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Woodrow Wilson and Philippine Policy

BY ROY WATSON CURRY

Nationalist circles in the Philippines were elated over the election of Woodrow Wilson as President of the United States in 1912.¹ The rejoicing, however, was more for the triumph of the party than the man. Since 1900 the Democrats had voiced anti-imperialist sentiments. The 1912 Baltimore platform, although favoring retention of naval bases, had called for "an immediate declaration of the nation's purpose to recognize the independence of the Islands as soon as a stable government can be established."² To friends of insular independence, the Democratic victory raised great expectations for the success of their cause.

The new President's personal position was less clearly defined. Like those of many of his countrymen, Wilson's views on the Philippines had undergone change over the years since 1898. First reportedly opposing annexation of the Islands, he later advocated a policy of American tutelage to prepare the Filipino people for self-determination; but in 1906 he veered to an endorsement of colonial imperialism, while a year later he was speaking in behalf of constitutional government for the Islands as a step toward self-government.³ In accepting the nomination of his party in 1912, however, he declared: "It is our duty, as trustees, to make whatever arrangement of government will be most serviceable to their freedom and development."⁴ The question of Philippine policy did not emerge as a campaign issue, but by the time Wilson took office the supporters of independence could point expectantly to a declaration which he had made in a speech at Staunton, Virginia, in

¹ See especially *El Ideal* (Manila), November 6, 1912.

² Democratic National Committee, *The Democratic Textbook, 1912* (New York, 1912), 30.

³ See Arthur S. Link, *Wilson: The Road to the White House* (Princeton, 1947), 27; Ray S. Baker and William E. Dodd (eds.), *The Public Papers of Woodrow Wilson* (6 vols., New York, 1925-1927), I, 413-14, 426, 438-39; Harley Notter, *The Origins of the Foreign Policy of Woodrow Wilson* (Baltimore, 1937), 148; and Woodrow Wilson, *Constitutional Government in the United States* (New York, 1908), 52-53.

⁴ Baker and Dodd (eds.), *Public Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, II, 469.

December, 1912, to the effect that the Philippine Islands "are at present our frontier, but I hope we presently are to deprive ourselves of that frontier."⁵

While the new administration was not to disappoint the insular nationalists, neither was it to fulfill their extreme objective of independence. The views which Wilson enunciated in his first annual message to Congress indicated the course his administration was to pursue. "We must hold readily in view their ultimate independence," he said, "and we must move toward the time of that independence as steadily as the way can be cleared and the foundations thoughtfully and permanently laid."⁶

Before assuming his presidential duties, Wilson asked Professor Henry J. Ford, a former Princeton colleague, to undertake a fact-finding mission to the Islands.⁷ After sixty-six days of investigation, Ford prepared a report covering nearly eighty typed pages and giving a clear picture of the state of affairs in the Islands. This report did not reach Wilson's hands until the autumn of 1913, but in the meantime personal letters from Ford had given him a preview of its contents, and he sent it on to Secretary of War Lindley M. Garrison without reading it.⁸

Ford had found the American colony enraged at the President because of his Staunton declaration favoring American withdrawal. Among the natives, on the other hand, the desire for independence was widespread. The Hong Kong junta, working for independence under the leadership of Artemio Ricarte, attracted many with its radical slogan: "We want the immediate restoration of the Philippine Republic by whatever means in whatever form." Secret societies forming a network throughout the Islands supported Ricarte. Their objective of independence was little understood by the populace, but it was supported by all the popular political groups. The Nationalist party of Sergio Osmeña, speaker of the assembly, was the most powerful of the parties advocating independence. It

⁵ Quoted in Grayson L. Kirk, *Philippine Independence: Motives, Problems, and Prospects* (New York, 1936), 44; also in Wilson Personnel File, Bureau of Insular Affairs (Department of Interior Records, National Archives).

⁶ Baker and Dodd (eds.), *Public Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, III, 77.

⁷ The Princeton Bank advanced \$7,000 for this purpose. Edward Howe to Woodrow Wilson, September 5, 1913, Woodrow Wilson Papers, file II, box 30 (Division of Manuscripts, Library of Congress). Hereinafter cited as Wilson Papers with file and box number.

⁸ The Henry J. Ford report is in Ford Personnel File, Bureau of Insular Affairs. See also Ford to Wilson, April 30 and May 20, 1913, Wilson Papers, II, 35, and Wilson to Lindley M. Garrison, September 26, 1913, *ibid.*, II, 30.

claimed the support of four fifths of the electorate, Ford reported, while the Federalists, favoring American control, possessed little strength outside of Manila.

