Filipino Insurgencies (1899-1913): Failures to Incite Popular Support

A Monograph

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The Philippine-American War and Moro War demonstrate the failure of an insurgency to achieve objectives if there is a lack of support from the populace. The American occupation of the Philippine islands in 1898 provoked sentiments of anti-imperialism among the populace. The result was a hastily organized guerilla campaign that led to the Philippine-American War (1899-1902). The insurgency of the Moro War attempted to unite the populace to force the withdrawal of the United States. During both wars, American commanders and forces adapted policies and objectives to counter the insurgency and gain the support of the local population. This monograph examines the strategy of the insurgency campaigns for the insurrectos and Moro insurgents. The decentralized organization, lack of resources, and objectives created conditions that weakened the insurgency. The inability of the insurgencies to gain support from the populace resulted no unity of effort to fight the invading American military.

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Abstract

Filipino Insurgencies (1899-1913): Failures to Incite Popular Support. By MAJ Carolyn B. Bronson, 45 pages.

The Philippine-American War and Moro War demonstrate the failure of an insurgency to achieve objectives if there is a lack of support from the populace. The American occupation of the Philippine islands in 1898 provoked sentiments of anti-imperialism among the populace. The result was a hastily organized guerilla campaign that led to the Philippine-American War (1899-1902). The insurgency of the Moro War attempted to unite the populace to force the withdrawal of the United States. During both wars, American commanders and forces adapted policies and objectives to counter the insurgency and gain the support of the local population. This monograph examines the strategy of the insurgency campaigns for the insurrectos and Moro insurgents. The decentralized organization, lack of resources, and objectives created conditions that weakened the insurgency. The inability of the insurgencies to gain support from the populace resulted in the absence of effort to fight the invading American military.

Contents

Acronyms

FM	Field Manual
GO	General Order
US	United States

Introduction

The Philippine-American War from 1899 to 1902 and subsequent Moro War from 1903-1913 were counterinsurgency successes for the United States. The guerilla-style tactics and strategy employed during the Philippine-American War and Moro War demonstrated that the success of an insurgency requires continuous support from the native populace to resist legitimate governments or invading forces. The Filipino insurrectos and Moro insurgents failed to establish a unity of effort and incite popular support to achieve objectives, which lead to the downfall of the insurgencies.These armed insurgencies challenged the ability of the US military to combat guerilla warfare and terrorism.

The history of the Philippine Islands is one of conquest by foreign invaders or occupiers. Ferdinand Magellan discovered the islands in 1521, and in 1565, they became a Spanish colony, except for the Moro region of the Sulu archipelago.[1] The Philippines is an archipelago consisting of over 7,000 islands that is centrally located along major sea trade routes in the pacific. The three large island groups of Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao divide the Philippines for a total area of 300,000 square kilometers. The diverse terrain of the many islands consists of mountains, narrow coastal plains, and numerous valleys. The Filipino populace includes a diverse mix of ethnicities, tribes, religions, and languages.[2] Autonomy is a uniting factor among the groups, and creates an

[1] Robert D. Ramsey, *Savage Wars of Peace: Case Studies of Pacification in the Philippines, 1900-1902* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2007), 4.

[2] Andrew J. Birtle, *US Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine 1860-1941*, CMH Pub 70-66-1 (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, Center of Military History, 2004), 108.

environment of local loyalty between the many tribes rather than a national loyalty.[3]

The Spanish conquest and rule of the Philippines lasted for over 300 years. Spanish influence during this time significantly influenced cultural and religious changes in Filipino society. This influence of the colony did not extend to the promotion of Filipino self-governing and economic development. The last half of the nineteenth century saw the rise of a group called the illustrados. This group embraced liberalism, reforms, and advocated for increased incorporation of Filipinos in the governing of the Philippines.[4] The late 1800s saw the increase of independence movements led by educated elites that supported a mix of change through both peace and violence. In March 1897, Emilio Aguinaldo became the head of the Philippine revolutionary army against the Spanish. [5] The objectives of the Philippine revolution centered on greater participation of Filipino citizens in the governance of the islands. These revolutionary forces achieved moderate success when the Spanish promised the Filipinos representation and equal treatment in political appointments.[6] The terms were dependent on the surrender of arms and all revolutionary leaders going into exile in Hong Kong. The US invasion of the Philippines in 1898 ended the small victories achieved by the Filipino revolutionaries and would test their resiliency in achieving independence.

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[3] David J. Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire: The Philippine-American War, 1899-1902* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007), xiv.

[4] Ramsey, *Savage Wars of Peace*, 6.

[5] Richard E. Welch, *Response to Imperialism: The United States and the Philippine-American War, 1899-1902* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1979), 11.

[6] Welch, *Response to Imperialism, 12.*

The Philippine-American War occurred after Spanish authorities ceded the Philippine Islands to American forces in August 1898. In February 1899, Filipino nationalists, led by Emilio Aguinaldo, became involved in a conventional fight against American forces to gain independence.[7] US strength in numbers, equipment, and weapons quickly overpowered the Filipino forces. The next phase of the war saw a shift in tactics to guerilla warfare, consisting of sporadic attacks and ambushes on US forces. The aim for Aguinaldo's resistance force was to undermine the actions of the US military, forcing an end to American occupation. The Filipino revolutionaries organized into autonomous regional commands.[8] These commands organized attacks and attempted to control the populace through shadow governments.

The shift to guerilla tactics forced the US Army to adopt a counterinsurgency strategy. American military focused on dispersing forces with the intent to protect the populace while providing a base of support to launch offensive counter-guerilla operations. The change in operations led to a pacification program focused on developing civic actions and social reforms to improve the Filipino society.[9] American forces captured Aguinaldo on March 23, 1901, but the armed insurgency resisted American occupation until 1902.[10] US President Theodore Roosevelt declared the end of the Philippine-American War on July 4, 1902. Despite the proclamations of victory, conflicts with insurgents continued across the southern Philippine islands.

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[7] Birtle, *US Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine*, 108.

[8] Ibid., 110-112.

[9] Brian McAllister Linn, *The Philippine War, 1899-1902* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2000), 197 – 198.

[10] H. W. Brands, *Bound to Empire: United States and the Philippines, 1890-1990* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 58 – 59.

After the pacification of the northern islands, US forces were involved in a conflict with bands of guerillas and resistance groups known as the Moros Insurgency. The Moros were Islamic tribes that aimed for autonomy from the Philippine government and US occupation. The Moros Insurgency was a rebellion against attempts at assimilation into the Philippine nation.[11] The US began a campaign that consisted of offensive operations targeting Moro insurgents and pacification efforts focused on bringing peace and order to the Moro province. This campaign would continue until 1913 when it was determined that conditions were set to transition the province to civil government. The prolonged conflict with different insurgent groups would challenge US counterinsurgency attempts.

Methodology

This study will analyze two historical periods that contributed to the emergence of insurgencies in the Philippines. The first period is the Philippine-American War from 1899-1902. The tactics and mode of warfare shifted from a conventional to guerilla-style campaign for Filipino resistance groups. This period will illustrate the reasons for this change and effectiveness. In addition, it will examine how US forces countered these tactics, which would continue to influence the growth of the guerilla campaign in the Philippines. The second period that will be examined is from the 1902-1913 during the Moros Insurgency or Moros Wars. The Moros Insurgency consisted of revolutionary Muslims in southern Philippines that opposed foreign rule from the US and Philippine government. This period will examine US military and political actions and their impact on the pacification of the Moros. Each period of study examines the limitations and weaknesses for each insurgency. This includes the environmental, political,

[11] James R. Arnold, *Jungle of Snakes: A Century of Counterinsurgency Warfare from the Philippines to Iraq* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2010), 71.

and social factors that contributed to the downfall of the insurgencies and failed attempts to incorporate terrorism into campaigns. These periods are vital to understanding the conditions that influenced the emergence of insurgent movements in the Philippines.

Definition of Terms

There are many definitions or interpretations to explain insurgency, terrorism, and guerilla warfare. This monograph will use the accepted definitions found in the Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms Joint Publication 1-02.

