

You Gave Me the Gavel

WB RICARDO BUENAFE, MASTER
Pinagabitan Lodge #26, Santa Cruz, Laguna

You have conferred upon me tonight the highest position within your power to give — that of the Oriental Chair during this Masonic year. This benevolent gesture on your part is a manifestation of your trust and confidence in me which I will cherish and remember as long as I live. In all humility and gratitude, I accept the honor and privilege of being your Worshipful Master. I am aware of the multitarious and heavy responsibilities that now rest upon my shoulders. I may not be equal to this heavy, but important task in view of my physical and intellectual limitations; however, I will consider the position as a challenge and in order that I may be able to acquit myself creditably in the performance of what is expected of me, I will always bear in mind the following doctrine:

"Let no man take wages or fees for a job that he cannot do, or cannot with probability undertake; or in some sense profitably, and with ease, or with advantage manage. Let no man appropriate to his own use, what God, by a special mercy, or the Republic hath made common: for that is against Justice and Charity."

As I look at your faces tonight, I can discern that they still reflect the spirit of the Yuletide season. This emboldens me then to discourse on

some unrestricted aspects of Masonry which I hope would find fertile fields and the seeds of which will lodge in the hearts of many of our non-member guests who sympathize with our cause.

As Masons, we love God and believe in Him. Before going into any important undertaking, we seek Divine guidance and help. The Mason believes and so holds that "no man has any right in any way to interfere with the religious belief of another. Each man is absolutely sovereign as to his own belief, tho that belief is absolutely foreign to all who do not entertain the same belief; and that, if there were any right of persecution at all, it would in all cases be a mutual right; because one party has the same right as the other to sit as judge in his own case; and God is the only magistrate that can rightfully decide between them. To that great Judge, Masonry refers the matter; and opening wide its portals, it invites to enter there and live in peace and harmony, the Protestant, the Catholic, the Jew, the Moslem.

We love our country; we have pride in our state; we love our homes. These are forces of immense power which we encourage our brethren to

possess and practise and insist them upon those in the public service.

Masonry is not interested in partisan politics. As a matter of fact the discussion of the matter is prohibited in our lodge meetings. Yet despite this inhibition that we must and should uphold, we as inevitable part and parcel of society, which is the ultimate and the very government itself, must be frawn to elect a government that is conducted with the highest degree of efficiency and honesty. However, in this consideration allow me to clarify that our fraternal organization is not peculiar in the election of a particular candidate of a political party, so long as those elected to take hold of the rein of government are the best qualified, honest and have the welfare of the people at heart. To this extent we are duty-bound.

As the river flowing through a busy city or town may be polluted thus making its water undrinkable and unfit for domestic consumption, so may our government be saddled with irregularities and venalities committed by certain public officials, thereby causing the people to lose faith and confidence in it. Yet, no matter how polluted the river may become, the source at its fountain-head is cool and crystal clear. Despite the shortcomings, errors and omissions willfully or unwittingly committed by certain public servants, our form of government is still among the best in the world today. We should zealously guard our government against all evils, especially the inroads of the communist ideology, if we want to preserve our democratic way of life. It is therefore incumbent upon us to elect the best

men for by them and through them the democratic way of life which we now enjoy will be enhanced. Masonry thrives best in a democracy but seldom if ever in a dictatorship.

Masonry works not for reward or aggrandisement for it believes that the highest contributions to life are those obscurely given without benefit of honorific rewards, newspaper space or monetary considerations. Many among our brethren trudge the lowly paths of service the better to render little things that mean a lot to the poor, the distressed or the oppressed. We cannot all achieve fame, but we can all help in doing things no matter how insignificant, that will cause progress in any given endeavor. So, whether our stations be exalted and our responsibilities heavy; or, whether our stations be humble and our responsibilities light, let us think, give, do and follow the best in us. If only our traditional Filipino custom "bayanihan" can be exploited to the fullest extent, more and bigger things could be easily achieved.

Brethren, as Captain of the ship of state of our fraternity, it is my intention to follow the course chartered by my distinguished predecessors. Our Pinagsabitan Lodge No. 26 of F & A M, under the jurisdiction of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of the Philippines, has, for many years, retained the distinction of being one of the foremost blue lodges in Southern Luzon and, undoubtedly, you share with me the desire not only to maintain and preserve the honor and prestige accredited to our Lodge but also to do better. I, therefore, Masonically appeal to all my brethren of Pinagsabitan Lodge No.

26 to give me their wholehearted support and unstinted cooperation. What I ask from you is not much and is within your easy reach to give. Let us all attend our regular monthly stated meetings, conferrals, yearly conventions, and other activities of the Lodge. By improving our Lodge attendance with regularity and punctuality, there would be more intimacy and fellowship among brethren, brotherly love and affection would be more firmly cemented, and ultimately, we would be more closely knitted in working together Masonically for loftier heights and greater achievements.

In conclusion, I do hope that our distinguished guests and brethren in the East will find their brief sojourn to our humble province a pleasant one. I reiterate my profound gratitude to my brethren for giving me the opportunity to serve our Pinagsabitan Lodge No. 26 in an exalted capacity as Worshipful Master. I convey to all of you belated but heartfelt greetings of the season and may you leave this hall contented, happy, and imbued with the spirit of the brotherhood of man under the Fatherhood of God.

ACACIA MUTUAL AID SOCIETY, INC.

Statement of Investments Deposits

Investments in Stocks & Bonds:

7 1/2 % San Miguel Brewery Pref.	P 10,150.00
4 % Philippine Government Bonds	13,000.00
50 Shares, Phil. Banking Corp.	5,000.00
Loans on Real Estate ...	P 500.00

PROCLAMATION OF MASONIC HEROES OF ILOCOS SUR

By virtue of the Resolutions of the Vigan Lodge No. 63, Free and Accepted Masons, I hereby proclaim the following deceased Masons of Ilocos Sur as heroes and patriots for their humanitarian achievements, in the Masonic World, namely:

1. Ex-Governor Alejandro Quirolgico — of Caoayan, I. Sur
2. Dr. Paulo Claro Palencia — of Burgos, Ilocos Norte
3. Ex-Major Urbano Crisologo Bancz — of Bangued, Abra
4. Atty. Severino D. Dagdag, Sr. — of Bantay, I. Sur
5. Ex-Mayor Macario Tolentino — of Magsingal, I. Sur
6. Dr. Cornelio Dato Julian — of Sta. Maria, Ilocos Sur

At Vigan, Ilocos Sur, this 30th day of December, 1960.

(Sgd.) Graciano P. Pada, P.M.
Secretary

Bank Deposits:

Savings Acct., Phil. Nat. Bank	P 1,144.66
Savings Acct., Phil. Banking Corp.	4,121.36
Current Acct., Phil. Nat. Bank	1,628.34
TOTAL INVESTMENTS AND BANK DEPOSITS ..	P 35,544.36

The foregoing report was sent to us by the secretary of the Society, WB. Aranieto. We congratulate the society, small and young as it is, for the efficiency and honesty in which its affairs are conducted. It is planning to distribute dividends to its members in the future.