After talking with representative Island leaders, Ford recommended the eventual establishment of a Swiss-type republic, simple in structure. He advocated expanding the electorate, placing revenues and coastal navigation under the jurisdiction of the insular legislature, and abolishing the American Commission, which exercised administrative powers and served as the upper house of the legislature. Ford found much to commend in the administration of the Islands. It was efficient, and its accomplishments noteworthy; but he concluded that the time had come when a change in the form of government was necessary.⁹

Long before the Ford report reached the President's hands, the processes of the federal bureaucracy were at work developing a Philippine policy. Secretary of War Garrison, finding himself in the unfamiliar environment of a new office with vast responsibilities, called upon his staff for recommendations concerning the insular possessions. On April 11, 1913, Felix Frankfurter, then a young law officer in the War Department, drew up a memorandum in which he reviewed the government and administration of the Philippines and presented a series of recommendations. Garrison took these recommendations and, with but minor changes, passed them on to the President. While Ford's correspondence and his later report might have confirmed Wilson in his decision on Philippine policy, the Frankfurter-Garrison recommendations formed the initial policy of the Wilson administration in the Philippines.

A principal part of the recommendations looked toward the Filipinizing of the Commission, a procedure which could be carried out by presidential rather than congressional action. Frankfurter recommended that the President appoint a man of constructive ability and leadership to become secretary of commerce and police in the insular government. After the new appointee had acquired some experience, he was to be made governor general. Then the Philippine legislature was to be asked for a list of Filipinos from which Wilson could make new appointments to the Commission, which served as a Philippine senate. With a majority of natives on the Commission, the Filipinos, already possessing an elective assembly, would have complete responsibility for the legislative branches

⁹ Ford Report, Ford Personnel File, Bureau of Insular Affairs.

of their government. Frankfurter urged a dramatic announcement of the new policy, either upon the appointment of the secretary of commerce and police or in a direct statement to the natives.

Garrison's minor changes in the Frankfurter report suggested the immediate appointment of a new governor general and the retention of the veto power over Philippine legislation in the executive rather than the legislative branch of the United States government. He advised Wilson that he had talked over the proposals with Senator Gilbert M. Hitchcock, chairman of the Senate Philippine Committee; Representative William A. Jones, chairman of the House Insular Affairs Committee; and the two resident Filipino Commissioners, and that their reaction to the proposals had been favorable.¹⁰

The first step in implementing the War Department recommendation was to find a governor general. The incumbent, Republican William Cameron Forbes, was a competent administrator and a man of independent means. His reports breathed a combination of personal uprightness, suspicion of the native assembly, and belief in the gradual evolution of the political life of the people through a program of education.¹¹ Wilson saw no immediate necessity for changing Forbes, but various influential groups insisted upon it and on the implementation of the policy declared in the Baltimore platform. Only a month after the inauguration, therefore, the new administration was looking for a governor general.

Wilson called Philippine Commissioner Manuel Quezon to the White House and asked him if a new governor general should be appointed. The Filipino advised that it was necessary if the administration meant to make good the commitment of the party platform.¹² The summer passed, however, without a change in the Islands, while the administration wrote its domestic reform program into legislation.

On August 16, Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan reopened the whole matter by writing Wilson that Congressman

¹⁰ Felix Frankfurter to the Secretary of War, April 11, 1913, and Garrison to Wilson, April 24, 1913, Bureau of Insular Affairs, File No. 141/76; also Garrison to Wilson, June 13, 1913, Wilson Papers, II, 35.

¹¹ See, for example, W. Cameron Forbes to Ford, May 12, 1913, Bureau of Insular Affairs, File No. 364/296.

¹² Unfortunately the conversation is undated in Manuel L. Quezon, *The Good Fight* (New York, 1946), 126. Quezon dictated these memoirs from his deathbed. He had a keen imagination, but the tenor of the recollection seems to fit what he was saying at the time to the chief of the Bureau of Insular Affairs.

Francis Burton Harrison of New York was looked upon as a favorable candidate for the Philippine office by Chairman Jones of the House Insular Affairs Committee. Bryan himself favored the Harrison appointment.¹³ The same day, Quezon called on Bryan and expressed his approval of the suggestion. Bryan passed these views along to Wilson, while Quezon now first proposed the appointment to Harrison.¹⁴ The President was "more and more inclined to think that Mr. Harrison is the right man."¹⁵ He obtained approval by telegraph from Secretary Garrison, then in Wyoming;¹⁶ and only nine days after Bryan's first suggestion, Harrison was named governor general of the Philippines. The appointment of the thirty-nine-year-old, wealthy New Yorker, whose father had been private secretary to Jefferson Davis, caused a stir in Washington, where he was known to be well in advance of his party in advocating Philippine independence.¹⁷

The President gave the new governor general his instructions on August 31, and Harrison afterwards related: "I found him wonderfully well informed on Philippine conditions, as I had previously found him a master of the intricacies of tariff revision."¹⁸ Announcement of future American policy in the Islands, however, awaited Governor General Harrison's arrival there on October 6, 1913. Excitement ran high in Manila, for the new executive's views were well known and served to enhance the great expectations raised by the Baltimore platform and Wilson's Staunton speech. Harrison was greeted at the pier and conducted to the park where before the assembled crowd he read Wilson's message, in which the President had endorsed the War Department's recommendations for the Philippines:

We regard ourselves as trustees acting not for the advantage of the United States, but for the benefit of the people of the Philippine Islands.

Every step we take will be taken with a view to the ultimate independence of the Islands and as a preparation for their independence, and we hope to move towards that end as rapidly as the safety and the permanent interests

¹³ William J. Bryan to Wilson, August 16, 1913, Wilson Papers, VI, 44.

