

WINNING HEARTS AND MINDS THROUGH “ACTUAL DEEDS”

U.S. PUBLIC DIPLOMACY DURING THE OCCUPATION OF
THE PHILIPPINES IN COMPARISON WITH THE AMERICAN
INVOLVEMENT IN IRAQ TODAY

Master of Arts in Law and Diplomacy Thesis

Submitted by Michael S. Kugelman

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DIPLOMACY DURING THE OCCUPATION OF THE PHILIPPINES IN COMPARISON
WITH THE AMERICAN INVOLVEMENT IN IRAQ TODAY*

SUBMITTED TO PROFESSOR ALAN K. HENRIKSON

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In September 2004, Max Boot of the Council on Foreign Relations stated on National Public Radio's *On Point* that the U.S. occupation of the Philippines at the turn of the 20th century provides the "closest analogy" to the ongoing U.S.-led operation in Iraq.¹ Indeed, comparisons are being made between the war in Iraq and the Philippine-American War, with many observers highlighting how, in both cases, the United States launched controversial interventions that yielded rapid U.S. military victories followed by long periods of local resistance to the American presence. John Judis' new book *The Folly of Empire* describes the invasion and occupation of Iraq as "a perfect imitation of an earlier imperialism" in which "things didn't turn out as American policy-makers had hoped"—the reference being to the Philippines.² Michael Ignatieff's comparisons are more specific and extensive. He wrote last year that the Iraq intervention "most resembles the conquest of the Philippines" as both "were wars of conquest, both were urged by an ideological elite on a divided country and both cost much more than anyone had bargained for."³

A further, more instrumental parallel, suggested by the proclaimed "democratic" purpose of both occupations, was the use of public diplomacy by the U.S. government. At a time when Americans in Iraq are struggling to win the support of the Iraqi people, and at a time when a prolonged U.S. presence among an often hostile Iraqi population appears likely, it may be instructive to investigate how U.S. public diplomacy functioned during the U.S. intervention in the Philippines in the early 20th century, an occupation

¹ "Evaluating Iraq," *On Point*, WBUR, September 8, 2004 (accessed November 17, 2004); transcript available from http://www.onpointradio.org/shows/2004/09/20040908_a_main.asp www.onpointradio.com

² John Judis, *The Folly of Empire: What George W. Bush Could Learn From Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson* (New York: Scribner, 2004), 8.

³ Michael Ignatieff, "Why Are We in Iraq? (And Liberia? And Afghanistan?)" *The New York Times*, September 7, 2003 (accessed November 2, 2004); available from <http://www.alanalexandroff.com/Ignatieff.html>.

that also continued long after the cessation of major hostilities and that involved U.S. efforts to gain the support of an often hostile and suspicious local population.

The term “public diplomacy” shall be defined throughout as U.S. government efforts during its occupation of the Philippines to win over the Filipino people through engagement, appeals, and dialogue that sought to demonstrate American goodwill and benevolence. These efforts, to qualify as public diplomacy, broadly defined, must occur in an environment stable and secure enough to sustain attempts to win hearts and minds, so that these attempts are not eclipsed by the exigencies of quelling unrest and restoring order.

“Public diplomacy” should also embody three additional qualities: inclusiveness, sincerity, and respect for Filipino national identity. An inclusive public diplomacy aspires to reach entire populations; it does not restrict its appeals to a wealthy elite or similarly prominent but small minority. During the U.S. occupation, the sheer masses inhabiting the Philippines’ thousands of islands were more representative of the sprawling archipelago’s populace than the tiny, often-Westernized elite. A public diplomacy that fails to reach these masses amounts to little more than a “private” diplomacy for which any hearts and minds won would be mere tokens and not indicative of a winning over of the entire population.

Sincere public diplomacy is undertaken by individuals with a legitimate, heartfelt desire to demonstrate the goodness and worth of their nations’ policies, and to make an honest, fair case that these individuals and their policies can be trusted. A public diplomat who fails to appeal to foreign publics and treats them with ignorance, disrespect, or outright hostility is not doing his job. Crucially, however, a public

diplomat who makes *excessive* appeals to foreign publics through groveling or other fawning behavior is no less guilty of poor public diplomacy. Such exaggerated efforts to win hearts and minds—especially if not accompanied by actions—smack of insincerity.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, public diplomacy involves an inherent recognition of the sanctity of national identity. If public diplomats minimize the national uniqueness of the people whom they seek to reach, then their public diplomacy strategies risk failing to respect the interests or preferences of their targets. U.S. public diplomacy during the Philippine occupation, to be considered as such, must not be imperialistic; it should recognize so-called “otherness” or “foreignness”—in this case, the identity of the Filipino people—without marginalizing it. Therefore, true U.S. public diplomacy in the Philippines must *demonstrate* American values, beliefs, or actions that seek to win Filipino support for American policies; it must not *impose* them. Such an imposition of American values risks spiraling into a full-flung Americanization of Filipinos. In fact, this study will argue that such Americanization became a major U.S. policy goal during the occupation of the Philippines, and that this goal undermined U.S. public diplomacy efforts.

This paper asserts that the United States attempted an early demonstrable form of public diplomacy, one that, in the general absence of the global communications tools available in Iraq today, emphasized the use of concrete actions and initiatives as a basis of appeal and persuasion to win Filipino support for the Americans and their Philippine policies. While many of these actions and initiatives pertained to self-government and education, some others included acts of nation-building (particularly public works projects). Indeed, *American Heritage* last year analogized the U.S. intervention in Iraq

with that in the Philippines by describing the latter as “our very first exercise in nation building.”⁴ U.S. public diplomacy in the Philippines, then, sought to work in the following way: the U.S. government aimed to win Filipino support for American policies in the islands through its acts of purported benevolence—such as the creation of initial conditions for Philippine self-government, expansion of public education, and public works projects such as road-building and public health and sanitation improvements. It will be argued, however, that the U.S. policies for which Americans sought Filipino support aimed to “Americanize” the archipelago. U.S. officials attempted to transmit American values and institutions to the Philippine islands. For example, Americans aimed to impose the English language and the American legal system, and they employed U.S.-style curricula in the Philippine education system. They also betrayed U.S.-centric prejudices while allegedly serving the Filipinos’ interests.

The paper begins with a discussion of U.S. military efforts to win Filipino hearts and minds, emphasizing its education programs and nation-building endeavors. It then addresses how the U.S. civilian administration in the Philippines continued these military-instituted efforts to win over the Filipinos, highlighting the role of public diplomacy in self-government, in expanding education policies and implementing nation-building projects from the period of 1899-1913. Next, the paper considers Filipino reactions to the actions and the degree of Filipino support for American policies following the consummation of the projects. The paper will then briefly address public diplomacy initiatives in Iraq, and consider whether existing public diplomacy strategies there are at all akin to those undertaken in the Philippines. Finally, the paper addresses

⁴ Kevin Baker, “America’s First Iraq: What Happened When We Delivered the Philippines from Tyranny a Century Ago,” *American Heritage* 54, no. 4 (August-September 2003): 21.

relevance—how, if at all, American efforts at public diplomacy in the Philippines might provide some guidance for current U.S. attempts to win hearts and minds in Iraq. This study will demonstrate that, though the U.S. occupation of the Philippines yielded some public diplomacy successes—most notably through the work of American teachers—the military’s need to suppress the Filipino insurrection, and, later, the U.S. political desire to Americanize the islands, undermined public diplomacy efforts, resulting in failures to win the people over.

I. The American Military and “Actual Deeds” in the Philippines

In May 1898, U.S. Navy Admiral George Dewey defeated the Spanish fleet at Manila Bay, a spectacular triumph for the United States during the Spanish-American War. The United States was ceded the former Spanish possession in the 1898 Treaty of Peace with Spain that concluded the war (the U.S. Senate ratified the treaty in early 1899). U.S. President William McKinley’s December 1898 Benevolent Assimilation Proclamation subjected the islands to U.S. military occupation. However, U.S. forces faced formidable resistance, led by chief rebel Emilio Aguinaldo, who had declared Philippine independence from Spain (with U.S. encouragement) on June 12, 1898, and who convened the Malolos Congress that approved a constitution on November 29, 1898. After a short-lived period of cooperation between American military forces and Aguinaldo’s rebels, American troops captured Aguinaldo in 1901. Yet the Philippine resistance movement would continue.

Despite these conditions, McKinley was eager for U.S. troops to undertake benevolent actions that would gain Filipino trust and goodwill. In his Benevolent Assimilation address he stated the “paramount aim” of the U.S. military administration

was “to win the confidence, respect, and affection of the inhabitants of the Philippines.”⁵ In 1899 he declared that “we shall not wait for the end of the strife to begin the beneficent work . . . We shall continue . . . to open the schools and the churches . . . and in every way in our power to make these people whom Providence has brought within our jurisdiction feel that it is their liberty and not our power, their welfare and not our gain, we are seeking to enhance.”⁶

The American desire to win over the Filipino public through the benevolent actions of its military is perhaps rooted in the testimony of the Schurman Commission, the first Philippine Commission and a fact-finding civilian mission dispatched to the Philippines in 1899 to seek guidance from the Filipinos on how best to defeat the insurrection. The commission was led by Jacob Gould Schurman, a philosophy professor and president of Cornell University. One prominent Filipino lawyer, Felipe Calderon, who had drafted Aguinaldo’s Malolos constitution, informed his American questioners that Filipinos could only be won over through concrete actions. This mentality, he explained, was rooted in the false promises habitually made by the Spanish in the past. “The most important thing is to show them [Filipinos] actual deeds,” he asserted. “The common people now lack confidence in the Americans because there has in the past been enacted laws which have never been carried out. The Spaniards made them promises which have never been fulfilled.”⁷

⁵ William McKinley, “Benevolent Assimilation Proclamation by President William McKinley,” in *Mixed Blessing: The Impact of the American Colonial Experience on Politics and Society in the Philippines*, ed. Hazel M. McFerson (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), 268.

⁶ Quoted in Elihu Root, “American Policies in the Philippines in 1902: Address of the Secretary of War at Peoria, Illinois, September 24, 1902,” in *The Military and Colonial Policy of the United States: Addresses and Reports by Elihu Root*, ed. Robert Bacon and James Brown Scott (New York: AMS Press., Inc., 1970), 72.

⁷ *Report of the Philippine Commission to the President, Vol II. (Testimony and Exhibits)* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1900), 68.

After Schurman Commissioner Dean Worcester interrupted Calderon's testimony by expressing support for this view—"It is very natural that they should wish for demonstrations of what we intend to do"—Calderon, noting that the Filipino "is not a man who can be compelled by force," provided examples: "When a town is captured . . . give to the people who have lost all that they have a little something for food, a little something in compensation for their houses, so that they may escape their misery."⁸ He adds that "when it is necessary to take a town which can not be defended," then "burn it," but "give to the people something to recompense them for their loss—not as indemnity, but as an aid, as a testimony of friendship or succor, as an evidence of good will."⁹ In closing, Calderon counseled avoiding, "so far as possible, robbing, burning, and killing on the part of the [American] soldiers," as Filipinos "have not forgotten the vile deeds of the Spanish."¹⁰ This theme of earning support through deeds appears elsewhere in the testimony as well, with one "Senor Melliza" recommending that peace be made "by putting into practice at once the good intentions of the Americans," so that Filipinos will see that Americans, unlike the Spanish, "intend to keep faith" with their promises.¹¹

One of the major military "deeds" in the Philippines was its provision of public schooling. Many American officials believed Filipinos had a strong interest in and respect for education, and so the idea of military-led instruction was an appealing one. It also served as a powerful instrument of public diplomacy. As former Philippine Commissioner Charles Elliott wrote, "It is difficult for [Filipinos] to be bitter with

⁸ Ibid., 68-69.

⁹ Ibid., 69.

¹⁰ Ibid., 70.

