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1ST SESSION

H. R. 2781

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GOVT. SOURCE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 26, 1945

Mr. MARCANTONIO introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Insular Affairs

A BILL

To provide for the withdrawal of the sovereignty of the United States over the island of Puerto Rico and for the recognition of its independence; to provide for the notification thereof to foreign governments; to provide for the assumption by the government of Puerto Rico of obligations under the treaty with Spain on December 10, 1898; to define trade and other relations between the United States and Puerto Rico; to provide for the calling of a convention to frame a constitution for the government of the island of Puerto Rico; to provide for certain mandatory provisions of the proposed constitution; to provide for the submission of the constitution to the people of Puerto Rico and its submission to the President of the United States for his approval; to provide for the adjustment of property rights between the United States and Puerto Rico; to provide for the maintenance of military, coaling, and naval stations by the United States

on the island of Puerto Rico until the termination of the war between the United States and Germany and Japan; to continue in force certain statutes until independence has been acknowledged; and for other purposes.

Whereas, as a result of the treaty ending the Spanish-American War, the island of Puerto Rico, the island of Cuba, and the Philippine Islands came within the jurisdiction of the United States and under the authority of Congress; and

Whereas, in assuming this responsibility, three duties devolved upon Congress: (1) To establish civil government, (2) to promote the welfare of the inhabitants, and (3) to take final action at the proper time as to the definite and permanent political status of these islands and their peoples; and

Whereas those three duties have been discharged with regard to the island of Cuba and are in process of final fulfillment with respect to the Philippine Islands; and

Whereas, in the discharge of the first of these duties with respect to Puerto Rico, Congress in 1900 and in 1917 established and developed forms of civil government by delegating certain powers to the people of Puerto Rico; and

Whereas, in the discharge of the second of these duties with respect to Puerto Rico, Congress has from time to time passed laws and made appropriations from public funds to promote the general welfare of the people of Puerto Rico; and

Whereas, in spite of this discharge of its first two duties by Congress with respect to Puerto Rico, the people of Puerto Rico still lack the right of complete self-government, as well as the full power to regulate their economic and social life in accordance with their own wishes and on the basis of a

republican form of government of their own creation and choosing; and

Whereas the people of Puerto Rico are entitled to full and complete independence both as a matter of principle and broad American policy; and

Whereas the production in the island of Puerto Rico under the prevailing system is not sufficient even to meet the present low standards of living, it being necessary for the United States to provide tax privileges and Federal appropriations which are a burden upon millions of continental citizens not receiving the benefits of our relations with Puerto Rico; and

Whereas the maintenance of Puerto Rico within the economic unit of the United States enjoins the island from promoting the development of production in order to attain adequate standards of living; and

Whereas, notwithstanding the appropriations made by Congress to promote the welfare of the island, the economic conditions in Puerto Rico are such that the people of the United States and the Federal Treasury are increasingly subjected to financial strain to alleviate the economic distress in Puerto Rico, a situation which is unjust to the people of Puerto Rico and to the people of the United States; and

Whereas the time is now proper and opportune for Congress to discharge its third duty with respect to Puerto Rico, as it has already discharged it with respect to other territory that came under the jurisdiction of the United States as a result of the Treaty of Paris; that is, to determine the final and permanent political status of the island and its people in a manner that shall be mutually satisfactory and beneficial to the people of Puerto Rico and to the United States; and

Whereas Congress has full authority under the Constitution and the laws to make such determination, with Presidential approval; and

Whereas in honoring the principle of democracy upon which the people of the United States have reared their whole national existence, it is deemed fair that the people of Puerto Rico shall have a voice and vote in determining under what conditions their whole future life is to be established: Therefore

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
 2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*
 3 That it is hereby declared to be the policy of Congress to
 4 acknowledge the right of the people of Puerto Rico to their
 5 independence and to grant themselves their own constitu-
 6 tion. It is furthermore declared to be the policy of Congress
 7 to maintain with the people of Puerto Rico, after inde-
 8 pendence, a mutually fair and beneficial commercial rela-
 9 tionship, evolved through the instrumentalities provided for
 10 in this Act.

