

**The View Towards Peace
of Filipinos, Americans
and *Ameri... Kain* During the
Philippine-American War**

Maria Serena I. Diokno, Ph.D.

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College of Social Sciences and Philosophy

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FOREWORD

We first learned about Dr. Maria Serena I. Diokno's Federico Alcuaz professorial chair lecture during a discussion of the potential contributions of academic disciplines to the multidisciplinary researches on peace, conflict resolution and human rights. The lecture, delivered on September 23, 1993, focused on the concept and content of peace during the Philippine war for national liberation.

The fact that the concepts and parameters of the debate on peace-related issues during the Philippine-American War have not changed after a century moved us to publish the lecture as an occasional paper. Apart from the lessons we can draw from the negotiations and discussions a hundred years ago, Dr. Diokno's paper broadens the scope of peace research to include the content analysis of concepts culled from historical documents.

The University of the Philippines-Center for Integrative and Development Studies (UP-CIDS) acknowledges the editorial assistance of Ms. Jocelyn de Jesus. Bella Lucas, Stretch Payawal, Michael Patrick Arciga, Josephine Padolina, Martin Macalintal and Teresita Tamayo saw this paper through its publication.

As in all UP-CIDS publications, the analysis and recommendations are those of the author whose academic freedom is upheld by the University.

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This is the first of what I would like to develop into a series of papers on the peace process during the turn of the century. Having looked at the meaning of peace from different perspectives, I plan to examine the attempts at peace negotiations between the Aguinaldo government and the United States. A more serious examination of the conduct of humanitarian law during the Philippine-American War would also be interesting.

There is, indeed, room for peace research in the discipline of history, and the timing could not be more right, given the approaching centennial of the Philippine revolution.

Let me then thank Dr. Cynthia Bautista and the University of the Philippines - Center for Integrative and Development Studies for publishing my professorial chair lecture as part of the Center's occasional papers on Peace. Under the direction of Cynch and along with other academics engaged in peace studies, the Center hopes to develop and carry out a multi-disciplinary research agenda for peace, a project in which I am more than honored to take part.

I also want to thank Maria Cleofe Marpa and Imelda Adante for helping me locate materials in the Rare Books Section of the National Library and rechecking my sources — tedious work that is not always fun. Father Domingo Moraleda ensured that my translations of Spanish sources were accurate. Thank you, Domingo.

I wrote my lecture originally in Filipino which Dr. Teresita Maceda polished to a fine sheen. *Maraming, maraming salamat*, Tet.

This was my first professorial chair lecture and I was nervous when I read it. I am grateful to my department for supporting me and to my chair, Dr. Jaime Veneracion, for taking an interest in my research. Dr. Bonifacio Salamanca and Mr. Vic Ladlad served as reactors to my lecture. Thank you, both, for your kind words of praise.

As I thank you all, I claim full responsibility for the limitations of my work.

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THE VIEW TOWARDS PEACE OF FILIPINOS, AMERICANS AND *AMERI...KAIN** DURING THE PHILIPPINE-AMERICAN WAR**

For over a hundred years, our people have yearned for peace in the face of both foreign and Filipino governments. This yearning has taken various forms: armed struggle, propaganda, and unarmed, collective, organized action. We inaugurated this century with a revolution for independence whose fruit was to be peace in our land, and we hope to close the century with negotiations for peace based on justice.

In many ways the themes remain basically the same although the participants and concrete situations have changed. Given the history of struggle in our country and the persistent recurrence of basic sociopolitical and economic problems, it is ironic that peace studies have not taken firm root in the social sciences. This professorial lecture is a modest attempt at enriching peace studies in our country in general and as a specific subarea in the discipline of history which, to date, remains relatively undeveloped.

Peace research is the analysis of social conflict, focusing on the conditions of peace or its absence, using social science methods. This type of research is value-laden because, through academic means, it aims to formulate alternatives to war.¹ In the West the traditional topics of peace studies were the Cold War and the arms race. For countries colonized by the West, however, the meaning of peace vastly differs. In this lecture, I will analyze peace-related issues at the onset of the century in order to shed light on the meaning of peace from the point of view of Filipinos at the time. I have two purposes:

First, to broaden the meaning and scope of peace research beyond the history of wars, diplomatic relations and biographies of generals and heroes, toward a deeper analysis of the concept and content of peace in the context of a given historical environment, in this case, a war for national liberation; and

* This was the term used to refer to Filipinos who hungered for America, a pun on the Filipino word *Kumain* which means "to eat."