Insurgency: The organized use of subversion and violence by a group or movement that seeks to overthrow or force change of a governing authority.[12]

Terrorism: The unlawful use of violence or threat of violence to instill fear and coerce governments or societies. Terrorism is often motivated by religion, political, or other ideological beliefs and committed in the pursuit of goals that are usually political.[13]

Guerilla Warfare: Military and paramilitary operations conducted in enemy-held or hostile territory by irregular, predominantly indigenous forces.[14]

Literature Review

There is a great deal of literature available for the Philippine-American War and Moro War. A significant amount of the information is the result of detailed military reports during the wars. The reports provide an analysis of the events of the war and effects on resistance groups.

[12] Joint Publication (JP) 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2015), 117.

[13] Ibid., 134

[14] Ibid., 274.

While information is plentiful, analysis is lacking. A limited number of historians have examined US military actions during these two conflicts.

One of the leading historians on the Philippine-American War is Brian McAllister Linn. Linn has written two important books discussing different aspects of the war. The first book is, *The Philippine War, 1899-1902*, which provides a detailed account of the events of the war. Linn begins with an examination of the initial conventional campaign waged by the American military at the beginning of the war in 1899. The second portion of the book examines the guerilla warfare campaign implemented by Philippine resistant groups under the direction of Emilio Aguinaldo. *The Philippine War* provides a thorough analysis of the Filipino resistance group's inability to wage a conventional war and the transition to a guerilla campaign.[15] In Linn's other book, *The US Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War, 1899-1902*, Linn presents an in-depth examination of the guerrilla warfare campaign that emerged. He describes the transformation of the method of warfare Filipino nationalists adopted to counter US occupation. Linn examines the actions and counterinsurgency campaign that the US military employed against the guerrilla groups. This book provides insight into the history and experience of the US military in counterinsurgency operations.[16]

Historian James R. Arnold wrote two books that discuss American counterinsurgency warfare efforts. A section of the book titled, *Jungle of Snakes,* provides a detailed account of the Philippine-American War from 1899-1902. Arnold analyzes the political and military decisions of the United States during the conflict. He compares these actions with current conflicts in Iraq

[15] Linn, *The Philippine War, 1899-1902.*

[16] Brian McAllister Linn, *The U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War, 1899-1902* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1989).

and Afghanistan to provide additional context and recommendations for US policy-makers.[17] Arnold focuses on the US military response to the Moros insurgency in the book *The Moro War.* He gives an extensive account of the conflict between the Muslim insurgency from 1902-1913. The book explains the tensions over the American policies directed toward ending the insurgency. This debate was between supporters for extreme military measures and supporters of pacification. Additionally, Arnold provides details on how the Moros posed a challenge to American efforts with their extensive knowledge of the terrain and support from the local populace to further their aims of independence.[18]

Andrew J. Birtle studies the development and evolution of doctrine in the *US Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine, 1860-1941*. He devotes an entire chapter to the Philippine-American war. He describes the operating environment at the beginning of the war in 1899 as a conventional war campaign. Birtle explains the change in US military operations after Filipino nationalists transitioned to guerilla tactics. He provides information for why Aguinaldo transitioned to guerilla warfare to force the withdrawal of US forces. Birtle explains in detail the pacification process the US employed as a way to influence the populace and emplace a civil government. In addition, he provides specifics on the counterinsurgency techniques and operations US forces used to counter the efforts of the resistance groups.[19]

Little Brown Brother, written by Leon Wolff, provides a descriptive history of the Filipino struggle for independence. Wolff examines the attempts of the Philippine resistance from the time of Spanish colonization to continued attempts during the Philippine-American War. The

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[17] Arnold, *Jungle of Snakes.*

[18] James R. Arnold, *The Moro War: How America Battled a Muslim Insurgency in the Philippine Jungle, 1902-1913* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2011).

[19] Birtle, *US Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine.*

focus of the book is on the period of 1899-1902. Wolff provides details from the Spanish-American War in 1898 as context for the grievances of the Filipino nationalists. The book describes the impact that American policy and efforts in the Philippines had on resistance groups.[20]

The book *Vestiges of War*, by Angel Velasco Shaw and Luis H. Francia provides a collection of literature that explains the complex nature of Philippine-American relations. The premise of the book is to provide an understanding of the US intervention and expansion in the Asia Pacific region. The various essays included in the book provide an explanation and impacts the Philippine-American war had on the Filipino society. The book includes essays that explain the dissenting relationship of cooperation between the US and the Filipino insurrectos.[21]

Robert A. Fulton's *Moroland 1899-1906: America's First Attempt to Transform an Islamic Society*, is an extensive account of American policy and military operations in the Moros Province. Fulton describes the approaches of the US military to conduct activities focused on nation-building while combating militant Islamic forces in the province. This book provides an account of the impact of US policy on the Muslim Moro population. Fulton explains the various techniques adopted by the US military to counter the Moros insurgency and use of terrorism to coerce the populace. His work provides insight into the continued struggle for independence in the Philippines following the 1899-1902 war. The only limitation in Fulton's book is that he only covers the period from 1899-1906.[22]

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[20] Leon Wolff, *Little Brown Brother: How the United States Purchased and Pacified the Philippines* (Oxford: OUP Australia and New Zealand, 1991).

[21] Reynaldo C. Ileto, "The Philippine-American War: Friendship and Forgetting," in *Vestiges of War: The Philippine-American War and the Aftermath of an Imperial Dream, 1899 – 1999,* ed. Angel Shaw and Luis H. Francia (New York: New York University Press, 2002).

[22] Robert A. Fulton, *Moroland 1899-1906: America's First Attempt to Transform an Islamic Society* (Bend, OR: Tumalo Creek Press, 2007).

Peter Gordon Gowing's *Mandate in Moroland: The American Government of Muslim Filipinos 1899-1920* examines America's actions during the Moro War. He provides an account of US military actions in the Moro Province during the period of military government. Gowing relies primarily on the Annual Reports of the War Department to explain the counterinsurgency campaign waged in Moroland. The reports include a description of the US political objectives and affect US operations. Gowing incorporates the reactions of the Moro populace and the impact it had on US military efforts.[23]

The book *Filipinos at War* by Carlos Quirino is an account of Philippine struggles from 1498 to 1986. He breaks down the major historical conflicts that have shaped the identity and nationhood of the Filipino populace. Quirino provides six chapters that describe the initial Philippine revolution against the Spanish in 1896 and the evolution of this insurrection against American occupation. The chapters on the Philippine-American War and the Moro War focus primarily on the major battles and insurgent conflicts that shaped the outcome of the wars. Quirino describes the major events from the perspective of both the US military and Filipino insurgents.[24]

Aside from the literature listed above, there is a great deal of information in journals, military archives, and US military after-action reports. These accounts provide extensive information regarding the progress of the conflict from the US perspective during 1899-1902 and the ensuing Moros War from 1902-1913. Overall, there is very little information describing the details of the acts of terrorism used by the Filipino and Moro insurgents. This lack of information and literature creates a gap in research to provide a detailed account of specific acts of terrorism.

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[23] Peter Gordon Gowing, *Mandate in Moroland: The American Government of Muslim Filipinos, 1899-1920* (Quezon City, Philippines: New Day Publishing, 1983).

[24] Carlos Quirino, *Filipinos at War* (Philippines: Vera-Reyes, Inc, 1987).

The information on these events focuses on the insurgent tactics used during attacks with little detail on the terrorist tactics used on the populace. This monograph will attempt to explain the methods and effects the Filipino insurrectos and Moro insurgent movements had on the populace.

Philippine-American War (1899-1902)

The initial events spurring the Philippine-American War began with the Spanish-American War of 1898. The United States declared war on Spain in April 1898 following the sinking of the battleship *Maine* in Havana.[25] The United States attempted to divert Spanish attention and deplete resources from Cuba with an attack on the Philippine colony. On May 1, 1898, the US Asiatic Squadron commanded by Admiral George Dewey attacked the Spanish Fleet in Manila Bay.[26] The US squadron quickly overpowered and destroyed the Spanish, but lacked sufficient manpower to invade the Philippines. While waiting for American ground troops, Dewey summoned Aguinaldo from exile to gain local support to combat the Spanish. This decision by Dewey would provide the Filipino revolutionaries an unexpected opportunity.

