



National Youth Action Committee

YOUTH ON THE MOVE

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A Compliment to Youth



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"Life is a Stage and we are the actors and everybody have a part to play

Like a never ending movie, with all different characters, each one have a role to portray."

- "Life is a Stage" by Bro. Valentino.

"Life is a Stage" is a classic and as all classics, it remains pertinent even today. It brings out the importance of each individual and the role they play. So why should we not apply the song to an issue of the day - the question of youth. Perhaps, we would arrive at the conclusion that the question of what should be done about the nation's youth should be altered to what roles are they to play. The solution to problems affecting youths would then be the answer to how are we to promote the right roles for them.

Let's set the stage, because this is key, for the roles they play are dependent on what is going on in the current act and how the characters perceive these events. In this unwritten script, we can try to forecast what are the consequences of various actions that these actors might take.

In the current act, the world is portrayed as dynamic and rapidly changing. However, hanging over the stage is an ominous atmosphere, for we are passing through troubled times. Our society, in particular, is now facing challenges it has never faced before. Socially, we are in a storm and the nation's youth are at the middle of it.

Violence is now prevalent, as some of the young perpetrate acts of violence on their peers, elders and sometimes turn it on to

themselves. . Some may say that the violence of ages ago has never left the stage, but few can deny that the proliferation of guns is a new element. It has not helped that we are now in the cultural shadows of the US, where studies have shown that by the age of 18 a child has seen about 200,000 acts of violence. Other studies have shown a link between children viewing TV violence and aggression in adulthood. The world has grown smaller and we are now exposed to their communication media. Is it a stretch to believe that a similar situation holds here as well? Probably not and with the country living a contradiction of economic wealth while many citizens do without, the frustration of poverty has channeled the violence to the crimes we see today.

A smaller world has also brought the threat of drugs to our shores. The global trade in illegal drugs is worth billions of dollars a year - as much, by some estimates, as the international tourist trade. The trade financially dwarfs national budgets and its circle of influence is widening. It has gone hand in hand with the spiraling crime and many underprivileged youths face the temptation of financial opportunities associated with it. The belief that there are leaders of the society who are directly or indirectly influenced by the trade has caused a waning of respect from youths for the society's authority figures.

These two factors, violence and drugs, have contributed to what has been a decay of the fundamental blocks of society, the family and the community. The communication media is also a great factor as it has, in many instances, has stripped parents of their dominance in the moulding of their children's values. This is of great importance since these institutions (the family and the community) have customarily been the main conduits of values for a nation.

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35 Years