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The Debate in the United States Concerning Philippine Independence, 1912-1916

JOHN A. BEADLES

THE Philippine Autonomy Act of 1916 (the Jones Act), which formally promised independence to the Philippines, was the result of an intensive four-year debate in the United States. To understand why the United States Congress passed this unique independence legislation, it is necessary to survey the arguments of the Filipino Resident Commissioners to the United States and those asserted by the organs of Filipino opinion that were available in the United States and to be aware of the contentions of not only Congressmen and Executive leaders but also the American press, certain business interests, and important lay and religious leaders in private life. The debate over Philippine independence lasted with full intensity from 1912 until Congress passed the Jones Act in 1916. In those four years, the entire range of pro-independence and pro-retentionist arguments concerning the Philippines was revealed in the United States for perhaps the last time. Viewpoints of the contending individuals and groups were thoroughly aired, influencing Congress before and during its deliberations and debates concerning the Jones Bill and other independence legislation.

American scholars, notably Julius Pratt in his *America's Colonial Experiment*, and Garel A. Grunder and William E. Livezey in *The Philippines and the United States*, have dis-

cussed the events pertaining to the Philippine question in the years 1912 to 1916.¹ They have, however, neglected to survey American press opinion, and have made no use of the organs of Filipino opinion available in the United States. Their studies, therefore, tend to focus on events that occurred within the Congress of the United States, neglecting to explore the impact of public opinion on the events that terminated in the passage of the Jones Act.

The Filipino who was most instrumental in helping to shape American opinion toward a position favorable to eventual Philippine independence was Manuel L. Quezon. Quezon was a Philippine Resident Commissioner to the United States from 1909 through 1916. He was also a leader of the Nacionalista Party, the majority party in the Philippines, which was founded on a program endorsing independence.² While he was in the United States, Quezon constantly lobbied for Philippine independence. His charm, wit, manner, bearing, and, indeed, almost everything about him, made Commissioner Quezon very popular in Washington. He was the most effective of advocates for independence who served in the United

¹Julius Pratt, *America's Colonial Experiment* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1950). Garel A. Grunder and William E. Livezey, *The Philippines and the United States* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1951). Pratt's work, while excellent, does not go into great depth when it discusses the passage of the Jones Act. Grunder and Livezey's book, long considered the standard work on America's Philippine policy, relies a great deal on official United States Government documents. It tends, therefore, to concentrate on events in Congress and pays little attention to the activities of the Filipino Resident Commissioners in the years 1912 to 1916.

²Maximo M. Kalaw, "President Wilson's Real Philippine Policy," *Philippine Review*, Manila, I, No. 7 (July 1916), p. 73. The *Philippine Review* although published for less than two years, appeared during the climax of the battle over the Jones Bill and the Clarke Amendment. Gregorio Nieva, its editor, was skillful in attracting articles from Filipino leaders such as Sergio Osmeña, Manuel Quezon, and Maximo Kalaw. The editorials and articles which appeared in English were devoted primarily to discussions of independence legislation pending before the United States Congress. The periodical had considerable circulation in the United States but it has been completely neglected by American scholars as a source of information concerning the events of 1916.

States. His usual tactic was very skillful: he would praise American government in the islands and then argue that since the Americans had done such a good job, it was time for the Filipinos to assume control, for they were now fully trained in self-government. Also, Quezon convinced most American Congressional leaders that the Filipinos deeply desired their independence.³

Through the publication of his own Washington periodical, *Filipino People*, which he circulated among Congressmen and other American leaders whom he viewed as interested in the Philippines, Quezon propagated his argument that the Filipinos wished to be free. He also called for Philippine independence in numerous speeches before Congress and on the lecture platform. American political leaders found that the Resident Commissioner was a tireless and persistent worker for the cause of Filipino autonomy.

One of Quezon's favorite themes, expressed in print and in person, was that although most of the sentiment for American retention of the islands was expressed in altruistic terms, the retentionists were not motivated by humanitarian intentions. Over and over again, Quezon charged that the retentionists were primarily selfish American businessmen who wished to exploit the Philippines economically. He asserted that he believed that the vast majority of Americans, including their government leaders, would reject such hypocrisy.⁴ Quezon's allegation of a selfish basis for America's Philippine policy contained enough truth to make an impression on American opinion, especially at a time when monopolies and trusts in the United States were being hotly attacked by the Democratic Administration.

Quezon and the other Resident Commissioners, Rafael Palma and Manuel Earnshaw, also received formal support from the Filipinos in the islands, for during the period that the various Philippine independence bills were before Con-

³ *Filipino People*, Washington, I:5 (January 1913), p. 5.

