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American Interests and Philippine Independence, 1929-1933*

THEODORE A. FRIEND III

IF 1898-9 was a year of great debate and a turning point in American foreign policy, so was 1932-3. The Great Depression had touched off a long debate on national interest and imperial conscience which came to a climax in that year. The victory of the contractionists of 1933 is as significant as that of the expansionists of 1898. In both cases material interests were so mixed with idealistic motives that simple interpretations will not suffice. The Marxian dogma of capitalist depravity, the American dogma of democratic mission, both fall pitifully short of the historical truth, a truth which one may approach only by examination of the particulars.

* This is the first in a series of articles examining the circumstances surrounding and the motives behind the passage of the Hare-Hawes-Cutting Act in January, 1933, which basically defined the schedule and terms for Philippine independence.

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This and subsequent articles will give both a preview and an amplification of some themes in the book. They commence with the year 1929, thirty years after American annexation frustrated Philippine nationalism and the hope of the Malolos Republic for separate nationality; thirteen years after the Jones Act, which promised eventual independence.

The atmosphere surrounding discussion of the Philippine future was fraught with tension. Secretary of War Patrick Hurley and Secretary of State Henry Stimson led the Hoover administration's opposition to independence, but they found a hostile reception in Congressional committees, where the influence of farm and labor lobbies was strong. Chairman Butler Hare of the House Committee on Insular Affairs tried to exclude from hearings all testimony on international affairs, but Hurley doggedly broke through. He found the Senate Committee on Territories tougher. Hurley had charged Senator Harry Hawes, a leading committee member, with "treasonable utterances" during a trip the latter had made to the Philippines; now he publicly denounced Hawes' independence bill as "cowardly". Hawes in return engaged him in heated argument and soon they were shaking fists and pointing accusing fingers at each other over the head of Hurley's shrinking assistant. Two days later in the middle of an antagonistic cross-examination led by Senator William King, Hurley walked out, complaining of "star-chamber proceedings" and "browbeating of witnesses." He would not take it, he boomed, when "you distort everything that I say and then call me a liar."¹

An objective discussion of the criteria for Philippine independence was, under such circumstances, less possible than ever. The two political parties had always disagreed on this point. While Wilson had been satisfied in 1921 that the Filipinos had established a "stable government" and were therefore entitled to independence, the Republicans had always asked for a "democratic government", which implied a much longer period of education and practice in the exercise of government. As Filipino demands for independence mounted, the Republican administrations of 1921-33 found even more criteria for them to satisfy, including "stable economy" and "defensive capacity". But if the Republicans invented new crite-

¹ House Committee on Insular Affairs, *Hearings*, 71:2, 385-424; Senate Committee on Territories, *Hearings*, 71:2, 7 ff., 113-45; Bureau of Insular Affairs (hereafter, "BIA"), Hurley file, esp., *New York Times*, *New York Herald Tribune*, Feb. 12, 1932, *Washington Star*, Feb. 14; Stimson diary, Nov. 10, 1931, Feb. 3, 10, 1932.

ria in order to delay independence, the Democrats demolished all criteria in order to advance it.² Neither Wilson nor Hawes nor King thoroughly and thoughtfully assessed Philippine affairs with an objective standard in mind. Pre-existing interests and convictions moved them, just as they did Stimson, Hurley, and the opponents of independence. At the heart of the Philippine independence question lay those conflicting interests and convictions—economic and social, military and political.

1

Economic interests were most pronounced, as might be expected during the the greatest depression in American history.³ By 1932 the interests opposed to independence assumed that a bill would pass despite their objections, and they confined themselves, for the most part, to attempts at obtaining as long a period of preparation as possible — twenty years at least. These advocates of prolonged transition fell roughly into four classes: (1) Americans with overseas investments in the Philippines, (2) importers and processors of tax-free Philippine products, (3) manufacturers and exporters of products

² Upon the meaning of stable government: House Ins. 72:1, 6-9, Sen. Terr. 120-3, *Congressional Record*, 72:1, 1909-10, 12799-832. Georges Fischer thoroughly and ably discusses the question of criteria for independence in *Un Cas de Decolonisation, Les États-Unis et les Philippines* (Paris, Pichon & Durand-Auzias, 1960), pp. 49-89. Raymond Leslie Buell dismissed the whole question by saying that the Philippines already could govern itself as well as ten or twenty countries in Central America, the Balkans, and other regions, "and certainly as well as Haiti, which we will free in 1936." *New York Times*, Apr. 15, 1932, BIA 364 a-w-873, part 5.