On May 19, 1898, Aguinaldo returned to the Philippines with the orders to lead a rebellion against the Spanish garrison in Manila.[27] During this time, Dewey was still awaiting the arrival of US troops. Aguinaldo used this opportunity to build forces and further establish himself among the population. On May 24, 1898, Aguinaldo declared himself the dictator of the Philippines until a formal government was established.[28] He began establishing a Filipino civil

[25] Arnold, *Jungle of Snakes,* 15.

[26] Ibid., 15.

[27] Ramsey, *Savage Wars of Peace,* 8.

[28] Ibid., 8.

government with the creation of local governments. The immediate theater of operations for the revolutionaries focused on Manila and establishing control over Luzon. The revolutionaries gained control over most of Luzon by the time US troops arrived on June 30, 1898.[29] The mission for US troops in the Philippines was an advisory role to the Filipinos with the aim of expelling the Spanish to establish US sovereignty over the Philippines. Spain formally ceded the Philippines to the Americans on August 14, 1898.[30] The result was a period of uncertainty over the status of the Philippines. The revolutionaries saw a continuation of war with the Americans as a struggle for independence. The Americans viewed the colonization of the Philippines as a means to secure commerce and markets in the Far East.

The relationship between the Americans and Filipinos began to dissolve following the Battle of Manila on August 13, 1898. Aguinaldo and his revolutionaries believed that the United States Army States supported their desire for independence and they would be treated as allies. Tensions increased with the arrival of the commander of the US expedition command, Major General Wesley Merritt, on July 26, 1898.[31] He intended to operate independently of the Filipino nationalists and planned to attack Manila with only US troops. The results were two separate American and Filipino operations focused on eliminating the Spanish from Manila. In the end Aguinaldo and his forces were denied entry into Manila, demonstrating a low regard for the American-Filipino alliance. Following the Spanish surrender of the Philippines on August 14, 1898, President McKinley issued a proclamation to the Filipino people declaring that US policies

[29] Ibid., 12.

[30] Arnold, *Jungle of Snakes,* 16.

[31] Linn, *The U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War,* 9.

focused on benign assimilation and not on waging war.[32] As a result, the US Army was charged with enforcing lawful rule of the islands while protecting the rights of the people.

Aguinaldo and his newly formed Army of Liberation viewed this as another sign of betrayal from the Americans and began preparing for war. The forces of the Army of Liberation were determined to fight for their independence, a warning that Aguinaldo gave to the Americans.[33] The force structure of the Army of Liberation mirrored that of a modern conventional force. The strength of this conventional force was its infantry and the ability to quickly traverse through difficult terrain under many hardships. The major weaknesses of the army were a lack of training and modern equipment.[34] Despite efforts to make the army more organized it remained a decentralized, loose federation of militias that served under their own local leaders. In addition, to raising the Army of Liberation, Aguinaldo also made great strides at the local and provincial level. Upon returning to the Philippines, he increased his influence over provincial elites groups. He ordered them to organize their own municipal and provincial governments under the Philippine Republic.[35] This would increase his sphere of influence throughout province while providing additional support for the fight for independence.

Hostilities between the Americans and Filipinos erupted on February 4, 1899 when a US soldier fired upon a Filipino patrol.[36] This incident would signify the beginning of the Philippine-American War. The Army of Liberation attempted to fight the American forces with conventional

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[32] Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 55-56.

[33] Arnold, *Jungle of Snakes*, 16.

[34] Linn, *The Philippine War*, 35.

[35] Linn, *The U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War*, 11.

[36] Ibid., 12.

warfare. They were quickly overpowered and unsuccessful in attempts to sustain continuous engagements that would weaken the US troops. The lack of training, organization, and equipment limited their ability to attack the Americans effectively. By November 1899, Aguinaldo and his army fled into the mountains of northern Luzon where they would reorganize and initiate a campaign of guerilla warfare.

The reconfiguration of the Army of Liberation into a revolutionary force of insurrectos, as the Americans called them, had many advantages. Their knowledge of the terrain, populace, and ability to acclimate to the varied climate were a great advantage. The nature of the terrain of the Philippines is so diverse, but easily traversed by the insurrectos. The insurgents adopted the new form of warfare with relief as they recognized continued conventional resistance was irrational with a lack of supplies and personnel.[37] The guerilla forces organized into autonomous regional commands that consisted of regular guerillas and part-time militiamen.[38] The guerillas focused on waging sporadic attacks in the form of ambushes and raids that intended to surprise American forces. These attacks occurred when the guerillas had numerical superiority and emphasized the plan to attack in small groups that could strike, disappear, and regroup at a prearranged location.[39]

Aguinaldo further complemented guerilla operations with a network of clandestine members that operated as a shadow government in the villages. He was able to exploit the influence he had with the elite populace to provide this network. Aguinaldo placed supporters of

[37] Wolff, *Little Brown Brother*, 289.

[38] Birtle, *US Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine*, 110.

[39] Linn, *The U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War*, 17.

the insurgency in elected positions in the villages.[40] These individuals collected intelligence on the Americans, recruited members, and collected money and supplies. The fear instituted by these shadow governments created an environment where any form of possible support to the United States meant death.[41] The local guerilla commander punished civilians deemed as collaborators with the Americans.[42] This influence and intimidation over the local population would provide the guerillas another means to resist to American forces. The underground nature of the insurgency and shadow governments created issues for the Americans to obtain reliable information on the network.[43]

American commander, Major General MacArthur remarked about the influence of the insurgency:

> Wherever throughout the Archipelago there is a group of the insurgency army it is a fact beyond dispute that all the contiguous towns contribute to the maintenance thereof. Intimidation has undoubtedly accomplished much to this end, but fear as the only motive is hardly sufficient to account for the united and apparently spontaneous actions of several millions of people.[44]

This perceived popular support for the insurgents made it difficult to determine friendly from enemy among the natives. The insurrectos could easily blend in with the populace and often wore clothing that made them appear as members of the local villages.[45] The initial stages of the war

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[40] Ileto, "The Philippine-American War: Friendship and Forgetting," 9.

[41] Wolff, *Little Brown Brother,* 293.

[42] Welch, *Response to Imperialism*, 33.

[43] Daniel B. Schirmer and Stephen R. Shalom, *The Philippines Reader: A History of Colonialism, Neocolonialism, Dictatorship, and Resistance* (Boston, MA: South End Press, 1987), 13.

[44] Wolff, *Little Brown Brother,* 289.

[45] Ileto, "The Philippine-American War: Friendship and Forgetting," 7.

shared a common element of unity in populace support for the nationalist cause for Philippine independence. Farmers, agricultural laborers, and urban workers embraced this cause and provided the bulk of the insurgency.[46] Fighting a populace that has historically been antagonized and is far from reconciliation frustrated American soldiers operating in a foreign land.[47] This would prove to be the greatest challenge facing US forces in their efforts to pacify the districts.

The revolutionaries' intent was to force the withdrawal of American forces from the Philippines. The strategy developed by Aguinaldo intended to prolong the war until American motivation waned because of disease or exhaustion.[48] The resulting guerilla warfare campaign developed by Aguinaldo would prove difficult to maintain with a decentralized insurgent network because of different objectives, tactics, and personalities of the commanders. The revised strategy followed three lines of effort that promoted the use of guerilla warfare. The first line focused on exhausting the US military's ability and willpower to continue to fight through sporadic attacks. The second line centered on discrediting American attempts to impose colonial government through blatant refusal of political office.[49] The third line required gaining support from the local population to develop a safe haven for operations and freedom of movement. The development of this new strategy centered on the assumption that the prospect of a protracted guerilla conflict would influence anti-imperialist sentiment in America.[50] Aguinaldo believed this would force and

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[46] Schirmer, and Shalom, *The Philippines Reader,* 7.

[47] Robinson, *The Philippines: The War and the People; A Record of Personal Observations and Experiences* (New York: McClure, Philipps & Co., 1901), 144.

[48] Linn, *The U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War,* 16.