⁴ *Speech by the Honorable Manuel L. Quezon of the Philippines in the House of Representatives* (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office), 1913, p. 31.

gress, the Filipinos constantly sent supporting resolutions, petitions, and statements. Even before the sympathetic Democratic Administration took office in March 1913, the Philippine Assembly adopted a unanimous resolution endorsing immediate independence.⁶ When speaking before the United States House of Representatives in the fall of 1914, Quezon stated that 247 municipal councils, four assemblies of municipal presidents (mayors), eight provincial boards, seventy mass meetings, and the Executive National Committee of the Nacionalista Party had sent him resolutions instructing him to support any independence legislation.⁶ Quezon was able to rely on the support of certain non-political groups in the islands. The small but emerging trade union movement gave unqualified support to independence.⁷ And, although the official position of the Roman Catholic Church, both in the islands and in the United States, was in opposition to the removal of American sovereignty, most of the native priests signed statements endorsing independence for Quezon's use in *Filipino People*.⁸

While the Filipinos were steadily advancing the movement for independence in the islands, widespread and articulate support continued to grow in the United States. Led by the Anti-imperialist League, which had been originally organized to oppose American annexation of the Philippines, American public opinion increasingly supported a policy of disengagement from the islands. Moorfield Storey, often president of the League and a successful lawyer and publicist, stated that Americans ought to jump at the chance to free the Filipinos. He asserted that the people of the United States would do the right thing:

The American people know in their hearts that they have no right to hold the Philippines. Their consciences have always been uneasy, and they have therefore been willing to catch at every excuse or justi-

⁶ *Filipino People*, I:7 (March 1913), p. 5.

⁶ *The Jones Philippine Bill: Speeches of Manuel L. Quezon in the House of Representatives* (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1916), p. 12.

⁷ *Filipino People*, I:8 (April 1913), p. 5.

⁸ *Ibid.*, I:7 (March 1913), p. 11.

fication for the abandonment of their principles. They will hail with delight and a profound sense of relief the passage of any measure which restores their self-respect by setting the islanders free.⁹

In 1913 and 1914, as Philippine autonomy legislation was discussed in Congress, there was a great deal of comment by the American press concerning Philippine independence, much of which favored Quezon and Storey's position. An editorial in the *New York Nation*, which consistently supported Filipino independence, argued that, because of the "admirable" conduct of the Philippine Assembly, there needed to be no concern about Filipino capacity to manage their own affairs.¹⁰ The *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, a Republican paper, asserted that the United States ought to turn the Philippines loose as soon as the Filipinos could govern themselves, which, the paper presumed, would be soon.¹¹ Another Republican daily, the *Boston Post*, stated that the Philippines could not be freed for some time, but the United States should make some promise of independence by appropriate legislation.¹² The *Chicago Herald*, presuming to speak for the Democratic Administration, approved of a pledge of independence, but cautioned against legislation that would put a definite time limit on the period of American occupation.¹³ The non-partisan *Christian Science Monitor* pointed out that the implicit actions of every administration since 1898 had caused the Filipinos to expect independence, and President Wilson should redeem the promise that the Democratic Party had made in the 1912 election platform concerning the granting of independence.¹⁴

Discussion of the prospects for Philippine independence in the islands and in the American press prompted a reaction from Americans who were interested in retaining the Philippines. Sentiment for the retention of the islands had lain

⁹ Moorfield Storey, *The Democratic Party and Philippine Independence* (Boston: George Ellis Co., 1913), p. 57.

¹⁰ "Governing Aliens," *Nation*, New York, XCVI (February 6, 1913), pp. 120-21.

¹¹ *Public Ledger* (Philadelphia), July 10, 1914.

¹² *The Boston Post*, July 11, 1914.

¹³ *Chicago Herald*, July 19, 1914.

¹⁴ *Christian Science Monitor*, July 10, 1914.

dormant since 1902. Government leaders in Washington seldom talked openly about the desirability of retaining American sovereignty over the islands because it embarrassed and offended the Filipinos. Also, few important private American citizens publicly spoke in favor of holding on to the Philippines because it was "unfashionable" in an era when the ideals of "progressive democracy" were popular. But when faced with the prospect of losing the Philippines, those persons who favored retention felt compelled to fight to keep the islands for the United States.

