

**Ratification of Philippine Independence
by the Municipal Presidents
(August 1, 1898)**

On August 1, 1898, the municipal presidents from the different towns of sixteen provinces (Manila, Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Bulacan, Bataan, Infanta, Morong, Tayabas, Pampanga, Pangasinan, Mindoro, Nueva Ecija, Tarlac, La Union, and Zambales) assembled in Bacoor, Cavite Province, upon orders of General E. Aguinaldo. This historic convention of local executives, after deliberation, solemnly ratified the Declaration of Philippine Independence which was proclaimed in Kawit on June 12, 1898. A formal document to this effect was drawn up, signed by 190 municipal presidents who were present, and certified on August 6th by President Aguinaldo and Don Leandro Ibarra (Secretary of the Interior). Full text of this significant document follows:*

The undersigned chief of towns comprising the provinces hereinafter named, elected as such in the manner prescribed by the decrees of the 18th and instructions dated the 20th of June last, after having been confirmed in their respective offices by the President of the government and having been taken the prescribed oath before him, have met in full assembly previously called for that purpose, for the purpose of discussing the solemn proclamation of the Philippine independence

The discussion took place with the prudence and at the length which so important a question demands, and after suitable deliberation the following declarations were unanimously adopted.

The Philippine revolution records, on the one hand, brilliant feats of arms, and, on the other, the no less notable fact that the people after the combat have not entered upon great excesses nor pursued the enemy further, but have treated him on the contrary with generosity and humanity, returning at once to their ordinary and tranquil life.

Such deeds demonstrate in an indisputable manner that the Philippine people was not created, as all believed,

* Taylor, *op. cit.*, Vol. III, pp. 279-281, Exhibit 163.

for the sole purpose of dragging the chains of servitude, but that it has a perfect idea of order and justice, shuns a savage life, and loves a civilized life.

But what is most surprising in this people is that it goes on giving proofs that it knows how to frame laws commensurate with the progress of the age, to present them and obey them, demonstrating that its natural customs are not repugnant to this progress; that it is not ambitious for power, nor honors nor riches, aside from the rational and just aspirations for a free and independent life and inspired by the most lofty idea of patriotism and national honor: and that in the service of this idea and for the realization of that aspiration it has not hesitated in the sacrifice of life and fortune.

These admirable — and more than admirable, — these wonderful deeds necessarily engender the most firm and ineradicable convictions of the necessity of leaving the Philippines free and independent, not only because they desire it, but because they are prepared to defend to the death their future and their history.

Filipinos are fully convinced that if individuals have need of material, moral and intellectual perfection in order to contribute to the welfare of their fellows, people require to have fullness of life; they need liberty and independence in order to contribute to the indefinite progress of mankind. It has struggled and will struggle with decision and constancy without ever turning back or retrograding before the obstacles which may arise in its path, and with unshakable faith that it will obtain justice and fulfill the laws of Providence.

And neither will it be turned aside from the course it has hitherto followed by the unjustifiable imprisonment, tortures, assassinations, and the other vandal acts committed by the Spaniards against the persons of peaceful and defenseless Filipinos. The Spaniards believe themselves released from every legal obligation toward the Filipinos, for the sole reason that the belligerency of the revolution has not been recognized, taking no account of the fact that over and above every law, whether written or prescriptive, are placed with imprescriptible characters culture,

national honor, and humanity. No, the Filipinos have no need ever to make use of reprisals, because they seek independence with culture, liberty with unconditional respect for the laws as the organ of justice, and a name purified in the crucible of human sentiment.

In virtue of the foregoing considerations the undersigned, giving voice to the unanimous aspiration of the people whom they represent and performing the offices received from them and the duties pertaining to the powers with which they are vested — Proclaim solemnly, in the face of the whole world, the independence of the Philippines;

Recognize and respect Señor Don Emilio Aguinaldo y Famy as President of the Revolutionary Government organized in the manner prescribed by decree of the 23rd and instructions of 27th of June last, and beg the said President that he will ask and obtain from foreign governments the recognition of its belligerency and independence, not only because this act constitutes a duty of justice, but also because no one is permitted to contravene natural laws nor stifle the legitimate aspiration of a people for its amelioration and dignification.

Given in the province of Cavite the 1st day of August of the year of our Lord 1898, and the first year of the Philippine independence.

Note by translator. Here follows the signatures of the local presidents of the provinces of Cavite, and many others.

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The undersigned, secretary of the interior, certifies that the present document is a literal copy of the original, which is deposited in the secretaryship under his charge; in proof of which he signs it with the approval of the President of the Revolutionary Government in Bacoor the 6th day of August, 1898.

Approved.

LEANDRO IBARRA
Secretary of the Interior

EMILIO AGUINALDO
President of the Revolutionary Government
