

- The quality, not the number, of members in the Congress of the Philippines is what is desired.

TOO MANY SOLONS!

Only 10 per cent of our congressmen do their work.

Thus, Judge Jesus P. Morfe of the Manila Court of First Instance bitingly criticized the congressional proposal to increase the number of congressmen from 120 to 180.

Morfe, who has served in the bench for the last 13 years, said the proposal was not needed, and would saddle the government with multi-million peso additional expenses, and enable the congressmen to perpetuate themselves in power through gerrymandering.

"Only a little more or if not less than 10 per cent of our congressmen perform constructive legislative work," the judge said in an interview.

The rest of the solons, he said, "merely vote after horse-trading for approval of their pet bills — franchise for an

electric plant, or changing a municipality's name."

The 180-congressman proposal is one of two questions being submitted to the electorate for approval in a plebiscite on Nov. 14, coinciding with the general elections.

Morfe also assailed the other proposed constitutional amendment which would allow members of Congress to be elected to the 1971 constitutional convention without forfeiting their congressional seats.

The judge said the proposal was discriminatory, and would enable members of Congress to completely dominate the constitutional convention, and again result in unnecessary expenses of public funds.

On the proposal for more congressmen, Judge Morfe said that if the amendment is ratified by the people, the

congressional budget will carry an additional outlay for the salaries and allowances of the new solons, and for the salaries, furniture, office equipment, and supplies of the requisite personnel of the congressmen.

"What assurance do the people have that more congressmen will mean more quality in our legislation?" asked the judge.

Morfe said:

"If many of our congressmen find their legislative district too big for them to serve efficiently, it is because they find it all important for their reelection that they devote most of their time to non-legislative work, such as intervening in securing reparations, allocations, intervening in such purely executive functions as the appointment or promotion of personnel in our civil service, putting pressure on executives of private enterprises or industrialists towards the employment by them of congressmen's constituents, going to the extent of emasculating the rule of law by exerting pressure on internal revenue, customs, and law enforce-

ment officials to favor their constituents."

The second proposed amendment, the outspoken judge said, is clearly discriminatory since, justices and judges and executive officials are prohibited from becoming convention delegates unless they forfeit their present positions.

It is not true as claimed in some quarters, Morfe said, that the proposal would only extend to members of Congress the same privilege given to other government officials to run for delegates of the constitutional convention without losing their present posts.

He cited Section 2, Article II of the Constitution which provides that members of the judiciary and officials of the executive department cannot take part in any election except to vote.

This constitutional provision prevails over a congressional resolution making the position of convention delegate compatible with any other government post, Morfe said.

Since the present members of Congress have their own political machinery in

the provinces, the judge said the likelihood is that they would all be elected to the convention, should the proposed amendment be approved.

Thus, he said, the calling of such constitutional convention would be a "pure waste of multi-million pesos

of public funds." Congress might as well approve the necessary constitutional amendments by resolution of both houses, thereby obviating the necessity of a convention for the same purpose, the judge pointed out. — *Vic Foz in Manila Times, Sept. 27, 1967.*

WHAT MAKES A CITY

Population, industry, commerce, and agriculture must reach a high stage of development and production at and around a community to make it a city. The modern city is a complicated affair. At times it is "a large body of people living in a relatively small area." A comprehensive definition of the modern city must indicate that it is a social, political, legal and economic unit all rolled into one. It is a concentrated body of population possessing some significant social characteristics, chartered as a municipal corporation, having its own system of local government carrying on multifarious economic enterprises and pursuing an elaborate program of social adjustment and amelioration. — *By Prof. William B. Munro, article on City, 3 Encyclopedia of Social Sciences (Macmillan, N.Y.)*