Dr. Geoff Babb, Department of Military History, US Army Command and Staff College
On 20 April 1898, President William McKinley announced that a state of war now existed with Spain. Ten days later, Commodore George Dewey’s American Asiatic Squadron destroyed the Spanish fleet in the Battle of Manila Bay.
President McKinley’s Decision to Occupy the Philippines

Take up the White Man's burden
   The savage wars of peace
   Fill full the mouth of famine
   And bid the sickness cease;
And when your goal is nearest
   The end for others sought,
Watch Sloth and heathen Folly
Bring all your hopes to nought.

-Rudyard Kipling

April 25th 1898

A Policy of
“Benevolent Assimilation”

“We blundered into colonization.”
   W. H Taft, 1905
The Philippines: America’s Far Outpost in the Pacific

6000 Thousand Nautical Miles (MNL-SFO)
War in the Philippines: The Tyrannies of Distance & Geography

[Maps showing distances and geography of the Philippines]
1. The Campaign at Sea against the Spanish: The Battle of Manila Bay
   (May-August 1898)
2. The Campaign on Land against the Spanish: The Capture of Intramuros
   (August-December 1898)
3. The Conventional Campaign against the Filipino forces of Aguinaldo
   (December 1898-November 1899)
4. The Counterinsurgency Campaign against the Filipino Guerrillas
   (November 1899-July 1902)
Asiatic Squadron: Hong Kong, April 1898

USS Monterey and USS Charleston

Commodore George Dewey

Flagship: USS Olympia in Hong Kong

Emilio Aguinaldo in Singapore & Hong Kong

“Aguinaldo: Honest, sincere, and a natural leader of men”

“Insurrectos or amigos?”
Philippines 1898: The Battle of Manila Bay

1 May 1898

- Spanish Losses: 77 KIA, 277 WIA, 8 Ships Sunk
- USN Losses: 9 WIA, 1 Ship Damaged
US Navy Senior Commanders in the Philippines, 1898-1902:
Commodore George Dewey
May 1898-May 1899
Rear Admiral J. C. Watson
June 1899-April 1900
Rear Admiral George C. Remey
April 1900- March 1902
US Army Senior Commanders in the Philippines, 1898-1902:

Major General Wesley Merritt, July 1898-August 1898

Major General Elwell S. Otis, August 1898-May 1900

Major General Arthur MacArthur, May 1900-July 1901

Major General Adna R. Chaffee, July 1901-October 1902

http://peacehistory-usfp.org/1898-1899/
Spring 1898: Preparing the US Army 8th Corps for War

1st South Dakota Vol Inf Regt

51st Iowa and 55th New York Vol Inf Regts

Leadership on Parade

1st California Vol Inf Regt

San Francisco, California Area
US Army 8th Corps Leadership

Chancellorsville
Gettysburg
Winchester
Appomattox (Bvt MG)

Enlisted 6th Ohio
Commissioned
Wilderness (Bvt Major)
Spotsylvania (Bvt LTC)

Chickamauga
Stone’s River
Franklin
Atlanta (Bvt Colonel)

Brother of the XO
on the USS Monitor
West Point 1870
Russo-Turkish War
8th Corps Departs San Francisco, May-June 1898

1st Nebraska Vol

1st North Dakota and 1st Washington Vols

1st Deployment 28 May (Anderson)
2nd Deployment 15 June (Greene)
3rd Deployment June (Merritt & MacArthur)
Aguinaldo Forces -- 10,000-20,000
The Spanish Leadership

Diego De Las Rios
Panay, Iloios Province
Sep-Dec 1898

Fermin Jaudenes
Governor General
of the
Spanish Colony
of the Philippines
Jul-Aug 1898
Enemy Forces-- 9,000 Spanish & 4,000 Filipino Troops

- Spanish Cavalry
- Spanish Artillery
- Spanish Infantry
- A Counterinsurgency Army
- Native Spanish Infantry
US Army Forces Reg & Vol (8,500)

Fourteenth United States Infantry (5 companies),
Twenty-third United States Infantry (2 battalions),
Thirteenth Minnesota Volunteers,
First North Dakota Volunteers (2 battalions),
First Idaho Volunteers (2 battalions),
First Wyoming Volunteers (1 battalion),
Astor Battery.

Eighteenth United States Infantry (2 battalions),
Third United States Artillery (1 battalion of 4 batteries),
Company A, Battalion of United States Engineers,
First California Volunteers,
First Colorado Volunteers,
First Nebraska Volunteers,
Tenth Pennsylvania Volunteers,
Batteries A and B, Utah Light Artillery.
August 13th 1898: The Battle for Manila

Naval Gunfire Support

1st Colorado Vols
The Fortress at Intramuros in Manila Surrenders

The “Mock” Battle of Manila
13 August 1898

BG Greene with POWs

Intramuros

Spanish Infantry Company
Aug 1898: MG Merritt Passes Command to MG Otis

“.... the twofold purpose of completing the reduction of Spanish power....and of giving order and security to the islands....” 10 May 1898

Merritt & Otis

13th Minnesota Inf as Police

Cdr, 1st Montana with Japanese Military Attache
MG Otis Commands from Aug 1898 to May 1900

Harvard Law 1860

140th NY Vols 1862

Battles of Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, Spotsylvania, the Overland Campaign, and the Siege of Petersburg

Bvt Brigadier General

and,

Long Service in the American West during the Indian Wars in Montana

Commander of the Columbia and Colorado Depts
Office U. S. Military Governor in the Philippine Islands,
Manila, P. I., September 13, 1898.

