

Document Set A: Testimony from Senate Hearings

Between January and June 1902, the Senate conducted hearings on the war in the Philippines. The excerpts below come from testimony given at those hearings.

Testimony of Corporal Richard O'Brien

The first shot was fired by Sergeant. His target was a mere boy, who was coming down the mountain path. . . .

The shooting... attracted the villagers, who came out of their homes in alarm. They did not display a weapon, made no hostile movement whatsoever, but they were ruthlessly shot down in cold blood, men, women and children. The poor natives huddled together or fled in terror. Many were pursued and killed on the spot. Two old men, bearing a white flag and clasping hands like two brothers, approached the lines. Their hair was white. They fairly tottered, they were so feeble under the weight of years. To my horror and that of the other men, the order was given to fire and the two old men were shot down in their tracks.

Testimony of Corporal Daniel J. Evans

One of the Americans took one of the men by the head and jerked his head back, and then they took a tomato can and poured water down his throat until he could hold no more, and during this time one of the natives [who supported the Americans] had a whip and he struck him on the face and on the bare back And when this native could hold no more water, then they forced a gag into his mouth; they stood him up and tied his hands behind him, they stood him up against a post Then one man, an American soldier, who was over six feet tall, and who was very strong, too, struck this native in the pit of the stomach as hard as he could strike him, just as rapidly as he could. It seemed as if he didn't get tired of striking him.

Source: *Testimony to the U.S. Senate on the use of the water cure in the Philippines. "Affairs in the Philippine Islands," Senate Committee on the Philippines, 57th Congress, 1st Session, April 1902.*

Document Set B: American Soldiers' Letters Home

The town of Titatia [sic] was surrendered to us a few days ago, and the two companies to occupy the same. Last night one of our boys was found shot and his stomach cut open. Immediately orders were received from General Wheaton to burn the town and kill every native in sight; which was done to a finish. About 1,000 men, women and children were reported killed. I am probably growing hard-hearted, for I am in my glory when I can sight my own gun on some dark skin and pull the trigger.

From A. A. Barnes, soldier, a letter to his parents in NY

Soon we had orders to advance, and we... started across the creek in mud and waters up to our waist. However, we did not mind it a bit, our fighting blood was up, and we all wanted to kill ni----rs. This shooting human beings is a "hot game," and beats rabbit hunting all to pieces. We charged them and such a slaughter you never saw. We killed them like rabbits; hundreds, yes thousands of them. Every one was crazy.

From a soldier from Washington

The old boys will say that no cruelty is too severe for these brainless monkeys, who can appreciate no sense of honor, kindness or justice... With an enemy like this to fight, it is not surprising that the boys should soon adopt "no quarter" as a motto, and fill the blacks full of lead before finding out where they are friends or enemies.

From a soldier from Utah

Source: Miller, Stuart Creighton, *Benevolent Assimilation*, (New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1982), 189.

Document C: Filipino Soldiers

The guerillas, in violation of Aguinaldo's orders and circulars, treated captured Americans with barbaric cruelty. Noses and ears were lopped off and bleeding wounds treated with salt. In some cases, American prisoners were buried alive. Kicking, slapping, spitting at the faces of American prisoners were common, the hatred of the American being such that the guerillas forgot or conveniently forgot Aguinaldo's injunctions regarding the good treatment to be accorded the prisoners.

Filipino soldier's report to Aguinaldo's government

Document D: Frederick Funston

Frederick Funston fought in 19 battles in the Philippines in less than a year and was involved in an undercover operation that led him to the headquarters of Philippine President Emilio Aguinaldo. He earned a Medal of Honor and returned to the US a national hero for his actions in the Philippines. In 1902, Funston toured the United States to increase public support of the Philippine-American War.

I am afraid that some people at home will lie awake [at] night worrying about the ethics of this war, thinking that our enemy is fighting for the right to self-government. They are as a rule an illiterate, semi-savage people who are waging war, not against tyranny, but against Anglo-Saxon order and decency.

I personally strung up thirty-five Filipinos without trial, so what was all the fuss over Waller's 'dispatching' a few 'treacherous savages'? If more [people who did this], the war would have been over long ago. For starters, all Americans who had recently petitioned Congress to sue for peace in the Philippines should be dragged out of their homes and lynched.

Source: *New York Sun*, March 10, 1902 as quoted in Stuart Creighton Miller, *Benevolent Assimilation*, (New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1982).