

Our Plight Compared with That of Other Lands

- *Clouds blowing up from Washington may be dark, yet there must be a silver lining discernible in comparisons between what we enjoy and what others must endure*

"It is not familiarity that breeds contempt," says Gilbert K. Chesterton, "it is comparisons." But at times comparisons breed other emotions than contempt; they breed, among other things, a better contentment with a man's own lot. Let us indulge in comparisons for the sake of that. For just now, the Philippines have been dealt a fearful blow—and a fearfully unjust one, that Washington statement raising the ghost of independence that everyone had thought had been laid, for ten years at least, by the commonwealth-independence act. It makes everyone's lot infinitely harder than it was, it quite changes everyone's expectations, and for the worse. Granted.

But when a calmer moment comes, that same mischief out of Washington sets us to comparing the instability it provokes here with the general instability that marks our times. Are we, even now, as badly off as many other countries?

As it happens that some reading has been done about England, she is chosen for comparison. Her plight is that every man, woman, and child must be provided a gas mask, at public charge, and instructed in its use—against the murky oight that may bring an airplane attack on her, without warning or formal declaration of war. Her further plight is, a large reliance on the colonies; their interest-bearing securities, their trade, and somehow they tend all the time to be less dependable—even less dependable in resources of defense if need be.

Yet England is muddling along, and really quite well—paying three times the per capita tax in America, and many times the taxes paid here, for the bargain. Incidentally, too, England nourishes quite a fascist movement; and at the same time, no little proletarian complaint. We have such things here, but on much smaller scale. Here they mean little; in England, much more—in England the cabinet has to be on the alert to foil them all the time.

England is much inclined to peace. Europe, however, is of rather another mind, and so England is upping both her air and naval forces, at great cost, and against her better judgment. But at least one country over on the Rhine is outbuilding England in the air, while no less prudent a man than Stanley Baldwin has said bluntly that the Rhine is

England's first line of defense. It used to be the Channel, but this was long ago, in prehistoric days prior to 1914. If you would know what England is being forced to spend for war, it is \$5,000,000 for every work day; and *Time* says that Neville Chamberlain, the chancellor of the exchequer, avers that this probably does not cover everything. Yet England does not desire war, and tries her extremist best to comport herself as the spouse of peace.

So much is England pledged to peace that her young men join up in the military services reluctantly; it is one of England's minor problems that this is so, since she is truly democratic and dislikes conscripting her citizens.

Does all this, about England, most favored of all European countries, place more perspective behind the threat to the Philippines from Washington and bring it into better juxtaposition with the general state of the world? It shows that if our future has its seamy side, so does even England's. But it is just the beginning.

London, England's empire capital on the Thames, Elmer Davis tells us in *Harper's* for March, under the title *England's Weak Spot*, is the home of nine million Britishers, one-fifth of the population of the United Kingdom, and has come to be within easy gunshot from the Channel coast of Belgium 18 miles away! London is two hours' flight from Germany, and London harbors one-fourth of England's wealth. "A fourth of England's productive capacity is within easy reach of the air fleets, against which there is no longer any effective defense except retaliation." Imagine the plight of England, with many of London's power plants shelled into inactivity; or these escaping and the factories mostly intact, means of getting raw materials destroyed.

The English are now contemplating a thorough-going report on this situation, the report from which Mr. Davis quotes his data. It finds that England has twenty-five aircraft factories, nine of them in London, five more in the southeastern countries. Not another metropolitan area in the world is so exposed to fatal crippling from air warfare, so small wonder that there is now in the Home Office a department of Air Raid Precautions. In such an atmosphere, the English carry on and muddle their way through the continental situation precipitated by the Spanish rebellion.

Now the English are dominantly individualists; though their constitution is unwritten, they sense what it is and cherish their liberty under it; they are instinctively opposed to governmental regulation, limitation of personal freedom; yet this is the situation at their capital, a city so significant that every lover of freedom should volunteer ever to defend it; and it is such a situation as to have led Malcolm Stewart, author of the report Mr. Davis uses, to suggest the licensing of industries at London: let founders of additional industrial enterprises prove the necessity of founding these at London, or locate elsewhere—a tremendous incursion into British rights.

But there are reasons enough for the suggestion, whether it comes to anything or not.

