

# We have become untrue to ourselves

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With all the force and vigor at my command, I contend that we have relaxed our vigilance, that we have allowed ourselves to deteriorate. I contend that we have lost our pride in the Philippines, that we no longer consider it a privilege and an honor to be born a Filipino. To the Filipino youth, nothing Filipino is good enough any more. Even their Filipino names no longer suit them. A boy named Juan does not care to be called Juanito anymore. No, he must be Johnny. A girl named Virginia would get sore if she was nicknamed Viring or Binang. No, she must be Virgie or Ginny.

Roberto has become Bobbie; Maria, Mary or Marie. And because they have become so Americanized, because they look down on everything Filipino, they now regard with contempt all the things that our fathers and our fathers' fathers held dear. They frown on kissing the hands of their elders, saying that it is unsanitary. They don't care for the Angelus, saying that it is old-fashioned. They belittle the kundiman, because it is so drippingly sentimental. They are what they are today because their elders – their parents and their teachers – have allowed them to be such.

They are incongruities because they cannot be anything else! And they cannot be anything else because their elders did not know enough, or did not care enough to fashion them and to mold them into the Filipino pattern. This easing of the barriers that would have protected our Filipinism, this has resulted in something more serious, I refer to the de-Filipinization of our economic life. Let us face it. Economically speaking, we Filipinos have become strangers in our own country.

And so, today, we are witnesses to the spectacle of a Philippines inhabited by Filipinos who do not act and talk like Filipinos. We are witnesses to the pathetic sight of a Philippines controlled and dominated and run by non-Filipinos. We have become untrue to ourselves, we have become traitors to the brave Filipinos who fought and died so that liberty might live in the Philippines. We have betrayed the trust that Rizal reposed on us, we are not true to the faith that energized Bonifacio, the faith that made Gregorio del Pilar cheerfully lay down his life at Tirad Pass.