

History Club meeting Presentation on September 25, the "Philippine-American War, better known in the United States as Philippine Insurrection, 1899-1902."

This is a closed chapter in American history and a relevant antecedent of the Vietnam War. The word "Insurrection" is a wrong term applied to this conflict. This word implies a violent uprising against a legal and authorized government. When the war broke in 1899, there was no legal and authorized American government in the Philippines, in fact, the Philippines declared her Independence on June 12, 1898. The Philippines has been calling this conflict, the Philippine-American War for the past one hundred years, and in 1999, the United States Library of Congress recognized it, and renamed the conflict as such. As a historical background, the Philippines was under Spanish rule for 333 years. Over the years, the Filipinos had many unsuccessful uprising against Spanish colonial rule all ended in failures for lack of unity and solid leadership, until the Revolution of 1896 when eight provinces in Luzon under the leadership of Emilio Aguinaldo and Andres Bonifacio led a successful campaign to expel the Spaniard in the Philippines. December 1897, Spanish monarchy sued for peace, because of the on-going revolution in Cuba simultaneously and anticipating American intervention, and for financial reason as well, it was too costly for Spain to fight two revolutions.

Spanish-American war broke in Cuba on April 21, 1898 and the Battle of Manila Bay, May 1, 1898. After three and a half months of war, Spanish sued for peace on August 12, 1898, which ended the Spanish-American War. In the Treaty of Paris, December 10, 1898, Spain ceded the Philippines to the United States and additionally, Spain received twenty million US dollars as payment for acquiring the Philippines. In addition, the United States acquired Puerto Rico and Guam.

There were many causes of Philippine-American War: (1), Foremost to the Filipinos was the strong rejection to the Treaty of Paris provision- unlawfully ceding the Philippines to the United States and American occupation of the Philippines; (2) US desires for overseas territory and coaling station; (3) extension of the Monroe Doctrine, manifest Destiny and the Anglo-Saxon superiority complex all rolled into one. The war started on February 4, 1899 and ended on July 4, 1902. This was a very brutal and bloody war. It was very clear in the beginning that the Americans looked at the Filipino soldiers and Filipinos as a people with contempt. Since many of the generals were veterans of the Indian wars, they treated the Filipinos as savages, uneducated, uncivilized and belong to the inferior race.

The Philippine Army fought the war in 2 phases. The first phase was conventional war that lasted from February 4 to November 30, 1899. The American Army were better trained and equipped, well supplied, better discipline and led by generals who were veterans of American Civil War and Indian Wars. This was no match to the Philippine Army led by General Emilio Aguinaldo who were under equipped, undisciplined, lacked supplies, poorly trained and no outside help of any kind. The second phase of the war was "guerrilla warfare." General Aguinaldo and his war council realized that fighting conventional war was futile. So he disbanded his army and organized them into 50-100 men/unit and resorted to guerrilla tactics: This was the most brutal part of the war. General Aguinaldo was captured on March 23, 1901 and took allegiance to the United States two weeks later. General Miguel Malvar took command of the remnants of the Philippine army and continued the war of independence. When the guerillas ambushed or attacked American camp or detachment, the American responses were to burning of towns and villages, shooting civilian

including children and women. They destroyed food supplies, livestock, burned rice, corn, and sugar cane fields. They utilized the extreme measures and campaign of anxiety and terror.

Captured Filipino soldiers and suspected civilians of being guerrillas were subjected to torture, including the use of "water cure or water boarding" to extract information. One province in Central Philippines was converted into "howling wilderness" after burning the province and massacred the population. In another province, the population was placed in the concentration camp without provision for food, sanitation and proper housing, people dying of infectious diseases and starvation and to make matter worse, destruction of their properties and houses burned. There were so much atrocities committed by both sides, but the American did the most. General Miguel Malvar surrendered on April 13, 1902. On July 4, 1902, President Theodore Roosevelt proclaimed the war was over into a successful conclusion.

This was a war of conquest, subjugation and colonization. One hundred twenty-six thousand American officers and soldiers served in the war with 4296 dead. The Filipinos lost 20,000 men killed in action and 500,000 civilians died from violence of war as well as starvation and disease. The Philippines was an American colony from 1902-1946. The United States returned Philippines Independence on July 4, 1946.

The official Philippines- Independence Day is June 12, 1898. The United States Senate Select Committee conducted hearings on the conduct of the war and atrocities done as well. The result of the investigations amounted to nothing because of lies, denials and covered-up. Furthermore, officers and enlisted men, including General Jacob Smith who issued the most despicable order to burn and to convert the entire province of Samar to a "howling wilderness" and kill every man 10 years and older were all exonerated. General Smith was found guilty of conduct prejudice to good conduct and military discipline: penalty- to be reprimanded by his superior officer. The rest were suspended for 2 weeks active duty and fine \$ 25.00.

The American Legacy: The Filipinos adopted Democracy, the Educational System and the American-Republican form of government.