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Philippine Interests and the Mission for Independence, 1929-1932 *

THEODORE A. FRIEND III

THE Philippines during the Great Depression presented an interesting contrast to other colonial areas, where economic suffering produced political turmoil. Indonesia and French Indochina were both immediately affected and went through cycles of want, unrest, and repression. Although a Leninist critic has presumed to find the same occurring in the Philippines, culminating in a "national liberation uprising,"¹ the facts set him at naught. An increasing share of the American market compensated for falling agricultural prices and delayed the impact of the depression until after 1931. Even then the effect was far less drastic and sweeping than in more complex economies. The index of business conditions in the Philippines remained con-

* This is the second in a series of articles examining the circumstances surrounding and the motives behind passage of the Hare-Hawes-Cutting Act in January, 1933. The previous installment discussed "American Interests and Philippine Independence, 1929-1933." The author is Assistant Professor of History in the State University of New York at Buffalo. In a forthcoming book, *The Philippines Between Two Empires*, he treats Philippine nationalism at greater length; the present article focuses upon concrete Philippine interests in a limited span of time.

¹ G. I. Levinson, *Filippiny Mezhdru Pervoy i Vtoroy Mirovymi Voynami* (*The Philippines Between the First and Second World Wars*, Moscow, 1958), pp. 66-67, 87-90.

stant for 1931-4 at about 90, based on the prosperous years 1924-8. After a dip in 1935, the year of transition to Commonwealth status, it rose again the next year to 96.²

In short, the economic preconditions of a "national liberation uprising"³ simply did not exist. Among the peasantry, furthermore, there was considerable respect for American fairness and equity, and such animus as they felt against Filipino landlords and constabulary, which later boiled over in the Sakdal and Huk movements, was still held in check by socially conservative forces. As for the ruling classes, their interests were certainly not so unmixed nor their temper so roused as to "blackmail the colonizers."⁴ Nor does the Osmeña-Roxas mission of 1931-33 support such an interpretation. It was the ninth in a series of such missions going back to 1919; it was the longest and the most energetic, but not the last lobbying trip by Filipino leaders, who showed ever increasing acumen, not in "blackmail," but in presenting persuasively their major political issue to the American congress and public.

² Report of the Governor General, 1937; remarks of Sen. Vandenberg, *Cong. Rec.* 72:1, 12831; *The Philippine Statistical Review*, 3, (1936), 261-64. These statistics may hide the suffering of individuals, families, and even regions at certain times, but they certainly refute the picture of unmitigated misery and exploitation which Levinson presents, chiefly based on previously published Russian works.

³ Such an incongruous term is only made possible by placing the Philippine Communist Party (organized 1930, outlawed 1932) at the center of Philippine history, and enormously exaggerating its influence. Jose Lava, later a leader and theologian of the Huk movement, achieves a similar effect in his "Milestones in the History of the Communist Party of the Philippines," mimeographed training material for party members, typescript copy in my possession. Better balanced accounts of the Communists in the early '30's appear in Alvin H. Scaff, *The Philippine Answer to Communism* (Stanford, 1955); Roy M. Stubbs, "Philippine Radicalism: the Central Luzon Uprisings, 1925-1935," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation in History, Berkeley, 1951; David R. Sturtevant, "Philippine Social Structure and its Relation to Agrarian Unrest," unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Stanford, 1958.

⁴ Levinson, p. 87.

1

Involved though the Philippine problem was with American social, political, economic and strategic questions, the OsRox mission chose to take the simple line that their people were united and ready for independence in all respects. They pursued that line in the best tradition of Philippine rhetoric, with the "patriotic vehemence, chivalry, and passionate earnestness essential to compel respect and sympathy."⁵

Out of native delicacy and practical diplomacy they did not mention the racial discrimination and the social rebuffs which were central to the Filipino desire to throw off American sovereignty. But they were outspoken about tutelary restraints upon self-government. Patrick Hurley raised this issue when he not only questioned Filipino capacity for self-government, but asserted that independence would produce political revolution, social anarchy, and economic chaos in the Philippines.⁶ Far from it, the Filipinos answered. They had proceeded step-by-step from military government at the turn of the century to all but complete legislative autonomy in 1916; now it was time to fulfill the promise of freedom made in that same year, and to bestow complete independence—legislative, executive, and judicial. As for social development, they enumerated widespread advances in health and education, and a literacy rate higher than most of Latin America, higher even than Russia and Spain. As for any peril to the Philippine economy, they recalled a previous decline, suffered during their own revolutionary war and the early American occupation, from which had followed a steady rise.

