

14th Annual Meeting Hears President Cavender's Report

New directors chosen at the well attended 14th annual meeting of the chamber of commerce Friday, January 26, are John R. Wilson and President and General Manager Verne E. Miller of the Philippine Education Co., Inc. Director P. A. Meyer was reelected. Directors Wilson and Miller succeed Leo K. Cotterman and W. L. Applegate, former directors.

The following alternate directors were elected: L. D. Lockwood, Manila lawyer and president of the Pampanga Bus Company, Inc.; F. H. Hale, president and general manager of the Hale Shoe Company, Inc.; E. J. McSorley, of the International Harvester Company of Philippines; and S. R. Hawthorne, president and general manager of the Hamilton Brown Shoe Company, Inc.

In their meeting following the annual meeting of members, the directors reelected Director H. M. Cavender to the presidency of the chamber of commerce, and Director Kenneth B. Day to succeed C. S. Salmon as vice-president, while Director John L. Headington was reelected treasurer and Director Wilson secretary.

Addressing the annual meeting of members, President Cavender said in part:

"There were many new bills presented in the Legislature which, if same had been approved, would have seriously affected many lines of business, however, as well known, the presiding officers of the two branches of the Legislature closed the session promptly at 12 o'clock midnight the last day. This action left hundreds of bills that were not approved by both houses. Of those approved there were only about eight

in which the Chamber, on behalf of its members, was seriously interested. Six of the Bills in question being:

Senate Bill 317, creating a Board and making arbitration of strikes and lockouts upon both employer and laborer;

Senate Bill 318, to give the Insular Treasurer supervision over persons and companies selling speculative securities;

Senate Bill 314, Sugar Limitation Bill;

House Bill 2982, exempting from the Sales Tax products sold on the Boards of Trade;

House Bill 3127, authorizing the collection of berthing fees from foreign and coastwise steamers;

House Bill 3224, amending the Corporation Law.

"These bills were vetoed by His Excellency, the Governor-General. There were two Bills, however, that passed the Legislature and were approved by the Governor-General that vitally affect business interests.

"The first of these bills is Senate Bill 155, to regulate the sale of chattels by installment. The second was House Bill 3100, establishing an eight hour working day for certain classes of laborers. Strenuous efforts were exerted by your Board of Directors to secure a veto of both these measure but to no avail. The results of both of these bills are yet to be seen.

"The restriction of installment sales will vitally affect many of the business establishments of the Islands and, while it may be true there were some abuses under the former system of sales by installments, still it is believed that new terms and conditions that might be imposed will prove very onerous to both sellers and purchasers in many instances.

"The Eight Hour Law becomes effective March 1st, 1934, and it is the firm belief of the Directorate of this Chamber that it will cause as much dissatisfaction among laborers as it will among employers. It is known that many firms whose laborers now work nine or more hours daily will naturally reduce the pay of the laborers at a rate which the eight hour day demands. Reports have been received which show that some small industries will be forced to make drastic reductions in their former wages paid laborers or go out of business. The law, however, if conscientiously administered may not prove prejudicial to the majority of employers of labor but there are possibilities in its interpretation, if administered by persons disposed to harp on technicalities may make it a very onerous measure to industry in general. Already our Secretary has asked the Office of the Governor-General for a definition of the word "laborers". A reply was received to the effect that the definition of laborers is set forth in the Laborer's Compensation Act and undoubtedly this will govern under the Eight Hour Bill.

Work with Other Chambers:

"There were four meetings of the Joint Committee of the Manila Chambers of Commerce during the year and it acted on matters which affect the business community.

Changes in Membership:

"During the year there has been considerable activity in the matter of strengthening our membership, both Active and Associate. There were six Active Memberships transferred from the Dormant list and seven Associate Members were admitted to membership. It is believed that as time goes on there will be more persons and entities desiring to join our Chamber.

Chamber of Commerce Journal:

"The activities of the Journal have been carried on as usual. There has been some falling off in both advertising and subscriptions but nothing to an alarming degree.

Charity Work:

"The calls on the Chamber for assistance have considerably increased during the past year. This was due to a great extent in the reduction and, in many cases, cancellation of pensions to War Veterans.

"We still have some professional panhandlers bothering us who don't want work and are content to go from office to office and house to house begging for money. The Secretary has issued warnings to members requesting them to send all persons soliciting funds to the Chamber where same will be investigated and acted upon.

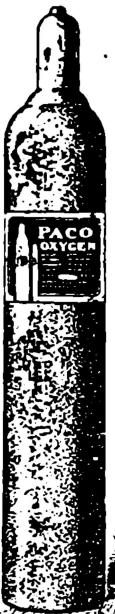
"Every transport sailing from Manila carries a quota of indigents. The Chamber has paid the subsistence cost for more than a dozen persons sent away on the transport during the last year.

General Conditions:

"As everyone knows there has been political turmoil raging in the Philippine Islands during the entire year. The Hawes-Cutting Bill was not accepted by the Philippine Legislature and it expired on the 17th of this month. The consequences are that political conditions are just as upset now as they were a year ago. This turmoil is injurious to business. No definite plans can be made for the future either by our merchants or those interested in the development of natural resources. Our products, with the exception of sugar, are selling at extremely low prices. Hemp is low and copra the lowest it has been in years. In fact in many instances, producers of these articles refuse to harvest their crops as the expense of getting the produce to market is greater than the price that can be realized on same.

"It is believed that there was a general improvement in commercial lines during the past year over the conditions of 1932, however, our imports of merchandise have greatly decreased. Our products are threatened by proposed legislation and administrative action in the United States.

"There are movements on foot among the producers and manufacturers of the United States to limit the amount of sugar, cordage, coconut and tobacco products that may enter the United States free of duty. If any of these movements become effective they will directly affect our business in an adverse way. It is thought that this Chamber should maintain an aggressive policy in the matter of opposing inimical measures now being considered in Washington."



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