³ The first student of the problem, Grayson V. Kirk, overemphasized economic interests in *Philippine Independence: Motives, Problems, and Prospects* (New York, Farrar & Rinehart, 1936). Garel Grunder and William Livezey, *The Philippines and the United States* (Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1951), exaggerate that aspect even more, devoting themselves almost completely to the farm lobby and barely mentioning foreign policy and immigration. Julius W. Pratt, *America's Colonial Experiment* (New York, Prentice-Hall, 1950), and Fischer, *Un Cas de Decolonisation*, provide better balanced but still incomplete discussions of American motives. I owe much to each of these predecessors, but new evidence and new perspectives require a fresh appraisal.

to the tax-free Philippine market, and (4) "Manila Americans" — American residents who lived in the Philippines and carried on business there.⁴

Among those with investments in the Philippines, the most active were American public utilities companies, food companies, and Standard Oil. RCA, whose chairman was an old Philippine hand, worked through the J. G. White organization with the Philippine Islands Telephone Company, and operated the Manila Electric Company, which in turn shared executives, including its president, with the Philippine Railway Company. Representatives of the latter companies asked for a thirty-year transition "to put themselves in shape." Agricultural investors included the Spreckels and other American sugar interests, the California Packing Company, which had a pineapple concession in Mindanao, and the Spencer-Kellogg Company, which had \$5,000,000 invested in equipment to crush copra into coconut oil, and ships to carry it to New York. "You gave the Spaniards ten years to liquidate their investments," said a Spencer-Kellogg man; "you should certainly give your own citizens twenty years." Another powerful factor was the interest of Standard Oil, which had acquired large tracts of land in Tayabas and adjoining provinces, and had begun testing in some. Operating *sub rosa* through Ivy Lee, they spent a great deal of money on anti-independence propaganda.⁵

⁴ Senator Harry Hawes himself compiled (*Cong. Rec.* 72:1, 13433-6) a roster of selfish economic interests on both sides of the question which Pratt cites, pp. 302-2, and Grunder and Livezey reproduce almost verbatim, pp. 199-200. My own classification differs in structure and emphasis. I do not, for instance, include among selfish opponents "bureaucrats fearing loss of position or curtailment of government activities in the Philippine Islands," because (1) such civil servants as would be affected were neither noticeably active nor articulate against the bills, and (2) the personnel in the Bureau of Insular Affairs and the insular administration itself tended, by conviction and inheritance, to Taft-Stimson attitudes, and not just by convenience.

⁵ Testimony of John H. Pardee, House Ins. 72:1, 229-39; Sen. Terr. 282-92; James D. Craig, House Ins. 201-31, 329; Sen. Terr. Feb. 11, 1932; Norbert Lyons to Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jan. 6, 1934, BIA 364-989. Lyons had been editor at various times of three dif-

Companies involved in trade with the Philippines, both export and import, were probably the next most concerned groups. Representatives from chambers of commerce on the Pacific Coast spoke for expanding American trade relations with the Far East, as if those relations depended on the Philippines; they were echoed by New York traders in tones which recalled the arguments of 1898, and which clung to the faded promise of the Philippines as a stepping stone to great Oriental markets.⁶ Neither group of opponents to independence, importers-processors or manufacturers-exporters, had alternative legislation to offer, now that Quezon had abandoned the Free State Plan which they had proposed in 1931. They nevertheless continued a stubborn retreat, issuing propaganda through the Philippine-American Chamber of Commerce, a New York City organization with eighty member firms and individuals. Although their campaign was relatively rational, and perhaps for that reason noticeably successful with the national press, they drew upon themselves the contumely of a Missouri congressman for "spilling more poison in the minds of the American people in reference to the Philippine problem than all other propaganda organizations combined."⁷

The insular equivalent of the Chamber in New York was the American Chamber of Commerce in the Philippines. Organized in 1921, it had strongly backed Leonard Wood in his public differences with Quezon. Along with the *Manila Daily Bulletin*, the Chamber was the chief mouthpiece for the interests of Manila Americans, and it had actively propagandized against independence until the Philippine legislature had

ferent American dailies in the Philippines, 1913-24, and representative in the United States of the American Chamber of Commerce in the Philippines, 1924-26. By 1934 he no longer had any financial ties with the islands.

⁶ Testimony of W. Edward Bruce, House Ins. 72:1, 299-325, Sen. Terr. 72:1, 77-105; Orville C. Sanborn, Sen. Terr. 443-5, John B. Chevalier, *ibid.*, 567-70.

⁷ House Ins. 72:1, 269. The Philippine-American Chamber of Commerce had been founded on Dec. 11, 1919, partly through the stimulus of the insular government. Of its members only two were located in Manila; all but twenty-two were in New York City. BIA 27685.

