
Franklin D. Roosevelt — “The Great Communicator”
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Series 2: “You have nothing to fear but fear itself:” FDR
and the New Deal

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Statement on Certification of Proposed Philippine
Constitution

P.P.F.
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[March 23, 1934]

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Statement by the President
delivered upon the occasion of the
certification by him of the proposed
Constitution of the Philippine Islands.

I am happy to state that the Constitution submitted to me on behalf of the Philippine Constitutional Convention for certification under the Tydings-McDuffie Independence Act conforms with the provisions of the Act.

The members of the Convention are congratulated on the satisfactory completion of a task so important and significant in the life of their people.

In the event of ratification of this Constitution, the authority granted to the Commonwealth government will permit exercise by the Filipino people of general control, subject only to a few important exceptions, of their local affairs.

During the period of the Commonwealth, there will remain with the government of the United States authority commensurate with and necessary for or appropriate to the ultimate responsibilities of sovereignty.

Animated solely by feelings of cordiality, sympathy and loyalty, the people of the United States and the people of the Philippine Islands have been conducting together a great experiment, and during the period of the Commonwealth government this experiment will continue until the ultimate withdrawal of United States sovereignty and the establishment of complete independence.

DRAFT

*suggested
draft from
State Dept.*

This day marks the dawn of a new era for the people of the Philippine Islands who, upon the approval of this constitution by popular referendum, will, under its guidance, thenceforth hew out their own destiny.

On the Fourth of July ten years after the inauguration of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Philippine ~~Islands~~, the United States will relinquish all rights of sovereignty over the Islands and the Filipino people will then take their place among the nations of the world. I wish to assure the people of the Philippine Islands that during this period of political and economic adjustment they can depend upon the people of the United States for *assistance*, friendly advice and good-neighborliness.

In keeping with the principles of justice and the traditions and aims of the United States, it has always been our purpose to withdraw our sovereignty over the Philippine Islands at the proper time. We believe that time to be now at hand. Our nation covets no territory and has no desire to hold a people who seek to establish themselves

as a separate nation. Our only wish is to keep faith with the Filipino people and to extend the hand of friendship in aiding them toward the realization of their just and honorable goal of independence.

I am happy to be instrumental in this epochal act: the granting of a new government to 12 million people; a free ^{ment} ~~government~~ *achieved* without bloodshed or strife, in common agreement and mutual confidence; an act of which both Americans and Filipinos may be justly proud. I believe that history records no such event.

With this constitution go the congratulations of the people of the United States, their best wishes for happiness and prosperity and the assurance of their continued friendship.