¹⁴ Francis B. Harrison, *The Cornerstone of Philippine Independence* (New York, 1922), 3.

¹⁵ Wilson to Bryan, August 18, 1913, William Jennings Bryan Letter Books (Department of State Records, National Archives).

¹⁶ Garrison to Wilson, August 19, 1913, Wilson Papers, VI, 44.

¹⁷ Brooklyn *Eagle*, August 20, 1913. The *Washington Post*, August 21, 1913, asserted that the appointment showed that Wilson wanted a man in the Philippines upon whom he could implicitly rely.

¹⁸ Harrison, *Cornerstone of Philippine Independence*, 56.

of the Islands will permit. After each step taken, experience will guide us to the next.

The administration will take one step at once. It will give to the native citizens of the Islands a majority in the appointive Commission and thus in the Upper as well as in the Lower House of the Legislature a majority representation will be secured to them.

We do this in the confident hope and expectation that immediate proof will be given in the action of the Commission under the new arrangement of the political capacity of these native citizens who have already come forward to represent and lead their people in affairs.¹⁹

Acting in line with the newly declared policy for the Islands, Harrison consulted with representative groups of officials and citizens. As a result of these consultations, five natives were recommended and subsequently appointed by Wilson to the Commission. Thus the legislature passed into native control.²⁰ A further step toward Filipinization of the government was taken in appointments to the civil service. Resignations of some Americans were sought, and when salaries were reduced in a general policy of retrenchment, many other Americans voluntarily left the service. This retrenchment was necessitated by the financial crisis resulting from abolition of the export tax and in face of a fixed debt limitation of five million dollars. The unfriendly American community and its sympathizers spread rumors and press reports of indiscriminate dismissals of their friends from the service; but Vice-Governor Henderson S. Martin and, in the United States, Frank McIntyre, chief of the Bureau of Insular Affairs, defended the governor general's action.²¹

The presidential policy of preparation for self-government aroused some apprehension among the governing classes in the Islands, and even among the politicians of the Nationalist party. Among the people independence was a slogan, a necessary political cry. It was a matter of utmost expediency that all successful political leaders espouse the vaguely defined cause. Manuel Quezon, whose Washington-published periodical, *The Filipino People*, fervently voiced the appeal for independence, privately feared Wilson's announced ambitions in that direction. Alarmed by the administration's new policy, he sought out McIntyre in Washington

¹⁹ Bureau of Insular Affairs, File No. 141/85; also Baker and Dodd (eds.), *Public Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, III, 53.

²⁰ Harrison, *Cornerstone of Philippine Independence*, 66-67, 69-70.

²¹ Henderson S. Martin to Garrison, February 5, 1914, Bureau of Insular Affairs, File No. 1239/102; Frank McIntyre to J. G. White, March 30, 1914, *ibid.*, File No. 1239/105.

to express fears over an early grant of independence. Such a step, he thought, would be a mistake. In a long memorandum covering this and subsequent conversations on the same subject, McIntyre reported that Quezon based his alarm "largely on the conduct of Japan. He said that on this trip home for the first time he became convinced the Japanese had designs on the Islands."

Quezon, who sought self-government under American sovereignty rather than independence, further confided to McIntyre that he was ready to advocate a new organic act that would settle American-Philippine relations for the next quarter of a century. He wished to have administration approval for his measure before introducing it as a bill, since it would divorce him from his old friends in America, the extreme anti-imperialists. He thought Osmeña, leader of the Nationalist party, would support the measure. McIntyre asked if he had spoken to Harrison about his proposed legislation. Quezon replied: "My God, no! I think he believes in independence. He thinks he can turn us loose in about four years." McIntyre explained that it would be difficult to get Wilson's commitment to any bill not approved by the governor general, but Quezon maintained that he would be afraid to broach such a program to Harrison.

Again during January, 1914, Quezon called on McIntyre and dwelt on the desire for some definite legislation to allay talk of independence in the Islands. He was skeptical of the earlier efforts of Chairman Jones, a Virginian, to promote a Philippine bill and expressed the belief that Jones, like the entire southern Democratic bloc in Congress, was motivated principally by a desire to get out of the Islands. And then, in a later meeting, Quezon left with McIntyre his own suggestions for a Philippine bill to be drafted and submitted to Garrison and Wilson. The suggestions contained little change in the basic governmental structure. The main purpose of circumventing the independence agitation was accomplished in a provision calling for a referendum on the subject when there was a 75 per cent male literacy and sufficient revenues to support a government in the Islands. The literacy provision alone "indefinitely postponed" any consideration of independence. Quezon confessed that the bill was an expedient, but he believed, as McIntyre reported, that "it would appeal to the President in view of his expressions favoring ultimate independence, and would appeal to the more extreme Filipinos, as well as to those people in the United