"clubbed it into quietude" about 1926. Because the law-making power was in Philippine hands, American businessmen had learned to watch their step, but during the depression crisis they reopened a cautiously urgent campaign to protect what they considered endangered investments. They urged that America had neither fulfilled her trust in the Philippines, nor yet realized her trade potential in the Orient.⁸

2

On the opposite side of the question, advocating independence for the Philippines, those with the strongest economic motives were farm and labor lobbies, whose eventual success was an early sign of the power and influence to which they would rise under the New Deal. Their objections to competition from Philippine imports and Filipino laborers had found no relief in tariff or immigration acts, and they turned instead to independence legislation to alleviate their problems.

First, imports: during the 1920's, Philippine agriculture had enjoyed an extraordinary boom, stimulated by wartime prices and then by the Fordney-McCumber Tariff of 1922, which improved its already strong position in the American market. In that decade, of the three leading Philippine exports to the United States, sugar increased 450%, coconut oil 223%, and cordage more than 500%. The resulting prosperity of insular agriculture might have gone unnoticed but for distress in continental agriculture for the same period, especially after 1926. Sharing but slightly in the boom years, the American farmers' share of national income between 1920 and 1929 dropped nearly 50%.⁹ Farm lobbyists, looking for something to blame, grossly exaggerated the role of Philippine competition.

⁸ Lyons to Roosevelt, Jan. 6, 1934; American Chamber of Commerce *Journal*, Mar. 12, 1932 and *passim*. The editor of the *Journal*, Walter Robb, tried to curb the extreme Americanism of the Americans, and three times resigned until he was given a free editorial hand. "He was a red-headed maverick," a friend said, "that the Chamber couldn't do without."

⁹ Kirk, 74-9.

By 1932 a large assemblage of forces was promoting immediate independence for the Philippines so that the tariff wall could be raised against their products. Nineteen beet-growing states of the Midwest, Rockies, and Pacific Coast, plus eight cane-growing states in the Deep South, were expressing themselves through national farm organizations, the state branches thereof, and interested congressman. The American Farm Bureau Federation, the National Grange, and the National Beet Growers' Association led the public attack,¹⁰ while, more quietly, American investors in Cuban sugar worked to save an investment threatened both by Philippine competition and Cuban revolution. Such diverse critics as Cameron Forbes, Arthur Krock, and Manuel Quezon all singled out the National City Bank of New York as the leader in that effort, which Forbes described as "a very short sighted policy . . . conniving at the independence movement of the Philippines and endeavoring to get them chucked away to save some of their pennies in Cuba." More than pennies were involved — eventually the National City Bank lost about 60 million dollars in Cuba — but short-sighted the policy certainly was. Many desperate measures recommended themselves in that harrowed year, not only to Wall Street, but to Main Street and the Great Plains.¹¹

¹⁰ Testimonies of Chester Gray, Fred Cummings, Fred Brenckman, John A. Simpson, and Sen. Edwin S. Broussard, House Ins. 72:1, 149-170, 185-8, 425-30; Sen. Terr. 72:1, 67-104.

¹¹ The Chase-Manhattan Bank, the Royal Bank of Canada, and certain Boston banks were also interested, if not active, in promoting Philippine independence for similar reasons. Cameron Forbes, *Journals, Second Series*, III, 494, IV, 269-71 (quotation from 269); Krock, *New York Times*, Apr. 5, 1932; Quezon to OsRox, Jan. 2, 1933 (Quezon Mss., Bureau of Public Libraries, Manila). In a speech before the Philippine Senate, Quezon accused the National City Bank of "paying millions [sic] to propagate in the United States the idea that the competition of [our] sugar was destructive to American beet sugar." *Diario de Sesiones*, Oct. 12, 1933, 748. While Quezon may not be reliable in this instance, (and he certainly exaggerated), Forbes' and Krock's observations are indirectly supported by the fact that the National City Bank considered for a while liquidating its branches in the Philippines (author's conversation with National City Bank personnel, Manila, 1958). An improvement of the above account might be possible after examination of National City Bank records in New York, but my request for such a privilege, July 1960, was denied.

Even so, the tactics of Wall Street and Cuban-American sugar were more soundly reasoned than those of their unnatural allies, the beet lobbies. Ninety percent of Philippine sugar entering the United States competed, not with American beet sugar in central and western markets, but with Cuban sugar in eastern markets. There, the cost of transportation, added to an already high cost of production, put American beet sugar at a disadvantage with both its competitors. The beet lobbyists, then, could neither have expanded the market nor raised the price for their sugar by shutting out the Philippine product, for the price was established by the world market rate plus the preferential tariff on Cuban sugar, which would still be coming in.¹² But the beet interests lobbied on.

