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## **The Role of the Church in Influencing Structural Change**

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# The Role of the Church in Influencing Structural Change

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AMELOU BENITEZ REYES

## Introduction

It is customary for speakers to begin their talk by saying that it is a great honor and privilege to address their audiences. Although it is indeed a rare opportunity for me, I find myself quite anxious and rather reluctant that I have to address a group of prestigious religious intellegentia. For one thing, what can a layman, much more a woman of my age, communicate that can prove significant or worth-while for the serious consideration of the religious assembly gathered here this afternoon? It is difficult for me because women are traditionally considered to be competent merely within the confines of home, and furthermore, because the active role of the laity in church matters has not yet been structurally defined, or even if vaguely understood, it has not yet been fully accepted by all.

However, the magnitude and complexity of the enormous task and problems of *development* allow almost everyone the confidence and the sense of urgency to get involved in a combined effort to influence and assist the liberation of the masses of the Philippines. Viewed from this perspective and within the context of developmental efforts and processes, I am more than happy to participate in this First Echo Asian Ecumenical Conference for Development. I gather that this Echo Conference proposes to share its findings and recommend-

ations with a larger local community that may be inspired to become involved in discovering the practical ways by which Christians and Churches may participate cooperatively in the process of development and in the liberation of the whole man within the Asian Context. Your presence here this afternoon is taken as an indication of your response to the Vatican's urgent appeal and of your personal commitment to the challenge of development.

Just as I was affected and transformed by the appeal of Vatican II concretely manifesting itself through the Asian Ecumenical Conference for Development, I hope you will find it also meaningful and challenging to participate as agents of change toward the achievement of a more just and humane Philippine society. It is my conviction that the greatest evil in the Philippines today is not so much economic poverty as moral poverty, the poverty of the spirit, our being uncommitted, apathetic, and unconcerned with the widening gap between the rich and the poor. Thus, the crisis of development has *now* become a crisis of conscience for all Christians in developing countries. The larger masses are clamoring not for charity, but for social justice, incorporating human dignity with equality.

This afternoon my task will be to summarize briefly the portion of the workshop proceedings in which Dr. Raul de Guzman, Head of the UP Local Government Center, and I were elected rapporteurs. I have worked out a schematic outline (see Diagram 1) in order to concretize in more practical terms the implications of these concepts, providing at the same time some of my personal observations on how the findings may relate to prevailing local conditions. I hope this simplistic conceptual framework would trigger some far-reaching insights that could prove meaningful in our development tasks and efforts.

The realities we face as we seriously consider the goals of development will make us realize that today is almost yesterday, and tomorrow might be too late. However, *if we all act today* with determination and a renewed hope and strength, when tomorrow comes you and I can hope for a better and just Philippine society. I wish to emphasize, however, that in relating

my findings to our present conditions, some of my observations concerning the unpleasant realities in which the local Churches, particularly the Catholic Church, find themselves have been included not to condemn but to shed light on the crux of the problem. Being a Catholic myself, I do not in any way wish to desecrate the greatness of the Catholic Church, but I am convinced that only in the painful realization of the Church's realistic situation may there be an awareness of its potential and strength as an agent in influencing structural change. It is only in the process of renewal, in modernizing the Church's institutionalized patterns and practices as a viable force and power for a rapidly changing society that the promise of Vatican II may be fulfilled.

Before I begin with the main thrust of the workshop sessions, allow me to share with you some of the events that occurred within the workshop group itself. The group was composed of youth leaders, priests and laymen, among whom I was the only woman representative. During the workshop sessions, it was very difficult to arrive at a consensus on the manner and approach for conducting the group discussions. There was open disagreement between the youth leaders and the older participants to the extent that much time was spent in attempting to initiate and suggest structural changes within the organization of the conference itself. The members of the group felt that the structure utilized within the conference itself did not adequately represent women and youth participation. One can easily deduce that the very core of the problem encountered within the workshop sessions could easily be the main problems of *structures* on a larger scale and of youth and laity's active participation in the structures of decision-making involving church matters.

Surprisingly, out of these discussions and open disagreement emanated a kind of workshop paper that was easily accepted and approved by the General Assembly. This was the only workshop group that had the easiest time in presenting its resolutions without further comments and deliberations from the general Assembly. The full text is quoted for your personal

consideration (pp. 173-179). The schematic outline summarizes, in the form of a diagram, the implications of the relevant concepts toward a better understanding of the present local conditions.