States who had taken so strong a position in favor of independence.”²²

McIntyre's memorandum of these conversations went forward to Wilson, who was fully aware of Quezon's true views,²³ and the Bureau of Insular Affairs began the task of shaping Quezon's suggestions into a bill. At the same time, Congressman Jones, as chairman of the Insular Affairs Committee, was formulating a measure of his own. In addition to a preamble promising independence when a stable government was established, Jones's bill made two basic changes in the organic law of the Islands. It conferred upon the Filipinos general legislative powers to enact land, timber, mining, coinage, and tariff laws with presidential approval. Secondly, it made the government responsible to the Filipino people by providing that both branches of the legislature would be elective and that appointments by the governor general would be subject to confirmation by the insular senate.²⁴

When the Democratic caucus failed to include the Jones bill in its 1914 legislative program, Quezon, who had supported it in lieu of his own proposal, called on McIntyre to learn the cause. According to McIntyre's report, the Commissioner contended that Wilson had favored the Jones bill subject to the approval of Garrison, and that the Secretary of War, therefore, must have been responsible for the lack of party support. Any delay in legislation, he warned, would only serve to increase the native demands for independence. Even Jones had favored a more extreme measure but finally had been convinced that the bill as proposed was “as radical as the President wanted.”²⁵ Quezon then called on the President and repeated his warning concerning the danger of delay. Wilson blamed the caucus neglect on members of Congress. He explained that he had outlined to Jones the measure he had favored, but that he had not known that the bill was already prepared. When Quezon promised to send him a copy, Wilson cautioned that he would have

²² McIntyre to Garrison, January 17, 1914, Wilson Papers, II, 44. This is a lengthy memorandum on the series of Quezon-McIntyre talks. The chief of the Bureau of Insular Affairs had a fortunate habit of keeping such memorandums concerning any business passing through his hands.

²³ Garrison to Wilson, January 19, 1914, *ibid.*

²⁴ *Cong. Record*, 63 Cong., 2 Sess., 16020.

²⁵ McIntyre Memorandum, May 13, 1914, Bureau of Insular Affairs, File No. 4325/158. Garrison explained that he had endorsed the measure to Wilson, but having heard nothing from the White House had concluded that Wilson was too busy to give it his attention. Garrison to McIntyre, May 13, 1914, *ibid.*

to advise with Garrison before fully committing himself concerning the measure.²⁶ This procedure of advising with the War Department on Philippine matters was consistently followed by the President, and for the most part he fully accepted its recommendations.²⁷

After a copy of the bill came into his hands, Wilson again consulted with Jones concerning its provisions. He expressed himself as preferring Quezon's proposal placing final veto authority of insular legislation in the person of the President. Meanwhile, Quezon, having returned to the Philippines, showed the bill to Osmeña, and Garrison cabled the main provisions to Harrison.²⁸ Much of the bill had been rewritten by McIntyre, and it had the full backing of the War Department. Concerned over reports from Quezon and Harrison of uneasy conditions in the Islands, Garrison advised Wilson that the bill with its preamble, promising eventual independence, should be introduced in Congress. Political pressure "from various sources," he said, made it expedient that the legislation be considered.²⁹ Because of the crowded docket of the 1914 calendar, however, he thought it unlikely that it would receive attention; and Wilson suggested, therefore, that he consult with Senator Hitchcock, chairman of the Philippine Committee of the Senate, on the measure.³⁰

The Jones bill was introduced on July 11, 1914, in the House. Secretary of State Bryan was decidedly for the measure; Wilson backed it; and Harrison cabled his approval. The outbreak of the First World War had increased the already heavy load of legislation to be undertaken by the Congress, but by the end of September the House pressed the bill to debate. The opposition charged that Japan coveted the Islands and would fall heir to them if America withdrew, and it insisted that retention of the Philippines was necessary to American command of the Pacific. While there was bitter debate over the question of eventual withdrawal, there was general agreement that a greater measure of self-government should be granted the Islands. In the closing days of the session, the bill

²⁶ McIntyre to Garrison, May 26, 1914, *ibid.*

²⁷ Frank McIntyre, "Notes on the Philippine Islands," p. 76, *ibid.*, File No. 7519/33½. This is an informal history written by McIntyre in 1925.

²⁸ Wilson to Garrison, June 4, 1914, and Wilson to William A. Jones, June 11, 1914, Wilson Papers, VI, 44; Garrison to Wilson, June 5, 1914, *ibid.*, II, 55; McIntyre to Harrison, June 8, 1914, Bureau of Insular Affairs, File No. 4325/66.

²⁹ Garrison to Wilson, June 9, 1914, Bureau of Insular Affairs, File No. 4325/71.

³⁰ Garrison to Gilbert M. Hitchcock, June 19, 1914, *ibid.*, File No. 4325/74; Garrison to Harrison, July 2, 1914, *ibid.*, File No. 1239/133.

was again brought forward, and on October 14, by a vote of 212 to 60, it passed the House.⁸¹ The Senate, however, was too deeply engaged in the emergency tax bill to bring the Philippine measure out of committee before adjournment.