Against coconut oil, the second largest Philippine import, were arrayed Midwestern dairymen and Southern farmers, represented generally by national farm organizations and specially by the National Dairy Union, the National Cooperative Milk Producers Association, and many state dairy associations.¹³ Their case rested on two arguments: the interchangeability of oils in soap manufacture, and the possibility of customer change-over from oleomargarine to butter in the competition between those two products. Soap (64.3%) and oleo (22.4%) accounted for most of American coconut oil consumption in 1932, but both lobby arguments concerning them were false. First, the chemical structure of coconut oil made it considerably superior to animal fats and cottonseed oil in soap manufacture, and even with tariff it would have been cheaper than both. Second, the price of butter was then 17.8 cents a pound higher than oleo, a price spread which a tariff of two cents per pound on coconut oil could do almost nothing to overcome; it would raise the price of oleo only a cent a pound, certainly nothing to change the mind of the average oleo consumer.¹⁴

¹² Kirk, 89-93; Grunder and Livezey, 216-7.

¹³ Testimonies of Charles W. Holman, A. N. Loomis, House Ins. 72:1, 170-84, 188-99; Minneapolis *Tribune*, May 16, 1929, BIA 364-652B.

¹⁴ Kirk, 80-88; Grunder and Livezey, 212-5. In addition to the farmers mentioned by these sources, Harry Hawes added soybean and peanut growers, plus makers and consumers of cottonseed and soybean meal for dairy cattle.

Against the third largest Philippine export, the American Cordage Institute seemed to be making no all-out campaign. Their representative pictured their dual position: on the one hand importers and processors of raw abaca, on the other hand competitors of already processed Philippine cordage. On the merits of the independence question itself, he expressed no opinion, asking merely for a limit on import of processed cordage. In fact, however, these imports vastly exceeded imports of raw material, and represented a more genuine competition than that faced by American beet and butter. Behind the scenes the wily cordage lobbyist therefore drummed up support for the independence bill as the only means to obtain limitation. As a favor to him for past favors received, a Greek patriotic society circularized its regional branches, asking them to petition their congressmen for Philippine freedom.¹⁵

Fourth among major Philippine agricultural exports, tobacco alone was not opposed by American interests. Early in the century it had looked like a threat, but Philippine production in this area had steadily dropped off since then, while Philippine consumption of American cigarettes had soared. American tobacco companies therefore kept quiet, and hoped to preserve a tax-free market, which was vastly more important than competition at the raw product level.¹⁶

3

The second group of economic interests asking for immediate independence was composed of opponents to Filipino immigration. Filipinos had been attracted and contracted to Hawaiian plantations since 1906, and by 1931 there were about 75,000 of them in that territory. Only in the late 1920's had they begun to flow rapidly into the continental United States, either after a period in Hawaii, or directly from the Philippines. By 1931 there were about 60,000 in America, nine-tenths of them males, mostly under thirty years old, four-fifths of them

¹⁵ Testimony of J. C. McDaniel, Sen. Terr. 71:2, 292-313; House Ins. 72:1, 295-6; Grunder and Livezey, 215-7; author's conversation with E. D. Hester, March 1958.

¹⁶ Grunder and Livezey, 212.

on the Pacific Coast. About sixty percent were agricultural workers, and another twenty-five percent were in domestic service.¹⁷ Their willingness to work for wages considerably below the American standard aroused the California State Federation of Labor, which, with similar bodies in Washington and Oregon, began agitating in 1928 to have further Filipino laborers excluded.

When exclusion efforts as such failed, the American Federation of Labor joined the independence bandwagon. Under Samuel Gompers in 1898, it had fought imperialism in the interest of excluding Oriental labor. Now under William Green it emphasized arguments against the "non-assimilable Asiatic."¹⁸ Although the depression had slowed Filipino immigration from ten and a half thousand in 1929 to two and a half thousand in 1931,¹⁹ racial as well as economic passions had been aroused. There was no let-up in the attempt to exclude the Filipino, as other Orientals had been excluded before him.²⁰

The Filipino had fallen "heir to the attitudes developed by two conflicting American traditions: reliance upon immi-

¹⁷ "Filipino Immigration into the Continental United States", special BIA report, Jan. 14, 1932. Bruno Lasker, *Filipino Immigration* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, for the Institute of Pacific Relations, 1931) not only improves on BIA statistics, but develops the most probing socio-economic study of the problem. Carey McWilliams, *Brothers under the Skin* (Boston, Little-Brown, 1934) adds color and liberal sympathies to the facts.

