

JOURNAL No. 51

APERTURA DE LA SESION

Se abre la sesion a las 5:15 p.m., bajo la presidencia del Vicepresidente, Hon. Ruperto Montinola.

EL VICEPRESIDENTE: Lease la lista de los Delegados.

SR. PERFECTO: Senor Presidente. pido que se dispense la lectura de la lista.

EL VICEPRESIDENTE: ØÿHay alguna objecion a la mocion? (Silencio.) La Mesa no oye ninguna. Se dispensa la lectura de la lista. Hay quorum. Lease el acta.

APROBACION DEL ACTA

SR. PERFECTO: Senor Presidente, pido igualmente que se dispense la lectura del acta y que la misma se de por aprobada.

EL VICEPRESIDENTE: ØÿHay alguna objecion a la mocion? (Silencio.) La Mesa no oye ninguna. Aprobada. Leanse los documentos recibidos.

DESPACHO DE ASUNTOS

EL SECRETARIO:

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON
OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

The President
Constitutional Convention

S i r :

Your Committee on Official Language begs leave to submit herewith a draft of the provisions recommended to be inserted in the Constitution, for the consideration of the Constitutional Convention. In making the recommendation, the Committee makes the following report of its deliberations and on the reasons that have impelled it in making said recommendation:

PROCEEDINGS

Three main sources of information have been availed of by the Committee in the study of the question of an official language, namely, the various precepts submitted by Members of the Convention, the views and opinions of men who have made a special study of said question expressed at the public hearings conducted by the Committee, and the extensive literature available dealing with the language problem.

The following constitutional precepts submitted by Delegates to the Convention were considered:

- C. P. No. 3 — Presented by Delegate Perfecto. Sobre el idioma nacional de las Islas Filipinas.
- C.P.No. 29 — Presented by Delegate Baltao. Referring to the National and Official Language for inclusion in the Constitution.
- C. P. No. 35 — Presented by Delegate Santos. Establishing a Filipino National language, based on the Tagalog dialect as distinguished from the official language which is English.
- C. P. No. 123 — Presented by Delegate Cloribel. Providing for the use of English as the official language of the Philippine Republic.
- C. P. No. 323 — Presented by Delegate Vinzons. Adoption of Tagalog as the National Language of the Philippine Commonwealth, and the temporary use of English as an official language.
- C. P. No. 463 — Presented by Delegate Calleja. Declarando lenguajes oficiales el ingles y el castellano.
- C. P. No. 521 — Presented by members of the Committee on Official Language. Adopting English as the official language and directing the Legislature to provide for the study of the native languages with the view to evolving a national language.
- C. P. No. 556 — Presented by Delegates Ribo and Zialcita. Adoptar, como lenguaje nacional un dialecto vernacular seleccionado mediante plebiscito.
- C. P. No. 634 — Presented by Delegate Cruz (C.). The official languages shall be English and Spanish.
- C. P. No. 653 — Presented by Delegates Villamor and Guzman. Que los idiomas ingles y castellano seran el idioma oficial del Gobierno de la Mancomunidad Filipina.
- C. P. No. 780 — Presented by Delegate Maramara. Creating a national academy for the study of a common local language.
- C. P. No. 742 — Presented by Delegate Maramara. Recognizing Spanish as an official language in the courts of the Philippines for six years during the Commonwealth.
- C. P. No. 792 — Presented by Delegates Jose Artadi and Manuel Fernandez. El lenguaje oficial de la nacion durante el periodo de transicion y despues de establecida la Republica Filipina sera el ingles y el espanol.

The following appeared and expressed their opinions before the Committee at the public hearings: Professor Antonio Viterbo, Dr. Antonio Isidro, Dr. Cecilio Lopez, Prof. Gabriel Bernardo, and Dr. Carmelo Reyes, all of the University of the Philippines; Dna. Rosa Sevilla de Alvero of the Institute de Mujeres; Hon. Vicente Sotto, Delegate from Cebu; and Messrs. Lope K. Santos, Abe Gonzales, Sofronio Calderon, Jose Sevilla, Jose Esperanza Cruz, Felix Gonzales, and various others.

The following literatures have received special attention of the Committee: "What should be the National Language of the Filipinos?" by Director Eulogio B. Rodriguez of the National Library and Museum; "The Language Problem of the Filipinos" by

SCOPE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The draft submitted contains a provision not only on an official language but also on a national language. The former is to be used by the Government and its agencies, its documents, papers and proceedings, as well as on dealings between it and the private citizens. The national language is to be used as a means of communication among the people, in their daily life and in their private dealings with one another. The official language is the language of official transactions; the national language, of the home, society, and private intercourse. It is further provided that when a national language will have been determined and adopted by the Legislature, it shall then also be used as an official language.

The Committee and the men who appeared before it fully agree that the time is neither ripe nor expedient nor propitious for the adoption of the national language from among the vernaculars. But all are agreed that such a time may be hastened or accelerated by the establishment of an academy to foster its growth and development. Hence, provision is made for the establishment of an academy of Philippine languages, which shall be entrusted with the determination of the vernacular to be adopted as a national language, and, after such determination, to foster its growth, enrich it from among the other vernaculars, and hasten its dissemination. The Committee believes that the determination of the national language is purely a technical matter, and therefore, to be left to the academy. But since such adoption may have its social and political aspects, provision is made for the approval of such determination by the Legislature.

