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"... It seems that in this respect our law has achieved an advance not attained by the capital-labor legislation of other countries. And considering that this progressive enactment is evidently aimed at preventing in the public interest an undue stoppage or paralyzation of the wheels of industry, the general welfare requires that it be upheld and enforced."

* * * *

In Case L-1377, May 12, 1948, the Supreme Court said that whether the ruling of the CIR will allow the petitioner a fair return on its investment or result in its bankruptcy, is a factual inquiry which the Supreme Court is not authorized to make. The Court also said the authority of the CIR to grant vacation and sick leave with pay is included in its general jurisdiction to deal with and settle labor disputes. In this case the petitioner objected to salaries and wages being fixed higher than those paid by the National Government. The Supreme Court said the comparison is rather sad because the Government, unlike the petitioner, is not established for profit and mainly derives its income from taxes paid by the people, but that, as its finances permitted, the Government was endeavoring to raise the standard, especially for those in the lower brackets.

* * * *

In Case L-1309, July 26, 1948, the Supreme Court said that as the CIR has the power to fix wages and salaries for day-work, so it has the power to fix the same with respect to night-work, and that as night-work is considered more onerous than day-work, it merits a greater remuneration.

Philippine Safety Council

BY FRANK S. TENNY
Executive Director

DISCOURTESY and negligence were the greatest contributing factors to the 1948 toll of traffic accidents in Manila, which was the greatest since Liberation. The figures were compiled by Lieut. M. B. Nazareno, Chief of the Accident Investigation Branch of the MPD Traffic Bureau.

The total motor vehicle accidents within Manila city limits has climbed from 5,400 in 1946 and 6,300 in 1947, to a new high of over 6,900 last year, 1948.

The leading causes of the mishaps reflected directly the prevalence of discourteous driving on local roads, the analysis showed. Perhaps the best indication of this was the increase in "failing to yield the right of way", which climbed to the number-two spot with 975 accidents recorded. This violation is conceded by traffic authorities to be a direct result of lack of courtesy behind the wheel.

"Improper passing" retained its three-year leadership of accident causes with an annual total of 1,132 cases. A close tie for third place was registered by "cutting in" and "following too closely" with 694 and 687, respectively; 406 accidents were caused by persons operating defective vehicles. It is believed that this latter cause can be remedied by stricter mechanical inspection of vehicles when application is made for licensing.

"Speeding", or exceeding safe or lawful speeds, was the principal cause of 346 mishaps, although it was undeniably a contributing factor in other categories. Other violations causing accidents running into the hundreds were "passing within an inter-

section" and "turning from the wrong lane". Many of such accidents could be prevented if drivers were subjected to a test on traffic regulations and rules of the road.

A total of 54 persons were killed and 2,170 injured. Of the over 12,000 vehicles involved, 96.7% were civilian-owned. Thirty-eight pedestrians were killed, including 17 minors under 14 years of age. Discouraging trends were noted in the categories of "hit and run" and "no driver's permit". These factors reflect directly upon the respect of the driver for law and order, and his sense of responsibility to society. The 1949 totals were 292 hit-and-run cases, and 105 drivers involved in accidents had no vehicle operator's permits.

The districts of Tondo and Sampaloc contributed the heaviest to serious accidents, with 79% of these happening north of the Pasig River. December, as usual, had the highest number of accidents, and April the least.

A surprising number of accidents were caused by vehicles driving on the wrong side of the road (165), despite the fact that right-hand driving has been in effect since June, 1945. In order to combat this trend, stricter enforcement is urged of regulations prohibiting parking on the wrong (or left-hand) side of the street.

Summarizing this worsening condition, the need for a central traffic authority is re-emphasized in order to strengthen the Enforcement, Engineering, Education and Administration factors of the traffic problem. The traffic problem, both that of accidents and of congestion, is rapidly becoming Manila's greatest single civic problem.

* * * *

FIGURES supplied from an official source reveal the number and causes of fires in Manila last year, 1948. For the third consecutive year the total number reported was in the 600's.

"Electricity" led the parade for the second year in a row. Investigation by fire department, fire insurance, and police arson experts determined that 175 fires began due to faulty wiring, short-circuits, or allied causes. This also caused 274 fires in 1947. The great majority of these were the result of illegal installations, not approved by Meralco or the City Electrician.

The number two cause (for the 2nd year) was "cigarette butts". Careless disposal of used cigarettes has been the bug-a-boo of fire departments the world over for years. They fall into piles of inflammable materials, oil slicks, beds, waste-paper baskets, and similar places. More mature consideration by the smoking public of the results of such negligence, seems to be the only thing that might lead to a solution to the problem. This cause was number one in 1946 with 200, accounted for 126 in 1947, and totalled 162 last year.

"Gasoline" held to number-three position for the 3rd year. Authorities hold that most of these start from illegal storage of fuel, and from hoarding. These fires are particularly devastating, once underway, and totalled 233 for the three-year period, although the annual number is declining.

A new member of the high-cause list was "spontaneous combustion"; 47 fires were attributed to this means of ignition, which usually begins in piles of rags, clothing, or textiles that have absorbed oils, directly or from the air. Specific warnings have been

issued by the Safety Council to many firms last year in this connection.

A long list of miscellaneous causes includes: firecrackers, bonfires, lamps, and "suspected arson". This last category includes some of Manila's largest 1948 blazes in crowded areas. The 1948 total, all causes, in Manila city limits — 607.

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