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APERTURA DE LA SESIÓN

Se abre la sesion a las 9:30 a.m, ocupando el estrado el Presidente, Hon. Claro M. Recto.

EL PRESIDENTE: Se abre la sesión.

DISPENSACION DE LA LECTURA DE LA LISTA

SR. OSIAS: Señor Presidente.

EL PRESIDENTE: Sr. Delegado.

SR. OSIAS: Pido que se dispense la lectura do la lista de los Delegacies y que se presuma la existencia de un quorum.

EL PRESIDENTE: Si no hay objeción, asi se acuerda. (No hubo objeción).

APROBACIÓN DEL ACTA

Se lee el acta de la sesión correspondiente al dia 24 de Agosto de 1934, la cual es aprobada.

SR. OSIAS: Sr. Presidente.

EL PRESIDENTE: Sr. Delegado.

SR. OSIAS: Tengo una resolución que obra en poder del Secretario, la cual pido que se lea.

EL PRESIDENTE: Léase el titulo.

EL SECRETARIO, leyendo:

RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION THAT THE CON-STITUTION TO BE DRAFTED AND FORMULATED SHALL BE A CONSTITUTION FOR THE COMMON-WEALTH AND THE PHILIPPINE REPUBLIC TO BE KNOWN AS "THE CONSTITUTION OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS."

EL PRESIDENTE: Si no hay objeción, se señala para el martes, día 28 del actual, la consideración de esta resolución. (No hubo objeción.)

THE PRESIDENT: The Delegate from Siquijor.

MR. JUMAUAN: Mr. President.

MR. JUMAUAN: Mr. President, I believe that the time or period within which the Committee on Rules should submit the rules for this Chamber has expired. For this reason, Mr. President, as a humble Member of this Constitutional Convention, and not being aware of the rules of a deliberative body like this, and in order to participate in the debates when the reports of the different committees are submitted, I call for the sub-mission of

the report on the rules as soon as possible. The Committee on Rules has been given time twice already.

EL PRESIDENTE: Qué dice el Comité de Reglamentos a lo manifestado por el Delegado por Negros Oriental?

SR. KAPUNAN: Sr. Presidente, deseamos tener información acerca de lo que ha dicho el Delegado Sr. Jumauan.

EL PRESIDENTE: El Delegado Jumauan ha dicho que el tiempo concedido al Comité de Reglamentos ha expirado y dicho Comité no ha presentado hasta ahora el proyecto de Reglamento.

SR. KAPUNAN: En la ausencia del Presidente del Comité de Reglamentos y de los "ranking members" del mismo, tengo el honor de informar a esta Convención y especialmente al Delegado Jumauan que el referido comité ha sometido ya su informe correspondiente; lo que pasa, creo yo, es que el personal no ha terminado de ronear el proyecto para su distribución a los Miembros de esta Convención.

MR. JUMAUAAN: Mr. President, if we are to set an example to the public to comply with our obligations, inasmuch as the members of the Committee were the ones who asked for the extension of time, they must present the set of rules to the Chamber.

THE PRESIDENT: Did the Gentleman understand the answer of the Committee?

MR. JUMAUAAN: I understand that the set of rules has been already indorsed to the Secretary, but it is not the fault of the House that the rules are not in the hands of the Delegates. As a matter of course, in accordance with the terms of the resolution the set of rules must be submitted to us, not to the Secretary of the Convention, within ten days,

EL PRESIDENTE: La Mesa siente tener que decir que las ultimas manifestaciones del Delegado por Negros Oriental, Sr. Jumauan, están fuera de orden.

SR. MARAMARA: Sr. Presidente.

THE PRESIDENT: The Gentleman from Cebu has the floor.

SPEECH OF MR. MARAMARA

MR. MARAMARA: Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Convention:

I rise in order to raise my voice in behalf of the great multitude of our inhabitants, both old and young, who are hopelessly drifting in doubt and in uncertainty with respect to their life career and whose welfare and well-being the government which they have established has the sacred obligation to pursue. This group has the misfortune of playing a very inconsequential part in laying the foundation and directing the educational policy and progress of our country. Yet they are the ones who need our care, who need our wise and careful judgment and solicitous consideration, especially at this time when we are about to consider the enactment of a charter which shall be the basis of the law of the land.

Gentlemen of the Convention, as we proceed to analyze the needs of the people, we should neither lose faith in God nor forget to be guided by what we believe to be the best interests of these people. I therefore invite your attention, lest you overlook it, to one of the outstanding problems in the building of an educational program: the problem of effective functional vocational education, that branch of learning which possibly has been given the least attention by the educated of the world, and until recently practically neglected.

