

THE TASKS OF THE SECOND PROPAGANDA MOVEMENT

*Speech delivered at the St. Louis University, Baguio City, on October 12, 1966;
sponsored by the St. Louis University Student Council.*

The Second Propaganda Movement

IT WAS Senator Claro Mayo Recto who first expressed the need for a second propaganda movement. It was his intention in 1960 to engage in an intensive and extensive anti-imperialist campaign tour after coming from his journey abroad. He was never able to do what he intended, but his anti-imperialists legacy remains with us.

This anti-imperialist legacy consists of the body of ideas and principles which he defined in the course of his nationalist crusade which he launched in the early 1950's. There was really no need for him to make any formal announcement that he and other patriots would embark on the Second Propaganda Movement. He started it the moment he began to relate the struggle of the present to the struggle of those who had successfully fought and isolated the first colonial tyranny, but who did not quite succeed in preventing the coming of a new foreign tyranny, U.S. imperialism.

It is important to speak of the Second Propaganda Movement because we need to recall the unfinished tasks of the Philippine revolution. The Second Propaganda movement is required to arouse our nation anew to the struggle for the fulfillment of the national democratic tasks of the Philippine revolution.

This Second Propaganda Movement occurs as a resumption of the First Propaganda Movement and of the Philippine revolution even as conditions are far different from those obtaining during the time of the first nationalist propagandists. While old problems have been carried over to the present, new ones have also arisen to make our national struggle more difficult and more complicated.

The Second Propaganda Movement must therefore be more vigorous and resolute. It should be a propaganda movement of a new type, with a new class leadership and a new alignment of forces and with a new ideological and political orientation more advanced and more progressive, if we are to be on the tide of a higher stage of historical development and if we are to win the struggle against an enemy far stronger and far more clever than the old type of colonialism. In other words, the Second Propaganda

Movement, are strategically weak as these are confronted with the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal unity of the people under the leadership of the working class. Furthermore, on a world scale, U.S. imperialism and feudalism are fast losing out before the surging forces of national democratic and socialist revolutions. The present tasks of the Second Propaganda Movement are huge but conditions for its success are also good.

The Second Propaganda Movement is first of all a political movement. It is an educational movement with political aims; for after all there is not type of education or culture that is detached from politics. It aims to replace the old type of education and culture while retaining only its progressive elements. It aims to prepare and guide the people for struggle against their foreign and feudal exploiters. It aims to effect results and it proceeds from a particular political standpoint. Class interests, whether of the exploited or of the exploiters, generate political ideas, values and attitudes that inspire and guide men to action.

Learn from the Masses

In order to move the people to obtain certain results by their collective action, one must first determine their motives based on their concrete conditions and class interests. It is necessary for the Second Propaganda Movement to learn from the masses their conditions, problems, interests and aspirations before it dares teach them what to do. The Second Propaganda Movement is a mass movement in the most genuine sense with the mobilization and victory of the masses as the main objective.

The principle of learning from the masses should never be forgotten even if at this point we are able to take advantage of a fund of general knowledge gathered from past experience.

General or second-hand knowledge is important but what is always most important is the first-hand knowledge of the masses or learning from the masses because it assumes being constantly with them and merging with them. Learning from the masses and being with them will make our generalizations for action and formulation of solutions more correct and more dynamic. We become immediately one with the masses in their mobilization.

The Second Propaganda Movement should never be a campaign to command or dictate above the heads of the masses. One should not throw big theories and big slogans without first learning the concrete conditions and problems of the people. A knowledge of these from first-hand observation, from practice with the masses and from listening to the masses, would enable us to test and verify theories, enrich them and explain them to the people in the most concrete terms that they immediately understand.

We must advance from the behavior and performance of the First Propaganda Movement which unfolded as a movement of exiles in a foreign city while it was supposed to be concerned with Philippine conditions and problems. It will not do now for the ilustrados or the petty bourgeoisie to assume leadership by simply brandishing their formal or artificial classroom knowledge, or by impressing the people with their bourgeois education.

The agents of U.S. imperialism, the landlords and religious sectarians themselves are trying to mingle with the masses, under the cover of the powerful mass media that they own and control and under the cover of many pretexts with the sole objective of confusing and deceiving the people.

The activists of the Second Propaganda Movement have no alternative but to take the mass line, merge with the masses and learn from the masses. It does not suffice now even to issue manifestoes and proclamations from the cities and big towns where the lazy "leaders" are fond of sitting out a revolution. The success of the Second Movement will be determined by those who choose to go to the masses and be with them.

