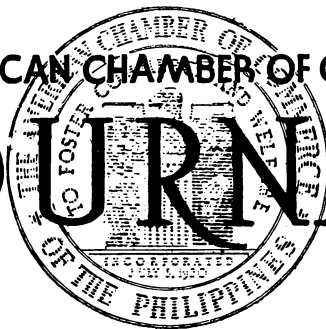


THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

JOURNAL



Editorials

"... to promote the general welfare"

The American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines extends its felicitations to the people and Government of the Republic of the Philippines on the occasion of the second anniversary of the establishment of Philippine independence, — on which same day Americans in all parts of the world celebrate the 172nd anniversary of the Philippines' Motherland, the United States of America.

The initiative, tact, courage, insight, and wisdom shown by President Quirino is bringing the disastrous Huk situation to what promises to be its end, deserves the highest commendation. So also the quiet

The Huk Amnesty
The crisis created when a cabal during the last hours of the sine die session of Congress, sought to use the issue of congressional concurrence in the Amnesty Proclamation as a means to force him to dismiss a member of his Cabinet. Intrigue and disregard for the national welfare could hardly go further, and Congress as a whole is to be commended for having broken this conspiracy. Congress also redressed an old wrong, immediately after the ratification of the Proclamation, in seating Congressman Luis M. Taruc, the Huk leader. The refusal to allow him and a number of other minority members to take their seats after the elections two years ago, was one of the causes of the Huk uprising.

Large parts of Central Luzon, long known as the "rice-granary" of the Philippines, have constituted a virtual no-man's land ever since that undemocratic action. Sporadic fighting between government forces and the insurgents and the consequent destruction of property and loss of life, widespread banditry, unsafe roads, broken communications, blocked distribution of foodstuffs and other supplies, abandoned homes and barrios, untilled lands, thousands of people withdrawn from productive labor, loss of earnings, closed schools, lack of medical service,—all such consequences have held back this important part of the country from the post-war rehabilitation in progress in most other parts of the land.

To seek to apportion and fix the guilt and blame, would be largely bootless here. Though the insurgence was never general enough to threaten the stability of the National Government, it did seriously tax its repute, resources, and revenues. The situation was cancerous, liable to exacerbation, the cause of loss and violence and death to many innocent people, wholly ugly and lamentable, and unreconcilable with Philippine aspirations and claims to democratic nationhood. Adjudgment and justification or punishment were far secondary to the need for the reestablishment of order and peace; this to both sides. Hence, and justifiedly, the Government's offer of amnesty and the insurgents' acceptance.

It is to be hoped that the Huk trouble may prove to have been a valuable political lesson. As Charles E. Merriam, political scientist, phrases it:

"Open revolution is always lurking in the background,—the skeleton at the feast of power, a continuing threat to authority not firmly rooted in economic and social realities and in human ideals related to them. . . ."

"The real safeguard lies in the moderation and judgment of those in office and in the alertness and wisdom of the political community."

For comparison we quote the words of Walter Lippmann in a recent article in which he made the point that in the United States the social order is so free that the country is in a state of slow but permanent revolution.

"As long as most people in a country feel that they are not held down, that country has the benefit of revolution—the renewal of its vigor by the rise of new men, without the convulsions which are the price of revolution."

The "First Regional Trade Conference" held under the auspices of the Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, has just come to a close, and publication of this issue of the *Journal* was delayed by us for a number of days so that we could include several pages of extracts from some of the speeches which were delivered during the two days devoted to discussion.

The Philippine Chamber insisted on playing the part of sole host to the delegation of American business men