Mr. President, there have been in the past four years so many innovations in our educational system, so many changes in methods, so many new principles, new aims and new ideals, that the average educator, particularly he who is responsible for the development of a curriculum, is confronted with a task that is more or less confusing.

What to accept, what to adopt, what to reject, how much of the old is worth keeping, and how much of the new is worth trying—these are questions which are constantly coming up into the minds of those who have the educational interests of the country at heart.

Mr. President, the same situation confronts this august Body when it discusses an educational policy and a worthwhile educational program for the Commonwealth government. Too often, novelties either fail in their purpose or they seem to be out of proportion to the benefits derived. It is, therefore, imperative that both the educator and the delegate who are interested in educational problems must go slow in their choosing and must be conservative in their decision. However, we must remember that it often happens that a policy that is too conservative is more than apt to result in educational impotence and stagnation.

Behind the maze of present-day experiments, however, there is one tendency which has been observed in recent years, and that is the tendency to coordinate learning and thinking with life and living. On this, there seems to be no quarrel. It is only in applying it to the specific needs of the schoolroom that discussion arises and opinion varies, and it is in this connection that I have before me the general aim of linking together the child's vocational and educational growth. Hence, I wish to discuss here today the problems of vocational education and its importance not only to our economic prosperity but even to our national existence.

Mr. President, there are times when we are charged with indifference to the education of our children — charges that are true to some extent. We have been accused of sending school children into the great world of competition, children who know absolutely nothing except to look forward to a haven in the world of white-collar jobs. In the past few years, there has been a tendency to create in the minds of the young of the country a perverted sense of values, a lopsided idea that the Philippines must be a nation of lawyers. This has resulted in so many of our young men being obsessed with a craving to become the legal lights of tomorrow. This is not casting an aspersion on the integrity of our lawyers nor minimizing the importance of this honored profession, but I am only presenting facts as I see them. This tendency is not the fault of our children, or our own nor that of education. Be that as it may, we cannot deny that it is ingrained in the very spirit of the country, and that education has failed to eradicate this belief to the extent that it should have.. . .

Mr. President, there is a need to change the attitude to the end that the mind of the young people, the "ambiente," and the quickening of the spirit manifest itself in directions pointed not only towards the classic halls but also towards activities which contribute to the economic development of our country. We must realize that a nation must stand four-square, and we as a new nation must also stand four-square; that is, we should develop a nation which not only needs spiritual leaders, physicians and lawyers but also businessmen, farmers, teachers, skilled workers and artisans. Besides, we have to consider whether the educational philosophy of the country is based upon the needs of special interests or the needs of the democratic mass.

Is a system of education truly democratic when it serves only the interests of a chosen few, and especially when these have more than their share of worldly goods and material opportunities? Should not the sons of agricultural and industrial workers have equivalent opportunities offered to them in the schools of the country as are offered to the sons of men who are working in the learned and professional world? The concept that training is necessary for the man who works with his hands in the field and in the workshop is still so new that the schools have only recently admitted that the control of natural things of life is an essential part of knowledge. Until very recently, the schools have neglected the class of people who are numerically the largest, the class upon which the remaining minority depends for food, shelter, sustenance and necessities.

In a true democracy, schools are not created to take care exclusively of the needs of a special class. They are organized to serve the interests of the vast majority, those who, in every country and clime, are the ones who turn

the wheels of the industrial, commercial and agricultural mechanism of that country—a mechanism which is, after all, the basis of all economic development and of all social problems.

It is true, and no one will deny, that we have opened wide the door of opportunity for the children of parents with the financial resources necessary to send them to the university, but we have sadly neglected the needs of children whose parents earn a mere pittance, a very meager salary, and who do not and will never have enough funds to send their boys and girls to a university or to any other institution of high learning. As an example, I will cite to you the City of Manila where we find over 8,000 students enrolled in four secondary high schools, and each one of these boys and girls is taking a straight academic, college-preparatory course. It is true that this course most effectively serves the best interest of the children whose parents can send them to college, but you will not disagree with me when I say that such course is absolutely of no use to the children of parents who cannot have them continue their education in institutions of higher learning. Strange as it seems, the City of Manila—the largest city in the archipelago, the center of industry and commerce—offers to the children of poor inhabitants no courses in industry, no courses in commerce, no courses in home economics, and no courses in special branches which would be of material benefit to the children of the man who earns a peso or just a little more a day but who is not financially able to support his children through a four-year course in the learned professions.