11 CONVENTION TO FRAME CONSTITUTION FOR PUERTO RICO

12 SEC. 2. The Legislature of Puerto Rico is hereby au-
 13 thorized to provide for the election of delegates to a con-
 14 stitutional convention, which shall meet in the capital of
 15 Puerto Rico at such time as the Legislature of Puerto Rico
 16 may fix within one year after the enactment of this Act,
 17 to formulate and draft a constitution for the government of
 18 the Republic of Puerto Rico, subject to the conditions and

1 qualifications in this Act, which shall exercise jurisdiction
• 2 over all the territory in the West Indies ceded to the United
3 States by articles II of the Treaty of Peace concluded be-
4 tween the United States and Spain on the 10th day of
5 December of the year 1898. The laws relating to qualifica-
6 tions of voters and the safeguarding of elections which
7 governed the election of November 7, 1944, in Puerto
8 Rico shall apply to this election, with such modifications
9 and additions as may be provided by law, in order to carry
10 out the purpose of securing a true expression of the will
11 of the people of Puerto Rico.

12 CHARACTER OF CONSTITUTION—MANDATORY PROVISIONS

13 SEC. 3. The constitution formulated and drafted shall
14 provide for a government, republican in form, shall contain
15 a bill of rights, including freedom of religious worship, free-
16 dom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly,
17 the right to petition, freedom from unreasonable searches and
18 seizures, and shall furthermore continue and guarantee all
19 the rights, privileges, and immunities at present enjoyed by
20 the people of Puerto Rico under the Constitution of the
21 United States, and shall expressly guarantee all persons
22 and corporations against any expropriation of property with-
23 out due process of law, and provide for reasonable, prompt,
24 equitable, and effective compensation for any property taken
25 for public use.

1 SUBMISSION OF THE CONSTITUTION TO THE PRESIDENT OF
2 THE UNITED STATES

3 SEC. 4. Upon the drafting and approval of the consti-
4 tution by the constitutional convention in Puerto Rico, the
5 constitution shall be submitted within two years after the
6 enactment of this Act to the President of the United States,
7 who shall determine whether or not it conforms with the pro-
8 visions of this Act. If the President finds that the proposed
9 constitution conforms substantially with the provisions of this
10 Act, he shall so certify to the Governor of Puerto Rico,
11 who shall so advise the constitutional convention. If the
12 President finds that the constitution does not conform with
13 the provisions of this Act, he shall so advise the Governor
14 of Puerto Rico stating where in his judgment the consti-
15 tution does not so conform and submitting provisions which
16 will in his judgment make the constitution so conform. The
17 Governor of Puerto Rico shall in turn submit such message
18 to the constitutional convention for further action by them
19 pursuant to the same procedure hereinbefore defined, until
20 the President and the constitutional convention are in agree-
21 ment.

22 SUBMISSION OF THE CONSTITUTION TO THE PEOPLE OF
23 PUERTO RICO

24 SEC. 5. After the President of the United States has
25 certified that the constitution conforms with the provisions of

1 this Act, it shall be submitted to the people of Puerto Rico
2 for their ratification or rejection at an election to be held
3 within four months after the date of such certification, on a
4 date to be fixed by the Legislature of Puerto Rico, at which
5 election the qualified voters of Puerto Rico shall have an
6 opportunity to vote directly for or against the proposed con-
7 stitution. Such election shall be held in such manner as may
8 be prescribed by the Legislature of Puerto Rico to which the
9 return of the election shall be made. The laws relating to
10 qualifications of voters and the safeguarding of voters and the
11 safeguarding of elections which governed the election in
12 Puerto Rico of November 7, 1944, shall apply to this elec-
13 tion. The Legislature of Puerto Rico shall by law provide
14 for the canvassing of the returns and shall certify the result
15 to the Governor of Puerto Rico, together with a statement
16 of the votes cast, and a copy of said constitution. If a ma-
17 jority of the votes cast shall be for the constitution, the
18 Governor shall, within thirty days after receipt of the certi-
19 fication from the Puerto Rico Legislature, issue a proclama-
20 tion for the election of officers of the government of the Re-
21 public of Puerto Rico provided for in the constitution. The
22 election shall take place not earlier than three months nor
23 later than six months after the proclamation by the Governor
24 ordering such election, and the qualifications for voting and
25 the safeguards for such election shall be as provided in such

1 constitution. When the election of the officers provided for
2 under the constitution has been held and the results deter-
3 mined, the Governor of Puerto Rico shall certify the results
4 of the election to the President of the United States, who
5 shall thereupon issue a proclamation announcing the results of
6 the election, and upon the issuance of such proclamation by
7 the President the existing government of Puerto Rico shall
8 terminate and the new government shall enter upon its rights,
9 privileges, powers, and duties, as provided under the con-
10 stitution. The present government of Puerto Rico shall pro-
11 vide for the orderly transfer of the functions of government.

