

# The "LET YOUR HAIR DOWN"

## Column

**T**HE *Journal* has on a number of occasions referred to the suggestion made by several members of the Chamber that in order to avoid the payment of the 17% exchange tax on income tax remittances to the United States Government, these taxes be collected locally through the American Embassy. Central Bank officials have admitted that

the application of the exchange tax in this case is an example of "unjust international double taxation".

Recently, one Chamber member received a letter from Washington with respect to this suggestion, a copy of which he sent us with a covering note in which he stated: "...Undoubtedly the last sentence is the orthodox ambassadorial way to let

one down—according to 'protocol'. First an indication of bad news, with, second, the bad news to follow."

The letter is from Mr. John F. Melby, Deputy Director, Office of Philippine and Southeast Asian Affairs, Department of State, and reads:

"Ambassador Cowen has asked me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter to him of August 25, 1951, relating to the application of the 17% exchange tax on dollar exchange purchased to pay United States income taxes by American citizens resident in the Philippines. The problem is presently under consideration in the United States Treasury Department. Preliminary study, however, indicates the proposal that the United States Embassy at Manila accept payment in pesos of United States income taxes does not appear feasible."

**W**E are pleased to note here the publication by the Bureau of the Census and Statistics of a 258-page, paper-bound volume: "1948 Census of the Philippines, Population classified by province, city, municipality, municipal district, and barrio."

In a letter to the editor, Acting Director Alfredo G. Eugenio wrote: "We feel that because of the nature of its contents, this publication has been long awaited by the public and so we have tried to make possible its early release."

The publication contains, as indicated in the title, a complete and detailed break-down of the population as of October 1, 1948, together with four maps, one political and the other three showing the total population, population density, and population distribution.

**M**R. H. P. Vibal, business editor of the *Philippines Herald*, commenting, in the *Herald* issue of October 22, on the exchange of letters between Mr. Walter Robb and the editor of this *Journal*, published in this column last month, came forward with unexpected but gratifying support. Mr. Vibal wrote:

"The latest American Chamber of Commerce *Journal* prints a letter from Walter Robb, former Manila resident and for many years editor of this *Journal*. He laments the old days this wise: 'Yet I assume that at best the *Journal* speaks in the quavering accents of the aging and senile American influence in the Philippines. The community there whistles in the dark, keeping up a futile courage, but the gloom creeps over it inevitably.'"

"Present *Journal* Editor A.V.H. Hartendorp hastily rises to object and says he can not agree, believing what difficulties Americans in the Philippines are meeting are but temporary. 'I am convinced', says Hartendorp, 'that a better statesmanship, American and Filipino, will in time assert itself. I see no inevitable and disastrous end, as yet.'"

"We agree with Hartendorp. Everything is not lost yet."

**T**HE editor received a letter from Mr. John A. Sowers, of the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce, who

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was in the Philippines some months ago. He wrote:

"The August issue of the American Chamber of Commerce *Journal* was on my desk when I returned to the office October 1. We are most appreciative of your splendid editorial. I had no idea, when I asked you for a little story, that you would find time to prepare so interesting an article.

"It was a real pleasure for me to spend several weeks in the Philippines and to again familiarize myself with some of the developments and problems that are in that part of the world. I feel too that I know some of you a little better and that I have established some friendly contacts.

"With every good wish and with kindest regards to you and the others there in the office, Cordially, etc."

We thank Mr. Sowers for his friendly letter. The editor says it was not difficult to write a short article,—and he hoped interesting, on such a city as Los Angeles. To tell the truth, we only skimmed through the editorial at the time, but Mr. Sowers' letter aroused our curiosity and we read it again. What struck us this time was that the editor managed to write about Los Angeles without even mentioning the great moving picture industry there, although he did mention "motion pictures" as among a score or so of the products of industry in which Los Angeles ranked first nationally. When we mentioned this to the editor as being something of a feat, he struck his desk a light blow with his fist, shook his head, and said, "By gad, that was not intentional! it slipped my mind!"

"Imagine!" we thought to ourselves. "All the beauty and seductiveness of earth, concentrated there. All the lovelies and loveliness. Cynosure of the eyes of the world. Epicenter of man's dreams of romance and love! He writes about the place,—and that slips his mind! Place of the angels, and he says nothing about the angels but writes about docks and piers! And he gets a compliment!"

THE sad news went out last month that Mrs. Marie Willimont, Executive Vice-President, is quitting the Chamber. She herself sent out the following letter to the members under date of October 20:

"This is the first time in my life that I am writing this kind of a letter and it is definitely not one I like to write! You may have heard that I have resigned my position in the Chamber as Executive Vice-President—I am now confirming this. My resignation will take effect as of December 31, 1951.