### Workshop Topic

The topic of the workshop was: *Influencing Structural and Institutional Change*. The main task undertaken by the workshop was to discuss the *Role of the Church in Influencing Structural and Institutional Changes in Asian Countries*.

Apropos this particular topic, it was felt necessary to emphasize that the Church should directly consider the structures and institutions that influence development, since it was agreed that structures and institutions are the means or the vehicles through which developmental goals may be attained.

Our discussion this afternoon will center on the following areas:

- a) The definition of Development and Social Structures.
- b) An Analysis of the Present Local Conditions—A State of Underdevelopment?
- c) The Role of the Church in Influencing Structural and Institutional Change.

Allow me therefore, to define the meaning of *development* as agreed upon in the AECD, and to point out the specific goals of development.

### The Definition of Development and Social Structures

Development is defined as "a liberating process which enables persons and communities to realize their full human potential as purposed by God. Wherever human life is oppressed, enslaved, and dehumanized, there is underdevelopment."<sup>1</sup> It is not sufficient to point to human sin as the cause of dehumanization, for many structures and systems exist that either

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<sup>1</sup>*Liberation, Justice and Development*, Asian Ecumenical Conference For Development. Tokyo Conference, 1970.

openly or secretly perpetuate institutional practices and that reinforce attitudes creative and conservative of an unjust social order. Development therefore, "is the liberation of man from external and internal forces which inhibit and prevent the realization of his full potential as human being with dignity and integrity. This goal of development, subsumes the following specific objectives, such as *distributive justice, economic progress, and national integration.*"<sup>2</sup>

In general human terms, *development* has to do with man in his individual and social life, the subject and object of development. Man has to reckon with a multiplicity of relationships as he relates to the objective conditions of his environment. The relationship man establishes with various groups, if constantly recurring and performed with some degree of regularity through a system of positions and role expectations, can be defined as the *structures* of a social system. According to Wright Mills, *social structures* are the combinations of institutions classified according to the functions each performs.<sup>3</sup>

As man reckons with various types of relationships, and in the process of adapting to the forces of nature and environment, he inevitably develops certain *attitudes* which influence the development of his mind and spirit. *Attitudes* is defined as the adaptive modes of response to the objective conditions of life and to the forces that impinge upon man as he strives to survive in his daily life. These forces or structures condition the life of man at every level and influence the manner of attaining development goals. As man begins to adhere to some principles in the attainment of his goals in life and in response to the forces that condition his life, *these patterns of relationship become institutionalized as the value structures of a society.*

The existence of institutions implies the pattern of role expectations within the various types of relationships and groupings, the economic group for example, or the political, the social,

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<sup>2</sup>*Ibid*, pp. 34.

<sup>3</sup> C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*, pp. 134, Grove Press Inc. New York, copyright, 1969, Oxford University.

the religious, the educational and cultural. The *value structures* system governs the nature and the activities of these various institutions, for example, the Church, the school and the home. Thus, an *institution* is merely a recognized pattern of norms which becomes the institutionalized pattern of expected behavior. *Structures* imply the relationship and the role expectations such as those between patron-client, superior-subordinate, tenant-landlord, etc. among and within the different types of groupings and institutions. Institutions are structures not only of roles and functions but of regulative symbols which give meaning and purpose to life. The church has itself shaped that experience and helped in articulating the expected behavior necessary in the various types of institutions.

The interplay of institutional practices and reinforcing attitudes directly creates the existing structures evident in a given society. Apropos such goals of development as *distributive justice*, *economic progress* and *national integration*, the question is asked: Are the present conditions of existing structures appropriate to the attainment of developmental goals or to full human development? If the present structures and institutions are not the appropriate means by which development goals may be attained, what specific role may the Church play toward bringing about structural adaptation? Perhaps an even more basic question should first be asked: Is the Church serious in wanting to influence structural change, or is it limited in its evangelical mission of propagating the faith and making the Church grow? Can the Church as an institution be considered capable of actually translating existing social structures into ones more appropriate for the pursuit of the *goals of Christian development*?

Against the backdrop of these questions, let us now attempt to view present Philippine society, the structures of its existing social order, the problem of poverty and the conditions affecting the people.