Of the interests in favor of maintaining American control over the Philippines, the most effective was the Roman Catholic Church, led by James Cardinal Gibbons of Baltimore. In 1898 the American Catholic hierarchy had acquired control of the Filipino Roman Church, and in the years before 1916, it was not ready to relinquish it. Cardinal Gibbons was very hostile to the idea of the withdrawal of American sovereignty over the islands:

I am irrevocably opposed to any proposal that would commit this nation to a scuttle policy in the Philippines—today, tomorrow or at any fixed time in the future—and I say this wholly in the interest of the social, material and moral advancement of the United States... no less than of the Filipinos themselves.¹⁵

Official Catholic opinion in the United States was united in its opposition. Catholic organizations in the country expressed their views against American withdrawal, and every American bishop asserted the same point of view.¹⁶

For the advocates of increased Filipino independence, the worst feature of the Catholic retentionist pressure was that it was effective. In an editorial in *Filipino People*, Quezon said that Cardinal Gibbons, among all the opponents, was doing the greatest harm.¹⁷ The anti-imperialist, Moorfield Storey, feared the great influence of the Roman Catholic Church on Congress concerning the Philippine question and

¹⁵ *Baltimore News*, February 19, 1913.

¹⁶ *Filipino People*, I:7 (March 1913), p. 6.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, II:7 (February 1914), p. 11.

felt that the activities of the Church were contrary to the First Amendment.¹⁸

Besides Cardinal Gibbons, another very effective spokesman who favored retention of the Philippines was William Howard Taft. Taft, who for nearly a decade had so greatly influenced the islands as Governor of the Philippines, Secretary of War, and President, felt a great obligation to the Filipinos. He did not want America to withdraw until he was assured that the Filipinos could operate a government in the image of the United States.¹⁹ Taft did not want the United States to retain the Philippines indefinitely, but he did desire a long period of American sovereignty in the islands.²⁰ In 1913, along with former Philippine Governors Luke E. Wright and W. Cameron Forbes, Taft organized a Philippine Society which opposed altogether an early grant of independence.

In an address in September 1915 which stressed the duty of the United States to the Philippines, Taft described what he believed were the pre-conditions to withdrawal:

I am in favor of turning the islands over to their people when they are reasonably fitted for self-government but this will not be for two generations, until the youth of the islands are educated in English, and until the present pernicious lack of self-restraint and sacrifice of public weal to political pelf and preferment are cured by a longer training in partial self-government. We are guardians not for the educated politicians; we are charged with protecting the rights of the ignorant and uneducated who do not know their rights. Among the educated politicians no real democratic spirit, no real desire to educate and uplift the ignorant masses, exists. They are seeking independence to establish an aristocracy of the present educated politicians.²¹

Taft's position on American disengagement notwithstanding, the American press' sentiment for semi-permanent retention of the Philippines was not strong. Although many influential

¹⁸ Storey, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15.

¹⁹ Francis Burton Harrison, *The Cornerstone of Philippine Independence* (New York: The Century Co., 1922), pp. 41-44.

²⁰ *House Document 1067*, 62 Cong., 3 sess., Taft's annual message, December 6, 1912.

²¹ William Howard Taft, "Duty of the United States Toward the Philippines," *Transactions*, St. Louis, X (September, 1915).

newspapers favored some promise of independence, the *New York Herald*, a strong Republican organ, firmly opposed any legislation aimed at withdrawal. Independence, it asserted, would bring immediate paralysis to all commercial activity in the islands. The majority of responsible Filipinos did not want independence, it stated, and Filipino politicians called for independence only because they wanted to get elected. The paper also argued that "the great majority of the people do not want independence, cannot understand it and would not be able to use it if they had it."²²

The retentionists received additional support from Dean C. Worcester's, *The Philippines, Past and Present*, which appeared in 1914 and included almost every conceivable argument against Philippine independence. Worcester, who had been a member of the Philippine Commission and the Philippine Secretary of Interior before he was removed by the Democratic Administration, must have been moved by extreme bitterness against both Democrats and Filipinos when he wrote his diatribe. He accused the Filipinos of every crime from savagery to the support of human slavery and asserted that the Filipinos were in no way prepared for independence.²³

Since 1898 anti-imperialists in the United States had charged that the Philippines had been acquired for the purpose of commercial exploitation by American business interests, and there was some truth in this. As early as 1913, exports to the Philippines had reached \$25,387,000,²⁴ and the number of American corporations in the Philippines was increasing so that by 1920, 135 corporations with a total capital stock of \$430,000,000 were registered in the Philippines.²⁵ American investors interested in retention of the Philippines, however, did not organize into a strong anti-Philippine independence group until the 1920's, for American investment in

²² *New York Herald*, April 6, 1913.

²³ Dean C. Worcester, *The Philippines, Past and Present*, 2 vols. (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1914).

²⁴ Worcester, *The Philippines, Past and Present* (1930 edition), p. 653.

²⁵ *Philippine Islands. Commerce and Industry Bureau. Statistical Bulletin*, No. 3, 1920 (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1921), p. 255.

the islands lagged somewhat until the United States entered the First World War. Those American businesses which had made early investments in the islands, however, did exert some pressure between 1912 and 1916 to retard the progress of independence legislation.

