

NAME: _____ DUE DATE: _____

Role Play Outline of:
SHOULD US TAKE THE PHILIPPINES

Overview:

- Class Divided into 7 groups:
 1. President William McKinley (Republican)
 2. Presidential Candidate William Jennings Bryan (Democrat)
 3. Senator Alfred Beveridge (R-Indiana)
 4. Samuel Gompers (President of American Federation of Labor)
 5. Colored Citizens of Boston
 6. Emilio Aguinaldo (President of Philippine Independence Movement)
 7. Clemencia Lopez (Filipino Independence activist)
- Each Group will represent the perspective of their character(s) in a whole class role play discussion

Homework #1—Character Preparation: In preparation for the role play, read ALL the character statements and complete the “Character Preparation Chart” on the back of this sheet.

Homework #2—Philippines Position Brief: In this part, you switch roles out of whatever role you had for the class discussion and into the role of “Special Advisor to the President for Telling Him What to Do.” In this role, you serve the president and his interests. You are responsible for writing a “position brief” that analyzes the Philippines situation with recommends a position. The “position brief” is 1-page in length should take the following format:

- (1) **Problem**—in paragraph 1, you briefly describe the problem/issue
- (2) **Goals**—in paragraph 2, you articulate & prioritize America’s goals & how the Philippines problem is relevant
- (3) **Options**—in approximately 1-2 sentences, list the options that are open. (annexing or independence are the 2 core options but you must come up with at least 1 more)
- (4-6) **Analysis**—the next 3 paragraphs analyze the options. Consider likelihood of positive & negative outcomes
- (7) **Recommendation**—in about 1 sentence make your recommendation to the President

① President William McKinley (Republican)

In this 1903 statement to a visiting church delegation, President William McKinley defends his decision to support the annexation of the Philippines in the wake of the U.S. war in that country.

When I next realized that the Philippines had dropped into our laps I confess I did not know what to do with them. . . And one night late it came to me this way. . . 1) That we could not give them back to Spain- that would be cowardly and dishonorable; 2) that we could not turn them over to France and Germany-our commercial rivals in the Orient-that would be bad business and discreditable; 3) that we not leave them to themselves-they are unfit for self-government-and they would soon have anarchy and misrule over there worse than Spain's wars; and 4) that there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all, and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them, and by God's grace do the very best we could by them, as our fellow-men for whom Christ also died.

Text and audio version available on the American Social History Project CD-ROM *Who Built America?, 1876-1914*.

② William Jennings Bryan (Democratic presidential candidate in 1896 and 1900)

Initially supportive of U.S. expansion into the Philippines, Democratic presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan soon made anti-imperialism a standard plank in his stump speeches during the 1900 campaign.

Imperialism is the policy of an empire. And an empire is a nation composed of different races, living under varying forms of government. A republic cannot be an empire, for a republic rests upon the theory that the government derive their powers from the consent of the government and colonialism violates this theory. We do not want the Filipinos for citizens. They cannot, without danger to us, share in the government of our nation and moreover, we cannot afford to add another race question to the race questions which we already have. Neither can we hold the Filipinos as subjects even if we could benefit them by so doing. . . . Our experiment in colonialism has been unfortunate. Instead of profit, it has brought loss. Instead of strength, it has brought weakness. Instead of glory, it has brought humiliation.

"Speeches of William Jennings Bryan," Michigan State University Voice Library. Audio version available on the CD-ROM *Who Built America?, 1876-1914*, by the American Social History Project. For historical commentary and links to many of Bryan's speeches on imperialism, see <http://www.boondocksnet.com/ail/bryan.html>.

③ Senator Alfred Beveridge (R-Indiana)

From a speech in Congress on January 9, 1900.