⁵ Report of the Legislative Mission for Independence, *Manila Sunday Tribune*, July 30, 1933, BIA 26480-w-164 (hereafter "OsRox Report"). The abbreviation "OsRox" was devised by Osmeña and Roxas to reduce expenditures on cables. Filipino newspapermen subsequently adopted it, as they also did "Quaqual," the answering abbreviation from Quezon, Benigno Aquino (acting Vice-President of the Senate in Osmeña's absence), and Antonio de las Alas (Acting Speaker of the House in Roxas' absence).

⁶ House Committee on Insular Affairs, *Hearings*, 72:1, 407 (Hereafter, "House Ins.").

Now, they declared, "All we ask is the privilege and the right to sink or swim. And we will swim," they asserted.⁷

While the mission represented accurately the aspirations of nationalistic Filipinos, other motives for independence, beside or beyond nationalism, went unexpressed. A majority of Catholic priests in the Philippines wanted independence. So did most members of the Communist party, for quite different reasons. In the case of the Church, to be sure, the reaction to the independence question was mixed and unofficial. Many of the priests were American and not disposed to see American Catholic style wane, as it inevitably would with the end of American national sovereignty. The majority of priests, however, were Spanish or Filipino; if Spanish, they tended to wish a recrudescence of Spanish culture and a subtle healing-over of the separation of church and state effected by America; if Filipino, they also frequently wished for a reassertion of church power in Philippine life, but, most important, under Filipino clergy.⁸

As for the Communist party, its own secular dogmas, its global mission, its local expansion, all would have greater opportunities if the Philippines were separated from American power, order, and influence. While the feelings of churchmen were of policy and necessity hidden in private conversations, those of Communist Party members were freely expressed, even after the party itself had been outlawed. "Immediate, absolute, and complete independence" — the old nationalist slogan would serve very well the new agents of the International.⁹

⁷ The Philippine representatives anticipated Hurley's arguments and also rebutted them, House Ins. 72:1, 352-78, 442-48; quotation, p. 367.

⁸ These remarks are based on conversation both with priests and with lay observers, Manila, 1957-58.

⁹ "READ DEEP AND ACCOMPLISH: Orders to all members of the Communist Party in the Philippines," translation of a fly sheet in Tagalog distributed to Communists in Manila and outlying districts, 1933, Quezon Mss.

2

Proceeding from political to economic motivations, one finds a great deal more ambiguity in the Philippine position. If the OsRox mission expressed political nationalism accurately, it close not to present the whole story of Philippine economic interests. There had always been an element of propertied Filipinos in favor of an extended transition to independence, or even a permanent attachment to the United States.¹⁰ As the dependence of the Philippines upon free trade with the United States had increased, this element had become still more conservative. Although in the early 1930's it still felt, or at least expressed a need for, greater political dignity, it was at least equally concerned with the problem of economic adjustment, for seven-eighths of the Philippines' expanding export trade went to the United States.¹¹ Those Filipinos whose investments were in a crucial way tied up with exports to America, and other businessmen anticipating a general shock to the economy, had begun to realize that they could not have both independence and free trade. They aimed instead for a long transition period preceding independence, during which free trade would continue. When American farm lobbies insisted on immediate quota limits if they could not have immediate duties, Filipinos with land and capital devoted to export produce strove to establish such limits as high as possible.

Their motives become clear in the light of a few statistics. Exportable farm commodities accounted for only one-third of the total cultivated Philippine acreage, but they contributed three-fifths of the crop value, as the accompanying table shows.

¹⁰ The Quezon-Osmeña correspondence over the Jones Bill, 1916, is rife with such indications, (Quezon Mss. and Eduardo de la Rosa Mss.). Ten years later, Henry Stimson recorded conversations to the same point in his diary, Aug. 9, 1926.

¹¹ A Philippine Chamber of Commerce dinner for Harry Hawes, July 31, 1931, expressed the public wish of that body for independence. Shortly afterwards, however, Patrick Hurley claimed, "four hundred" businessmen expressed themselves privately against it. *Cong. Rec.* 72:1, 914-16; *House Ins.* 72:1, 393, 420-22.

