

OIL & FAT INDUSTRIES

The Editor's Page

Protectionists Persist

THE high-tariff advocates are already shaping their plans for the future. Feeling that efforts further to increase the tariff on sugar, vegetable oils and similar commodities will be unsuccessful at this time, particularly in the face of Presidential opposition to such procedure, they are reverting again to the proposal to levy full tariff duties on all products imported from the Philippine Islands. The latest effort in this direction has taken the form of a proposed amendment to the tariff act, sponsored by Senator Broussard of Louisiana. Senator Broussard proposes to return to the Philippine Treasury all receipts of duties on Philippine products collected at American ports, the proceeds to be used in furthering educational and other development in the Islands, in order that they shall be sooner prepared for the complete independence to which some of the natives aspire. At the same time, of course, all industries in this country which come into competition with Philippine produce will have the benefit of the added protection. The sugar cane planters of Senator Broussard's State and the beet growers of the Middle West would see the growing menace of Philippine sugar partially checked, and the copra crushers, the tobacco growers and the rice planters would all join in praise.

The prevalent opinion in informed circles in Washington is that the backers of Senator Broussard's proposed amendment do not confidently expect it to be successful in connection with the pending tariff legislation, but are skillfully laying their lines for a real fight in the next Congress on this issue.

This suggested amendment comes on the heels of a suggestion on which the domestic and Cuban sugar producers have been conferring, looking to the placing of a differential tariff against Philippine sugar, equal to the increase in the duty on Cuban sugar. Its proponents lost hope of securing the adoption of this proposal when Secretary of State Stimson went before the House Ways and Means Committee and denounced the plan to limit the amount of Philippine sugar which could be imported to this country.

The time seems to approach when our Con-

gress and indeed the Administration as a whole must adopt a fixed program in relation to the Philippine Islands, and give the Filipinos and Americans (in the Philippines as well as at home) positive assurance that the program will be adhered to over a period of years. If those who claim the Islanders have been promised their independence are correct, and if the Filipinos really desire that independence, a definite program looking to such grant within a given period of ten or twenty years, should be adopted and adhered to. It might then be desirable to build gradually a system of import duties on the products of the islands, so that at the time of assuming independence, the Philippine industries would not suffer from the sudden erection of a high tariff wall around their best market. If, on the other hand, we are to stand as guide and protector to this infant nation for an indefinite period of years, it seems absurd to threaten them every year with the club of a tariff barrier held over their commerce with us, their avowed friend and guardian.

Discounts and Credits

IF there are any things in the daily routine of business which are abused more than another, they are credit terms and cash discounts. There are those who will attempt to deduct a so-called cash discount from invoices which are thirty and sixty days old, and there is no end of firms who will permit this practice in order to avoid controversies with customers. Houses without number have all sorts of credit rules and regulations which are just so many empty words because the rules are never enforced. The reasons for this are obvious. Attempts to enforce such rules frequently cause a certain class of buyers to shift their business elsewhere. Sellers do not want to lose this business and as a consequence, permit many buyers to do just about as they like in the payment of bills and deduction of discounts.

Where there is a set of group credit rules, formulated by a trade association or agreed to by a number of firms who join together for this purpose, the problem is somewhat simpli-