¹⁸ Testimonies of Joe Crail, Ralph Horr, and Richard Welch, House Ins. 72:1, 122-6, 271-4, 378-84; W. C. Hushing, *ibid.*, 233-8, and Sen. Terr. 72:1, 113-8; Yakima (Washington) *Herald*, Aug. 5, 1931. The AFL wanted to exclude Filipinos even from Hawaii, but both the Territorial delegate, Victor S. K. Houston, and the vice president of the Hawaiian Sugar Planters Association, R. D. Mead, successfully pleaded for continued Filipino immigration, in the interests of the agricultural labor needs of the territory; House Ins. 72:1, Feb. 12, 1932.

¹⁹ BIA special report, Table 4.

²⁰ There was even an unorganized but assertive element of Negro labor which resented competition from Filipinos in work to which Negroes had adapted themselves, or found themselves confined; Hawes, in *Cong. Rec.* 72:1, 13433-6.

grant hands for the least pleasant and least remunerated labor tasks, and hostility to the encroachment of alien peoples upon the ethnic and social homogeneity of the population."²¹ Now the second tradition was fully aroused. "We have enough race problems now in the United States," declared Senator Shortridge of California, "the Negro problem; the Chinese problem; the Japanese problem . . . It is [my] purpose to prevent the growth of the Philippine problem." "I have no racial prejudices," declared Representative Welch of the same state, "but God gave the non-assimilable Asiatics a place in the sun and that place is the Orient."²² Several Southern senators equally free from racial prejudice supported the Filipino exclusion movement, and when that foundered, the movement for Philippine independence.²³

The social impetus behind Filipino exclusion, however, was more than sectional. Powerful nationalistic societies supported it, notably the American Legion and the American Coalition, the latter representing forty-six different patriotic organizations. These supporters of the movement for "racial purity" and "national homogeneity" had backed the sweeping and discriminatory Immigration Act of 1924. No countervailing lobbies for liberal immigration legislation opposed them. The "non-assimilability" argument, which had almost ruptured diplomatic relations which Japan in 1924, was now being used with the intention of fracturing the colonial relationship with

²¹ Lasker, p. 328.

²² *Cong. Rec.* 72:1, 7513; *House Ins.* 72:1, 379. Why did Shortridge not diagnose a "Mexican problem" too, inasmuch as they were used in great numbers to plant, pull, top and pile sugar beets? The answer seems to be that they mostly represented seasonal labor, whereas the Filipino was a putative transient who showed many signs of becoming a permanent resident.

²³ Most Southerners had never seen a Filipino, since immigrants stayed clear of that section for fear of being treated like Negroes. Nevertheless senators from the Deep South had voted 5-3 (8 not voting) in favor of an exclusion amendment which Shortridge tried unsuccessfully in 1930 to attach to a more general immigration bill. The Far West (including Nevada and Arizona) was most strongly for it, 9-1, and the Middle Atlantic and New England most strongly against it (1 yea, 10 nays, 7 not voting). The measure as a whole lost, 41-23. *Cong. Rec.* 71:2, 7529-30.

the Philippines. With more common sense one might have observed that the Filipino who came to America was likely to speak English, to have been schooled in love of American customs, to be anxious to acquire American skills and knowledge; that he was, "if anything, *too* assimilable to accept the limitation imposed upon him by public opinion;" and that the problem which he created was "not that of the stranger who cannot be Americanized, but rather that of the would-be American who refuses to remain a stranger."²⁴ Common sense, however, was not typical of American nativism.

4

"The Orient," Henry Cabot Lodge once said, "is like a bowl of jelly — poke one part of it, and it all shakes."²⁵ The discussion of Philippine independence, in its strategic phase, was essentially an argument about whether to poke the jelly or leave it alone. Cabinet officers Stimson and Hurley led the leave-it-alone school, with Hiram Bingham as their outlet in the Senate, and Nicholas Roosevelt, the journalist, carrying the argument to the public. Their case, though elaborately presented, can be briefly summarized: American prestige in the Orient depended upon military force, upon completing the job of politico-economic development in the Philippines, and upon keeping face by not backing down before the Japanese. An independence act would not only weaken prestige in all three instances, but would overthrow the power equilibrium in Asia by eroding the American position, undermining European interests, stimulating various colonial and semi-colonial nationalisms, and above all, encouraging Japanese imperialism.²⁶

Every one of these assumptions was echoed in a contemporary military-naval Joint Planning Committee study of the problem. The army saw their bases in the Philippines as af-

²⁴ Lasker, 33-7, 298-304; quotation from p. 331.

²⁵ Article in *Harpers Magazine*, reprinted without date as Appendix K to Sen. Terr. 71:2, 614-21.