Several efforts to retard autonomy legislation were made by American investors through business publications. For example, an article featured in the June 12, 1912 issue of the *New York Journal of Commerce* stated that it would be tragic to grant the Filipinos autonomy at a time when American investment was just beginning to be felt.²⁶ It pointed out that the "Fallows Syndicate," headed by Edward Huntington Fallows, President of the Grandanor and Falvan Corporations and Vice-President of the Holdings Investments Corporation, was about to "begin development of the islands."²⁷ Backed by the Standard Oil Company, Fallows planned to build several sugar mills in the Philippines. The National City Bank of New York, largely through the efforts of its President, Frank A. Vanderlip also attempted to encourage business interest in Philippine retention through the publication of various economic reports showing increasing American investment in the Philippines.²⁸ Vanderlip had been Assistant Secretary of the Treasury in 1898, and at that time he had strongly advocated acquiring the islands for the commercial good of the United States.²⁹

American investors favoring long-term control of the Philippines exerted pressure not only through publication but also tried directly to influence members of Congress and the Democratic Administration. Various Southern and Eastern Congressmen were pressured by the textile manufacturers to oppose Philippine independence legislation. Their lobbyists pointed out that there were thirteen American cotton companies doing \$250,000 worth of business in the islands annually and that a Filipino government would not protect their in-

²⁶ *New York Journal of Commerce*, June 12, 1912, pp. 8-11.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

²⁸ Storey, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

²⁹ *Report of the Thirteenth Annual Meeting of the Anti-Imperialist League*. (Anti-Imperialist League, Boston 1911), p. 36.

terests.³⁰ Even Francis Burton Harrison, Governor-General of the Philippines during Wilson's Administration, stated that he was subjected to pressure by American business: "Before leaving Washington I had been frankly approached by a former editor of a Manila newspaper, now employed by one of the greatest banking firms in Wall Street, who said that if I did not govern to suit the American financial interests, matters would go hard with me."³¹

Of the business interests attempting to thwart Philippine legislation, the loudest and most desperate were the "Manila Americans," those Americans who lived in the islands and maintained their business there. Their most effective effort to block legislation was the publication of pamphlets which were widely circulated in the United States. Two pamphlets are noteworthy for their frank assertion of commercialism as the basis for the continuance of American control of the islands: *The Facts as to the Philippine Islands*³² by Harold M. Pitt, President of the Manila Merchants' Association and *The United States and the Philippines*³³ by Frank L. Strong, owner of a machinery company in Manila. Both Pitt and Strong pointed out that great opportunities awaited American investors who came to the Philippines, and its economic development would greatly benefit the United States.

Strong's pamphlet was extraordinary, for in addition to outlining the commercial possibilities in the islands, it called for making the Philippines an American territory:

One of the richest countries on the earth needs American goods in unlimited quantities. Native capital in large amount stands ready to buy. Foreign and American capital in unnumbered millions awaits the action of Congress. . . . If you believe, as do all the better class of natives, as do all Americans who have studied the Far Eastern question, that the only wise course is to annex the Philippines to the United States as a territory, then say so in no uncertain words to your Congressman.³⁴

³⁰ *Congressional Records*, 64 Cong., 1 sess., p. 7148.

³¹ Harrison, *op. cit.*, pp. 51-52.

³² Harold M. Pitt, *The Facts as to the Philippine Islands* (Manila, 1914).

³³ Frank L. Strong, *The United States and the Philippines* (Manila, 1913).

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

The idea of Philippine statehood, the ultimate result of making the islands a territory, had not been seriously discussed in Congress since 1908.³⁵ Nevertheless, many "Manila Americans" continued to agitate along these lines during the discussion of Philippine independence.

In the summer of 1914, in this climate of pro-independence and pro-retentionist debate, the United States Congress prepared to consider Philippine legislation. The Philippine Autonomy Bill (H.R. 18459), introduced by the Chairman of the House Committee on Organic Affairs, William Atkinson Jones (Democrat, Virginia), received the support of President Wilson and the Democratic Administration, for the bill omitted references to a fixed date for Philippine independence.³⁶ It did, however, declare the intention of the United States eventually to free the islands, a step in accordance with Wilson's desires. The perceptive Filipino representatives in Washington, led by Quezon, had already adopted goals which followed Administration guidelines. They stopped trying to hold the President to his 1912 campaign promises of freedom for the Philippines and, instead, sought to get a definite commitment from the Congress and the President guaranteeing eventual independence and providing for increasing self-government.³⁷ This shift in policy was realistic. The Filipino representatives in Washington would win a major victory with even an American promise of independence, for no imperial power of the modern period had pledged that it would withdraw its sovereignty over a colony.

