

[Act No. 2728, January 31, 1918]

AN ACT CREATING THE BUREAU OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY, DEFINING ITS FUNCTIONS, MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Legislature assembled and by the authority of the same:

SECTION 1. *Creation of the Bureau of Commerce and Industry; Department to which it shall belong.*—A Bureau is hereby created, which shall be known as the Bureau of Commerce and Industry and shall belong to the Department of Commerce and Communications.

SEC. 2. *Principal officers of the Bureau.*—The Bureau of Commerce and Industry shall have a chief and an assistant chief, who shall be known, respectively, as Director and Assistant Director of the Bureau of Commerce and Industry, and shall receive compensation at the rate of seven thousand two hundred and six thousand pesos *per annum*, respectively.

SEC. 3. *Powers and functions in general.*—The Bureau of Commerce and Industry shall have, under the immediate executive authority, direction, and supervision of the Department of Commerce and Communications, the following-powers, duties, functions, and aims:

(a) To promote, stimulate, and further the development and expansion of the domestic and foreign trade of the Philippine Islands, the industries, mining and fishing, land, river, and maritime transportation, and commercial and industrial organizations; to acquire, collect, compile, systematize, publish, distribute, and furnish statistical data and information relative to the commercial and industrial situation and movement and the other subject-matters above mentioned; to give advice concerning the markets and industries most suitable for the country; to establish and maintain commercial and industrial museums and expositions; to propagate and stimulate interest in Philippine products abroad; to stimulate and facilitate relations and act as intermediary and informant between foreign capital, commerce, and industry on the one hand, and Philippine capital, commerce, and industry on the other.

(b) To open and keep in the city of Manila the Mercantile Register provided for in the Code of Commerce, the Director of the Bureau or the officer to whom he may delegate the functions as such, with the approval of the Department Secretary, to act as mercantile registrar, but said register shall not include the shipping register, which shall continue to be under the Bureau of Customs, as heretofore; to take possession and charge of all existing documents in connection with the Mercantile Register and, upon the payment of fees to be prescribed by regulation, to issue certified copies of the entries in said register.

(c) To perform, hereafter, the functions and duties heretofore performed by the Divisions of Archives, Patents, Copy-rights, Trade-Marks, and Corporations of the Philippine Library and Museum, in connection with the registration of corporations, trademarks, and patents, and only those in connection

therewith; to take possession and charge of all books, documents, and records, relating thereto, and, upon the payment of the fees to be fixed by regulation, to issue certified copies.

(d) To make investigations concerning the nature, organization, and resources of the business of all persons, natural or juridical, domiciled in the Philippine Islands or having branch houses or agents in the Islands, engaged and interested in commerce, industry, mining, fishing, and transportation, and for this purpose to administer oaths, issue *subpcena and subpcena duces tecum*, and, if necessary, obtain compulsory process from the courts.

(e) To organize, establish, create, maintain, and regulate, and, whenever it may deem it proper, authorize the creation, under such regulations as it may prescribe, of commercial exchanges and other public places of exchange, and to suspend and abolish the same, as it may see fit; to qualify, approve, authorize, and license for periods not to exceed three years, as exchange agents, merchandise brokers, and ship brokers and interpreters, and to suspend and revoke said licenses or any of them for cause, and to organize and authorize associations of exchange agents, merchandise brokers, and ship brokers and interpreters, subject to such regulations as it may prescribe, and to consolidate, suspend, and dissolve the same.

(f) To perform hereafter the functions and duties heretofore performed by the Bureau of Customs, with regard to the marine railway and repair shops and the construction, repair, maintenance, and operation of vessels; the maintenance, lighting, inspection, and superintendence of lighthouses the care and maintenance of buoys, beacons, lightships, navigation marks, and their appurtenances; and the general superintendence over the inter-island water transportation, as described in section eleven hundred and thirty-nine (;) of the Administrative Code; and to take possession and charge of all property, work under construction, plans, books, and documents relative to the same.

(g) To compile, compare, and publish the tariffs of other countries in languages known in this country, showing the equivalents of the currencies, weights and measures, and foreign terms used in said tariffs.

SEC. 4. *Penalty for failure to comply with lawful duties towards the Bureau.*— Without prejudice to the compulsory process that the Bureau of Commerce and Industry may obtain from the courts, any person failing or refusing to comply with the legal summonses of the Director of the Bureau of Commerce and Industry or the person acting in his stead, or refusing to be sworn previous to testifying, or refusing to answer pertinent questions, or giving or furnishing false or misleading data in investigations made in pursuance of subsection (d) of section three of this Act, shall, upon conviction, be punished by a fine not to exceed one thousand pesos, or imprisonment not to exceed one year, or both, in the discretion of the court, but if the information or data have been given under oath, the penalties prescribed by law for perjury shall be imposed.

SEC. 5. *Uniform and systematic method of statistics.*— The Director of the Bureau of Commerce and Industry shall adopt, with the approval of the proper Department Secretary, a uniform and systematic method for the preparation of all general statistics of the Philippine Islands concerning commerce and industry, mining,