The gravitation of industry and labor to London has told heavily on other British manufacturing centers; other cities tend to go to seed, as London flourishes with hothouse intensity. And in London, and in all British cities, families diminish. England's birthrate declines. Continuing to live

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Quezon challenged every Congressman who feels he wants the United States free of the Philippines, to vote that way; and to do more, to round up his fellows and get all them to vote with him. Doing so, he challenged such Congressmen to do the impossible. Whatever the feeling, and the undersigned shares this feeling strongly, it is not possible to translate that feeling into deliberate action. It is not possible for any Congress and presidential executive of the United States to withdraw America from the Philippines in the Islands' present unprepared condition.

The pressure of international influence is too great, if not on Congress itself, then on the White House. Quezon's action let it be known that none of this decisive pressure derives from the Philippines. Whoever campaigns against him here will have to attack his policies, discuss the state of the Commonwealth and how to better it; harangues for earlier independence will fall of their own weight. Thus the Commonwealth will be able to proceed. And since no bill embodying American feeling that America should get out of the Islands can become law, for the simple reason that nothing will be done at Washington to help a great Oriental Power wallop the West or any part of it, what does the situation resolve itself into? It becomes a situation well designed for the Philippines to urge upon Congress and President Roosevelt the commercial provisions of the Commonwealth act, the Tydings-McDuffie law of 1934.

This is foreseen in the most cogent statement High Commissioner Paul Vories McNutt has made since his appointment to Manila: "... economic independence before political independence." Right there is a plain declaration of policy, and reassignment at Washington of full responsibility for the ultimate date, if ever reached, when Philippine independence will be voted.

—W. R.

Our Plight . . .

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free, the English live nearby neighbors who have gone on breeding booms to create cannon fodder for strafing purposes: Germany and Italy. Italy's and Germany's birthrates rise, England's falls; and the English tend to become a race of oldish folk. If peace were assured the world, little difference this. But that's the rub, peace is not at all assured.

So the English have more to worry about, were they given much to worry, than the considerable that has been cited.

There are a million childless homes in England; in a population, bear in mind, of forty-five million. There are 2,500,000 one-child homes; families in which the generation is not

renewed number 3,500,000. In recent years the annual birthrate has dropped by 282,723; nine persons of a generation ago have produced but six children; only 120,000 children a year are born.

In 1901, births to every 1,000 women in England numbered 28.5 a year; in 1935, only 14.6 a year. Twelve years ago, lives suppressed in England numbered 150,000 a year, they now total 290,000 a year. The English are faced with doing something about this, as they are concerning all that has been mentioned—much more that might be. Yet English morale is far from wavering. That his capital might be shelled is something the Britisher is willing to shoulder taxes to correct, not something that will take his sleep or foreshorten his weekends. He faces changing circumstances, adjusts himself to them. It is something all the world is doing, under the compunctions of our pyrotechnic times, during which blow-ups are to be expected momentarily almost in any quarter.

We have not spoken of England's struggle to keep her markets open, her goods moving, her supplies coming in, her people housed and fed—as little from dole as possible—but these ends are of course her chief preoccupations.

If we now turn back to our own situation, it may seem more agreeable. If independence comes, there is to be a trade treaty with the United States along with it. The status of independence is to be agreed upon among the Powers. Should the Islands go over to another country, it would be by means of peaceful penetration; the war establishment, we are assured every day, is never to be large—it is now no great drain on taxation; Manila, our metropolis, hovers over no great proportion of the insular population—the draws people from the provinces but slowly.

It will be a long time before the Philippines live in hourly prospect of possible attack; the day never will dawn when gas makes become a part of the regular household furnishings. Independence means death to our sugar, unless the trade treaty takes care of it; but the problem even here is no more acute than England's that involves her heavy industries, or Germany's in trying to get food enough for 66,000,000 inhabitants while arming a third of them for war. Other countries face the problems that masses of urban populations provoke. The Philippines has not a single one of these problems, and therefore have moderate taxes. Beside that, whenever a major political calamity threatens these Islands, invariably it blows away on the same ethereal breezes that lumbered it into view. Population increases here, 2% a year. Yet sixty million acres of public domain are yet to be claimed by man. Sixty per cent of the land is still forested; while

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Growing Upland Rice in Western Negros

• *Described by Vicente V. Gamboa in The Sugar Cane Planter. Methods of cultivation are thorough*

Two practices prevail in Occidental Negros in the cultivation of upland rice; one, by administration, the other the well-known share-cropping system. I shall say nothing of the administration system. Under it, as everyone knows, the planter gets the whole crop except he is leasing the land; if he leases the land, the owner receives a percentage of the crop, and just what this percentage should be has not been determined in the central and northern part of Occidental Negros to which my observations are limited.