²⁶ For the Stimson-Hurley arguments see Senate and House hearings, *passim.*, 1929-32. Bingham made his position clear in the *Congressional Record*, and Roosevelt in the editorial policy of the *New York Herald Tribune*.

fording means of protecting the navy's freedom of operation in the West Pacific, and means of reinforcing garrisons in China, if necessary. The navy, always more emphatic, declared that peacetime policies required a naval base in the Philippines for protection of American Asiatic interests; and in time of war such a base would even have to be seized from an independent Philippines in order to fight the "dominant Asiatic power." Present conditions, indeed, made proposals to weaken our position there "particularly inopportune."²⁷

Others, on the contrary, were willing to yield independence to the Philippines regardless of the consequences in the Orient. Their position reflected either a wistful desire for non-involvement in any foreign broil, or unsparing analysis of the true state of American power in the Pacific. The first group, disillusioned by the sequel to the World War, was generally apathetic, if not strongly opposed to American naval and military spending, to interventions abroad, and even to exercise of influence, (except sometimes for the sake of business) in foreign areas. This isolationism had many exponents in Congress who believed that the most powerful America was one which would confine its power to the continent, or at most the hemisphere, rather than losing it, and thereby losing it, elsewhere.²⁸

Where the Philippines was concerned, up to 1931, Congressional isolationists dismissed strategic arguments against independence as "the Japanese bugaboo." Japan had no interest in the Philippines, they said, and international agreements and the League of Nations would protect the islands in any case. These plausible themes were sounded with ingenious variations, including a counterpoint of hopeful *realpolitik* — Great Britain, France, and Holland would step in should Japan show signs of upsetting the balance of power. In other words, there was no international problem to freeing

²⁷ General Board 405, serial 1564, Adm. Mark Bristol to Secretary of Navy, Feb. 2, 1932.

²⁸ An excellent synthesis and running narrative of such attitudes is found in Selig Adler, *The Isolationist Impulse*, (New York, Abelard-Schuman, 1957).

the Philippines; just free them; the Japanese did not like the climate there anyway.²⁹ Even after the conquest of Manchuria, wistful theories continued to echo in Congressional chambers: "The greatest strength that the Philippines have is their . . . weakness," said Harry Hawes.³⁰

After Manchuria, however, "the Japanese bugaboo" tended to become "the Japanese menace."³¹ Although the latter point was scored mostly for convenience, it could have been made from close analysis. Relative to Japanese power, American power in the Western Pacific had been slowly and steadily declining for some time. Philippine security had already been ransomed twice, for recognition of Japanese special interests in Korea (1905) and Manchuria (1908). Congress had foregone fortification of the Philippines in 1921 partly in order to persuade Japan to accept the short end of a 3:5 ratio of capital ships. Would not the next logical step be to retreat from the Philippines entirely? The American navy had fallen under treaty strength and grown overage, while Japan kept up to treaty strength and up-to-date in naval architecture. While Chief of Staff MacArthur complained how puny a standing army Americans were willing to maintain,³² the Kwantung army was strong enough to try to swing Japanese national policy by the tail. Though the dignity of the forum forbade saying so, many in Congress were willing to complete a series of awkward accommodations to Japan by a graceful and final withdrawal from the West Pacific.

5

Manuel Roxas turned Stimson's "lever of influence" argument around and predicted that if America gave the Philippines independence, her prestige would rise: "The Philippines will be the broadcasting station for America's ennobling prin-

²⁹ For example: remarks of Senators King and Broussard, *Cong. Rec.* 71:1, 3567-8, 4065-6, 4369-426; Reps. Nelson and Lozier, *ibid.*, 71:2, 5320-6, 8463-6.

³⁰ House Ins. 72:1, Feb. 12, 1932.

³¹ For example: remarks of Reps. Yon and Strong, *ibid.*, 298-9, 340.

³² Annual reports of the Chief of Staff, in *Annual Reports of the Secretary of War*, 1931-4, especially 1933.

ciples of democracy and justice."³³ Roxas, in effect, asked for America's democratic self to prevail over her imperial self. He proposed an attractive alternative to the Stimsonian identification American interests with the colonial powers of Europe, an opportunity for the United States to identify itself with the rising peoples of Asia.

The debates of 1932-3 echoed the political content of the debates of 1898-9. Americans felt badly that their nation, itself born in the travail of revolt against empire, had nevertheless abducted from Spain a rebellious colonial ward and subdued it as her own. Even the most truculent expansionists had had to confine themselves to a notion of "trusteeship" over the Philippines, a "civilizing mission," which would have as its fulfillment the ultimate independence of the Filipinos. In the taking up of "the white man's burden" was envisioned its laying down. The remaining question was: when shall the mission have been accomplished?³⁴

Certain men would never believe the mission had been accomplished. Old Philippine hands were nostalgic for empire. Cameron Forbes found meetings of Philippine Associations, in New York and Chicago, in San Francisco and Los Angeles, even in Miami, Florida, "dripping with sentiment." Although there were liberals among them, the most prominent members were frequently the most Kiplingesque, answering "not yet" to suggestions that the Filipinos were ready to govern themselves. In spite of a full generation of steady socio-political construction in the Philippines, they predicted chaos if the United States withdrew. So did Stimson and Hurley. But their prophecy cast more doubt upon thirty years' work than most Americans were willing to sustain, and implicitly dispar-

³³ House Ins. 72:1, III-2 (Jan. 25, 1932). Roxas had earlier developed this plea as a counter to the opinions of Nicholas Roosevelt; it appeared in "The Philippines," Foreign Policy Association pamphlet No. 64, March 1930, pp. 15-16.