PLANTED ACREAGE and CROP VALUES¹²
 Year ending June 30, 1934

Export Crops	Acres	% Total area	Crop Value	% Total value
Sugar cane	755,840	7.6	\$ 81,392,155	46.4
Coconuts	1,502,720	15.1	13,573,325	7.7
Abaca	923,520	9.3	5,456,650	3.1
Tobacco	136,960	1.4	1,432,100	0.8
Total		33.4		58.0
Consumption				
Crops				
Rice	4,952,320	49.9	\$ 52,372,130	29.9
Bananas	266,880	2.7	6,751,040	3.9
Corn	1,332,480	13.4	5,679,660	3.2
Total		66.0		37.0
Other	57,280	0.6	8,634,915	5.0
Total	9,928,000	100.0	\$175,291,975	100.0

Of all agricultural produce, the biggest money crop was sugar. From sugar, in 1933, two-thirds of Philippine export income was derived, and in 1934 thirty percent of the total annual income of the islands.¹³ The original growth of the industry—encouraged by the boom prices of the First World War and by the support of the insular government—was now followed by an even more dramatic growth, out of fear at the prospect of ending unlimited free trade. Every independence bill from 1930 onwards carried a provision that Philippine sugar be admitted on a quota basis, with that quota divided by allocation among Philippine producers, on the basis of recent performance. The industry, as a result, was waging two simultaneous battles for continued prosperity. The first was in America: through the independence mission, Philippine sugar lobbied for a quota which would preserve its strong position in the American market. The other was in the Philippines: to obtain the largest possible allocation of the national

¹² Derived from Abraham A. Greenberg, "Economic Aspects of the Philippine Question," unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, International Law and Relations, Yale University, 1939, p. 163, citing *Philippine Statistical Review* 2 (1935).

¹³ Jose J. Mirasol, "The Philippine Sugar Industry," Philippine Sugar Year Book, 1950.

quota, every *central*, or mill, strove to increase its percentage of national output, and nearly every Philippine planter, in turn, labored to increase his percentage of the central's output. Because of this quota race, total insular production continued to shoot up as long as the independence question remained unresolved and quotas remained unimposed.

Besides competitive struggle for relative advantage in allocations, there were other strains of a more clearly political nature in the Philippine sugar industry. Under prevailing contracts, planters split their produce 50-50 with the millers, a ratio which the former found more and more unfair. Planter groups had been advancing general proposals to change the ratio to 60-40 in their favor, but they had as yet succeeded only in isolated cases. This dissatisfaction, aggravating some natural tensions between foreign centralistas and Filipino planters, left the planters rather less concerned about independence than millers. Because sugar cane lands, unlike sugar mills, could always be converted to other uses, the planters were freer to indulge any nationalism they might feel, or even such anti-foreignism as they might wish tactically to express, against centralistas.¹⁴

Of lesser economic and political power in the sugar industry were those labor unions which had succeeded in organizing field workers. The laborer was usually expected to vote as his employer indicated; only through a union leader might he express himself. Most union leaders seemed to have absorbed the traditional political advertisements for indepen-

¹⁴ Evidence of the greater concern of American, Spanish, and cosmopolitan centralistas for free trade, and of Filipino planters' greater willingness to accept immediate independence, appears in Roxas and Rafael Alunan to Quezon, Apr. 26, 1929, Quezon to Roxas, Alunan, Apr. 29, Juan Ledesma to Alunan, Sept. 10, 1932, Amando Avanceña to Quezon, 1932-34, passim, (Quezon Mss.); *New York Times*, Sept. 9, 1931, BIA, Hurley-P; Statement by Sen. Ruperto Montinola, House Ins. 72:1, 347-48. Alunan was Secretary of Agriculture and Natural Resources and sometime President of the Philippine Sugar Association; Ledesma was a Negros planter; Avanceña was the President of the *Confederación de Asociaciones y Plantadores de Caña Dulce*, as well as a compadre of Quezon.

dence. Believing that independence was a good thing, if he believed anything at all, the worker probably had not been educated to foresee the layoffs in the sugar fields which would follow sugar quota limitations.¹⁵ From the centralista down to the planter, down to the laborer, enthusiasm for independence increased, but political-economic power decreased.

For coconut oil and cordage, the other main Philippine exports to America, the story was less complicated and less important. Neither industry was as technically advanced or nearly as prosperous as sugar. Neither was significantly affected by such phenomena of economic development as a quota race, a planter-processor disagreement, or incipient labor unionism. Both industries concentrated on obtaining as high a quota as possible, without marked dissension within.

