Children can easily identify quality if they are taught how.

The third area does not refer to the spiritual in the ordinary sense of the word. It is learning how to spend for others beyond the family, relatives, and friends. Unlike the aesthetic and the practical, spending for the spiritual transcends the personal. Some people call it philanthropy. Some may call it other-people-oriented spending. Examples of this type may range from contributions to the Red Cross (obviously the child must understand fully the work of the Red Cross), to victims of disasters or misfortune whom one may not even know, and to other worthy causes. The highest form of this spending is exemplified by the works of Mother Teresa of Calcutta. The reader will at once understand why I stated earlier that it is difficult to teach this kind of spending.

As the child who was taught "how to spend money" grows up, he will have good reasons for earning money. The child who grows up appreciating books and art and music and nature will spend money on these things. The child who learned to buy the proper food and clothes will also spend on these things. More important, the child who is taught how to spend rather than earn money first *will strive to earn money for the things that he has been taught are important.*

(NOTE: Many years ago when I was dean of the Graduate School and later president of the PNC, I went about literally begging for donations and gifts for scholarships and professorial chairs from Filipinos whom I thought could afford to give. That experience left me a very disappointed man. The third kind of spending still has to become a part of the Filipino national character.)

7.10 Needed: Maintenance Ethic

Did you know that the Filipino needs a maintenance ethic? Barely a month after the Manila International Airport, now Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA—popularly pronounced as *naya*), was inaugurated I took a trip abroad. On visiting the CR (i.e., comfort room, a Filipino euphemism for what most Americans call washroom but which most Filipinos call toilet), I was shocked to see one of the urinals covered with a piece of cardboard marked "Out of Order." So when President Corazon C. Aquino paid the NAIA a surprise visit and was shocked with the state of the washrooms, I was not surprised.

Dirty toilets seem to be part of our national "failure." They seem to symbolize our lack of a maintenance ethic. I remember one of the city governments in the Metropolitan Manila area buying a whole fleet of Volkswagen beetles for the police. In no time at all, the VWs all broke down and disappeared from the streets, as if by magic, almost all at the same time. I am sure that the reader can cite many examples of this lack of a Filipino maintenance ethic. Our potholed roads, dilapidated and dirty taxis, the uncollected garbage in many places especially in the Metro Manila area, and similar eyesores, are proofs of this lack.

May I suggest that a maintenance ethic be one of the values that should be promoted and cultivated under the present values education program of the DECS.

7.11 Tricycle Power

Of the many modes of transportation in the Philippines today, the tricycle is one of the most symbolic of the way of life of the vast majority of our people.

The tricycle tells us so eloquently that so many of our people do not have much to depend upon, and this is so aptly illustrated by the three wheels that carry unevenly the weight of both the vehicle and the occupants. More fortunate people depend on four or more wheels. The tricycle shows how unfair life is: think, for example, of big shiny powerful cars that often have very much less load (passengers and cargo) than the small frail tricycle. Compare an overloaded tricycle with an expensive and beautiful Mercedes Benz carrying one passenger (if owner driven) or two or three (the rich well-dressed owner/s at the back seat and chauffeur at the wheel). Note further that big beautiful houses almost always have less occupants than squatters' shanties that pass for homes.

The tricycle, like so many public utility vehicles in the Philippines today, is almost always overloaded. If I remember right, before World War II, there was a law against the overloading of public utility vehicles. The law used to be strictly enforced. If that law still exists, the overloading of tricycles and other means of public transportation is a reflection of the times. Overloading and a general lack of maintenance often result in bad accidents.

But of all the cover symbols that the tricycle stands for, the clearest is that of poverty that is the lot of so many of our people in the countryside. The overloaded tricycle also stands for the neglect of the transportation industry.

The tricycle gives many messages. A clear message is the fact that it is not enough to have good roads. We must have the vehicles to transport people and their produce economically and safely. Maybe we need a Philippine Henry Ford who will produce a cheap but reliable vehicle that can be afforded by the people of the countryside. Even more important, we should have the kind of economy that will make it possible for people in the country to afford better means of transportation.

7.12 Bell of Atri

As this is being written, the newspapers are full of accounts of the measure passed by Congress and approved and signed into law by President Aquino institutionalizing the 13th-month pay and bonus of

₱1,000 for all employees in the government service who have served at least four months. I don't know why the news item reminds me of a story entitled "Bell of Atri," one of the favorite stories of our boyhood.

There was this town of Atri that had a bell on top of a tower. Attached to the bell was a rope that almost reached the ground. The bell was rung only for one very special occasion. It was rung by anyone in town who had a legitimate complaint. When the bell rang, the officials of the town gathered to listen to the complaint of the bell ringer. The decision of the officials on the complaint was final and it was dutifully enforced.

One day the bell rang. The officials went to see the complainant. They found a very old thin horse tugging at the rope. At first they were at a loss as to why a horse should be ringing the bell. Then the reason dawned on them. They realized that the horse belonged to a rich man of the town. The officials suspected that the rich owner had no more use for the horse because it was too old to work. The old horse was simply let loose to take care of itself.

The officials decided to call the owner. Their suspicions were confirmed. The officials decided that the owner should take back the horse and take good care of it the rest of its life.

There are many men and women (retirees) in the Philippines today who served the government faithfully and well. The vast majority were not able to save for their old age. Many depend on their very meager pensions. Is it true that some receive as little as ₱200 a month? Stories of their sad lives need not be recounted here.

The law giving 13th-month pay and ₱1,000 Christmas bonus yearly to government employees did not include the retirees.

What these government retirees need is a bell of Atri.

7.13 Who Is Teaching Whom?

Did you know that many of those who graduate from the PNC come from poor families? Many are the children of jeepney drivers, soldiers, and laborers. Some are the children of *lavanderas.* There are many who are the first to obtain a college or university education in their family or clan. They belong to that group that is referred to as the "disadvantaged." Because they are graduating from the teachers college that is admittedly the best in the country, many will be hired to teach in schools which the children of the "advantaged" attend. More and more we have a case of the disadvantaged teaching the advantaged. This is because the rich and the advantaged, with very rare exceptions, do not encourage their children to take up teaching.

7.14 Asiaworld and Other Dreamworlds

I had the rare experience of attending the ground-breaking ceremonies of the P12 billion Asiaworld City at the 173-hectare reclamation area in Pasay City on October 27, 1989. The world's largest five-star hotel and a complex of medical, arts, sports, and recreation buildings will rise in the city in 15 years. It is a great and grand vision. I hope it will succeed.

During the ceremonies, and especially as I listened to Emilia "Bien-Bien" Roxas describe her dream of Asiaworld, many thoughts crossed my mind. The dominant one was the excitement of the possibility of thousands of jobs and opportunities that the project would create.

I recalled a second cousin of mine who has since passed away. Together with many other Ilocanos, he had gone to Hawaii in the late twenties to work in the sugarcane plantations there. He saved and sent his earnings to his wife. His wife wisely used the money to buy small parcels of rice land.

When my cousin returned to the Philippines before the outbreak of the Second World War, the couple were rich by Ilocano standards. They were able to send their eight children to school. Six became highly successful professionals, including one with a Ph.D. who is now a professor in Los Baños, Laguna. One grandchild is a physician.

It took only one man who had a job to start the chain of success of that family. I recalled many others, both friends and relatives, whose success stories are the same. Their success started with a job.

Today many Filipinos are all over the world working and sending their money to their families. I am sure that many will repeat the story of my cousin. Some day many who will work in Asiaworld or in related jobs created by Asiaworld may also succeed. It is a fascinating dream.

7.15 The Golden Girls and Boys

Last April 29, 1990, members of the Philippine Normal School (PNS) class of 1940, to which this writer belongs, celebrated its golden jubilee during the annual homecoming of alumni at the PNC campus. After half a century, only 50 of the 520 graduates could attend the celebration. PNS class 1940 originally consisted of 377 graduates of the general curriculum (the two-year course leading to a certificate in elementary school teaching), 74 of the combined curriculum (three-year course where the graduate finished the general and the home economics curriculum), and 76 Octoberians, a total of 520 graduates from all over the Philippines. At the time the PNS was truly a national school.

Judged in terms of traditional measures of success, PNS class 1940 was successful as many members of the class made significant achievements. One became president of a state university, another became president of his alma mater, and still another became a regional director. Six became superintendents and seven assistant superintendents. Three alumnae taught at the PNC, one man was a professor at the U.P. College of Education, and another became dean at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP).

A large number became principals and supervisors. One became a lawyer-CPA, another a doctor of medicine. A former school superintendent is a practicing lawyer. Four members are heroes. Three of the men who attended the jubilee were in the Death March and were prisoners at the concentration camp in Capas, Tarlac. The president of the class died in Bataan.

While many rose from the ranks, many others chose to remain in so-called lower positions. One was offered very much higher positions but she elected to remain a principal teacher. Many remained classroom teachers. I take my hat off to those who remained classroom teachers and thus did the most important and most difficult work in education. I have been saying this, and I will say it again and will continue saying it—*without classroom teachers, school education would come to a dead stop.*

Many still work after retirement. To those who know a teacher's life, they will understand why a number teach in college or do other work, not only to keep themselves busy but also because the extra income helps especially in these very hard times. Very rare is the teacher who makes a pile and lives a life of plenty and luxury ever after. Two or three of us did, but they did not do it from teaching. One is still active in research and publication, writes a column in a teachers' magazine, and is editor in chief of a national education magazine. Another works as director of a private foundation during the day and administers a city college in the evening. One is still active with a gymnastics association. Several are running private colleges. Many others are engaged in business. A number are active in church and community work. Some baby-sit for their grandchildren. One is a faith healer.

The reunion and jubilee was a joyful occasion for those who could attend. It was a time to remember many things. Some had to be reintroduced to former classmates whom they had not met for a long time. We recalled how we men were always in coat and tie except during ROTC activities. Fortunately a very good tie in those days cost 20 centavos and white cotton shirts, one peso. An immaculate white drill suit could be bought for as little as ₱3 *hecho derecho* which meant

both material and labor were furnished by the tailor. We recalled how some of us were suspended from attending classes for being caught with our shirt collars open and our ties comfortably loose because of the heat. We also recalled that during "our time" we walked to school. To take a calesa was too expensive unless it was absolutely necessary (which was seldom) and the Meralco's *tranvia* also cost several centavos.

We also recalled that everyone had to present the required textbook for every subject. We would open the textbook on the page that stood for the year. Thus in June 1939 we opened our books to page 39 and the instructors (all our teachers were called instructors then) dutifully affixed their initials on the page so that no other student could present the same copy that semester. Happily for us, the textbooks were seldom changed so some of my books were borrowed from former graduates of the PNS.

Ah, 50 years ago. We were young then. All the girls were very beautiful. Too bad that the lady volleyball players who had some of the most shapely figures had to wear bloomers.

I do not know what brought my classmates to the PNS. In my particular case, I know. I had been teaching for six years after graduating from secondary normal school, so if I expected to remain and rise in the teaching profession a PNS diploma was the key. For one thing, to qualify for entry to the PNS then was quite an achievement. Teaching was a very much honored profession. Many young men and women went into teaching and the Philippine Normal School was the school to go to. Some of the best school superintendents, academic supervisors, district supervisors, principals, demonstration teachers, and the most admired classroom teachers were PNS graduates.

After I graduated from the PNS, I was admitted to teach in the city of Baguio. At the time only PNS graduates (and graduates of equivalent schools such as the National Teachers College) were accepted to teach in the Baguio City elementary schools. The salary of a Baguio City elementary school teacher then was ₱70 compared to the national average of ₱50.

I recall now, very vividly, how graduates of the PNS at the time would proudly append the acronym PNS to their names as if the three letters were the acronym of an academic degree. I dreamed of the day when I would be able to write PNS after my name. The day I was able to do so was one of the happiest moments of my life.

7.16 Another Tale of Shoes

I have a friend who recently bought a pair of Bally shoes of Switzerland. The pair cost ₱4,000. That is a little bit under U.S. $200. Even in the U.S., that is a pretty expensive pair of shoes. It is much more so in the Philippines. I asked my friend why he had to spend so much money when he could easily have bought a very good pair of shoes made in Marikina or a very good handmade (custom-built) pair.

According to him he had read somewhere that there are two possessions that a person should be very particular about: shoes and bed. During most of the day, a person is in his shoes. When he removes his shoes, he generally goes to bed. A person thus spends about a third of his life in bed and more than that in his shoes. So both bed and shoes should be most comfortable.

That makes sense, but why the expensive Bally pair? The justification he gave are psychological reasons. According to my friend, all his life he had always worn the cheapest and least comfortable kinds of shoes so that except for the nails of his big toes and the toes next to them, all his toenails are deformed. During the thirties, the period when people were wearing the better make of shoes such as Esco, Hike, or Ang Tibay, he could only afford Gandara shoes which cost about ₱1.50 a pair. These were cheap shoes and the soles easily gave way when it rained. He wore his shoes even when they had holes in them. All his life he had to make do with the cheapest.

So he bought this pair of Bally shoes to make up for all the privations in his life.

I told him that perhaps the most important reason is that he could now afford it. As my father used to tell his children: There is nothing that is expensive. To a man who can afford a Cadillac or Rolls Royce, these are not expensive. There are only people who cannot afford so-called expensive things.