[49] Brian McAllister Linn, *Guerrilla Fighter: Frederick Funston in the Philippines, 1900-1901* (Lawrence, KS: Kansas State Historical Society, 1987), 3.

[50] Ibid., 3.

compel the United States to withdrawal and lead to the establishment of a sovereign, independent, and self-governing Philippines.[51]

The insurgent center of gravity focused on influencing US national willpower and became the goal for all guerilla operations. Aguinaldo tasked his army to organize into small groups that would execute this new strategy from the surrounding areas near their homes.[52] This allowed insurrectos to capitalize on their knowledge of the terrain to their advantage. They laid booby traps, conducted attacks at night, or under the cover of tropical rainstorms, which the Americans were ill prepared for.[53] The breakdown of operations varied throughout the Philippine islands. Estimates of the insurgent force strength vary between 80,000 and 100,000 personnel with limited weapons and munitions.[54] The illustrados served as local insurgent commanders, the principals controlled local politics, and the peasants served as guerilla fighters. The guerilla campaign focused operations primarily on the island of Luzon as it included the capital and the majority of the population.[55]

Success of the insurgency required a unified effort with support from the illustrados, principales, and peasants. This was a difficult task to achieve with competing agendas, geography, and ethnic divisions. It required maintaining a unified Filipino society, which proved

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[51] Timothy K. Deady, "Lessons from a Successful Counterinsurgency: The Philippines, 1899-1902," *Parameters* 35, no. 1 (March 2005): 57.

[52] Linn, *Guerrilla Fighter,* 3.

[53] Luzviminda Francisco, "The First Vietnam: The U.S.-Philippine War of 1899," History is a Weapon, 1973, accessed October 15, 2015, http://www.historyisaweapon.com/defcon1/franciscofirstvietnam.html.

[54] Deady, "Lessons from a Successful Counterinsurgency," 55.

[55] Ibid.

extremely difficult considering the breakdown of ethnic identities, cultures, and decentralized insurgent leadership. The decentralized nature of the insurgency caused more harm to the organizations ability to achieve objectives. There was a lack of direction, support, and an inability to communicate, which are common issues for many insurgencies.[56] These were issues that Aguinaldo did not anticipate when ordering his Army to organize into small groups spread across Luzon. Aguinaldo's strategy did not plan for a protracted guerilla campaign. Motivation for the insurgents was the belief that the United States' desire and support for American involvement in the Philippines would force a change in the presidency.[57] Popular support in the Philippines for the guerilla campaign began to waiver when the American populace reelected President McKinley. This event demonstrated the little influence the Filipino insurrectos had over the Americans. It contributed to increasing the decentralized and sporadic nature of the insurgency in a desperate attempt to frustrate US pacification efforts.

The current US Army Counterinsurgency doctrine, Field Manual 3-24, provides a guideline and overview for military counterinsurgency operations. This doctrine is applicable and relevant to understanding the objectives of the Filipino insurgents. Additionally, it provides an understanding of the ability of the US military to plan a counter-insurgency campaign to combat guerilla warfare tactics. FM 3-24 describes insurgency as, "a struggle for control and influence, generally from a position of relative weakness, outside existing state institutions."[58] This accurately depicts Aguinaldo's reasons for the transition to guerilla warfare. There are three

[56] Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Insurgencies and Countering Insurgencies* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2014), 5-5.

[57] Deady, "Lessons from a Successful Counterinsurgency," 58.

[58] Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Insurgencies and Countering Insurgencies*, 1-1.

prerequisites that provide a framework for insurgencies; opportunity, motive, and means.[59] The opportunity for an insurgency emerges when the state or its allies are unable to provide control over the population.[60] Major General MacArthur recognized this challenge in the Philippines when he remarked that the, "Unique system of guerilla warfare employed by the Filipino army depended upon almost complete unity of action of the entire native population."[61] This support from the populace was a combination of extreme loyalty and belief in the insurrection to those forced to comply through fear and violence. The transition to guerilla warfare is a result of the inability to defeat or force the withdrawal of US forces through conventional means.

In the fall of 1899, the US Army conducted a series of maneuvers at Lingayen Gulf that forced the Army of Liberation to retreat.[62] This retreat forced Aguinaldo to regroup, reorganize, and devise a plan centered on guerilla tactics. The means available to Aguinaldo's guerilla forces were limited. The primary means of resource available were through various methods of coercion or force on the local population. These acts of terrorism to intimidate or influence the populace varied throughout the different provinces in Luzon and were dependent on the perceived level of support from the local populace. The lack of unequivocal support would constrain the insurgents' ability to obtain an unlimited amount of supplies.

The main activities associated with an insurgency include political activities, population control, military tactics, and support activities.[63] The range of activities associated with the

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[59] Ibid., 4-3.

[60] Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Insurgencies and Countering Insurgencies*, 4-3.

[61] Schirmer, and Shalom, *The Philippines Reader,* 11.

[62] Linn, *Guerrilla Fighter,* 3.

[63] Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Insurgencies and Countering Insurgencies,* 1-1.

Filipino insurgency was large and varied by province. Political activities are a method for influencing the populace through propaganda to highlight the illegitimate nature of the current governing forces.[64] This method was often employed by Aguinaldo as the predominate means to increase support to force the removal of US forces on the island. Control of the population is a key element for any successful insurgency campaign. Aguinaldo and his commanders recognized the need for support from the population. The use of force or coercion provided the insurgents the ability to enforce local rules and influence the population. The insurrectos used terrorism techniques with violence to control the population while conducting various irregular, sporadic attacks. The belief was this would create a destabilizing environment while discrediting the occupying forces. The insurrectos used these guerilla attacks to target US forces in an attempt to demonstrate a show of force or overwhelming support for the removal of the United States. Additional critical elements to any insurgency are the use of support activities that include training, recruitment, finance, and logistics. The inability to acquire continuous resupply, provide thorough training, and access to unlimited recruitment limits the capacity of the insurgency.[65] The lack of a formalized plan for these support activities significantly affected Aguinaldo's guerilla campaign. Without unlimited supplies, consistent training, and funding the guerilla forces became more decentralized and unable to coordinate a successful plan.

The transition to guerilla warfare forced the US Army to adopt a counter-insurgency strategy that concentrated on influencing the populace. US operations focused on a pacification program that would improve the Filipino society through civic actions and social reforms.[66]

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[64] Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Insurgencies and Countering Insurgencies*, 5-1- 5-2.

[65] Ibid., 5-4.

[66] Linn, *The Philippine War*, 197-198.

President McKinley directed three objectives for US forces: occupation and administration, gain the confidence and respect of the Filipinos, and defeat the guerilla fighters.[67] The Philippine Department established four lines of effort that synchronized political directives with military actions. These lines were civil governance, civil services, population security, and counter-guerilla operations.[68] The US military strategy required dispersing forces throughout Luzon province in four separate departments. The array of forces created an operating environment that allowed for simultaneous operations in multiple areas. The division of US forces into military districts assumed civil-military functions of governance.[69] This allowed US forces to establish a base of support to launch offensive counter-guerilla operations while protecting the populace.

The operational approach for US forces in the Philippines evolved under the direction of MG MacArthur. While serving as the governor-general, MacArthur would institute General Order 100 (G.O. 100). G.O. 100 established the campaign directives for subordinate commanders in the Philippine Department.[70] These orders provided a shared understanding and vision to achieve military objectives. MacArthur understood the changing operating environment with the transition to guerilla tactics. The US campaign under G.O. 100 focused on denying the guerilla forces support and influence with the local population. This required the use of martial law to enforce the compliance of the population to obey the laws of the US occupying forces. The new guidelines increased the lethality of US operations. It created opportunities to integrate the local populace into military operations to achieve US objectives for the Philippine War Department.

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[67] Ramsey, *Savage Wars of Peace*, 13-14.

[68] Linn, *The Philippine War,* 21-22.

[69] Linn, *Guerrilla Fighter,* 3.

[70] Ramsey, *Savage Wars of Peace,* 55-57.