As soon as it was approved by the House Committee on Insular Affairs (August 26, 1914), the Jones Bill received impressive support. Both Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan and Secretary of War Lindley M. Garrison addressed open letters to Manuel Quezon in support of the measure.³⁸ Bryn urged that all Filipinos support the bill, not only be-

³⁵ *House Report 606*, 62 Cong., 2 sess.

³⁶ Ray Stannard Baker, *Woodrow Wilson, Life and Letters*, 8 vols. (Garden City: Doubleday Page and Co., 1931), IV, p. 459.

³⁷ *The Jones Philippine Bill*, p. 30.

³⁸ *Filipino People*, II:11 (July 1914), p. 3.

cause it promised eventual independence, but also because it was designed to give the Filipinos a larger participation in their own affairs.³⁹

Representative Jones' arguments for independence legislation in the Insular Affairs Committee, however, were not fundamentally humanitarian. He contended that it was in the national self-interest of the United States to free the Filipinos for a variety of reasons. He believed that the cost of maintaining the islands was too high and that knowledgeable Americans in the islands favored a declaration of America's purpose to free the Philippines.⁴⁰ He was also convinced that the peace and security of the United States would be menaced if America continued to hold a possession in the Far East.⁴¹

When Representative Jones' bill was discussed in the House, it received widespread support from Democrats, Republicans, and Progressives. Democratic Representatives Finis J. Garret (Tennessee), James L. Slayden (Texas), and William P. Borland (Missouri) were instrumental in shepherding the bill through the Rules Committee. Another Democrat quite vocal in support of the Jones Bill was James Michael Curley of Boston.⁴² The most outstanding Republican who favored the proposal was Henry A. Cooper (Wisconsin), and George Curry of New Mexico took the lead among the Progressives.⁴³

The formal House debates on the Jones Bill began on September 26, 1914, and ended October 14, 1914. During the discussions on the pending measure, Manuel Quezon was given an opportunity to present the viewpoints of the Filipino poli-

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁴⁰ *Speech of the Honorable William A. Jones in the House of Representatives* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1913), pp. 16-18.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² *Filipino People*, III:2 (October 1914), p. 3.

⁴³ *Ibid.* The Organic Act of 1902, which was introduced by Representative Cooper, established the first representative institutions in the Philippines. It provided for the election of a Philippine Assembly, which was to be the lower house of a bicameral governing system in the islands. This Assembly first met in 1907.

tical leaders. He said independence was a holy cause to the Filipinos whom he represented and that they were living with the hourly expectation that Congress would endorse the bill:

Mr. Chairman, the eyes of the Filipino people are now upon the Congress, and at this particular time upon this House. They live breathless with the horrible suspense caused by the doubt as to what you will do with the destinies of that people, they appeal to you not as Democrats, Republicans, or Progressives, but as Americans representing the people that of their own accord have proclaimed themselves the champions of human freedom.... Would you fail them, after so many of your implied as well as expressed promises of rapid extension to them of self-government and ultimate independence?⁴⁴

Quezon did not have to worry about the House. With the Democratic majority and firm Administration support, there was little doubt that the Jones Bill would be approved. On October 15, 1914, the Bill passed the House 211 to 59. All the Democrats plus eleven Republicans and Progressives voted affirmatively.⁴⁵

The Jones Bill had, however, provoked opposition in the Senate and it was not passed before the expiration of the Sixty-third Congress. Wilson blamed Republican senators for the failure of the bill because of their delaying actions and their amendments. They managed to change the bill to read that independence would be granted to the Philippines as soon as the United States decided that the Filipinos were fit for its enjoyment.⁴⁶

When the bill came before the Senate in the Sixty-fourth Congress, it was changed again to read that independence would be granted when the United States decided it would be in the permanent interest of the Philippine people.⁴⁷ This bill (S. 381) was introduced by Senator Gilbert M. Hitchcock (Democrat, Nebraska) and was reported favorably by the Senate Philippine Committee on December 17, 1915.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ *Speech by the Honorable Manuel Quezon, op. cit.*, p. 45.

⁴⁵ *Congressional Record*, 63 Cong., 2 sess., p. 16627.

⁴⁶ *Senate Report 942*, 63 Cong., 3 sess. On H. R. 18459, the Jones Bill, proposed during Wilson's first Congress.

⁴⁷ *Congressional Record*, 64 Cong., 1 sess., p. 606.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 95-100.

During the prolonged debate over the revised measure known as the Jones-Hitchcock Bill, the positions of those favoring Philippine independence became more extreme. Several senators, from both the Democratic and Republican sides of the aisle, called for complete abandonment of American responsibility to the islands and a grant of immediate independence. This was not Administration policy, and the majority of Republicans opposed abandonment. On the other hand, Quezon and the other Filipino representatives in Washington were quick to endorse the call for immediate withdrawal.

