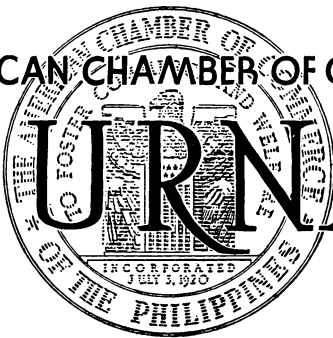


THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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Editorials

"... to promote the general welfare"

It would be instructive and inspiring to read through a collection of the Thanksgiving Day proclamations issued in America, first by some of the early colonial governors and in later years by the Presidents of the United States and the Governors of the different States, beginning with that first proclamation of the wise Governor William Bradford in Plymouth Colony after the first harvest in 1621.

Taken together they would afford us a generalized and spiritualized and deeply solemn review of the vicissitudes through which the people of the United States have passed, covering periods of peace and war, of want and plenty, of ease and distress, of confidence and hesitation, of toil and strife and peril, and glorious vindication. And through all these documents we would discern that there runs, like a golden thread, that accent of faith,—faith in God, in destiny, in life, faith in man.

President Truman's Thanksgiving Day Proclamation

President Truman's proclamation of last month was one such as the head of no other nation could have issued. But only briefly he referred to the richness of the country's blessings, and then not only to its bountiful harvests and abundant production of goods, but to its undiminished spiritual endowments, and he immediately went on to say that these resources have permitted America to aid the needy and helpless of other lands.

He also declared that America was privileged to participate in international efforts to advance human welfare, and that it is profoundly grateful for the existence of an international forum (the United Nations) where differences among nations may be submitted to world opinion with a view to harmonious adjustment (not with a view to self-justification).

He prayed for wisdom in the nation's approach to the problems which confront it, coupling with the supplication the statement that it believes in the dignity of man and his right to guard against the selfishness of himself and for other people.

That was for Stalin and Company.

In closing he called upon the American people to continue to render generous assistance to the hungry and homeless of other lands, "thus renewing our devotion to the cause of good-will among men."

That is the spirit of a people who today are burdened with a public debt which in 1946 reached a level equal to over \$7,000 for every family in the country, now reduced to \$6,303, but still about twice the whole annual income of a typical family. But they do not despair and do not tire of well-doing because they believe in God, in themselves, and in their fellow men.

It was rumored last month in business circles that President Quirino would issue an executive order on or about November 15, to become effective January 1 of next year, instituting the so-called luxury import control system which he is authorized to establish under Republic Act No. 830.

Import Control?

The fact that at this writing,—early December, such an order has not yet been issued, is giving rise to speculation and to a hope that the President may be hesitating as to the wisdom of the step and that he may finally decide against taking it at all.

Though so short a delay, if a delay it is, would by itself hardly justify this hope, there is otherwise plenty of reason to think that a chief executive who has the knowledge of economics which the President has, might hesitate to such a decision. And if, apart from the wisdom of the decision, technical grounds were considered, these could easily be found in the highly technical constitutionality of Act No. 830.

It is a liberty granted the President under the emergency, in any event, at the end of next year, although this period of what is now practically one year could of course be extended by Congress, there is no certainty that it would do so. The