In the Second Propaganda Movement, it is necessary to determine whose politics or ideology should lead the people.

There is a presumption on the part of the bourgeoisie and the landlords that only those with high formal schooling are fit to lead the people. They talk of the people disdainfully as illiterate and uneducated. By asserting that only those educated in the bourgeois or conservative fashion are fit to lead, they wish to entrap the masses within the system of exploitation.

The Second Propaganda Movement should reject this dangerous and undemocratic presumption as a lie intended to mislead the masses. We have given to the products of colonial and neo-colonial

education more than three centuries and many more decades to solve the problems of the masses. But what have they done? We have given the bright boys or the technocrats of the bourgeoisie and the landlord class more than enough time and yet they are either too dull or too dishonest to see the basic problems that are U.S. imperialism and feudalism.

What a pity that educated elite does not see clearly the basic problems that are U.S. imperialism and feudalism which the masses, with lesser formal education, can see and feel most acutely as they are the ones most adversely affected. The masses are in a position to perceive not only their own sufferings but also the benefits that accrue to a new from U.S. imperialism and feudalism.

What the masses experience they can immediately grasp. They can also easily grasp the correct solutions based on the correct analysis of their problems. It is the self-satisfied statesmen, educated men and publicists of the bourgeoisie and the landlords who will consider such terms as imperialism and feudalism too high above their heads, not so much because they are dull but because they are dishonest and are afraid of exposing the negative character of the system that benefits them.

The national and social liberation of the masses will come only from the masses themselves. Only they themselves can understand their problems most profoundly. The activists of the Second Propaganda Movement can only generalize and formulate solutions from the experience of the masses.

The Scientific and Democratic World Outlook

Reliance on the masses and rejection of bourgeois and egotistic education can be understood only if one has a scientific and democratic world outlook.

This scientific and democratic world outlook should be even more advanced than the liberal-democratic outlook that the First Propaganda Movement has as a matter of political posture. The proletarian world outlook is today the most scientific and democratic outlook. It is superior to the narrow viewpoint of the "enlightened" liberal bourgeoisie. It sees clearly the entire range of the opposing class forces operating in society today with their respective viewpoints. It comprehends their basic relations and contradictions and it so masters the situation as to be able to change it through revolutionary practice.

It recognizes the progressive force in any contradiction and at this stage of world history it recognizes the proletariat as the progressive class in the struggle between the U.S. monopolists and the proletariat going on all over the world and in our country. It does not only recognize every progressive force but it takes sides as a matter of commitment. A man who has a scientific and proletarian outlook knows that no man or no small group of men can be detached or excluded from basic social struggles. Outside of one's consciousness, this class struggle is objectively occurring; one can only side with the progressive or the reactionary force in the moment of crisis. To assume the posture of neutrality is actually to become an appendage of the stronger force.

The class struggle is objectively going on in the Philippines but it has taken the form of a national struggle, with patriotic classes – the working class, peasantry, intelligentsia and the national bourgeoisie – aligned against the U.S. imperialists, compradors, landlords and bureaucrat-capitalists. The working class is the leading class, with the peasantry as

its most reliable ally, and it conducts its struggle against the U.S. monopoly capitalists and the local comprador bourgeoisie, supported by the landlord class.

The Second Propaganda Movement should advance a modern scientific and democratic world outlook that rejects the religio-sectarian culture of feudal times, the decadent imperialist culture and the egotistic petty-bourgeois mentality. The schools as they are now in the Philippines are the purveyors of these that we must reject.

Alienation in the Present Culture

There has to be a complete overhaul of the entire educational system. But the initial necessary step to be taken is to advance a national democratic culture of a new type. This national democratic culture is a part of our political struggle to achieve national democracy.

Education must serve our national struggle to gain independence and self-reliance in every field of endeavor, whether political, economic, social, cultural, military and diplomatic.

As a whole, the present educational system in the Philippines is in the hands of forces inimical to the principles of national democracy. Its control is shared by the agents of an imperialist culture and those of a regressive feudal-sectarian culture.

It is an educational system which actually shields the ruling class and alienates the formally educated from the masses. It does not at all propagate a healthy scientific and democratic viewpoint; even the exceptional children of the poor who manage to acquire a high degree of education inevitably adopt the decadent and corrupt values of the ruling class and abandon the cause of national and social liberation. This kind of education is a device by which the betrayal of the masses by a few of its own children is assured.

