3A. Decree of June 23, 1898, establishing the Revolutionary Government*. (English translation)

Don Emilio Aguinaldo y Famy, President of the Revolutionary Government of the Philippines and Commander-in-Chief of its Army.

This Government in its desire to prove to the Filipino people that one of its aims is to combat with firm resolution the inveterate vices of the Spanish administration, replacing its irresponsible and pompous ostentation of doing things with a much more modest, simple and expeditious manner of discharging public functions; I hereby decree the following:

Chapter I

Of the Revolutionary Government

Article 1. The Dictatorial Government shall henceforth be called Revolutionary Government, the object of which is to fight for the Independence of the Philippines until all free nations, including Spain, expressly recognize her, and to prepare the country to become a true Republic.

The Dictator shall henceforth be called President of the Revolutionary Government.

Art. 2. Four Department Secretaryships are hereby created. One of Foreign Relations, Marine and Commerce; another of War and Public Works; another of Police and Internal Peace and Order, Justice, Education and Hygiene; and another of Finance, Agriculture and Industry.

The number of the Department Secretaryships may be increased if it be found that they are inadequate to cope with the multiple and complicated problems of public service.

Art. 3. Each Department Secretaryship shall help the President in the proper discharge of the affairs pertaining to each.

Each Department shall be headed by a Secretary who shall not be responsible for the Decrees issued by the President; however, he shall sign them, with the President, in order to give evidence of their authenticity.

However, if the Decree is issued at the proposal of a Department Secretary, he shall be responsible jointly with the President.

Art. 4. The Department of Foreign Relations shall have 3 Bureaus: one of Diplomacy; another, of Marine; and another, of Commerce.

The first Bureau shall study and direct all those matters pertaining to diplomatic negotiations with foreign powers as well as the correspondence of this Government with them; the second, shall study all mat-

* Translated from Tagalog by the author.
ters relating to the creation and organization of our Marine of War and to the necessity of making war expeditions; the third, shall concern itself with internal and external commerce and the execution of commercial treaties with other countries.

Art. 5. The Secretaryship of War shall have 2 Bureaus: one, of War, and another, of Public Works.

The first Bureau shall have 4 Divisions: one, of Campaigns; another of Military Justice; another, of Military Administration; and another, of Military Sanitation.

The Division of Campaigns shall be concerned with the recruitment and screening of those who serve in the Revolutionary Militias; in directing campaigns, drafting of war plans, works of fortifications, and circulation of notices of movements of battles; in the study of military tactics for the Army and the organization of land, artillery, and cavalry forces; and lastly, in the discharge of other matters relating to military campaigns and operations.

The Division of Military Justice shall concern itself with matters relating to military tribunals and trials; in the appointment of jurors and assessors and in the discharge of functions which are juridico-military in nature.

The Division of Military Administration shall take charge of food supplies and other necessities of the Army; and the Division of Military Sanitation shall take charge of matters relating to hygiene and well-being of the militias.

Art. 6. The other Department Secretaryships may have such number of Bureaus, and the Bureaus of such Divisions and Sections as may be necessary, taking into account the nature and importance of the functions embraced.

Art. 7. The Department Secretary shall inspect and supervise the work of his Department and execute the same with the President of the Republic. Each Bureau shall have a Director, and each Division, an official in charge with such number of employees needed.

Art. 8. The President shall choose his Secretaries at his discretion, and in consultation with the latter, appoint all the personnel of the department.

However, in the appointment of employees, favoritism should be eliminated, because the good name of the country and the triumph of the Revolution require the services of truly capable persons.

Art. 9. The Department Secretaries may attend sessions of the Revolutionary Congress whenever they have legislative proposals to submit in the name of the President, or are required to answer some questions from the Representatives; but when their proposals in Congress or
the object of their appearance therein are to be voted upon, the Secretary concerned must leave, and shall not take part in the voting.

Art. 10. The President of the Government is the personification of the Filipino people, and under this concept, he may not be held liable for his acts during the discharge of his office.

This exemption from liability shall last until the victory of the Revolution is fully attained, unless by reason of extraordinary circumstances he is obliged to present to the Congress his resignation, in which case another suitable person shall be elected in his place.

Chapter II

Of the Revolutionary Congress

Art. 11. The Revolutionary Congress is an Assembly of Representatives from all the provinces of the Philippine Archipelago, elected in the manner provided for in the Decree of June 18 of the current year.

In the provinces which could not elect Representatives due to the fact that the greater portion of the inhabitants thereof have not yet been liberated from the Spanish rule, the Government may provisionally appoint such number of persons considered most capable by reason of their education and social position, provided they have been born and resided for a long time therein.

Art. 12. The Representatives shall assemble in the town where the Revolutionary Government resides and in such building as this Government may designate, and proceed to do the preliminary work, designating by plurality vote a Commission composed of 5 persons to take charge of giving accreditation of the chosen Representatives, and another Commission of 3 persons who shall examine the documents presented by the aforementioned 5 Commission members.

Art. 13. On the day following, the said Representatives shall reassemble and the two Commissions shall read their respective reports on the authenticity of the documents examined, resolving by absolute majority vote, those credentials of doubtful authenticity.

Thereafter, by absolute majority vote also, a President, one Vice-President, and two Secretaries shall be elected from among the elected Representatives, notifying the Government of the results of the election.

Art. 14. The place of session of the Congress is sacred and inviolable and no armed forces may penetrate into it, unless the President of the same itself so petitions in order to restore order caused by persons who do not know how to honor it and its august functions.

Art. 15. The powers of the Congress are: To work for the general welfare of the Filipino people and to implement the laws of the Revolution; discuss and vote upon said laws; discuss and approve all treaties
and loans; examine and approve the accounts of general expenses presented annually by the Secretary of Finance as well as all extraordinary contributions and others that may be subsequently imposed.