The quotas originally proposed by all industrial representatives for Philippine crops were well above the highest previous figures for exports to America: sugar, 20% of American consumption annually; coconut oil, 250,000 tons; cordage, 7.5 million pounds. The independence mission, however, trimmed these in an effort to present a more realistic and acceptable case to the committee. The American sugar lobby was the toughest to fight against, and the mission therefore cut the figure to 20% of American *imports* annually, which still allowed for the possibility of expanding Philippine production. Philippine cordage was the hardest to argue for, because of heavy Japanese ownership of abaca plantations, and the burning in 1931 of the Ynchausti mill, largest processing factory in the islands; Roxas therefore agreed to 3 million pounds. Mission trimming brought complaints from affected interests, although Osmeña and Roxas had already sent a message to Quezon, asking him to warn them there were now over fifty lawyers, publicity and other agents try-

¹⁵ I develop the entire sugar question in much greater detail than is possible here in "The Philippine Sugar Industry and the Politics of Independence, 1929-35," *Journal of Asian Studies* 22 (1963), 179-92.

ing to influence the independence bill.¹⁶ Against such an array of lobbyists, the Filipinos would have to expect some sharp compromises.

3

To provisions for limiting Philippine imports there was an awkward companion—one for limiting or even excluding Filipino immigration. The initial reaction of the Filipino leaders was of indignation, which was buried finally in practicality. Certainly it would be a blow to the national dignity to suffer the same discrimination as other Oriental peoples; especially so considering that Spanish-speaking Mexicans crossed American borders relatively unhindered, and in greater numbers *annually* than the total of Filipino nationals accumulated in the States.

Quezon's first impulse was "to tell Americans that if they will not permit us to enter that country they have no right to keep us." Fair-minded Americans, he thought, would reply, "It is evident that we are not meant to be married. Let us be divorced." While Quezon protested the social insult, Roxas assailed the political injustice: the Spanish had not prohibited Filipino emigration to Spain, nor, currently, did the Japanese exclude Koreans, the Dutch exclude Javanese, or the British exclude their many colonial peoples. "Not even the crudest mercantilists," said Quezon, had ever held colonies by force while keeping their inhabitants at arm's length.¹⁷

Neither insult nor injustice, however, finally deterred the

¹⁶ OsRox to Quaqual, Jan. 28, 1932, coconut oil interests through Quezon to OsRox, Feb. 17, Alunan to OsRox, Feb. 25, OsRox to Quaqual, Feb. 17, Philippine Sugar Association through Quezon to OsRox, Mar. 3, Ynchausti Co. through Quezon to OsRox, Mar. 17 (Quezon Mss.); Senate Committee on Territories, Hearings, 72:1, 97-99 (hereafter, Sen. Terr.).

¹⁷ Quezon (March, 1929), quoted by Bruno Lasker, *Filipino Immigration* (Chicago, 1931), p. 278; Roxas, *Ibid.*, pp. 279-80, citing House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization, 71:2, *Hearings* on HR 8708, pp. 101 et. seq.; undated incomplete Ms. in Spanish, p. 10, probably by Quezon, (Quezon Mss.).

Filipinos from cooperating with the AFofL in passage of an independence act which carried a minimal limit on Filipino immigration.¹⁸ If restriction was to be a price of independence, many were willing to pay it, including Quezon. After some thought, he was ready by 1931 to accept it as part of a fair compromise, because the national interest required that "our labor remain at home." Behind him he found enough support among Philippine businessmen and provincial governors to warrant his stand—keeping labor home was necessary for economic development, they thought, and though themselves unwilling to sponsor or initiate unpopular limits on laborers leaving the country, they would accept restrictions from America. Some of them were even willing to accept restriction without independence. Certain labor leaders concurred in emigration control, not only to further economic development, but to diminish the likelihood of importing laborers from China or Japan.¹⁹

4

While engrossed in the political aspects of the independence question, and becoming rapidly aware of its economic implications, the Filipinos were least sensitive to the strategic factors involved. Claro Recto and Maximo Kalaw had ventilated some of the issues in their famous newspaper debate on "Asiatic Monroeism" and relations with Japan.²⁰ Of the two theories of international politics which emerged, the dynamic and the familial, most Filipinos held the latter. Though the interested reader might pleasantly admit that Recto's dynamic argument was the more compelling, he could

¹⁸ Camilo Osias and Mario Baradi, *The Philippine Charter of Liberties*, (Baltimore, French-Bray, 1933), p. 8, cited in Grayson V. Kirk, *Philippine Independence* (New York, 1936), p. 107n; Marcial P. Lichauco, *Roxas* (Manila, 1952), pp. 65-66. Neither source mentions the patriotic racists who worked for Philippine exclusion.