¹¹ Ibid., 98.

soldiers who without pay were teaching their little children.”¹² In March 1900, the U.S. military governor and top-ranking U.S. military official in the Philippines (and former member of the Schurman Commission), General Elwell S. Otis, established the Department of Public Instruction (forerunner of the civilian-run Bureau of Public Instruction), and by September 1900 about 100,000 Filipino children were enrolled in army-supervised schools—and the department had disseminated “almost \$100,000 (U.S. dollars) worth of school material, including readers, geography texts, pens, and U.S. flags.”¹³ The department began developing the ideas that would later become hallmarks of American educational policy in the Philippines—mandatory attendance, the use of English, and the creation of vocational schools.¹⁴

Many accounts of the military-led schools are laudatory. The soldier-teachers “laid down their guns and picked up old Spanish textbooks in almost the same motion,” wrote one writer, the child of American teachers in the Philippines. They “sat down on rough benches” and “began to dispense knowledge to the children of the men they had been shooting at a few weeks earlier. I doubt if natural antagonisms between conquered and conqueror ever in history have been healed so rapidly Both sides forgot their grievances and set to work building a new nation.”¹⁵ One finds few references that condemn this experience of military-led schooling, though Glenn May, a harsh critic of American occupation policies in the Philippines, has written of overcrowded schools, enormous disparities in student-teacher ratios, and problems in getting classroom

¹² Charles Burke Elliott, *The Philippines: To the End of the Commission Government* (New York: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1968), 235.

¹³ Glenn Anthony May, *Social Engineering in the Philippines: The Aims, Execution, and Impact of American Colonial Policy, 1900-1913* (Westwood, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980), 79.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Frederic S. Marquardt, “Life With the Early American Teachers,” in *Tales of American Teachers in the Philippines*, ed. Geronima T. Pecson and Maria Racelis (Manila: Carmelo & Bauermann, Inc., 1959), 2.

materials to classrooms. Additionally, May argues, the schools' primary aim was "to pacify" students and to convince them of U.S. good will—"a mere adjunct of its military activities."¹⁶ Nevertheless, one can assert that this schooling provides an example of the American government's execution of public diplomacy through the use of an appeal-driven action. "I'll never forget that big American soldier who first taught me how to read," a prominent Filipino lawyer would later recall.¹⁷ If one is to believe the Filipino children—and their parents—were won over by the soldier-teachers, then this public diplomacy effort can be scored a success.

The U.S. military, mindful that pacification depended on showing "good intentions," instituted various other projects of nation-building; General Otis agreed such efforts were worthwhile so long as the military managed them. Among such actions were sewer construction, food distribution, and, in the political realm, the formations of local governments, directed by Filipinos under American military control.¹⁸ Military forces also supervised large-scale "scrubbing of towns and their inhabitants."¹⁹ Elihu Root, McKinley's Secretary of War and one of the architects of U.S. Philippine policy, catalogued in great detail the activities of American military forces during a 1900 address:

They have been feeding the hungry and clothing the naked and protecting the weak and cleaning the foul cities and establishing hospitals and organizing and opening schools and building roads and encouraging commerce and teaching people how to take the first step in self-government, with cheerful industry and zeal.²⁰

¹⁶ May, 79.

¹⁷ Stanley Karnow, *In Our Image: America's Empire in the Philippines* (New York: Random House, 1989), 153.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Stuart Creighton Miller, "Benevolent Assimilation:" *The American Conquest of the Philippines, 1899-1903* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1982), 173.

²⁰ Elihu Root, "The United States and the Philippines in 1900: Address of the Secretary of War, at Canton, Ohio, October 24, 1900," in Bacon and Scott, 59.

This recitation of accomplishments, however, must not be exaggerated, for the military's emphasis on benevolence would soon ease. As the Filipino resistance grew stronger, the American military was obliged to concentrate more on crushing the insurgency. Several reasons exist for this about-face. One, Filipino guerrilla tactics complicated American military efforts to reach out to Filipinos. The use of *amigo* warfare, in which Filipinos acted publicly as friends of American forces but turned against them privately, caused major difficulties in distinguishing between friend and foe.²¹ Two, events on the battlefield necessitated a harsh military response. In September 1901, 45 American soldiers were killed in a shocking, pre-meditated operation in Balangiga on the island of Samar. The *New York Times* reported that, at the signal of ringing church bells at daylight, Filipino combatants stormed the 9th Infantry at its base, killing, burning, and mutilating their victims.²²

This massacre triggered a U.S. reaction long on brutality and short on appeals to goodwill. Brigadier General Jacob Smith would famously order that every Filipino “over ten” be killed. In July 1901, U.S. military governor Adna Chaffee raged that the “silly talk” of benevolence and the “soft mollycoddling” of “treacherous natives” could not replace “shots, shells, and bayonets.”²³ Yet the military, even before the Balangiga massacre, was losing faith in policies of benevolence. In the colorful language of Elliot, the military believed it was in the Philippines “to quell an insurrection, not to have a symposium with its leaders on the rights of man.”²⁴ One military general announced the

²¹ Karnow, 154.

²² “Filipinos Burned Bodies of Soldiers at Balangiga,” *The New York Times*, October 3, 1901. Accessed November 1. Available from ProQuest Historical Newspapers, *The New York Times* (1851 - 2001).

²³ Karnow, 191.

²⁴ Elliott, 167.

inanity of quelling rebellions through “throwing confetti and sprinkling perfumery.”²⁵

The military clearly had a job to do on the battlefield—and efforts to gain Filipino public support would frequently be relegated to the backburner of strategy.²⁶

Some historians offer a more nuanced view on U.S. military efforts to win hearts and minds. John Morgan Gates, whose book *Schoolbooks and Krags* describes the history of U.S. military involvement in the Philippine-American War, has suggested that the alleged brutalities of American troops were exaggerated.²⁷ Also, the revised U.S. military “pacification program” of late 1900 (established by U.S. General Arthur MacArthur, whose time as military governor followed Otis’ and preceded Chaffee’s)—though no longer characterized by the “unqualified benevolence” of initial pacification policy—was still “selective enough” not to alienate Filipinos previously convinced of U.S. good intentions.²⁸ The “new approach to pacification” still reflected the idea that “benevolent and humanitarian action was needed to win the enduring friendship of the great mass of Filipinos,” with this “action” represented by continued efforts in the creation of municipal governments, sanitation and public health, schools, fiscal reform, and public works.²⁹ Yet Gates acknowledges that, despite the continued progress in schools and public works, by early 1902 the scorched-earth policies of the American

²⁵ Karnow, 179.

²⁶ Stuart Miller, in “*Benevolent Assimilation*,” his critical assessment of the American military in the Philippines, cites more controversial reasons for the army’s unwillingness to remain true to policies of benevolence. He theorizes that U.S. military volunteers evinced a “frontier spirit steeped in an individualism” that easily lurched into lawlessness (195). Also, he cites the testimony of an army surgeon that the tropical climate induced soldiers to dehumanize Filipino rebels as “vermin” who had to be exterminated (260).

²⁷ John Morgan Gates, *Schoolbooks and Krags: The United States Army in the Philippines, 1898-1902* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, Inc., 1973), 256.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 215.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 215-216.

military's response to the Balangiga massacre had "done so little to win over" the Filipinos in Samar that many would continue to resist American rule.³⁰

Indeed, some top U.S. military officials would regret not engaging in more attempts to win over the Filipinos. In 1900, Thomas M. Anderson, commander of the first land force in the Philippines, penned a revealing account of his Philippine experiences—his Philippines tour of duty having occurred before the establishment of MacArthur's less benevolent pacification policy—in the *North American Review*. Anderson contends that the insurgents themselves could have warmed to the American occupation—he recounts a bizarre story in which, after one of Anderson's officers assured some insurgent leaders that "we had come not to make them slaves, but to make them free men," the leaders said, "'we wish to be baptized in that sentiment'" and "poured the wine from their glasses over their heads."³¹ However, U.S. soldiers looted, incurred debts "which they did not find convenient to pay," "called the natives 'niggers,'" and treated them "with a good-natured condescension."³² In words that resonate in Iraq today, Anderson wrote that, as a result, "thus it happened that the common people, from at first hailing us as deliverers, got to regarding us as enemies."³³ Ultimately, he concluded, his forces had failed to "conciliate the common people" and "to win over" the friendly military leaders—"we know how to fight, but we do not know how to conquer . . ."³⁴ And Anderson's tour of duty, it should be recalled, occurred *before* the establishment of the military's less benevolent pacification plan. It was the U.S. civilian administration—led by William H. Taft from March 1900 to January 1904 in his capacity

³⁰ Ibid., 256.

³¹ Thomas M. Anderson, "Our Rule in the Philippines," *North American Review* CLXX (1900): 277.

³² Ibid., 282.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid., 282-283.

as President of the Philippine Commission and then Civil Governor in the Philippines—that would attempt to pick up the pieces and finish the job of winning over the Filipino population.

II. The American Civil Administration and Actual Deeds in the Philippines

The Schurman Commission would advocate the creation of a U.S. civilian government in the Philippines. U.S. policy makers intimated that the establishment of the American civilian administration would be another response to Calderon's plea for "actual deeds." Root, in a 1902 address, spoke of the "vile slanders" and "extravagant and grotesque tales of American tyranny and barbarity" propagated by the leaders of the Filipino insurrection. Knowing that the use of words "to dispel" these myths was "of no avail" and "assurances and promises were useless," the United States "established civil government to go hand in hand with our advancing armies."³⁵ And Taft, wary of what he called the "sullen" nature of the Filipino people, confided to a friend shortly before heading up the new civilian government that "until we are able to do something the value of which they can estimate by the fruits, they are not inclined to welcome us."³⁶

McKinley's April 7, 1900, Instructions to the Taft-led Philippine Commission transferred the administration of the Philippine Islands from the military to the civilian Commission, effective September 1, 1900 (after which the Commission would become a governing legislative body). Yet the Instructions are significant for two other reasons. First, they emphasize the importance of stressing American good intentions as a means of securing Filipino goodwill and support. The Commission "should bear in mind" that it is to help create an eventual Filipino government that reflects indigenous customs, habits,

³⁵ Elihu Root, "American Policies in the Philippines in 1902," in Bacon and Scott, 76-77.

³⁶ Taft to E.B. McCagg, April 16, 1900, William H. Taft Papers (hereinafter listed as TP), Lamont Library, Harvard University, Series 3, Reel 30. All Taft correspondence accessed via microfilm (Film A156).

“and even their prejudices,” and that is designed for “the happiness, peace, and prosperity” of the Filipino people.³⁷ McKinley ends with the hope that Filipinos will one day “look back with gratitude to the day when God gave victory to American arms at Manila.”³⁸ The emphasis on U.S. benevolence extended even to semantics. The end of Root’s “Report of the Secretary of War for 1901” notes that the branch of the War Department charged with Philippine-related tasks would be named the Division of Insular Affairs, which “in other countries” would belong to “a colonial office” in a “much more pretentious establishment.”³⁹ The McKinley administration may have stressed the benign nature of the civilian administration in order to make up for the military’s repressive actions. While McKinley, Taft, and Root would publicly laud the military, they knew of its darker side. In 1900, Taft received from a military friend several dispatches that described burned homes and excessive floggings—atrocities that “would make our President blush with shame.”⁴⁰

Second, the instructions identify two of the major initiatives that would define the American occupation and that were employed to win over Filipinos: the creation of the rudiments for self-government and the broadening of the public education system initiated by American military authorities. Governments would be organized in “the larger administrative divisions” with representatives chosen to fill offices, and municipal

³⁷ William McKinley, “Instructions to the Philippine Commission,” in Bacon and Scott, 291.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 294.

³⁹ Elihu Root, “The Civil Government of the Philippines: Extract From the Report of the Secretary of War for 1901,” in Bacon and Scott, 287. It is interesting to note, however, that William H. Taft’s correspondence immediately prior to his departure for the Philippines includes a required reading list for himself and his fellow commissioners that contains quite a few volumes on European colonial policy.