7.17 Our Kind of Ball Game

Did you know that the Philippines has a world champion baseball team? Did you know that the Philippine baseball team composed of boys aged 11 to 12 years that won the World Bronco Baseball Championship in Citrus Heights, Sacramento, California, is a privately supported, coached, and managed team? Did you also know that during the twenties and the thirties, baseball was one of the favorite team games by high school students all over the Philippines?

Of course you should know (or do you?) that baseball was introduced into the Philippines by the Americans. In fact prior to 1900 we did not have any of the ball, athletic, and other games that we play today. Many of the games were introduced into the public schools so that by the twenties and thirties, Filipino boys and girls were playing in organized ball and athletic games. Filipino athletes starred in the Far Eastern Games in the twenties and thirties. In 1936 the Philippine basketball team placed fourth in the World Olympic Games held in Berlin. That was the time when basketball players from all over the world were not as tall as they are today.

Did you know that the Philippines regained the Putra Cup, emblematic of amateur golf (team) supremacy in Southeast Asia; that the competing teams came from Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Hong Kong, Brunei, and Myanmar (formerly Burma)? that this is the 15th time (in 30 tournaments) the Philippines won the championship?

We should encourage the playing of baseball and golf by Filipinos because they are two games that they can excel in.

7.18 For Shame, for Shame

What a shame to all Filipinos! It is with great embarrassment that I must take back my expression of pride and praise for the Philippine bronco baseball team (boys who should have been aged 11-12) winning the world championship in Citrus Heights, California, this year.

Some of the boys were more than 12 years old. The ridiculous thing is that such a simple matter as publishing the dates of births of the boys to settle the controversy could not even be done. Why?

I wonder why the parents of the boys who were over 12 years old did not prevent their sons from joining the team. If I were the parent and I knew the age limit, I would have told my son not to join because that would be cheating. Why did not the players themselves tell that they are more than 12 years old and therefore were not qualified to play? Is not honesty one of the values that should be taught and emphasized in our schools?

Why do many people who direct or are involved in sports in the Philippines cheat? I recall many instances in the past when students who were not actually enrolled in the schools were temporarily "enrolled" and allowed to represent schools and provinces and regions in the regional and interscholastic meets of the then Bureau of Education (later Bureau of Public Schools). I also recall one instance when I told a group of coaches of an association of government colleges

and universities in the Metro Manila area that I could not understand why there was so much cheating by people in sports. To this very day, I still feel the silence that greeted my remarks.

Sports is supposed to teach honesty, integrity, cleanliness, and many other virtues.

I am embarrassed and ashamed. Shouldn't we all be? *Nakakahiya!*

7.19 The Culture of Laziness and Insecurity

"Please don't make too many assignments. Don't make us read too much."

"Sir, you make us work too hard."

Those are the pleadings of two teachers, both graduate students working for doctoral degrees.

I conduct a reading course (Education 699—the 6 is the code for doctoral courses) on Saturdays in the Graduate School of the Philippine Normal University. The course is primarily intended for students who are supposed to be ready to write proposals for their doctoral dissertations toward either the Ph.D. (in education, bilingual education, and applied linguistics) or the Ed.D. degrees. Occasionally, upon my discretion, I admit students who are beginning to take courses for the two doctoral degrees.

I find too many students in graduate school who are lazy. They do not want to read. They want to do as little as possible to secure their graduate degrees. Many do not care for genuine scholarship which is the hallmark of the advanced degree. Too many want advanced degrees for promotion purposes; the easier they can get the degree, the better.

The improvement of Philippine education through research and scholarship is the least of their interests, and with many, such a goal is not even within their awareness.

Oh, yes, once in a while one meets a graduate student who is not only bright but industrious and knows why he is in graduate school. Such a student is a gem. When I get such a student, I try my best to help him. I have assisted several such students by helping them get study scholarships or grants for research, writing, and travel. I try to help them advance in their careers. I am filled with happiness when these students of mine succeed. But I repeat: Such students are rare. The majority are lazy.

I find this laziness manifested not only in graduate school but also in many other spheres in our society today. There are a lot of beggars in the Metro Manila area, many of them strong enough to work but

who would rather beg. I know many college graduates who are unemployed but unwilling to do manual labor which they consider demeaning. One sees these people waiting in the anterooms of politicians waiting to be given jobs.

All the foregoing examples and many more are Filipinos indulging in a culture of laziness.

There are many other manifestations of this culture of laziness. The many unkempt public buildings surrounded by tall grass with so-called maintenance people just sitting around doing nothing. The dirty, potholed, unmaintained streets in the Metro Manila area and even in most parts of the Philippines.

These manifestations seem to be closely tied up with what one foreigner priest who visited the Philippines several years ago called the "culture of insecurity." This priest said that when he saw a security guard, he felt insecure. How true that the sight of security guards everywhere produces the opposite effect, that of insecurity. In countries where there are very few, if any, security guards, people feel and, indeed, are secure.

The culture of insecurity is found everywhere in our country today. One sees security guards everywhere—public buildings, commercial buildings, banks, hotels, schools, colleges and universities, even hospitals. The so-called exclusive villages are all heavily guarded.

There seems to be some connection between the cultures of laziness and of insecurity. People who are insecure in the provinces come to the urban areas and become squatters. Many of them were formerly gainfully employed in some work in the provinces. They find themselves out of work in the urban areas. What to do? Nothing, hence, the road to the culture of laziness. In turn this culture of laziness tends to breed another subculture: that of violence and crime.

It is all around us—these twin cultures of insecurity and laziness. I mentioned this hypothesis of the twin cultures to a distinguished lady with whom I had a talk. Very perceptive, she made the observation that this culture of laziness is in some way sanctioned and encouraged by the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law (CARL). "Why should not these people who want the cultivated land go out and carve their own productive piece of land out of the many public lands like one of my uncles and many Filipino pioneers did? Too many are just plain lazy," she said emphatically.

The culture of laziness has taken hold of several strata of our society: from graduate school students expected to exhibit industry and the will to achieve excellence and nothing but the best, down to beggars. And its twin, the culture of insecurity, pervades the entire society.

What is the way out of all these? I have a suggestion. There is a religious song that goes something like this: "Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me." How about industry and excellence starting with each one of us?

7.20 One Basket Is Enough

Many Filipinos have often wondered why basketball is so popular and that we insist on funding and sending basketball teams abroad to compete in a game where height and weight (which Filipinos lack) are the greatest assets for winning. Why can't we develop, say, soccer where height and weight do not count as much and where we can excel? The great soccer player, Diego Maradona, is small, built like many Filipinos. Why not soccer indeed? or why not baseball? Filipinos can excel in baseball as proven in the World Little League baseball series.

I no longer wonder though why basketball is so popular. Basketball is so easy to learn. All it needs is one basket attached to a single post in any small vacant lot; the favorite in most urban areas is the street. One sees these improvised one-basket courts almost everywhere in crowded neighborhoods where there are many children. For participants, a minimum of two players for competition purposes. One boy can practice all by himself dribbling and shooting that ball in that one basket.

Compare that to soccer which needs a large field. Or baseball which needs a lot of equipment including gloves, bats, and a mask for the catcher.

Basketball is easy to understand compared to baseball. My driver eagerly watched the series of games played between the Detroit Pistons and the Portland Trail Blazers for the 1990 NBA championship. When the 1990 world baseball games were played between the Oakland A's and the Cincinnati Reds, my driver was not interested. I asked him why. *"Hindi ko maintindihan ang* baseball," he said.

7.21 A Good Way of Saying "Thank You"

It is March and it is graduation time again. Somehow I associate graduation with many feelings: joy, gratitude, hope, *utang na loob.* I feel that every graduate owes some person or persons, a parent or parents, a brother or sister or relative or a kind person for help in the way to his graduation. I know of no one who graduated, especially from college, who did not receive some kindness or some form of help from someone along the way, no matter how independent that person may

be. Even so-called self-made persons and self-supporting students somehow made it because of some help extended to them. Some graduates may owe bigger debts of gratitude than others.

Graduation often reminds me of a very kind man who is full of wisdom and grace. It is about this man and his kindness and his influence on me that I would like to write about during this month of graduations.

Like many Filipinos, the feeling of utang na loob (*utang a naimbag a nakem a saan a mabay-bayadan uray inton ka-no man* to put in more extended Ilocano, "a debt that one can never pay") was bred in me by my parents and our culture. So after I received my Ph.D. from the University of Michigan, my wife and I made a trip to Washington, D.C., mainly to see Dr. Robert Lado, who was my professor and adviser at Michigan before he left to accept the position of dean of the School of Languages and Linguistics of Georgetown University.

I owed (and will always owe) a very special debt of gratitude to Dr. Lado. He had asked me what my plans were after I obtained my M.A., and I told him that my Philippine Center for Language Study scholarship and the study permit given by the Philippine government was for one year only so I had to come back to the Philippines. He told me that I was Ph.D. "material" and that it would be a shame if I left without staying and working for an advanced degree. To make me stay, he made arrangements for a scholarship paid out of Ford Foundation funds. (Later I had to waive the Ford scholarship for a Rockefeller Foundation fellowship.)

But there was the problem of the permission for extended stay from higher Philippine government authorities. I had two colleagues in the General Office who were separated from the service for overstaying in the U.S. I could not afford to lose my job as General Office supervisor.

By coincidence and good fortune, the late Dr. Benigno Aldana, director of Public Schools then, visited the Filipino scholars on second language teaching who were at Michigan for the summer institute of the Linguistics Society of America. I told Dr. Lado that if the director of Public Schools gave me permission, I could stay. Dr. Lado kindly volunteered to talk to Dr. Aldana.

I can still hear the late Dr. Aldana telling me in his room at the Michigan Union: "You are very lucky, Sibayan. It is a very rare opportunity for a student to be offered a scholarship to work for a Ph.D. If you obtain a Ph.D., that is the best thing that can happen to you. You stay." It is one of the best "commands" I ever received in my life.

My wife and I felt that making a special trip to Washington, D.C., to say "Thank you" to Dr. Lado was both a pleasure and an obligation.

After dinner in their home at Bethesda, Maryland, I started to thank Dr. Lado for what he did for me. He stopped me and called my wife (who was conversing with Mrs. Lado), "Isabel, listen to what I am going to tell your husband. Bonifacio is trying to thank me for what I did for him. I want you to continuously remind Bonifacio later in the Philippines that the best way to thank me is for him to help others who are worth helping in their careers, whether academic or professional. Later, when he is in a position to help others, he should not hesitate to do so. That is the best way he can say 'Thank you' to me."

I have since tried to live by that advice.

Small footnote: Dr. Lado sort of spotted me in his M.A. classes, and he asked me to help him edit the manuscript of his book *Language Testing* which was eventually published by Longmans of London. I remember spending many hours with him at the Horace H. Rackham School of Graduate Studies in Ann Arbor discussing many points in his book. He was very gracious in mentioning my name as the third person in the acknowledgment page of the book. The first two were the famous Charles Carpenter Fries, who established the English Language Institute at Michigan, and Herschel T. Manuel, the materials writing and testing expert, at the University of Texas.

7.22 "After-Dinner" Speech "Between Dinner"

About ten years ago, I had the good fortune of visiting the People's Republic of China in the company of several other social scientists from the Philippine Social Science Council. One thing about the Chinese is they serve some of the best food anywhere in the world.

Chinese dinners are generally long affairs because of the many courses served. Aside from the excellent food, there is one feature I like about these Chinese dinners. It is the "after-dinner" speeches. Anyone who is important enough to deliver a speech is called between courses to deliver his piece. The speaker generally times his speech to coincide with the time for waiting for the next course. The length of his speech is appropriately cued. When the next course is served, the speaker generally has said all he has to say. All speeches are delivered between courses. After the diners are through with the last course, everyone stands up and leaves. Very, very sensible.

7.23 To Be Middle Class

As this is written, there is a big *welga ng bayan* triggered by the rise in the price of gasoline and other oil products. The price of premier gasoline was increased from ₱8.70 to ₱15.70 and after a day or two to ₱20.70 per liter. The increase has disadvantaged everyone except the rich. According to most observers and economic analysts, the section of society worst hit by the steep rise in gasoline prices is the middle class.

What does it mean to be middle class? Before we answer the question, let us first look at the classes in society. There are (1) the poor, (2) the middle class, and (3) the upper class generally composed of (*a*) the rich, (*b*) the very rich, and (*c*) the extremely rich, some of whom are sometimes referred to derisively and perhaps enviously as the filthy rich. (NOTE: Before I go any further, I must warn the reader that I am not academically trained in the disciplines of sociology or economics that treat of the subject of socioeconomic classes. What I write here are my ideas which may not be acceptable to sociologists or economists.)

Our concern in this essay is the middle class. We repeat the question: What does it mean to be middle class "in the Philippines"? That qualification "in the Philippines" is important because we understand that the middle class in countries like the U.S. or Japan may be different.

I think that to answer the question "What does it mean to be middle class?" it is better to give an example from real life.

The movement to the middle class category is generally an upward one, from the poor to the middle class. It is this movement that we are interested about.

Our example is that of a young farmer (*peasant* is the more apt term) who was 17 years old when the Philippine public school system was established in 1901 by the Americans. He had learned to read and write his native language toward the end of Spanish rule through *caton* and *cartilla* classes offered by private individuals in their homes (often under the house) but it was not much of an education, just basic literacy.

When he was 22 years old, he sold his carabao and left his hometown to study in the public school in the neighboring town. When he was in grade five, a newly established school in a barrio was opened. The Americans were looking for a teacher and because he was the biggest, oldest, and brightest, he was picked to go to teach at ₱4 a month. It did not take him long to find out that teaching was not for him, so he quit after two years of teaching and left the old hometown.

