

The aftermath of the spanish-american war and brutality in the philippines



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In order to accurately respond to the question of whether or not the American forces in the Philippines after the Spanish-American war and during the Philippine-American war were in fact brutal, we must first look at why the wars started in the first place.

The Philippine-American war was sparked from the Spanish-American war. Spain owned the Philippines at the time and the American government wanted to take down the Spanish from all sides and the Filipino government was all too eager to help them. They wanted their independence, so at first there were factions of the military who fought alongside the United States to drive the Spanish out. However the U. S.

got greedy after a swift victory and the prospect of gaining new territory was all too enticing to pass up. So, the U. S. turned on its promise to the Filipino government to help them establish their independence and tried to take over for themselves. However the Filipino government was not so easily cooperative and they felt betrayed—and rightfully so— by the United States and they felt that they had to make a run for their independence now since they were already in the midst of war. One of the leaders of the Philippine war was Emilio Aguinaldo.

He led the Filipino revolutionists to victory against the Spanish army. However, unbeknownst to the Filipinos, American forces had secretly signed an agreement with Governor-General Fermin Jaudenes of the Spanish army. They agreed that the city of Manila, was to only be surrendered to the American forces under the false pretenses of a mock battle and that no Filipinos would be allowed to enter the city. Spain was burnt by their defeat

and saw that the only way to have some sort of victory was to not let the Filipinos have independence by secretly helping the Americans—blinded by their own greed for expansion— to become the ruling force in the Philippines.

1) As a result, the Spanish government ceded the Philippines to the United States in the 1898 Treaty of Paris, and the American forces took hold of what was considered to be the strongest military position in the Philippines and on January 1, 1899, Aguinaldo was declared President. (2) Feeling unrest at their betrayal, Aguinaldo felt that it was his responsibility to give his people the freedom and independence that they had been fighting for and so, he declared war on the United States on June 2, 1899.

The war itself continued for 3 years until 1902, and the casualties amounted to 4, 196 American soldiers dead, and 2, 930 were wounded. Small numbers compared to the 34, 000 Filipino soldiers who had died during battle and approximately 200, 000 civilians who are thought to have died as either casualties of the war or from the cholera epidemic that broke out in the last legs of the war and the years following. (3) Much of the “ brutality” of the American soldiers towards the Filipinos is probably largely attributed to the fact that America had much more advance technology, weapons, and means of communication. They had been an established country for over 100 years where as the Philippines were just starting out on their own. However, that is not to say that there was no actual brutality and unnecessary force exercised on the Filipino people. Or vice versa.

In 1900 Aguinaldo switched his war strategy from conventional to guerrilla warfare. As a result, the Philippine Army began staging bloody ambushes and raids against the American occupants. Unfortunately this only angered <https://assignbuster.com/the-aftermath-of-the-spanish-american-war-and-brutality-in-the-phillipines/>

Americans and led them to become even more ruthless than before. There are accounts of poor treatment of prisoners of war, and the pillaging of small civilian countryside towns, in which all of the buildings, livestock and farmland were burned so as to destroy any means by which the Filipino armies could gain supplies or an advantage, torture of prisoners for information and the movement of civilians into what they called “ protected zones”, which in all actuality were concentration camps, and the routine shooting surrendering Filipino soldiers.

4) The African-American populations in the United States were sentimental to the Filipinos plight. This is mostly because, while the Filipinos were being conquered by an advanced America, they were treated terribly, as inhuman, and not worthy of their own independence. Surely the African-American population could relate to this plight with their newly gained independence. African-Americans had just won the fight to abolish slavery and become equal citizens, but were still looked upon as unworthy and as different. They were one in the same, briefly shown their freedom only to have it be taken away from under them.

Yes the Filipinos plight is very different from that of the African-Americans, however the underlying feelings of betrayal and contempt for the US government were most likely still a large factor in their views. Americans often saw others as being inferior, and that only with American help could they truly achieve what they were trying to. (5) Which, we unfortunately still see a lot of today. 1. The World of 1898: The Spanish-American War, U.

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