⁴⁰ George K. Hunter to Taft, May 16, 1900, and June 4, 1900, TP, Series 3, Reel 30.

governments would be established.⁴¹ The instructions also spell out the “duty of the commission” to address the “system of education.”⁴²

The civil administration in the Philippines aimed gradually to include the Filipino people in the political process, in order to prepare them for eventual self-rule. As Taft would state at the occasion of the 1907 inauguration of the Philippine Assembly—a key mechanism for Filipino self-government—Washington’s “avowed policy” has been “to fit the people themselves to maintain a stable and well-ordered government affording equality of right and opportunity to all citizens.”⁴³ Taft’s last series of correspondence before his departure for the Philippines had betrayed a pessimistic view about the prospect of winning over the population, though he believed that bestowing political rights would be a good start:

The task of . . . making possible a well ordered government . . . is not an easy one, but I think that when we have once convinced the people of our desire to give them and to secure to them permanently the liberty of the individuals, and a large measure of political self-control, they will become tractable and will cease to maintain the sullen attitude which now seems to characterize them.⁴⁴

In order to convince Filipinos to participate in government—one that, in the early 20th century, would still be under American control—the United States had to conceive of a way of draining Filipino support for the anti-occupation insurrection. The Americans adapted what Taft would call a “policy of attraction” in which U.S. civilian authorities aimed to seduce the Filipino public into helping the Americans rebuild the Philippine nation. In so doing, it would deprive the Philippine insurgency of its vital public support

⁴¹ William McKinley, “Instructions to the Philippine Commission,” in Bacon and Scott, 288-290.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 293.

⁴³ William H. Taft, “The Inauguration of the Philippine Assembly,” Manila, Philippine Islands, October 16, 1907, in *The Collected Works of William Howard Taft*, Volume I, ed. David H. Burton (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2001), 85.

⁴⁴ Taft to H.C. Otis, April 14, 1900, TP, Series 3, Reel 30.

and render it impotent. The policy was “to leave a deep imprint” on the Philippines, as Filipinos would govern themselves under American supervision for much of the U.S. occupation.⁴⁵ By 1908 Taft was claiming victory, proclaiming in a speech that “tranquility was restored . . . by the carrying out of the policy of attraction by establishing autonomy in the municipalities, partial autonomy in the provinces and by giving Filipinos representatives in the Commission conducting the central government.”⁴⁶ What Taft did not say, however, is that the political representatives were invariably drawn from the *ilustrado* class—the Filipino educated elite. As Peter Stanley states in his seminal work on the Philippines, U.S. civilian officials discerned divisions in Filipino political society as well as desires for “structural modernization” that transcended these cleavages. The Americans “acted on both fronts, detaching the elite by drawing them into the political process, and appropriating the modernization issue through programs of reform and nation building.”⁴⁷

The policy of attraction is another reflection of the apparent respect American policy-makers had for the views of the Filipino lawyer, Felipe Calderon. When interviewed by the Schurman Commission, Calderon had asserted that it is best “to dominate” Filipinos “by leading them on by attraction.”⁴⁸ The key question, however, is whether “leading by attraction” served as a public diplomacy tool genuinely meant to “attract” the Filipino public to the U.S. civilian administration, or whether it was merely a political tactic to win the loyalty of a powerful elite. On a theoretical level it did function

⁴⁵ Karnow, 174.

⁴⁶ William H. Taft, “In Defense of the Philippine Policy: Addressed to the Citizens of Norwood, Ohio, at the Sinton Hotel, September 19, 1908,” in Burton, Volume II, 59.

⁴⁷ Peter W. Stanley, *A Nation in the Making: The Philippines and the United States, 1899-1921* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), 268.

⁴⁸ *Report of the Philippine Commission*, Vol. II, 69.

as a public diplomacy tool, as it invited the Filipino public to form a political system in partnership with the United States civilian administration, with the latter dangling the prospect of nation-building projects for the Filipinos' benefit. In other words, attraction policy was used as an instrument of appeal.

The *ilustrado* factor, however, looms large. The major targets of attraction policy were elites, and not the general public as a whole, an indication of noninclusivity. Taft's letters abound with antipathy for the *ilustrados*, yet he was clearly determined to "attract" them—for the simple reason that they were the only group of Filipinos sufficiently educated to help the Americans rebuild the country. The *ilustrados* may be familiar with the high-minded principles of the U.S. Constitution, Taft wrote to friends soon after his arrival in the Philippines, but they "have not the slightest conception of the practical questions" in governance. Further, they are "the most magnificent liars that is has been my luck to run across," they lack moral stamina, and they bilk the commoners of money.⁴⁹ Still, Taft would also refer to a prominent ilustrado as "an ass" but in the same breadth contend that given his influence among Filipinos, he would be "useful."⁵⁰ One is also struck by Calderon's choice of words in his Schurman Commission testimony. He had spoke of it being "easier *to dominate*" [italics added] Filipinos "by leading them on by attraction." "Dominating" a people is a different matter completely from appealing to, or engaging a people, in order to garner support for policies. Hence, it may be appropriate to regard attraction policy as a pure political ploy to consolidate power, through the assistance of a pliant local elite—a tactic the British were to perfect in many of their British mandates—including Iraq—several years later.

⁴⁹ Taft to John M. Harlon, June 30, 1900, and Taft to Howard C. Hollister, June 30, 1900, TP, Series 3, Reel 30.

⁵⁰ Stanley, 67.

Public education also constituted a major pillar of U.S. Philippine policy. McKinley's Instructions to the Philippine Commission asked the civilian administration "to promote and extend, and, as they find occasion, to improve, the system of education already inaugurated by the military authorities."⁵¹ The Commission "should regard as of first importance" the extension of free primary education "which shall tend to fit the people for the duties of citizenship and for the ordinary avocations of a civilized community;" this "instruction," McKinley stipulated, should initially be provided in the vernacular, though the Commission should endeavor to establish English as the "common medium of communication."⁵² Taft was confident that the emphasis on education would echo with the interests of the people: "Our most satisfactory ground for hope of success in our whole work," he announced in his Inaugural Address as Civil Governor of the Philippines, "is in the eagerness with which the Philippine people, even the humblest, seek for education."⁵³ The Philippine Commission codified its education policy in July 1900 with the passing of Act 74, which established the Bureau of Public Instruction. Act 74, among other things, instituted a "centralized system of public primary schools;" authorized the Bureau's head, Fred Atkinson (a high school principal from Springfield, Massachusetts), to hire 1,000 American teachers; created normal, agricultural, and trade schools; and stipulated that English "as soon as practicable" be the language of "public school instruction," with U.S. soldiers to provide the instruction until "trained teachers" were available.⁵⁴

⁵¹ William McKinley, "Instructions to the Philippine Commission," in Bacon and Scott, 293.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ William H. Taft, "Inaugural Address as Civil Governor of the Philippines," Manila, Philippine Islands, July 4, 1901, in Burton, Volume I, 79.

⁵⁴ May, 82.

The “trained teachers” did arrive, led by the “Thomasites,” a thousand-strong armada of teachers that steamed into Manila on the American vessel *Thomas* in August 1901. Though the occasional account denounces some teachers as mere opportunists more interested in exotic travel than classroom instruction, most testimonials acclaim the American educators for succeeding in their craft and—significantly—for earning the trust and support of the Filipinos. Whether intentionally or not, the executors of American educational policy in the Philippines played the role of public diplomat. Using words that many would relish hearing about U.S. public diplomacy efforts in Iraq, Elliott, the former Philippine Commissioner, wrote of the American teachers: “They reached the hearts of the humble people and convinced them of the disinterestedness of the American policy. They soon became the centers of the community life, respected by every one and loved by the children with an abounding love.”⁵⁵ A volume dedicated to the American teachers in the Philippines resonates with praise and admiration for their capturing Filipino hearts and minds. “With wonderful zeal, tact, diplomacy, a warm heart, and colossal patience, [the teacher] succeeded in winning his way into the hearts of the once suspicious people,” proclaimed a Filipino in 1929, at the time the Director of the Bureau of Public Schools.⁵⁶ The teachers won over the Filipinos not just through their teaching, but through connecting with communities as a whole. A Filipina student at Stanford University concluded in her dissertation on the American teacher in the Philippines that he (or she) “was the best salesman of democracy in the Philippines. Through his precepts, his classroom practices, his dealings with the people, his personal, social, and

⁵⁵ Elliott, 230.

⁵⁶ Benigno V. Aldana, “The Early American Teacher,” in Pecson and Racelis, 9.

official relationships, his covert and overt behavior, the Filipinos formed their concept of democracy.”⁵⁷

The labors of the American teachers in the Philippines were complemented by the *pensionados* program, a student exchange initiative and apparent forerunner of the international and cultural exchange programs launched by public diplomacy initiatives in more recent times. The program, in fact, was to be the largest U.S. study program for Filipinos until the birth of the Fulbright scholarship.⁵⁸ As early as 1900, Taft expressed his support for educational exchange and for how it could serve U.S. policies in the Philippines. Writing to the president of the University of Michigan, where a young Filipino man had recently received a prize to study, Taft expressed his hope that “it is the beginning of the education of a great number of young Filipinos in America, where they can breath in the air of Anglo-Saxon and individual liberty and Anglo-Saxon civilization . . . if we are able to reach the [Filipino elites] by American education, we can be sure of putting very effective leaven into the lump.”⁵⁹ And in his 1901 Report of the Secretary of War, Root spoke of “the widespread desire to send boys to the United States for education. Many of the towns are arranging to send and support boys here for that purpose.”⁶⁰ In 1903, David Barrows, Atkinson’s successor as head of Public Instruction, established a program for Filipinos to study in the United States. *Pensionados* had to promise they would join the Philippine civil service upon returning from abroad.⁶¹ A 1903 Census of the Philippine Islands would boast that 100 young Filipino men had

⁵⁷ Amparo Santamaria Lardizabal, “Pioneer American Teachers and Philippine Education,” in Pecson and Racelis, 99-100.

⁵⁸ Alexander A. Calata, “The Role of Education in Americanizing Filipinos,” in McFerson, 92.

⁵⁹ Taft to James B. Angell, June 26, 1900, TP, Series 3, Reel 30.

⁶⁰ Elihu Root, “Extract From the Report of the Secretary of War for 1901,” in Bacon and Scott, 272.

⁶¹ Calata, in McFerson, 92.

sailed for California in October of that year; had “made a very favorable impression,” and “by their courteous and gentle manners removed many prejudices and made many friends.”⁶²

Other accounts, curiously, are not as sanguine. Stanley Karnow, citing the correspondence of Filipinos who studied in America, contends that *pensionados* would return to the Philippines with “American dress, manners and speech” and be ridiculed and dubbed “Amboys.” Many of them, however, “retained a lifelong devotion to the United States.”⁶³ Elliott is even more critical. While he acknowledges they became “useful citizens of the Philippines,” with some serving as educators, engineers, or government officials, he doubts if many “acquired any affection for America or admiration for her institutions by reasons of the years spent” in the United States, and “it is certain that some of them returned with a feeling of restlessness and dissatisfaction which threw them into the ranks of the agitators.”⁶⁴ While the *pensionados* program cannot be considered a public diplomacy failure, as it appeared to endear many of its participants to the United States, it certainly fell short of succeeding as a public diplomacy tool, as the returning students did not appear to sell their fellow citizens on the United States and in some cases may have themselves turned against the Americans. The program would end in 1914.

The Philippine Commission’s educational policy, like that of attraction, appears at first glance an attempt to win Filipinos over to the American civilian administration’s side. As Elliott wrote, “on political grounds alone, without reference to general humanitarian considerations, the new government felt justified in . . . giving the Filipino

⁶² “Filipino Students in the United States: Excerpt from the Census of the Philippine Islands, 1903,” in Pecsín and Racelis, 200.

⁶³ Karnow, 206-207.

⁶⁴ Elliott, 242.

people a common-school education which would render them less liable to be led by political leaders into insurrectionary schemes.”⁶⁵ Educational policy, given its emphasis on universality, functioned as a more inclusive appeal for Filipino sympathies than did attraction policy, which restricted itself to wooing the *ilustrados*. Stanley, noting the “ambiguities of attempting to attract the populace through established leaders,” points out that education strengthened American power in the Philippines “by conciliating Filipinos and weakening established patterns of social organization,” which had traditionally favored the elite.⁶⁶ The Philippine Commission invited the entire population to reap the benefits of its system of universal primary education.