The primary areas of operations for the Philippine Department were the following: First District Department of Northern Luzon, Fourth District Department of Northern Luzon, Second District Department of Southern Luzon, and Third District Department of Southern Luzon. Each commander identified the areas in the districts that were influenced or supportive to Aguinaldo's guerilla war. This required an understanding of the social-cultural demographics of each district to identify levels of influence and support among the various ethnic groups.[71] The understanding of the variables in the environment allowed the commanders to apply different measures to increase power and influence in the districts. This enabled US forces to establish bases of support to broadcast power and increase influence over the populace.[72] The American military adopted coercive measures through force, restrictions on the population, and the threat of violence to influence the populace.[73] The Philippine Department's approach to countering the widespread guerilla warfare in Luzon was diverse. It combined operations that focused on offensive actions targeting guerilla fighters with pacification efforts that improved the Filipino society.[74]

Despite a lack of cohesion, the insurrectos conducted sporadic, harassing attacks on American forces in the region. The populace support in Luzon allowed the insurrectos to move easily throughout the province. They were able to resupply, gain information and establish

[71] Peter L. Berger and Thomas A. Luckmann, *Social Construction of Reality: Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (New York: First Anchor Books, 1967), 60.

[72] Jeffrey I. Herbst, *States, and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control (*Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 3.

[73] Stathis N. Kalyvas et al., *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 173.

[74] Linn, *Guerrilla Fighter*, 122.

temporary safe havens among the native population.[75] The insurgents employed a variety of methods to inflict casualties on the Americans. These included continuous ambushes and sniper attacks from a variety of directions. Their preferred method was to conduct hit and run attacks that would force the Americans to become engaged in combat and become fatigued from pursuing the guerilla fighters.[76] In addition, the insurrectos utilized an underground network of local governments and villages for information on US personnel and equipment locations to conduct harassing incidents that focused on stealing US supplies.[77] The US military in the region countered the guerilla campaign by focusing on civic government and social reform programs that would assist in gaining local alliances. The result was a gradual decline in the morale and willpower of the guerilla campaign and fighters. The US military was then able to influence the populace while continuing to apply pressure on the insurgents. US forces were able to leverage the weak popular support to guerilla forces to wage a successful pacification program. In addition, the incorporation of the populace supported US objectives that increased influence and support to pacification efforts.

Many factors contributed to the failure and effectiveness of Aguinaldo's guerilla campaign. The greatest impact was from the decentralized organization of the insurgents and their inability to create a unity of effort. American efforts in the Philippines were limited during the early phases of the campaign. In late 1900, the implementation of General MacArthur's G.O. 100 and intensification of offensive counterinsurgency operations changed the nature of the

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[75] Francisco, "The First Vietnam," accessed October 15, 2015, http://www.historyisaweapon.com/defcon1/franciscofirstvietnam.html.

[76] Wolff, *Little Brown Brother,* 292-293.

[77] Francisco, "The First Vietnam," accessed October 15, 2015, http://www.historyisaweapon.com/defcon1/franciscofirstvietnam.html.

operational environment.[78] These operations placed increasing pressure on the insurgency to maintain supplies and morale. The morale of the insurgency received a great blow when US forces captured Aguinaldo in March 1901. The detainment of the leader of the insurgency demonstrated a weakness in the insurgencies ability to effect change. The populace became supportive of American efforts allowing the implementation of the pacification campaign. Other contributing factors that led to the downfall of the insurgency was the disconnect between Aguinaldo and his commander's on the objectives for their guerilla campaign. The lack of cohesion allowed subordinate commander has to focus on personal causes rather than causes that supported the guerilla campaign for independence.[79] The insurgents could not maintain the support of the populace to provide the necessary resources, proper equipment, and personnel to compete against the Americans. The result was a continued degradation in the insurgent ranks and lack of control and focus for the insurgency.

Moro War (1902-1913)

American military forces focused on the southern Philippine islands upon completion of pacification efforts in Luzon. The Moro Province comprises the islands of Mindanao, Palawan, Basilan, and a chain of islands of the Sulu Archipelago. It is the largest province in the Philippines and located in the southern portion of the country. This mass area known as Moroland would become a heavily contested region resisting American occupation from 1902-1913. The

[78] Silbey, *A War of Frontier and Empire*, 180.

[79] Ibid., 216.

Americans viewed the region as a strange place occupied by Islamic warriors and primitive tribes.[80]

The geographical location of the province was an important center for trade. Between the years 800 and 1000, Arab merchants and Islamic preachers arrived in Moro.[81] The result was the introduction of the religion of Islam to the islands. The Islamic preachers belonged to the Shafiite sect of Sunni Islam and taught that every human was subservient to the Prophet Mohammed.[82] Schools and political institutions throughout the Moro province shared this religious belief. "Islam provided the only unifying bond among the thirteen or so Moro cultural-linguistic groups living in the southern Philippines."[83] The Moro populace organized communities into clans or tribes. These communities adhered to Islamic law (sharia).

Since the Spanish conquest of the Philippine islands in in the mid-1500s, there have been repeated attempts to conquer the Moroland. The Spanish met great resistance from the Moro warriors and subsequently were never able to claim the chain of islands in the south. These Moro Wars heightened religious tensions between the Roman Catholics of the northern islands and the Muslims of the Sulu archipelago.[84] Spanish attempts to conquer Moroland began in 1578 on the island of Jolo and was able to overpower the Moros.[85] The result was a half-hearted acknowledgement of Spanish sovereignty over the Sulu islands. The Moros would not follow

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[80] Arnold, *The Moro War,* 2.

[81] Ibid., 3.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Ibid., 4.

[84] Fulton, *Moroland 1899-1906,* 31.

[85] Arnold, *The Moro War,* 5.

through with the agreement and pledged revenge against the Spanish that would last for over three hundred years. Hatred for the Spanish would unite the Moros in a jihad against invaders. This sentiment would continue with the American occupation of the islands in 1901.

In 1876, the Spanish made another large attempt at acquiring the Sulu islands with an expedition of 9,000 troops against Jolo.[86] This time the Sultan of Sulu, Jamal-ul A'zam, saw no other option than to sign the Treaty of 1878. This treaty ceded foreign relations of the Sulus to Spanish control, but allowed the Sultan to retain control over internal administration, religion, and laws. Moro resistance would remain prevalent despite the signing of the treaty. Resistance took on the form of low-intensity, guerilla warfare that included sniper attacks, and ambushes on Spanish soldiers. These guerilla fighters known as juramentados were warriors that, "took a vow on the Qur'an in front of an Imam to relentlessly attack and kill as many acknowledged enemies of Islam as possible before being killed themselves."[87] These warriors operated independently lulling their victims into a vicious attack using a kris or barong. The Spanish considered them indiscriminate murderers. The primary targets for juramentados were generally stationary targets that represented the Spanish government such as sentries, civilian administrators, and Catholic priests.[88] Fear and terror ensued because of numerous juramentados attacks among the Christian populace in the Sulus. As a result, Spanish operations declined as did attempts to colonize the region.

[86] Fulton, *Moroland 1899-1906,* 33.

[87] Ibid., 33.

[88] Ibid., 34.

The Moros warriors' faith in Islam was an influential element in their belief that death fighting an infidel led to an afterlife in paradise.[89] This extreme devotion and religious guidance instilled a sense of pride that would not accept surrender at any cost. This sentiment would hinder American pacification efforts in the Moroland for over ten years. The initial focus of American military operations focused on defeating the insurgency in the northern Philippine islands. There was little focus or perceived threat from the southern islands of the Sulu archipelago. The United State implemented indirect rule of the islands through the Bates Agreement of 1899. This agreement gave the Sultan of Sulu authority to govern the islands as long as he recognized US sovereignity.[90] Brigadier General John Coulter Bates had the task of implementing the agreement. It was merely an extension of the previous Treaty of 1878 signed between the Sultanate and Spain.[91] The orders Bates received from General Otis explained that the purpose of the agreement was to gain recognition from the Sultan that the United States would control all future social and political relations with the inhabitants of the Sulu islands.[92]

On August 20, 1899, the Bates Agreement became the leading document allowing American military forces freedom throughout the Sulu archipelago. The Moros accepted this agreement with the belief that the Americans would not interfere with their internal affairs and governance. This indirect rule would not last as tensions and frustrations between the Americans and Moros increased. American soldiers grew increasingly frustrated with the Moros civil

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[89] Arnold, *The Moro War,* 6.