In a period where the ruling class has stability of power, the educated middle class serves as the transmission belt of the ideas and values of the ruling class to the lower classes. Before it is won over or neutralized by the organized masses, the middle class functions as the instrument of the exploiting classes.

As clear manifestation of the alienation of our educational system from the cause of national democracy, it does not perform the function of teaching the students to merge with and mobilize the people for, say, national independence, land reform, national industrialization or any such urgent tasks.

The activists of the Second Propaganda Movement should patiently arouse and mobilize the masses, win over the intelligentsia and develop an alliance with the national bourgeoisie, on the basis of its self-interest, under the banner of national democracy.

Filipinization of the Educational System

One immediate step that can be taken with regard to the present educational system is its Filipinization. This should be taken with the view of replacing foreign ownership, control and influence over the schools with that of Filipinos imbued with the spirit of national democracy.

Teachers educated in the old way should themselves be re-educated. The process of their education will accelerate as the political situation consistently develops in favor of the revolutionary masses.

The adoption of textbooks and other study materials that are Filipino oriented and progressive should be used to counteract the hundreds of years of our colonial, imperialist and neo-colonial mental subjugation. Filipino authors should struggle to replace the materials and textbooks now being used which are alienated from the conditions and problems of the masses.

The Filipino students and the people should be alerted to the foreign agencies and devices by which the colonial and feudal mentality is meant to be perpetuated. The imperialist and subversive character of the activities and influence of the AID, USIS, the Peace Corps, U.S. scholarships and grants, the ALEC, IEDR, the research grants extended by U.S. corporations, Asia Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, Ford Foundation and the Congress for Cultural Freedom should be thoroughly exposed. These agencies have been exposed before as imperialist agencies or as CIA fronts and conduits.

When your enemy makes you think the way he does, he becomes your friend superficially even if he takes advantage of your interests and exploits you. As Senator Recto said in a message addressed to the youth, a "brainwashed" generation followed the military defeat of the Philippine revolution. The result has been the abandonment of national democratic tasks.

As proof of the abandonment of the historical tasks of the nation and the betrayal of the Philippine revolution, it has been deemed "subversive" for the youth and the people now to recall the Philippine revolution and to strive for national democracy.

The Second Propaganda Movement should likewise be alert to the friar enemies of the First Propaganda Movement. They are now, in collaboration with the imperialists, fast

expanding their ownership and control of the educational establishments. The religious hypocrisy of a Padre Salvi and a Padre Damaso should not deceive the people again.

As we all believe in the freedom of religion, they are free to preach in their churches, but they should not oppose the struggle for national democracy and try to discredit us as heretics and filibusters by abusing the credibility that they have among their faithful. Religion should not be used as a cover for the people's enemies. Both the church and those striving for social change should avoid the conversion of a national and social struggle into a religious one. Otherwise, those who claim to be concerned with the spiritual welfare of their faithful will only be exposed as tools of those who want to perpetuate the political power of the exploiting classes. It is the prevalent imperialist culture and the decadent feudal values of the exploiting classes which create the monsters and demons of this society.

A scientific and democratic type of education should be fostered by all means and should not be run down by the expanding schools of foreign friars. The national democratic movement, that is, the Second Propaganda Movement, should demand that the clerical type of education should not be allowed to prevail over a scientific and democratic type of education. Clerical schools have only become bastions of class discrimination, authoritarianism and anti-secularism.

National Democratic Scholarship

Within and outside the schools, progressive scholars and researchers who consider themselves part of the Second Propaganda Movement should work assiduously for the replacement of those historical writings and social researches which unilaterally misrepresent the colonial and imperialist aggressors as great conscious benefactors of the Filipino people.

There should be an objective presentation of our historical development as a nation. The struggle of social opposites must be objectively presented with a clear appreciation of our national efforts and with the clear understanding that the revolutionary masses make history.

Our colonial-minded and bourgeois historians and scientists have even gone to the extent of obscuring the most important historical documents of the Philippine revolution in their attempt to play up their colonial heroes and their intellectual subservience.

The step taken by an increasing number of scholars in taking the Filipino orientation in the writing of Philippine history is a positive step which does credit to the national democratic efforts of our people.

The most progressive step to be taken by our Filipino scholars now is to present objectively the struggle of the nation and of the various patriotic classes in our society for democracy and progress.

A National Language and Revolutionary Arts and Letters

In language, literature and the arts, vigorous efforts should be exerted for these to serve the interests of the masses.