It is with deep regret that I turn over my desk to someone else and were it not for the fact that I am taking our youngest daughter back to the United States in January to enter high school and upon my return to the Philippines plan to reside in Baguio where Mr. Willimont is Auditor for the Benguet Consolidated Mining Company, I would probably be with the Chamber as long as I was wanted.

"The past four years that I have been associated with the Chamber have been the most interesting and fruitful of my business career in Manila and the reason undoubtedly has been because of the continued cooperation and assistance which I have always had from you, individually, and from all your staff. I could not have asked for more, and I shall always remember with deep appreciation the help you have given me when I was confronted with some problem too deep for my feminine mind.

"Mrs. Virginia Gonder has been appointed by the Board of Directors to succeed me in the position of Executive Vice-President. She has been a resident of Manila for the past five years, has had excellent business training, and, I am sure, will do justice to the work which will confront her. I am sure, also, that you will extend your cooperation to her as you have to me—the will especially need this until she becomes familiar with her

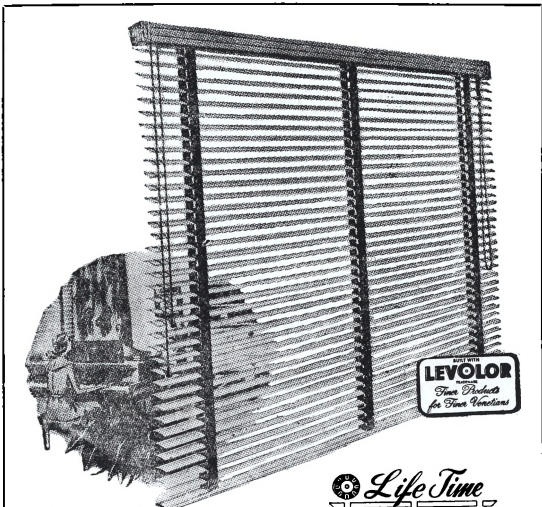
duties. She will begin her work on November 1 so that I will be able to assist her for the six weeks' prior to my leaving on December 15.

"Again please accept my thanks for your part in making my association with the Chamber a very happy one.

Sincerely, etc."

To the gratification of everyone in the office, Mrs. Willimont's announcement precipitated an avalanche of letters addressed to her by members of the Chamber and others expressing their regret at her leaving and lauding her outstanding service.

One was from Ambassador Myron M. Cowen, which we are taking the liberty of printing almost in full:



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"I am very sorry to learn that you are leaving the American Chamber of Commerce, where you have done such a good job in the last four years. The Chamber has been very helpful to me and my staff and I think you are entitled to a great deal of the credit for the very cordial relations that have existed.

"As you have no doubt noted by today's papers, I also will be leaving and I think you and I are both experiencing the same kind of feeling because it is a very trying wrench to leave here and say goodbye to the many friends one makes in Manila..."

There were letters from a number of other embassies and legations, including the Spanish, Chinese, Netherlands, French, and Indonesian.

Ambassador Chen Chih-ping wrote in part:

"... I am sorry to see you leaving Manila and I am sure that you will be missed by the host of your friends here. May I take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation of our pleasant association and to wish you Godspeed and every success in the future? Please rest assured that Mrs. Virginia Gonder, as your distinguished successor, will continue to receive every possible cooperation and assistance from this Embassy whenever needed."

Ambassador A. A. Maramis, of Indonesia, wrote, in part:

"I note with pleasure your expression of thanks for the close cooperation between

the Embassy and the American Chamber of Commerce which was in real essence, mutual and congenial. The Embassy, for its part, has much to thank you as well as the rest of the members of the Chamber for... Please convey to Mrs. Virginia Gonder who will succeed you, further confirmation and assurance that the Embassy will only be too glad to do its share in maintaining the same cooperation that happily exists between the Embassy and the American Chamber of Commerce."

The Netherlands Minister, A.J.D. Steenstra-Thoussaint, wrote in part:

"It has always been a great pleasure to the members of this Legation and to me to associate with you and I want to assure you that Mrs. Virginia Gonder, your successor in the American Chamber of Commerce, may count on the same cooperation of the Netherlands Legation and myself whenever assistance or information should be required..."

Minister Lucien Colin, of France, wrote that Mrs. Willimont's letter announcing her resignation was a "painful surprise" to him, and said, in part:

"Please allow me in the name of the French Chamber of Commerce as well as of this Legation and in my own, to express to you our sincere appreciation for the unselfish and unstinted cooperation you have always extended to us during your incumbency... Kindly assure Mrs. Gonder that she can count on our wholehearted cooperation..."

There were two letters from the Central Bank. Governor Miguel Cuaderno wrote, in part:

"...While your decision is to be regretted, at the same time I believe we can be happy in the thought that we will soon have one more friend in the United States. With your vast knowledge of conditions in the Philippines and of the problems which this young republic is trying to meet, I have no doubt that you will continue to be interested in Philippine affairs. I assure you that since the organization of this Bank it has been my consistent policy to help in the formulation of monetary policies which are necessary to maintain the stability of our money and to implement such policies impartially.