[90] Andrew J. Bacevich, "Disagreeable Work: Pacifying the Moros, 1903-1906," *Military Review* 61 (June 1982): 50 – 51.

[91] Fulton, *Moroland 1899-1906,* 50.

[92] Ibid., 50-51.

governing structure that centered on the Koran. The Americans felt it limited opportunities to eradicate piracy and provide peace in the region.[93] The lack of understanding and knowledge of Moro culture and religion increased tensions between the American soldiers in the region and the populace. American officers in the region believed it was necessary to modernize and civilize the Moro people, but felt that Moro leaders hindered any attempt to do so.[94] During the years 1899-1903, the Americans encountered sporadic ambushes and raids from the juramentados in an attempt to harass and impede American efforts in Jolo.[95] These random acts of violence created an unstable region that the Sultan had no control over and would change the focus of military operations to one of direct rule.

In 1900, the main focus for the Philippine War Department centered on defeating Aguinaldo's insurgency in the northern islands. As a result, minimal resources and personnel focused on establishing order in the southern islands. In April 1900, the Philippine War Department created the Departments of Mindanao and Jolo under the command of Brigadier General William Kobbe. These new departments were located in the heart of Moroland, but remained focused on defeating remnants of the Christian insurgency. Kobbe's three priorities were: 1) ensure that the Moros did not become a problem to efforts in the north by establishing a working relationship with them, 2) defeat the Christian insurgent forces in northern Mindanao, and Palawan, and 3) further extend the American occupation of the southern islands.[96] The military found favorable conditions working with the datus of Jolo and Mindanao. This

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[93] Arnold, *The Moro War,* 12-13.

[94] Brian McAllister Linn, *Guardians of Empire: The U.S. Army and the Pacific, 1902-1940* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 59 – 82.

[95] Quirino, *Filipinos at War*, 183.

[96] Fulton, *Moroland 1899-1906,* 83.

perception would change over the year as it became evident that the Bates Agreement did not allow the United States to make civil changes.

Focus on changing the direction of operations in the Sulus became a priority with Brigadier General Davis' Report on Moro Affairs released in October 24, 1901. Davis' research and investigation into the region resulted in the assessment that it would be difficult to eradicate the religious convictions and principles of the Moros people with the current arrangement under the Bates Agreement.[97] He equated the problem with that of the United States handling of the American Indians of the Great Plains and recommended that the issue be the responsibility for the Army to handle. On July 1, 1902, the Philippine Government Act incorporated these recommendations, making all tribal governments subject to the oversight of the US military in the region.[98] The transition to direct rule over the Moros would prove to be difficult for the next decade and forced an extensive counterinsurgency campaign to pacify the insurgents.

Devotion to local leaders is commonplace in the Moro society. The Sultan of Sulu was a figurative leader of the Moro population throughout the Sulu archipelago. The number of supporters or followers differed from villages, which ranged from five to thousands. [99] True allegiance to authority from the population was further determined through tribal or clan relations. A majority of the Moro populace followed the direction of their tribal or village leaders known as sultans or datus. They provided direction on spiritual, religious guidance, as well as financial aid. A large portion of the Moro population was indentured servants or slaves for the

[97] Fulton, *Moroland 1899-1906*, 51-52.

[98] Ibid., 110-111.

[99] John White, *Bullets and Bolos: Fifteen Years in the Philippine Islands* (New York: The Century Co., 1928), 189-190.

elite. This economic reliance toward the sultans or datus hindered individual opportunities for prosperity.[100] The Moros are an Islamic society that resist change with a strong desire to remain independent reinforced by a strong sense of pride, dignity, and courage.[101] The ability to maintain their independence and autonomy were the driving factors for the Moros to fight the occupying forces.

There was no hierarchy of command structure organized for the Moro insurgency. The sultans operated independently and took individual opportunities to target or attack the Americans. There was no clearly defined objective or goals established for the Moro insurgency other than to prevent American occupation. Their internal tribal groups and clans were often in disagreement, which hindered their ability to unify efforts.[102] The decentralized nature of the insurgency created an environment of independent actors that were not a part of an organized resistance.[103] Efforts between the different resistance groups were not coordinated and lacked a centralized command structure to provide direction. The result was pockets of extreme resistance or violence throughout the Sulu archipelago.

Groups of fiercely determined warriors known as amoks and juramentados defended these areas of resistance. The amoks were extremely radical and irrational in their method for

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[100] Daniel G. Miller, *"American Counterinsurgency Strategy During the Moro Rebellion in the Philippines 1903-1913,*" Small Wars Journal, July 2009, 2, accessed December 14, 2015, http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/journal/docs-temp/252-miller.pdf.

[101] White, *Bullets and Bolos,* 194.

[102] Charles Byler, "Pacifying the Moros: American Military Government in the Southern Philippines, 1899-1913," *Military Review* 85, no. 1 (May-June 2005): 43.

[103] Miller, *"American Counterinsurgency Strategy During the Moro Rebellion,"*3.

attacks.[104] The loose and uncontrollable manner in which they conducted attacks gave the amoks an aura of insanity. The indiscriminate attacks of the amoks is best described as, "generalized anger and individual grievances relieved by the wanton slaughter of anyone in a deranged Moros path."[105] This attempted to identify or combat these fighters more difficult for US forces while also increasing the tensions and fear among the populace. The juramentado dedicated their lives to fight against oppressing forces and protect the Islamic religion of the Moros.[106] The juramentados extreme faith made these warriors determined and lethal killers. Their attacks were violent and crude and included disemboweling, suicide attacks, and beheadings.[107] For the juramentado, these attacks were a way of life to protect the Moro homeland.[108] The combination of the amoks and juramentado throughout the villages created a sense of terror and fear among the populace and even more for US forces operating the Sulu archipelago.

The Moro armed resistance applied many forms that are commonly associated with terrorism. They predominately used surprise attacks on American patrols in the form of ambushes or sniper attacks. These attacks intended to limit US forces' freedom of movement and create a sense of instability in the region. The Moro warriors' knowledge of the terrain created opportunities to set ambushes on restricted jungle trails that limited US patrols. The Moros incorporated aspects of guerilla warfare by raiding US outposts as a means to resupply while

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[104] White, *Bullets and Bolos*, 293.

[105] Miguel J. Hernandez, "Kris vs. Krag," *Military History* 23, no. 4 (June 2006): 6.

[106] White, *Bullets and Bolos*, 203.

[107] Ibid.

[108] Hernandez, "Kris vs. Krag," 59.

disrupting US logistics.[109] Overall, the Moro supply of weapons and munitions was limited with only a handful of rifles stolen from the US or Spanish forces. The preferred weapons of choice for the Moros were swords and spears that were effective in close range ambushes or attacks.[110] The Moro had many disadvantages concerning numbers, weapons, and supplies as opposed to their US opponents. As a result, the Moro resistance was primarily defensive in nature and relied on the use of cottas or forts to retreat and launch attacks.[111] The Moro insurgents incorporated elements of terrorism on the populace. There were incidents of the forced use of women and children to fight the Americans. Women would dress as men during larger engagements against the United States and in some instances, Moro fighters used children as shields.[112] The US forces in the Sulu archipelago were up against a fiercely determined enemy with an extremist vision of Islam. The devotion to protecting their independence increased after the United States transitioned to direct rule over the Moros.

On June 1, 1903, the Philippine Commission created the Moro Province that consisted of the Southern Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago.[113] The province consisted of five districts: Cotabato, Davao, Lanao, Sulu, and Zamboanga. The transition to direct rule was a result of the continued Moros resistance hindering US progress in the region. The Philippine Commission appointed a military governor that had a considerable amount of authority throughout the province. The military governor commanded all US troops in the province and all district

[109] Byler, "Pacifying the Moros," 43.

[110] Ibid.

[111] Ibid.

[112] Quirino, *Filipinos at War*, 186.