Mr. President, there is only one solution to this problem, and that is to coordinate more efficiently and correlate more intimately our educational policies with the life activities and the economic needs of our country. Let us hope sincerely that in formulating the educational policy and the progress for our Commonwealth, we shall take up this problem with seriousness of purpose and with the determination to make it serve the best interests of the larger number.

You might ask: What are the needs and how can we help solve them? The answer is simple. A critical study of the Philippines shows that it is rich in natural and physical resources and that her future economic history is inevitably dependent upon and interwoven with the development of modern agricultural and industrial practices. Her economic welfare depends fundamentally upon the efficient utilization of her agricultural resources and such being the case, the need for vocational training, particularly along agricultural education, is more than obvious. With the realization of this great need for the development of our economic resources comes a realization that education is destined to be one of the most effective agencies for solving this very serious problem.

Most of the progress of the Islands, especially in agricultural, industrial, and commercial development, will be vitally dependent upon the extent to which our children's education is developed and the direction which it takes. The kind of education they need is by no means different from that needed by other people. If other peoples are giving maintenance to the development of the useful and the practical in their school system, I see no reason why this should not find a similar application in our own schools, especially so if we consider that this is a new country, therefore it will have an even greater need for industrial and agricultural activities if we must take our place among the progressive peoples of the world.

Mr. President, it is not sufficient to say that a child is educated because he knows how to read and write. There are other social and vocational problems which have to enter when we consider the extent to which that education is functional. It is said that the Chinese know how to read and write; that they are able to keep accounts and that they generally observe the laws of the land; yet to them poverty is almost a universal condition. They have skill and adaptability to the most marked degree and, above all, their mountains are full of coal and iron; vegetable and grain abound in great varieties. Yet these millions of men and women of an ancient race now lag behind the march of civilization because they have built their educational system merely on reading and writing and not on the consideration of other equally essential though material things of life.

This condition is due to the improper development of wealth and the inefficient system of education and to the faulty distribution of vocational knowledge. The Philippines will do well to avoid duplicating the pitiful economic plight of China by the introduction of some system of vocational training whereby the Filipino people will best develop and utilize their enormous natural wealth, both aboveground and underground. I will add that the Filipino youth must be made conscious of their opportunities along these lines and the chances held out to them for their own prosperity and for the progress of their country.

This is a troubled and difficult situation and nobody is going to improve it except the people and their chosen leaders. All of the people, regardless of their vocational status, must cooperate in solving it. We cannot wait for some mysterious, providential interpositions because those will only make matters worse. We must provide for a leadership not only along political, social, and judicial lines, but also along the line of economic, industrial and agricultural progress. Where and how shall we get this leadership? This is a challenge to us as we dedicate our precious time and energy in shaping the destiny of our future Commonwealth.

Great leaders and teachers have held before their students and people the desirability of progress—that ideal without which life becomes meaningless. In the field of economic activity which is changing most rapidly and which is probably the most complex, in the world of occupation and work, practically nothing is being done to make changes in attitude and changes in "ambientes." It is because of this that I appeal to you to support my project on agricultural education and agricultural extension—a field in which I believe lies the welfare, the progress, the happiness and the economic development of our people and our country. I thank you.

SR. ABELLA: Señor Presidente.

EL PRESIDENTE: Tiene la palabra el Delegado Abel la.

DISCURSO DEL SR. ABELLA

SR. ABELLA: Sr. Presidente, Caballeros de la Asamblea: No hace mucho que me dirigia a mis compañeros de la Asamblea exponiendo una materia de importancia vital en todo régimen democrático: El voto de la mujer filipina. Estoy otra vez ante vosotros, Compañeros, no en calidad de expositor, sino de propugnador de la misma medida. Los que abogamos por el sufragio femenino estamos entablado las últimas pugnas por el triunfo de nuestra causa. Esperamos de esta Convencion un criterio abierto y liberal. Las cuestiones de importancia trascendental las tenemos que decidir en la balanza de una sosegada y madura reflexion, para que no intervengan los apasionamientos pasajeros del momento nervioso, ni tampoco los prejuicios que la justicia y un mejor conocimiento de los hechos excluyen de toda deliberación sana.

Las opiniones formadas obedecen necesariamente a una casualidad, y al abrazar la causa que sostengo con tesón, en estos momentos, he de deciros que a ella me empujaron su justicia y bondad democrática. La postergacion politica de la mujer no se apoya en ninguna consideracion sana y plausible. Su diferenciacion sexual no prueba inferioridad mental o moral, base de las ineligibilidades en el sufragio. La Bruyere y Stuart Mill tenian mucha razon al calificarlo de absurdo. La practica es aun mas dura aprobando esta inigualdad: Puede votar el ultimo patan que no sabe escribir y, sin embargo, se le priva de ese privilegio a una Doña Sofia de Veyra.

