

November 30, 1958 HONORING ANDRES BONIFACIO

BONIFACIO, FATHER OF THE KATIPUNAN

"Is there a love nobler, purer and more sublime than love for one's own country?"

Andres Bonifacio, Founder and Supremo of the Katipunan, had one telling answer: None!

Across the pages of history is written in purple Bonifacio's proof of his conviction. Imbued with undying love for country, possessed with the genius of a people's leader, unswerving in his struggle against tyranny - he succeeded where others failed. He ignited a revolution that was never suppressed.

Ninety-five years ago today, November 30, Andres Bonifacio was born to an impoverished family in Tondo. The eldest among four boys and two girls, he shouldered early the burdens of a breadwinner when orphaned at 14. First he peddled bamboo canes and paper fans, then served as messenger and storekeeper. Despite handicaps, however, he found time for self-study. Soon he was reading not only local periodicals and novels but also the History of the French Revolution.

Inspired by this chronicle, he conceived the idea of a total armed uprising against oppressive Spain.

The opportune moment to sow violence's seed came after Rizal's *Liga Filipina* broke up. On the night of July 7, 1892, together with Teodoro Plata and Ladislaw Diwa he secretly organized the Katipunan. Its appeal to the masses was immediate: tens of thousands pledged themselves to its cause: to loose the shackles of colonial tyranny. When discovered, the Katipunan struck: the Revolution was on.

For a while Bonifacio was undisputed leader. But not for long. The dangerous and complex web of rivalry and intrigue trapped him. He had to give in to someone else. Hardly a year after he raised the Cry of Balintawak, he fell from power. His fall was fatal and tragic. Consequently, he was court-martialed and sentenced to die.

Under the shadow of storied Mount Buntis, Maragondon, Cavite, on May 18, 1897, he was shot - one more priceless sacrificial lamb before the altar of patriotism.

To honor him, the Bureau of Posts is featuring him on a 60-centavos denomination stamp, the seventh of the famous Filipino series.