He came to Manila where he did odd jobs while he went to night school studying bookkeeping.

He took what was then known as third grade civil service examination for clerical positions and passed it. He went back to his province where he landed a job as clerk in the municipal treasurer's office. In the meantime he enrolled in accounting in the then famous ICS (International Correspondence Schools). He took the municipal treasurer's examination and passed it. He became a municipal treasurer in one of what were known then as townships. In those days, municipal treasurers were issued Colt .45 six-shooters.

The favorite attire of a government official in those early days of American rule consisted of the following: khaki breeches patterned after the U.S. Army garment for horseback riding, the calves protected by pigskin leather leggings that came down to a pair of high-cut army brown leather shoes. The outfit was topped by a khaki shirt or army olive drab flannel shirt. The favored head gear was a Stetson hat. With the Colt .45 six-shooter hanging in a holster and a riding whip to complete the attire, the government official riding a black or white pony with a matching saddle cut quite a figure. One of the most famous pictures of the late Manuel L. Quezon standing was in this getup (minus the horse).

The point we are driving at, however, is that the man had started the movement from the peasantry toward the middle class. His children eventually became middle class and in so doing, moved from the disadvantages of the carabao-owning class to the disadvantages of the car-owning middle class!

7.24 Who Is a Successful Person?

In August 1977 I was invited to give a series of lectures on Language Planning in the Philippines at the East-West Center in Honolulu. One of the lectures I gave was on the learning of English and its relation to success. I said that the child who learned English well generally succeeded not only in school but also outside school because English is the main language of work in better paying jobs. On the other hand, a child who failed to learn and master English was often a failure.

During the question-and-answer period that followed, a gentleman from Africa asked me, "Who is a successful person in your country? only those who learn English well? How about those who never go to school or have very little school education, aren't there any who are successful? I would suspect that there are quite a few. For example, I understand that rice is your most important food and that you are

successful in raising rice. Do you mean to tell me that all those who succeed in raising rice know English well? Are there not many jobs or things to do that are essential that need to be done which do not need a mastery of English?"

I could not respond immediately. I was completely taken aback. After I had recovered, I said, "Oh yes, there are many jobs that do not need a good knowledge of English. For example my driver does not know English well, but he is a good driver."

"Do you consider him a failure?"

"No, of course not," I admitted.

Of all the open forums in which I had to answer questions, that particular session in Honolulu has left one of the deepest impressions on me. The figure of that African member of academe is still very fresh in my mind. His question often comes back to me whenever I talk or write about education and the teaching and learning of English and Filipino in the schools.

Should all, yes, all Filipinos learn and master English?

The question is important for a number of reasons. The 1987 Philippine Constitution mandates that quality education must be available and be made accessible to all Filipinos. At present and for many years to come, that quality education is available mainly in English and only partly in Filipino. The main language in which quality education can be made available and acquired in the schools is English. The implication of this fact is that the tool, English, should be made available to all Filipinos who go to school. Not to make it available to the poor would be rank discrimination against them.

But the question is asked: What is quality education?

Does the education of the good driver who does not know "good" English not qualify under the definition and contemplation of the Constitution of quality education? Surely we need all kinds of good drivers: family drivers, bus drivers, trailer truck drivers, container van drivers. Our economy would not be possible without good drivers. The kind of English of most successful drivers can be acquired through an elementary school education.

There are many other jobs that are very important in the life of the nation and in our lives that do not require a mastery of what may be called good English. Many of these jobs require only some speaking and reading and little writing of English. It is the kind of English that does *not* require a secondary school education.

May not the education of these people be considered under the term *quality education* as provided for in the Constitution?

That's a very neat question. I think the answer to the question is "It may be considered quality education."

The answer suggests that there are various levels of English that are appropriate for certain kinds of jobs or work. The kind of English needed by the successful driver or the waiter in a restaurant is very different from the level and kind of English needed by a lawyer. For example, the majority of the flunkers in the 1987 bar examinations failed, according to the examiners, because of their poor or inadequate knowledge of English. Poor or inadequate for the knowledge and practice of law.

The English needed by the lawyer (and by those in other professions requiring a good college education such as physicians, engineers, teachers, and accountants) has to be learned well from the very beginning of school life—from grade one and on through elementary and secondary school and in a preparatory bachelor's degree such as an A.B. The English in law proper is specialized English peculiar to law, but the way a future lawyer writes and speaks English is based on the kind of English taught and learned in the lower levels. The chain is actually a very vicious one: good English in college can be learned and is based on good, if possible excellent, secondary English. Good English in the secondary school is based on good English learned in the elementary school, which begins right in the first grade or in kindergarten. Which means that unless good English is taught and learned right from the beginning, secondary school is too late to start teaching and learning it. To start teaching and learning good English in college based on poor elementary and secondary education is a disaster.

Which brings us to the subject of free secondary education.

What is the purpose of giving free secondary education? The rationale for giving free secondary education is based on the belief and assumption that it is considered the minimum kind of education that makes for intelligent and successful participation by the individual in the affairs of society. It is assumed that without that minimum, the citizen cannot participate and contribute fully as a member of modern Philippine society.

It has been claimed by some that one has to have a second year high school education in order to be able to retain and use successfully what one has learned in the lower grades, hence, the need for free secondary education.

I do not think that everyone needs a high school education, just as not everyone needs a college education. Some can be successful members of society with an elementary education or even a primary education provided that elementary or primary education is good.

I think the root of the trouble lies in the belief that all Filipinos need a secondary school education. There is even a belief that everyone should go to college or the university.

7.25 Source of Sportsmanship

One of my early-morning-walking companions is very unpopular among us because he is what is called in Tagalog *pikon.* He loves to say things to us that tend to hurt our feelings which we either ignore or answer in the same vein. He would really get sore (not just pretend) when given a dose of his own medicine. On such occasions he would leave us. He often walks alone. He is one of those persons who love to "give it but cannot take it."

We are almost sure that he never played games where he experienced losing or was punished for losing when he was young.

Poor fellow.

7.26 Candidate for Failure

In my third year of teaching, I taught a combination of grades three and four. Before the close of the school year, the biggest and tallest of my grade four pupils (he was taller than I was) stayed behind after the room was cleaned in the afternoon. In those days janitors were unknown. Classrooms were kept clean by the children who were divided into five groups, one group assigned to one day of the week.

The boy approached me while I was doing my board work for the next day. Seat work had to be prepared and most were written on the blackboard because the style of teaching then called for seat work by one grade while the teacher taught the other grade.

The following is my recollection of what the boy said: "Excuse me, sir. The end of the school year is coming. Soon you will have to pass or fail pupils. I know, sir, that I am not bright and I might fail. But, sir, please let me pass grade four. I promise that I will not go to grade five. I am now big and I will go to the mines around Baguio, maybe in Acupan or Itogon. If you let me pass, sir, when I become old and I have children, I can always tell them that it is too bad that I did not continue going to school even if I passed because I am poor. Had I continued, maybe I could be somebody." I passed him. True to his promise he left school.

After World War II, almost 20 years later, I went to Malacañang to follow up the approval of my papers for a Fulbright-Smith/Mundt scholarship. The guard in the corridor of what is now Maharlika Hall

(the administrative and clerical offices used to be located there) snapped to attention and saluted and said, "Good morning, sir." It was the boy I passed. He had joined the guerrillas against the Japanese during the war and was one of the soldiers who helped in the escape of the late President Manuel Roxas from Baguio.

The reason I write about this incident this early in the school year is simple. This is the time to identify those pupils who are likely to fail at the end of the year. Pupils now are not old enough, in fact even high school graduates are too young, to go to work if they fail. The identification of possible failures will make it possible for the teacher, the principal, and the supervisor to help the child really learn in order to pass and succeed. The best kind of teaching and supervision is that where teacher, administrator, and supervisor all help the child as a team in contrast to the observe-the-teacher/tell-the-teacher-what-to-do style of supervision.

7.27 Tragedy upon Tragedy

As of this writing the entire world is holding its breath: Will a shooting war break out in the Middle East? One Indian seer predicted that war will break out sometime after October 10, 1990. Because of the annexation of Kuwait by Iraq, the United Nations, in an unprecedented move led by the U.S., has imposed sanctions against Iraq.

In the meantime thousands of Filipino overseas workers have lost their jobs and many have returned home to the Philippines to add to the number of jobless Filipinos. Many are still waiting in Jordan and elsewhere to be rescued and brought home.

The crisis caused by the Iraqi annexation of Kuwait has caused untold suffering not only to Filipino workers and their families but also to thousands of other nationalities working in Kuwait and Iraq.

The loss of jobs in the Middle East has caused and will continue to cause misery among Filipino workers and their families. I know of two students from the Ilocos region who have stopped going to school in Manila because their parents lost their jobs in the Middle East. Many more will stop schooling.

To many Filipinos, it is a tragedy of the greatest magnitude. It is a tragedy for our country.

How sad indeed that many of our people have to go to other lands to look for work because we cannot provide them work in our own land. In contrast little Taiwan is looking for workers because of its prosperity.

Napakarami at napakahaba ng kalungkutan ng mga Pilipino. Bakit kaya?

7.28 The Greatest Joy of All

One of the most repeated admonitions issued by the Ministry of Education (I use this term as a cover term for the arm of the government that administers the educational system from 1900 to the present) to teachers, education officials, and parents is the warning on or prohibition of unnecessary expenses in connection with graduation. Teachers and parents are told not to approve or encourage expenses on such items as dresses that are worn just during graduation or on annuals.

While I agree that some expenses are too much and are unreasonable, the rule that graduates should attend graduation ceremonies in their ordinary clothes worn during ordinary days is unreasonable. The prohibition on annuals or publications, it seems to me, is also unreasonable.

I think people should look forward to certain high points in their lives and such high points should be celebrated and a record made of them. One of life's pleasures is being able to look back to beautiful memories. Even drab lives should have their high points of interest or accomplishment. Graduation should be one such high point. And these can and should be recorded in annuals. It is a poor people who have no record of their past and their history. Naturally, one must be willing to save and spend for these things. This in fact should be an important part of the education of the young and our people. Anything that is good should be worth spending for. Graduation should be one

CHAPTER EIGHT

Footprints and Footnotes on the Sands of Time

8.1 Blood on the Tarmac

I left the Philippines for the U.S. on the morning of August 31st, the day Ninoy Aquino was laid to rest. I think it is alright for me to use his nickname because that is what everyone affectionately calls him. When I arrived in the U.S., I read the news that his funeral procession had lasted more than 10 hours and that it was the biggest seen in the Philippines in a long time.

Later, when I met friends, invariably one of the first questions they asked was about the assassination of Ninoy Aquino: What really happened? Almost everyone expected that because I was in Manila during the tragedy I knew what really happened. Many were disappointed because I could not give them satisfactory answers. They were surprised why I didn't know much when I was right here in the midst of where it happened.

Other questions were "Who were really responsible? Who would profit from his death?" Everyone wanted to know the truth. It did not take me long to find out that in several cases, many of the Filipinos in America knew more about the assassination than I did. I think they had more sources of information.

What was revealing was the fact that while these men and women were American citizens, they felt they were Filipinos. They expressed the same anguish, disgust, and anger over what happened.

There was Manong Johnny who left the Philippines in the late twenties when he was barely 17 to work for a while in the sugarcane fields of Hawaii. He now lives in retirement alone. He still talks of the Philippines with deep nostalgia. Often as I talked with him during times when we watched baseball on TV, he never gave me the impression that he was an American. He talked and felt like the Filipinos I know. Many of his relatives are still in the Philippines and he worries about them. Whatever happens in the Philippines interests him and tragedies like Ninoy Aquino's death affect him.

There were Mike and Betty and Ruffy and Cora and others who immigrated to the U.S. in the fifties and sixties and have since become citizens. They asked many questions. They felt unhappy and deeply concerned, and filled my six hours of visit with them (over Chinese or Filipino and American lunch, *merienda,* and dinner) with questions about Ninoy and the Philippines—What's going to happen next? We talked about the Korean Air Lines flight 007 shot down by the Russians where 24 Filipinos perished. We discussed the pros and cons of President Ronald Reagan's proposed visit to the Philippines and other topics. But always the conversation returned to Ninoy Aquino, the political climate, the economy, the future, the dangers—what was in store for Filipinos in the Philippines?

There was Bradley, a young man with a degree in physics. While he was born in the U.S. and therefore a first-generation Filipino American, he was nevertheless informed about the Philippines and he showed a keen interest in what was happening here. I noted that his interest was less emotional, rather more intellectual: What were the prevailing or conflicting ideologies in the Philippines? Who were the leaders who would succeed the present leaders after they are gone? How strong is the Left in the Philippines?

There was Von, 12 years old, born in the Philippines but brought to the U.S. when he was barely a year old. He spoke English exactly like an American boy and it was hard to believe that he was a Filipino, if one just hears him speaking without seeing him. He did not join the conversation. I saw in him the de-ethnicized Filipino, no longer emotionally tied with the Philippines. When he grows up, I wonder how events like the Aquino assassination will affect him. Maybe, like Bradley, it will be mainly of intellectual interest.

Some of my friends asked me if I was not contemplating immigrating to the U.S. They were surprised when I said no, that my place is the Philippines. I told them that I spent the best years of my life here, and it is here where I will spend the rest of my life. I told them I chose to live in the land where Ninoy Aquino chose to return.