Wilson now hoped to get the bill through the Senate during the coming short session. In his annual message, the President urged the Senate "to fulfill our promises to a dependent people" by passing the Jones bill.⁸² Senate hearings on the bill began on December 14, 1914, and continued until January 9, 1915. Eighteen witnesses, including former President Taft, Commissioner Quezon, and Secretary Garrison, were heard. The Bureau of Insular Affairs put its resources at the disposal of Chairman Hitchcock, and the administration strove to obtain Senate approval of the bill. At Quezon's request, Wilson issued the following statement in its support:

I feel it is my duty to urge the passage, if it is at all possible at this session of the Senate, of the Philippine bill, because, deeply important as the general power and the conservation bills are, they do not touch, as the Philippine bill does, the general world situation, from which I think it is our duty to remove every element of doubt or disturbance which can possibly be removed. Such communications as that we have received from the Governor General of the Philippines shows that a very important element of disturbance indeed will be removed if we can get the Philippine bill through.

If it must be a choice, therefore, among the three bills, I must give my preference to the Philippine bill. I do not see how it is possible to pass all three of them.⁸³

Garrison informed the President that the major opposition to the bill grew out of the preamble's promise of eventual independence. If it were retained, he doubted that the bill would get through the Senate.⁸⁴ Wilson and Representative Jones agreed, however, that the preamble should not be sacrificed.⁸⁵ Garrison's warning proved correct, for the Senate adjourned without passing the measure. Garrison cabled the Governor General that "The President

⁸¹ *Cong. Record*, 63 Cong., 2 Sess., 15800-11, 16024-25, 16090, 16092, 16134, 16627-29.

⁸² Baker and Dodd (eds.), *Public Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, III, 219. See also Edward M. House Diary, December 10, 1914 (Yale University Library).

⁸³ Wilson to Garrison, February 24, 1915, Wilson Papers, VI, 44.

⁸⁴ Garrison to Wilson, February 26, 1915, Bureau of Insular Affairs, File No. 4325/154.

⁸⁵ McIntyre, "Memorandum for the Record," March 4, 1915, *ibid.*, File No. 4325/155.

and I did everything which we consistently could do in an endeavor to get the bill through the Senate.”⁸⁶

Wilson, too, felt an explanation of the Senate’s inaction to be necessary, and he cabled Harrison :

It [the bill] was constantly pressed by the Administration, loyally supported by the full force of the party, and will be pressed to passage when the next Congress meets in December. It failed only because it was blocked by the Republican leaders who were opposed to the legislation and who would yield only if we withdrew assurance of ultimate independence contained in the preamble. That we would not do.⁸⁷

At the same time, the President expressed to Quezon his admiration “for the self-respecting behavior of the people of the Philippines in the midst of agitations which intimately affect their whole political future.”⁸⁸

Upon the convening of the new Congress in December, 1915, the Jones bill was the first measure introduced in the Senate. It was taking its natural course through debate on the floor when an unexpected development occurred. The principal opposition bloc in the Senate had been made up of senators, mostly Republicans, who objected to the prospect of independence embodied in the bill. At this point, however, a new source of trouble appeared in a group of southern Democrats whose viewpoint, as Quezon had expressed it earlier, was “to get rid” of the Philippines. On January 11, 1916, Senator James P. Clarke of Arkansas, acting apparently on his own initiative but reflecting the sentiment of the extreme Democratic anti-imperialists, suddenly introduced an amendment authorizing the President to recognize the independence of the Philippines and to withdraw from the Islands within two years. Only the naval bases and coaling stations were to be retained. During the two-year interval, the President was to negotiate with interested powers a series of treaties effectively neutralizing the Islands. If he could not obtain the desired agreements, the United States alone would offer such guarantees.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ Garrison to Harrison, March 4, 1915, Wilson Papers, II, 94.

⁸⁷ Wilson to Harrison, March 8, 1915, *ibid.*, VI, 44.

⁸⁸ Wilson to Quezon, March 12, 1915, *ibid.*

⁸⁹ *Cong. Record*, 64 Cong., 1 Sess., 846. According to an undated memorandum by Frank McIntyre (Bureau of Insular Affairs, File No. 4325/204), Senator Clarke was talking with a number of his colleagues in the Senate cloakroom, and on finding that they shared his viewpoint on complete withdrawal from the Philippines he returned to the floor and introduced his amendment. It does not seem probable, however, that the action could have been as spontaneous as this account indicates.

Thus the bill now threatened to take a course which had not been planned by the administration. Wilson called at Senator Clarke's hotel room, but interruptions prevented a satisfactory talk, and a later conference was held at the White House. As a result of the President's representations, Clarke agreed to change his amendment. All immediate danger was removed from the proposal by extending the period within which withdrawal was to occur from two to four years and making initiation for such withdrawal dependent on presidential judgment that internal and external affairs of the Islands warranted such action. Then for five years following withdrawal the United States was to guarantee the independence of the Philippines. During this period, negotiation of neutralization treaties was to be sought with other interested powers.⁴⁰

In its revised form, Wilson found the new Clarke amendment "satisfactory,"⁴¹ but his views were more explicitly revealed in a memorandum directing Garrison to inform the Governor General that "It is the President's judgment that it would be best to pass the Philippine Bill in the shape in which it was originally proposed but, being convinced that some action such as is proposed in the Clarke Amendment is desired by a majority of the Senate, he has consented to the Clarke Amendment as the best form of action to that end."⁴²

Clarke frankly admitted that he stood for withdrawal from the Philippines on the grounds that an extension of American occupation into Asian spheres produced racial antagonisms and led to misunderstanding with Japan. The Republicans opposing the amendment charged that such a policy "scuttled" the Islands and was unworthy of America. On February 4, 1916, after vigorous debate, the Senate adopted the amendment in its revised form, with Vice-President Thomas R. Marshall casting the deciding vote, and the bill containing the amendment was then passed.⁴³

Following the passage of the Senate bill, Representative Jones again became active. Having ascertained that the bill as passed was contrary to the views of the War Department, Jones saw the President and expressed a desire to support in the House the original Senate bill without the Clarke amendment. Wilson was un-

⁴⁰ *Cong. Record*, 64 Cong., 1 Sess., 1426.

