

Dominican Republic Independence Day Special

A tribute to the heroes of our nation

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On the night of Feb. 27, 1844, a group of men and women willing to risk everything for everything in order to build a different future for the Dominican Republic, left their imprint

on the waves of history by launching our country's struggle for independence.

When the eastern part of the island of Hispaniola was occupied on Feb. 9, 1822, it marked a milestone in the history of the Dominican Republic.

The occupation was the third by the same country and subjected the territory of what is now known as the Dominican Republic to a process of territorial unification with the western part of the island, as well as progressive dilution of its culture.

"The university was definitively closed; the abandoned population and convents

were soon in ruins... everything seemed to be that Spanish civilization had died on the favorite island of the discoverer," said Pedro Henriquez Urena, a 19th century Dominican intellectual, while referring to the outsiders' arrival on the Spanish-speaking part of the island.

That being said, this is not meant to be a lecture, but a referential framework based on the reality experienced at that point in history while exalting the figures of three individuals under the age of 30: Juan Pablo Duarte, Matias Ramon Mella and Francisco del Rosario Sanchez. Given their achievements, these three are called the founding fathers of the Dominican Republic.

Duarte promoted the formation of two movements based on liberal values that represented the prelude to and the aftermath of the struggle for Dominican independence: La Trinitaria, a secret reformist movement with the main purpose of regaining territorial control, and La Filantropica, which promoted brave independence ideas orchestrated by theatrical performances.

This group of young people, sheltered by patriotic ideas and shouting, "Dios,

Patria y Libertad" (God, Fatherland and Liberty) — the proverb that adorns our national coat of arms — succeeded the night of Feb. 27, 1844, in achieving what they had previously only dreamed of: the proclamation of a Dominican Republic, free, sovereign and independent of any foreign power. The feat of these young people, their courage and bravery, marked from that point onward a new course of history for our country.

The role of young people in social change is simply amazing. They and the organizations in which they participate have the potential to be catalysts for a hopeful future.

There should be no difference between young Dominicans and Japanese nor between young people of all nationalities when it comes to committing to the ideals of a better world. If it's worth dreaming, it's worth doing.

United in attitude, they must take advantage of the interaction with other cultures to enrich each one of them and to form themselves positively and with empathy and heart to build a more inclusive, equitable and freer society.



Above: Alcazar de Colon forms part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site in Ciudad Colonial, Santo Domingo. Below: A bust of Juan Pablo Duarte stands atop Pico Duarte, the tallest mountain in the Caribbean.

EMBASSY OF DOMINICAN REPUBLIC



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Congratulations
to the People
of
the Dominican Republic
on the Occasion
of
Their National Day



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