** Federico Alcuaz professorial chair lecture read on 23 September 1993 at the Faculty Center Conference Hall, University of the Philippines-Diliman.

Second, to the extent possible, to relate the issues that affected us a hundred years ago to the issues of the present decade, now that there are fresh efforts by forces at war in our country to resolve their conflict through a negotiation that will hopefully bring about peace. I also wish to contribute, however modestly, to the celebration of the approaching centennial of the Philippine Revolution.

The preparation for this lecture has in itself been a rewarding and inspiring experience — to read the works of our great forebears and feel in a way that can never compare with theirs, their difficulty and suffering, hopes and frustrations, their rage and sacrifice for our motherland. Who among us is untouched by this simple expression of love of country by a warrior-poet from the mountains of Leyte in 1900:²

*'Tis our good fortune
To return to your bosom, core of our soul
The compassion in your heart binds us
Taste once more the love that has faded*

*Oh, what incomparable joy
If we attain our goal
If we, your children, behold you
And offer you our deep-felt reverence*

xxxx

*Because from you sprout the branches
The life we treasure and our bodies
Every action is also an offering
To willingly serve you and show you our compassion*

In this lecture I shall also discuss the varied and conflicting perspectives of peace and peace-related issues such as cease-fire, amnesty and humanitarian law from the standpoint of Filipinos and Americans. In truth all these remain issues today despite the changed situation and the fact that fellow Filipinos are at war with each other. I am convinced there are lessons to learn from our past and before I end this lecture, I shall endeavor to give a few of these lessons.

For this lecture I drew heavily from the letters and writings of Apolinario Mabini (who, were he alive today, would likely be called a

“hardliner”), the *Philippine Insurgent Records*, the articles written by Filipino support groups abroad, and several other official and private American documents. Of all these the most moving were the words of Mabini. True, he wrote in Spanish, a foreign tongue, but his mastery of the language and the richness of his imagery, especially when he was angry, made reading him sheer pleasure.

Contradictory Views of Filipinos and Americans

At the outset of the war the American position on peace was clear: “To hasten peace,” according to one American, “we sent an army of occupation across the Pacific.”³ As the war deteriorated, U.S. President William McKinley appealed to the Filipinos: Let peace come first, and then we can attend to what you desire.⁴ The Schurman Commission reported that it was only appropriate to meet force with force in order to fulfill the obligations of the United States to itself, to other countries and to the “amiable Filipinos.”⁵

Several months later General J.F. Bell warned Mabini that since there was no possibility of victory for the Filipino forces, and for the sake of civilization and humanity, Filipinos should surrender even though this might “be painful to ... [their] feelings.”⁶ Bell added that “the only wise thing to do is to admit what is inevitable, suspend hostilities, surrender the arms and cooperate with the United States in the regeneration of the Islands.”⁷

In short, peace for the United States meant the surrender of the revolutionary movement and the termination of the war through forceful means as measured by such military criteria as the number of weapons surrendered and the size of the Filipino army. Do we not hear this today whenever we are told that the moment of peace is at hand because the New People's Army (NPA) is weakening? As proof, we are repeatedly told, for example, that they now have fewer clashes with the military.

The Manila residents who testified before the Taft Commission best answered the American call for peace when they said: “Given the inferiority of our forces compared with those of the United States, it is possible that we will one day lose hope of defeating the United States. But what we will never lose is hope in dying for the independence of our country.”⁸

This hope was founded on the revolutionary movement's unswerving view toward peace as evidenced in Mabini's reply to General Bell: “The

Filipinos may be vanquished now and again, but as long as they are denied every kind of right, there will not be lasting peace."⁹

Interestingly, the term "lasting peace" is also used at present. The same is true of the phrase *paz honrosa*, which today we refer to as "honorable peace." Then as now the implication is the same: that in order to have lasting peace, not only military aspects of the conflict should be considered but also — and more important — the very roots of the conflict. For Mabini the cause of the conflict was a denial of the rights of the Filipino people, the denial of their independence. He declared:

We are not enemies of peace, neither do we wish to fight for the sake of fighting; we proclaim that to struggle is the only recourse open to us in order to save the national honor and arrive at a true peace. To give up without prior recognition of our judicial capacity is to surrender; it is to capitulate in fact; it is to consent to slavery, sacrificing our independence; it is to desire peace solely for the Americans, not for us, the poor conquered [people] ...¹⁰

Mabini repeatedly stressed this view, which is probably why the Americans called him intransigent. According to Mabini:

Peace is the condition sine qua non for the exercise of rights, but peace itself does not produce rights; rather, it is precisely the product of the satisfaction derived from the acquisition of rights. Give [the people] their rights and you will see how they lay down their arms in order to exercise their rights. Give the child sweets because he cries and you will see how quickly he stops crying; but do not make promises because if he insists on having sweets as he did before, your promise will merely fuel his desire.¹¹

Here Mabini referred to the American promise to respect our independence, a promise they reneged on and which, in Mabini's opinion, further nurtured the Filipino people's yearning for independence. For the revolutionary movement, independence alone could guarantee freedom. Peace, in short, was to be the fruit of independence in the same way that today, peace can only be the outcome of justice.

Because of this view the word "order," which was frequently attached to the word "peace," was repulsive to the revolutionaries: "The word order is extremely repugnant to us because we know the *yanquis* always mock us shame-

lessly; we feel horribly nauseous whenever we read in the press in Manila the words peace and order because we immediately think that for now, the basis of this cannot be anything but our own slavery."¹²

Thus when General Bell told Mabini that as long as the situation was favorable, the Philippines could count on the generosity of the United States,¹³ Mabini countered:

to believe in their generosity, it is necessary that we first see justice. A generous act costs the doer more than any act of justice, because in the latter case he does nothing more than pay or give what is due, while in the former case he has to make a present of something which is his very own. If the Americans begin by taking possession of the sovereignty that belongs to the Filipino people, you are more than sagacious to understand that it is useless to expect gifts from one who, not content with what is his, takes possession of what belongs to another.¹⁴

In the discourse on peace many terms were used to depict its various meanings for the opposing camps and even among Filipinos themselves. For example:

- ❑ "solid and lasting peace,"¹⁵ as opposed to a military victory;
- ❑ "honorable peace,"¹⁶ as opposed to a "humiliating peace";¹⁷
- ❑ "moral peace" as opposed to "material peace."¹⁸

These phrases are practically the same terms used in the peace process today.

For the revolutionary, a solid, lasting, honorable and moral peace could only be achieved if the United States recognized the independence of the Philippines. This alone could lead to "health and equilibrium in ... this society in turmoil."¹⁹ Mabini added, "A humiliating peace is tolerated only in uncivilized countries" which, if accepted by the Philippine government, would reinforce the belief of others that Filipinos lack culture.²⁰ Mabini further asked: what is material peace without morality?

Annexationists, Autonomistas and Independentistas

Though one might expect Filipinos and Americans to have had contrasting views, the feeling is different when applied to Filipinos in serious discord among themselves for here, an overpowering sense of irony and tragedy emerges. Several months after the war broke out a number of Filipinos met — most of them wealthy and educated²¹ — in order to work for peace based on autonomy under the administration of the United States. Their hopes grew when the Schurman Commission offered autonomy in April 1899.²²

From the Americans' point of view, their Filipino bedfellows were "peace advocates,"²³ thus implying that the revolutionaries were warmongers and obstacles to peace. These autonomists met with the Schurman Commission on their own initiative and used their influence to attract other residents of Manila to side with the United States.

The rise to prominence of the autonomists within the revolutionary government can be gleaned from the following series of events in May 1899:

- the Congressional resolution of May 6 expressing reconciliation with the Americans;
- the removal of Mabini from the cabinet on the 7th; and
- on the following day, his replacement by Pedro Paterno as head of the cabinet.