Nuestras instituciones de gobierno son copias" de las americanas. Con ligeras variantes de caracter Oriental seguimos sus principios de regimentacion politica. Hemos implantado aqui y seguido como un ideal aquel principio que es broche señero de la declaration de independencia americana y que reza asi; "Todo gobierno deriva sus justos poderes del consentimiento de los gobernados." Si efectuamos una revision cuidadosa de nuestras practicas de gobierno, ¿podriamos acaso, al clausurar el balance, decir que hemos seguido esa norma? Estoy seguro que esas cuentas habrian de arrojar un deficit enorme de valores democraticos porque en Filipinas,

con la esclavitud politica de la mujer, estamos deteniendo inicuaamente los fueros de mas de la mitad de nuestros electores, sabiendo el predominio numerico del elemento femenino en nuestro pais.

Señores opositores del sufragio femenino: meditaad bien el alcance de esta situation anomala en un regimen que se dice ser democratico, y os convencereis de que algo o mucho necesita correccion en el mecanismo de nuestro gobierno. Ahora es el tiempo de subsanar esa deformidad en el sistema.

El voto no va a causar la dislocación de la familia filipina, ni esos capullos femeninos, tiernos y delicados, del terruño, se habrán de agostar, al vaho del ergástulo que surge de las realidades politicas. El sufragio y el cargo publico no son la politica. Nosotros queremos darles aquellos, no ésta. Si teméis que con el disfrute de esas prerrogativas, se habrá de mancillar el blanco armiño de sus poderes y correrán riesgo sus virtudes, entonces hagamos limpia nuestra casa politica como nos ponemos limpios nosotros y limpiamos nuestras casas cuando se trata de ofrecerlas a la mujer. Si vuestra casa encuéntrase sucia y asquerosa a la visita de una dama a quien apreciáis con todo el corazón, o quizá amáis locamente, ¿no es acaso vuestro primer impulso ponerla limpia, inmaculada, reluciente de nitidez y atractiva para que sea digno alberque de la persona de vuestra predilección? Eso es lo que debiéramos hacer tratándose del sufragio femenino. Si, a decir de nuestro Presidente, la mujer filipina levanta en nuestro corazón fervores semipaganos porque es ella una divinidad hecha carne y hueso, seduccion y misterio, lo más puro, lo más tierno de nuestra existencia, al franquear los umbrales de nuestra casa politica, a la cual fuere llevada por su deseo de compartir nuestras labores y esfuerzos, nuestra hospitalidad, la innata hidalguia, impiden que les demos con la puerta en las narices. Recibámosla con los brazos abiertos y hagamos de su estancia lo mas placentera posible.

Las predicciones ominosas en contra del voto femenino al efecto de que rebaja moralmente a la mujer y siembra el germen de las discordias en el seno de la institucion familiar, hicieronme reflexionar mucho sobre el tema. Bastante sé que las teorías muchas veces no sostienen ocupación con la actualidad de los hechos. En mis momentos de indecision he vislumbrado a la mujer filipina tal como la concibieron los antisufragistas: arrebatada de su puesto de preeminencia, hollada con denuestos en las grandes "mascaradas del carnaval politico", perdido su tesoro de virtudes autoctonas. Y me decia: ¿Será verdad que mis entusiasmos habrán de causarle estos males? En la duda acudi a las realidades. Acudi a la historia del sufragio de América, Inglaterra, Alemania, China, Siam y otras, trazando el progreso de sus luchas y de su ejercicio en la actualidad. La prueba fue definitiva y concluyente para mí porque en estas naciones eminentemente sostenedoras del sufragio femenino, no se ha visto que sus mujeres hayan sufrido no-tables quiebras morales, ni que sus familias se hallen en un estado de desintegración.

Los cálculos teóricos, Señor Presidente, ya he dicho en mi primer discurso sobre esta materia, por excelentes que aparezcan en su formulación, tienen que deshacerse al frio contacto de la actualidad, más elocuente y persuasiva que las soberbias lucubraciones de visionarios y teorizantes. Y si esto es verdad, cumple a todos los que cifraron su fe en esos cálculos revisen de raiz sus creencias para mejor amoldarlas a las patentes manifestaciones de los hechos.