12 If a majority of the votes cast are against the constitu-
13 tion, then the constitutional convention shall frame a new
14 constitution, which shall be transmitted to the President
15 within six months after certification of the result of the
16 election, and the procedure provided in section 4 and in this
17 section shall be followed until a constitution framed in ac-
18 cordance with the provisions of this Act receives the favor-
19 able vote of a majority of the votes cast at an election held
20 as herein provided. In the event of the rejection of such a
21 newly framed constitution by the duly qualified votes of Puerto
22 Rico, then the constitutional convention shall be considered
23 permanently dissolved and a new election of delegates to a
24 constitutional convention shall be held within one year from
25 the date of such rejection and a new constitution shall be

1 submitted for the approval of the people of Puerto Rico,
2 following the procedure herein provided.

3 TRANSFER OF PROPERTY RIGHTS TO THE REPUBLIC OF
4 PUERTO RICO

5 SEC. 6. All the property and rights which may have
6 been acquired in the island of Puerto Rico by the United
7 States under the treaty mentioned in the second section
8 of this Act are hereby transferred to the Republic of Puerto
9 Rico: *Provided, however,* That this shall not deprive the
10 United States from establishing and maintaining military
11 and naval or air bases until the termination of the present
12 war with Germany and Japan, such clause to be contained
13 in the treaty to be signed between the Republic of Puerto
14 Rico and the United States. Any further arrangements for
15 necessary naval, military, and air bases shall be made by
16 treaty agreements.

17 ECONOMIC RELATIONS AFTER THE INDEPENDENCE OF
18 PUERTO RICO

19 SEC. 7. As soon as the constitutional convention meets
20 to draft the constitution, it shall designate a committee spec-
21 ially charged with the duty of negotiating a commercial
22 treaty between Puerto Rico and the United States. The
23 committee thus designated shall carry out the negotiations
24 with the Department of State, which shall follow such pro-

1 cedure as the Secretary of State shall provide with the
2 approval of the President. Treaty relations shall be drafted
3 according to the following provisions:

4 (a) All goods now imported into the United States
5 from Puerto Rico, or which may in the future be imported
6 in accordance with treaty regulations, shall be admitted
7 free of all duties into the United States market up to the same
8 amount in dollars as articles imported in Puerto Rico from
9 the United States shall be admitted free of all duties. The
10 necessary rules shall be established in the treaty for the
11 effective enforcement of the foregoing provision, whereby,
12 and supplementing other rules that may govern the com-
13 mercial interexchange between both countries, the mutual
14 debits and credits resulting from other considerations shall
15 be settled and any balance which may result in any year,
16 shall be carried over to the next year for the settlement of the
17 accounts thereof, so that the exchange of values be main-
18 tained upon a basis of strict mutuality. Values of imports
19 and exports shall be computed at prices prevailing in the
20 domestic market of the United States.

21 (b) The treaty shall be drafted in such terms that in the
22 economic relations between the United States and Puerto
23 Rico, the volume of commerce now carried on, measured in
24 dollars, shall not be reduced by the exclusive will of one of
25 the parties. Such volume of trade, measured in dollars,

1 shall be established in the treaty, and computed on the
2 basis of a period of representative years of normal relations,
3 agreed upon by both contracting parties. However, this
4 rule shall not prevent any one of the two countries, if it be
5 possible to obtain in the other country any goods different
6 from those specified in the treaty, from eliminating one or
7 more items from the list of goods approved in the treaty if
8 the amount in dollars be substituted with other items: *Pro-*
9 *vided, however,* That items figuring in the treaty under the
10 designation of "Fixed imports" will not be subject of elimi-
11 nation or change unless by mutual agreement of the parties.
12 Any other item or items of importation not figuring in said
13 list of fixed imports may be eliminated at will by either
14 importing party if provision is made by the importing party
15 to the end that the corresponding amount in dollars is sub-
16 stituted by other item or items figuring in the export trade
17 of the other party: *And provided further,* That when a fall
18 in the prices of the goods figuring in the export list of either
19 party takes place in the market of the other importing party,
20 the exporting party may decrease the mutuality basis by
21 decreasing the importation of goods from the other party in
22 an amount equivalent to the decrease in the selling prices of
23 the goods of the exporting party, due to such fall in prices.