I left America thinking about Filipinos gravely concerned about what they still consider their land, a land to which they are still strongly attached emotionally. In more senses than one, they still belong here. The Filipino Americans made me understand and feel that Ninoy Aquino's death touched their own lives. They made me feel that to be a Filipino is much more than just living in another land.

8.2 The Totem Pole

There are six layers (some prefer to call them levels) of managers and supervisors in Philippine education, a fact which a graduate student considers unique. The layers, from the top, are the minister of Education and his staff; regional directors and their staff; provincial or city superintendents and their staff; district supervisor (called supervising teacher before World War II); elementary school principal—but today there are principals I, principals II, III, etc., depending upon how many teachers are "under them"—the use of the term *under* is deliberate because it is in common usage in Philippine schools (in the U.S. the term used by the managers and supervisors is, to my mind, even worse because they say, "So and so works for me"); and the sixth and lowest layer, the head teacher. A post-World War II development is the addition of coordinator, adding one more layer above the classroom teacher. That is perhaps one reason why classroom teachers often refer to themselves as "mere" classroom teachers with some embarrassment or in apologetic tone.

The foregoing situation reminds me of an incident when I was an elementary school principal. The late Cecilio Putong, former director of Public Schools and later secretary of Education, one of the truly great educators this country produced, humble, extremely honest, and the perfect gentleman, visited our school. He saw the organizational chart of the school system in my office, one of those large beautifully handmade organizational charts that adorn administrators' offices. He called me and asked quietly, "Mr. Sibayan, don't you think this chart of the educational system is wrong? It is inverted." I answered, "Sir, it is correct. The secretary of Education is right there on top and all the rest under him."

With a twinkle in his eye (those who have known the late Dr. Putong will remember his very charming eyes), he said, "Look at the poor child right underneath everyone, all these administrators and supervisors on top of him, pressing him down. Don't you think it should be the other way around, the child on top, with all these administrators and supervisors supporting him?"

I never put any organizational chart in my office again.

8.3 Like a Diamond

There are certain persons whose lives tower above others, with facets more brilliant than a diamond. Paz Marquez Benitez, mother, civic leader, writer, and teacher, was one of those rare persons. Because

of her, many other people's lives became better. Her life was both an inspiration and a blessing.

8.4 Born to Greatness

The topic on what should be taught to children brings to my mind a conversation I had with my oldest son regarding Rajiv Gandhi who has been accepted by the majority of the people of India. It also is quite clear that he is admired by other world leaders. And yet he is so young compared with other world leaders. My son and I agreed that one of the main reasons for his apparent success is that he was born to greatness. What he saw and heard and lived from childhood, both from his mother and his grandfather, were honesty and integrity. His grandfather, the incomparable Jawaharlal Nehru was, in the words of Norman Cousins of the *Saturday Review* (I forgot the exact words), not one man but a procession of men: statesman, patriot, scholar, philosopher, writer, etc. So right from the beginning, Rajiv Gandhi was exposed to greatness and to the right way of governing a people. He learned the most basic things not so much in school from teachers but from those who brought him up and the people who surrounded him.

I believe that the family is still the best institution for important values such as honesty and uprightness. The school and other institutions can only help.

(NOTE: Greatness in the context of a political life has its own burdens and risks. Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated while he was campaigning in an election which many believed would have led him to recapture a past he had lost.)

8.5 The Pioneers

Did you know that the Philippine Society for Curriculum Development (PSCD) is celebrating its 30th foundation anniversary this year? that the group was originally called the Philippine Association for Curriculum Development (PACD) and that it was founded by the late Dr. Maria Cid Peralta of the Philippine Women's University who was also its first president? that the name of the society was changed to its present name in 1966 and that PSCD was first used during the seminar on Projections on Curricular Development: Science and Mathematics, Social Studies, Language Arts held at the Mabini Memorial Colleges in Iriga, Camarines Sur? that the reason for the change of name was due to the fact that the acronym PACD was often mistaken for the Presidential Assistant on Community Development with the same acronym? And by the way,

did you know that in one of the Visayan languages the acronym PACD translates into something not exactly flattering?

And did you know that the list of officers and members of the Board of Directors of the PSCD and those who participated actively in the early activities of the society reads like a who's who in Philippine education at the time? Here are some names: Isidoro Panlasigui, Geronima T. Pecson, Horacio de la Costa, S.J., Cecilio Putong, Prudencio Langcauon, Benigno Aldana, Antonio Isidro, Benito Pangilinan, Ariston Estrada, Vitaliano Bernardino, Jesus E. Perpiñan, Daniel Salcedo, Pedro T. Orata, Miguel Gaffud, Jose V. Aguilar, Miguela M. Solis, Liceria B. Soriano, Estefania Aldaba-Lim, Jose T. Cortes.

8.6 Two Upright Men

Those who have intimate knowledge of the public school system know that the school superintendency is one of the most strategic and sensitive positions in the organization. When I expressed this view in a recent conversation with MECS Deputy Minister Jose "Ping" de Jesus, he said that he was glad that his suspicion was being confirmed.

The position of superintendent of schools offers to the honest, hardworking, and brilliant administrator and scholar unlimited opportunities and the necessary power and influence for high achievement by pupils, teachers, and other school personnel and the people of the province or city. Two superintendents who belong to this category come to mind—Jose V. Aguilar who conceptualized and carried out the language experiments of Iloilo and Juan C. Laya who organized community schools in Bataan and wrote about them in "Little Democracies." At the same time, the superintendency is the one position in the MECS that offers many temptations for graft and corruption. Among such temptations to which superintendents may succumb are the requisitions for supplies and materials, athletic equipment, gardening tools, and the like. Fortunately the records in the ministry and in the old department show that, as a whole, most superintendents did not yield to these temptations.

The need to strengthen the superintendency and to the right people to man this extremely important and strategic position, can be one of the most challenging tasks that can confront any minister of Education. The sad fact is that the minister seldom has this opportunity.

8.7 The New Leaders

I would like to extend my congratulations and best wishes to Minister Lourdes Quisumbing with whom I had the pleasure of serving the Philippine Accrediting Association for Schools, Colleges and Universities (PAASCU) for many years; the deputy ministers of MECS in the order of the lady first, then alphabetically: Dr. Minda C. Sutaria who rose from the ranks (a graduate of the two-year general course of the Philippine Normal School) and a former colleague in the Instruction Division of the Bureau of Public Schools in Arroceros and the Philippine Society of Curriculum Development; Arthur D. Defensor whom I still have to meet; Jose "Ping" de Jesus, formerly of the Development Academy of the Philippines, whom I had the pleasure of consulting on a project of the Philippine Normal College at one time; and Dr. Victor M. Ordoñez, former dean of the Graduate School of De La Salle University, who worked with me in a project when I was dean of the PNC Graduate School. I wish all of them success.

Leaders come and go. Their marks on the sands of time may either remain or be washed away, depending on how deep their imprints are.

8.8 Those at the Helm

In a dinner tendered by former MECS Minister Jaime C. Laya in honor of incoming MECS minister Dr. Lourdes R. Quisumbing, invited as special guests were all living former MECS ministers and secretaries: Alejandro R. Roces, now chairman of the editorial board of the *Manila Times,* Onofre D. Corpuz, and Juan L. Manuel. (Education used to be headed by a secretary of Education in the Department of Education until the change to the present terminology during the martial law years.) Seated with the new minister and Dr. Laya were the three former ministers, Demetrio Quirino of the Technological Institute of the Philippines, and this writer.

Conversation revolved mainly around the experiences of past ministers and some of the more recent experiences of Dr. Quisumbing. It was funny that they found difficulty in recalling who succeeded whom in the ministry (department) which prompted Dr. Laya to remark that the ministership of education is ephemeral. Secretary Roces said that the reason the secretary/minister could not do work well was because of the many small matters that he was forced to pay attention to, leaving no time for really big problems and programs. They also gave examples of the many pressures and pressure groups and individuals the minister

had to deal with. A most interesting observation by Dr. Quisumbing is the fact that the MECS is in desperate need of men and women educators with excellent scholarly and administrative abilities.

8.9 Not Our Rivals—Justifiable Pride

I had the rare pleasure, recently, of helping launch a book coauthored by two of my former students. I proudly said that the book would become a classic in the field of scholarship that it treats. I also said that it would be terribly embarrassing for anyone doing work on the subject not to read the volume. It is a book that should not only be read by students of the subject, that on language, but by educated laymen because language touches the life of everyone. Anyone who directs or undertakes research on the subject of language, language surveys, and language education should have a copy within reach at all times.

I was and am very proud of the fact that the authors have rendered a most valuable service and contribution to Philippine and international scholarship because their work is the most comprehensive and the only review on language surveys of any single country anywhere in the world. The volume will be very useful to both local and international scholars.

As I sat in the hall where a number of scholars from various universities in Metro Manila were present, and after I had given my part of the program in which I praised the authors very highly, I realized something very important: I was not jealous because they were my former students. They were not my rivals. They were like my children. I rejoiced in their achievements.

No wonder the world improves because we are happy in the success of our students and our children especially if they surpass us. The senior author of the book took Introduction to Descriptive Linguistics under me in the summer of 1964 when he was only 23 years old; later he enrolled in my courses in morphology and syntax and other subjects. The junior author was my student in the Philippine Normal College-Ateneo de Manila University-De La Salle University consortium for a Ph.D. in Linguistics. I was chairman of her doctoral dissertation committee in which she wrote the prototype model for the study of mixing English and Tagalog now popularly called Taglish; her dissertation was later published in Australia.

The title of the book that I helped launch is ***Language Surveys in the Philippines*** (1966–1984) published by the De La Salle University Press, 1986. The senior author is Andrew Gonzalez, FSC, Ph.D., president of

De La Salle University, and the junior author is Ma. Lourdes S. Bautista, Ph.D., dean of the College of Arts and Sciences of the same university.

And I repeat the message of this essay: Our students, like our children, are never our rivals. We rejoice in their success especially if they surpass us. No wonder the world improves.

And that is the joy of teaching.

8.10 His Name Is Still Adrian

I called up Adrian A. Arcelo to congratulate him for being named to the very important and sensitive position of undersecretary for Finance in the DECS and naturally I addressed him Mr. Undersecretary. He quickly told me, "To my friends who have always called me Adrian, I am still Adrian. I do not want to lose my name."

He is right. Many people lose their names upon their elevation to high positions. Humble, competent, and honest, Adrian Arcelo brings to the DECS a new perspective and style on how things should be done. One thing about him is that he goes to the department without prejudgments especially about people and practices. Whatever he finds out himself is not due to a previous bias, but based on what he himself will learn.

I jokingly told him my favorite quotation on money from Sydney Smith which is "Money is not the most important thing in the world but it is inconvenient not to have it." He and I agreed that in this quotation the one who will be inconvenienced when there is no money in DECS is the Filipino child who needs so many things for his education. I wish Undersecretary Arcelo, a coffee-drinking friend from way back, all the success in the world. Philippine education needs that success.

8.11 Two by Edades

There are two books I recommend to teachers, principals, supervisors, and administrators. I also recommend it to those teaching in colleges and universities. One is *English in a Nutshell,* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1988, ₱40). The other is *Onstage and Offstage* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1983, ₱44). Both books are by the distinguished teacher and writer, Jean G. Edades.

English in a Nutshell is a very handy reference for some of the most troublesome uses of prepositions, wrong expressions made right, and a simple guide to pronunciation. The book contains a Foreword by

Salvador P. Lopez. The first part of *Onstage and Offstage* contains very interesting and insightful personal experiences of Mrs. Edades in the development of Philippine plays and accounts of the creative work of several Philippine playwrights and actors and actresses at the University of the Philippines, Arellano University, Silliman University, Brent School, and in Davao, where she lives at present. The second part consists of six noteworthy short plays of the thirties and the forties which can be easily staged in high schools, colleges, and universities. The plays also show the development of Philippine English.

8.12 Achievement in Chess

As I write this, the biggest news in the sports page is the seventh place finish of the Philippine chess team (Grand Master Eugene Torre, International Masters Rico Mascariñas and Ruben Rodriguez, and National Masters Rogelio Antonio and Eric Gloria, the sensational 16 year-old Rogelio Barcenilla, Jr. [who defeated GM Ivan Sokolov, one of Europe's rising grand masters], and nonplaying captain Edgar de Castro) in the 28th Chess Olympiad held in Thessaloniki, Greece. This is a very great achievement considering the fact that 107 nations participated in the chess olympiad.

The Philippines ranked higher than such countries as West Germany, Spain, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Iceland, Israel, Sweden, Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, Denmark, Argentina, and Cuba, countries which have a long tradition of excellence in chess. Most of these countries have a minimum of four GMs in their teams. This is the kind of achievement that we Filipinos should be very proud of. The chess team deserves our praise and congratulations.

Chess is a game where brains, not size, count. It is a game that Filipinos can excel in, so we need to encourage it. It is the kind of activity that takes away children from mischief. It can easily be promoted by the schools. Chess deserves our support.

8.13 The Teniente del Barrio

During the years that I was a barrio and central school teacher and a district supervisor in the provinces of Benguet and Ifugao, one of the most important helpers of the schools was the lowly teniente del barrio. He was selected and designated by the elders of the barrio. His services were for free. He was the willing and happy all-around helper of the barrio. He performed such important tasks as seeing to it that truant children attended school. It was he who helped fix the

thatched roof of the schoolhouse after a typhoon and if he could not do it alone, he asked the people to help.

