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# PHILIPPINE LIBERTY SURE, SAYRE HOLDS

## Americans Probably Would Be Unwilling to Pay for Island Defense After '46, He Says

Wireless to THE NEW YORK TIMES.  
MANILA, Feb. 25—Four months as High Commissioner of the Philippines have convinced Francis B. Sayre that the United States will not remain permanently here, and probably will carry out the present act under which the islands will receive their independence in 1946, according to an interview published here today.

Mr. Sayre believes that neither the fear of Japanese aggression nor the practical certainty of "grave economic dislocation" to the Philippines owing to the loss of the free American market will result in a reversal of the present program.

Mr. Sayre's interview was given on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the American-owned Manila Daily Bulletin. His views now more than ever appear to be diametrically opposed to those of his predecessor, Paul V. McNutt, who advocated a re-examination of the Philippine problem leading probably to outright permanent retention of the Philippines as American territory.

One of Mr. Sayre's principal reasons for believing in American departure from the islands in 1946 is the probable unwillingness of the American taxpayers to support the necessary Philippine defense force.

### Says People Want to Be Free

"As naval and aerial warfare develop in the future, additional millions must be poured into defenses if they are to be kept abreast of advancing technique," said Mr. Sayre.

"If we do not learn to supplant war by effective methods of international cooperation, I wonder whether it is going to be practicable for any nation to undertake to maintain and defend the kind of far-flung military empires which developed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Viewing the local situation broadly, Mr. Sayre said:

"It's unlikely that we will see the Philippine Assembly or the Filipino people denying the hopes and aspirations to which they tenaciously clung for over forty years. The movement toward independence is like the flow of a great river which has carried both peoples [Ameri-

cans and Filipinos] along in its current. They have been carried along to a point from which it would be difficult now to turn back. I do not believe the Filipinos would voluntarily relinquish any of the autonomy they now enjoy.

"In fact I think they would be unwilling to accept, following 1946, any form of government or even dominion which would restrict them in what they now enjoy. Remember President Quezon's statement before the Assembly last month. The only kind of arrangement he said he would be willing to consider would be one giving the Filipinos full control over immigration, imports, exports, currency and related financial subjects, as well as the right to conclude commercial treaties with other nations without being subjected to the supervision and control of the United States.

### Doubts No Plan is Possible

"In short, the tide has carried both Americans and Filipinos to a point where the only kind of dominion status the Philippines would probably be willing to accept would be one which the United States could not grant."

Asked if the fear of aggression from Japan might not change the views of the Filipinos, Mr. Sayre said:

"Of course no one can foretell the future. The world might be so different in 1946 that everything I have been saying would have to be thrown out the window. Unless conditions change very materially however, I would be much surprised to see the Philippine Assembly vote to reconsider the present independence program."

Turning to the possibility that the American Congress might change the Tydings-McDuffie Law which supposedly settled the independence matter, Mr. Sayre went on:

"I feel sure that many members of Congress would seriously be swayed by the wishes of the Filipino people. At the same time I do not see any present lessening of the strength of the various groups in Congress which pressed for passage of the independence act. Some of them are even stronger than in 1934. And don't forget that it takes an affirmative vote of both houses of Congress to make a change."

Using the oft repeated argument against trade preferences in line with Secretary Hull's trade treaty program, Mr. Sayre said that he was dead against giving the Philippines permanent preferences after they had become politi-

cally independent, but said that this attitude would not necessarily preclude some kind of a temporary arrangement to prevent "drastic economic dislocation."

"People have invested money out here and built up various businesses dependent on the selling of Philippine products in the American markets," he said. "Much, in fact, is American money. It would seem to be entirely unnecessary as well as disastrous to reduce Philippine-American trade drastically overnight.

"When we introduced the bill into Congress last Winter to effectuate the recommendations of the Joint Preparatory Committee, the bill was framed to provide a gradual tapering off of preferences—5 per cent yearly beginning in 1940 and running down through the post-independence period to 1960.

"Political independence need not coincide exactly with economic independence. But some leaders in Congress felt that it would be unwise as early as this to negotiate for a period past 1946. It was agreed to cut the bill in half. As to the period beyond 1946, we will wait and see."

Calling to mind provisions for a conference in 1944 as contained in the latest revision of the Tydings act, Mr. Sayre said that he hoped a new bill would be introduced embodying the recommendations of the joint committee.

Asked if he thought the Filipinos were ready for independence, the High Commissioner replied:

"There is only one practical way by which the question can ever be truly answered. That is through actual experiment. The United States had to learn from experience. If the Filipinos remain true to our own teachings they never will cease to aspire to independence. This I believe to be an objective reality at which we cannot afford to blink.

"In view of the high responsibility we assumed in 1898 and which we have carried ever since, the American nation is under a strong moral obligation if and when we give them independence to give it to them under conditions best suited to make the success of their great experiment practical and possible. I am for helping them so far as we legitimately can to succeed as we succeeded in 1776."

*This is in line with Sayre's previous utterances i.e. it takes for granted the desire of the Filipinos to become independent in 1946; but his remarks about the cost of defense may cut the other way if the Filipinos are more frightened of the Japs than he affects to believe. Manila with sure report this with local reactions. He might report if it is taken up by the press here. Meanwhile put with PP*

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