Mabini criticized these events: "It seems that the present Cabinet is negotiating with the Americans on the basis of the grant of autonomy, and this thing looks funny to me because people who lose heart after a few months of fighting are only good to carry the yoke of slavery."²⁴

From May 1899 up to the establishment of the Federal Party in December 1900, and through the succeeding year, the autonomists continually exerted efforts to end the war by convincing the revolutionary government to embrace American sovereignty. This, for them, was peace. Mabini thus categorized the proponents of peace into three:

- The few annexationists who refused to join the revolution because of their belief that a change in leadership would satisfy the aspirations of the Filipinos (and, Mabini added, these people's hopes were modest because "they neither worked for nor sacrificed anything").
- The autonomists who defected to the enemy because they thought it was crazy to fight a nation as powerful as the United States. They called themselves "peace advocates" to avoid being labeled "advocates of convenience."
- The majority of the revolutionaries and the masses who were fighting for independence as "the most dignified and noblest goal of the revolution."²⁵

Perhaps because the annexationists were few, they were generally ignored by the revolutionaries. Suffice it to summarize the revolutionary position on annexation through a poem published in the revolutionary paper, *Ang Bayang Kahapishapis*:²⁶

*What political liberties
and equality of rights
does annexation offer?
These are but a calculated deception
of future domination*

Indeed, Mabini wrote to a comrade in Hong Kong that there were no factions in the Philippine government: "There are only the autonomists and the partisans of the war. The first are very few and they are within Manila and, even among these few, it seems to me that many show that they are so only for the sake of convenience."²⁷

In time the conflict between the *autonomistas* and *independentistas* intensified. If the former looked upon the *independentistas* as intransigent, the latter called the former *americanistas*; and if Paterno and Buencamino had their *fiesta de paz*,²⁸ the revolutionaries gleefully celebrated their *festival de sangre*.²⁹

What really was the peace program of the autonomists? Let us analyze the statements and actions of their leaders. In June 1900 Paterno initiated a meeting in Manila of former government officials, members of the armed forces and other Filipinos. Mabini did not attend the meeting because, in his opinion, this would lead nowhere unless there was genuine freedom of expression.³⁰ Nevertheless, several resolutions were passed proposing the following conditions for peace:

- ☐ general and absolute amnesty;
- ☐ simultaneous cessation of hostilities on both sides;
- ☐ restitution of confiscated property;
- ☐ absorption of revolutionary officers with their present rank into the future army;
- ☐ pensions for disabled soldiers, widows and orphans;
- ☐ assurance of individual rights based on the United States Constitution;
- ☐ installation of a civilian government in Manila and the provinces headed by Filipinos or at least of Filipino committees to prepare the way; and
- ☐ expulsion of friars.³¹

These conditions were not accepted by either Aguinaldo or the Americans.

Felipe Buencamino, who was released by the Americans from prison for his willingness to do "missionary" work for peace, was authorized by Arthur MacArthur to propose peace to Emilio Aguinaldo based on "honorable terms."³² He therefore planned a meeting of "the Filipino people"³³ first, to inform them of the peaceful objectives of MacArthur, and second, to make them see the need and advantage of peace as the basis of freedom and prosperity.³⁴ But the meeting did not materialize, having been overshadowed by Paterno's *fiesta*.

Mabini criticized these moves and sarcastically labeled Paterno's party a *fiesta de paz*. Paterno, according to Mabini, had a propensity for premature gatherings which often caused the opposite result. When Paterno organized the *fiesta popular* to achieve peace, Mabini remarked: "I am afraid peace will be so shaken by the laughter of the *Paternistas* that it will hide in the bowels of the earth, for us to never behold her beautiful, smiling face."³⁵

Revolutionary Vocabulary

The revolutionaries, insulted by the idea that autonomy could be swapped with independence, vented their ire on the autonomists.³⁶ The revolutionary vocabulary for the autonomists was vividly colorful; they called the latter pseudonationalists,³⁷ opportunists,³⁸ political acrobats,³⁹ cowards or traitors,⁴⁰ advocates of convenience,⁴¹ and miniscule McKinleys.⁴² Paterno and Buencamino, in particular, were described as having "no backbone, they are panicky and unable to withstand difficulty and hardship; that is why they at once seek shelter under a shady tree."⁴³