Under the share system the procedure is as follows: The landlord prepares the fields very carefully, plowing them two to three times, usually with gang-disc plows, and harrowing them an equal number of times, preferably with a disc harrow. The soil being thus thoroughly prepared, the share-cropper seeds it with seed provided by the landlord, 10 to 12 gantas to the hectare; the cropper plows out the rows and plants them, and takes all care of the crop until it has matured. This is all at the cropper's expense; the landlord furnishes the fertilizer, but the cropper applies it.

Harvesters are extra help, paid a portion of the crop. Less this pay in kind, it is the obligation of the cropper to warehouse all the rice cut in any one day. The day following, this rice is threshed. In this province, threshing is done by trampling; the crews that do this usually receive 1 cavan out of 15 of the threshed rice.

When the rice is threshed and the portion of the threshers is taken out, the rice is usually divided immediately between the landlord and the cropper—two thirds to the landlord and one third to the cropper. Impartial observations during four years have demonstrated that this division of the crop is eminently equitable, as will be seen in the following table based on production of 50 cavans of unhulled rice per hectare:

<i>Planter: Cost of Preparation</i>	
Two plowings with tractor	P16.00
Two harrowings	4.00
Seed	0.40

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Denmark, who has had to change her *modus vivendi* completely since 1870, puts a new feather in her cap when she reclothes 3% of her area with forest, to make a total of 9%.

Then the comparative productivity of forests. Why, the very minor products of ours would, if exploited, return more by themselves than all that may be gathered from a northern forest anywhere. In short, the more our actual lot is compared with that of other men in other climes, what may come upon us in 1938 or 1939, or eight years hence when the Commonwealth ends, seems entirely within the bounds of human endurance. Not that what is wrong and harmful should not be vigorously opposed, only that despair should not be countenanced. America will not see the Islands go under, the new High Commissioner says; and adds, economic independence first. This is something very different from, and infinitely better than, most of the proximate political horizons throughout the world.

Let us stop now. To go farther would make us feel absolutely smug.

Fertilizer	25.00
Total, per hectare	P45.40
Two thirds of 50 cavans (33 cavans and 8-1/2 gantas) at P2.50 per cavan	P83.35
Less planters' expenses, above	45.40
Gain	P37.95
<i>Cropper: Cost of Seeding and Cultivating</i>	
Seeding	P 2.20
Weeding, etc.	6.00
Applying fertilizer	2.00
Cultivating, one time	2.40
Transportation	0.10
Total	P12.70
One third of 50 cavans (16 cavans and 16-1/2 gantas) at P2.50 per cavan	P41.65
Less expenses, above	12.70
Cropper's gain	P28.95



The landlord's gain of P8 more than the cropper in every 50 cavans, taken as the harvest to be divided between them from each hectare after harvesters and threshers are paid, is justified, we think, by the greater capital the landlord risks and the greater loss he suffers when bad seasons affect the harvest. To the end that the yield respond to the effort exerted by the planter, whether lessee or owner, in the preparation of the soil, it is always stipulated that the cultivation, and the quantity of fertilizer and manner of its application, be under the direction and supervision of the planter.

The divers varieties of upland rice grown in Occidental Negros are of the first quality; very white, aromatic, and fine-tasting. They are popularly called *bisaya*. Being in demand, the price varies from P3.50 to P4.50 for the cavan of 44 kilograms, though as yet there is no general market for their sale to the public and sales are made among the rich families.

Sixty-two Oldtime . . .

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pino pension and keeps paying on this account, mainly in the Philippines, more than \$2,000,000 a year:

Filipino Scouts, retired	\$900,000
Naval Personnel, Filipino, retired	587,958
Other enlisted Filipinos, U. S. N., retired in Hawaii and the United States	100,000
Filipinos retired from the U. S. civil service ..	550,000
Total per year from U. S. Treasury to Filipinos ..	\$2,137,958

So far as is known, the United States has never moved to evade these contractual obligations on any grounds whatever. She keeps paying them as a matter of course, and does not even move to pay them out of any taxes collected in the United States on Philippine products sold and taxable there; on the contrary, she keeps remitting these collections to the Philippine treasury, including the excise collections on Philippine cigars sold in the United States—which in a single year are several times the \$65,000 the Commonwealth would need yearly to keep the American teachers' pensions undisturbed.