¹⁹ Quezon to Switzer, Oct. 2, 1931, Quezon Mss.; Lasker, pp. 282-83. Lasker's text reads "Chinese or Javanese laborers." The latter is theoretically possible, but highly unlikely; I have therefore assumed that "Japanese" was the word intended.

²⁰ Excerpts reprinted in Claro Recto, *Asiatic Monroeism and Other Essays* (Manila, 1929).

not easily divest himself of basic assumptions to the contrary. The family was the major thing in his life; the nation was an agglomeration of families, and the world at large was a family of nations. Indeed, was not the League of Nations itself a kind of family council to settle disputes among contentious kin? And had there not been treaties signed in Washington to preserve peace in the Pacific and East Asia?

A Machiavellian scholar like Recto might see nations as self-aggrandizing brutes, and world politics as ceaseless contention; he might see Philippine safety to inhere in a balance of power in Asia, to which American power was necessary. But most other Filipino leaders, and certainly the people in general, whose defense and whose foreign relations had been in imperial hands for centuries, left such considerations entirely to America, as they would to a father or an older brother.

Very few Filipinos of whatever persuasion dared to oppose independence on grounds of military-strategic weakness. Such misgivings as the educated and influential may have felt were voiced only by those impervious to ostracism. One such was the able lawyer-economist, Vicente Villamin, resident in America and a spokesman for the Philippine-American Chamber of Commerce. Independence, as he foresaw it, would mean inundation by Chinese immigrants, continued economic penetration by the Japanese, and increased Communist infiltration. A Philippine Republic would not be strong enough to withstand any one of these, and to a combination of them it would surely succumb.²¹

The more acceptable patriotic position asserted that, in the first place, "invulnerability" was not a prerequisite of independence, and that in the second place, the best way for the Philippines to grow strong enough to resist foreign dangers was to be free to do so on her own. Admittedly the country was at the moment unable "even to repel a coastal invasion by a well-organized band of pirates," but an independence act would end this anomalous state of affairs by turning over

²¹ *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 31 (1932), pp. 206-21, BIA 364-905.

to Filipinos the responsibility and the authority to protect themselves.²²

Because the independence movement had begun rolling again in 1929, during a period of Japanese liberalism and world peace, the Filipino leaders tended to minimize subsequent events which might have cast doubt on the wisdom of independence for their people—the threat of Japanese military expansion, become overt in 1931, and the larger Hitleirian threats to world peace, already implicit in 1933. Indeed, the progress of independence legislation itself put the Filipinos in the position of debating its specific provisions before they had a chance to consider the general merits and defects of their strategic position. Under the circumstances, they were willing to endure strategically objectionable parts for the sake of a politically acceptable whole.

Military and naval bases were the major concern. They had been inserted in committee so as to weaken criticism from the Republican administration and its voices in Congress.²³ Juan Sumulong spotted the danger there: such bases might involve the Philippines in any conflict between the United States and another Pacific power, yet American military experts declared that in the first stages of a Far Eastern conflict they might of necessity have to abandon the islands. In short, if American-retained bases might attract enemies to the Philippines, they could not repel them.²⁴ This penetrating argument, however, did not make its way past the "commonsense" position taken by Quezon: "If the American people say that they will not grant us independence unless

²² Statements of Roxas, Sen. Terr. 71:2, 28, and Osias, *Cong. Rec.* 71:3, 2826-28; quotations from Guevara, *Cong. Rec.* 72-1, 7858.

²³ *Cong. Rec.* 72:2, 264.

²⁴ Sumulong's objections appear in *Philippines Herald*, June 11, 1932, BIA 364-918; similar remarks by Rep. Ramon Diokno in *La Opinión*, June 3, BIA 364-873b. Earlier Quezon had glibly pacified the objections of a compadre who foresaw "unpleasant incidents" locally as a result of American retention of bases; Quezon to Ramon Fernandez, Apr. 6, 1932; Fernandez to Quezon, Apr. 16, Quezon Mss.

we agree to let them retain a military and naval station here, we cannot do anything.”²⁵

With the bases provision there also finally crept into the bill a contradictory stipulation—for a neutralization agreement to guarantee Philippine independence once it had been achieved. Although such was the diplomatic style of the day, consistent with the Nine-Power Treaty on China and the Kellogg-Briand Peace Pact, it flew in the face of Japanese disregard for both agreements in Manchuria, and was itself logically nullified by the bases provision. As one pundit said, “You cannot neutralize a fort.” General Aguinaldo, however, had popularized the idea of a neutralization treaty among Filipinos, for whom it had at least some value as psychological comfort.²⁶