REASONS FOR THE ADOPTION OF ENGLISH AS AN OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

There is unanimity of opinion in making English at least one of the official languages. The following reasons, among others, have been considered by the Committee:

- a. English is now very widely diffused throughout the Islands, especially among the masses.
- b. The present generation, with the exception of a limited portion, has been educated in English, and the coming generations are also being educated in the English language.
- c. The great staff of teachers now developed has been educated in English and uses English as a means of instruction.
- d. English is the prevailing commercial language in the Orient, and the bulk of commercial transactions with Oriental countries or with America is conducted in said language.
- e. Millions have been spent in the education of the masses in English, in the training of teachers, preparation of a system of instruction, books, periodicals, etc., and the nation can ill afford the loss of so much time, money, and energy

spent in the study and diffusion of the language.

- f. A great mass of literature, especially by the younger generation of Filipinos, is written in the English language.
- g. The mandatory provision in the Tydings-Mc-Duffie law making English the principal basis of instruction and the introduction of a similar provision in the recommendation of the Committee on Public Instruction.

REASONS FOR ADOPTING A NATIONAL LANGUAGE FROM AMONG THE VERNACULARS

The development of a national language is the aim of every Filipino statesman and the dream of every Filipino patriot. No factor is so essential to the homogeneity of the race, or to the compactness or unity of the nation, or to the evolution of a culture and civilization entirely our own as a vernacular language is, not only the medium of comprehension between individuals and groups but also as a vehicle of thoughts and ideas—in it are treasured the spirit and the ideals, the culture and the civilization of a race. In the cultivation and preservation of a native language, native customs, thoughts, feelings and ideals are cultivated and preserved. If we are to evolve in this corner of the Orient a nation with its own individuality and civilization, its native language should be preserved and evolved, as a treasure chest or a nurser for such culture and civilization. The adoption, cultivation and evolution of a national language among the vernaculars is, therefore, essential to the establishment and perpetuation of a real Philippine Republic and a real Filipino people.

There was a time when English was expected in time to become the national language of the Filipinos. That time is gone, for, in spite of thirty years of continuous tutelage in the English language, the vernaculars still dominate the home, the village, the country, society, and all the fields of industry. The inexorable law of nature as reflected in the history of Rome and her colonies, Arabia and its dependencies of Mesopotamia, Syria and Egypt, the Mohammedans in India and Malaysia, must take its course here as in other parts of the world. Barely thirty-five years has passed since Spain hauled down its flag in the Philippines, yet, in spite of over three centuries of Spanish domination, the Spanish language is a waning language. Thirty years after America will have hauled down its flag in the Philippines, and the pressure of foreign domination lifted, the vernaculars will leap into a new life of growth and vigor. With the lessons that history has taught us, and with the little experience we have witnessed in our own land, the way should be clear towards the adoption of a vernacular as a national language. In such a step we shall be encouraged, not only by the lessons of history and experience but by the noble ideal of perpetuating the Filipino individuality. But the Committee has been encouraged in the adoption of a vernacular as a national language, not only by the desire to preserve and perpetuate Filipino culture and civilization but by its evident practicability and feasibility and the material hope for its ultimate accomplishment. The following reasons assure us of the practicability of adopting a national language from among the vernaculars.

- a. All the vernaculars are outgrowths or branches of the Malay.
- b. The vernaculars have very many terms in common and are almost similar in inflection and variation.

c. Ease and rapidity with which one tribe learns and uses another vernacular.

d. Wide diffusion of Tagalog in provinces not speaking it, notwithstanding the absence of encouragement for its use.

Most of those who have appeared before the Committee are confident that with the adoption of one of the vernaculars as a basic dialect, a national language may be evolved. What language shall it be, which shall be adopted as the basic language, the academy shall decide according to the merits of the different vernaculars. But whichever language is adopted, it shall be enriched by importations or engraftments from the other vernaculars. In that way all words or terms in the various vernaculars shall be preserved and combined to form a national tongue rich in variety of thought and expression, and peculiarly suited to the expression of Filipino thought, feeling and emotion. Hereunder are quoted two eminent authorities who have given thought to the adoption of Tagalog as a basic language.

Dr. Blake of John Hopkins University.—"Some persons, struck by the great resemblance which the various Philippine languages bear to one another, have thought it would be possible to fuse these languages into one, and form a sort of national compound language, but such an artificial scheme is certainly impracticable. If the Filipinos are destined even to have a national language in which a national literature can be written, that language will almost surely be Tagalog, the language of the capital city, and of the most progressive race of the archipelago; a language admirably suited by its richness of form and its great flexibility for literary development and needing but the master hand of some great native writer to make it realize its latent possibilities."

Assistant Director Eulogio B. Rodriguez of the Philippine Library and Museum.—"I, too, am of the firm conviction that Tagalog with all its undreamed of possibilities as a national vehicle of expression and thought will be the basic dialect. In fact it was the official language of the Philippine Revolution. Consolidation of all the languages and dialects is artificial and impracticable, and such a language would meet the same fate as Esperanto, which, without the traditional development and progress inherent in a natural language, makes little or no headway. Anything artificial has no stable life, and is subject to the whims and fashions of the day, to be cast aside any time as interest in it fades. It is soulless and therefore fated to collapse."

While some of the members of the Committee and some Delegates are decided on the adoption of Tagalog as the basic language, the Committee has refrained from making a definite and specific recommendation to that effect in view of the technical nature of the question involved in the determination as to which of the vernaculars should be adopted as the basic language. This question seems also to be of a controversial nature. Hence, the Committee is of the opinion that the matter should be left to the academy and to the Legislature to finally determine.

PROVISIONS AS TO THE USE OF SPANISH AS AN OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

There is a strong movement among many of the Delegates to the Convention that Spanish should also be one of the official languages of the nation. Because of the prevalence of the use of Spanish among the older generation of cultured Filipinos,