U.S. education policy in the Philippines, however, involved more than mere appeals to the Filipino public. The Bureau of Public Instruction, like the U.S. Department of State in later years with publications like *Hi!* Magazine (a glossy publication featuring stories and photos on the lives of Arab-Americans), attempted to inculcate a positive image of the United States in the minds of Filipino children, using words and pictures as vehicles. The early primary school textbooks were the *Baldwin Readers*—common in the United States at the time—and contained pictures of “lily-white American children and hard-working middle-class parents, living in sturdy wooden homes in prosperous U.S. towns and cities.”⁶⁷ Glenn May, one of the few major critics of U.S. Philippine education policy, notes that Atkinson’s proposed primary school curriculum in the Philippines—which included study of “some of the world’s greatest men” such as Washington, Lincoln, and, curiously, William McKinley—“was not

⁶⁵ Ibid., 224-225.

⁶⁶ Stanley, 84.

⁶⁷ May, 88.

substantially different” from the curricula employed in his home state of Massachusetts.⁶⁸ Atkinson himself would acknowledge that words such as “strawberry,” “Jack Frost,” and “fairy” (all presumably featured in textbooks) “possess little significance for the children of the Philippines.”⁶⁹

In 1903, Barrows instituted a series of curricular reforms that yielded new textbooks with images more appropriate for Filipino children. May acknowledges they were an improvement over Atkinson’s choice of texts—they featured children with Spanish names participating in activities common in the Philippines. The new images were more recognizable to the Filipino: “mangoes and carabaos, carromatas and cascós, coconuts and abaca.”⁷⁰ Interestingly, however, the textual messages retained a uniquely American flavor, with short stories imparting American mantras such as the importance of honesty, hard work, individual thought, resilience, and kindness to animals. The stories had titles such as “The Country Mouse and the City Mouse” and “The Little Red Hen.” These efforts, May concludes, “aimed to impart American values to Filipino school children.”⁷¹

This Americanizing element hints at a more sinister objective of U.S. education policy, one that goes further than simply trying to win Filipinos over by offering them the benefits of free primary education. It betrays a desire to marginalize their identities as Filipinos, an understandable desire if one recalls President McKinley’s 1898 proclamation that the U.S. military administration should “win the confidence, respect, and affection” of Filipinos through the mission of “benevolent assimilation.” This vague

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Quoted in May, 89.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 100.

⁷¹ Ibid., 102.

term is difficult to define, but it can perhaps be construed as an intention to use education as a vehicle for transforming Filipinos and their institutions into a mirror image of the United States. One discerns this motive in the correspondence of the times. Willard French, writing in *North American Review* in 1905 about his impressions of the public school system after his recent travels in the Philippines, recounts a conversation he had with an unnamed U.S. official involved with education policy. This individual complained that too many “Thomasites” were uninterested in teaching and that he would have preferred a “concentration plan” in which only several American teachers served in the Philippines. French retorted that such a plan “would have lacked the essential element of Americanism,” and that fortunately “the task was undertaken of creating in the Philippines the complex school system of America.”⁷²

French’s account is peppered with remarks attesting to the link between Americanism and education. “Americanism of higher grade has become the fad of the Philippines,” he gloats, “and an insatiable desire to learn has developed everywhere.”⁷³ He also notes how “the little brownies’ heads” are as capable of learning as those “in ruffs and collars from staunch Yankee cradles.”⁷⁴ French recounts a story that he believes demonstrates how the public education system amplifies Filipinos’ strong identification with American values. While strolling around Batangas—“the hotbed of insurrectionary dreams”—on July 4, he witnesses “popular enthusiasm” for the American holiday, an “external indication . . . of the esteem and respect with which the natives consider the schools,” and “incidentally vindicating the plan of multiplying American

⁷² Willard French, “The Public-School System in the Philippines,” *North American Review* CLXXX (1905): 550.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 552.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 553.

teachers at the outset, instilling better Americanism with the first rudiments.”⁷⁵ French’s equating of education with Americanization dovetailed with official policy. Jose Ruiz de Luzuriaga, a wealthy sugar planter and one of the few Filipinos on the Philippine Commission, declared in *North America Review* several years before French that the “schools have been so organized that the Americanization of this country will be an accomplished fact within a few years.”⁷⁶ Interestingly, the American teachers catalyzed the forces of Americanization as well, with many Filipinos beginning to dress like Americans, to decorate their homes in an American style, and to adapt English first names after encounters with teachers.⁷⁷

U.S. civilian officials in the Philippines clearly strove to win over Filipinos with its education policy. Taft counted “a good school system” as one of the “most important agencies” in “bringing about contentment on the islands.”⁷⁸ Public education, then, functions as one of the initiatives through which the United States attempted public diplomacy to appeal to the Filipino public. Yet the fact that American civilian authorities strove not just for Filipino support but also for an Americanization of the Filipino public provides evidence that American educational policy emphasized the conquering—and not just the winning over—of Filipino minds.

Another story in French’s article betrays this mentality. While sitting in on a class in Manila, French witnesses a history lesson about John Smith and the first Virginia settlers. One boy stands and says that after he saw a picture of Smith holding an Indian

⁷⁵ Ibid., 551.

⁷⁶ “Filipino Views of American Rule,” *North American Review* CLXXIV (1902): 82-83.

⁷⁷ Lardizabal, in Pecson and Racelis, 106-107.

⁷⁸ Taft to J.C. Shmidlapp, June 15, 1900, TP, Series 3, Reel 30.

“by the throat” and demanding “your money or your life,” he was reminded of the Philippines. French continues:

There was a sparkle—a glint—in many dark eyes, and dark lips were smiling . . . It was nothing. And yet, as I sat with Dr. Beattie, the Superintendent, in his private office, afterward, I couldn’t help remarking that, if he proposed to pursue the history of the United States with those children, he ought surely to provide expurgated editions.⁷⁹

Though French’s remark may have contained an element of jest, there is an implication that Filipinos should not have access to information that may portray the United States, and its history, in a negative light. Such a policy would demean the public education system by employing it not as a means of appealing to Filipino sentiments with offerings of the benefits of free schooling—that is, as a public diplomacy tool—but rather as a tool of repression. Censorship in the educational arena did, in fact, occur; in 1904 the education superintendent informed teachers under his control that they must not criticize U.S. government policies in the Philippines.⁸⁰

One later assessment of American educational policy in the Philippines, Renato Constantino’s “The Miseducation of the Filipino,” is often cited for its savage denunciation of early 20th century American actions in the Philippines. Constantino’s essay condemns American-led education for stifling Filipino intellectual growth in the decades that followed, as it forced Filipinos to absorb American values and ideals at odds with Filipino realities. Additionally, Filipinos were educated in an alien language, English, that made learning more difficult. The result was a new educated class of Philippines lacking the intellectual grounding and practical skills to manage the nation’s problems after its eventual independence after World War II.

⁷⁹ French, 554.

⁸⁰ Henry Parker Willis, *Our Philippine Problem: A Study of American Colonial Policy* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1905), 162-163.

Constantino unabashedly asserts that U.S. educational policy always served a conquering role. “The most effective means of subjugating a people is to capture their minds,” he wrote. “Military victory does not necessarily signify conquest. As long as feelings of resistance remain in the hearts of the vanquished, no conqueror is ever secure . . . The molding of men’s minds is the best means of conquest. Education, therefore, serves as a weapon in wars of colonial conquest.”⁸¹ Applied to the Philippines case, Constantino wrote that “young minds had to be shaped to conform to American ideals” and education “served to attract the people to the new masters and at the same time to dilute the nationalism which had just succeeded in overthrowing a foreign power.”⁸² The result, he concluded, was a “captive generation” that “came of age, thinking and acting like little Americans.”⁸³ While Constantino’s words are harsh, one cannot dismiss them. American educational policy, while often championed as an altruistic means of serving the Filipino interest in education, did occur in contexts of Americanization and racism that portrayed Filipinos as inferior children (Taft’s infamous reference to Filipinos as “my little brown brothers” is representative) who could only succeed if taught by Americans. Commander Anderson had written in 1900 that the U.S. Army could fight, but it couldn’t conquer. One could perhaps say the schoolbooks of the U.S. civilian authorities had come closer to doing so than had the rifles of Anderson’s military forces.

What is the balance sheet on education’s role as a public diplomacy tool? The evidence is strong that the American teachers succeeded as public diplomats—the loyalties they won were on display during World War II, when, after the Pearl Harbor

⁸¹ Renato Constantino, “The Miseducation of the Filipino,” in *Vestiges of War: The Philippine-American War and the Aftermath of an Imperial Dream 1899-1999*, ed. Angel Velasco Shaw and Luis H. Francia (New York: New York University Press, 2002), 178.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 179

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 180

attack, the remaining American teachers in the Philippines were sent to internment camps, but received food and supplies from their former students.⁸⁴ Additionally, scores of Filipino children undoubtedly benefited from learning English, history, mathematics, and the other curricular subjects. And many others surely took advantage of the other educational offerings provided later by the Bureau of Public Instruction such as vocational and business schools and a school for the deaf. However, one is hard-pressed to accept the lasting impact of American educational policy as a public diplomacy tool. Its Americanizing elements betray an unwillingness to respect the “otherness” of Filipinos, noted above as contrary to true public diplomacy. Additionally, May minimizes the success of U.S. educational policy because of its failure to reach the Filipino public. In the 1910s, he notes, public school enrollment began to decrease, and universal primary education was abandoned, owing to perceived funding difficulties.⁸⁵ As Constantino has implied, public education merely spawned a new educated elite instead of generating a universally well-educated population. It is difficult to use universal education as a means of appeal for public sympathies if the appeal is not inclusive and is only heeded by certain segments of the public.

The objective of securing hearts and minds through developments in self-government and education was accorded prominent billing in McKinley’s Instructions to the Philippine Commission. Little is mentioned of public works, though it is clear the Commission considered this area of nation-building—comprising the construction of new state infrastructures (particularly those of transportation and public health) and the amelioration of existing ones—to be within its mandate. Elihu Root’s 1900 Report of the

⁸⁴ Gilbert S. Perez, “From the Transport Thomas to Sto. Tomas,” in Pecson and Racelis, 23.

⁸⁵ May, 120-121.

Secretary of War notes that of the Philippine Commission's first three legislative actions, one appropriated funds for "the construction and repair" of highways and bridges throughout the Philippine Islands, while another earmarked funding for a "survey" of a railroad to the Benguet mountains. Another initial measure targeted improvements for the Manila harbor.⁸⁶ Taft conceived of these initiatives as falling under the general rubric of economic development, and included among them road, rail, and port construction and "the injection of large doses of American capital into the Philippine economy."⁸⁷ Felipe Calderon's plea for "actual deeds" was satisfied: "aware from the start that the Filipinos would judge them by actual deeds," the Americans launched "practical programs" such as dam and irrigation facility construction and spent generously on health initiatives.⁸⁸ Taft, in 1907, would boast of many "public improvements," including making the archipelago's three major ports—Manila, Iloilo, and Cebu—more secure; prolific road construction; growth of the railroad from 120 to a projected 1,000 miles in five years, and "a more complex system of posts, telephones and telegraphs."⁸⁹

Why did the Philippine Commission favor the execution of such policies? The words of Taft reveal that, invariably, they were undertaken as a means of gaining support from the Filipinos. Only through improving economic conditions on the islands, he reasoned, could the Americans win Filipino allegiances. At the inauguration of the Philippine Assembly in 1907, Taft stated that "political privileges, if unaccompanied by opportunities to better their condition, are not likely to produce contentment among a people. Hence the political importance of developing the resources of these Islands for

⁸⁶ Elihu Root, "The Beginnings of the Civil Government: Extract From the Report of the Secretary of War For 1900," in Bacon and Scott, 243-244.

⁸⁷ May, 15.

⁸⁸ Karnow, 197.

⁸⁹ William H. Taft, "The Inauguration of the Philippine Assembly," in Burton, Volume I, 94-95.

the benefit of its inhabitants.”⁹⁰ In another public address, Taft declared that “one must feed a man’s belly before he develops his mind or gives him political rights,” and when the “prosperity” needed to feed him arrives, “the people of the islands will realize how much American has done for them.”⁹¹ The Americans had to facilitate the transport of goods and to keep people healthy, the thinking went, so that their material needs were met—after which they would reward the United States with their support. Therefore, the public works aspects of nation-building undertaken by the Philippine Commission were meant to contribute to American public diplomacy efforts—they composed some of the concrete actions and initiatives (other than steps towards self-government and expansion of education) envisioned as a basis of appeal and persuasion to win Filipino support for U.S. policies.