While we should preserve the culture of localities and minorities as part of our cultural heritage, we should develop a new and truly national culture by propagating and making use of a national language that is a cognate to all our local languages and can therefore, unlike English, be easily grasped by the masses everywhere. Vigorous steps must be taken to make Pilipino a language ascendant over English. The main reason for this is to have a medium for the rapid promotion of national democratic understanding among the people of the entire archipelago. The educated elite has made use of a foreign language as a language of conceit over the heads of the masses. The laws are still in Spanish and English; this is one sign of how alienated are the laws of the ruling class from the masses.

In literature and the arts, the process of raising aesthetic standards and popularization should go hand in hand. For the masses who constitute our biggest audience can appreciate our literature and art only if our writers and artists make use of the life and struggles of our masses as raw material. If we adopt this raw material, it can be given the form that our artistic talents are capable of making.

Our heroes and values must change if we are truly for revolutionary progress. The workers, peasants and revolutionary fighters should prevail in our representation of life. The content and themes of our literary and artistic efforts must shift from a pseudo-aristocratic and petty bourgeois concern over a narrow and limited portion of our national reality. The task of our writers and artists now is to turn to the great drama of the struggle of the masses for national and social liberation.

Those creative writers and artists who fail to use the life of more than 90 per cent of our people for their raw material must be pretty narrow-minded. Or, they are too misled by or absorbed with getting travel grants and other concessions from the Rockefeller Foundation, the USIS and other imperialist institutions which have calculatedly planned to make our writers and artists flighty and escapist.

The petty bourgeois writer or artist should realize once and for all that there is no such thing as being declassé, above classes, apolitical or detached from politics. An honest analysis of the work of the people who take this presumption will show their real objective partisanship on the side of the ruling classes which give them the crumbs and the plums. They are actually reactionary through and through, either praising the regressive values of the primitive or feudal life or presenting the helpless or the self-indulgent individual who is trapped by a system which he does not care to understand or which he deliberately mystifies.

Those who write for the proletariat or the masses and for their cause are regarded by the imperialist, feudal or petty-bourgeois writer as being gross and utilitarian. But look at the works of our supposedly refined and arty writers or artists: the presentation of their egotistic obscure concerns actually represent a narrow-minded grossness and incapability to grasp the basic tensions of life. They are capable only of presenting a narrow part of reality, the alienation and psychology of the individual alienated from the more dynamic forces of society.

The Second Propaganda Movement should be pushed forward by cultural workers who can surpass even the tradition of critical realism of Dr. Jose Rizal in his novels, the *Noli* and the *Fili*, and Juan Luna in his painting, *La Spoliarium*.

Literature and the arts are a concentrated expression of reality. In the present era, one must unswervingly take the proletarian standpoint in order to achieve the greatest progress in art and literature. Literature and the arts would reflect the revolutionary struggle and point towards its triumph.

Science and Technology for National Industrialization

Let us consider science and technology. It is not true that science and technology are free from political or class dictation. The feudalists and imperialists have a particular way of using them or restricting them and for definite reasons.

The feudalists wanted to restrict science and technology because they did not want their religious dogmas to be challenged, and exposed. Today, imperialists use science and technology to make weapons of destruction for their wars of aggression and they also restrict production for the sake of maximizing their rate of profit.

In the Philippines, we wish to make use of science and technology for our industrial progress and for producing more for our people. In intellectual perspective, we have advanced far from that period when the friars opposed scientific knowledge as "heretical" and mishandled "A Class in Physics" in order to subvert our intellectual development.

When U.S. imperialism took over the Philippines, it first showed, in comparison with the friars, some desire to share science and technology to pursue national industrialization and effect economic emancipation, we find the American capitalist society, with its own scientific and technological progress, inimical to our progress.

U.S. imperialist politics do not permit us to make full use of the science and technology within the grasp of our scientists, technologists, and our people because the economic development we would create will set us free and cut down the market and profits of U.S. industries.

It is wishful thinking, therefore, to consider that sciences and technology have no necessary connection with politics and with class dictation.

Science and technology and production in socialist countries are within the realm of politics, that is to say, of satisfying the needs of the people. But, in capitalist countries, despite the high level of development in science, technology and the forces of production, altogether these are made to serve the profit-making and political power of the monopolies against the interests of the masses and nations abroad.

In the Philippines, we should pursue a thoroughgoing program of increasing our scientific and technological knowledge for political and economic purposes; that is, for our political emancipation and economic welfare. We want to have the skills for national industrialization and agricultural development. In order to ensure the participation of the masses of our people in production and in accelerated social development, we should popularize the most advanced skills; but, before we can put these to use, the masses must first arm themselves politically, liberate the nation and themselves from the political forces that restrict our economic growth and our scientific and technological progress.