"Mrs. Gonder, your successor, can rest assured of such assistance as we may be able to render her.

"With regards and best wishes, etc."

Mr. N. Tomas, Superintendent of Banks, wrote in part:

"...I deeply regret that you have to leave the Philippines soon. It has been a pleasure to have known and dealt with you. I have no doubt that Mrs. Virginia Gonder, your successor, will be accorded the same degree of cooperation that has been accorded to you by the Exchange Control Department... With kindest personal regards and best wishes, etc."

Acting Commissioner Mariano G. Pineda, of the Securities and Exchange Commission, wrote in part:

"I am sorry to learn that you will soon be severing your connection with the American Chamber with which you have been so closely identified during the past four years. On your representations, the Commission has rendered the Chamber some advisory assistance in matters pertaining to the statutory functions and activities of this Office. It pleases this Commission to know that its services in this regard are being appreciated by the Chamber.

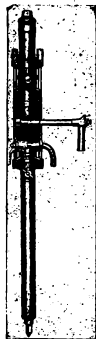
"For my part, I can assure Mrs. Gonder

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that she can count on the Commission to give her the same cooperation that has been its pleasure to extend to you. With best wishes for your success in every endeavor, etc."

Collector of Internal Revenue S. David wrote in part:

"...and thank you for your expression of satisfaction over the humble courtesies extended by this Office to you. In this connection please rest assured that this Office will extend to your successor, Mrs. Virginia Gonder, all the cooperation which she may need in her official transactions with this Bureau... Wishing you Good Luck, I am, etc."

Mr. A. de las Alas, President of the Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, wrote, in part:

"...I deeply regret that by the imperatives of motherhood, you had to resign as Executive Vice-President of the American Chamber of Commerce... I know of the creditable work you have rendered... It is the policy of our Chamber to work in close cooperation with other Chambers of Commerce, and it has been our experience to have been the recipient of courtesies and attention from you whenever the assistance of your Chamber was needed. We are grateful to you for your cooperation... I welcome and greet, through you, Mrs. Virginia Gonder, your successor..."

Mr. W. Wooding, President of the Manila Chamber of Commerce, wrote:

"I am sorry to learn from your letter of October 22nd that you are giving up your work with the American Chamber of Commerce. Your departure will be a great loss not only to the American Chamber of Commerce but also to the Manila Chamber. I, for one, shall long remember your helpful cooperation during my term as President of the Manila Chamber of Commerce."

"Mrs. Gonder may rest assured that all officers of the Manila Chamber will extend to her the fullest possible cooperation in matters of interest to the two Chambers."

Mr. Arno Duchstein, Executive Secretary of the Philippine Tourist and Travel Association, Inc., recently established, also wrote Mrs. Willmont a very nice letter.

Two of the letters Mrs. Willmont received were from past Presidents of the Chamber. Mr. Frederic H. Stevens wrote in part:

"...Am sorry to hear of your resignation. It will not be the American Chamber of Commerce without you. You certainly made good... We will miss you, and I more than all..."

Mr. Paul Wood, last year's President, wrote her, in part:

"I want to thank you for your most appreciated letter... but I am made most unhappy by the knowledge that the time for your leaving is rapidly approaching... Last year was to me one of the most instructive and interesting that I can remember. The Chamber presidency is without a doubt the most overworked and underpaid employment one could imagine—and to a certain extent, perhaps the most unappreciated. On the other hand, I know I made more friends and acquaintances during that year than at any time since I arrived in the Philippines..."

"During many years in business I have had the opportunity to work several times with capable women executives. As com-

pared to men, I have always felt that there were certain business responsibilities that could better be discharged by women and that has particularly to do with dealing with people. In our own business here Mrs. Carmichael has shown that ability as Supervisor of Personnel. It will always be a pleasant and happy moment to me to remember your own most capable administration of American Chamber affairs. I am glad the Board has chosen another lady to follow you, but I must say you have left an example that will make it most difficult for your successor."

"Thank you for your help to me, and with best wishes to you and your family for a happy and prosperous time in the United States, Sincerely, etc."

A member of the present Chamber Board, Mr. C. R. Leaber, wrote:

"... I enjoyed working with you, and no matter how competent your successor may prove to be, you are going to be sorely missed by all the members of the Chamber. Persons can be replaced, but not personalities..."