One must consider, however, whether these activities—the “actual deeds” demanded by Calderon—truly functioned as a means of appeal and persuasion. While Filipinos were most likely grateful for the more passable roads and the better health conditions, one can argue that on some levels the nation-building activities represented a vision of how Americans wanted the Philippines to be, without taking into account the “prejudices” or “customs” of Filipinos themselves, as McKinley had ordered in his instructions.

Two examples come to mind. One is the construction of the road to the Benguet mountains. The importance of this project is evidenced by its being the subject of one of the Philippine Commission’s first legislative acts. The Commission sought to build transportation to the mountains in order to facilitate access to higher land that lacked the

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 87-88.

⁹¹ William H. Taft, “The Duties of Citizenship Viewed from the Standpoint of Colonial Administration,” Address at Yale University, 1906, in *Burton*, Volume I, 43.

archipelago's suffocating tropical humidity. Back in 1900, Taft, already enamored of Benguet and its major city of Baguio, had told a friend it had "all the qualities of the temperate zone" and would surely cure those afflicted with "tropical disease."⁹² Six years later, he predicted that "as transportation becomes cheaper," Filipinos will "obtain a change of air and acquire a renewed strength that is given to tropical peoples by a visit to the temperate zone."⁹³ However, the Philippine Commission would soon be criticized for spending two million dollars on a project that appeared to be less an initiative for the benefit of the Filipino people, who had no desire to travel there, and more a diversion for American expatriates in the Philippines dying to escape the heat below. Taft responded to this criticism in 1908, noting that many Filipinos had bought lots in Benguet and that "it is hardly too much to say that Benguet has become as popular and as useful among the Filipinos as among the Americans."⁹⁴ Elliott vehemently disagreed. Writing in 1917, he insisted "the Filipinos have never liked Baguio and the political element has always bitterly opposed its development."⁹⁵ The Philippine Legislature had consistently refused to appropriate funding for the city of Baguio or for the Benguet road, he added, and Filipino civil servants "detest being separated from the delights of life in Manila and subjected to the isolation and cool weather of the mountains."⁹⁶ Elliott did not mention the sentiments of the Filipino poor, who in any event could probably not afford the trip. Similarly, the Manila tramway was allegedly built for Filipinos, and not for Americans

⁹² Taft to A.S. Burt, July 25, 1900, TP, Series 3, Reel 31.

⁹³ William H. Taft, "The Inauguration of the Philippine Assembly," in Burton, Volume I, 94.

⁹⁴ William H. Taft, "In Defense of the Philippine Policy," in Burton, Volume I, 61.

⁹⁵ Elliott, 298.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

(who preferred carriages). However, the high prices prevented Filipinos from using it, and they were obliged to walk instead.⁹⁷

The other example of an attempt at nation-building that may have represented American prejudices more than Filipino perceived interests was the attempt to make the Philippines a cleaner place, devoid of the filth and public health hazards that greeted the American administrators. Taft, who, ironically, succumbed to the very conditions he sought to eliminate (he would contract dysentery soon after his arrival), insisted on a complete hygienic makeover. He built Manila's first sewer system and a new hospital with a free clinic. American doctors taught Filipinos to boil water, which would drastically lower cholera rates. This obsession with cleanliness was rooted in the urban renewal movement then popular in the United States, with its proponents believing "an esthetic revival" could eliminate "grimy industrial areas."⁹⁸ As a result, Manila "received such a scrubbing and cleaning as had never before been experienced by any city east of Suez."⁹⁹ Some of the American initiatives were truly extraordinary, such as the attempts to reach the outer peripheries of the islands. A "hospital ship," for example, was dispatched to the Sula Archipelago—which could not be reached by land—to assist "the suffering Moros."¹⁰⁰ While he provides no evidence to back his claim, one imagines there were elements of truth in Elliott's prediction that the sea-based efforts to alleviate malaria and malnutrition among the Moros "will undoubtedly greatly influence the attitude of the Moros toward the Americans."¹⁰¹

⁹⁷ Carl Crow, *America and the Philippines* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1914), 245.

⁹⁸ Karnow, 210-211.

⁹⁹ Elliott, 190.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 193.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 216.

Interestingly, however, some U.S. civilian officials believed Filipinos were not affected by dirt and filth. “There seems to exist between the Oriental and the earth a natural affinity, which renders him partial to dirt and indifferent to squalor,” Elliot mused.¹⁰² He may have based this questionable opinion on the situation that arose during the coercive cleaning campaigns waged by the U.S. Army, when “delousing was invariably carried out at gunpoint” due to the American perception that the locals “did not share the antiseptic obsession of their conquerors.”¹⁰³ While more modern writers—such as Stanley—note the Filipinos’ desire for and appreciation for state modernization, some Americans in the Philippines a century ago apparently thought otherwise. If Americans believed the Filipinos had no objections to living in “squalor,” why then would they assume they could solicit Filipino support for American nation-building policies that aimed to clean up the Philippines? Here, as with the Benguet case, Americans were seemingly driven not only by what would be best for Filipinos, but by what they thought would be best for Filipinos based on what worked best in the United States. By failing to appreciate Filipino interests, Americans were once again disregarding the “otherness” of the Filipino public they were seeking to win over.

This myopia once again hints at a major objective of American policy in the Philippines—the desire to leave an American imprint on all things Filipino, and even to transform the Philippines into a “tropical” version of the United States. May considers this motivation to be self-evident. It was surely “obvious” to American policy-makers that U.S. Philippine policy “was designed primarily to remake the colony in the image of

¹⁰² Ibid., 186.

¹⁰³ Miller, 173.

the United States,” a process May calls “an experiment in self-duplication.”¹⁰⁴ Stanley discusses possible American motivations in the Philippines as well, and while he is not as blunt as May, the same theme of “self-duplication” is discernable. He notes the desire to promote Filipino well-being and to secure a trading base for China’s coveted markets, yet he also lists as motivations the development of Western values in Asia and the need to prepare the world’s less civilized peoples for the inevitable march of progress.¹⁰⁵

Several aforementioned ideas attest to the power of this self-duplication model, such as American-style school curriculums, the linking of public education with Americanization, and nation-building activities that resonate more with American ideals than Filipino ones. Americans were already equating the Philippines with the United States during the period of military occupation—soldiers had taken to referring to Filipino rebels as Indians. Root, in an 1899 address in Chicago, brazenly asserted that the American title to Luzon “is better than the title we had to Louisiana. It rests upon a more just foundation than the title we had to Texas.”¹⁰⁶ Taft appeared determined to associate the Filipinos’ fate with that of the United States for the foreseeable future. In 1910, he voiced his wish that the Philippines would one day have a government “like that of Australia or Canada,” so that Filipinos could “retain some sort of bond” with Americans.¹⁰⁷ This notion of a long-standing American-Philippine bond materializes throughout Taft’s policy declarations as Philippine Commissioner, Secretary of War, and U.S. President. It is not surprising that during the early occupation period, the United

¹⁰⁴ May, 17.

¹⁰⁵ Stanley, 106-107.

¹⁰⁶ Elihu Root, “The American Soldier: Address by the Secretary of War at the Marquette Club in Chicago, October 7, 1899, in Response to the Toast, ‘The American Soldier,’” in Bacon and Scott, 10.

¹⁰⁷ William H. Taft, “The Philippine Islands: Remarks at the Banquet of the Washington Corral of the Military Order of the Carabaos, New Willard Hotel, Washington, D.C., January 22, 1910” in Burton, Volume III, 448.

States allied itself with the Federal Party (the *Federalistas*), a Philippine political party (formed by *ilustrados*) that advocated Philippine statehood. The *Federalistas* trumpeted an Americanized world in which, in the words of party president Trinidad Pardo de Tavera, “we shall feel ourselves completely united and assimilated.”¹⁰⁸

May was not the first to consider it self-evident that American policy in the Philippines aspired to “self-duplication.” Even before his departure for the Philippines, Taft received a note from a military general recently returned from the Philippines. “It seems to me obvious,” he wrote to Taft, that the United States possesses “the power and [illegible] the duty directly of governing the Philippines, according to the spirit and the intent of the Constitution and laws of the parent country.”¹⁰⁹ He would not be disappointed. McKinley’s Instructions to the Philippine Commission emphasized how the fledgling government in the Philippines must reflect Filipino interests, yet his message is also firm that “certain great principles of government which have been made the basis of our governmental system” must “be imposed” in the Philippines.¹¹⁰ And in August 1900, in one of its first official assessments of its work in the Philippines, the Philippine Commission would tell Root that the creation of a central government within 18 months, under which “all rights described in the bill of rights and in the Federal constitution are to be secured” to Filipinos, will bring them “contentment, prosperity, education, and political enlightenment.”¹¹¹ Seemingly, the Philippine Commission viewed Americanization itself as a means of winning over the Filipinos.

¹⁰⁸ Karnow, 176.

¹⁰⁹ Harrison Gray Otis to Taft, April 10, 1900, TP, Reel 3, Series 30.

¹¹⁰ William McKinley, “Instructions to the Philippine Commission,” in Bacon and Scott, 291.

¹¹¹ Philippine Commission to Elihu Root, August 21, 1900, TP, Reel 3, Series 31.

Root furthered the self-duplication construct with an Americanization of Philippine history. In a 1902 speech, he cited an address of Jose Rizal—a martyred Filipino rebel who died in the uprising against the Spanish—that promoted the necessity of education and virtue. “That message,” Root declared, “is the platform of the American government in the Philippines.”¹¹² Root had, in effect, subsumed the revered Rizal into broader American Philippine policy. Yet perhaps the most vivid evocation of the self-duplication image was provided by Austin Craig, originally an American teacher in the Philippines and later a lecturer at the University of the Philippines:

Spain had her chance in the Philippines and, in language and laws, failed. So when the United States undertook the task it was to make the Filipinos literate in English, the language of their neighbors in the Orient and of democracy, and to give their government an Anglo-Saxon foundation. The United States wanted a daughter in the Orient.¹¹³

This idea of reproducing the United States in the Philippines played a major part in American actions and beliefs at the time. Did the intensity of self-duplication policy marginalize American public diplomacy, or the ability of the Americans, through their “actual deeds,” to seek the Filipinos’ willful support of U.S. policies? Not always. American teachers in the Philippines made a clear effort to engage the Filipinos, as evidenced by their frequent presence at social functions; their role as local confidants and advisers, and their general ability to form long-standing and warm relationships with the Filipino people. Indeed, the role of dialogue—a key component of public diplomacy, particular in an era before the advent of international media—was paramount in American-Filipino relations during the American occupation. Taft would promulgate that “the first duty of the American citizen” in the Philippines “is to make himself as well

¹¹² Elihu Root, “American Policies in the Philippines in 1902,” in Bacon and Scott, 87.

¹¹³ Josephine and Austin Craig, “Farthest Westing: A Philippine Footnote,” in Pecson and Racelis, 241.

acquainted with the Filipinos as he can; to cultivate their good-will; [and] to have them understand that the interests of the Filipinos are paramount” in affecting American policies there.¹¹⁴

Taft’s advice was heeded by the teachers. U.S. civilian officials respected it as well, albeit for political reasons. Taft “regularly entertained members of the elite” at the governor’s residence, and “made a point” of dancing with Filipino women.¹¹⁵ Public Instruction Secretary Bernard Moses, while at a luncheon at the home of a local mayor, invited “Filipino ladies” to sit at his table. Also, Moses’ wife surprised her escort by asking him to sit next to her at a dinner party.¹¹⁶ These actions to enhance social relations, however, were an attempt to make up for the actions of the U.S. military authorities, who had offended the *ilustrados* by rarely associating with them.¹¹⁷ May notes how Taft was eager to secure local support for his policies. Therefore the dialoging and engaging with the elites was “good public relations,” but “not an accurate reflection” of the U.S. civilian administration’s views of the population as a whole.¹¹⁸ And by limiting its personal exchanges to elite society, the Philippine Commission was practicing poor public diplomacy as well, as a successful public diplomacy should engage entire publics, not simply the wealthy elite minority.