³⁴ Pratt's *Expansionists of 1898* analyses the original debate; Fischer, *Un Cas de Decolonisation*, 94-6, reviews traditional anticolonialism as it re-emerged over the independence question.

aged Filipino capacities for self-government in a manner which aroused Quezon and the Manila press.³⁵

Doubtless Stimson and Hurley were unconsciously exaggerating Philippine unreadiness as an excuse for maintaining a position from which to deter Japanese expansion. Their words and actions carried intact Mahanian ideas of the large policy, as well as some paternalistic Darwinism. The grandiose altruism, hopeful commercialism, and even the ragged jingoism of the 1890's survived in these men.

The Anti-Imperialist League had led the opposing side since the turn of the century, but with the death of its secretary, Erving Winslow, in 1923, it had gone defunct.³⁶ Moorfield Storey, once president, produced one of many in a new wave of books condemning various American imperial and semi-imperial ventures. Many people who had been against the League of Nations because they believed it an abettor of Anglo-French imperialism, had switched, after the defeat of the League Covenant in the Senate, to attacking imperialism closer to home.³⁷ Get out of Central America, they cried, out of the Caribbean, out of the Philippines. A species of liberal in their day, they were also isolationist.

³⁵ Quezon had privately requested Hurley, in a cable sent at his personal expense, Feb. 8, 1932, not to make any declarations concerning incapacities of the Filipinos. Hurley complied only in the sense that his criticisms were indirect and implicit; United Press reports made them explicit and touched off a strong Quezonian reaction which took a week to subside. Osmeña, Roxas to Quezon, Aquino, Alas, [10] February; Butte to Secretary of War, Feb. 13; OsRox to Quaal (Quezon, Aquino, Alas), February 14; Quezon to Secretary of War, Butte to Secretary of War, February 15. (Quezon Mss.)

³⁶ Winslow had for some time been suspicious of the Filipino leaders' interest in close commercial relations with the United States, which he felt would jeopardize the independence campaign. Quezon complained to Moorfield Storey of Winslow's insinuations that he was a traitor to the cause. Leading letters on this dispute, which survive in the Quezon Mss., are: Winslow to Quezon, April 8, 1918, March 13, 1919; Quezon to Winslow, March 22, 1919; Quezon to Storey, June 8, 1919.

³⁷ Pratt, *America's Colonial Experiment*, 311-3; Adler, *The Isolationist Impulse*, chs. 6-8; Storey and Marcial P. Lichauco, *The Conquest of the Philippines by the United States, 1898-1925* (New York, Putnam's 1926).

The "lay down the burden" argument also implied an "abandon the fort" argument, which in many cases was left inarticulate. Very few idealistic anti-imperialists examined what getting out of the Philippines might mean for the balance of power in East Asia. Francis Burton Harrison, for instance, wanted independence on ethical grounds above all.³⁸ He, like most Americans, had always been quick to take a moral stand, and usually slow to distinguish between colonial policy and foreign policy. To admit that what might be advisable in the one field might leave them vulnerable in the other was difficult for the insistent idealist. Those who did make the distinction, such as Senator Borah, minimized it.³⁹ Such men were the spiritual progeny of those anti-annexationists of 1898 who thought expansion both politically immoral and strategically unwise, and their numbers were swollen by disillusionment with the World War and discouragement with the Great Depression. It was time again, they argued, for Americans to pursue a "small policy" of anti-imperialism and non-entanglement in the Pacific. Which came first did not matter. Where the Philippines was concerned, both meant the same.

6

Such was the structure of American motive and argument when independence legislation cleared its first obstacle in April 1932. The Hare Bill, as reported by the House Committee on Insular Affairs, provided low import and immigration quotas, but no tariff until an eight-year period of transition to independence was complete.⁴⁰ Probably economic motives were the most prominent in the House, which easily passed the bill, for a depression election was only seven months away. But no full scale debate took place to reveal the relative weight of other factors.