... [J]ust beyond the Philippines are China's illimitable markets. . . We will not renounce our part in the mission of our race, trustee of God, of the civilization of the world. . . Where shall we turn for consumers of our surplus? . . . China is our natural customer. . . [England, Germany and Russia] have moved nearer to China by securing permanent bases on her borders. The Philippines gives us a base at the door of all the East. . . They [the Filipinos] are a barbarous race, modified by three centuries of contact with a decadent race [the Spanish]. . . It is barely possible that 1,000 men in all the archipelago are capable of self-government in the Anglo-Saxon sense. . . The Declaration [of Independence] applies only to people capable of self-government. How dare any man prostitute this expression of the very elect of self-government peoples to a race of Malay children of barbarism, schooled in Spanish methods and ideas? And you, who say the Declaration applies to all men, how dare you deny its application to the American Indian? And if you deny it to the Indian at home, how dare you grant it to the Malay abroad.

Congressional Record, 56th Congress, 1st session, 704-711. Full speech available at <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/ajb72.htm>.

④ Colored Citizens of Boston

Resolved, That the colored people of Boston in meeting assembled desire to enter their solemn protest against the present unjustified invasion by American soldiers in the Philippines Islands.

Resolved, That, while the rights of colored citizens in the South, sacredly guaranteed them by the amendment of the Constitution, are shamefully disregarded; and, while frequent lynchings of Negroes who are denied a civilized trial are a reproach to Republican government, the duty of the President and country is to reform these crying domestic wrongs and not attempt the civilization of alien peoples by powder and shot.

The Boston Post, July 18, 1899. Reprinted in D. Schirmer and S.R. Shalom (eds.) *The Philippines Reader* (Boston: South End Press, 1987), 33. For historical commentary and many resources on African Americans in the anti-imperialist movement, see <http://www.boondocksnet.com/a1/afamhist.html>

⑤ Imperialism -- Its Dangers and Wrongs

By Samuel Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labor

Extract from a speech delivered at the Chicago Peace Jubilee, Oct. 18, 1898.

It is worse than folly, aye, it is a crime, to lull ourselves into the fancy that we shall escape the duties which we owe to our people by becoming a nation of conquerors, disregarding the lessons of nearly a century and a quarter of our national existence as an independent, progressive, humane and peace-loving nation. We cannot with safety to ourselves, or justice to others keep the workers and the lovers of reform and simple justice divided, or divert their attention, and thus render them powerless to expose abuses and remedy existing injustice.

A "foreign war as a cure for domestic discontent" has been the device of tyrants and false counselors from time immemorial, but it has always lead to a Waterloo, a Sedan, to certain decadence and often utter ruin. In our country we are perhaps too powerful to incur outside disaster; but we shall certainly court worse evils at home if we try to benumb the nation's sense of justice and love of right, and prevent it from striving earnestly to correct all proved errors.

If the Philippines are annexed what is to prevent the Chinese, the Negritos and the Malays coming to our country? How can we prevent the Chinese coolies from going to the Philippines and from there swarm into the United States and engulf our people and our civilization? If these new islands are to become ours, it will be either under the form of Territories or States. Can we hope to close the flood-gates of immigration from the hordes of Chinese and the semi-savage races coming from what will then be part of our own country? Certainly, if we are to retain the principles of law enunciated from the foundation of our Government, no legislation of such a character can be expected.

In a country such as ours the conditions and opportunities of the wage-earners are profoundly affected by the view of the worth or dignity of men who earn their bread by the work of their hands. The progress and improvement in the condition of the wage-earners in the former slave States have been seriously obstructed for decades in which manual labor and slave labor were identical. The South now, with difficulty, respects labor, because labor is the condition of those who were formerly slaves, and this fact operates potentially against any effort to secure social justice by legislative action or organized movement of the workers. If these facts have operated so effectually to prevent necessary changes in the condition of our own people, how difficult will it be to quicken our conscience so as to secure social and legislative relief for the semi-savage slave or contract laborers of the conquered islands?

If we attempt to force upon the natives of the Philippines our rule, and compel them to conform to our more or less rigid mold of government, how many lives shall we take? Of course, they will seem cheap, because they are poor laborers. They will be members of the majority in the Philippines, but they will be ruled and killed at the convenience of the very small minority there, backed up by our armed land and sea forces. The dominant class in the islands will ease its conscience because the victims will be poor, ignorant and weak. When innocent men can be shot down on the public highway as they were in Lattimer, Pa., and Virden, Ill., men of our own flesh and blood, men who help to make this homogenous nation great, because they dare ask for humane conditions at the hands of the moneyed class of our country, how much more difficult will it be to arouse any sympathy, and secure relief for the poor semi-savages in the Philippines, much less indignation at any crime against their inherent and natural rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness?