La concesión de la franquicia electoral a la mujer necesariamente tiene que ocasionar gastos. Muchos se fijan en esta consecuencia para oponerse a tal concesion. No vamos a echar cuentas porque podríamos manipularlas a nuestro capricho. Es lo cierto, sin embargo, que esos gastos no causarian trastornos de orden económico en nuestro gobierno. Y que importa gastar un poco más si con ello mantenemos un principio que es el eje vital de todo gobierno democratico ?

Los Estados Unidos gastaron decenas de billones de dolares durante la pasada Guerra Mundial, y las naciones de la Entente Cordiale, cientos de ellos. Filipinas contribuyo un barco de guerra, hombres y millones de pesos, para el triunfo de la gran causa abrazada por todo el mundo entonces, la causa de la democracia. Ahora que se trata de

aplicar y llevar a cabo los principios que fueron motivo de homéricas hecatombes, nos oponemos diciendo: "No, señor." "Espíritus aguerridos mártires de la democracia, cruzados del ideal más sublime de estos tiempos de luz, que en tierras extrañas supisteis ofrendar vuestras propiedades, vuestra sangre, vuestra vida, iluminad a vuestros sucesores para que sean dignos de vuestras épicas hazañas y no violen la sagrada causa por la cual alcanzasteis memoria inmortal.

Las revoluciones políticas de los siglos XVII y XVIII en el viejo Mundo trastornaron la ordenación política de los gobiernos absolutistas. El gobierno del pueblo fomentaba el esfuerzo individual, origen que fue de los progresos y triunfos industriales y mecánicos posteriores. Eran fuerzas tremendas de innovación y cambio. Se parecían a un dique desbordado porque todo lo alcanzaban en la estructuración social, económica y política de las naciones. La imprenta y la electricidad han cambiado hasta la fisonomía espiritual y moral del mundo civilizado. Los ingenios de la invención, al suplantar al hombre en sus obras y actividades, crearon un nuevo estado de cosas. Las costumbres y las creencias que son efectos del medio ambiente, se tuvieron que revisar para ajustarlas a los nuevos rumbos, a las nuevas orientaciones. La educación universal y el sufragio de la mujer son dos de los nuevos resultados trascendentales surgidos del cambio del status quo. El elemento femenino se impuso de su derecho y lo reclamó; emancipado del hogar y de prácticas y creencias absurdas tradicionales, quiso ejercerlo y lo ejerció. Sucintamente, ahí tenéis trazado el origen y desarrollo del sufragio femenino. Es tan decisivo el movimiento que casi todas las naciones lo tienen adoptado, inclusive China, que hoy es la nación más recalcitrante y conservadora que hay, y Java cuya civilización no sostiene parangón con la nuestra, considerada la vanguardia en el Extremo Oriente. La civilización de la mujer rechaza esta postergación política. Si nuestras mujeres no se interesan ahora es deber nuestro despertarlas. La educación femenina en los instrumentos de gobierno en estos tiempos ya no es una mera curiosidad, es un imperativo de las circunstancias.

Sr. Presidente, estamos aquí para redactar los principios básicos de gobierno de nuestra patria para el porvenir. Esta Asamblea debe colocarse sobre un plano elevado desde cuya cima domine el panorama local, y la más amplia y dilatada del mundo en la actualidad. Atalayados en nuestra imaginación, ¿qué divisamos en nuestro derredor? Naciones avanzando a grandes pasos en el camino de la cultura, del progreso y de la civilización. Casi todos los estados fomentando la educación universal para eliminar el analfabetismo. Las democracias concediendo la franquicia del voto a las mujeres.

Nuestro deber, Señor Presidente, es claro; en la Constitución que legaremos al porvenir debemos dar paso franco a los grandes desenvolvimientos del progreso político y la civilización. Las mujeres están abriéndose paso en todo, en seguimiento de nuevas prácticas y de un nuevo estado de cosas. Aferrarse al conservatismo del pasado y a los prejuicios tradicionales, es remedar la insensatez del rey Canuto de Inglaterra al querer detener el avance de las olas. El voto femenino tiene que triunfar porque es secuela del estado presente de la civilización. Ese curso es tan natural como las olas del monarca inglés, y pretender ignorarlo es condenarse a sufrir una desilusión. Nos contempla el mundo en nuestras labores. Adoptemos el sufragio femenino para que ese mundo no se ría de nosotros y las generaciones por venir no nos tilden de retrogrados. He dicho.

LEVANTAMIENTO DE LA SESIÓN

SR. LIZARDO: Sr. Presidente, pido que se levante la sesión hasta el lunes, a las 4:00 de la tarde.

EL PRESIDENTE: Si no hay objeción, se levanta la sesión hasta el lunes, a las 4:00 de la tarde.

Eran las 10:20 a.m.

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