24 (c) Any subsidy or benefit payment which is at present
25 provided by any one of the two governments, for the benefit

1 of producers of any item of commerce between the two coun-
2 tries, whether such subsidy or benefit payment be to promote
3 agricultural or industrial processes, shall be counted as a
4 part of the selling price of the article and shall be paid by the
5 government which makes the concession through the govern-
6 ment of the country the producers of which are entitled
7 thereto.

8 (d) All rights and benefits acknowledged to Puerto
9 Rican citizens under the laws of the United States by virtue
10 of their status as veterans of war and by virtue of their
11 status as retired employees of the Federal Government, and
12 all rights and benefits acknowledged under the laws of Con-
13 gress to families or relatives of Puerto Rican veterans of
14 war and of Puerto Rican retired employees of the Federal
15 Government, shall be entirely maintained and respected by
16 the Government of the United States. Said rights and
17 benefits are considered "vested rights" and deemed as addi-
18 tional compensation due for services rendered to the Gov-
19 ernment of the United States of America. The payments
20 which are to be made by the Government of the United
21 States for said consideration, either directly or indirectly,
22 shall be made through the government of the Republic of
23 Puerto Rico up to the complete settlement according to the
24 aforesaid laws and are not to be counted in relation with the
25 provisions of paragraph (a) of this section. The same re-

1 sponsibility shall be assumed toward the Treasury of the
2 United States by the government of the Republic of Puerto
3 Rico, in order to give adequate protection and enforcement
4 to the rights and benefits which have been acknowledged to
5 continental citizens of the United States by similar laws of
6 the Legislature of Puerto Rico, which are in force at the time
7 of the approval of this Act.

8 (c) During the period of the effectiveness of the first
9 treaty, and during not less than ten years after the proclama-
10 tion of independence, provisions (a) and (b) under this
11 section shall govern the commercial relations between both
12 countries: *Provided*, That at any time after the expiration
13 of such period, or extensions of such period agreed thereto
14 by both countries, the said provisions (a) and (b) of this
15 Act unless modified by treaty agreement, shall continue in
16 force, with the exception, that substitution of items of com-
17 merce as provided in paragraph (b) shall not be binding
18 for either party, and elimination of items shall be governed
19 by the following rule: Items of commerce may be eliminated
20 by any importing party from the exporting list of the other
21 party totally in one year, or by equal parts among a number
22 of years, according to its importance in value as compared
23 to the total amount of imports, thus—

24 (1) if the item to be eliminated does not exceed

1 5 per centum of the total amount of imports, it can be
2 eliminated totally in one year;

3 (2) if it exceeds 5 per centum and does not exceed
4 15 per centum, it can be eliminated in three years;

5 (3) if it exceeds 15 per centum and does not ex-
6 ceed 30 per centum, it can be eliminated in six years;

7 (4) if it exceeds 30 per centum and does not ex-
8 ceed 50 per centum, it can be eliminated in eight years;

9 and

10 (5) if it exceeds 50 per centum, it can be elimi-
11 nated in ten years.

12 The reciprocal rights of both parties may be effectively exer-
13 cised by either party pursuant to official notice served to the
14 other party at least one hundred and eighty days before the
15 first day of the business year when such elimination is to
16 take place.

17 SEC. 8. The treaty between the United States and
18 Puerto Rico, once approved according to the foregoing
19 principles, both by the Department of State of the United
20 States and by the Committee of the Constitutional Conven-
21 tion of Puerto Rico as hereinbefore provided, shall be sub-
22 mitted for ratification to the Senate of the United States
23 and to the constitutional convention of Puerto Rico as a
24 whole, but it shall not become effective until the date at
25 which the President of the United States issues the procla-

1 mation announcing the results of the election of the officers
2 provided for in the new constitution, as provided in section
3 5 of this Act.

4 LIQUIDATION OF TAX PRIVILEGES AND ELIMINATION OF
5 FEDERAL APPROPRIATIONS

6 SEC. 9. All tax privileges and concessions granted to
7 Puerto Rico under existing laws and all Federal appropria-
8 tions regularly in force and applicable to Puerto Rico by ac-
9 tion of Congress shall be liquidated or eliminated, as follows:

10 (a) All internal revenues now levied and collected or
11 which shall be levied and collected by the Government of
12 the United States on goods at present produced and which
13 shall continue to be produced in Puerto Rico and sold in
14 the United States market, which are now paid to the treasury
15 of Puerto Rico, shall continue to be collected and paid in
16 full to the treasury of the Republic of Puerto Rico during
17 five years after the proclamation of the Republic by the
18 President.