If development is understood in terms of economic progress and technical expertise, one can say that the Philippine situation may be considered in a state of *underdevelopment* (refer

to diagram 1). For lack of a better term in our attempt to describe the real Philippine situation in contrast with developed nations, let us simply accept the word underdeveloped. After all, one can say that the prevailing widespread poverty is a form of underdevelopment.

An Analysis of the Present Local Conditions—  
a State of Underdevelopment?

The elimination of widespread poverty evident in the Philippines today is the fundamental objective of development efforts. Men are *underdeveloped* when they are deprived of human rights and dignity, dehumanized or made less human and when they are suppressed or repressed from their basic freedom to experience growth and effect change. Their full potential is less developed when they are not free to make independent decisions affecting their lives. *Underdevelopment* is a condition of dependence, oppression and exploitation imposed by unjust structures resulting in social injustices and poverty.

In the Philippines, economic poverty and material insecurity are prevalent because the wounds suffered from colonialism have yet to be fully healed. The feudalistic structure of land ownership which has resulted in the concentration of ownership in the hands of only a few deprives the rural Filipinos of the opportunity to gain material self-sufficiency and robs them of the motivation to improve themselves. Political power and the country's economic resources and wealth are in the hands of a few, while the many continue to live in misery, deprived at times even of bare necessities of life—food, clothing and shelter. The economic interests of the elite in power are carefully guarded and protected, while the general population is *powerless* and ignorant of its basic rights, potentialities and responsibilities.

The political and economic power groups have succeeded in manipulating situations according to the exigencies of their vested interests. They have never really made the rural sector participate meaningfully in the political processes that serve

the rural proletariat's interests. This paternalistic spirit of the powerful toward the powerless provides in return political allegiance and loyalty but it has at the same time deprived the masses of meaningful participation in the decision-making processes that affect their lives. This imbalance of political power and authority has led to lip-service shown toward the task of uplifting the masses. The power elite have not directly contributed the economic resources needed; instead they have perpetuated and reinforced the material dependence of the poor proletariat. Thus, basic social reform policies geared for the upliftment of the masses, like land reform, the promotion of cottage industries, scientific farming and agricultural innovations, must inevitably depend upon the powerful economic and political sector for effective implementation.

The country's present economic and social structures tend to increase present forms of poverty and accentuate inequalities in the distribution of wealth and opportunities which emanate from systems of land tenure, administrative hierarchies, inadequate educational opportunities and other traditional practices and customs. These unjust social structures have created a social, economic, and political system that is not responsive to the needs and aspirations of the large majority of Filipinos suffering from poverty, backwardness and exploitation.

The rural proletariat are not free when they are deprived of the resources to make independent decisions. Men are not made free by just owning things. Gifts do not liberate the poor. The rural proletariat are not free when they depend on others for support, aid and patronage. Liberation involves the change to develop oneself and to work towards one's own personal growth and fulfillment. But the poor farmer, in the face of the absolute power of the *malakas*, feels exceedingly hopeless in his condition. His only desire is to survive with the bare necessities of life, since he believes the full development of his full human potential is not within his capacity. The rural proletariat's dependence on the *malakas* for survival has resulted in his social and economical immobility; it has kept him in economic bondage. The rural proletariat's lack of education and training robs

him of the aspiration for a better life, and prevents him from taking an active part in the political decisions affecting his life. The full development of his human potential is not within his power and capacity but is entirely in the hands of the powerful landlord.

Consequently, the social structure system has reinforced the institutional factors of an authoritarian hierarchical society, with the corresponding attitudes of the rich and the poor allowing the system to perpetuate itself. These factors operate within, maintain and strengthen the traditional social system; the maintenance of stability and the status quo is made possible through the existence of mutual strengthening features of the traditionalism, colonialism, imperialism and feudalism still discernible in the present structures. The traditional way we understand the teachings of the Gospel, the manner by which we practice our religious beliefs, and our traditional values, mores and customs all seem inadequate for the emerging contemporary struggle for human liberation. The institutional and human factors present within the structures of our society are the *real obstacles* to development efforts, the causes of economic misery, and the obstructions to social and economic development in the rural sector.

Development efforts, therefore, constitute the struggle for liberation from external and internal forces that prevent the realization of man's potential. Liberation is a demand for action, for commitment towards a realistic involvement in achieving a more just social order. The new technological resources create an awareness in the rural people of new possibilities for improving the conditions and quality of human life. But these possibilities may demand radical changes in the existing structures, if these structures are to be the instruments for social justice and equality. This freeing process must be carried out not only within the context of a society based on rural and traditional social patterns, but also within the very structures, institutions, cultural patterns and political ideologies that are representative of the Filipino's way of life. The *problem*, therefore, is where do we start so that the vicious circle may be broken?