Filipinization of the Mass Media

Let us consider the newspapers, radio, TV, movies and other like media of information, opinion and entertainment which are now powerful instruments of either progress or reaction in this era of the Second Propaganda Movement.

We know that these are not controlled by the masses. The masses on the other hand, are reduced to passivity in relation to the emissions of these mass media.

Because of the fact that most of the corporations owning these media or sponsoring the programs are imperialist and imperialist-oriented, our mass media at present cannot be used for propagating national democracy, on the other hand, it is through the mass media that the glorification of sex and violence, characteristic of imperialist culture, is

propagated to the detriment of our youth and people. Just take note of the James Bond cult and the cowboy fare and the rat-race mercenary kind of justice dished up by the imperialist-controlled mass media. They are the vehicle for imperialist propaganda and likewise for anti-Filipino and anti-democratic prejudices. Because of commercial advertising the tastes, attitudes and consumption habits of the Filipino people are anchored on the products of U.S. imperialism.

As a whole, foreign control of the mass media their content (ranging from local sensationalism and slanted reports of U.S. press agencies like AP and UPI) constitutes intervention in our political life; and in the most subtle way, it actually conditions the minds of the people to accept not only the commercial products in the form of political agreements and fair-haired boys of U.S. imperialism.

In the field of mass media, let us recall the glorious tradition of Kalayaan and La Independencia, which were the genuine journalistic instruments of the national democratic movement. In the spirit of these publications, let us convince our journalist that the truth does not lie only within the framework of imperialist and landlord political power. Many of them have realized this; and they are bound to widen their freedom of expression more and more.

There is no such thing as freedom of the press in the abstract. Only a liar or a dull person would make that claim. The reporters are bound by editorial policy; the editorial policy is in turn bound by the publisher's policy or that of the company board of directors; the publisher or the board is in turn bound by the advertisers' policy. It is foolish to make the liberal argument that by having different or several advertisers, none of them would be able to control the paper. The advertisers are well-organized in their chambers of commerce and national advertisers' association and in many more business groupings. If the press depends on them for survival, it is bound never to violate the basic class "truths" of their interests.

It is common knowledge how U.S. companies have tried to quell the expression of national democratic vies in the press. The patriotic and progressive members of the press should struggle for greater press freedom by siding in so many ways with the forces of national democracy.

Professionalism in the service of the exploiters means political subservience to them; inasmuch as it serves to shape and foster opinions in the service of the exploiters.

One concrete step that can be taken by the Second Propaganda Movement is to fight for the Filipinization of the press so that direct ownership by foreigners of such anti-national and anti-democratic media like Philippines Herald, Manila Daily Bulletin, DZBB, DZHP, DZBU and others can be removed. If we succeed in Filipinizing the press, the

popular support we shall have generated will automatically serve to back up national democratic publications. At present, we should consistently expose and isolate all those anti-national and anti-democratic media directly owned, supported or controlled by foreign monopolies and compradors.

If our newsmen should wish to play a role in the national democratic tradition of Jose Rizal, Lopez Jaena, Del Pilar, Jacinto and Luna they should organize themselves as militantly progressive journalists and workingmen who wish to broaden their freedom of expression. Their unity should serve to counter the power of decision of the publisher who is tightly bound by financial compromises with the anti-national and anti-democratic advertisers and stockholders.

Within and outside the field of journalism, the Second Propaganda Movement can vigorously call for the nationalization of the economy and for national industrialization so that ultimately the foreign advertisers can no longer have the press at their mercy.

What the Second Propaganda Movement can do now by itself in widening press freedom is to establish a publication where there is the untrammelled freedom to express and advocate national democratic views.

This publication, as was envisioned by Sen. Claro Mayo Recto, should articulate and organize the resurgent forces of the Philippine revolution. It should therefore be guided by the patriotic style of our revolutionary forefathers and the true revolutionaries of the present.

The Second Propaganda Movement should use this publication to help break down old ideas, old customs, old habits and old attitudes and help the Philippine revolution advance.

The Second Propaganda Movement should be a thoroughgoing cultural revolution. It should shatter the present semi-colonial and semi-feudal superstructure. A new national and democratic culture is crying out to be born. Mass organizations, especially of the youth play a great role in promoting this new culture under the leadership of the proletariat. #