least accomplish one good thing: It will force the Filipinos to recognize reality and employ new methods. It will be the political death-knell of some of the present leaders who have been living on the vague promise of the Jones Law.

The American working-class, which should be in the forefront of the struggle for Filipino liberty, is unmoved. Even those elements who are already ranged with the cause of the Filipino people against American imperialism are inactive. It is vitally necessary that they recognize the facts of crisis which are now unmistakable and prepare to take resolute action.

Rubber and the Bacon Bill

By Ella G. Wolfe

THE Bacon Bill, providing for the separation of the Mindanao, Basilan, etc., from the Philippines is a maneuver to postpone indefinitely the independence of the Philippine Islands.

To trace the authorship of the Bacon Bill is to follow a trail that leads directly to the doors of the automobile interests of America and their rubber hunger.

The Bacon Bill provides:

> **For the separation from the Northern Philippine Islands and the annexation to the United States . . . of . . . the Islands of Mindanao, Basilan, the Sulu Archipelago, the Jolo group and Tawi Tawi, Palawan and Dumaran.**

This is precisely the territory judged most suitable for the production of rubber—in a report made by the U. S. Department of Commerce in 1925—entitled "Possibilities for Para Rubber Production in the Philippine Islands."

The British monopoly of rubber coupled with America's steadily increasing needs is forcing the United States to cast about for new rubber sources. The southern Philippines provide ideal territory for the production of rubber.

It is true that in 1916 in the Jones Law the United States government stated that "it has always been the purpose of the people of the United States to withdraw their sovereignty over the Philippine Islands and to recognize their independence **as soon as a stable government can be established therein.**"

But—

In 1916—The United States and Canada produced **only 1,617,708 automobiles**—and had no trouble securing the necessary rubber for the industry.

In 1920—Wilson in his message said:

"The people of the Philippine Islands have succeeded in maintaining a stable government . . . and have thus fulfilled the condition set by congress as precedent to a consideration of granting independence to the Islands. I respectfully submit that this condition . . . having been fulfilled it is now our liberty and our duty **to keep** our promise to the people of those Islands by granting them the independence which they so honorably covet."

In 1920—The United States and Canada produced **2,205,197 automobiles** and rubber was still easy to obtain.

But in 1924—production increased by 1½ million: the United States and Canada produced **3, 617,602 automobiles** and the British monopoly on rubber was "exacting its profits."

In February, 1924—President Coolidge writes to Manuel Roxas, one of the fighters for Filipino independence, as follows:

"Altho they have made wonderful advances in the last quarter century, the Filipino people are by no means equipped either in wealth or experience to undertake the heavy burden which would be imposed upon them with political independence.

"The government of the United States would not feel **it had performed its full duty by the Filipino people or discharged all its obligations to civilization,** if it should yield at this time to your aspirations for national independence."

And just at this time the American government sent a commission to the Philippine Islands to investigate the possibilities for growing rubber. The results of this investigation were embodied in the report of the U. S. Department of Commerce referred to above.

The report outlines in detail the special adaptability of the soil of the Southern Philippine Islands for the planting of rubber trees—discusses the available labor supply as follows:

> **"The Mohammedan Filipinos known as Moros are generally good agricultural workers where supervised . . . Moro laborers . . . work peaceably side by side with the Filipinos." (Page 78)**

In 1925—the production of automobiles in the United States and Canada jumps to **4,336,754.** (Statistical Abstract for 1924. The 1925 figures are from the U. S. Census of Manufactures.)