19 (b) After the termination of the period of five years
20 referred to in paragraph (a), internal revenues levied and
21 collected or which shall be levied and collected by the
22 Government of the United States on goods produced in
23 Puerto Rico and sold in the United States market shall be
24 in part paid every year to the Treasury of the Republic
25 of Puerto Rico, reducing from the total amount so collected

1 one-fifteenth during the first year, two-fifteenths during the
2 second year, and so on, so that at the end of a period of
3 fifteen years all such internal revenues shall be fully re-
4 turned and totally deposited with the Treasury of the United
5 States.

6 (c) All Federal appropriations provided by Congress
7 for services to be rendered in Puerto Rico, regularly pro-
8 vided for by the United States (excluding appropriations for
9 military purposes), shall continue to be provided in a lump-
10 sum appropriation each year, and shall be paid and de-
11 posited annually with the treasury of Puerto Rico, during
12 a period of five years after the proclamation of the Republic
13 of Puerto Rico by the President of the United States: *Pro-*
14 *vided*, That after the termination of the said period of five
15 years the total amount of the said appropriation shall be re-
16 duced each year, the first year one-fifteenth, the second
17 two-fifteenths, and so on, so that after a period of fifteen years
18 no more funds of the United States Government shall be ap-
19 propriated, deposited, or paid to the Treasury of the Re-
20 public of Puerto Rico.

21 RECOGNITION OF INDEPENDENCE OF PUERTO RICO AND

22 WITHDRAWAL OF AMERICAN SOVEREIGNTY

23 SEC. 10. On the date fixed by the new constitution of
24 Puerto Rico, which shall not be later than three months after
25 the proclamation issued by the President of the United

1 States announcing the results of the election of officers for
2 the first government of the republic of Puerto Rico, there
3 shall be held the inauguration of the new government of
4 Puerto Rico under the constitution provided for in this Act.
5 On such date, the President of the United States shall by pro-
6 clamation withdraw and surrender all rights of possession,
7 supervision, jurisdiction, control, and sovereignty then exist-
8 ing and exercised by the United States in and over the terri-
9 tory and people of Puerto Rico, excepting all military, naval,
10 and other reservations of the Government of the United
11 States in Puerto Rico as hereinbefore provided; and, on
12 behalf of the United States, shall recognize the independence
13 of Puerto Rico as a separate and self-governing nation and
14 acknowledge the authority and control over Puerto Rico
15 of the government instituted by the people of Puerto Rico
16 under the constitution then in force.

17 NOTIFICATION TO FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS

18 SEC. 11. Upon the proclamation and recognition of the
19 independence of Puerto Rico, the President shall notify the
20 governments with which the United States is in diplomatic
21 correspondence thereof and invite said governments to recog-
22 nize the independence of Puerto Rico.

23 CITIZENSHIP

24 SEC. 12. All Puerto Ricans with domicile in the island
25 of Puerto Rico, as herein defined, who were granted and

1 acquired American citizenship pursuant to the provisions of
2 the Organic Act of Puerto Rico approved March 2, 1917,
3 and their descendants with domicile in the island of Puerto
4 Rico, as herein defined, on the date of the proclamation of
5 the republic by the President of the United States, shall
6 become citizens of the republic of Puerto Rico. Puerto Ricans
7 who acquired American citizenship by virtue of said Act, as
8 well as their descendants, domiciled in the United States or
9 elsewhere outside the territorial jurisdiction of Puerto Rico
10 on the date of the proclamation of the republic by the Presi-
11 dent, may acquire Puerto Rican citizenship by filing a decla-
12 ration of intention to do so at any moment after six months
13 from such date, with any Federal court, ambassador, or con-
14 sular officer of the United States: *Provided*, That such Puerto
15 Ricans shall retain American citizenship until such declara-
16 tion of intention be filed. Likewise all American citizens
17 native-born or naturalized in the mainland territory of the
18 United States and their descendants, domiciled in Puerto
19 Rico at the date of the proclamation of the republic by the
20 President, may after six months from such date become citi-
21 zens of the republic of Puerto Rico pursuant to the filing of
22 declaration of intention to do so with the corresponding Dis-
23 trict Court of Puerto Rico.

24 All Puerto Ricans in the armed forces of the United
25 States shall be turned back to Puerto Rico to the place of

1 induction by the United States Government, upon the termi-
2 nation of the present war with Germany and Japan, and
3 once discharged from duty shall be granted all privileges and
4 shall assume all duties as citizens of the republic of Puerto
5 Rico without any formal requirement therefor: *Provided,*
6 That this paragraph is not applicable to Puerto Ricans in-
7 ducted in the armed forces of the United States from any-
8 where outside the territorial limits of Puerto Rico.