⁴¹ Wilson to Joseph P. Tumulty, January 23, 1916, Wilson Papers, VI, 44.

⁴² Wilson to Garrison, January 25, 1916, Bureau of Insular Affairs, File No. 4325/204.

⁴³ *Cong. Record*, 64 Cong., 1 Sess., 2107-2108, 2116-25.

certain as to what should be done. He asked for time in which to decide, but he confessed that he had committed himself to Clarke and that he could not ask the Senator's consent to some other plan.⁴⁴

Secretary Garrison, who opposed the Clarke amendment, was out of Washington, and Assistant Secretary of War Henry Breckenridge asked Wilson to withhold any commitment to Jones on the future of the bill until Garrison returned.⁴⁵ Since Wilson and Garrison were then at odds over an unrelated measure — the means of raising an army⁴⁶ — the Clarke amendment had passed at an inopportune moment in their official relations. Upon his return to Washington, Garrison protested against the amendment as “an abandonment of the duty of this nation and a breach of trust toward the Filipinos” and added: “so believing, I can not accept it or acquiesce in its acceptance.”⁴⁷ To his disgruntled secretary of war, Wilson replied that he too viewed the Clarke amendment as “unwise at this time,” but that he felt it “unadvisable” to oppose the measure, should it meet with approval in both houses. He refused to say what his course might be if it passed the Congress. For the time being, he was consulting with Jones and others on the action to be taken.⁴⁸

The President's effort to mollify his secretary of war proved unavailing. Garrison, concerned particularly over Wilson's refusal to apply pressure on the House Committee to accept the War Department's views on the means of raising an army, had concluded that further protest on the Philippine question was useless. In reply to the President's note, therefore, he forwarded a terse letter of resignation.⁴⁹

Why had Wilson permitted the Clarke amendment to pass? Did he really contemplate withdrawal from the Islands within four years? There is no question but that Wilson favored “eventual

⁴⁴ Frank McIntyre Report, February 7, 1916, Bureau of Insular Affairs, File No. 4325/204.

⁴⁵ Henry Breckenridge to Wilson, February 7, 1916, *ibid.*, File No. 4325/210.

⁴⁶ Josephus Daniels, *The Wilson Era: Years of Peace, 1910-1917* (Chapel Hill, 1944), 445.

⁴⁷ Garrison to Wilson, February 9, 1916, Garrison Personnel File, Bureau of Insular Affairs.

⁴⁸ Wilson to Garrison, February 10, 1916, Wilson Papers, II, 93.

⁴⁹ Garrison to Wilson, February 10, 1916, *ibid.* The resignation correspondence is also found in David F. Houston, *Eight Years with Wilson's Cabinet, 1913 to 1920* (2 vols., Garden City, 1926), I, 174-80. McIntyre, from his vantage point in the War Department, thought that “the cause of this resignation was the controversy with reference to military legislation rather than disagreement as to the Philippines.” McIntyre to Harrison, February 14, 1916, Garrison Personnel File.

independence” for the Islands. His action at this time, however, seems to have been motivated by the political situation of the moment. The President’s refusal to bar American nationals from traveling on belligerent ships had created a rebellion within the Democratic Congress.⁵⁰ Presidential leadership was currently at stake, and the administration was anxious to avoid all further points of controversy. There was little danger in a policy of appeasing the political opposition to the Senate bill. It was general knowledge that the Clarke amendment had little chance of getting through the House. Personally Wilson had done what was necessary to change the amendment until it placed the future of Philippine policy in his own hands. He privately expressed his belief that the Senate bill was unwise, and that it violated his whole program of steady progress toward responsible government and independence for the native people. Wilson had nothing to lose by waiting. Whatever the future of the bill the situation would still be within presidential control.

Other interested officials were somewhat more concerned over the Senate bill. McIntyre thought it so unwise that it would be better to have no legislation at all.⁵¹ Governor General Harrison, on the other hand, informed the newly appointed secretary of war, Newton D. Baker, that “the great majority” of Filipinos favored the Clarke amendment.⁵² Quezon, along with Osmeña, publicly endorsed the amendment; but in reality Quezon was said to have been so upset over its passage that he had taken to his bed.⁵³

Many powerful groups opposed the Clarke amendment. William A. Kincaid, a Manila lawyer representing a number of wealthy enterprises, including the Catholic Church of the Philippines, was active against it. He wrote Wilson that the measure was “a threat to every Christian Church in the Philippine Islands and is a violation of the promises under which they entered the field,” and that it was also violative of the government’s obligation to the investors in the Islands as well as to the Filipino people and the nations acquiescing in American possession of the Islands.⁵⁴ The southern

⁵⁰ McIntyre to Harrison, February 24, 1916, Bureau of Insular Affairs, File No. 4325/217.