If they were unaware of the inconsistencies in America’s strategic posture, most Filipinos were equally unclear about what their own military position would be. Three main arguments were advanced—“God will provide for us,” “America will protect us,” and “We must prepare ourselves”—of which only the last had any claim to being realistic. The first was typical of Philippine fatalism, whether it took the form of pagan pessimism or of Christian optimism. Where would funds for internal defense come from, which was costing American taxpayers fifteen million dollars a year? Hurley had asked a prominent Filipino who would maintain order if no funds were forthcoming. “Almighty God will take care of us,” he replied. “I can’t debate the question with God and you,” Hurley said.²⁷

The second attitude was more practical, but over-estimated both American intentions and American capabilities.

²⁵ *Philippines Herald*, Mar. 26, 1932, BIA 364-a-w-873, part 5. Quezon later abandoned this position in order to have a point to criticize in the bill obtained by Osmeña and Roxas.

²⁶ Raymond Leslie Buell quoted, *New York Times*, Apr. 15, 1932; Aguinaldo to Hawes, July 25, 1931, quoted in part, *Washington Star*, Sept. 6, and printed in full, *Cong. Rec.* 72:1, 598-600, Dec. 16.

²⁷ Typewritten transcript of press conference, San Francisco, Oct. 19, 1931, BIA Hurley-P. Fifteen million dollars would have amounted to about 37% of the whole Philippine budget for 1931.

America could easily retain bases in the face of Philippine political nationalism, but could they hold them against Japanese military imperialism? Most Filipinos either assumed so out of trust or out of convenience. They were not used to enduring, and did not wish to undertake, the expense of supporting a military establishment, however small. When the Hoover administration, in an economy bill, proposed to transfer the cost of maintaining the Philippine Scouts from the War Department to the insular government, Filipino leaders successfully resisted the change.²⁸

In the early 1930's few Filipinos except military men —American-trained officers of the Scouts — were in the third group. If the thoughts of Major, later Brigadier General, Vicente Lim are any criterion, Filipino officers tended to see independence as a security problem first, and a moral issue second. Certainly Philippine autonomy should be accelerated, Lim argued,²⁹ in order to insure Filipino loyalty, for without such loyalty the islands could never be a military asset to the United States. But in addition to that basic ingredient, both American power and Philippine preparedness were necessary. Lim suggested a rough division of labor: American naval power and Philippine military strength. The former only America could provide in a magnitude comparable to Japan's; the latter the Philippines could provide where America was unable and unwilling. A hundred thousand trained soldiers, it was estimated, would be necessary to defend the Philippines adequately at the outset; and the whole of the standing army of the United States was only 115,000. "Use of native manpower and resources," Lim concluded, "will be necessary for the safety of the Islands and the eco-

²⁸ *Manila Daily Bulletin*, Apr. 12, 1932, *Manila Tribune*, Apr. 13, *Pagkakaisa* (trans.), Apr. 12, BIA 364-a-w-873, part 5; OsRox Report, July 30, 1933. The Filipino leaders found a question of principle at stake: that they should not have to pay any military expenses until they were set on the road to independence, or until they had control of the military forces involved.

²⁹ "The Philippine Islands—a military Asset," Memorandum to the Commandant, The Army War College, Apr. 29, 1929, McCoy Mss. Box 41, Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division.

nomy and prestige of the United States." He recommended several means of strengthening the war machine in the Philippines, including the inauguration of an ROTC program, enlargement of the enlisted reserve, coordination of the Constabulary with defense efforts, training of Filipinos in aircraft and anti-aircraft, and complete reorganization of existing forces to suit the climate, terrain, and expected mode of warfare.

Removed as these considerations were from the experience, and even the imagination of Filipino leaders, the ruling triumvirate, and Quezon especially, were to be drawn slowly into them by the force and success of their own arguments for independence. Did they ask for increased responsibility? They would get more than they asked for.

5

If the Philippines in 1932 was comparatively far less torn by economic distress than the United States was, it also presented a far less complicated political picture than the mother country, which was tossing with the activities of a presidential election year. There was far less sectional diversity and articulate class antagonism in the Philippines; there was only one major party; there was an agreed consensus on a national demand for more executive power. Yet tensions at the summit of Filipino leadership made it exceedingly difficult to present the common front on independence for which the OsRox mission in Washington begged. When the mission arrived, they found that Quezon's talk of dominion status had engendered suspicion and doubt in America as to the real desires of the Filipino people.³⁰ Before they left, a far more serious schism would open up.