The Commanding General of the Philippine Forces.

Sir: Referring to my communication of September 8, I have the honor to inform you that I have had a most agreeable conversation with certain gentlemen who are in the interests of your revolutionary government upon the matters therein contained. We have discussed at length the complications now existing, which will exist, and will doubtless increase, while our troops continue to occupy jointly certain districts of the city of Manila. I have urged upon them the necessity of the withdrawal of your troops in order that the friendly relations which have always been maintained by and between them and the forces of the United States Government may be perpetuated. I am sure that the gentlemen fully appreciate my sentiments and will clearly report them to you. May I ask you to patiently listen to their report of our conversation?

It is my desire that our friendly intercourse and mutual amicable relations be continued; that they be not jeopardized if we can by consistent action avoid it, and such I am certain is the desire of yourself and associates.

May I ask, therefore, that you withdraw your troops from Manila?

Permit me to add in conclusion that I have that confidence in your ability and patriotism which will lead you to accede to this request.

I am, with great respect, your most obedient servant.

E. S. Otis,
Major-General, U. S. V.,
United States Military Governor in the Philippines.
Philippines Sep 1898: Military HQ and Gov’t in Malalos

Meeting of the Congress of the 1st Philippine Republic

Military Forces
Philippines Dec 1898- Feb 1899: The Fuse is Lit

The Treaty of Paris
10 Dec 1898

"Benevolent Assimilation"
21 Dec 1898

President William McKinley

Senate Ratification
6 Feb 1899
The Philippine-American War Begins: 4-5 Feb 1899

Incident at the San Juan Bridge

Pvt. William Grayson

1st Nebraska Vol
Philippines, 1898-1902: The Key Role of the Navy

Arms Blockades & Commerce Patrols

San Fabian Campaign
Amphibious Landings

Headquarters & Logistics Support

Naval Fire Support

Philippines, 1898-1902: Key US Army Weapons

- Gatling Gun
- 45-70 Trapdoor Springfield
- 30-40 Krag-Jorgenson
- 3.2 Inch M1897 Light Field Gun
- “Civilize them with a Krag”
Philippines, 1898-1902: Special Capabilities

- US Laguna Del Ray Gunboat
- Utah Vol Light Artillery
- Railroad Transport
- Signal Corps
- Cavalry and Engineers
Philippines, 1898-1902: Special Units & Missions

J. Franklin Bell
Office of Military Information

24th Inf Buffalo Soldiers

9th Cav Buffalo Soldiers

Young’s Scouts

4th US Mounted Infantry
Major Campaigns from February-December 1899

Philippino Revolutionary “Regulars”

The 1st South Dakota Vol Inf Regt
Campaigns from February-December 1899

1. Manila Campaign 4 Feb-17 Mar
2. Iloilo Campaign 8-12 Feb
3. Malolos Campaign 24 Mar-16 Aug
4. Laguna de Bay Campaign 8-17 Apr
5. 1st San Isidro Campaign 21 Apr-30 May
6. Zapote River Campaign 13 Jun
7. Cavite Campaign 7-13 Oct
8. 2nd San Isidro Campaign 10 Oct-20 Nov
9. Tarlac Campaign 5-20 Nov
10. San Fabian Campaign 6-19 Nov
11. Cagayan Valley Campaign Dec 1899 (USN/USA)

12. Supporting Naval Blockade & Treaty 19 Aug 1899-

25 seagoing gunboats (USN)
10 river steamers (Armed USA)
Zamboanga, Cebu, Iloilo, and Vigan.

Sultan of Sulu signed a treaty for American sovereignty, on Jolo, Zamboanga, and Siassi.
November 1899: A “Hybrid” War Begins.

Tarlac Campaign Nov 1899
Large and Small-Scale Ops
William Howard Taft was the first head of the Philippine Commission from March 16, 1900 until July 4, 1901, after which the commission's head also became the Civil Governor of the Philippines.

