

10.4.3. Explain imperialism from the perspective of the colonizers and the colonized and the varied immediate and long-term responses by the people under colonial rule.

Document Based Assessment

The Imperialism Debate and the Philippines

After defeating the Spanish in Manila Bay in May 1898, American forces remained in the Philippines. In February 1899, the United States Senate voted to annex the Philippines. The Philippines were one aspect of the United States' efforts to compete with Europe in the scramble for new foreign markets, investment opportunities and raw materials. A great debate took place in the United States over the issue of imperialism, as the documents below show.

Document A

"I have been criticized a good deal about the Philippines, but don't deserve it. The truth is I didn't want the Philippines, and when they came to us, as a gift from the gods, I did not know what to do with them... And one night late it came to me this way-I don't know how it was, but it came: (1) That we could not give them back to Spain-that would be cowardly and dishonorable; (2) that we could not turn them over to France and Germany-our commercial rivals in the Orient-that would be bad business and discreditable; (3) that we could not leave them to themselves-they were unfit for self government-and they would soon have anarchy and misrule over there worse than Spain's was; and (4) that there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all, and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them..."

-From remarks to a visiting delegation of Methodist church leaders made by U.S. President William McKinley on November 21, 1899

Document B

"We hold that the policy known as imperialism is hostile to liberty and tends toward militarism, an evil from which it has been our glory to be free... We maintain that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed. We insist that the subjugation of any people is "criminal aggression" and open disloyalty to the distinctive principles of our government.

We earnestly condemn the policy of the present National Administration in the Philippines. It seeks to extinguish the spirit of 1776 in those islands... We denounce the slaughter of the Filipinos as a needless horror."

-From the Platform of the American Anti-Imperialist League, 1899

Document C

"Isn't Every American proud of the part that American soldiers bore in the relief of Peking [i.e., Beijing, where some U.S. citizens were held hostage by the Boxers]? But that would have been impossible if our flag had not been in the Philippines.

Gen. Chaffee led two infantry regiments, the Ninth and the Fourteen, and one battery of the Fifty Artillery to Peking. They did not come direct from the United States; there was not time... But for these men and the marines from Manila barracks, Minster Conger and his American comrades in the besieged legation would not have seen their country's flag, and would OWE THEIR RELIEF TO BRITISH, JAPANESE AND RUSSIANS.

When Mr. Bruan [Democratic candidates for president] tells you that the Philippines are worth nothing to America, you tell him to 'REMEMBER PEKIN'"

-From a leaflet to the Republican Club of Massachusetts. 1900

Analyzing Documents

Use your knowledge of this topic and Documents A, B, and C to answer questions 1-4.

1. In Document A, which of McKinley's four reasons for the takeover of the Philippines explained that important business interests were at stake?
 - a. 1
 - b. 2
 - c. 3
 - d. 4
2. In Document B, what is the meaning of "It seeks to extinguish the spirit of 1776 in those islands"?
 - a. The U.S. vowed never to give the Philippines its freedom.
 - b. The U.S. is undermining an independence movement that is like the American revolution
 - c. Self-government in the Philippines is inevitable.
 - d. The U.S. has the ability and the duty to educate Filipinos about self-government
3. According to Document C, the Philippines are necessary to the United States as a(n)
 - a. Source for raw materials
 - b. Outpost for Christian missionaries
 - c. Base for military actions
 - d. Market for U.S. goods.
4. William Jennings Bryan considered imperialism, which he opposed, to be the top issue in the 1900 presidential campaign. Who would have received your vote, the Democratic candidate, Bryan, or the Republican, William McKinley? Give your reasons, using these documents and information from the chapter.