Samuel Gompers (1850-1924) was a vice president of various anti-imperialist organizations from 1898-1921. During the campaign against ratification of the Treaty of Paris, the Cigar Makers Union that he helped to create was the most active participant among labor organizations.

⑥ Emilio Aguinaldo (President of the Independent Philippine Republic)

From "To the Philippine People" in Major-General E.S. Otis, *Report of Military Operations and Civil Affairs in the Philippine Islands, 1899* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1899), 95-96.

R. . . I published the grievances suffered by the Philippine forces at the hand of the [U.S] army of occupation. The constant outrages and taunts, which have caused misery of the people of Manila, and, finally, the useless conferences and the contempt shown the Philippine government prove the premeditated transgression of justice and liberty. . . . I have tried to avoid, as far as it has been possible for me to do so, armed conflict, in my endeavors to assure our independence by pacific means and to avoid more costly sacrifices. But all my efforts have been useless against the measureless pride of the American government. . .

Reprinted in D. Schirmer and S.R. Shalom (eds.), *The Philippines Reader* (Boston: South End Press, 1987), 20-21.

⑦ Clemencia Lopez (An Activist in the Philippine Struggle for Independence)

"Women of the Philippines: Address to Annual Meeting of the New England Woman's Suffrage Association, May 29, 1902."

I believe that we are both striving for much the same object- you for the right to take part in national life; we for the right to have a national life to take part in. . . . Mentally, socially, and in almost all the relations of life, our women are regarded as the equals of our men. . . . this equality of women in the Philippines is not a new thing. It was not introduced from Europe. . . Long prior to the Spanish occupation, the people were already civilized, and this respect for and equality of women existed. . . in the name of the Philippine women, I pray the Massachusetts Woman Suffrage Association do what it can to remedy all this misery and misfortune in my unhappy country. You can do much to bring about the cessation of these horrors and cruelties which are today taking place in the Philippines, and to insist upon a more human course. . . you ought to understand that we are only contending for the liberty of our country, just as you once fought for the same liberty for yours.

The Woman's Journal (June 7, 1902). Reprinted in full at:
http://www.boondocksnet.com/wj/wj_19020607.html.

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⑧ Filipino Opinion of Reconcentration

El Renacimiento (June 30, 1905)

We have insisted on calling the attention of the government to the alleged cruel proceedings as they took place. At the end of last May, in consequence of the reconcentration which the Philippine commission authorized the constabulary to establish, or which it took leave to enforce, not only in Cavite, but also in the other provinces, we gave the matter a thorough examination. The civil commission has just approved a law giving the governor-general power to order reconcentration in the barrios of Cavite and wherever else it should be necessary. Our arguments against this stringent measure have had no influence with the government, and did not produce any amelioration of the conditions.

It seems that the magnanimous spirit which in the American Congress cried out so indignantly against the Weylerian proceedings in Cuba is unconcerned about conditions in the Philippines. The ordinance of the civil commission has fallen like a pestilence on the unfortunate people of Cavite. It is only natural that the present state of affairs should fill us with the gravest apprehension. We say frankly and with deep sorrow that this measure which causes so much suffering is not justified by the good at which it claims to aim. There are created by it feelings of animosity and rancor that will not be forgotten for many years,-- perhaps never. This same view of the situation was taken by a famous American, the son of Gen. Grant.

Does America desire to establish herself in the hearts of the Filipinos? Does she not at least desire to refrain from creating resentment in their minds? Then let her rectify these deeds! "Whoever sows hatred will reap wrath and hatred twofold." We are not ignorant of the object of this rigorous campaign to suppress the outlaws, but the people, especially the lower classes, do not reason, they can only feel, and what affects them are ruin, hunger and nakedness. We can only trust that the authority put into the hands of the governor-general may lie dormant, and especially that he will never employ it to distress the unfortunate townspeople of Cavite.