Implementing “Benevolent Assimilation”
MacArthur’s Long Service in the Philippines:

1st Brigade 2nd Division

2nd Division, Eighth Corps
Department of North Luzon

Military Governor of the Philippines (1898-1901)

One of his Regimental Commanders:
Colonel Frederick Funston
20th Kansas Volunteers (1898-1902)

MG MacArthur Relieves MG Otis in May 1900

MG Arthur MacArthur Relieves MG Otis in May 1900

COL Funston
CDR, 20th Kansas Volunteer Infantry

MG MacArthur
Commanding General & Governor-General
General Order No. 12 (Sep 1900)
American China Relief Expedition

1st U.S. Marine Regiment (1 Bn)
3rd U. S. Infantry Regiment (1 Bn)
5th U. S. Artillery Regiment (Btry F)
6th U. S. Cavalry Regiment
9th U. S. Infantry Regiment
14th U.S. Infantry Regiment
15th U.S. Infantry Regiment (1 Bn)
Engineers
Signals
Hospital Corps
Supported by the USN

An Eight-Nation Relief Expedition in the Summer of 1900
US Troop Levels in 1900: 47.5K (Jun) & 75K (Dec)

The forces are now available for a Policy of Chastisement under General Arthur McArthur

Three Types of Army units served: Regulars, State Volunteers, and US Volunteers
Pacification (Carrots): Nation Building

Soldiers as:
- Public Administrators
- Teachers
- Economic Advisors
- Organizers and Trainers of Local Police
- Justices and Lawyers
Pacification (Sticks): General Order 100 (Lieber Code)

The “Water Cure”
Interrogations
Summary Executions
Forced Dislocations

The American Occupation of the Philippines
1898–1912

By
James H. Blount

Officer of United States Volunteer in the Philippines, 1899–1901
United States District Judge in the Philippines, 1901–1905

“Concentration”
Population Control

Reprisal Village Burnings

“Concentration”
Population Control

Forced Dislocations
Indigenous Forces with the US Army (5,000 in 1901)

Igorot Guides

Philippine Constabulary

Macabebe Scouts with US Officer

US Officers with the Philippine Scouts

Philippine Constabulary
Funston graduated from Iola High School in 1886. He attended the University of Kansas from 1886 to 1890.
Aguinaldo in Custody, but the Conflict Continues

Aguinaldo & Funston

Funston’s Filipino Support
Stability Ops: 500+ Platoon & Company Outposts, 1901-1902

- Patrolling
- Ambushes
- Route Security
- Area Security
- Build & Support Local Authorities

The Battle of Balangiga (Oct 1901)
The Bells of Balangiga (On Samar)

Co C, 9th US Inf (44KIA/14WIA/4 MIA)

Bolos: The Weapon of the Filipino Guerrilla

20th Kansas Vol Inf Regt
02 July 1902: Directive From President Roosevelt (Extract)

The general commanding division of the Philippines....

shall be at all times subject, under the orders of the military commander, to the call of the civic authorities for maintenance of law and the enforcement of their authority.

America’s Philippine Colony is now under American Civilian Control.
President Teddy Roosevelt: Declares Victory on 4 July 1902

30th US Infantry Parade in Manila 4 July 1902

Roosevelt Memorial Day 1902
1899-1903
Zamboanga, Iligan, and Camp Vicars

1909-1913
Military Governor
Moro Province

Postscript: War is Over, Low-Level Conflict Continues throughout the islands

Colonel
John J. Pershing
As our forces of liberation roll forward the splendid aid we are receiving from guerrilla units throughout the immediate objective area and adjacent islands causes me at this time to pay public tribute to those great patriots both Filipino and American who had led and supported the resistance movement in the Philippines since the dark days of 1942.

General Douglas MacArthur

United States Army Forces
in the Philippines

USAFIP-Northern Luzon

A Division Equivalent of Five Infantry Regiments
(11th, 14th, 15th, 121st, & 161st)

Col. Russell W. Volckmann

Postscript: A Guerrilla Tradition & Independence in 1946
Postscript: Out the Bases (1991) & Terrorism Today

CPP/NPA

MNLF

Abu Sayaf

Subic Bay/Cubi Point

Clark Air Force Base

Jolo 24 Aug 2020
(14 Dead, 75 WIA)

Special Operations
Training Feb 2020
Postscript: Post WW2 to the Present: From Marcos to Marcos
Secretary of Defense Austin’s Visit in 2023.

Philippines Agree to Larger American Military Presence

The two sides have also agreed to grant the U.S. armed forces access to additional bases under Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreements.

Postscript: The U.S.–Philippines Defense Treaty and the SCS: A Flashpoint

Disputed claims in the South China Sea

Claims
- China
- Philippines
- Malaysia
- Brunei
- Vietnam

Area:
South China Sea covers more than 3 million sq km

Trade:
Over $5 trillion in ship-borne trade passes through the sea annually

Oil and gas:
Major unexploited oil and gas deposits are believed to lie under the seabed

Sources: CSIS/AMTI/D. Rosenberg/Middlebury College/HarvardAsiaQuarterly/Phil.gov.ph/ChinaMaritimeSafetyAdministration
War in the Philippines: Great Sources (Books & On-Line)

https://history.army.mil/books/amh-v1/ch15.htm
The Administration's promises have been kept

1896 - 1900

The American flag has not been planted in foreign soil to acquire more territory but for humanity's sake.

McKinley, July 12, 1900.