And our rubber magnates still more irritated by the British monopoly are becoming impatient with the government's slow, hypocritical, diplomatic investigations and dilly-dallying. They refuse to indulge in discussions about "granting independence when you are ready for it"; they speak plainly and frankly. J. W. Harriman of the Harriman National Bank, says:

> **"While conferences and conventions are held, and we sit around and holler like small boys over where we are to get rubber to supply our future needs, the United States is in the position of a man who has a valuable asset in HIS SAFE DEPOSIT BOX but does not know it.**
>
> **"THE PHILIPPINES ARE A GOLD MINE IN TERRITORY AND LABOR. Costly government investigations have proven an already known fact—that rubber can be produced cheaply and efficiently in all parts of the islands . . .**
>
> **"In the Philippines WE HAVE 120,000 square miles of territory . . . adapted to the growing of rubber. Labor is plentiful among the population of 11,000,000 WHILE CHEAP CHINESE LABOR IS ONLY 60 HOURS AWAY."**
>
> **"ASSURANCES THAT THE ISLANDS WILL REMAIN UNDER OUR FLAG by the definite government policy and the ELIMINATION OF FOOLISH RESTRICTIONS AND LIMITATION OF OWNERSHIP OF LAND ARE NECESSARY. Once this is effected the influx of American capital will be rapid."**

By **"foolish restrictions"** Harriman is referring to the Philippine land law which provides that no corporation can hold more than 2,500 acres of land.

Dr. J. W. Strong, manager of the American Rubber Co. in the Philippines, has proposed an amendment to the above law, permitting corporations to lease 25,000 acres of land for a period of 75 years.

With such an arrangement "Harvey Firestone, America's King of Rubber, told Coolidge that in fifteen years the United States could become independent of the British rubber monopoly."

In **"Men and Rubber"** Firestone says that he will not "open" the Philippines unless its laws are changed to permit foreign corporations to own large tracts of land.

The keynote to every speech made by Colonel Carmi Thompson is **RUBBER.** Visiting the Basilan rubber plant in the Philippine on August 29, he says:

> **"The success of the Basilan rubber planters convinces me that a rubber industry could be developed in the Philippines which could make th United States INDEPENDENT OF ANY FOREIGN RUBBER CONTROL AND KEEP PACE WITH THE AUTOMOBILE TIRES." (Emphasis mine.—E. G. W.)**

J. W. Strong (manager of the American Rubber Co.) told Thompson that the net profit on rubber in the Philippines in 1925 was 16 per cent.

So runs the speech of the American capitalist—in dollars and cents. But the speech of his servant—the government—is characterized by words like civilization, white man's burden, and other holy slogans.

Russel Porter in his dispatch to the New York Times on August 24, quotes the Americans in the Philippines as follows:

> **"Unless we want to stand by and let the Moros remain savage, we must RETURN TO THE JOB OF TRYING TO CIVILIZE THEM."**

At the present time the best civilizing methods known to the U. S. government are the growing of rubber trees for the American capitalists.

Colonel Carmi Thompson reported that the southern islands possess not only vast rubber growing trees but also huge coal and iron deposits, in short, enough treasure to justify any act on the part of the imperialist mother country to secure the Philippines unto herself.

Thompson told the Filipinos (Porter dispatch to New York Times, Sept. 5): "With your natural resources 25 or 30 years of trading and financing should make these islands lending instead of borrowing islands,"—implying that at least until such time comes the United States will be glad to protect the Philippines.

The Filipinos themselves are not fooled by America's holy slogans of civilization. When Thompson returned from Mindanao he saw before him, upon landing, a large replica of the Liberty Bell bearing the legend:

> **"This bell has been silent for centuries; when will it ring for the Philippines?"**

There was also a large banner to greet him with the inscription:

> **"WE HOPE COLONEL THOMPSON WILL BE THE LAST INVESTIGATOR."**

Some of the Filipino leaders of the independence movement realize that the Thompson mission and the Bacon Bill are the brow-beating tactics by which the American government hopes to force a double compromise from them:

1. **To get them to so modify the Filipino land law as to permit of large holdings—to make possible the growing of rubber on a large scale—in order to meet the growing American needs for rubber and in order to beat the British monopoly.**
2. **To put off their bothering for independence for at least a generation—in order to permit complete economic domination of the Philippines and a substantial profit on the investments about to be made.**