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Education or Chaos **by Jose M. Hernandez**

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apparently contradictory view exhibited in the present volume in the face of that very same diversity. From the earliest colonial days non-public and religious schools have constituted an integral and highly important element in the educational system of the United States. The same is true of the British Commonwealth nations. Liberty and democracy have thriven on them. Of the fifty-five signers of the *American Declaration of Independence*, only one is known to have attended the public schools. Indeed, up to the final quarter of the nineteenth century, publicly controlled educational establishments played a very minor role in American life. This elementary historical fact convicts Dr. Conant of a grave error in his insinuation that the present proportion of non-public schools in the United States (about 10 per cent) is a departure from the traditional American pattern. The truth is quite the contrary. The real innovation is the contemporary government-controlled, monopolistic, secular school.

On the whole, the views expressed and implied in *Education and Liberty* on the question of schools and democracy, while pretending to be democratic, strike this reviewer as dangerously close to outright totalitarianism. Unity and uniformity have become Dr. Conant's magic watchwords. The diversity of opinion which in 1948 he regarded as "the bedrock of our national unity" is now a "threat". His logical next step is to advocate the elimination of the "threat" by destroying, directly or indirectly, the God-given freedom of parents to choose for their children the kind of education they think best and forcing them *à la* Hitler and Stalin to conform to the pattern prescribed by himself and his coterie from Columbia and the National Education Association.

FREDERICK FOX

EDUCATION OR CHAOS. By Jose M. Hernandez. A pamphlet reprint of ten articles previously published singly in *The Manila Times*. Manila. 1953. pp. 2-64. Appendix.

Dr. Hernandez is to be congratulated on this pamphlet. Likewise *The Manila Times* for having given these ideas space. It is refreshing to hear a man speak out so loudly, so boldly and so well on such a vital national topic as the educational set-up.

I suppose that most all who know the facts and who are unprejudiced, will agree with his general picture. Regarding the public schools, Dr. Hernandez maintains that they are engaged in the mass production of spiritually, morally and intellectually deficient students (what Dr. Hernandez calls "potential hoodlums"), ignor-

ant of the English language and strangers to any real thought. This lamentable product is the result of poorly trained teachers, working under unfavorable conditions and employing faulty methods (such as those of progressive education and excessive objective tests), in an atmosphere in which students have lost any sense of discipline and authority, and the personnel through fear any initiative.

Very many of the private schools suffer from the same defects. But in addition, the highly commercial motives upon which they are operated have produced the "diploma mills" with all their abuses: indifference to standards, overcrowded classrooms, traveling libraries, outline education through inferior mimeographed notes, absentee students, the production of incompetent BSE's by incompetent BSE's. In such institutions even the laudable efforts of the Bureau are evaded. Meanwhile, Dr. Hernandez notes, the private schools of the Philippines can boast at least one attribute found nowhere else in the world: they are taxed by the government.

These two systems, Dr. Hernandez says, with certain notable exceptions, are turning out "morally bankrupt intellectual misfits, shiftless and useless citizens and thoroughly undisciplined Filipinos, emotionally immature, irresponsible, and in many cases conscienceless", with no regard for good books, craving "sex", in many cases lacking "even the elementary characteristics of a gentleman: courtesy, grace, refined speech, respect for authority, reverence for the aged, consideration for the poor and infirm."

Dr. Hernandez suggests as a remedy for this situation a revision of the educational system, along the following lines: (1) elementary education, essentially for the masses, with the objective literacy; (2) secondary education with a twofold division: vocational, to prepare for jobs, mainly manual; academic, to prepare for college; (3) technical or vocational education after high school, to prepare for immediate efficiency in some employment like radio, carpentry, typing, or accounting, elementary school teaching; (4) or the college after the academic high-school only, for those fitted or inclined to become leaders; objective: preparation for life and specialization; (5) the university, for those who wish to and can become experts and specialists; objective: preparation for leadership in a democracy.

Naturally, he desires that all the evils enumerated above be remedied. And more constructively he proposes: that the local dialect be the principal language of instruction in the primary school. English would become and remain the principal language from the fifth grade on. Tagalog would have an important, if subordinate place in the course, with Spanish also included at the proper time.

In his division of technical and academic training, he would have opportunity distributed according to the talents of the students. The University in Dr. Hernandez's concept would be restricted to

the intellectual élite, and would be reached through an academic high school and college training, with due insistence on the balanced formation of all the faculties of the student. This training would embrace the humanities, the social sciences, science and mathematics, with philosophy added in college. Screening by experts and examinations would be used to effect the proposed selection.

Countless reflections might be made on this well thought out pamphlet of Dr. Hernandez. I venture only a few:

(1) I wonder whether the time is ripe for trying to effect such a reform on a *national* scale. I am inclined to agree with a method such as the one proposed by Mr. Jeremias U. Montemayor for agricultural reform, in his recent series entitled "Plows and Peace" in *The Manila Times*. He would begin with the barrios. Let the Government leave sufficient liberty to competent individual schools, or associations of schools, so that they can really educate when they want to. For instance, any grade school that wants to insist on the following simple objectives for the end of sixth grade should be allowed to do so: the correct understanding, speaking, pronouncing, personal composition of English sentences, and knowing thoroughly enough arithmetic for the starting of algebra. Of course certain subordinate ends will not be neglected, but they will not be allowed to hinder education, as the complaint goes about some of the "progressive" type schools. We have a strange, paradoxical situation today: in the name of education we are often forbidden to educate, in the name of patriotism (in this case the highest training and welfare of the people), we are forbidden to be patriotic.