In the meantime, however, the mission's appeal for passionate unanimity seemed to be heard when in February the Democrata party, after eighteen years as the major opposition, formally dissolved itself. Why did it do so? "To have a united front on independence," Emiliano Tirona, a Democrata missionary, told the House Committee on Insular

³⁰ OsRox Report.

Affairs. Though Americans might believe him, Filipinos could not, for the major complaint of the Democratas had for some time been that they were not permitted to establish themselves as a strong and separate entity. The Nacionalistas, they complained, used their majority mainly to increase it; by controlling pork barrel appropriations and patronage they intentionally fattened themselves while weakening their opponents. Without the necessary projects and appointments to dole out, the Democratas were unable to build that pyramid of familial favor and interest upon which power depended. The last words of the party were a charge of murder by malnutrition.³¹

The answer, however, lies deeper than that. For some years the Democratas had badly managed their own role of opposition, and had foundered in disputes within the party. "The Democratas are so darn fools [sic], and Aguinaldo three times more," Quezon had written to a friendly advisor, "that they can never hope to...constitute a strong opposition party, even when we give them the chance." In 1931 the Democratas of Manila split the party wide open by preventing the nomination of Juan Sumulong as senatorial candidate. After some maneuvering led by Recto, Sumulong's friends and the provincial dissidents managed to end the party's life, and thus to free its members to rehabilitate their prospects through other alliances.³²

Tirona's talk about a "united front" was therefore specious salesmanship made for American consumption; both he and his party colleague, Senator Ruperto Montinola, had actually op-

³¹ Tirona Statement, House Ins. 72:1, 350. The Democrata party's final resolution of grievances, (*Philippines Herald*, Feb. 1, 1932, BIA w-3427a-46) included a charge against the governor general for helping the Nacionalistas by using government patronage to attain his own ends. If ever any governor general did so, it was inadvertently, for all of them were anxious to encourage a two-party system in the American image, and were seriously concerned about the weakness of the opposition.

³² Quezon to McIntyre, June 11, 1928, BIA Quezon-P; *New York Times*, Jan. 20, 1932, BIA w342a-46; *Manila Tribune*, Feb. 2, BIA 364-918a.

posed dissolution of their party for fear of losing the basis of their position on the mission and being called home.³³ That position, however, they kept. There was under way in the Philippines a complete political realignment, based on personalities and the circumstances of the independence question. Montinola and Tirona looked for power with which to associate themselves, and found it in the mission leaders, Osmeña and Roxas. The mission at least was now united, but the mission was not the whole of the Philippines.

Unity: Quezon was pleading for it too. To support the campaign for independence he and other leaders had set up a Finance Committee whose representative membership collected money from various sources.³⁴ The members of the Committee were prominent citizens, supposedly without political obligations, whose reputation would be enough to assure the public that its monies were properly handled. At the outset, however, the Philippines Sugar Association caused Osmeña and Roxas some anxiety by sending money directly to them. Thereafter, the same funds, presumably the largest of all contributions, were routed through the Finance Committee, as an acceptably neutral source.³⁵

A sizable number of people refused to contribute to or work with the latter body, and for reasons of pique or policy followed instead the Federation of Independent Citizens. Formed by Aguinaldo and Sumulong, and led by those two individualists, the Federation stood for immediate and complete independence, and directed a running fire at objectionable

³³ Recto interview with Federico Mangahas, *Manila Tribune*, Nov. 19, 1933, BIA Recto-P.

³⁴ In a memorandum approved by Quezon, Feb. 9, 1932, (Quezon Mss.), Miguel Unson, former Secretary of Finance, listed the members of the committee of which he was made chairman: Francisco Benitez (academic), Ramon Fernandez (retired public official), Gonzalo Puyat (business entrepreneur), Carlos Romulo (journalist), Wenceslao Trinidad (sugar executive), and Jose Hilario. These independent citizens would be in charge of collection of monies and responsible to the people for their disbursement.

³⁵ Quezon to OsRox, Mar. 2, 1932; Osmeña, Roxas to Quezon, Mar. 2, Quezon Mss.

provisions of the developing legislation, especially that concerning bases.³⁶ By the time the Hare Bill passed, the chief misgivings in the Philippines at large were economic. Producers and exporters were getting restless about their prospects, and Quezon at that time had broken into nervous public rumination about a dominion plan.