Now the teniente del barrio is gone. He has been replaced by a person with a much higher-sounding title, that of captain. The barangay captain will be paid out of government funds and has privileges and perquisites.

8.14 The Real Gentleman

As I write this, Dr. Jaime C. Laya (Jimmy to his friends), former Central Bank governor and minister of Education, Culture and Sports, is the subject in all the newspapers regarding his shameful treatment by U.S. authorities at the Honolulu International Airport. To think that he was ill-treated by a people supposedly espousing fair treatment, human rights, and all the good and noble things in the world, is something very difficult to understand. I am glad that Jimmy shamed the Americans with his gentleness. In my book, Jimmy Laya, the gentleman son of an intellectual gentleman father and lady mother, is one of the very best to ever head the education department. He emphasized the attainment of excellence in Philippine education.

8.15 Pedro T. Orata: Thinker and Doer

Those people fortunate enough to have known Dr. Pedro T. Orata intimately as a professional educator and as a private person will realize all too keenly what a rich life of scholarship, friendship, and great, uncommon but practical wisdom came to a close on July 13, 1989.

He was born in Urdaneta, Pangasinan, on February 27, 1899, the son of Ilocano farmer immigrants Candido Arata (capital *A* is correct, not *O*) of Tubao, La Union, and Numeriana Tamesis of Cabugao, Ilocos Sur. He decided to change his family name to Urata while he was still in primary school because the teachers seated pupils in alphabetical order and were made to recite in the same order. He later changed it to Orata because that was just right for seating and reciting purposes (Gregorio Borlaza, *The Life and Work of Pedro Orata* [Manila: Philippine Christian University, 1984]).

Like the boys and girls of that early period, he walked barefoot to attend the first four grades in Urdaneta and grade five in Binalonan which was 11 kilometres away. He finished grade seven in Urdaneta in 1916. He attended the Pangasinan Provincial High School in Lingayen from 1916 to 1920, where he graduated valedictorian. High school graduates were rare in those days. He could have become a teacher

or he could have joined the government service but he did not. Like other adventurous Ilocanos, he dreamed of going to the United States where one could work and study at the same time. With the money that his sister had saved in Lingayen when she cooked and did housework and took in boarders to see him through high school, he left for the U.S. by steerage and arrived in Seattle, Washington, in the middle of June 1920.

As a working student, he studied at the University of Illinois in Urbana and obtained a bachelor's degree in education, with honors, in 1924. Because of his graduating with honors, the University of Illinois granted him a graduate scholarship which paid his tuition and a stipend of $300 a year. The Philippine government also made him a partial *pensionado,* which was a great help. He continued doing part-time work so he could send money home. He obtained a master's degree with honors in 1925. In recognition of his academic achievement, he was granted a graduate assistantship at the Ohio State University (OSU) where he worked for a Ph.D. in psychology, which he obtained in 1927. His doctoral dissertation on identity of principles as more conducive to transfer of training than Edward Lee Thorndike's identity of elements was published by OSU, a rare distinction. Thorndike was to eventually abandon his identity of elements theory and Orata's identify of principles gained acceptance. It is rather curious that Orata has not been given more credit for this academic achievement.

A highly academically prepared and very pragmatic Dr. Orata returned to the Philippines in 1927. He was assigned as instructor at the then Bayambang Normal School (now Pangasinan State University) but before the semester was over, he was transferred to the then Philippine Normal School. He was soon assigned as assistant chief of the Research and Evaluation Division, central office of the Bureau of Education. He topped the division superintendents examination and was assigned to the province of Isabela as superintendent of schools before he was 30, the youngest at the time. From Isabela he was transferred to Sorsogon where he served for three years (1931-1934). While he was superintendent he published many articles, some of which were considered controversial. One characteristic of PTO was that he spoke out his mind.

As a superintendent of schools, he emphasized scholarship, research, and concrete results and achievements of teachers and pupils. He was obsessed by tangible achievements, both academic and practical. He insisted that teachers' conferences and meetings should result in better pupil academic achievement. If such meetings did not obtain better teaching and pupil achievement and improvement, then

they were a waste of time and money. In later years he severely condemned workshops which he called "talkshops."

It seems that he was not happy about a number of things in Philippine education, including the climate in which one should be free to express what one thinks. In 1934 he returned to the U.S. where he was offered a faculty position in his alma mater, the Ohio State University. After two years at OSU, he accepted a position as principal of a school in an Indian reservation in South Dakota (1936-1937). It was in this school that he introduced many innovative ideas revolving around the concept of self-help which was to be the cornerstone of the barangay high school, his most lasting contribution to Philippine education.

His work at the Indian reservation school and a four-volume report on it so impressed the Americans that he was invited to serve at the U.S. Office of Education first as supervisor of home economics and later as specialist in Guidance and Vocational Information. It was in Washington where he and Camilo Osias who was on special assignment for the Philippine government met. Osias persuaded Orata to come back to the Philippines where his expertise was needed. PTO returned to Manila in 1941 shortly before the outbreak of the war to work as technical assistant in the National Council of Education.

Then the Japanese occupied the Philippines. Osias was appointed deputy minister of Education and Culture, and Orata worked with him as an assistant. Those were unhappy years. PTO requested that he be allowed to return to Urdaneta about a year before the war ended, where he waited for the liberation of the Philippines.

There is a story that must be told because it illustrates the bold and original thinking that characterized the work of PTO and, more important, the start of a movement in Philippine education that was to change the shape and character of Philippine high school education permanently—whether for good or otherwise will depend upon one's philosophy of education.

When Urdaneta was liberated by the Americans (it will be recalled that the biggest American liberation force to land in Luzon landed in Pangasinan), PTO received an appointment as "Director of Education" of the "City of Urdaneta" from an American captain. The school system directed from Manila was not yet organized. Everything was in chaos. He was ordered by the American officer to reorganize the schools and make them going. He did.

PTO did something unheard of. He put together a group of professionals, lawyers, doctors, pharmacists, and others as members of the high school faculty. He also gathered all the now overaged high school students. The roofless Urdaneta Roman Catholic Church became

the high school building. The floor was divided into four sections by lines, one section for each year of high school. The teachers and classes took up any subject they thought was important. After less than three months, the first class of 35 high school seniors were graduated. Handwritten diplomas were handed to them.

The graduation had to be recognized and legalized. PTO brought up the matter with higher authorities in the Department of Education in Manila. Fortunately the secretary of Education in the cabinet under President Sergio Osmeña was Francisco Benitez, another original thinker and educational giant who had founded the U.P. College of Education in 1918. Dean Benitez approved the graduation.

With the establishment of the Urdaneta Community High School, the first high school outside Lingayen, the provincial capital, was born.

I first met Dr. Orata in 1962 when I transferred from the General Office to the PNC to accept a professorship in linguistics and education. PTO was dean of the PNC Graduate School. He had returned to the Philippines in 1960 after a dozen years as program specialist at the UNESCO in Paris (1948-1960) where he dealt with educators from all over the world. Prior to his UNESCO assignment, he served as chief of the Curriculum and Research Division of the Bureau of Education and head of the technical staff of the Joint Congressional Committee on Education.

He was a severe critic of second language teaching (SLT). He was against (and rightly so) the mindless repetition and rote learning in the so-called pattern practice by the early advocates of SLT. His favorite story on SLT concerned an incident where he met some children outside the gate of a school. He greeted the children, "Good morning, children."

Children: Good morning, sir.

Orata: Is your teacher in school?

Children: Fine, thank you. Please sit down.

Unlike many who were not well informed on the theory and principles of SLT but never took steps to understand it, Dr. Orata took pains to learn as much about it as he could. I had many discussion sessions with him on the subject. There were times, however, when we argued heatedly on certain points and many of our colleagues at PNC got the impression that we often quarreled. They were therefore surprised when after these arguments in the dean's office in the morning we would be seen having lunch together at the college cafeteria. They did not know that Dean Orata and I never allowed our intellectual differences to interfere with our friendship and respect for each other. It was precisely these intellectual differences and encounters that made us the best of friends.

Of the many contributions of PTO to Philippine education, the one with the most lasting effect on Philippine life and thought is the barangay high school (BHS). He and I agreed on a number of ideas and principles on the BHS but we differed in a couple of concepts. Of the many educational topics we talked about, it is the BHS that drew our sharpest arguments.

We agreed that the BHS should be a self-supporting and self-help high school by the people of the barrio or barangay or community with very little, if any, funding from the government. We thought that buildings and other facilities should be used to the maximum, hence the BHS's use of elementary school buildings and facilities. Both of us took the position that BHS education should be terminal (he later changed his position on this matter). One of the beliefs which we shared very strongly was that of self-help. He was very happy when the BHS started to be accepted nationally. However, while he did not object to some help from government, he was very unhappy when the BHS's most important features, those of self-help and self-support, started to be abandoned in favor of more and more help from and dependency on the government. He believed very strongly that people or institutions that depended on others instead of themselves would deteriorate. I fully agreed with him.

We disagreed on the employment of elementary school teachers to teach high school subjects after a full day of elementary school teaching. (I told him that our points of view differed in this respect because my belief was based on my work as an elementary classroom teacher, where at the end of the day I was very, very tired while he never had the benefit of such experience.) I also felt that elementary school teachers who had no training in high school teaching would have poorly educated high school pupils; he believed that it is better to have a poorly educated person than a person with no education. I argued that a poor education was no education, that it would only make the person disillusioned and frustrated and in most cases unemployed; he said that it was better to have a poorly educated unemployed than to have an uneducated unemployed. I gave examples of people to support my beliefs and he did the same for his beliefs.

Dr. Orata was a prolific writer on a great range of topics. Unknown to many educators, he was a first-class bibliographer in education. He even did a 100-entry [item] bibliography on postwar economic problems of the Philippines. He was one of two educators I knew who was genuinely interested in bibliography work. (NOTE: The Philippines needs first-class bilbiographers in education.)

There were facets of Dr. Orata's life that very few people knew. He loved trees and plants, dogs, cats, the land and landscapes. He loved

classical music which he played early mornings or in the evening. He loved the music of Mozart, Beethoven, Bach, Chopin, Brahms, Haydn, Handel, Wagner, Mendelssohn, and other great masters.

He and Mrs. Orata were the perfect hosts. Once, on my way from Baguio to Manila in the seventies, my car developed serious engine trouble that could be handled only by a first-class mechanic or by a major repair shop. Fortunately it occurred in Urdaneta. We pushed the car to Dr. Orata's home (where it was eventually repaired by my mechanic son). He was so happy to see me. That evening we talked until past midnight. Very early the next morning, I was awakened by Beethoven's "Pastoral". When I got downstairs, he told me that the water that he personally heated was ready for my bath. I was terribly embarrassed.

Not too long after his retirement from PNC in February 1964, he accepted an invitation as senior scholar in curriculum development at the East-West Center in Honolulu. I visited him there on my way to a conference in the U.S. Mrs. Orata prepared a very tasty dinner which included *mahi-mahi,* Honolulu's tastiest fish. PTO insisted that I spend the night with them. We talked about Philippine education and other subjects beyond midnight. I remember him telling me that too many superintendents waited for instructions from above. He wished there were more scholarly superintendents who had original ideas and projects.

In 1971 he was awarded the prestigious Ramon Magsaysay Award for public service. He used the award money to support his many school and community projects.

In Pedro T. Orata's death, the Philippines lost one of its most truly sincere, dedicated, original, and independent thinkers. I personally lost a very warm, human, and scholar friend.

It will be a very, very long time before the Philippines will produce one like him again.

8.16 Pedro T. Orata: Bibliography

One of the honored customs in academe is to publish a bibliography of the complete works of a departed scholar as a part of the obituary which is usually printed in a journal dedicated to his scholarly concern. Because of the tremendous volume of Dr. Pedro T. Orata's writings which can best be contained in a substantial monograph, it is not possible to print his complete works here. However, in observance of that tradition, we print a very short list (which only hints, but is not even truly representative, of the range of his scholarship) of some of

the works of Dr. Orata, one of the truly intellectual giants of Philippine education.

Dr. Orata had written for the *Philippine Journal of Education* at various times in the past. It would be interesting and a distinct contribution to Philippine educational scholarship if a graduate student working for a doctoral degree did a complete bibliography and an analysis of the works of PTO as part of a study in the history of the development of educational thinking by Filipino educators. (To those interested in the life and works of Dr. Pedro T. Orata, I recommend Dr. Borlaza's book cited on p. 215.

(NOTE: The following partial information on bibliographies prepared by Dr. Orata during the years 1941, 1946, and 1947 shows his almost unbelievable capacity for sustained mental work: *Occupational information and guidance bibliography* containing 2,808 entries; *Bibliography of postwar economic problems of the Philippines,* 100 entries; *Bibliography of Philippine studies and investigations,* 600 entries; *Bibliography of Philippine education,* 6,000 entries covering the period from pre-Spanish to 1947 [see Borlaza 1984, 81].)

Token List

1927. The humanizing of geographic knowledge. *Journal of Geography.* October.

1932. A study of errors in letters of application. *Philippine Public Schools.* March.

The use of an intrinsic device to motivate and stimulate professional reading among teachers and supervisors. *Philippine Journal of Education.* March.

Sorsogon research studies, 1931-32. *Philippine Journal of Education.* November.

1933. A critical evaluation of scientific studies and investigations in the Philippines. *Philippine Teachers Digest.* March.