The Resident Commissioners and others who wanted a quick American pull-out received additional support from former President Theodore Roosevelt, for he also openly advocated immediate disengagement. In a letter to the *New York Times* he had asserted that the United States should pull out of the Philippines altogether:

I hope therefore that the Filipinos will be given their independence at an early date and without guarantee from us which might in any way hamper our future action or commit us to staying on the Asiatic coast. I do not believe we should keep any foothold whatever in the Philippines. Any kind of position by us in the Philippines merely results in making them our heel of Achilles if we are attacked by a foreign power. There can be no compensating benefit to us.⁴⁹

Roosevelt had echoed the same sentiments in an open letter to Quezon on December 4, 1914, when he said that the proper course to follow "is to grant the Filipinos their absolute independence without any responsibility on the part of the United States in guaranteeing such independence."⁵⁰ Roosevelt had decided on his viewpoints for two reasons: first, the Philippines were a military and naval liability in the face of Japan's growing naval power; second, he thought that the Philippine people had come to expect immediate independence because of Wilson's campaign promises.⁵¹

This "abandonment" sentiment reached its climax in the Senate in 1916. Senator John F. Shaforth (Democrat, Colorado) called for immediate American evacuation from the is-

⁴⁹ *New York Times*, November 22, 1914.

⁵⁰ *Filipino People*, III:4 (December 1914), p. 3.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

lands.⁵² Then an amendment to the Jones-Hitchcock Bill was introduced by Senator John P. Clarke (Democrat, Arkansas), President Pro Tempore of the Senate. This amendment provided for American withdrawal in not less than two years, nor more than four years from the passage of the bill, with no guarantee that the United States would maintain Philippine independence after the Americans left.⁵³ In supporting the Clarke Amendment, Senator Albert B. Fall (Republican, New Mexico) asserted that the United States should free the Philippines immediately as a war measure:

I for one, Mr. President, in these times am in favor of voting and caring for the interests of the people of the United States....I think, sir, we are in a critical period in our history, and I believe that the Philippine Islands constitute a weak point in the line of our defense.⁵⁴

Charles E. Townsend (Republican, Michigan), in opposing the Clarke Amendment said, "It looks to me as though there is a disposition on the part of some Senators to scuttle the ship—to haul down the Stars and Stripes from over the Philippines."⁵⁵ Townsend was not against the promise of eventual independence contained in the Jones Bill as passed by the House during the Sixty-third Congress, but he was opposed to immediate independence, which he viewed as abandonment.

On February 4, 1916, the Senate passed the Clarke Amendment 42 to 41, on the casting vote of Vice-President Thomas Marshall. Five Republicans had voted in favor of the amendment, while thirteen Democrats opposed it. The Senate action caused serious reaction within the Wilson Administration. Secretary of War Garrison who was in part responsible for the nation's Philippine policy, resigned his position because, he said, he was not prepared to oversee America's abandonment of the islands. In a letter to the President (February 9, 1916), he explained his action:

I consider the principle embodied in the Clarke Amendment an abandonment of the duty of this nation and a breach of trust toward

⁵² *Ibid.*, III:9 (January 1916), p. 9.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, III:10 (February 1916), p. 3.

⁵⁴ *Congressional Record*, 65 Cong., 1 sess., p. 1995.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

the Filipinos; so believing I cannot accept it or acquiesce in its acceptance.⁵⁶

Wilson accepted Garrison's resignation with some reluctance, but, as illustrated by his statement in *Filipino People*, he was apparently unwilling to oppose the Senate Democrats:

It is my judgment that the action in the Clarke Amendment is unwise at this time, but it would clearly be most inadvisable for me to take the position that I must dissent from that action should both houses of Congress concur in a bill embodying that Amendment. That is a matter upon which I must, of course, withhold judgment until the joint action of the two houses reaches me in definite form.⁵⁷

On February 4, 1916, the amended Hitchcock-Jones Bill passed the Senate 2 to 25 with no Democrats opposing it. It was then ready to go back to the House. Before committee action in the House took place, powerful opponents of immediate Philippine independence had time to make their influence felt. The Chief of the Bureau of Insular Affairs, General Frank McIntyre, broke his long silence and asserted that none of the more responsible Filipinos favored the United States' immediate withdrawal from the island.⁵⁸ The *New York Times* stated that the Filipino leaders were having second thoughts now that independence was staring them in the face and that they should consider the consequences of a quick American pull out.⁵⁹ Also, behind the scenes, Cardinal Gibbons was undoubtedly working on the Catholic members of the House.