The Commissioners did make attempts to engage the general public, mainly through the process of meeting with Filipinos to get their consent for nation-building tasks. Elliot describes his efforts to gain endorsements from Filipinos for the

¹¹⁴ William H. Taft, “The Duties of Citizenship Viewed From the Standpoint of Colonial Administration,” in Burton, Volume I, 41.

¹¹⁵ May, 12.

¹¹⁶ Lardizabal, in Pecson and Racelis, 98.

¹¹⁷ May, 12.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

construction of roads and damming projects. Writing about his experiences addressing public meetings and explaining to people the benefits of irrigation prior to the initiation of a damming project, Elliot grumbled that his week “in the dusty villages” during “the hot and dry season” will not be forgotten, though “it was worth the effort” nonetheless.¹¹⁹ However, writing at a different time about road construction, he inveighed against the “self-imposed necessity” of “securing the co-operation and consent of the natives as a condition precedent to do anything.”¹²⁰ He contrasts the reality in the Philippines with that in India, where central governments “with unrestricted control” and “ample funds” can easily proceed with their nation-building projects.¹²¹ Such a disinclination to engage Filipinos raises again the question of how much value American policy-makers in the Philippines accorded to public diplomacy, and of whether they cared more about hurrying along with the road construction and dam building to consummate their goal of creating another America than about truly cultivating Filipino support and loyalty for American policies in the Philippines. Put differently, one wonders if the Americans were so obsessed with executing the “actual deeds” ordered by Felipe de Calderon that they failed to reason whether the deeds they were executing were truly the ones desired by Filipinos.

III. Results

How did the Filipino people react to the American efforts to reach out to the people, and what can be concluded from these reactions? Is there any indication that Filipinos began supporting American policies after the roads were built, the sewer systems were constructed, and the school houses proliferated? Naturally, U.S. policy-makers, speaking in very general terms, believed the Filipinos had been won over.

¹¹⁹ Elliott, 368.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 280.

¹²¹ Ibid., 280-281.

“There is nothing in life equal to the consciousness of having attempted to do good for a people and having in a measure succeeded,” Taft would say in 1910.¹²² And in 1907, he was citing what he considered the “state of tranquility” in the Philippines and linking the end of the “insurrection” to the “acquiescence of the Filipino people in American sovereignty.”¹²³

Such questions of American public diplomacy success are impossible to answer conclusively. One can make some assertions on a micro level. The three *ilustrados* on the Philippine Commission who wrote glowing endorsements of American policies in *North America Review* in 1902—declaring, among other things, that only those “who oppose all civilization and progress” found fault with American government measures in the Philippines—probably had a different response than the poor, rural men of the resistance movement that scoffed at the overtures of the newest Western power occupying the archipelago. Then again, some of these resisters may have been “conciliated,” to use a term of the time, to the Americans after beholding the arrival of a U.S. “hospital ship” to care for the village poor, or after witnessing the affection and respect their children had developed for their American teachers. But then there is Renato Constantino, who refused to attribute even a shred of benevolence to U.S. educational policies, dismissing them as a “miseducation” of the Filipino people.

Gauging more collective Filipino reactions to American attempts to win hearts and minds, however, is more difficult. One visitor to the U.S.-occupied archipelago in the early 1910s was struck by how Filipinos in Manila were more hostile to American policies than those in the countryside. His explanation was that in Manila, Filipinos,

¹²² William H. Taft, “The Philippine Islands,” in Burton, Volume III, 448.

¹²³ William H. Taft, “The Inauguration of the Philippine Assembly,” in Burton, Volume I, 90.

emboldened by their ample political rights, sought more power and resented the American presence for blocking their way. Outside of Manila, however, “social and political barriers are not so apparent,” and Americans and Filipinos “find more common ground.”¹²⁴ Meanwhile, the cynical Elliott is convinced that the American emphasis on winning Filipino support for U.S. policies became overkill—and that the repeated American appeals to Filipinos backfired, with the latter perceiving American actions as mere obsequiousness. “In our desire to impress the natives with our friendship,” he says, “we permitted them to overlook the fact that our functions were much more than advisory.” He continues:

Exaggerated deference, much of it palpably insincere, was shown the Filipino leaders. Every effort possible was made to secure their good will and cooperation, and this of course was good policy . . . the evil lay in the fact that it was so grossly overdone . . . there was a good deal of this feeling among the more intelligent Filipinos . . . a little more firmness and straightforwardness when dealing with individuals would have increased the prestige and hence the influence of the American officials.¹²⁵

Elliott was alleging that efforts to win over the Filipinos were not genuine, another public diplomacy no-no described earlier. With this denunciation of U.S. efforts to persuade Filipinos of their benevolent policies in the Philippines, Elliott appears to scoff at the repeated themes of benevolence and good intentions prevalent in official U.S. Philippines policy proclamations and correspondence of the time—the themes that, in many ways, materialize today in the Iraq policy statements of the Bush Administration.

The assessing of Filipino public support for U.S. policies is best determined through studying the views of Filipinos themselves on the matter. The Philippine historian Maria Serena I. Diokno judges that Filipino views of American policies divided

¹²⁴ Carl Crow, *America and the Philippines* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1914), 234-236.

¹²⁵ Elliott, 389-390.

along class lines, with the *ilustrados* generally supporting them and the poor—particularly the revolutionaries—rejecting them. “Given the inherent contradictory nature of benevolent conquest, it became inevitable that Filipino reactions to American rule would vary,” she concludes.¹²⁶ Indeed, Manuel Quezon, who, ironically, would become one of the Philippines’ most prominent early proponents of independence, once mused that American benevolence had played such a role in Philippine political thought that Philippine nationalism had been undermined: “Damn the Americans! Why don’t they tyrannize us more?”¹²⁷ Yet one wonders if his countrymen—the ones who lost families or homes to the U.S. military offensive—were as eager for more tyranny. Ultimately, Diokno writes, many non-*ilustrados*, as proponents of state modernization, favored the U.S. nation-building projects, yet believed that so long as the United States remained in power, they would be passive observers to the modernization.¹²⁸

Stanley’s assessment points to more general support for U.S. policies. He acknowledges the Americans “talked a better game than they played,” but that nonetheless “nation building and the imperialism of suasion were enough by themselves, in most cases, to neutralize hostility and promote confidence.”¹²⁹ The major Filipino complaints against the U.S. government, he judged, were rooted in “the failure or misfiring of enlightened, well-intentioned programs” such as inefficient animal inoculations or snooty public health officials—“not the stuff of which revolutions are

¹²⁶ Maria Serena I. Diokno, “‘Benevolent Assimilation’ and Filipino Responses,” in McFerson, 78.

¹²⁷ Quoted in Karnow, 16.

¹²⁸ Diokno, in McFerson, 86.

¹²⁹ Stanley, 269.

made.”¹³⁰ At the same time, however, American policies—most notably attraction—strengthened the “class interests” of the *ilustrados*, to the detriment of the poor.¹³¹

One can conclude that it was the teachers, and not U.S. civilian officials, whose efforts to win Filipino hearts and minds paid the most dividends. While certain opportunists with no interest in engaging the Filipino people undoubtedly penetrated their ranks, many American teachers earned respect and support from their pupils and others in their communities. One of the more comprehensive volumes on American teachers in the Philippines lavishes encomiums on the educators, with the following a representative sample: “The success of the American experiment in the Philippines is largely due to the success achieved by the first American teachers in winning the hearts of the Filipino people . . . He was able to win the confidence of the people through an unselfish devotion to duty and an ever-helping hand.”¹³²

The situation is murkier with regards to the American politicians in the Philippines. Clearly, Filipinos were not in complete support of American policies. Arthur Stanley Riggs, an American journalist and editor of two Manila-based, English-language newspapers in the early 20th century, wrote in the pages of *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1903 about recently-passed Philippine Commission legislation that authorized governors to close banks. This law, he wrote, “was so evidently needed, it was so sane, that public opinion for once sided with the authorities, an unusual thing indeed in Manila.”¹³³ Granted, the U.S. occupation was still in its incipient stages in 1903, yet the implication that public support for Philippine Commission policies were the exception,

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid., 270.

¹³² Julian Encarnacion, “From the Days of the Lakans to the Coming of the Transport Thomas,” in Pecson and Racelis, 20-21.

¹³³ Arthur Stanley Riggs, “A Letter From The Philippines,” *The Atlantic Monthly* XCII (1903): 260.

not the norm, does not bode well for American public diplomacy in the Philippines at the time. And it should be noted that the instability and violence plaguing the archipelago during the earlier period of U.S. military administration continued, albeit less intensely, during the initial years of the civilian occupation.¹³⁴ This reality surely bedeviled civilian attempts at public diplomacy in 1903 as much as earlier military-led public diplomacy efforts. In retrospect, Filipino support for the Americans would follow a complex trajectory in the 20th century. Filipinos would fight alongside American military forces in World War II, and they would watch as U.S. officials, after years of support for Ferdinand Marcos, finally began a campaign of opposition during the 1980s. And, more recently, Filipino publics would react to the abduction of one of their own—a truck driver, Angelo dela Cruz, kidnapped in July 2004 by militants in Iraq—by denouncing American policies in the U.S. occupation of a far-away land that is so often compared to the U.S. occupation of their own country one hundred years ago.

IV. U.S. Public Diplomacy in Iraq

While Cruz's abduction would spawn the Philippine government's decision in 2004 to withdraw its modest military contingent from Iraq, American troops appear hunkered down for the foreseeable future in a nation they first entered in March 2003 to overthrow Saddam Hussein. The Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), the U.S.-led civilian administration in Iraq, existed very briefly compared to the U.S. civilian administration in the Philippines. Yet the American military, though subordinate to the new interim Iraqi government, is active in efforts to win Iraqi hearts and minds, particularly as violent resistance to the American presence appears strong and widespread. Indeed, in comparison to the U.S. intervention in the Philippines, the

¹³⁴ Miller, 264.

American occupation of Iraq is now most similar to the period of 1898-1902, when the U.S. military was attempting to suppress what was then a raging Philippine insurrection. Are existing public diplomacy strategies in Iraq at all akin to the efforts undertaken in the Philippines during the 1898-1902 period?

In some ways, the American efforts to win hearts and minds in Iraq are reminiscent of the Philippine attraction policy. Several weeks ago the *Washington Post* reported that the Pentagon this past summer developed a new military strategy “aimed at driving a wedge among various factions” in Iraq. This new plan “centers on enticing more Sunnis into the political process, while targeting the Islamic extremist groups for elimination.”¹³⁵ Substitute “*ilustrados*” for “Sunnis,” and “*insurrectos*” for “Islamic extremist groups,” and one could be referencing the Philippine Commission’s attempt to drain the Philippine rebellion’s strength by attracting key members of society to the American side. U.S. policy-makers mince no words about their intention to win over the Sunnis. The article quotes one official who explains how many Sunnis Arabs in Iraq “feel disenfranchised and are being intimidated,” and how “they need to be relieved of that yoke and engaged, while the extremists need to be isolated, captured, or killed.”¹³⁶ This desire to “entice” moderates is also shared by U.S. diplomats. Edward Djerejian, a former U.S. ambassador in the Middle East who headed a government public diplomacy commission in 2003, recently stated that by fashioning an effective Iraq policy that produces a “representative government,” then moderates can be “galvanized.”¹³⁷

¹³⁵ Bradley Graham and Walter Pincus, “As Insurgency Grows, US Plan Is to Divide and Conquer,” *The Washington Post*, in *The Boston Sunday Globe*, October 31, 2004, A13.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Edward Djerejian, panelist at lecture, “Communicating With the Arab World,” at conference, *Engaging in Dialogue on U.S. Foreign Policy*, Tufts University, Medford, MA, November 9, 2004.

