

self-contemplation and self-admiration. No! He has made us the master organizers of the world to establish a system where chaos reigns. He has given us the spirit of progress to overwhelm the forces of reaction throughout the earth. He has made us adept in government that we may administer government among savage and senile peoples. Were it not for such a force as this the world would relapse into barbarism and night. And of all our races He has marked the American people as His chosen nation to finally lead in the regeneration of the world. This is the divine mission of America, and it holds for us all the profit, all the glory, all the happiness possible to man. We are trustees of the world's progress, guardians of its righteous peace. The judgment of the Master is upon us: "Ye have been faithful over a few things; I will make you ruler over many things."

What shall history say of us? Shall it say that we renounced that holy trust, left the savage to his base condition, the wilderness to the reign of waste, deserted duty, abandoned glory, forgot our sordid profit even, because we feared our strength and read the charter of our powers with the doubter's eye and the quibbler's mind? Shall it say that, called by events to captain and command the proudest, ablest, purest race of history in history's noblest work, we declined that great commission? Our fathers would not have had it so. No! They founded no paralytic government, incapable of the simplest acts of administration.

Viewpoint 8B

America Should Not Rule the Philippines (1900)

Joseph Henry Crooker (1850-1931)

INTRODUCTION *The American Anti-Imperialist League was founded in 1898 to protest the U.S. acquisition of Spanish colonies following the Spanish-American War. The following viewpoint is taken from a 1900 pamphlet by league member Joseph Henry Crooker, a clergyman and author of several books on religious issues. A central area of concern of Crooker and other anti-imperialists was the Philippines, a group of islands ten thousand miles from California with a population of 7 million. In 1899 the newly annexed American colony became the site of a prolonged military struggle between American soldiers stationed there and nationalist rebels; the military conflict intensified the domestic controversy over America's role in the Philippines.*

What does Crooker see as most alarming about American acquisition of the Philippines? How does he differentiate between continental and overseas expansion?

A political doctrine is now preached in our midst that is the most alarming evidence of moral decay that ever appeared in American history. Its baleful signifi-

From Joseph Henry Crooker, *The Menace to America* (Chicago: American Anti-Imperialist League, 1900).

cance consists, not simply in its moral hatefulness, but in the fact that its advocates are so numerous and so prominent.

It is this: A powerful nation, representative of civilization, has the right, for the general good of humanity, to buy, conquer, subjugate, control, and govern feeble and backward races and peoples, without reference to their wishes or opinions.

This is preached from pulpits as the gospel of Christ. It is proclaimed in executive documents as American statesmanship. It is defended in legislative halls as the beginning of a more glorious chapter in human history. It is boastfully declaimed from the platform as the first great act in the regeneration of mankind. It is published in innumerable editorials, red with cries for blood and hot with lust for gold, as the call of God to the American people. . . .

If this be Duty, let us recite no more the Master's [Jesus] creed of love. If this be Destiny, let us proclaim no more the rights of men. If this be Patriotism, let us sing no more "America." We must rewrite the "Star Spangled Banner," and make its theme the praise of conquest and colonization. We must erase the motto, "E Pluribus Unum," and inscribe instead: "One nation in authority over many people." We must tear up the Declaration of Independence and put in its place "A Summary of the Duties of Colonists to Their Master." . . .

OUR NATIONAL SHAME

We cannot worship this golden calf and go unscourged. We cannot violate the principles of our government and enjoy the blessings of those principles. We cannot deny freedom across the ocean and maintain it at home. This Nation cannot endure with part of its people citizens and part colonists. The flag will lose all its glory if it floats at once over freemen and subjects. We cannot long rule other men and keep our own liberty. In the high and holy name of humanity, we are trampling upon the rights of men. But Nemesis will wake. The mask will fall; our joy will turn to bitterness; we shall find ourselves in chains.

Most of all, we lament the stain that has come to our flag, not from the soldier carrying it, but from the policy that has compelled him to carry it in an unjust cause. On executive hands falls, not only the blood of the hunted islander, but the blood of the American murdered by the ambition that sent him to invade distant lands. What we most deplore is the surrender that we as a nation have made of our leadership in the world's great work of human emancipation. What we most bitterly mourn is that we, by our selfish dreams of mere commercialism, have piled obstacles mountain high in the way of progress.

What is most surprising and most alarming is the fact that large numbers of our people still call this national ambition for conquest and dominion a form of exalted patriotism. But we are surely under the spell of a malign influence. A false Americanism has captivated our reason and corrupted our conscience. May this hypnotic lethargy, induced by the glittering but deceptive bauble of imperialism, speedily pass away; and may these fellow citizens become again true Americans, free to labor for the liberty of all men and intent on helping the lowly of all lands to independence.

It is time that all American citizens should look more carefully into the conditions and tendencies which constitute what may well be called, "The Menace to America." Let me discuss briefly certain phases of what rises ominously before us as the Philippine problem. . . .

SLAUGHTER AND DESTRUCTION

The following is one phase of the popular argument in justification of our oriental aggressions: The obligations of humanity demanded that we take possession of the Philippine Islands in order to prevent the anarchy which would certainly have followed had we taken any other course than that which we did.

But would a little native-grown anarchy have been as bad as the slaughter and destruction which we have intruded? Let us remember that we ourselves have already killed and wounded thousands of the inhabitants. We have arrayed tribe against tribe; we have desolated homes and burned villages; agriculture and commerce have been prostrated; and finally, we have created hatred of ourselves in the breasts of millions of people to remain for years to plague us and them. It is not likely that if left to themselves anything half so serious would have occurred. It is perfectly clear that some other attitude towards those Islands besides that of domination, which this Nation most unfortunately took, would have prevented these results.