Within a traditional framework where a rigid concentration of the elite is placed in immutable positions of power and authority, the Christian Church, with its message of love, due to traditional authoritarian features, may serve as the catalyst of change for structural transformation and adaptation. If the Church wants to be in the mainstream of development efforts for the underdeveloped Filipinos, it is urgent that the Church seriously consider the modes of operation that will break down attitudes obstructing development.

What can the Church do? What is the Role of the Church in Influencing Structural and Institutional Change?

Can the Church be successful and effective in the struggle for human liberation within the present existing structures? Can the Church's mission of service concentrating on charity, relief, and welfare be sufficient to bring about the goals of Christian development?

The AECD decided to focus its attention on the relationship between *distributive justice* and *institutional structures*. Considering our survey analysis of the Philippine situation, it is essential to assume that instead of working towards a change of social structures, the Church has been working within an unjust social structure. Since it has carried out its mission of preaching the Gospel within an unjust social order, one can say it may have contributed in a large measure to the maintenance of this unjust social order.

Since structures and institutions are the means through which development goals are attained, the elimination of poverty would imply structural transformation and adaptation. Therefore, this means that if the Church is seriously interested in development efforts and in the struggle for human liberation, it can only demonstrate its seriousness by being involved in *structural change*. The Church must recognize that structural change means a change in the existing power structures, property relations and positions of social classes. To achieve the goal of social justice, it becomes necessary to change the social

framework of power relations which is, of necessity, revolutionary in character.

*Distributive justice* cannot be accomplished by a consensus and cooperation of all existing interests of a given society. Vested interests have to go. People whose interests are bound with the existing institutions and power structures will inevitably get hurt, and the powerful, the *malakas* will be dispossessed of their power and privilege. Thus, the process of structural change is not one of harmony but of mass struggle combined with legislative action against all oppressive structures. Progress in development will often require revolutionary change through *political will* or action or mass or popular participation in the power structures. This dynamic struggle will require deep and manifold changes in the people's outlooks, attitudes, and perspectives and must be present within the structure itself. The Church, therefore, can direct its efforts in eradicating and removing these social and political obstructions.

Are we, who advocate institutional change and distributive justice, willing to get involved in the formation of new values, new orientation and different outlooks in life, as well as to provide the motivation and commitment to accomplish this structural transformation? My personal observations have been that the Church and probably educational institutions as well, have largely contributed towards conservatism, the preservation and maintainance of the status quo, of the unjust social order. The manner the Church has acted on current and conflicting issues confronting the present situation confirms my observations. The Church has not publicly taken a stand to side with the poor or with the rich, nor has it given its sanctions on some economic endeavors geared towards social upliftment, such as trade unions, cooperatives, family planning, labor and farmer movements. Before the Church can become an effective instrument for structural change, it must first be capable of internal change and introspection regarding its own institutional and traditional practices. The Church must examine itself in relation to the emphasis it has placed on evangelism and the struggle for social justice, to avoid a dichotomy between these

two. In its quest for relevance, can the Church even own to some of its mistakes, regarding the values it has stressed in the people's philosophy of life? Can the Church as a human social institution admit some of its errors, failures and misdirection *now* evident in a rapidly different and changing world?

For one thing, the Church is only capable of acting effectively in the world if it has been able to sort out its own internal contradictions and its conflicting ideologies. More specifically, this could mean the gap between some of the absolute truths it held in the past and the changing truths that must conform with the present revolutionary age. Can the Church now resolve the dichotomy it previously emphasized between the realm of the spiritual and that of the material, since economic development is essential for man's material needs? It is demanded by his intellectual and religious life. The Church need not be a passive spectator of human social evolution, if it can be freed from the accumulated traditions of the past. Yet if it has been mostly the bulwark of the status quo, of conservatism, it will remain passive on the sidelines while the struggle for a just new society continues. If the Church does not get involved in the daily realities of life, where social injustice and inequalities prevail, eventually the Christian Church in the Philippines will lose its influence and will be left more and more out of touch with society, to the point of irrelevance.

