

Theodore roosevelt

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Theodore Roosevelt Jr. and His Contributions to the Philippines Theodore Roosevelt Jr. or “Teddy” was the eldest son of the 26th U. S. President Theodore Roosevelt and Editha Roosevelt (2nd wife). He was born on September 3, 1887 and died of a heart attack at the age of 56. He had 3 brothers and 2 sisters, but he carried the highest expectation from his family that he would follow his father’s footsteps. Like his father, Roosevelt Jr. had accomplished many things in life as a politician, soldier, writer, hunter, businessman, leader, and a family-oriented man, which give him a prominent and distinguished career worldwide. At an early stage of his life, he had fought many wars (World War I & II), which he had received several recognitions and military honors/decorations (i. e. Distinguished Service Medal, Service Cross, etc.), particularly the Congressional Medal of Honor. As a good political leader, Roosevelt Jr. was assigned to several big responsibilities, particularly as Governor-General of the U. S. acquired territories such as Puerto Rico (1929-1932) and the Philippines (1932-1933). Being the Governor-General of the Philippines was a big challenge to his political career and leadership because the island was uncivilized; there were strong revolutionary insurgents, and the great depression. However, having a big heart or the passion to help the uncivilized or the little one, he managed to inflict good government, which was positively accepted by the Filipinos. Although he stayed in the country for a short period of time, he was viewed by many Filipinos as an extraordinary kind of Governor in terms of his attitudes and dealings compared to his predecessors. In fact, he “does not mind being bitten by jungle mosquitoes, who can fall into wild Carabao barrows and like it, who can drink Igorot wine and lick his chops, who can be really human without losing his grin” (Collier and Horowitz 332). This positive

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and friendly attitude of Roosevelt Jr. had gained him the respect of the Filipino people and acceptance of the American governance in the island. Moreover, he was able to repair the Filipino-American friendship, which was lost when Gen. Leonard Wood and William Cameron Forbes declined to accept that the Philippines was ready to self-rule (Rebecca Ongsotto and Reena Ongsotto 176).

The Philippines was fortunate to have Roosevelt Jr. because he “ deeply sympathized with the cause of the poor and advocated the improvement of the welfare of the masses” through the inauguration of the first community assembly (Cabag 19). Through these community assemblies, social instability and the level of poverty in the country have been addressed by the Philippine legislature. He passed several Acts to the legislative body that contained his goals for the Philippines, and as a sign of respect to the capabilities of Filipino leaders to implement improvements in the island. One of his enacted laws was the Act No. 4046 that contained the objectives of the community assembly (see table 1). He also enacted the Rice Share Tenancy Act (Public Act No. 4054), an agrarian reform that would protect the rights of farmers and peasants to be equally treated by the law in terms of share, interest rate, and ownership (Hayami, Quisumbing, and Adriano 54).

Table 1: Objectives of the Act No. 4046

Source: Cabag 19

During his 1-year term as a Governor-General in the Philippines, he had accomplished many things like he “ initiated educational and land reforms and greatly improved health care, especially in the areas of child health and control of tuberculosis and leprosy” (Guillermo 381). His unparalleled concerns to the Philippines have made him a real hero and a best friend to
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many Filipinos, which considered him as the most favorite Governor of all (Perling 264).

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