And we are not yet at the end. Recurring outbreaks against us as intruders, by people desirous of independence, will undoubtedly produce more distress and disorder in the next ten years (if our present policy is maintained) than would have resulted from native incapacity. Moreover, there are no facts in evidence that warrant the assertion that anarchy would have followed had we left them more to themselves. This is wholly an unfounded assumption. It would certainly have been well to have waited and given them a chance before interfering. That we did not wait, that we did not give them a chance, is proof positive that our national policy was not shaped by considerations of humanity or a reasonable desire to benefit them, but by a spirit of selfish aggrandizement. . . .

WHOSE FINANCIAL GAIN?

It is pitiful that our people, and especially the common people, should be so carried away by wild and baseless dreams of the commercial advantage of these Islands. It is bad enough to sacrifice patriotism upon the altar of Mammon; but it is clear that in this case the sacrifice will be made without securing any benefit, even from Mammon.

The annual expense our Nation will incur by the military and naval establishment in the Philippines will be at least \$100,000,000. This the taxpayer of America must pay. On the other hand the trade profits from these Islands—from the very nature of the case—will go directly into the pockets of millionaire monopolists, the few speculators who will get possession of the business interests there, in the line of hemp, sugar, tobacco and lumber.

The proposition is a plain one. These Islands will cost us, the common people, a hundred million dollars a year. The profits from them, possibly an equal sum, will go directly to a few very rich men. This is a very sleek speculative scheme for transferring vast sums of money from the people at large to the bank accounts of a few monopolists. Can any one see anything very helpful to the common taxpayer in such a policy? This is a serious problem for consideration, in addition to the competition of American labor with cheap Asiatic workmen—in itself sufficiently serious.

The question I press is this: Can such a policy work anything but financial harm to the average American citizen? For one, I do not care to pay this tribute money every time I draw a check or buy a bottle of medicine, tribute money that means oppression to those distant islanders, unnecessary burdens to our own people, and a still larger store for speculators to be used in corrupting American politics!

WHAT IS "EXPANSION"?

A passionate demand for expansion has taken possession of the American imagination. It is contended, We must come out of our little corner and take our place on the worldstage of the nations.

The expansion of military rule and sordid commercialism is not the expansion of our real strength or true glory.

But what has been the real expansion of our Nation for over a century? It has been two-fold. (1) The extension of our free institutions westward across the continent to

the Pacific coast; (2) the powerful influence of our republican principles throughout the world. Our political ideals have modified the sentiments of great nations; our people have flowed over contiguous territories and planted there the same civic, social, religious and educational institutions that they possessed in their Eastern home. All this has been a normal and natural growth of true Americanism.

The policy that now popularly bears the name "expansion" is something radically different; and it is in no sense the expansion of America. Our people have been sadly deceived by something far worse than an optical illusion—a deceptive phrase has lured them into danger and toward despotism. To buy 10,000,000 distant islanders is the expansion of Jefferson Davis, not the expansion of Abraham Lincoln. To tax far-off colonists without their consent is the expansion of the policy of [British king] George III, not the expansion of the patriotism of George Washington. To rule without representation subject peoples is not the expansion of Americanism, but the triumph of imperialism.

The policy advocated is the suppression of American principles, the surrender of our sublime ideals, and the end of our beneficent ministry of liberty among the nations. Just because I want to see America expand I condemn the policy as unpatriotic. Let us not deceive ourselves; the expansion of military rule and sordid commercialism is not the expansion of our real strength or true glory. Let us not mistake the renunciation of American ideals for the expansion of American institutions.

FLAG AND CONSTITUTION

Wherever the flag goes, there the constitution must go. Wherever the flag waves, there the whole of the flag must be present. Wherever the constitution is extended, there the entire constitution must rule. If any one does not wish to accept these consequences, then let the flag be brought back to the spot where it can represent true Americanism, and Americanism in its entirety. What shall our banner be to the Filipino? A symbol of his own liberty or the hated emblem of a foreign oppressor? Shall it float over him in Manila as a mere subject and say to him when he lands in San Francisco that he is an alien? Then that flag will become the object of the world's derision!

If it does not symbolize American institutions in their fullness wherever it floats, then our starry banner becomes false to America and oppressive to those who may fear its authority, but do not share its freedom. Disgrace and harm will not come from taking the flag down, but rather from keeping it where it loses all that our statesmen, prophets and soldiers have put into it. The only way to keep "Old Glory" from becoming a

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falsehood is to give all under it the liberty that it represents. Nowhere must it remain simply to represent a power to be dreaded, but everywhere it must symbolize rights and privileges shared by all.

FOR FURTHER READING

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Brooklyn Bridge. "What is the most surprising thing you have seen?" asked several comfortable Christian gentlemen of this benighted pagan whose worship was a "bowing down to sticks and stones." The savage shifted his red blanket and answered in three slow words, "Little children working."

It has remained, then, for civilization to give the world an abominable custom which shocks the social ethics of even an unregenerate savage. For the Indian father does not ask his children to work, but leaves them free till the age of maturity, when they are ushered with solemn rites into the obligations of their elders. Some of us are wondering why our savage friends do not send their medicine men as missionaries, to shed upon our Christian darkness the light of barbarism. Child labor is a new thing in human affairs. Ancient history records no such infamy. "Children," says the Talmud, "must not be taken from the schools even to rebuild the temple." In Greece and Rome the children of both slave and master

ing mansions, the crowded circus, the airy span of the

From Edwin Markham, "The Hoe Man in the Making," *Cosmopolitan*, September 1906.

sucked in from the hills to dance beside the crazing wheels.

Let us again reckon up this Devil's toll. In the North (where, God knows, conditions are bad enough), for