⁵⁶ *Filipino People*, III:11 (March 1916), p. 4. A new perspective for the study of an American historical event is revealed here in *Filipino People*. American scholars have generally concluded that Garrison resigned because Wilson did not agree with his views on a Continental Army and because the conservative Garrison did not have the confidence of the progressive Wilson. While it was no doubt true that Garrison and Wilson clashed over their conflicting defense policies and differing political views it seems likely that the last straw which caused Garrison's resignation was the Senate passage of the Clarke-amended Jones Bill and the fact that Wilson did little to make his influence felt while the bill was progressing through the Senate.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *New York Times*, February 12, 1916.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, February 11, 1916.

On April 6, 1916, the House Committee on Insular Affairs favorably recommended the Clarke-amended Philippine Bill. In commenting on the measure, Chairman Jones said that the islands were a military liability and, therefore, should be abandoned:

If the United States should unfortunately become involved in war with any first-class military and naval power, the Philippines would constitute our most vulnerable point of attack, and therefore it can not but be apparent that so long as they are held as an American colony they will provide a source of national weakness and a constant menace to our peace and happiness as a people.⁶⁰

This statement of national self-interest, however, was lost in the subsequent House debate. Discussion on the measure in the House was very brief; an atmosphere of doom seemed to surround the "scuttle" bill from the moment it left committee. Most of the statements by the Representatives were in opposition. Led by Judge Horace M. Towner of Iowa, the ranking Republican on the insular committee, and Tammany Democrat John J. Fitzgerald of New York, the opponents to the Clarke Amendment made statements about "hauling down the American Flag" and "casting the Filipinos adrift."⁶¹ Representative George F. O'Shaunessy (Democrat, Rhode Island) called the amendment a statement of abandonment, not of independence:

It looks to me as if it were a bullheaded attempt to bring about peace and comfort, not to the Philippine Islands, but to bring peace and comfort to the minds of some men who are disturbed by the Philippine question and want to rid themselves of an obligation.⁶²

On May 1, 1916, the House of Representatives defeated the Clark Amendment 213 to 165. Jones then introduced two amendments—one which would have granted independence in six years, and one which would have allowed independence in eight years. Both were defeated by almost the same vote as the Clarke Amendment. It was then agreed to re-introduce the Jones Bill as passed by the House of the

⁶⁰ *Filipino People*, III:12 (April 1916), p. 4.

⁶¹ *Congressional Record*, 64 Cong., 1 sess., p. 7151.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 7159.

Sixty-third Congress. This bill received overwhelming support 251 to 17.

When the Jones Bill passed the House without the Clarke Amendment's promise of immediate independence, the decisive factor in the Amendment's defeat was the opposition of twenty-eight Roman Catholic Democratic Representatives in a House with a Democratic majority of only twenty-one. The *Springfield Republican* (Massachusetts), a persistent advocate of immediate Philippine independence, explained how the Clarke Amendment was defeated:

The defeat of the independence clause of the Philippine bill in the House was due directly to the defection of some twenty-eight Democrats, the majority of whom represent constituencies in certain large northern cities. . . . The influence of the Roman Catholic Church, is seen by observers of these facts. As for the Roman Catholic Church, it is opposed to Philippine independence as much as it ever was in the days of Spanish rule. Its interests might be under the control of the old revolutionary element; besides, independence, from the Vatican point of view, is a step nearer, perhaps, to ultimate Japanese domination—Japan is pagan.⁶³

Governor-General Francis Burton Harrison took the same view and charged that the Clarke Amendment went down to defeat because of the direct intervention of Cardinal Gibbons, who acted on the suggestions of the American bishops in the islands.⁶⁴

Although many senators were angered by the apparent influence of Cardinal Gibbons over the House, they at last agreed to a House request for a conference. The conference report, which affirmed the Jones Bill passed by the House, was accepted by the Senate on August 16, 1916 and by the House two days later.⁶⁵ On August 29, it was signed into law by President Wilson.

This Philippine Autonomy Act of 1916 did not give the Filipinos immediate independence but it did promise them

⁶³ *Springfield Republican*, May 3, 1916.

⁶⁴ Harrison, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

⁶⁵ *Congressional Record*, 64 Cong., 1 sess., pp. 12732 (Senate) 12844 (House).

eventual independence and a much larger voice in their own affairs. It established a Philippine Senate and House of Representatives and made the suffrage requirement in the islands more liberal. (All males of twenty-three years of age or older, who could read and write English, Spanish or a native language, were given the franchise.) The only officials to be appointed by the President of the United States were the Governor-General, the Vice-Governor, members of the Philippine Supreme Court, and two auditors. All appointments made by the Governor-General had to be approved by the Philippine Senate. The Governor-General could veto legislation, but the Philippine legislature could appeal to the President of the United States. The measure also established free trade between the Philippines and the United States.⁶⁶

The Jones Act pleased most of the Filipino political leaders, and it was warmly hailed by the American administrators and the majority of the Filipinos in the islands.⁶⁷ Because he was given credit for the enactment, Quezon gained great prestige within the Nacionalista Party and among his countrymen. He returned to the islands in September 1916, and was soon elected to the Presidency of the newly created Philippine Senate.