³⁸ Harrison to Col. Francisco Oñate, Nov. 8, 1931. In earlier days Harrison appears to have been more concerned with the military possibilities; he employed the "Achilles heel" argument in a letter to Winslow, May 8, 1913, and spoke of a neutralization agreement to Quezon, July 10, 1911 (Quezon Mss). See also remarks of Reps. Sabath and Nilson, *Cong. Rec.* 72:1, 7487-90.

³⁹ *Cong. Rec.* 72:2, 1916-8, and *passim*.

⁴⁰ House Report, 72:1, No. 806.

Only by severely limiting discussion did Speaker Garner prevent the farm bloc from trying to insert in the bill the immediate independence and immediate tariffs which they desired. The rules were suspended; the bill was debated for forty minutes with no amendments permitted; a two-thirds vote was necessary for passage. Only in this way, the Osmeña-Roxas Mission later reported back home, was the bill saved from mutilation.⁴¹

The forty-minute debate resolved itself into farm bloc intimations of what they might have done if they had been able, and others' impassioned generalities for and against the bill. One speaker, for passing it, harked back to the Jeffersonian principle of the consent of the governed. Another, opposing it, harked back even further to exclaim, "What a travesty, what a tragedy! Forty minutes to found a nation! . . . I have to go to Calvary and quote the words of the Great Master of men . . . 'Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.' " The vote was 306 to 47, a six-to-one majority, for passage. All the votes against it were Republican, thirty of them from New England and the Middle Atlantic states, and another nine from midwestern industrial cities. In favor of the bill were 188 Democrats, 117 Republicans, and a Farmer-Laborite.⁴²

Reactions were varied. Editorial comment in leading American newspapers was sternly critical of the bill and the way it was passed, and Will Rogers in his printed drawl observed that "the freedom of a race of people never entered into it . . . The only reason why we ever held 'em this long is because the Japanese didn't use sugar in their tea. But they are liable to start using it any day." The Japanese government

⁴¹ *Cong. Rec.* 72:1, 7393 ff.; *New York Times*, *New York Herald Tribune*, April 3, 5, 1932, and *Washington Star*, April 4, BIA 364-a-w-873, part 5. Report of the Philippine Legislative Mission, *Manila Sunday Tribune*, July 30, 1933 (hereafter "OsRox Report").

⁴² *Cong. Rec.* 72:1, 7401-12; quotations from Gilbert of Kentucky, 7410, and Underhill of Massachusetts, 7408; interesting extended remarks by members of the House appear on 7483-90, 7517-9, 7772-3, 7827-8, 7832-3, 8502, 9045. Kirk, 102 ff., and Grunder and Livezey, 198-9, differ slightly in their breakdown of the vote; I have used the findings of the latter.

itself was unofficially pleased with the turn of events, but the reaction of European colonial powers was naturally quite the opposite, and Americans with investments in the Orient were disgruntled.⁴³

Even the Filipino reaction was lame. Newspaper editorials sought awkwardly to praise the bill, and the Legislature, although it congratulated the Osmeña-Roxas mission, did not endorse its achievement. More ominous still for the united front which the mission had hoped to present, was a press statement issued by Quezon just before the Hare bill was passed. If given the freedom to act voluntarily, Quezon said, the Philippines might consider some kind of permanent relationship with America: "The Filipino's position, with his definite, dignified civil status, could be as satisfactory as a Canadian's is under England."⁴⁴

Thus independence legislation for the Philippines cleared its first obstacle. The forces propelling it were not only economic interests opposed to Philippine competition, but strategic anxieties vis-à-vis Japan, and the political conviction that American promises to Philippine democracy had come due. Serious obstacles to the bill still loomed. The Hoover administration intended a veto should it clear the Senate. And Manuel Quezon, to insure his political primacy, might be expected to oppose any achievement by Osmeña and Roxas which would threaten his own popularity.

⁴³ *Washington Post*, *Richmond News Leader*, April 5, 1932; *New York Herald Tribune*, April 12; Rogers in *New York Times*, April 5; Japanese "government spokesman" quoted in *New York Herald Tribune*, and commented upon in *La Opinión*, Manila, April 6. European reactions were anticipated by Arthur Krock, *New York Times*, April 5, analyzed in *La Opinión*, April 9, and recollected by Henry Stimson in *The Far Eastern Crisis*, (New York, Harper and Bros., 1936); editorials expressing the concern of and sympathy for American businessmen in the Philippines appear in *Manila Bulletin*, April 5, and *The China Press*, April 6. All press clippings from BIA 364-a-w-873, part 5.

⁴⁴ *New York Herald Tribune*, April 5, 6, 1932; editorial, *Manila Tribune*, April 7, Quaqual to OsRox, April 5, (Quezon Mss.); Quezon quoted in *Washington Star*, April 3. Clippings from BIA 364-a-w-873, part 5.