In July 1932, independence legislation stalled in the Senate, preceded by American banking and relief bills, and impeded by a filibuster organized by Senator Arthur Vandenberg of Michigan. Harry Hawes briefly considered trying for cloture, but twenty-eight Democrats were already in Chicago to nominate a candidate for president; a move to limit debate would probably fail and jeopardize the whole bill. Hawes admitted temporary defeat, while extracting from the floor leaders an agreement to take up his bill as unfinished business during the next session, scheduled for December.³⁷

The Filipinos had a chance to repair their broken unity, but the half-year breathing spell produced more tension among them rather than less. Quezon, who had felt the situation getting out of his control, requested the mission to come home and report to the legislature. The mission, which at last felt that an independence bill was within their reach, declined to do so. Quezon suggested that Osmeña and Roxas appear at a party convention to revise the platform, now that "immediate, absolute, and complete independence" was clearly impossible. Osmeña and Roxas replied that a party convention was unnecessary because Philippine elections were two years away, and changing the platform now would weaken their case in America. Quezon declared that the government was in a financial crisis and that further remittance of the

³⁶ Quezon letter to Ramon Fernandez, Jan. 26, 1932; Quezon to OsRox, Feb. 17; OsRox to Quezon, Feb. 17, Quezon Mss.

³⁷ OsRox to Quaal, July 1, 1932, Quezon Mss.; *Cong. Rec.* 72:1, 9204-05, 12805-07, 12828 ff., 13338-39, 14256-62; OsRox Report. Despite the success of his delaying tactics thus far, Sen. Vandenberg warned Gen. Frank Parker, BIA Chief, that a bill would pass in the next session, and that a veto could not be sustained; Parker memo to SecWar, July 1, 1932, BIA 364-913.

mission's allowance might be difficult. The mission replied that they would take a further cut in their perdiems rather than run up the additional expense of a round trip for each, to Manila and back to Washington.³⁸ For two weeks Quezon tried to cajole and threaten Osmeña and Roxas back to Manila and within the ambit of his power, even should it mean a flagging or failure of the campaign for independence. To obtain an independence bill, especially one of dubious generosity, did not appear to Quezon worth the risk of losing his political primacy to Osmeña and Roxas.

As for the latter two, who resisted his blandishments and his menacings, they also clearly had a subjective stake in staying—the possibility of upsetting the man who had lorded it over them for ten years. They, however, also had a more objective case than Quezon to present before their people. Faced with the question of whether to hold the ground they had won, and press on, or to seek a better bill from another Congress, Osmeña and Roxas, and the rest of the mission, decided not to lose “what seemed to them a reasonable certainty...in exchange for...mere possibilities.” To rouse interest in Congress and the public over Philippine independence all over again would be difficult in any case, but even more so because Hawes and Hare, fervent advocates of the Philippine position, were retiring, and many new members unfamiliar with the problem would be coming in. In America at large, economic and social problems were growing daily more acute; banks were failing; unemployment was increasing; international tensions were rising. The mounting crisis might crowd the Philippine question out of consideration.³⁹

As the mission was weighing these considerations, Harry Hawes prompted their decision with another one which they

³⁸ Guevara, Osias, “Memorandum Concerning the Philippine Mission,” July 2, 1932, suggesting that part of the mission stay and part return; de la Rosa Mss. Quezon to OsRox, July 6, 1932; OsRox to Quaqual, July 6; OsRox to Quezon, July 6; Quaqual to OsRox, July 9; OsRox to Quaqual, July 9; Quezon to OsRox, July 11; OsRox to Quezon, July 13 (two separate messages); OsRox to Quaqual, July 14; Quaqual to OsRox, July 20; Quezon Mss.

³⁹ OsRox Report.

did not report. "Without intending to be offensive," Hawes wrote, "I wish you to know of a statement which a high official made. He said: 'They (the Filipinos) are a "soft" people, given to exciting and impressionable conduct, but lacking in earnestness and perseverance.'" Leaving now, Hawes said, would put the Filipinos in danger of losing ground.⁴⁰

The mission stayed, for not only was personal ambition involved, but personal dignity and national honor. In an afterthought they turned Quezon's tactics back on him, and in September requested he come join them. His counsel and cooperation were necessary, they said, to manage the bill through its final stages. Quezon did not answer.⁴¹ When Congress reconvened in December, only a thin line of civility held the two factions of the Nacionalista party together. Despite their fundamental agreement on what was good for the Philippines, they would soon break apart on the issue of leadership.

⁴⁰ Hawes to Osmeña and Roxas, July 9, 1932; de la Rosa Mss.

⁴¹ OsRox to Quezon, Sept. 10, 1932; Quezon Mss.