

LESSON 2: THE PHILIPPINES CRISIS, 1899

Student Handout 3

SHORT OUTCOMES

President McKinley and his advisers decided to keep the Philippines. Here are some of the unintended consequences of that decision. Which of them did you anticipate?

1. The Filipinos fought a guerrilla war against U.S. forces in which both sides engaged in torture and execution of prisoners.
2. U.S. generals censored the American press in the Philippines, setting a precedent for censorship in later wars.
3. Significant protests against the war broke out in numerous U.S. cities. War supporters criticized the protesters for undermining American soldiers. The war divided the country.
4. Many American soldiers hated the war and were critical of some of the military leaders. Some also despised the Filipinos, calling them “niggers” and “Injuns” (they had fought Indians just prior to the war).
5. The U.S. suffered losses of 4234 killed and 2818 wounded. The war cost the U.S. \$600 million (about \$30 billion in 2002 dollars). Approximately 20,000 Filipino soldiers were killed and 200,000 civilians died, mostly from starvation. U.S. troops killed more people in the Philippines in three years than the Spanish had killed in 350 years.
6. When the U.S. took over, it built roads, hospitals, and bridges, and increased the literacy rate from 20% to 50%. English was taught in the schools and became the dominant language (which is one reason Filipinos work in large numbers for American companies today).
7. In 1916, the U.S. became the first Western power to grant some form of self-rule to a colony when it did so with the Philippines.
8. The country achieved a level of democracy, but poor people couldn't vote, and rich people dominated the government.
9. Until the 1960s, the Philippine economy expanded greatly, as it was tied to U.S. imports and exports.
10. As predicted, the U.S. could not effectively defend the Philippines, and in a World War II battle against Japan, it lost approximately 25,000 soldiers, many of whom died in the Bataan Death March.
11. Asian countries began to view the U.S. as cruel and imperialistic. Years later, communist leaders such as Mao Zedong and Ho Chi Minh played on Asian dislike of America.



Filipino soldiers returning to camp