9

PROCESSING TAXES

10 SEC. 13. The United States will pay to the government
11 of the republic of Puerto Rico the aggregate sum of all
12 processing taxes collected in Puerto Rico by virtue of the
13 Act of May 9, 1934 (48 Stat. 670), which have not been
14 refunded to processors or expended or obligated for expendi-
15 tures in Puerto Rico for the benefit of agriculture prior to the
16 proclamation of independence.

17

ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO PUERTO RICO

18 SEC. 14. Within sixty days after the passage of this
19 Act the President shall appoint a commission of five experts
20 who shall make a thorough survey of the economic condi-
21 tions on the island of Puerto Rico, and who shall within
22 six months after the date of their appointment render a
23 written report to the President embodying the results of
24 their investigation and study. The report of the commission
25 shall contain recommendations as to the form of assistance

1 which the Government of the United States may render to
2 the people of Puerto Rico to enable them to attain a greater
3 degree of economic and social well-being. Within six months
4 after the rendering of such report the President shall, if he
5 deems it advisable, recommend to the Congress of the United
6 States specific recommendations for assisting the republic of
7 Puerto Rico, after its inauguration, in improving the condition
8 of the people of Puerto Rico.

9 IMMIGRATION AFTER INDEPENDENCE

10 SEC. 15. Upon the final and complete withdrawal of
11 American sovereignty over Puerto Rico the immigration laws
12 of the United States shall apply to persons who were born
13 in Puerto Rico to the same extent as in the case of other
14 countries in the Western Hemisphere.

15 CERTAIN STATUTES CONTINUED IN FORCE

16 SEC. 16. Except as in this Act otherwise provided, the
17 laws now in force in Puerto Rico shall continue in force in
18 the republic of Puerto Rico until altered, amended, or re-
19 pealed, and all references in such laws to Puerto Rico shall be
20 construed to mean the government of the republic of Puerto
21 Rico. The government of the republic of Puerto Rico shall
22 be deemed successor to the present government of Puerto
23 Rico and of all the rights and obligations thereof. Except as
24 otherwise provided in this Act, all laws or parts of laws re-
25 lating to the present government of Puerto Rico and its ad-

1 ministration are hereby repealed as of the date of the inaugu-
2 ration of the government of the republic of Puerto Rico.

3 SEC. 17. If any provision of this Act is declared uncon-
4 stitutional or the applicability thereof to any person or
5 circumstances is held invalid, the validity of the remainder
6 of the Act and the applicability of such provisions to other
7 persons and circumstances shall not be affected thereby.

8 PROVISIONS OF CERTAIN EXPENSES

9 SEC. 18. All necessary expenses of the elections, the
10 constitutional conventions, and the commissioners designated
11 by the convention in the negotiation of the proposed com-
12 mercial agreement under this Act shall be provided by the
13 Legislature of Puerto Rico. The sum of \$10,000 is hereby
14 authorized to defray all necessary expenses of the commis-
15 sioners designated by the President of the United States in
16 the negotiation of the proposed commercial agreement under
17 this Act.

18 There is hereby authorized the sum of \$25,000 to defray
19 all necessary expenses of the economic commission of five,
20 none of whom shall, however, receive any salary, but whose
21 expenses in attending to their duties shall be paid out of
22 such sum. The commission may engage the service of
23 experts, research workers, counsel, stenographic, and other
24 help required to carry out its duties.

A BILL

To provide for the withdrawal of the sovereignty of the United States over the island of Puerto Rico and for the recognition of its independence ; to provide for the notification thereof to foreign governments ; to provide for the assumption by the government of Puerto Rico of obligations under the treaty with Spain on December 10, 1898 ; to define trade and other relations between the United States and Puerto Rico ; to provide for the calling of a convention to frame a constitution for the government of the island of Puerto Rico ; to provide for certain mandatory provisions of the proposed constitution ; to provide for the submission of the constitution to the people of Puerto Rico and its approval ; to provide for the adjustment of property rights between the United States and Puerto Rico ; to provide for the maintenance of military, coal, and naval stations by the United States on the island of Puerto Rico until the termination of the war between the United States and Germany and Japan ; to continue in force certain statutes until independence has been acknowledged ; and for other purposes.

By Mr. MARGANTOXO

MARCH 26, 1945

Referred to the Committee on Insular Affairs