

---

Option  
1

## FULLILL OUR NATIONAL DESTINY

America's stunning triumph over Spain has ushered our nation into a new era of opportunity and responsibility. Just as the courage of our founding fathers opened the door to taming the North American continent, the heroism of our soldiers and sailors in Cuba and the Philippines has revealed a new horizon of expansion and possibility. This is our God-given mission. We must grasp the empire that our brave young men have won and fulfill our national destiny.

From the beginning, America has been more than just another country. Rather, we have been chosen by God for greatness. With divine blessing, hard work, and a sense of duty rooted in our Anglo-Saxon heritage, we have built the greatest nation on earth. No other country can compete with the productivity of America's farms and factories. No other people has demonstrated the same capacity for wise and moderate self-government. Now we have the opportunity—some would say the obligation—to extend the grand American experiment beyond our shores.

America's economic future lies abroad. The ingenuity, efficiency, and innovation of our people are producing more than our country can consume. As we have witnessed in recent years, the economic problems and social unrest resulting from surplus production threaten to bring down all that we have achieved. We must look overseas, particularly to the Far East, to continue advancing. The markets of Asia hold the key to keeping America's economy healthy and strong. To reach them, however, we need to control the Philippines in their entirety. With their safe harbors and strategic location, the Philippine islands are the gateway to all of Asia.

Of course, our role in the Philippines must go well beyond economics. Now that we have rescued the Filipinos from Spanish misrule, we owe it to them to bring the benefits of American civilization to the islands. We must accept the responsibilities that have been laid before us. Outside of a small educated elite in Manila and a handful of wealthy landowners, most Filipinos are in a primitive state. During three centuries of Spanish colonial rule, the islands made little progress. To move forward, the Filipinos need the firm and fair government that only the United States can provide. They need order and security as they learn about the American concepts of democracy and freedom. They need our helping hand to develop the resources of their islands and to enter the modern age. The task awaiting us is difficult and probably thankless, but it is the morally correct thing to do.

Consider the alternatives. In this age of ruthless colonialism, the Philippines without U.S. protection would be easy prey for powerful, unscrupulous nations like Japan and Germany. As they were under the Spanish, the Filipinos would again be conquered, exploited, and left in misery. Moreover, Manila Bay—the finest natural harbor in the western Pacific—could fall under the control of an unfriendly power. Both Americans and Filipinos would lose.

No self-respecting nation can abandon what was earned by the blood of its fighting men. Our military forces accomplished in a few short months what Filipino and Cuban rebels could not do for themselves in years of struggle. Advancing the cause of civilization in the Philippines gives meaning to those who died in the process, and especially to those who were murdered on the *Maine*.

If we shirk the challenge before us, if we turn inward, we will both dishonor our nation and deprive future generations of the economic blessings which an empire can provide. We will betray the mission which God has given us to act as a beacon of liberty and Christianity. Let us seize our national destiny and move bravely forward.

---

## FROM THE HISTORICAL RECORD

*Senator Orville Platt, Connecticut*

"I believe the hand of Providence brought about the conditions which we must either accept or be recreant [cowardly] to duty. I believe that those conditions were a part of the great development of the great force of Christian civilization on earth. I believe the same force was behind our army at Santiago and our ships in Manila Bay that was behind the landing of the Pilgrims on Plymouth Rock.... The English-speaking people, the agents of civilization, the agency through which humanity is to be uplifted, through which despotism is to go down, through which the rights of man are to prevail, is charged with this great mission. We propose to proclaim liberty in the Philippine Islands, if they are ours."

*Senator Knute Nelson, Minnesota*

"Today, in substance, the English government is as much a republic as our government. Her colonial development has served to increase the liberties of Englishmen.... That English government in British India, in Egypt, and in all other English colonies, wherever we look at it, has been a great improvement and a great blessing.... Are we incompetent to colonize, to develop, and to govern territorial possessions like England? Is the Yankee inferior to the Englishman? It is our duty under the providence of God to protect the Philippine islanders against anarchy, chaos and confusion, and the despotism that results from it. We owe them a duty now, as in the case of the drowning child snatched from a watery grave.... They are as unfit for self-government as most people on the face of the earth.... We are there for two purposes: to give the people of those islands a just, good, fair, and free system of government in some form, and to keep them out of the hands of the great powers."

*Rand-McNally Bankers' Monthly*

"Railroad building may be expected to boom in all the islands which fall under the influence of the United States. Our sugar and tobacco growing would receive an impetus. The forests may also be made to yield handsome returns, and in fact every industry so long under the blighting rule of Spain, will be exploited and made to show the advantages accruing from better government and wider enterprise."

*The Churchman*

"Woe to any nation brought to pass where it is called to guide a weaker people's future which hesitates for fear its own interests will be entangled and its own future imperilled by the discharge of unmistakable duty."

*Railway World*

"One way of opening a market is to conquer it.... Already our enterprising merchants are beginning to take possession of the markets which our army and navy have opened to them."

*Senator Albert Beveridge, Indiana*

"The Philippines are ours forever, 'territory belonging to the United States' as the Constitution calls them. And just beyond the Philippines are China's illimitable markets. We will not renounce our part in the mission of our race, trustee, under God, of the civilization of the world. God has marked us as His chosen people, henceforth to lead in the regeneration of the world.... We are not dealing with Americans or Europeans. We are dealing with Orientals. They are not capable of self-government.... Savage blood, Oriental blood, Malay blood, Spanish example—are these the elements of self-government?... The Declaration of Independence applies only to people capable of self-government.

"The power that rules the Pacific, therefore, is the power that rules the world. And with the Philippines, that power is and will forever be the American Republic.... The ocean unites; steam [powered vessels] unites us; electricity unites us; all the elements of nature unite us to this region where duty and interest call us.... Our fathers wrote into the Constitution words of growth, of expansion, of empire, if you will,

---

unlimited by geography or climate or by anything but the vitality and possibilities of the American people.

“Do you tell me that it will cost us money? When did Americans ever measure duty by financial standards? Do you tell me of the tremendous toil required to overcome the vast difficulties of our task? What mighty work for the world, for humanity, even for ourselves has ever been done with ease?...Pray God that the time may never come when Mammon [material wealth] and the love of ease shall so debase our blood that we will fear to shed it for the flag and its imperial destiny. The American people must move forward to the future of their hope and the doing of God’s work.”

---

### ***BELIEFS AND ASSUMPTIONS UNDERLYING OPTION 1***

1. Just as destiny guided our nation across the North American continent, so it now points to expansion southward and eastward across the seas.
2. God has bestowed a special mission on the American people, choosing us to bring progress, Christian virtues, and order to distant and long-suffering lands. For the Filipinos, annexation by the United States offers them their best, and perhaps only, hope of creating a stable, effective government.
3. Our nation’s continued prosperity depends on finding new markets overseas to absorb America’s surplus production.

### ***ARGUMENTS SUPPORTING OPTION 1***

1. Establishing a U.S. presence in the Philippines will open new commercial opportunities in Asia, particularly in the vast markets of China.
2. Annexing the Philippines will block other countries from seizing the islands and converting them into a base that may threaten U.S. interests.
3. Introducing the American concepts of democracy and liberty to the Filipinos will eventually transform them into reliable allies.
4. Controlling the entire Philippine archipelago will ensure the security of Manila harbor and provide the United States with a strategic naval base for asserting our interests in East Asia.
5. In American hands, the Philippines will quickly emerge as a major exporter of sugar, cotton, tobacco, and other valuable crops.