⁵¹ Two memorandums from McIntyre to Secretary of War, March 16, 1916, *ibid.*, File No. 4325/225a.

⁵² Newton D. Baker to Wilson, April 4, 1916, enclosing letter from Harrison, *ibid.*, File No. 4325/227.

⁵³ McIntyre to Harrison, February 14, 1916, *ibid.*, File No. 1239/135.

⁵⁴ William A. Kincaid to Wilson, February 11, 1916, Wilson Papers, II, 93. See

cotton manufacturers and other business interests of the country with markets or investments in the Islands also disapproved the Senate's action.⁵⁵

Opponents of the bill did not have an entirely free hand. There was always the small core of anti-imperialists who stood behind the measure. They gained some strength from those Republicans who followed Theodore Roosevelt after he came out in support of American withdrawal.⁵⁶ When the House caucus approved the Senate bill by 140 to 35, it began to look as though it would become a law. This view was further strengthened when the administration went ahead with plans to seek its approval in the House, where the Jones bill had passed nearly two years previously. Wilson said that he "sincerely hoped for its early adoption."⁵⁷

The Senate bill came to a vote in the House on May 1, 1916. Loyally supported by the Insular Affairs Committee and the Democratic organization, it seemingly had a fair chance of passage. Then twenty-eight members, led by Tammany Democrats, bolted the party to join the opposition and to defeat the bill. By clever maneuvering, they substituted the Jones bill of 1914 for reconsideration.⁵⁸ Inasmuch as the original Senate bill was essentially the same as the earlier Jones bill, this action meant that they were merely rejecting the Clarke amendment and sending the measure to a conference committee of the two houses to adjust the differences. Secretary Baker at once urged Wilson to take steps to assure prompt action, and the President promised "to do everything possible," adding: "I feel the importance of it very profoundly."⁵⁹ There is no indication of either his pleasure or displeasure at the turn the legislation had taken in the House.

Although 1916 was an election year, the question of the Philippines did not emerge as an important issue. The Democratic platform also Kincaid to McIntyre, December 23, 1915, Bureau of Insular Affairs, File No. 4325/186.

⁵⁵ Charles W. Swift to Jones, February 18, 1916, Bureau of Insular Affairs, File No. 4325/216. See also *New York Journal of Commerce*, March 3, 1916.

⁵⁶ McIntyre to Harrison, April 17, 1916, Bureau of Insular Affairs, File No. 4325/221.

⁵⁷ Wilson to Jones, April 26, 1916, Wilson Papers, VI, 44.

⁵⁸ *Cong. Record*, 64 Cong., 1 Sess., 7210-11. For statements that the failure of the House to accept the bill as passed by the Senate was due to the opposition of the Catholic Church, see *Boston Herald*, May 12, 1916; Harrison, *Cornerstone of Philippine Independence*, 193; and Maximo M. Kalaw, *The Development of Philippine Politics* (Manila, 1926), 347.

⁵⁹ Baker to Wilson, May 3, 1916, and Wilson to Baker, May 5, 1916, Bureau of Insular Affairs, File No. 4325/236 and 237.

form, written by Wilson, supported the bill which had been passed by the House in October, 1914, and reiterated "our endorsement of the purpose of ultimate independence for the Philippine Islands, expressed in the preamble of the measure."⁶⁰ In his campaign address at Topeka, the President spoke of the United States as a trustee for the Filipino people and stated that "just as soon as we feel that they can take care of their own affairs without our direct interference and protection, the flag of the United States will again be honored by the fulfillment of a promise."⁶¹

In the midst of the campaign, the efforts to obtain congressional action for the Philippines finally met with success. On August 29, 1916, a bill approved by a joint conference committee and embodying essentially the provisions of the Jones bill of 1914 passed the Congress without issue.⁶² As Wilson signed it into law, he reportedly said: "I hope and believe that this law will be sufficient proof to the Filipinos of our real intention. This measure means a very satisfactory forward movement in our policy of giving them genuine self-government and the control of their own affairs."⁶³ He also expressed his gratification to the insular assembly that he "should be privileged to take part in doing justice to the people of the islands."⁶⁴ And in November, with the election successfully past, he cabled Harrison: "I rejoice that what we have begun in the Philippines under your administration is to be continued."⁶⁵

With the passage of the Jones Act of 1916, as the measure was popularly called, the major work of the Wilson administration for the Philippines was completed. Through executive action the

⁶⁰ "Democratic Party National Platform," in Wilson's typescript, p. 25, Wilson Papers, II, 99.

⁶¹ Baker and Dodd (eds.), *Public Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, IV, 92.

⁶² *Cong. Record*, 64 Cong., 1 Sess., 12732, 12844. On September 7, 1916, Wilson cabled Sergio Osmeña: "I rejoice in the passage of the new legislation and hope that it will bring prosperity and happiness to the Filipino people." Wilson Papers, VI, 44.