(2) All Catholic schools should immediately insist on the implementation of the scholastic philosophy laws of training of the students' faculties, and the harmonious training of these faculties. This philosophy should germinate in detailed classroom methods. We should have the liberty to do this. But I would not try to convert the entire local educational world to the superiority of the faculty plan of education. There are too many forces against us. As long as the situation prevails that the best exponents of the "worst education of all," as normal school and teachers' college education has been called (*Time*, October 16, 1950, p. 31), should hold key positions in the direction of the department of education, it is vain to expect that the educational philosophy of Dr. Hernandez should be accepted to any very wide extent. But more democracy and less bureaucracy in education, more liberty for the exercise of private competence, and the encouraging of private competence, will go a long way towards solving our difficulties. Each case can be gauged by its results. Regardless of theory, I think it is not difficult to convince a thinking educator of another school of thought that the faculty plan works out extraordinarily well in *practice* for the national welfare.

(3) I am not convinced that it is more for the welfare of the Filipino people to teach the primary grades in the vernacular. Time is short for education. We can afford to lose none of it. I believe it is better for the national welfare to keep in mind primarily the education of those who will continue further, not of those who drop out. English opens up the world of the past and the present to the student. A knowledge of these two worlds, on the part of a select few at least, is necessary for the greater national good. These select few cannot afford to lose the years of primary school. As regards those who drop out after primary school, it is to be noted that if they can say something in English, they can also say it in their own dialect, but not vice-versa. That children are not somewhat literate *both* in English and in their own dialect at the end of primary school is due to faulty methods, I believe. Correct the methods! More memory of essentials, more drill, more exercises terminating in expression. Eliminate the abuses of the "progressive" system. It also would seem certain that thus greater union is promoted among the different constituent elements of the Filipino nation. Also, the stressing of "content" courses, even in citizenship, before the mind is matured by language study, seems to be futile, even if the courses be in the local vernacular.

(4) I would like to add something here to what Dr. Hernandez has on the same matter. I believe it can be logically shown that to accomplish the humanistic ideals of Chancellor Hernandez, advanced training in one fully developed language with an extensive literature is necessary. Other languages must be subordinated. Education with equal value for everything is consistently a relative failure. In point of fact, English is now the major language of our education, like it or not. In the present circumstances of history, and for the greater artistic, scientific, social, economic, and military welfare of the Filipino people, it seems advisable that it stay so. Other languages then must be subordinated—in educational importance, in time allotment. I am inclined to believe that more Tagalog can be learned in less time, if, after the elements of the grammar are taught (maybe comparatively with English), translations from English, as Mr. Hernandez also suggests, are assigned as written exercises; if progressive exercises in speaking and writing with advanced English literary models should be assigned, together with certain readings done outside of class. Thus, with even two periods a week, Tagalog could be raised to an advanced literary stage in the capable student's repertoire of abilities. Likewise Spanish must be greatly subordinated. If Spanish were the *de facto* major language of education here, I would say the same about it as I say of English. And let me add here, if certain select schools, in certain select classes, want to make Latin the major language, and connect it with the development of English and Tagalog, by all means let them do so, and give them

full recognition for it. Nowadays we praise the educated minds of José Rizal and Claro Recto, but we forget that the type of early teen-age education that produced those minds is forbidden.

(5) Dr. Hernandez suggests that a greater percentage of the national income should go for the support of public schools. I suggest that the Government study seriously how it can cut down its educational appropriation by partly subsidizing private schools, including schools under the supervision of a Church. It is cheaper partly to subsidize private schools, under government inspection, than totally to support the present primary school system. If the people in a barrio want a Catholic grade school, it is cheaper to subsidize it partly and close up the public school. The same for certain provincial high schools as regards the Provincial Government. I am fairly sure Dr. Hernandez would be in favor of this system also, since he mentions sympathetically the systems of England, Holland, Ireland, Canada. The financial argument is very strong here, and it is probably the only one that will appeal to the Government at present. The concomitant benefits of greater peace, more religion, more morality, more liberty, more democracy, I believe would be insufficient against the present powerful current of Masonic tradition, that has public education so within its grasp that we have had for years a most intimate union of State and Church—the Philippine State and that Church that is the Masonic religion. A strange anachronism at present, but a powerful fact, for which many influential men are always ready to do battle.

I advance these views with due humility, I trust. On most all other points of Dr. Hernandez, I would be in substantial agreement. A few points might need further clarification, e.g., the practical workings of the proposed accrediting association, the feasibility of *government* exams for entrance to universities. As a closing salute, Dr. Hernandez is again to be felicitated on his very intellectual and carefully prepared booklet.

WALTER F. HYLAND

IDEAS JURIDICO-TEOLÓGICAS DE LOS RELIGIOSOS DE FILIPINAS SOBRE LA CONQUISTA DE LAS ISLAS. POR FR. JESÚS GAYO ARAGÓN, O.P., Ph.D., Imprenta de la Universidad de Santo Tomás, Manila. 1950. pp. ii-242.

This judicious and well-documented study is the extended version of the inaugural lecture given by the Archivist of the University of Santo Tomás at the beginning of the school year 1950-1951. It deals with the Philippine phase of what Lewis Hanke calls "the