While he was pleased with the passage of the Jones Act, Quezon found that Sergio Osmeña and the other nationalist leaders in the islands were only determined to press harder for full self-government. The official position of the Nacionalista Party on the Jones Act was expressed by Osmeña in the opening ceremonies of the first all-Filipino legislature:

I feel the greatest satisfaction that after laboring for nine years, we are able to inaugurate this House of Representatives with the clear, explicit and definite watchword that the Filipino people are in favor of independence. The most characteristic feature of this House is

⁶⁶ *Acts of Congress and Treaties Pertaining to the Philippine Islands in Force and Effect July 1, 1919* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1920), pp. 34-48.

⁶⁷ Gregorio Nieva, "Facing the Situation," *Philippine Review*, I:8 (August 1916), p. 2 and Harrison, *op. cit.* p. 195.

that all its members have sworn before their conscience and their people, to defend the independence of their country.⁶⁸

Implicit in Osmeña's words was the policy of his party until the 1930's. This position was that while the promise of independence was a definite improvement, the Filipinos would never be completely satisfied until they attained complete self-government and the subsequent withdrawal of all American sovereignty over the islands.⁶⁹

The position of the Wilson Administration significantly differed from that of the Nacionalista Party, for the Administration was quite satisfied with the Jones Act and declared that it was "the best organic act ever passed by Congress."⁷⁰ Wilson's policy was that the United States had gone far enough for the present in extending self-government to the Filipinos. This position was stated by Secretary of War Newton D. Baker, who warned Governor Harrison to be careful in going beyond the provisions of the Jones Act. Baker pointed out that there had been a "well-defined view in Congress that the Philippine government was being given something more in the way of self-government than the people of the islands are at the time capable of exercising in the way most beneficial to the people."⁷¹

The differing viewpoints about the Autonomy Act established a problem from the time of its passage. Quezon, Osmeña, and the other Filipino leaders seized upon the "stable government" provision of the Jones Act, and they insisted that since such a condition was already a reality, Philippine independence should be granted as soon as possible.⁷² A condition, which

⁶⁸ Sergio Ormeña, "Inaugural Address of the Speaker of the House of Representatives," *Philippine Review*, I:10 (October 1916), pp. 81-82.

⁶⁹ Manuel L. Quezon, "Why the Filipinos Desire Independence," *Current History Magazine of the New York Times*, November 6, 1921.

⁷⁰ *Report of the Chief of the Bureau of Insular Affairs, 1916* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1916), p. 7.

⁷¹ Quoted in Herman Hagedorn, *Leonard Wood, A Biography*, 2 vols. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1931), II, p. 444.

⁷² *Hearings Before the Committee on the Philippines*, U.S. Senate, 65 Cong., 3 sess., p. 485.

would be of long duration, had been established: the Filipinos would continue to agitate for their complete independence, and the United States would continue to be reluctant to take the final step. The Americans, for the most part, remained satisfied with the promise of independence, while the Filipinos pressed ever harder for the fulfillment of that promise.

The reason that an independent Philippine republic was not established by 1920 was because the Clarke Amendment to the Jones-Hitchcock Bill was rejected by the House of Representatives. This amendment failed because enough Republican and Democratic Representatives felt that it would be unwise to "cast the Filipinos adrift" without a longer period of "training in self-government" under American control. Also Cardinal Gibbons and other spokesmen for the Catholic Church made their strong opposition to Philippine independence greatly felt because of their persuasiveness over several Northeastern Congressmen from strongly Catholic constituencies.

It is clear that the original Jones Bill (H.R. 1859) became law because it was supported by President Wilson and the Democratic Administration and because a favorable climate of opinion had been created within the United States Congress by 1916. This opinion was produced by the arguments of the domestic press, by the contentions of Manuel Quezon and the other Filipino Resident Commissioners, by the assertions of prominent Americans, such as Theodore Roosevelt and Moorfield Storey, and by organs of Filipino opinion, notably *Filipino People* and *Philippine Review*, to which American government leaders had access. The judgment of those favoring independence was that the Filipinos should be promised autonomy because they deeply desired it and because the words and actions of American leaders, especially those of the Democratic Party, had led the Filipinos to expect a pledge of autonomy to be eventually followed by the withdrawal of the United States.