[113] Byler, "Pacifying the Moros," 41.

governors primarily led by Army officers.[114] US military forces in the region slowly incorporated direct rule over the Moros populace in an effort to minimize violent resistance or uprisings. The United States applied two main initiatives in an effort to increase support from local leaders and the populace. First, the Americans allowed the datus to maintain responsibility and authority for local governments at the village level.[115] The second major initiative was the promotion of President McKinley's benevolent assimilation program. The focus was to increase support for American control with civil service programs of increasing commerce, and improving health and education for the Moros.[116] These efforts included the building of roads, schools, markets, and vaccinations. The ability to make these civic programs effective needed the support and approval of the Moros local leaders. Many Army officers serving as district governors attempted to earn the trust of the Moros by gaining an understanding of local customs, traditions, and beliefs to create an environment accepting of US authority.[117]

The process of gaining trust would take close to ten years and through many trials of various strategies. After implementing direct rule, combat military operations were a supporting role to the overall strategy. The focus of all efforts was to establish a system of governance through the incorporation of civil services.[118] During the Moros War, three military governors attempted to pacify the Moros and establish a system of governance. These governors, Brigadier

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[114] War Department, *Annual Reports of the War Department for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1903*, vol. 3 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1903), 152.

[115] Julian Go, and Anne L. Foster, *The American Colonial State in the Philippines: Global Perspectives* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 141.

[116] Byler, "Pacifying the Moros, 42.

[117] Gowing, *Mandate in Moroland*, 47 – 57.

[118] Miller, *"American Counterinsurgency Strategy During the Moro Rebellion*," 2.

General Leonard Wood, Brigadier General Tasker H. Bliss, and Brigadier General John Pershing, all considered the establishment of an effective government would lead to the end of the Moros resistance.[119] Each military governor applied different policies and strategies in an attempt to create a secure environment in the Moro Province.

General Wood was the first military governor for the Moro Province from 1903 to 1906. His initial strategy centered on establishing an effective system of governance from the provincial to district and local levels.[120] Wood's approach focused on the government taking control through various legislative and economic policies that intended to control the populace. Wood believed it was necessary to impose order over a populace he viewed as lawless and disorganized.[121] He felt that instituting an organized form of governance and reforms would eventually diminish armed resistance and stabilize the populace.

The reforms Wood implemented during his tenure were a contrast to the Moros way of life. He focused his efforts on reforms that established municipal governments, ended slavery, new methods of taxation, and the institution of a formal legal code.[122] These reforms shocked the Moro people and their culture, which resulted in varying levels of resistance. Wood thought any violent response from the Moros insurgency was temporary. He believed that one major battle would be the decisive engagement that would end the armed resistance and insurgency in the

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[119] Miller, *"American Counterinsurgency Strategy During the Moro Rebellion,"* 2.

[120] Ibid.

[121] Jack C. Lane, *Armed Progressive: General Leonard Wood* (San Rafael, CA: Presidio Press, 1978), 117 – 126.

[122] Byler, "Pacifying the Moros," 42-43.

province.[123] Wood felt that it was necessary to establish a single justice system to institute and uphold these reforms.[124] Efforts to establish municipal governments were an attempt to sway the populace from a reliance on tribal wards to govern local areas.[125] This combined with the abolishment of slavery and implementation of various tax systems did not consider Moro traditions, customs, and way of life. The result was continued insurgency in portions of the province and with varying levels of support and violence.

Military forces operating in the Moro Province were routinely involved in attacks and fights against resisting Moro insurgents. These attacks were sporadic and concentrated in a few distinct areas that prevented Wood from achieving stability in the region. The first area of major resistance occurred in the Lake Lanao region of the Cotabato district. The Moro resistance leader of the region was Datu Ali. Since the American occupation in 1903, Ali was actively recruiting and uniting other datu leaders and supporters to fight the Americans.[126] Ali was able to garner approximately 5,000 supporters and built the largest cota to resist the Americans.[127] The decisive engagement that Wood sought never occurred. Instead, from March 1904 to October 1905, there were a series of minor fights until US forces killed Ali. Wood viewed Ali and his followers as the

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[123] Hermann Hagedorn, *Leonard Wood: A Biography*, vol. 2 (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1931), 5.

[124] Bureau of Insular Affairs, *Annual Report of the Governor of the Moro Province, September 1, 1903 to August 31, 1904* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1904), 8, 15-16.

[125] War Department, *Annual Reports of the War Department for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1903,* 69.

[126] Fulton, *Moroland 1899-1906,* 251.

[127] David S. Woolman, "Fighting Islam's Fierce Moro Warriors," *Military History* 19, no. 1 (April 2002): 40.

greatest threat to security and because of his death, believed the province would easily transition to peace.[128]

This would not be the case as a group of approximately eight hundred Moros insurgents prepared for battle at Bud Dajo on the island of Jolo. This group of Moros insurgents included those who were fighting because of an opposition to tax reforms, resistant to American authority, and those who were loyal to the authority of local datus.[129] The Moros insurgents and a desire to fight American occupation incited the Moro populace in the area to join the resistance. The Americans attempted to negotiate with the Moros, but eventually viewed it necessary to assault the cottas. The Battle of Dajo lasted from March 6 to March 8, 1906 with over 900 Moros killed.[130] Wood and many American officials viewed the bloody battle as the battle that signified the end of Moros resistance and insurgency. The situation in the Moro Province was considered relatively stable and as a result, the number of troops and outposts was gradually reduced from 1905-1906.[131] However, security issues remained with criminal activity, an inability to unite datu leaders, and US capability to influence large portions of the populace.

In 1906, Brigadier General Bliss became the second governor of the Moro Province. The Americans considered the province relatively stable with no expectations of large resistance after the Battle of Bud Dajo. Bliss maintained, generally, the same policy and strategy that Wood

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[128] Executive Secretary of the Philippine Islands, *Fifth Annual Report of the Executive Secretary of the Philippine Islandds to the Honorable Governor-General Covering the Period from July 1, 1905 to, June 30, 1906* (Manila, Bureau of Printing, 1906), 418.

[129] Hernandez, "Kris vs. Krag," 62.

[130] Ibid.

[131] War Department, *Annual Reports of the War Department for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1905* (Washingon, DC: Government Printing Office, 1905), 300-303.

implemented. His strategy focused on the promotion of economic development, which he considered the correct approach that would gain support to US authority.[132] Additionally, Bliss recognized the importance of incorporating the Moro culture and leadership into the American strategy. He did so by having many key leader engagements with local Moro leaders in an effort to influence and gain support to the American government.[133] Changes to the judicial system gave legal authority to tribal leaders that would create one legal system that combined American and Moro laws.[134] Bliss believed that a policy of diplomacy and inclusion of Moro customs and traditions would assist in pacifying the region.

The security situation during Bliss' tenure as military governor was relatively peaceful. Generally, the US military assessed any acts of resistance as criminal activity and not a threat to the Americans.[135] Bliss adopted a security strategy that placed native troops from the Philippine Constabulary as the primary means to maintaining peace.[136] This was in an effort reduce the conflict between the Americans and the Moros while creating an effective local security force. The Philippine Constabulary conducted a majority of the patrols and arrests, especially in areas that extended beyond the US operational footprint.[137] The effectiveness of the Constabulary forces gradually declined as their area of operations increasingly grew. The reliance on the Constabulary as the main effort for security operations, created a semblance of peace in the

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[132] Miller, *"American Counterinsurgency Strategy During the Moro Rebellion,"* 3.

[133] Frederick Palmer, *Bliss, Peacemaker: The Life and Letter of Tasker Howard Bliss* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1934), 85 – 87.

[134] Gowing, *Mandate in Moroland,* 396-396.

[135] Miller, *"American Counterinsurgency Strategy During the Moro Rebellion,"* 3.

[136] Byler, "Pacifying the Moros," 44.

[137] Gowing, *Mandate in Moroland,"* 167-171.

province. Moros insurgent leaders continued to recruit and conduct sporadic, harassing attacks despite the American perception of stability. During Bliss' term, there were no major engagements between American forces and the Moros. The limited US military presence throughout the province and the classification of all resistance activity as criminal activity contributed to low attacks. In reality, the Moros insurrection remained active and was able to operate unhindered without US interference.[138] The Moro insurgents used this time to continue to influence and intimidate the populace to maintain areas of refuge.