Art. 16. The Congress shall also be heard in all grave matters which admit of delay or deliberation; but the President of the Government may himself resolve those matters which are urgent in character, without prejudice to informing the Congress of the measures taken by means of a massage.

Art. 17. Any Representative may present to Congress any bill; so also, any Department Secretary by order of the President of the Government.

Art. 18. The sessions of Congress shall be public and only in cases which require secrecy shall they be held in secret.

Art. 19. In its deliberations and internal affairs, Congress shall be governed by its own Rules which it may draft. The President shall preside over its deliberations but shall not vote except in case of a tie.

Art. 20. The President of the Government shall not impede nor prevent the holding of sessions by Congress.

Art. 21. Congress shall designate a permanent Commission of Justice presided by the Vice President aided by one of the Department Secretaries and with these and seven others elected by plurality vote, from among the Representatives, shall compose the said Commission.

This Commission shall decide on appeal all criminal cases decided by the provincial councils; and shall have exclusive and original jurisdiction to decide cases filed against Department Secretaries and provincial and municipal officials.

Art. 22. Congress shall keep a Book of Honor wherein shall be noted the names of those who have rendered great service to the country and regarded as such by the said body. Any Filipino, civilian or military, may petition Congress the notation therein of his relevant services supported by documents since the start of the Revolution. For extraordinary services which may arise in the future, the Government at its initiative may propose such notation, justified by the relevant documents.

Art. 23. The Congress shall also, upon the proposal of the Government, grant compensation in cash to families which had become victims of their valor and patriotism in accomplishing acts of heroism.

Art. 24. The grants of Congress shall not be obligatory until the President of the Government orders their compliance and fulfillment. When the said President believes that any congressional grant is uncalled for, he shall oppose its execution, and if the Congress should insist, the President may exercise his veto power for which he alone shall be responsible.
Chapter III

Of Military Procedure

Art. 25. When the Chief of a Military detachment has notice that a member of the military has committed a crime or has violated any military rule, he shall inform the Zone Commander thereof, who shall appoint a judge and a secretary who shall institute the formal proceedings in accordance with the Rules stated in the Decree of June 20th. If the accused has the rank of at least a lieutenant, the Zone Commander shall himself be the judge, and if the accused is the superior provincial commander, the judge appointed shall have a rank of higher grade and if none available, then by another superior commander. The judge shall always pertain to a class of chiefs.

Art. 26. The proceedings having been instituted, the superior commander shall designate three other members of the same rank as the judge, and the said judge together with said three members and an assessor shall constitute the War Council of the President. The Zone commander shall be the chairman, if the accused is a sergeant or below, and the superior commandant shall preside if the accused has the rank of a lieutenant and above.

This Council shall decide the case in the same manner or is done by the provincial councils; but its decision may be appealed to a superior War Council.

Art. 27. This superior war council is composed of 6 members each of whom shall have at least the rank of Brigadier General, and the Auditor of War. Should the member of brigadier generals who reside in the capital of the Revolutionary Government does not reach 6, the number may be supplemented by Representatives designated and commissioned by the Congress. The most senior among the generals shall be the Chairman of the Council, and should there be more, or their rank are equal, the Chairman shall be elected by majority vote.

Art. 28. The superior War Council shall have exclusive original jurisdiction of cases over superior commanders, zone commanders, and those military men having the rank of commander and above.

Art. 29. The following military crimes are committed by:

1. Those who failed to give immunity to the persons and property of foreigners and Filipinos, to establishments and red cross ambulances and to persons or things found therein, so long as they do not show acts of hostility; (2) those who failed to give due respect to the life, money and jewels of the enemy who had surrendered their arms, and of prisoners of war; (3) Filipinos who gave their services to the enemy, engaged in espionage and the discovery of war secrets and plans of the revolutionary positions and fortifications and those who pose as members of Congress without in truth being such; (4) those who failed to give immunity to flags of truce as recognized by international law.
They shall also be guilty of military crimes: (1) Those who attempt to destroy the unity among revolutionists, provoking rivalry among chiefs, and forming armed bands and divisions; (2) those who sought contributions without government authority and malverse public funds; (3) those who, being armed, surrender to the enemy and execute acts of cowardice in the face of the enemy; (4) those who hide any person who has not done anything wrong to the Revolution, those who rape women or assassinate or inflict grave physical injuries to defenseless persons, and those who execute acts of robbery and arson.

Art. 30. Those committing the above-enumerated crimes are considered enemies of the Revolution and shall be punished according to the Spanish Penal Code in its maximum degree.

If the act does not appear punishable under said Code, the culprit shall be imprisoned until the Revolution triumphs, unless the military court by reason of an irreparable damage caused by the act, imposes the penalty of death.

**Additional Provisions**

Art. 31. The Government shall establish abroad a Revolutionary Committee, composed of an indeterminate number of persons considered the most competent in the Philippine Archipelago. This Committee shall be divided into 3 missions: one for Diplomacy, another for Marine, and another for the Army.

The Diplomatic Mission shall negotiate with the foreign ministries for the recognition of Philippine belligerency and independence.

That for Marine shall take charge of studying and organizing the Philippine War Marine and preparing expeditions demanded by the necessities of the Revolution.

That for the Army shall study military tactics and the best way of organizing an army corps, artillery and engineering corps, and all means of giving the Philippine army modern equipment.

Art. 32. The Government shall issue the necessary instructions to put into effect the present Decree.

Art. 33. All decrees heretofore issued by the Dictatorial Government, which are in conflict hereto are hereby deemed repealed.

Given at Cavite, this 23rd day of June 1898.

—EMILIO AGUINALDO