According to the revolutionaries, Paterno's position on the war was barely recognizable because of his constant shifts in so short a period of time. It was recalled that as head of the Malolos Congress, Paterno had once asked for guns for the war, only to defect a few months later to the side of the Americans. "Whatever happened to the guns demanded by his Excellency Señor Don Pedro Alejandro Paterno?" asked the Committee for Philippine Independence (in Spain). "Did he not find a manufacturer to make the gun?" The committee concluded: "We do not want, and neither do our heroic people want clowns ... who entertain us and make us laugh because these are not moments at present to sing hosannas and alleluias, but to intone the *De profundis* [a funeral hymn]."⁴⁴

Among the strongest and most sarcastic labels for the autonomists was the term *pastelero*, a pun on the Spanish word for peace [*paz*]. Listen to this message from the Committee in Spain: "Indignantly reject a peace with oppression. Do not accept that peace [*paz*] which more than a wonderful message is a *pas ... tel* [pie] kneaded with the infamy of traitors."⁴⁵

For this reason those who entered into arrangements with the Americans were called "rotten *pasteleros* lacking in faith, pride and valor."⁴⁶ From the revolutionary viewpoint, they were worse than the American imperialists because while the latter desired only McKinley's reelection, the *pasteleros*

were thrilled with the "suffocating and unbreakable chain of gold to hang around the collar of their country Shame!"⁴⁷

Worse, the autonomists were called

"hungry ameri...kain, who have never sacrificed anything for our people and are content with whatever crumbs are thrown them by their master."

xxx

If we will examine the ancestry of these very few ameri...kanin, they are not true Filipinos. Therefore, it is understandable that they have no love for the Philippines."⁴⁸ (underscoring supplied)

The revolutionary movement believed the *autonomistas* lacked credibility not only among the Filipino people but even among the Americans since these people could neither influence nor be relied upon by the American government. Nonetheless, according to Mabini, "By being on the side of the Americans they serve us some purpose because, being advocates of convenience, they will tire quickly of American sovereignty and will conspire against them in our favor."⁴⁹

And Mabini was right. The Americans pictured Paterno as "a man ready for reconciliation schemes of any sort, or to speak more accurately, for notoriety of any sort."⁵⁰ It came as no surprise when the American government rejected Paterno's peace proposal, saying that it was unachievable.

In fact, Paterno was jailed for publishing, without American authority, his proposal for independence under the protection of the United States.⁵¹ (It is amusing to note that in his proposal, Paterno proposed the title *Venerable Miembro Superior Independiente del Gabinete* or *Consejo de Ministros*⁵² for higher officials and, for himself, "Prince."⁵³)

At the same time, the revolutionaries tried to understand the autonomists, hoping that the latter had only been forced to accept American sovereignty. Isabelo de los Reyes, for example, said the *autonomistas* were held hostage "inside the walls of Manila under the bayonets of General Elwell Otis."⁵⁴ Listen to this excerpt from de los Reyes's *Ramo de Olivo*:

Continue to carry out with honor the assignments you have received from the Americans ... because your families need your salaries.

But the United States could also oblige you to turn against your country. If so, I earnestly hope you will use your influence with them so that they will treat our compatriots well who fall into their hands or who are in pacified towns. You would do well to denounce the abuses against these people in your newspapers. If you do not show them [the Americans] dignity, character and energy in defense of your rights, they themselves will not appreciate you and will get used to treating you as slaves.

*As for us, leave us in peace to fight for the independence of our country. Do not do anything or do not answer the mockeries which we direct at the **americanistas** because we believe these are necessary so that americanism will not grow, knowing that true valor consists in knowing how to control one's passions. Do not fuel the fire of discord with your supposed remedies but be intermediaries with the Americans so that they will do us justice, and do not forget that our cause is also yours and that of your children.⁵⁵*

The Intransigentes

Let us now turn to the *independentistas*. They did not hide, and indeed were proud of their uncompromising stance in defense of the country's sovereignty,⁵⁶ in contrast to the autonomists whom the *independentistas* claimed deceived everyone. Since their true motive was independence, they asked: "why accept autonomy only to later overthrow by force of arms the sovereignty of America? We do not wish to be traitors afterward. We wish to show our character of frankness and sincerity and nothing more."⁵⁷

Were the revolutionaries truly unreasonable? This can be answered by examining their stand on three issues: cease-fire, autonomy and amnesty.