Peter Stanley has described U.S. Philippine policy as intent on not simply drawing local elites into the political process, but also on capitalizing on a perceived Filipino desire for modernization by undertaking nation-building programs. Indeed, U.S. planners in Iraq are engaging in such projects with an apparent desire to use them as a means of eliciting Iraqi loyalty. USAID, which did not exist during the U.S. occupation of the Philippines, is overseeing the rebuilding of schools, roads, and other areas of the Iraqi infrastructure. The agency's website describes its work as "devoting substantial resources throughout the country to restore critical infrastructure, support the delivery of healthcare and education services, expand economic opportunities, and improve governance."¹³⁸ USAID has undertaken education-related measures that rival, at least in terms of breadth, the initiatives of Americans in the Philippines a century ago. USAID has funded Iraqi teacher training programs, the reconstructions of school buildings, and the provision of school supplies, including desks and textbooks.¹³⁹ The major difference between USAID education projects and those of Americans in the Philippines is that USAID has provided the funding and infrastructure for the education, but not the education itself; American teachers in Iraq, if they even exist, are most likely few.

Unlike in the Philippines, however, the United States has taken advantage of advances in global communications to boost its public diplomacy efforts in Iraq. Radio Sawa, a State Department-sponsored project that broadcasts in Iraq and throughout the Middle East, intermingles Western popular and Arab music with periodic news segments. Radio Sawa is an example of the current emphasis on international communication in

¹³⁸ "USAID: Assistance for Iraq—Accomplishments Overview" (accessed November 7, 2004); available from <http://www.usaid.gov/iraq/accomplishments/>.

¹³⁹ "USAID: Assistance for Iraq—Education" (accessed November 17, 2004); available from <http://www.usaid.gov/iraq/accomplishments/education.html>.

U.S. public diplomacy. The State Department's most recent Report of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy focuses its policy recommendations on tools such as message dissemination, broadcasting, and Arab language skills. The only public diplomacy tool described in the report with a direct link to those in the Philippines is the emphasis on international educational exchange programs such as the Fulbright Scholarship program—one thinks back to the *pensionados* initiative.¹⁴⁰ The report does endorse the use of action-based initiatives as a public diplomacy tool, contending that “USAID activities make a positive contribution to U.S. public diplomacy when they are communicated to host populations,” and recommending coordination with USAID “to better publicize the numerous contributions America makes to foreign societies.”¹⁴¹ Even with the primacy of communications-based tools of public diplomacy, the State Department is still championing the use of Philippines-style nation-building initiatives and actions as appeals to the Iraqi people.

The actual results on the ground, however, point to some departures from the goodwill-seeking strategies in the Philippines. Back in 2003, shortly after the famous toppling of the Saddam Hussein statue in Baghdad, U.S. troops may have blown opportunities to convince Iraqis of U.S. goodwill. According to recent comments by Barbara Bodine, a career diplomat who briefly led the transitional government in Baghdad, a “critical moment” occurred when the United States failed to curb the widespread looting convulsing the country early in the war. The Americans, she contends, considered looting “insignificant” and thereby implied to Iraqis that “we’re not interested in you.” In effect, “we traded Iraqi personal security for an amorphous thing

¹⁴⁰ 2004 Report of the United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy (accessed November 7, 2004); available from <http://www.state.gov/r/adcompd/rls/36275.htm>.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

called freedom.”¹⁴² This disregard for the looting is at odds with the determined advice of Felipe Calderon, who had told the Schurman Commission more than a century ago that the U.S. military must make gestures—no matter how small—to demonstrate American goodwill towards Filipinos as the U.S. military fought the insurgency. Bodine also implied that the larger manifestations of U.S. beneficence in Iraq mean nothing in the absence of more immediate, practical demonstrations of American intentions to help the Iraqi people. “Schools are great,” she remarked, “but if you don’t feel safe going there, what’s the point?”¹⁴³ One imagines Calderon would have agreed. Taft may have concurred as well, as one thinks back to his warning that the immediate, material needs of Filipinos must be fulfilled before any thought can be given to winning them over. The U.S. military clearly understands the value of initial gestures; Harvard University’s Tiziana Dearing wrote last month that “in the Iraq war, the US military specifically saw early aid provision as part of the strategy to win Iraq hearts and minds.”¹⁴⁴ Yet as Bodine’s comments indicate, these “provisions” have not always been forthcoming.

Last year’s U.S.-Iraqi military offensive in Fallujah can provide a case study of U.S. public diplomacy efforts on the ground. This “battle for Fallujah,” billed as the largest show of U.S. force in Iraq since the heavy fighting of March 2003, began in early November 2004 in an effort to crush Iraqi insurgents in a city considered a major hotbed of resistance to the American presence in Iraq. Only days before the assault began, a *Boston Globe* reporter spent a day observing American interactions with Fallujah residents. The reporter paints a hopeful picture of American military personnel striving

¹⁴² Barbara Bodine, panelist at lecture, “Learning Lessons from Iraq,” at conference, *Engaging in Dialogue on U.S. Foreign Policy*, November 9, 2004.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Tiziana Dearing, “For Aid Workers, a Deadly Blurring of Lines,” *The Boston Globe*, November 27, 2004, A17.

to convince Iraqis of their intentions to help them, despite the soaring challenge of doing so in a city so volatile that the Marines never ventured into Fallujah proper to conduct their interactions. Indeed, “to win over Fallujans, US Marines are trying to field complaints, hire local contractors, and run reconstruction projects from a heavily guarded outpost two miles from the city center.”¹⁴⁵ The article mentions plans to rebuild water, sewage, and electricity systems—public works projects similar to those undertaken by Americans in the Philippines. It notes the presence of a military judge advocate at the Marine outpost who handles compensation claims against U.S. forces. Yet it also recounts how schools and mosques rebuilt by the Americans have since been attacked again, and how those Iraqis committed to the Americans—such as two brothers who signed a contract to renovate a mosque with U.S. funds—fear for their lives.¹⁴⁶

This account of Fallujah captures clear American military efforts to dialogue with and engage Iraqis. Yet while the marines outside Fallujah, like those in the Philippines, are committed to nation-building tasks, they are also obliged to use violence to eliminate perceived extremists. In both occupations, American military efforts to win local hearts and minds have been undermined by the exigencies of war. An Iraqi soccer player in Fallujah complained that U.S. troops had repeatedly broken promises to build a sports club—“I don’t think they will now, after all the battles and destruction,” he confessed.¹⁴⁷ One imagines after the siege began the plans were put on indefinite hold. By mid-November, U.S. and Iraqi forces had taken control of much of the city. U.S. military officials believe that unless American troops and Iraqi officials can quickly return to

¹⁴⁵ Anne Barnard, “US Faces Delicate Task in Volatile Falluja,” November 4, 2004 (accessed November 6, 2004); available from http://www.boston.com/news/nation/articles/2004/11/04/us_faces_delicate_task_in_volatile_fallujah/.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

Fallujah and continue with the reconstruction efforts and convince residents that “they have a stake in the new Iraqi government,” the U.S. siege of Fallujah will be a failure.¹⁴⁸ American military planners, however, are now deferring to the Iraqi interim government in efforts to win over Fallujah residents. “The Iraqi government should take the lead,” a military chief of staff said in a recent *Boston Globe* interview. “We want to become invisible at this point . . . [The Iraqis] have a real window of opportunity. They need to be there with a line of bulldozers, garbage trucks, cement trucks.”¹⁴⁹ In early December, *The Boston Globe* reported that the U.S. military was resigned to the fact that its earlier efforts to win hearts and minds through pledges of benevolence had failed and merely “telegraphed weakness” by asking, as a marine intelligence officer put it, “‘What are your needs? What are your emotional needs?’ All this Oprah [stuff].”¹⁵⁰ The officer’s comments, made after the difficult Fallujah campaign, are eerily similar to those uttered by Adna Chaffee and his contemporaries about “mollycoddling” and “sprinkling perfumery” during the challenging times of the Philippine insurgency. Just as in the Philippines, public diplomacy efforts in Iraq have grown ever-tenuous in the midst of a violent, unstable environment.

Given the fluidity and volatility of events in Iraq, it is impossible to predict the success of American public diplomacy there, especially as the U.S. military is careful to delegate much of the task of winning Iraqi support to the interim Iraqi government. Yet by extrapolating some of the conditions prevailing during the U.S. occupation of the

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Quoted in Bryan Bender and Anne Barnard, “Rebuilding Fallujah Will Test US Next,” *Boston Sunday Globe*, November 14, 2004 (accessed December 6, 2004); available from http://www.boston.com/news/world/articles/2004/11/14/rebuilding_fallujah_will_test_us_next/.

¹⁵⁰ Quoted in Anne Barnard, “Returning Fallujans Will Face Clampdown,” *Boston Sunday Globe*, December 5, 2004, A28.

Philippines to those in Iraq today, one can draw a major conclusion: three factors favorable to U.S. public diplomacy present in the Philippines do not now exist in Iraq. The fact that, even with the presence of these conditions, the Americans still struggled to win hearts and minds in Philippines bodes poorly for the present situation in Iraq. These conditions in the Philippines were a lack of residual hatred from past encounters with Americans, the monopoly the American government held over nation-building projects, and the lack of media resources with which Filipinos could respond to the American occupation.

The rumor that William McKinley at one point had never heard of the Philippine islands and could not locate them on a map may be exaggerated.¹⁵¹ However, it is true that American encounters with Filipinos prior to the Spanish-American War and Dewey's conquest at Manila Bay were uneventful and few. The United States' foray into East Asia had begun only several decades before, when it formalized commercial relations with China and Japan. Until it occupied the archipelago in 1898, it is safe to say U.S.-Filipino encounters were not prolonged. Plus, though they would soon anger many Filipinos and trigger an uprising against their presence, Americans did not arrive in the Philippines a long-hated people. Significantly, Emilio Aguinaldo, the rebel leader, had initially been an American ally. The situation, of course, is very different today in Iraq. Though many Iraqis most likely welcomed the initial arrival of the Americans and the overthrow of Hussein in 2003, the United States had surely generated past Iraqi ill-will through, among other things, its waging of the Gulf War and the resulting sanctions regime, Ba'thist party anti-American propaganda, as well as the United States' perceived

¹⁵¹ Ernest R. May, *Imperial Democracy: The Emergence of America as a Great Power* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1961), 244.

role as a biased player in the Arab-Israeli conflict. In short, the United States could figure on an easier job convincing Philippines of American good-will than it could in Iraq, simply because Filipinos in 1898 had less reason than Iraqis in 2003 to harbor negative sentiments towards the United States.

The Philippine Commission considered nation-building a major policy component. And though U.S. officials in the Philippines took pains to avoid being labeled colonials, the American occupation of the Philippines was one in which the United States alone—and not any other foreign power—exerted control. This control extended to the public works and nation-buildings projects, many of which—as illustrated in Elliot’s account of his travels throughout the islands to promote irrigation projects and road-building—the Philippine commissioners themselves oversaw. The United States alone, then, was associated with these projects. In the Philippines, therefore, The United States could conceivably have declared its intentions to endear itself to the Filipino people through its actions of nation-building, because the United States was truly and fully dedicating itself to these projects. In Iraq today, however, despite the U.S.-dominated military intervention, foreign nationals and international non-governmental organizations contribute to activities of reconstruction. In the same way that the U.S. military in Fallujah is sharing the load of public diplomacy with the Iraqi government, the United States government is sharing the grand task of reconstruction with others. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ Gulf Region Division recently announced an initiative in which it will collaborate with Iraqi engineers to rebuild

schools, power plants, and infrastructure.¹⁵² While this initiative may be construed as a positive development, in that it envisions American military personnel and Iraqi civilians working in harmony, it could also spell disaster, given how many Iraqis have not favored their compatriots' collaboration with the United States (an example would be the brothers in Fallujah fearing for their lives for using U.S. funds to rebuild mosques).

It is, of course, true that USAID plays a major role in Iraqi reconstruction, a fact that the Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy has recognized. Yet USAID projects in Iraq are often outsourced to private contractors, many of them American employees of private corporations.¹⁵³ These contractors do not always win Iraqi support; the commonplace abductions of contractors—not to mention the fates of the U.S. contractors whose charred bodies were hung over a Fallujah bridge last spring—attest to this reality. The United States, clearly, cannot boast in Iraq of the monopoly over nation-building efforts it enjoyed in the Philippines, and this reality handicaps its ability to appeal to the Iraqi people.