1934. The insignificance of the statistically significant. *Educational Administration and Supervision.* May.

1936. Evaluation in the field of social science. *Educational Method.* December.

1938. Progressive look at progressive education. *Educational Administration and Supervision.* November.

Annotated bibliography (in education). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Printing Office. (A 521-page book containing 4,413 entries).

1940. Evaluating the Evaluator. *Journal of Educational Research.* May.

Test of the socially competent person by Mort, Paul R., and others: A critical appraisal and interpretation. *The 1940 Mental Measurement Yearbook.*

1946. The Philippines and world peace. *The Sunday Post.* Nov. 3.

1947. How does the Philippines stand among the United Nations? *Evening News Magazine.* February 15.

1948. Mechanized farming by contract. *This Week.* June 27.

1974. Self-help projects to enable poor high school and college students to earn their tuition fees. (Mimeographed Bulletin.)

1976. Piglet project plan revised. (Mimeographed bulletin).

8.17 Miss Salonga

I first saw Lea Salonga act in *Little Annie* when she was a small girl. She was very impressive. At that early age, one could feel she had class. Now she is a world celebrity. At the moment of this writing, the papers (both local and foreign) are full of almost, if not, extravagant praise for her debut on the London stage on September 20, 1989. Lea Salonga makes me proud to be a Filipino especially at these times when there is so much (all these scams) that we Filipinos cannot be proud of.

She reminds me of the time my wife and I rode in a cab from Ben Gurion Airport to Jerusalem in early September 1986. When the cab driver learned we were Filipinos, he warmed up and said, "You are a splendid people for driving away a dictator." I cannot forget his use of the word *splendid.* We noted the respect he had for us. He was all praise for Filipinos for what they did at EDSA in February 1986. My wife and I were so proud to be identified as Filipinos. Again, I have the same feeling because of this gem of an actress.

There is a lesson in Lea Salonga. Without in any way subtracting from her personal achievement, we must also give credit to the people who helped make her into what she is. I do not know Zeneida Amador personally, but she and her associates at Repertory Philippines must be congratulated for helping educate Lea. I have the highest respect for people who build other people, especially those who seek talent and develop it. It is people who help build other people to help others who should be emulated and honored. Money is important and convenient to have but, first, there must be the right people who can recognize talent and help develop it for the achievement of greatness. Lea Salonga happened because there were people who made her possible.

I would say that is one of the best formulas for success.

8.18 Claro Mayo Recto, Nationalist and Patriot

The month of February should bring to mind one of the greatest men the Philippines ever produced. The 1935 Constitution of which Claro M. Recto was one of the chief architects was approved in February 1935. One thing about Recto was that he was a true nationalist and patriot in spite of the fact that he was Spanish (language) dominant, a fact which proves that Filipino (the language) should be advanced not as a mark of nationalism but on other more legitimate grounds.

I suggest that values-biased educators produce a book on great Filipinos. I am sure that the values gleaned from the lives of such great men as Recto, Conrado and Francisco Benitez, Maximo Kalaw, Jose P. Laurel, and the heroes of earlier generations will have a great impact on the sense of values of our children.

8.19 Continuing Education with Dr. Juan M. Flavier of JJRR

Did you know that superintendents, assistant superintendents, district supervisors, gardening and industrial arts teachers, or home arts teachers may contact Dr. Juan M. Flavier, the original doctor to the barrios, president of the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction, Silang, Cavite, Philippines, for arrangements in a cooperative program of continuing education?

Dr. Flavier and his staff have experts in such subjects as pest control without the use of insecticides; crop planning, companion planting, and the use of the garden fence for producing many kinds of vegetables; collecting and storing seeds, and in more detail, what they call "bio-intensive" approach to small-scale household food production.

Dr. Flavier told his writer that he and his associates would be happy to have a consortium with schools on a first-come, first-served basis. They now have a cooperative program with schools in the Bicol provinces.

I suggest that you write Dr. Flavier if you are interested in continuing education in your communities. They even have literacy programs.

8.20 The Unnamed Ones

We add our tiny voice in giving praise to the heroes during the search and rescue work and related activities after the July 16 killer earthquake. The miners, the cadets of the Philippine Military Academy, the many

courageous but anonymous people, some of them very young boys, who saved lives and did other acts of unselfishness and love. We also thank the many foreign rescue teams—American, Japanese, Singaporean, British, and others—who came with their expertise and equipment to help earthquake victims. We praise all people, both local and foreign, who donated relief goods.

At the same time, we must record our shame and condemnation of those who stole or diverted relief goods from the victims.

8.21 Preface from the Teacher's Bible

Did you know that the Philippine public school system has a bible? This bible is called *Service Manual* (SM). Originally published in 1912, it has undergone three revisions: 1917, 1927, and 1960. Unfortunately, we have copies only of the 1927 and 1960 revisions. If there is anyone in the field who has a copy of the 1912 and 1917 editions, we would like to borrow it and have it photocopied for the library collections of the Philippine Journal of Education and the PNC.

Before World War II, the SM was a required reading of all teachers, supervisors, and superintendents. Even those in the office of the division superintendents found the SM profitable reading in connection with their work.

The following quotation from the Preface of the 1927 SM is both interesting and very informative:

> . . .in its present form, the manual embodies only those regulations promulgated by this bureau which are believed to be more or less permanent . . . The *Service Manual* is issued primarily for the purpose of acquainting teachers, supervisors, superintendents with the rules, regulations, and general policies of the Bureau of Education, to enable them to act as promptly and as intelligently as possible on matters coming within their own limited jurisdictions . . . For this reason it is highly desirable that teachers and supervisors acquaint themselves with the contents of the manual. It is specially important that teachers rendering their first year of service in the bureau be given an opportunity to read Chapter IX on General Information.

Teachers then were not only "given opportunity" to read the SM, they were required to read the manual and then were tested on their knowledge of the provisions of the SM during Saturday or monthly meetings.

Many of the practices and traditions still found in Philippine education today, especially among teachers, can be traced to the requirements and provisions of the SM.

8.22 Sins of Commission

Did you know that in the 1927 SM there is a provision which makes it practically impossible on the part of the teacher to criticize policies or one's superiors? We quote the following provision on criticism from the 1927 SM in full because it is not only interesting and informative but because we strongly believe that it is responsible for the tradition of almost blind obedience on the part of teachers up to the present day. The regulation requires that any teacher who disagrees with policies or with his superiors should tender his resignation. Because most teachers come from the poorer segment of the population, and before World War II it was very difficult to find a job, one can understand why teachers preferred to be silent rather than criticize or voice their opinions.

It is this tradition that many so-called old-timers in the public schools called "the discipline of teachers of long ago."

Section 611, pages 221 to 222 of the 1927 SM is quoted in full:

> Employees should not feel that they are deprived of the ordinary amount of freedom of speech allowed government employees elsewhere. Such freedom can, however, extend to the point where it interferes with discipline and morale of the force. Employees who may feel aggrieved because things are not done as they believe should be, and who express their dissatisfaction to outsiders and to other government employees, should remember that no business house would long keep in its service employees disgruntled with their own organization and the men above them. In this connection, the following is quoted from a former governor-general:
>
> "The undersigned does not object to criticism coming from those who may properly and lawfully indulge in that pastime. Oftentimes such criticism helps to create a healthy public sentiment, and sometimes it proves to be a very useful guide for official conduct. Subordinate officers of the government holding office by appointment or selection, however, have no right to constitute themselves the critics and censors of their superiors. To permit them to do so would soon destroy all discipline and reduce the government service to the same state of efficiency as that of an army composed exclusively of brigadier-generals. If any subordinate officer or employee is not

> in accord with the policy of his chief, the discipline of the service and the amenities and conventionalities require that his freedom to criticize and censure in some other way than officially prescribed must be secured by sending in his resignation."

Those were the words that prescribed the norm of conduct of teachers up to 1960. One should note that the word *discipline*, while not underlined or emphasized, is stressed in the regulation that is quoted. Another interesting fact is that in the 1960 revision of the SM (Sec. 551, p. 246) the quotation from the governor-general was eliminated. The section ends with the phrase "the men above them." The provision "that no business house would long keep in its service employees disgruntled with their own organization and the men above them" was still threatening. And the tradition continued because it was retained in the 1960 SM which is the latest. We are not aware of any plans to have the SM revised. One happy development, however, needs to be mentioned here. It seems that the SM is no longer read and seldom invoked. However, the traditions it has built are still strong and ever present.

8.23 Teacher's Money Rights

Did you know that more than half a century ago teachers in the public schools were not allowed to lend money on real or personal property without written permission from the director of Education and the secretary of Public Instruction? Not only that, teachers had to get written permission to make investments in Philippine stocks and bonds. Neither were teachers allowed to engage in any private business, vocation, or profession, or be connected with any commercial undertaking without written permission from the same higher authorities. The regulation provided that "In general, permission to engage in business transactions of any kind is not given if the entire time of the employee is not left free for government business" 1927 SM, Sec. 614.

Yes, the key phrase was that the entire time of the employee must be left free for government business. While that tradition was somewhat broken after the Second World War, the average teacher today still devotes all her time to teaching and nonteaching duties. I am sure that many who read this know of teachers who left the profession to engage in more lucrative pursuits. To be a teacher then, as now, is to make a vow of poverty.

I quote below the entire provisions on Restrictions on Business Activity (1927, SM, Sec. 614):

> No officer or employee shall engage in any private business, vocation, or profession, or be connected with any commercial undertaking, or lend money on real or personal property, without written permission from the director of Education and the secretary of Public Instruction. Employees desiring to make investments in Philippine stocks and bonds are usually given permission on application therefore. No permission is needed to deposit money in banks or similar institutions at ordinary rates of interest. In general, permission to engage in business transactions of any kind is not given if the entire time of the employee is not left free for government business. Employees of the Bureau of Education should not act, either directly or indirectly, as agents for, hold stock in, or be financially interested in any commercial venture, the business of which is to furnish books, school stationery, magazines, periodicals, athletic goods, or other materials for school purposes. This does not apply to an author's royalties, provided the employee had previous permission to engage in writing.

Finally, did you know that the prohibition and restrictions are reiterated in the 1960 edition of the SM (Sec. 554) which is currently in use? I am not aware of these prohibitions having been revised or eliminated. One happy development in Philippine education, however, is that there is much more leeway in the application of old rules and regulations at the present time. Teachers and other employees surely invest in stocks and bonds now. Many schools, colleges, and universities now run cooperatives that sell books, stationery, athletic goods, and other school supplies and are making a handsome profit.

With this development, however, the irregularities that were anticipated and which the regulations tried to forestall have cropped up in some instances. Many old-timers in education recall the "good old days" when *delicadeza* was the norm of conduct. The younger generation, unaware of a historical past, lives in accordance with the rules of the game at the present.

The most disastrous effect of the teachers' plight is the lowering of the quality of education. Teachers cannot concentrate and give their best with all their economic and other difficulties. I remember that when I was a classroom teacher, whenever we were in money difficulties my mind was not in my teaching. And I write of a time when the teacher was relatively much better off, of a time when many of those who graduated from college and became professionals were the children of teachers.

8.24 Automatic Eligibility

Did you know that in the twenties and early thirties, graduates of the Philippine Normal School were considered junior teacher eligibles without examination? So were graduates of the U.P. College of Education with high school teachers' certificates (H.S.T.C.) or Bachelor of Science in Education (B.S.E.) degrees. Secondary school graduates of the Philippine School of Arts and Trades (now Technological University of the Philippines) when appointed as shop teachers were also considered junior teacher eligibles (1927 SM, Sec. 318).

8.25 A Time to Study

Did you know that the 1927 SM of the Bureau of Education instructs teachers and supervising officials to "see that pupils are taught proper methods of study. Sufficient time, especially in secondary and in the upper elementary years, should be given to this phase of schoolwork so that pupils may be able to use intelligently the most effective means in attacking various problems that come up in connection with the study of different school subjects and that will come up in postschool life" (1927 SM, Sec. 121).

How much time is devoted today to teaching pupils how to study? This should be part of the responsibility of educated members of the family and the community.

8.26 The Good News

Did you know that Republic Act no. 4670, more popularly known as the Magna Carta for Public School Teachers which went into effect on June 18, 1966, has the following very interesting and pertinent provisions?

> Section 1. Declaration of Policy—It is hereby declared to be the policy of this act to promote and improve the social and economic status of public school teachers, their living and working conditions, their employment and career prospects in order that *they may compare favorably with existing opportunities in other walks of life,* attract and retain in the teaching profession more people with proper qualifications, it being recognized that advance in education depends on the qualifications and ability of the teaching staff and that education is an essential factor in the economic growth of the nation as productive investment of vital importance. (Emphasis supplied.)

Section 16. Salary Scale—Salary scales of teachers shall provide for a gradual progression from a minimum to a maximum salary by means of regular increments granted automatically after three years, provided, that the efficiency rating of the teacher concerned is at least satisfactory. The progression from the minimum to the maximum of the salary scale shall not extend over a period of ten years.

Section 17. Equality in Salary Scales—The salary scales of teachers whose salaries are appropriated by a city, municipal, municipal district, or provincial government shall not be less than those provided for teachers of the national government.

Section 18. Cost of Living Allowance—Teachers' salaries shall, at the very least, keep pace with the rise in the cost of living by the payment of cost-of-living allowances which shall automatically follow changes in cost-of-living allowances of teachers employed by the national government. The determination of the cost-of-living allowances by the secretary of Education shall, upon approval of the President of the Philippines, be binding on the city, municipal, or provincial government, for the purposes of calculating the cost-of-living allowances of teachers under its employ.