The last military governor for the Moro Province was General Pershing from 1909-1913. He soon realized that the security situation of the province was unstable and would ultimately prevent any transition from military to civil governance. Pershing focused efforts on improving the security situation, which would affect both military operations and the Moro society. He placed more emphasis on governmental reform of the province that would facilitate the transition to a civilian government. The first change was the increase in the number of districts with local governments throughout the province. Pershing believed that the increase in districts would create conditions for governmental control over local areas and the populace.[139] He facilitated this with the inclusion of more Moro leaders in legitimate and authorized district governmental positions. Pershing believed in the use of diplomacy to build relationships, influence, and trust with local Moro leaders.[140] This was necessary in order to develop the Moro leaders while implementing American policy and reforms in the society.

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[138] Miller, *"American Counterinsurgency Strategy During the Moro Rebellion,"* 4.

[139] War Department, *Report of the Philippine Commission to the Secretary of War 1911 (In One Part)* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office), 23.

[140] Donald Smythe, *Guerilla Warrior: The Early Life of John J. Pershing* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973), 146.

The most significant governmental change that Pershing made was instituting the provincial disarmament policy on September 8, 1911.[141] The disarmament policy directed the forcible removal of all weapons belonging to the Moro population.[142] The Moros populace resisted the policy and viewed it as another way of American control over their rights. Violent uprisings and resistance challenged security and stability in the province from the Moros. Pershing believed that the disarmament policy was necessary to create the conditions that would allow for the transition to civil governance. As a result, he redirected the security efforts of US military forces in the region to enforce the order.

The increase in violence and resistance in the province was a result of the expanded area of operations for US troops and the enforcement of the disarmament policy. Pershing stressed the importance of US security efforts as a means to creating order throughout the province. He accomplished by expanding US presence to control areas outside of outposts and bases and increased engagement with the local populace. Pershing believed that US patrols needed to maintain a persistent presence throughout the province and continuous contact with populace.[143] He continued to rely heavily on the use of the Philippine Constabulary as the primary means to handle security threats. Violent resistance because of the disarmament remained a concern despite the increase of US troop presence and inclusion of local Moro leaders in the security process.

Two major conflicts occurred during Pershing's tenure that demonstrated the unwillingness of the Moro to comply with American authority and the resiliency of the

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[141] Byler, "Pacifying the Moros," 44.

[142] War Department, *War Department Annual Reports, 1913 (In Four Volumes),* vol. 1 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1914), 33-34.

[143] War Department, *War Department Annual Reports 1910,* vol. 3 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1911), 250-251.

insurgency. The first was the Battle of Bud Dajo in November and December 1911. Approximately eight hundred Moros returned to the sight of the violent battle of 1906, this time to resist the disarmament policy.[144] Pershing preferred to negotiate with the Moros rather than forcibly remove the resistant forces through direct contact. He continued to engage with local Moro leaders to assist in convincing the Moro insurgents to surrender without bloodshed. US patrols and constabulary forces were involved in minor conflicts with Moro resistance forces while carrying out the disarmament policy. The last and largest escalation of violence in opposition to the policy occurred in June 1913 at the Battle of Bud Bagsak on the island of Jolo.[145] A core group of Moros insurgents along with a civilian population of approximately six to ten thousand people occupied the top of the Bud Bagsak.[146] Once again, Pershing attempted a diplomatic method to quell the insurgency, but was unsuccessful. Pershing saw no alternative course but to attack the resisting force resulting in the death of almost five hundred Moros, to include women and children.[147] The Battle of Bud Bagsak received an immense amount of press coverage, which many considered the decisive battle to end the insurgency. Minor acts of resistance and small attacks continued to occur throughout the summer of 1913, but none to the scale of organization as Bud Bagsak. The focus for military operations on security efforts and the disarmament policy eventually created a stable environment and allowed for the transfer of the province to civilian control in 1913.[148]

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[144] Byler, "Pacifying the Moros," 44.

[145] Hernandez, "Kris vs. Krag," 64.

[146] Russell Roth, *Muddy Glory* (West Hanover, MA: The Christopher Publishing House, 1981), 148.

[147] Gowing, *Mandate in Moroland*, 238-241.

[148] Miller, *"American Counterinsurgency Strategy During the Moro Rebellion,"* 4-5.

The Moro insurgency was never able to organize into a cohesive resistance force to combat US forces. The different approaches employed by the three military governors all focused on different ways to improve the livelihood of the Moro people. However, it was not until Pershing's tenure that the operational reach of US forces increased. Additionally, the focus of continuous engagement with the local populace and increased inclusion of Moro leadership in the governance of the province assisted in establishing a more stable environment. The inability of the Moro insurgency to organize as a collective group with shared objectives did not create the necessary conditions to influence the populace and garner long-lasting support to defeat and force the removal of US forces. Ultimately, the ability of the Americans to provide essential civil services and development influenced the populace to support the local government and not the violent resistance proposed by the insurgency.

Conclusion

The insurgencies of the Philippine-American and Moro Wars were unsuccessful in inciting cohesion and support from the populace. These factors contributed significantly to the inevitable defeat of their attempts to force the withdrawal of US forces. Successful social transformations and revolutions are in large part a reflection the challengers who seize power.[149] There is a great deal of responsibility on the ability of the leader of the revolution to obtain resources, organize supporters, and maintain control of the insurgency.

During the Philippine-American War, Aguinaldo was successful in creating an aura of instability and fear during the initial stages of the guerilla campaign through acts of terrorism. The result was an environment that was not conducive or accepting of American efforts. This

[149] Misagh Parsa, *States, Ideologies, and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of Iran, Nicaragua, and the Philippines* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 24.

forced a change in the nature of the US campaign in the Philippines, which ultimately contributed to the end of the insurgency. It caused and created the necessity to consider additional socio-cultural factors that varied throughout the provinces. Different approaches and lethality of operations were required and modified as necessary to the environment. Ultimately, Aguinaldo's guerilla campaign would fail to produce a social revolution among the diverse ethnic groups in the Philippines that would unite in a concentrated effort to expel the American occupation. The command structure and operational objectives of the Philippine insurgency were unorganized with inconsistent priorities. This, coupled with depleting resources and an inability to provide for the populace, created issues for the insurgency. Aguinaldo, once captured, recognized that he was unable to maintain influence and motivate his followers, which caused a major weakness in the insurgent strategy. The result was a continued degradation in the insurgent ranks and lack of control or focus for guerilla campaign.

The insurgency during the Moro War lacked an organized command structure and objectives. The decentralized nature and priorities varied between the datus throughout the province. Each resistance leader was only concerned with maintaining the sovereignity of their local area. The inability to unify efforts between the different factions of resistance forces created opportunities for US forces to exploit by providing essential civil services. Protection of the Moros' religious and cultural beliefs was the consistent element that allowed the insurgency to continue. This extreme devotion to Islam and subsequent protection of socio-culture sovereignity is what held the insurgency together. However, the ability of the Americans to demonstrate an understanding for and respect of the culture eventually influenced local leaders and the populace. This influence and ability to provide for the populace fostered an environment that was unsupportive and no longer saw a benefit in violently resisting American efforts. In the end, the inability of the Moro insurgency to maintain a majority of popular support led to its demise.

Both of these US counterinsurgency campaigns demonstrate the importance of understanding the culture in the operating environment. The ability of the US commanders to adapt and modify their operational approaches would eventually win the support of the populace. The US forces operating in the Philippines utilized a variety of efforts from security operations to combat the insurgency, economic and industrial development to create opportunities for the populace to prosper, and the establishment of a functioning government. These efforts took time, but created an environment that was enticing to the populace. The US counterinsurgency campaign was persistent and eventually dissolved opportunities for the insurgencies to influence and gain support from the local populace. The result was a failure for the insurgents to establish a stronghold and base of support. Ultimately, the lack of support, influence, and control over the populace led to the end of both the insurrectos' and Moros' insurgency efforts.

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