Vatican II is not yet a reality in the Philippines because there is an absence of adequate motivation, of reorientation and commitment to the accomplishment of the desired structural transformation. The traditional Asian attitude of apathy is a constant temptation for us all. It would be ironical if the Church in the Philippines, after four hundred years, will cease to be of value and influence in the life of the underdeveloped Filipinos. Although the Church has made statements through Vatican II on the role of the Church in development efforts, the local Church has not effectively been able through its Sunday sermons to provide a successful and practical theology of development relating life and faith with the physical aspects of daily living, a reality where the widening

gap between the rich and the poor is becoming more acute. Could it be because the Church cannot withdraw its intimate liaison with the existing powerful elite and its connections with the outmoded social and political structures involving marked disparities of status and income?

Innovation always carries with it certain risks, but can the Church be an agent of structural change when it is very reluctant to experiment with new forms of involvement especially when the consequences are not measurable or are quite uncertain? How can the Church convince others that it is seriously involved in the struggle for human liberation when at present its development efforts are directed towards relief, welfare, and charity services? Has the Church taken a definite stand regarding the transformation of new power and economic structures, where political balance, social justice and economic equality can prevail? Furthermore, how can the Church's preaching on social justice be heard when the Church has not combined efforts nor has supported the powerless in their plight to gain power in participating in the political processes affecting their lives, which hopefully can bring about the equality and justice for underdeveloped Filipinos?

The task of development is not easy and no simple blueprint nor a rosy way out can emerge. Changing attitudes and creating new outlooks may provide the *starting point* in developing a new perspective. This is the *challenge* confronting the Church today. The hope of a new openness, an urgent need for a cultural and religious re-orientation can only come about when individuals are concerned, committed and continuously transformed with a feeling of urgency and a sense of restlessness to do something positive and concrete.

Let us not be discouraged. Structural change occurs more frequently in fits and starts, in response to concrete, identifiable political and social problems, such as those evidently happening today which have been brought to our attention by demonstrations and student activism. A change in the social structure or in social relations is constituted not of a continuous process but of spontaneous fragments. The increasing literacy, the

impact of technological change, the greater demand for social and economic mobility, the communication revolution given momentum by mass media, and perhaps above all, the rising sense of frustration caused by our people's inability to meet rising expectations, can all be the various means by which social and political tensions shall emerge, demanding change in the power relations.

It would seem that the Church's main task would be to provide some sort of dis-equilibrium, by creating a sense of awareness among its members of the existing unjust social order. It seems that the Church needs to increase polarization, to create friction out of which may issue common solutions that would lessen the separation between the haves and have-nots. The Church's authoritarian features can be utilized to serve its own advantage in becoming a strong political power. For if the religious values and practices remain irrelevant to the pressures of struggle and recurring frustration, this could mean that eventually the Churches will fall out of the mainstream of Philippine life and will be reduced to being mere spectators in the people's struggle for human liberation.

In addition, let us not delude ourselves into thinking that the development of productive forces through technology will eliminate poverty or that the creation of welfare measures will of itself establish new social relations. Under the existing relations of power structures in the Philippines, technology will further enhance the exploitation by the minority of the unorganized and powerless, a minority who have both the political and economic power, thus making poverty more acute than ever before. Legislative action by the powerful elite may not necessarily bring about equality; it could further strengthen and maintain the status quo as a means of protection for the politician's vested interests. What is needed today, more than ever before, is an *organized Church* as an institution of political power, mobilizing the under-privileged with a view to redressing injustice and preventing further exploitation and oppression.

Lastly, I do not intend to provide an over-all development strategy on how the Church may influence structural change

or the specific developmental projects it can concentrate upon. These have all been recommended in the various workshop proceedings of the Asian Ecumenical Conference for Development (see pp. 141-218). The most I had intended to do is to present some observations and raise questions that hopefully would prove provocative enough to stimulate further thinking on the role that the Church may have in influencing structural change. In conclusion, my personal suggestions direct themselves more to the Church's administrative hierarchies to *take active part in the affairs of the laity*. The Church's traditional emphasis on the other-worldly must be re-examined within the context of an existing unjust institutional and structural framework, to allow a more effective participation in the struggle for a just and humane Philippine society. The Church's authoritarian features can directly influence structural transformation towards a new social order by creating new value orientations and changing the cultural attitudes of the common people. The process of gaining new understanding will involve a re-examination of some of the basic premises about society and action which have been a part of the traditional thinking of the Church. Ideas about private property, human dignity, freedom, justice, charity, solidarity, manual labor, acquisitive and profit motives, family planning, etc., are often out of tune with the requirements and demands of change. Equally important will be the scrutiny of the Church's traditional stress on peace, harmony, power, conflict and order in the social and political processes of society. Development efforts must include a re-thinking of these and other fundamental issues especially concerning the Church's privilege of land ownership and use of private property, since ownership enjoyment must be limited by the demands of social justice and development.

