

A Friend In Deed

By Moises T. Guerrero

IN Washington where decisions affecting relations between the Philippines and the United States are made, practices a lawyer who has been waging a silent fight for some 35,000 Filipinos.

His interest in this particular work started about a year ago when the Philippine Ex-Political Prisoners' Association sent a mission to the United States to work for the amendment of the War Claims Act of 1948 in which American civilian internees among others are entitled to benefits during their period of incarceration.

Harlan Wood, a veteran of World War I, who is quick to see justice where justice is due, accidentally met the mission and from that meeting emerged an assurance that he would help seek Congressional interest in a bill giving justice to former Filipino civilian internees. The result of this joint effort is the Cavalante Bill, introduced by Rep. Anthony Cavalante, of Pennsylvania, which seeks to amend the war claims act by giving equal benefits to former Filipino civilian internees as those accorded Americans under the act.

Since then Mr. Wood has been in the thick of the fight, attending committee hearings, getting in touch with the War Claims Commission which has been named by President Truman to carry out the provisions of the act and enlisting the

support of American leaders, both in the executive and legislative branches, in which he counts with many friends.

Only recently, he obtained an important ruling from the U.S. Immigration office to the effect that Filipinos, prior to July 4, 1946, were American nationals. With this ruling which is expected to be adopted by the State Department, less legislation may be required on behalf of Filipino claimants under the war claims act.

His interest however is not limited to the claim of former Filipino political prisoners. Sometime ago when a wave of anti-Philippine propaganda hit the American press, Mr. Wood wrote Gil Puyat, president of the PEPPA, stating that something should be done to counteract this propaganda. "Our

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ility is particularly true in the case of industries that turn out export products which have to meet open competition in the foreign market.

We must not only avoid direct taxes but also those imposed on other elements affecting production like transportation and capital goods.

We must not be lured by the elements of collectibility, which may perhaps be a good reason for imposing taxes on export products, for the reason that sure collection may be reduced to an insignificant figure when production declines.

There is still an imposing amount of uncollected taxes. Laws have been ground to reach the sure sources of taxes but unfortunately the machinery for collection is not as efficient as it should be. We suggest therefore that this matter be given first priority in the implementation of a revised tax system as any accumulation of laws will only mean more evasion by some of our elements who are specialized in tax evasion and who are enriching themselves not only by the non-payment of taxes but specially as a result of the very unfair, undue and we may say, criminal use of this money to thoroughly compete with those that comply with the letter and spirit of our tax laws.

The structure of our business today requires mass production in most cases, specially when we wish to lower prices by bringing down the cost of production. This in turn necessitates polling of our individual resources through the formation of corporations. But by increasing taxes on corporations, we will be adding a new obstacle to the already difficult task of attracting capital due to our individualistic nature, as a result of which only those corporations formed by aliens who are endowed with the know-how to avoid taxes, using unethical if not illegal means, will be the only ones that will thrive.

MOISES T. GUERRERO

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papers here," he wrote, "have recently been carrying very distressing articles in reference to the Philippines and I am fearful that there are many in the country who are not familiar with the intricacies of the problems facing your government."

While he has not yet visited the Philippines, he has a good grasp of local problems and conditions. He is in constant communication with the Philippine Ex-Political Prisoners' Association and keeps close contact with the Philippine Embassy in Washington. Among his close friends also are two former American Ambassadors to the Philippines, Paul V. McNutt and Emmet O'Neal, who all belong to the Post-Mortem Club, an organization in Washington which counts among its members many officials and leaders including Secretary of the Interior Oscar Chapman and former Defense Secretary Louis Johnson.

Born of humble parents in the small town of Spartanburg, South Carolina, Mr. Wood early saw in life and need for social justice for the poor. He supported himself through high school and early college by running a newspaper route, acting as a plumber's assistant and operating a cleaning and pressing establishment.

Shortly after graduation from Wofford College in 1917, he volunteered as a private in the United States Army and after several assignments to various camps, was detailed to the Motor Transport Corps Headquarters in Washington, D.C. where he became one of the aides to the Chief of the Service, General Charles B. Drake.

Power In The . . .

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we might use them to commit suicide or to strangle the Kempeis with. Whatever the reason, the loss of the rosaries merely served to intensify our devotion to the garland offering to Mary.

Escape, after two years! Out of the rear gate, bag in hand, joy in the heart, rosary in the trousers pocket. Up the hills with the Hunters' Guerrollas and Marking's camp to join the intelligence with the 6th Army observer.

The liberation came, and so did the defeat of Japan. I wonder if that Kempei Lieutenant who called our hymn to the Sacred Heart song of weakness is still alive. Japan is not so strong now. But the Sacred Heart and Mary are firmly entrenched in our altars and in our hearts, thanks to that hymn and the Rosary:

It was while he was serving in the Army that he started to take up law at Georgetown University Law School. When he graduated from the university in 1921, the law school was celebrating its golden anniversary and he was chosen the jubilee orator.

He was admitted to the Bar of South Carolina on May 1, 1921, to the Supreme Court of the United States on May 26, 1924, and to the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia on February 13, 1922.

Besides the Post-Mortem Club, Mr. Wood is a member of the Wofford College Alumni Association, Georgetown Alumni Association, Sigma Nu Phi Legal Fraternity, Forty and Eight, Army and Navy Union, Veterans of Foreign Wars, United Spanish War Veterans.

He is a Past Master of Columbia Lodge No. 3, F.A., A.M., a 32nd Degree Mason, and a Shriner. He has been chairman of several committees of the Columbia Bar Association, one of which took charge of studying the reorganization of Municipal Courts. He has been delegate to several national conventions of the Democratic Party and is a member of the Democratic Central Committee of the District of Columbia.

For two and a half years, he was Chairman of the Local Draft Board (World War II). He has two sons, Harlan Wood, Jr., who is a junior at Brown University and John Paul Wood, who goes to school in Washington.

A few days ago, he reminded the PEPPA of the coming opening of the new Congress, assuring the organization that he will continue his fight for them until justice is won.

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