

HISPANIC AMERICAN HISTORICAL REVIEW

Article Evaluation Record

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Title: "Independence Rejected: Puerto Rico and the Tydings Bill of 1936"

Date Mailed:
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For Evaluation to: Bailey W. Diffie
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I recommend

Acceptance

Rejection

Date:

2/19/57

Publication, but with the following improvements
(Use separate sheet if necessary)

Signature:

Bailey W. Diffie

This article is well-written, competent and interesting. I would publish with the following reservations. However, please note that the author was a student at The City College who worked for me and that I do not wish to be considered one of the readers.

The interpretation of the autonomy granted by the Spanish government in 1897 is distinctly wrong. The Puerto Ricans have built up the myth that we took something from them that they had won from Spain. The Charter of 1897, especially the powers reserved to the Governor General, as demonstrated in Cuba where the same act applied, left all essential power in Spanish hands. This part of the article should be deleted.

The value judgements concerning some of the governors and other politicians may or may not be true, but they do not belong in an article of this type. They represent the "liberal" and the "Puerto Rican" views but not necessarily the best historical judgement.

The pro-independence convictions of the politicians were never strong, this is revealed in their actions when faced with what they said they wanted. While there was some room for doubt about this before the Tydings Bill, there was none thereafter. Their aim all along was not to get independence, but to win wider self-government, coupled with more power within the protection of the U.S. This point should be made clear though it steps on the toes of the Puerto Ricans.

The tone of the article assumes that in all matters the U.S. was wrong and the Puerto Ricans right, that having taken them in 1898 we thereby incurred an incalculable debt. This was the viewpoint of Diffie in Porto Rico, A Broken Pledge, but it does not seem right in retrospect. The abuses went hand in hand with a progress made possible by U.S. ownership of the Island.

There is some significance in the number of responsible U.S. officials who became somewhat anti-Puerto Rican after dealing with the islanders (politicians of the islands, at least).

In discussing the Cadetes de la Republica the Massacre of Palm Sunday should perhaps be mentioned.

The last paragraph about Tydings and the apparent scorn of the American market seem to be bitter in one case and too casual about the benefits of the American market in another.

There are a number of typing errors which Gattall should correct.

As for other readers: outside the board, perhaps Earl Hanson, who would give a volcanic report of some kind. Or, perhaps Munoz might read it; or, Tomas Blanco of San Juan

Sorry I cannot think of anybody else just now.

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