Finally, perhaps the most significant condition existing in the Philippines in 1898 and lacking in Iraq today is the absence of media resources. Global communications—most notably the Al-Jazeera satellite television station—can now be wielded by the very people that are targeted for U.S. public diplomacy efforts in Iraq—a resource that existed to a much lesser extent for Filipinos during the U.S. occupation. While the United States can tap into *Hi Magazine* or Radio Sawa, Iraqis, like others throughout the Middle East, can respond through their use of the power of television images to induce strong

¹⁵² Mitch Frazier, "New Program Partners U.S., Iraqi Engineers To Rebuild Nation," *Army News Service*, October 21, 2004 (accessed November 17, 2004); available from http://www4.army.mil/ocpa/read.php?story_id_key=6472.

¹⁵³ "USAID: Assistance for Iraq—Contracts and Grants" (accessed November 11, 2004); available from <http://www.usaid.gov/iraq/activities.html#contracts>.

sentiments against the United States—a phenomenon known as the “Al-Jazeera effect.” Indeed, last year Hafiz Al-Mirazi, of Al-Jazeera’s Washington, D.C. bureau, described the channel’s ability to shape Arab public opinion with its visual images of suffering in the Arab world as the “al-Jazeera effect.”¹⁵⁴ Just as CNN aroused American public opinion with its harrowing footage of Mogadishu and Sarajevo, he explained, al-Jazeera, by broadcasting images of Palestinian casualties and demolished homes, has engendered among Arabs a desire to take action.¹⁵⁵ One can make a similar argument in Iraq—images of leveled homes and other destruction from the war incite Iraqi sentiments against the Americans and their occupation. This media weapon poses a formidable challenge to American attempts to convince Iraqis of American goodwill and to elicit support for American policies in Iraq.

The Philippines of the early 20th century had no equivalent to al-Jazeera, and local media were subject to crackdowns. Arthur Stanley Riggs, an American journalist and editor of two English-language Manila papers, wrote in 1903 about the alien and sedition laws recently passed in the Philippines. “These laws are somewhat similar to our old law,” he explained, “the difference being that they are enforced here on what seems to be the average newspaper man[‘s] very slight provocation.”¹⁵⁶ Riggs writes of curtailed media freedom in the Philippines:

. . . As a plain fact, conditions now in Manila are such that no paper can tell at what minute it is likely to be summoned to the office of the attorney-general to answer for any one of a number of things it had no idea of doing, and which it did not believe were done. Retractions are as a rule fruitless.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴ Hafiz al-Mirazi, “The Al-Jazeera Effect: In the Middle East and Beyond,” *Fares Lecture Series—Media and the Middle East*, October, 2003, Tufts University, Medford, MA.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁶ Riggs, “A Letter from the Philippines,” 263.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 264.

Taft was not pleased with local media. He wrote a terse message to a military contact in late 1900, deeming some Tagalog articles in two papers “strictly seditious” that require action “of a radical character.” He recommended those involved be jailed and the paper suppressed. “The open advocacy of war when the soldiers are losing their lives in trying to suppress it ought to bring severe punishment,” he fumed.¹⁵⁸ The former Philippine Commissioner Henry Ide, writing in *North America Review* several years later, would insist “there has been absolutely no censorship of the press” since the advent of the U.S. civilian government.¹⁵⁹ While he may have been right, Riggs’ account illustrates that Philippine media freedoms were compromised nonetheless. Additionally, the U.S. civilian administration was not above the bribing of its preferred media. Taft allegedly provided \$6,000 to *La Democracia*, a struggling newspaper of the Federal Party, the U.S.-supported political party that advocated Philippine statehood.¹⁶⁰

However, media in the Philippines did enjoy some relative freedom and, according to some accounts, were even able to affect U.S. policy. Elliott describes how, in 1914, the “native papers,” echoing the sentiments of many Filipinos, helped successfully lobby for the abolition of the Bureau of Navigation, an unpopular Commission agency.¹⁶¹ And in an indication that U.S. civilian officials, unlike those in the Middle East today, had limited means of using pro-American media tools to shape minds, Filipino perceptions of the United States were influenced by their having read not contemporary news accounts but instead past works of American “muckrakers”—

¹⁵⁸ Taft to Brigadier General J. Franklin Bell, November 10, 1900, TP, Series 3, Reel 31.

¹⁵⁹ Henry C. Ide, “Philippine Problems,” *North American Review* CLXXXVI (1907): 517.

¹⁶⁰ Karnow, 176.

¹⁶¹ Elliott, 337.

because current news traveled so slowly.¹⁶² Finally, Filipino public opinion about Americans, according to Elliot, was informed by the “perverted data” in Spanish-language papers.¹⁶³

An even more interesting Filipino communications phenomenon during the American occupation is the U.S.-based Philippine pro-independence public relations movement. According to Grayson Kirk, Filipino independence advocates launched a propaganda movement in the United States. The activists used money to train American journalists, who in turn “flooded the mails” with pro-independence literature.¹⁶⁴ Manuel Quezon, a Philippine “resident commissioner” in the United States, spearheaded the campaign with yearly “petitions, resolutions and bills” sent to Congress that advocated Philippine freedom from American occupation.¹⁶⁵ Quezon, in his resident commissioner capacity, also published a magazine, *The Filipino People*, which was billed as a publication of Filipino views. Elliot would quip that Quezon, whose charm would gain him courtesy member status of the House of Representatives, “was unusually well equipped for securing publicity” while boasting his own official magazine and “the free use” of the *Congressional Record*.¹⁶⁶ In sum, despite the oppressive alien and sedition acts, the United States could not stymie the ability of Philippine media to affect American policies, perhaps because of a powerful Philippine response that was global in nature.

It is safe to say, however, that neither the Filipino affinity for U.S. muckraker literature nor Quezon’s public relations outfit come close to the influence of al-Jazeera

¹⁶² Karnow, 240.

¹⁶³ Elliott, 75.

¹⁶⁴ Grayson Kirk, *Philippine Independence; Motives, Problems, and Prospects* (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, Inc., 1936), 50-51.

¹⁶⁵ Elliott, 415-416.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 416.

(or, for that matter, the Internet), which can instantaneously—and ubiquitously, given its increasingly-broadening reach—respond to the United States’ actions in Iraq by producing images of Iraqi war dead or of the sexual abuse of Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib. In fact, American civilian authorities in the Philippines were so careful about controlling information that few foreign correspondents were based there (the Associated Press and the Laffon Press Association each had one representative based in Manila), and the few present were obligated to file uncritical dispatches of Filipino life under occupation.¹⁶⁷ Henry Parker Willis has attributed these conditions to the U.S. perception that the Philippines had little importance as a news source and also that U.S. personnel in the Philippines cowed foreign journalists into compliance.¹⁶⁸ The Filipinos, then, could depend on neither their own media nor foreign outlets to respond critically to the American occupation. Clearly, there was no al-Jazeera effect in the Philippines.

V. A Need for Further Comparisons

This paper has sought to illustrate how U.S. public diplomacy efforts were implemented in the Philippines, an occupation often described as analogous to the current one in Iraq. Both U.S. military and civilian authorities in the Philippines attempted to employ actual deeds and initiatives as a means of convincing the Filipino public that the United States and its Philippine policies were worth supporting. These concrete actions ranged from military-led public education to educational exchange programs, and from beautification programs to hospital ships. However, whether these programs were uniquely meant as public diplomacy—that is, whether they were inclusive, sincere, and, most notably, respectful of the Filipinos’ “otherness,” is doubtful, given the United

¹⁶⁷ Willis, 157-158.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 158-159.

States' determined objective to create what was described as a "daughter in the Orient."

As noted in the above pages, Filipino interests were sometimes disregarded as the United States hurriedly proceeded with its mission to recreate the Philippines in its image.

Nevertheless, the U.S. civilian administration was intent on winning Filipino hearts and minds, and one can argue that it succeeded on several levels—particularly in regards to the American teachers, often described as the quintessential public diplomats. At the same time, however, public diplomacy did not broadly convert the Filipino public, as evidenced by the ongoing resistance to American occupation—U.S. policy makers would dismiss it as mere "banditry"—that some argue has lasted to the present day, and by the angry scholarship of Renato Constantino, who insists the American occupation has stunted the Philippines' development as a free nation. Given the lack of total success in the public diplomacy realm in the Philippine experience, one's prediction of public diplomacy successes in Iraq today is therefore necessarily skeptical. Indeed, despite the similarities between the two occupations, many conditions about the Philippine occupation that boded well for public diplomacy efforts are not apparent in today's Iraq. Not only do these different conditions hint at public diplomacy pitfalls in Iraq, but they also raise some questions: is the U.S. occupation of the Philippines truly the best parallel to draw with its intervention in Iraq? Can a more accurate compass for U.S. public diplomacy in Iraq be located in another decade, by the actions of a different nation?

Indeed, it appears logical to examine the last occupation of Iraq—the British one of 1918. While the U.S. occupation of the Philippines provides insight into the occupier of 2003, a study of the British occupation of Iraq would provide insight into the occupied of 2003. An examination of Britain's Iraq mandate would also be instructive given the

apparent respect for and interest in British colonial policies evinced by American policy-makers in the Philippines. Soon after Taft sailed for the Philippines, he wrote a letter to a representative of the Boston Book Co., requesting a lengthy reading list for himself and his colleagues on the Philippine Commission. The list includes several books on British colonial policy.¹⁶⁹ Additionally, in his initial correspondence to the first Philippine Education Commissioner, David Atkinson, Taft repeated several times his desire that Atkinson read the works of George Trevelyan, who wrote on Britain's India policy.

Despite his interest in British colonial policies, Taft did not find them faultless, noting in a speech that its colonies pursued a policy of “enlightened selfishness.”¹⁷⁰ While he praised the British for establishing successful governments, maintaining order, and building “magnificent roads,” he lamented that England had not “given great time to the improvement of the individual among her tropical peoples . . . In this respect her policy is exactly the opposite of that which we have pursued in the Philippines.”¹⁷¹ Taft would speak specifically of the British policies in India, but not in Iraq—because, at the time of his speech (1906), the British occupation of Iraq was still several years away. A study of British policies to win Iraqi hearts and minds—if they existed—would be an interesting way of ascertaining whether Taft's views were accurate. More importantly, they would provide some additional guidance—or at least an additional framework—for Americans attempting to implement public diplomacy efforts in Iraq today.

Nonetheless, one can make a significant conclusion about U.S. public diplomacy in the Philippines: though it did succeed in some ways—particularly through the work of

¹⁶⁹ Taft to Charles C. Soule, April 23, 1900, TP, Series 3, Reel 30.

¹⁷⁰ William H. Taft, “The Duties of Citizenship Viewed from the Standpoint of Colonial Administration,” in Burton, Volume I, 47.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

the American teachers—it fell short in many other ways. U.S. public diplomacy’s major obstacle during the period of military occupation was the ongoing insurgency, which generated unstable and violent conditions to which the military had to dedicate its time and energy—to the detriment of efforts to win hearts and minds. The major impediment to U.S. public diplomacy during the civilian occupation period was the American desire to “Americanize” the Filipinos—a desire one can discern through, among other things, American education policies in the archipelago as well as U.S. hopes to tie Filipino society to a system of U.S.-style laws. This Americanization signifies a failure to respect the sanctity of the Filipino national identity, one of the three requisite qualities for a true public diplomacy described in the initial pages of this paper. The other two necessary qualities—inclusiveness and sincerity—also appeared to have been lacking at certain times. Both the attraction policy—through its targeting of the small Filipino educated elite—and education policy—with its failure, according to Glenn May, to reach the entire Filipino population—attest to a lack of inclusiveness. And Charles Elliott regarded the “exaggerated deference” of U.S. civilian officials towards Filipinos as “palpably insincere.” There are indications that at least some of these themes may materialize in Iraq. For example, the Fallujah case study reveals how U.S. military efforts to win hearts and minds in Iraq have been sidelined by the more immediate imperative of winning the insurgency. Only time will tell if public diplomacy efforts in Iraq come to reflect those of the Philippines in terms of their degrees of inclusiveness, sincerity, and respect for “otherness.”

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