

**October 16, 1957**  
**50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1<sup>st</sup> PHILIPPINE ASSEMBLY**

**STAMP COMMEMORATING THE 50<sup>th</sup>  
ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST  
PHILIPPINE ASSEMBLY**

The inauguration of the First Philippine Assembly on October 16, 1907 was among the significant events in the annals of our history, for it manifested the first exercise of the right of suffrage being enjoyed by our people. While only 100,493 Filipino voters out of 104,966 registered voters went to the polls, it was indeed an important step towards the establishment of democracy in the Philippines.

The Philippine Bill of 1902 enacted by the Congress of the United States provided for the creation of the Philippine Assembly to be composed of Filipinos elected by the people. The following were the other important provisions of the Philippine Bill of 1902:

1- The extension to the Filipinos of the Bill of Rights, such as the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; the freedom of speech, meeting and the press; the right to ask the government for redress of grievances; no imprisonment for debt; and equality before the law;

2- The sending of two Filipino resident commissioners to the Congress of the United States; and

3- The preservation of the natural resources of the Philippines for the Filipinos.

Thus, five years after President Theodore Roosevelt proclaimed the existence of peace in the Philippines (July 4, 1902), and two years after the publication of the first Philippine census, eighty delegates were elected to compose the First Philippine Assembly. It took place at the Grand Opera House in Manila with the 28-year old Sergio Osmeña as speaker and the late Manuel L. Quezon as the majority floor leader. The Assembly acted as the lower house in the exercise of legislative powers over all the Christian population of the Philippines.

The stamp was prepared by N. Dimanlig, Jr., philatelic designer, and printed by Thomas de la Rue & Co., Ltd. of London.