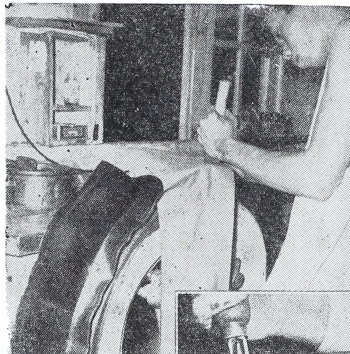
Letters from members were too numerous to quote from at length. A few extracts follow:

"We appreciate your writing to us about your resignation from the American Chamber of Commerce... in which you thank us for our cooperation. It should be the other way around,—we thank you for your cooperation..."—Harry A. Lee (Philippine Advertising Associates, Inc.)

"... Allow me to congratulate you for the wonderful and splendid work which you have rendered during your incumbency..."—J. Macias (S. Frieder & Sons Company).

"... We are very sorry to see you leave the Chamber and we want to extend our appreciation for the help and cooperation you have always given us..."

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"You have done a fine job with the American Chamber of Commerce, one you have the right to be proud of. As far as I am personally concerned, I have used the facilities of the Chamber only seldom, but each time I used them was through you and on each occasion your courtesy, promptness, and efficiency were outstanding..."—*J. A. Wolfson.*

"It is the feeling of the staff of this Central that you have always been most helpful and that you have conducted the affairs of your office in such a way that it was a real pleasure to call on you for assistance, which we have done frequently. On behalf of the Panpanago Sugar Mills, we extend our best wishes..."—*O. H. Herzheimer.*

"Your leaving the American Chamber will be a big loss to the members; in fact it makes one feel that he is losing a very good, helpful, and willing friend..."—*G. F. Wood (Filippo, Inc.).*

"I shall always gladly remember the pleasant and efficient services I received from the Chamber under your management..."—*F. E. Rein (Basian Lumber Company).*

"I am sorry to know that you are leaving the American Chamber of Commerce but happy to know that you are going to have a good long visit in the States... My very best wishes to you for your past services and friendship, which I value greatly..."—*Nail Crawford (Phillipine Packing Corporation).*

"...We at the American Bible Society, are only associate members of the Chamber... and yet we have received all the good services and certainly it has always been given so willingly and graciously.

We have, a number of times, sent friends of ours to you to ask for information which we could not give; and invariably they have agreed to me afterward that you were most kind and considerate and that it proved a real pleasure to meet and talk with you... I want you to know how much we appreciated your good service..."—*W. H. Gonder.*

"...While I fully understand the reasons which compelled you to present your resignation, nevertheless the American Chamber of Commerce will suffer a loss—a grievous loss—which will be felt by all members alike. I think the President, as well as his predecessors, will all agree that a very large measure of the success of the Chamber is due to your untiring efforts... While I have not had the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Gonder, she will have to be a wizard to equal your record..."—*E. A. Perkins.*

"...We shall, of course, be very sorry to see you go. We wish you a happy stay in the U.S.A. and an early return to the Philippines. You may assure Mrs. Virginia Gonder of our cooperation..."—*R. G. Davis (Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company of the Philippines, Ltd.).*

"... We have noted with regret your resignation... take this opportunity to express our appreciation for your cooperation and assistance... Wish you bon voyage and (the familiar) 'Good luck, good health, God bless you!'—*G. Magnus (Bunge Far East Agencies, Inc.).*

"I have read with a great deal of regret your announcement of your impending separation from the American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines. For more than 25 years I have had contact with the Chamber and during that long period, I do not know of any administration that has been more effective, warm-hearted, and generally satisfactory, in this trouble area, than the administration which you gave the Chamber..."—*E. W. Schedler (Luson Brokerage Company).*

"...From the standpoint of the Chamber, we sorely regret the need of your leaving,—for yourself we wish you the best of everything in the years to come. We will miss you, but are pleased to have your assurance that the Chamber will be well served by your successor, Mrs. Gonder. We will be pleased to give her our full cooperation. You have won the high respect and esteem of all of us..."—*David G. Gunnell (Phillipine Education Co., Inc.)*

THE editor has been quiet and rather pale about the gills all month, and we wondered. Now we have learned that he is getting out a book of poetry! We didn't know he ever wrote poetry, but it seems he has been writing it for years, but kept it quiet. What seems to worry him is that the poems may offend some good people who are his friends. They are not just about sunsets on Manila Bay, he said, but pretty deep stuff about man's place in the universe, life, love, God, and such-like themes. "Some of it is pretty bitter", he added.

"Well", we said, "If you are worried about it in any way, why publish? You haven't up to now."

"That's it," he said. "I have so little to show for a lifetime of work, what with my diaries and notes and manuscripts destroyed and even the library files of all the newspapers and magazines I ever wrote for. These few poems I was able to salvage or reconstruct. I can't start all over again at my age. And foolish as it may be, I somehow feel the same impulse a young man feels when he starts carving the initials of himself and his sweetheart in the trunk of some tree. He wants to leave something behind him, some kind of mark of his own. He wants people to know he was there."

"When's the book coming out?" we asked.

"Heaven help me, about the end of this month!" he said.

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