⁶³ "Extract of Address Purported to Have Been Made upon Signing Jones Bill," Bureau of Insular Affairs, File No. 364A/209.

⁶⁴ Wilson to Baker, September 7, 1916, Wilson Papers, VI, 44. Senator Gilbert M. Hitchcock, chairman of the Senate Philippine Committee, attributed the success of the bill to Frank McIntyre. Hitchcock to Baker, August 23, 1916, McIntyre Personnel File, Bureau of Insular Affairs.

⁶⁵ Wilson to Harrison, November 15, 1916, Wilson Personnel File, Bureau of Insular Affairs. Upon Wilson's re-election Quezon informed him that the news "filled my heart with genuine joy. The Filipino people have to a man rejoiced over your triumph, and we shall continue to lend to your Philippine policy for the administration of the Islands our whole hearted support as we have done heretofore." Quezon to Wilson, November 18, 1916, *ibid.*

President had already enlarged the sphere of native responsibility by changing the complexion of the appointive Philippine Commission from an American to a Filipino majority and by increasing the ratio of natives appointed to civil service positions. Now, through congressional action the Commission itself was abolished and provision was made for a popularly elected two-house legislature with full power to act in all insular matters except control of trade relations (retained by the American Congress) and measures affecting lands, mining, forestry, currency, coinage, and immigration (made subject to presidential supervision). The governor general, the vice-governor, and the members of the supreme court were still to be appointed by the President of the United States, and while the governor general was empowered to name departmental heads and other officers, all appointments made by him were subject to confirmation by the upper house of the legislature.⁶⁶ In many respects the form of government that had now been established was similar to that of the final stage in the American system of territorial organization, with the significant exception that the Filipino people were looking forward not to statehood but to independence. For them, therefore, perhaps the most important element in these developments was the fact that the preamble of the new law placed the United States on official record as promising eventual independence to the Philippines.

Secretary Baker, aware of the changes in the government but apparently unable to grasp their full significance, warned Governor General Harrison against permitting any encroachment by the legislative branch on the executive authority.⁶⁷ But Harrison seems to have been concerned less about preserving the powers of his office than about helping the Filipino people solve their governmental problems. From the beginning of his term he had consulted closely with the leaders of the Nationalist party, advising especially with Speaker Osmeña, its head, upon questions and policies of government. He had thus brought the executive branch under informal yet effective native party control, and subsequent political developments in the Islands led to an even more effective inclusion

⁶⁶ *Statutes at Large of the United States*, XXXIX (1917), Pt. I, 545-56. For a recent evaluation of this law, see Garel A. Grunder and William E. Livezey, *The Philippines and the United States* (Norman, 1951), 155-56.

⁶⁷ Baker to Harrison, August 18, 1916, Bureau of Insular Affairs, File No. 141/91; also William Cameron Forbes, *The Philippine Islands* (2 vols., Boston, 1928), II, 259.

of the Filipino leaders in the exercise of advisory and administrative functions.⁶⁸ In general, the nature of these adjustments seemed to indicate that the spirit of American participation in Philippine affairs had changed from one of control over a dependency to one of providing guidance for a people who now possessed most of the privileges of governing themselves. From the conservative point of view of such officials as Secretary Baker and Frank McIntyre, the chief of the Bureau of Insular Affairs, this transition was being made too rapidly;⁶⁹ but President Wilson was fully informed of the course of the developments, and until the end of his administration he gave Harrison his fullest support.

The Wilson administration had thus brought the Philippines a long step forward on the way to eventual independence, and presidential policy had been an effective guide. Since his campaign declarations of 1912, Wilson had adhered to the policy expressed in his first annual message to Congress that "we must move toward the time of . . . independence as steadily as the way can be cleared and the foundations thoughtfully and permanently laid."⁷⁰ The way was being cleared, in the years which followed, with the President sometimes leading and sometimes following the Philippine objectives which he and his party had endorsed. An unyielding consistency was not to be expected, for a policy looking toward eventual independence faced major opposition from those who favored more immediate independence and those who saw the Philippines, quite differently, as a cornerstone of empire. In its broadest aspect, a successful Philippine policy meant reaching a balance among contesting forces which included hostile Republican congressmen, dissident Democrats, and the diverse views of Filipinos, Filipino political aspirants, American businessmen, and numerous Island and mainland officials. All of these viewpoints, in turn, appeared against a background of American public opinion which was widely split on the subject of colonial empire. Wilson's course, on the whole a moderate one — but braced by firm belief in the ultimate objective — had threaded its way toward the day of independence.

⁶⁸ For discussions of the development of the insular government in the years immediately following the passage of the Jones Act, see John R. Hayden, *The Philippines: A Study in National Development* (New York, 1942), 325-26, and Harrison, *Cornerstone of Philippine Independence*, 202-15.

⁶⁹ McIntyre, "Notes on the Philippine Islands," pp. 74, 76, 77, Bureau of Insular Affairs, File No. 7519/33½.

⁷⁰ Baker and Dodd (eds.), *Public Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, III, 77.