8.27 Moving On

In 1927, the following were excerpts of the rules and regulations on the promotion (or failing) of pupils (Bureau of Education. SM, [Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1927] 230-231).

Sec. 641. The modern educational administrator must study the progress of the pupils through the grades to see if it corresponds to the time specified by the course. He must attend to individual differences of pupils; give special attention to attendance and discipline; aid the improvement of the periodical and written quizzes, which are important in determining the final rating of the pupils; and closely supervise the rating system.

Sec. 642. Since the final examinations have been abolished, it is especially important that the teachers' ratings of the work of the pupils be carefully supervised. Teachers usually object to being told that their standards of grading are either too high or too low, but every investigation conducted in the United States and in the Philippines has shown that teachers, if left to their own discretion, use very different standards in rating the same piece of work, except in the objective-type examination of which the value is always more or less fixed. It is conceded that the teacher is the final judge (barring

evidence of favoritism or incapacity) of the relative standing of all pupils in his classes, but the administrative authorities are the final judges of the system of marking and the distribution of marks to be used. When it is very evident that a teacher's grades are too high or too low in comparison with those of the other teachers of similar classes, he should be required to adjust the general range of his marks. For these reasons the bureau will be glad to have principals experiment along the line of determining standards of marking.

Sec. 643. The principal must use all possible means to ensure fair action on the final promotion or failure of pupils in their term's work. No pupil should ever be failed unless it is clear that he will not be able to do the work of the next higher grade. Teaching should be so efficient and adaptable to individual needs that pupils who are not deficient mentally are able to complete the minimum annual requirements in one year's time. Our scheme of education presupposes a course of study which any average pupil can complete in the specified time. A large number of failures is a blot on the teacher's and on the principal's record, for by the law of averages and under ordinary circumstances, a reasonably high percentage of pupils are entitled to pass.

How do present rules and regulations on ratings and promotion compare with the foregoing?

CHAPTER NINE

Myths, Parables, and Prayers

9.1 Stranger Than Fiction

Every profession has its share of classic anecdotes about members of the profession. I would like to relate two on teaching which picture the plight of teachers.

The late Venancio Trinidad, former director of Public Schools, loved to tell an anecdote about the old teacher who went to collect his salary. The teacher belonged to that generation of Filipino men (the women of the same generation did not seem to have been victims of the habit) who licked their right thumbs to give a more sticky feel on the paper bill so that only one piece instead of two was counted at a time. The cashier who was observing him said, "You should not do that. There are germs in those paper bills because they have passed through so many hands. You will get sick."

The old teacher looked at the cashier in the eye and said, "Listen, son. Not even germs can live on teachers' salary."

Then there was the teacher in the early days of the school system when teachers were struggling to master the English language. She sent in her resignation in the following words: "I have the honor to resignate because the works are too many and the salaries are too few and the supervising teacher is trying to make lovings to me and I said, oh not, oh not, oh not . . ."

These may be stories of an earlier era but they are significant and still applicable to teachers of today, perhaps even more painfully and truthfully. Teachers are not only overworked and underpaid; worse, they are often taken for granted.

Teachers are overworked because they have been made to do too many activities that should be done by other sectors of the population. It may have been reasonable to have many of these activities done

by teachers in the days when the majority of the people were not educated. But no longer. Let me cite just two examples.

Take boy and girl scouting. In many communities where there are educated parents, these activities should be taken over by individuals or organizations.

A better example is that of work during elections. Teachers are made to do election work because of the belief that they are honest and can be trusted. While this may be a "tribute" to teachers, it is actually a sad commentary on our maturity as a people. It implies that the other sectors of the population cannot be trusted and are immature to do this kind of work. That is a serious indictment of our people.

9.2 Requiescat En Pace

This being the month of November, the month when it is the custom of majority of the people to visit their dead, I would like to suggest, without intending in any way at blasphemy or irreverence, that we take an imaginary visit to some of the tombstones of Philippine education.

The first tombstone that we see is that of the Philippine community school. The epitaph reads: "Here lies the Community School. Born in or about 1950, it died with its children named Reading Centers, Model Piggery, Model Orchard, Model This and That, around the sixties."

The community school was considered one of those genuinely indigenous Philippine ideas in education. Its death, while not exactly a mystery, has not been satisfactorily explained up to the present. It needs investigation by Filipino scholar-educators.

The epitaph on the next tombstone reads: "Here lies Pattern Practice, one of the children of Second Language Teaching. An adopted child of Philippine Education, it died in the sixties. Probable cause of death was indiscriminate and misunderstood use."

The third tombstone is that of integration and the epitaph reads: "Underneath this tombstone lies Integration, one more of those adopted children of Philippine Education. Brought to the Philippines around 1950, those who adopted it did not know that unrestrained freedom in the classroom or anywhere is not good for anyone. Its death was unlamented."

9.3 Moving up the Ladder

Guess what decade the following description was written?

> The third and most important reason why the academic is preferred to the vocational course . . . (is because) Filipino parents of the professional and propertied classes naturally wish their

children to maintain a social status at least as high as that to which they are born, and it would never occur to them to train their offspring for any but a professional career. Those of the working classes are determined that, if possible, their sons and daughters shall move up in the social scale, and this means that they shall progress into occupations which do not involve manual labor. The *tao* does not aspire to have his son follow the carabao through the rice paddies as he has done. The tenant farmer or the city laborer is not raising his boy to be a poor but honest workman. He wants little Juan to become a government employee, or a clerk in an office, or a doctor, lawyer, dentist, pharmacist, teacher, or some kind of "professional" who will live in a class above that of his forebears. He knows that other boys not better than his have achieved this sort of success. This is his goal and when he sacrifices himself and the rest of his family to keep his boy in school through the intermediate or high school grades, he wants the boy to take those courses which seem to him to lead most directly to it.

Did you know that that was a description of the Filipino parent and his sons (children) more than half a century ago? If you look around today, has anything changed? Why do we have the NCEE? Think about that. The above quotation is from Joseph Ralston Hayden's *The Philippines: A Study in National Development* (New York: Macmillan, 1942), page 525.

9.4 The Fox and the Cat

We are all for values education. However, may I suggest that we start and concentrate on just a couple: those of honesty and integrity. Just these two, please, for a long while. Other values can follow after these two. In making these suggestions, I am reminded of the fable about the fox and the cat who met in the woods one day.

The fox asked the cat, "By the way, cat, how many tricks do you know?"

The cat said, "Come to think of it, I only know one."

The fox said, "Poor cat. Do you know that I know more than a hundred tricks?" Just then they heard hunting dogs barking in the distance. The dogs came nearer and nearer and soon were upon them. The cat, to save her life, did the only trick she knew: she quickly climbed the nearest tree. On the other hand, the fox died saying to himself, "Which of my hundred tricks should I do now? Which of my many . . ."

9.5 Hindi Naman Atin To, E

The present (end of July 1987) criticisms aired in the press by concerned citizens and some members of the press on the seemingly too large salaries, allowances, and other expenses appropriated by senators and congressmen for themselves bring to my mind an incident involving our driver and the public-choice theory that won for James Buchanan the 1986 Nobel Prize in economics. No two examples of the phenomenon we are witnessing in the Philippines (and I understand in other countries as well) can be more contrasting in the sense that one is taken from the lives of ordinary human beings and the other from the highest planes of intellectual life.

A couple of years back, our driver was chided by our very frugal and sensible maid on his use of too much laundry detergent in washing his clothes (our drivers are generally allowed to help themselves to the laundry soap in washing their clothes). The driver told the maid, "*Hindi naman atin ito, e.*" Because he continued to be overly extravagant in his use of soap, he was advised to buy his own. After that he was very economical in his use of the commodity.

The attitude of the driver confirms the public-choice theory on economics by James Buchanan. According to the theory, "government decision makers (are) rational, self-interested people just like the rest of us, who view issues from their own personal perspective and act in the light of their personal incentives." However, while politicians and bureaucrats may desire to reflect the "public interest," that desire may be outweighed by more powerful ones such as, for example, their own personal interests.

According to public-choice theory, politicians and government bureaucrats may be very careful in spending their own money, seeing to it that they get the most out of their purchases and expenses. In contrast,

> in the public sector, where decisions are made collectively, people (may be) equally self-interested and rational, but incentives are different. When a legislator pursues the "public interest," he does so by spending other people's (the taxpayers') money. So, he has little personal incentive to make sure that government expenditures are efficient or wise. The result of this system of incentives, public-choice proponents say, is that government tends to grow too large and to be increasingly costly to operate. (Jane Shaw, "James Buchanan and Public-Choice Economics," *Dialogue* 3 (1987): 22-25.)

These seemingly contrasting examples are actually manifestations of the same kind of values at the extreme ends of the scale. The problem that faces educators and other members of our society is how to go

about changing the *"Hindi naman atin ito, e"* attitude to something like *"Maski hindi atin ito, kailangang tayo'y magmalasakit."*

It seems to us quite obvious that the effort to achieve such an attitude or value starts from example and practice in the family and in the home and in all sectors of our society and not only taught as lessons in school classrooms as now practically required by the DECS.

9.6 Good-bye, My Education

One of the enduring traditions of the teaching profession is that of attendance at what used to be called institutes, later renamed assemblies, and still later simply summer class or schools. Earlier there were Saturday classes but these were eliminated by the Magna Carta of Philippine education. There were night schools but the early night schools were conducted by school officials. Today night school attendance is connected with the acquisition of degrees. The most popular and most used style is the workshop or seminar-workshop introduced around the fifties. In this short essay, however, I would like to relate an anecdote on the institutes held during the first two decades of this century.

The institute was over and the teacher had packed his clothes and, most important of all, his notes and what were then known as teaching devices—pictures, cutouts of fruits, animals, birds, and the like from old cardboard used as the backing of pad papers—into his tampipi. The notes included instructions on how to carry out certain procedures in teaching, jingles, poems, and other materials that were difficult to secure in the barrio.

In those days the rivers were wide and deep (our forests were not yet denuded then) and there were no bridges. Rafts made of bamboo were used for crossing the rivers. Also in those days there were no sudden or flash floods. It would rain heavily in the mountains with the heavy forest cover, but rainwater did not rush down to the rivers. It took some time for the floodwaters to build up. However, when the accumulated volume of water came down from the headwaters, the water rushing downstream could be tremendous and powerful. The rushing water is called ***ulo-ulo*** in Ilocano.

Our teacher in the story hired a raft, settled himself and his precious tampipi on it, and the raftman proceeded to get across the river. While they were in the middle, a really huge ulo-ulo came rushing and the raft was swept away by the onrushing river. Both raftman and teacher swam to the bank for their lives. When they had reached the bank, the teacher looked at the disappearing raft and the tampipi, irretrievably lost. Possessed of a sense of humor, he waved his hand and said, "Good-bye, my education."

9.7 Narrowing the Gap

We have all heard the complaint that the rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer. Practically all persons who are worried about this situation are engaged in programs intended to narrow the gap between the rich and the poor. I think this is not the correct way of looking at the situation. The constant comparison of the poor with the rich and always making the poor try to catch up with the rich in my view is inappropriate. To borrow an Americanese, it is like keeping up with the Joneses.

The more appropriate point of view on which to base programs is to raise the quality of life of the poor to a level where they can live decent lives so that there would be no persons living below the poverty line. It is not necessary to contrast the lives of the poor with those of the rich and to continually try to narrow the gap between them. To do so is to promote envy and that is bad.

9.8 Boundary

To a public utility jeepney driver (PUJD) in the Metro Manila area, the word ***boundary*** means the minimum amount of money that he has to give at the end of a day's driving to the owner of the jeepney that he drives. In simpler terms, it is the day's rent for the jeepney. Whatever the PUJD makes beyond the boundary is his take-home earning for the day. More than five years ago, the boundary, according to my driver who used to be a PUJD, was something like ₱120. At this writing (September 1988), the boundary is around ₱200.

If the PUJD does not earn enough to pay the boundary, he is in trouble. He has to work very hard. Aside from the boundary, the PUJD has to earn enough money to pay for the diesoline (practically all public utility jeepneys run on diesoline, which is much cheaper than gasoline). All repair and maintenance costs of the jeepney are borne by the jeepney owner.

One can easily understand the behavior of Manila's PUJDs because of the boundary system of earning a living. It is a difficult life that the PUJD lives.

Upon reflection, the boundary system has many variations in life and lends itself to many interpretations and explanations. It may even explain the difference between success and failure. For example, it may explain the difference between the behavior and output of the great majority of government employees and that of employees in private firms. Private firms generally set "boundaries" for their employees; most

government workers do not have to meet a "boundary" (an exception seem to be the bureaus of Internal Revenue and of Customs where there are set targets for collection). This may explain the often unsatisfactory kind of service that one sees in many government offices. As of this writing, the best example of a government worker who has set a very high "boundary" for herself and her co-workers is Miriam Defensor Santiago, commissioner of Immigration and Deportation.

9.9 Boundary Pa Rin

I find it interesting to play around with the notion of the "boundary."

Let us identify some boundaries.

There are (1) concrete, (2) physical, which is often related to psychological, (3) intellectual, (4) spiritual, (5) philosophical or ideological, (6) aesthetic or judgmental, and (7) abstract boundaries.

An example of the concrete is the jeepney driver's boundary. Many *pakyaw* or contractual jobs are concrete.