In addition, since development is closely related with the political dynamics of nationalism, the Church's role in influencing structural change will necessarily mean a concomitant responsibility in the formation of national goals. Under the existing structures it is necessary to include factors concerning character-building with nation-building. The Church's pre-

vious orientation to evangelism paid little attention to changes in the traditional culture. Obstacles to development still exist such as too little awareness of the importance of quality human labor, the desire to arrive at a goal as fast as possible, lack of responsibility, lack of self-confidence, closed-mindedness, not enough practice in problem-solving and lack of discipline to arrive for common national goals. The Church can take the responsibility to change these hindering aspects of culture by changing the cultural attitudes which will assist development efforts. This change will eradicate the negative characteristics and replace them with attitudes that will help development, some attention to the material and the secular, for example, a high value recognized in technology, more orientation to the future, boldness in taking risks, determination and the ability to work with others in a disciplined manner. In the process of politicizing the underdeveloped Filipinos to gain a sense of self-consciousness and self-reliance, traditional values may be replaced by rational values, feudal values by democratic values and colonial values by national values, thereby forming one nation amidst the fragmented regional groups. With this attitudinal change, the Church can introduce mutual understanding, common interests, common goals, joint responsibilities, and a common sense of need in our educational programme towards achieving a common Filipino identity.

In the political sphere the attitude of the Churches has been one of complete indifference and passivity. Since the political structures are the instruments of social justice and economic growth and prosperity, the Church must enter into dialogue with all those concerned with developing the moral conscience, with providing by means of a *theology of power* the framework that will guide the pressure groups and politicians in the search for a just society. The important factor in the Church's participation in the struggle would be to assure that non-violent means will be utilized for the powerless in their plight to gain power and participation in the political processes affecting their lives. It is necessary for the Church as an institution of power to allocate successfully and authoritatively the values and resources of society by securing the widest and

most effective participation from the majority of the people. Specifically, this could mean radical transformation of those oppressive structures by *massive horizontal organization of pressure groups*, thereby eliminating the patron-client relationship. Furthermore, the Church could also initiate mass participation in centers of powers and sensitize the general populace to the urgent needs of humanity, justice and peace for a more effective and responsible government by providing checking systems on the part of the people.

In the short run, the contribution of the Church may be small but there always are crucial areas in which they may in the long-run prove an effective instrument of change. A new society based on freedom, equality, inter-dependence and mass participation in decision-making will come only with the emergence of a *new kind of man* whose will, attitudes, hopes, and aspirations will be geared to the vision of a new, just and humane Philippine society.

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## COMMENTS

### MR. MANUEL MONDEJAR

We are here talking about development, talking about means and ways, of how to have people progress, how to have people liberated from the exploitation of others, but we do so without asking the exploited—the worker, the peasant—their opinion. We are dictating the terms for them; we are committing again that same mistake i.e., committing the mistake for others, not recognizing others' right to commit their own mistakes. I think that this is one of the main arguments that we have against all structures presently existing in the Philippines. Consider for example the government. It is supposed to be a democratic government. But what is the basis of democracy? In the very constitution itself it says that you cannot vote if you do not know how to read and write. In what language? In a colonial language, namely English. I was just wondering why, for example, some of our cultural minorities who preserve their own means of writing, are not allowed to vote in their own script. These are the real Filipino people, if we may say so. Yet they are not allowed to use their script to vote. Is this democracy? If democracy is supposed to be the rule of the majority, I was just wondering how many voters there are. 8,000,000? Do 8,000,000 voters represent the Filipino population? If as they say 70% of the Filipino population are youth, how is it that we seldom see youthful people in our government?

Now, consider education. What are we taught in school? We are taught Western values that never existed in the Philippines. One of the classical examples we always meet is the fact that in Grade One or in kindergarten we are taught that A is for Apples. Apples