Physical boundaries are illustrated by achievements in sports such as the 4-minute mile which was broken by Roger Banister of England. So was 10 seconds in the men's 100-metre dash. The 20-feet barrier in the pole vault still has to be broken. At one time, climbing Mount Everest was a physical boundary. There are many other examples of physical boundaries that man has to set and break.

The question of the physical boundary is apt at the time of this writing because of the Olympic games going on in Seoul, Korea. Two or three of our swimmers broke their Philippine boundaries, but their records were not good enough to qualify for the finals. Only one boxer, Leopoldo Serrantes, was able to give the Philippines a bronze medal. Most of our national boundaries (read *standards*) are much below world standards. We should not be satisfied with Philippine boundaries. We must strive to set our sights on higher physical and psychological limits. To do this we need to subordinate our conflicting personal differences and organize ourselves properly.

Intellectual boundaries take such matters as getting a passing grade of 75% or C in a subject in school. Some of the most difficult intellectual boundaries are those that have to do with the highest levels of mathematics and physics. These intellectual boundaries are either set by schools or, as in the case of discoveries in mathematics and science, by those working in those areas of knowledge. Many, and the best, are self-imposed boundaries.

The difference between an excellent and a poor school or university or a system of schools depends upon the boundary set by the people running the institutions. The kind of intellectual boundary set by the Philippine public school system has been criticized as too low compared to that of, for example, the Japanese, which explains the difference between what the two countries have achieved in practically all fields of national intellectual accomplishment.

The ability to bear discomfort and punishment may be attributed to spiritual boundaries. Some have very high or deep faith in God so they can withstand a lot of suffering. Spiritual boundaries may be allied to philosophical boundaries. There are people who succeed because of the high level of philosophical outlook (boundary) they have on life. There are cases though when spiritual and ideological lines seem to conflict, as in cases where brothers are engaged in killing brothers.

Judgmental or aesthetic or abstract boundaries are those that have to do with art and literature and other abstract products of the mind of man.

Boundaries can also be classified as (1) personal or individual, (2) family, (3) clan, (4) ethnic, (5) national, and (6) international boundaries.

Individuals vary in setting their levels of achievement. Some are great achievers. Many are satisfied with the mediocre. There are families who set high standards of achievement for members of their families. Often it takes just one to begin such high boundaries and this results in achievements of a clan.

What seems to be crucial are our national boundaries. As individuals many Filipinos can be justifiably proud of their abilities and achievements and even as members of families. It is in our national achievements that we seem to be unable to match what other nations have achieved. Why have other nations in Asia, the so-called NICs (for newly industrialized countries, namely, Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea), achieved so much while we have fallen behind?

We must not stop asking the foregoing question until we have found the answer.

The most important thing to consider in this matter of boundary is how the boundary is set and achieved. Take the case of many taxi drivers violating traffic rules to meet their boundary. Personal or self-imposed boundaries may be achieved through graft and corruption or cheating. The case of the athletes in the Seoul Olympiad who were disqualified for taking prohibited drugs, the saddest and most embarrassing example being that of Ben Johnson in the 100-meter dash, is a case in point. The old adage "It is not the winning but how one wins" is still the best of maxims to follow.

9.10 Scrimping on Chalk

The present practice of making teachers purchase the chalk used in their classes by giving each teacher a chalk allowance has resulted in less opportunity for learning by pupils. Teachers have to be economical in the use of chalk resulting in less writing and illustration. Worse, pupils no longer have the luxury and pleasure of writing on the blackboard. This situation has deprived the pupil of one of the means for learning. Something should be done to have more chalk in the classroom. I wonder if this may not be a good Christmas gift to Filipino children.

9.11 I Think That I Shall Never See

Of course you and I know that we have been having a tree-planting program for so many years. One of the photographic cliches in Philippine life and culture is that of an admiring group of lesser officials looking at a very important government official holding a shovel in the act of shoveling earth to cover the hole around a newly planted tree. This ritual is repeated in many places all over the Philippines. An even more familiar ritual is the planting of trees by schoolchildren under the supervision of teachers.

At the rate we have been planting trees, we should have some of the most beautiful forests and tree-lined landscapes in the world. But we don't. Why? Because what we have is a tree-planting but not a tree-caring culture. In fact, Filipinos seem to have a tree-cutting or tree-destroying syndrome.

I repeat that what we need is a tree-caring program that should become a part of Philippine life and culture. We need, for example, to copy the practice in Singapore where no tree can be cut without the approval of the Singapore government. The story is told that Premier Lee Kuan Yew goes around Singapore and knows when a tree has disappeared from any part of the city.

9.12 We Had No Childhood

Like many fathers, especially fathers who are teachers, I told stories to our children when they were very young. Some of the stories were accounts of how my brothers and I spent our childhood in Bangar, La Union, where we were born and in Bakun, a small town in Kankana-ey country, deep in the Cordilleras in the then subprovince of Benguet in what was then the Mountain Province.

When Judy, our youngest child, was about eight years old, I told her how we enjoyed catching dragonflies and cicadas through rituals that included singing songs that mesmerized the insects.

We would silently go behind this big multicolored dragonfly after it alighted in the grass. Quietly we would advance toward the dragonfly in a crouching position with the thumb and index finger of our right hand on the ready, poised to gently hold (no, not grab) the tail of our beautiful dragonfly, as we repeated over and over again as soothingly as possible the following words in Ilocano: *"Tuw-wato, baliw-wato, alwadam ta ipus mo, dikan sa pay nagilo, bayat ti naka-domingo."* This would unfailingly mesmerize the dragonfly and we would have it by its tail between our thumb and index finger almost always at the word *domingo.*

I told Judy that I believe and am convinced that the English equivalent (translation) of the mesmerizing song "Dragonfly, dragonfly, careful with your tail, [I suspect] you have not wiped yourself for one week" would not have mesmerized those dragonflies.

Another story that I told Judy was how we caught *andidit* (my La Union Ilocano for the transport-winged cicada). During cicada time, the cicadas would announce their arrival and presence with the peculiar cicada song, a somewhat piercing and insistent sound that every country boy or girl knows. The cicadas would perch on the bark of the trunk of a tree too high to be reached. How did we catch the cicada without climbing the tree? Simple. We sang a song that mesmerized and "commanded" the cicada to come down to us.

We would fix our gaze on a particular cicada. We would "sing" the following liltingly and soothingly over and over again: *"Un-unod, umarisunod; Un-unod umarinsunod, . . ."* The particular cicada we had fixed our eyes on would crawl down backwards toward our out-stretched arm and soon we had the transparent-winged insect between our thumb and index finger.

This ritual never failed.

After I had told the two stories to Judy, she said, "Dad, Manong Noel and I had no childhood."

"Why do you say that?" I asked her.

"Because we never caught any dragonflies or cicadas with songs like those you sang to me."

I realized Judy and her older brother Noel were growing up in the city of Manila.

Judy was to repeat this regret of hers many more times as I told her of many other accounts of our childhood.

I look at many children today attending preschool education, many of them starting at the very tender age of three, I feel that many of

these children are missing their childhood. I have the feeling that we are hurrying our children too much through school. In our effort to have children have a headstart, they are missing much of the joys of childhood.

I feel very strongly that every child should grow up with a corner in his heart and mind filled with beautiful memories of multicolored dragonflies and transparent-winged cicadas.

9.13 We Invented Our Own Happiness

My granddaughter Karen who is a senior at the U.P. Integrated School (UPIS) once asked me what games we played a long time ago when we were young. I described a couple of games we played. Following is the essay she wrote:

> What is life like without TV? To most kids, it is unthinkable. Illusion has become the major source of entertainment for them. Kids nowadays don't have to create their own fun. It's handed to them in a silver platter. But what was it like during the days of our *lolos* and *lolas?* There were no TV sets to keep them occupied. They had to be resourceful and be creative to have fun.
>
> My lolo who grew up in Mountain Province and in La Union has fond memories of his childhood. He recalls how he and his friends would make use of things they could find around them to have fun. They played games that encouraged sportsmanship, camaraderie, resourcefulness, and creativity. Among the games my lolo and his playmates played, *tatsing, lipay,* and *mutsatso* are his favorites.
>
> The losers in these games were often "punished." One form of punishment was the *baled.* The loser would stand straight with feet together. The winner would spit on his middle finger and dip the finger in the dust. He would then use that finger full of dust to cut across the shins of the loser as many times as was agreed upon. Losers would willingly submit themselves to punishment.

(NOTE: In the rest of the essay, Karen describes the games and the most popular "punishments" administered by the winner/s to the loser.)

9.14 The Gift of Reconciliation

How time flies! Suddenly it is December and the Christmas holidays are with us. As we come to the end of the year, the word that is practically on everyone's lips is *reconciliation.* What season is more suited

to reconciliations than Christmas and the approaching New Year? And we mean all kinds of reconciliation: self-reconciliation, which is needed by individuals who are torn by conflicting thoughts; reconciliation among family members because the family is the nucleus of our society; reconciliation among warring neighbors; reconciliation among employers and employees (with the benefit of the doubt going to the employee, the worker, the wage earner); reconciliation between those who govern and the governed. It is our hope that those who govern especially those highly placed can pray with St. Francis of Assisi that they will have the capacity to understand rather than to be understood.

Reconciliation should bring us peace and order, justice and freedom, dignity and self-respect.

9.15 The Spirit of the God

At this time of the year, practically everyone manages to express the spirit of the season in one form or another. Many send commercially printed cards, and it is often uncanny how some of these cards can express what they mean. Some print their names and do not sign them. Some send beautifully printed cards showing the government offices where they work. Others manage to scribble a personal note with the feeling perhaps that the stereotyped message is not adequate. Some have cards printed with photographs or pen-and-ink sketches. They write individual and personal messages on these cards. Many send materials gifts but with the hard times this practice is diminishing and that is perfectly understandable.

There is one thing that we can sincerely wish for all of us at this time, and that is peace. That peace and love and understanding will come to all of us not only in the Philippines but also all over the world.

9.16 Away at the Manger

Of the many deep impressions that linger in my mind on our pilgrimage to the Holy Land, that of seeing the place of the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem lingers especially at this time of the year. Of the many shrines I have seen, that of the manger (actually a cave) left one of the deepest and humbling impressions on me.

Another unforgettable experience is the visit to the holy places of three religious faiths: the Western (Wailing) Wall of Judaism, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Via Dolorosa of Christianity, and the Dome of the Rock of Islam.

9.17 My Peace I Give unto You

A walking companion friend of mine asked me in one of our early morning walks what the contribution of education is to the peace and order problem. The question took me by surprise and I really could not tell him. We were discussing the peace-and-order situation not only in the Philippines but also in other parts of the world. My friend reminded me that the schools are supposed to teach the young the ways of peace. He even recalled a statement of the United Nations to the effect that wars start in the minds of men and therefore because the schools of all agencies, according to him, influence the minds of the young, then education should take responsibility for much of how men and women think. The others in the group chorused that educators must take much of the responsibility for the current disturbances caused by Filipinos killing brother Filipinos.

This Christmas season, I am reminded of that conversation. Why can't men really live in peace? Maybe my walking friends are right that we educators should bear some of the responsibility for some of the world's troubles. But how much? That is the question. We try our best to teach the children who come to school many things: reading, writing, numeracy, good manners and right conduct (although this terminology is now obsolete and other terms have taken its place, but the concept is still valid), and many other things that go under the term ***behavioral changes*** in the individual. Many people call teachers agents of change but often the changes that teachers should be responsible for are not specified and even worse, the means by which these changes are to be achieved are often not provided. If there is one point that I want to make here, it is this: We educators try our best to teach children to love each other, to value peace and order, but we cannot be expected to do everything. Peace and order is the business and concern of the entire society.

During the Christmas season, our schools put on programs that convey the message of brotherly love. It is my hope that the message conveyed in these activities stay permanently in the hearts and minds of those who participate in them.

9.18 Next to Godliness

The editorial board of the *Philippine Journal of Education* set cleanliness as the theme of the Christmas issue. At first I wondered what cleanliness had to do with the month of December. Well, now it is clear. December is the month when our minds and our hearts should be clean. December

is the month when we must think kind thoughts. It is the month of love and forgiveness. It gives us the opportunity not so much to give and receive gifts, but to think and do something for the well-being of our fellowmen. If this is an acceptable interpretation of cleanliness, it might be good to have every month assume the characteristics of December.

9.19 Succeed and Succeed until You Try Again

There was this man in a small town who withdrew from school after he finished grade three. In those days the now-pejorative term *dropout* was not known. Many successful men and women simply withdrew from school and went to work.

Our man had been mayor for four successive terms. On his fifth try for the mayoralty, he was defeated by a big margin. During the next elections, however, he ran in the mayoralty race again.

The teachers in the locality were surprised and asked him, "Mayor, why are you a candidate again when you were already defeated during the last elections?"

"Well, the reason is simple. I had very good teachers and they made me memorize important sayings which I never forgot. I put into practice the most important of them. For example, my favorite is the saying 'Succeed and succeed until you try again.' "

9.20 A Hope and a Prayer

We hope and wish and pray that peace and justice will come all over the world; that the nuclear powers will dismantle all nuclear weapons; that the economy will improve; that the national reconciliation will be attained; that there will be clean and honest elections not necessarily dependent upon teachers as in the past, but upon all citizens who should be concerned.

Finally, we say here very special hopes, wishes, and prayers that a satisfactory solution to the teachers' plight will be found.