Before he was removed from office, Mabini sent Colonel Manuel Arguelles to the Americans to present a cease-fire proposal. He did this to show the Filipino people that their government was exhausting all means to avoid destruction as well as to gain time to reflect on the prevailing situation and the American offer of autonomy. However, Mabini warned the Ameri-

cans that if they denied the people this recourse, the Philippine government could not be faulted for pursuing the war. Should this happen, Mabini added, peace would "signify the annihilation of either the Filipino people or the imperialist party of America."⁵⁸

The United States replied tersely: there would be no cease-fire unless the Philippine forces surrendered.⁵⁹ A subsequent attempt, this time by General Antonio Luna, elicited the same response from the Americans.⁶⁰ Which party then was intransigent?

True, the revolution refused to accept autonomy which it perceived to be merely a palliative.⁶¹ But the firmness of the revolution was not the kind derived from "extreme pride and blind stubbornness ... [or] an obsession with an impossible idea."⁶² Mabini himself said he would accept autonomy only if he was convinced the people were "not disposed to sacrifice themselves for a better cause."⁶³ De los Reyes took the same stance when he recommended that the United States allow a free plebiscite in which Filipinos would decide their fate, a decision which both sides should accept.⁶⁴

Mabini added that if the struggle could no longer be sustained and became too heavy a burden for a Filipino to carry, he would not complain:

on the contrary, I will be the first to salute him and say: "You have done well. You have seen that the journey is long and painful and you need to rest. Live contentedly and happily; but do not forget that there (in the struggle) lies the center of your gravity Remember those who fell by the road and, above all, those who fell exclaiming: 'Happy are those who can give proof, by means of their abilities, of their love of country!'"⁶⁵

In sum, the basis of the revolutionaries' resoluteness was that they remained constantly by the people's side. When Mabini returned from exile in Guam, he explained why, after his long rejection of the United States, he finally accepted American rule.

When the people launched the war, I believed it my duty to stand by their side and help in their suffering until the end of the war; and now that the people are thinking of continuing the struggle for their rights without arms, I also believe that I should be on their side so that I can tell them not to lose hope, to strengthen their confidence in themselves, in justice and in the future."⁶⁶

The revolutionary government rejected the *paternista* conditions for peace. With respect to the proposal to retain the present rank of Filipino generals and absorb them into the future army, the revolution responded:

Will the generals accept this, they who earned their stars much better than all the generals in the world, having earned them in a heroic war between midgets and giants; will they agree to stoop down to the category of Kapuitan or tininti del cuadrillero or of those poor devils, the greasy soldiers?

*Ha! Ha! Ha! Leave the grease to the hungry ameri...kanin [because] ... our soldiers, thank God, need not eat with the help of the enemy ...*⁶⁷

The revolution also scorned the amnesty proclaimed by MacArthur in June 1900. The proclamation granted complete immunity for past actions and absolute liberty of action in the future to all those connected with the revolution in either a military or civil capacity. The proclamation, however, excluded those who had violated the laws of war (humanitarian law) during the period of active hostilities based on the following conditions:⁶⁸

- ☐ the renunciation of all connection with the insurrection;
- ☐ taking an oath of allegiance to the United States (the Tagalog version of which was prepared by Buencamino); and
- ☐ a promise not to communicate with or give information to, assist or abet an enemy of the United States.

In return, those who abided by these conditions would be paid thirty pesos for each rifle they surrendered.

From the point of view of the revolution, the fact that a country as proud and powerful as America had stooped so low to buy Filipinos only demonstrated its own inability to take the Philippines as a colony.⁶⁹ To ridicule the American offer, Aguinaldo issued the Philippine government's amnesty program in which:⁷⁰

- ☐ all imperialist soldiers who surrendered their rifles would be paid eighty pesos (more than what the Americans paid!);

- ❑ they would be released without having to swear allegiance to the Philippines; and
- ❑ they would be assisted to return back to their camp with their transportation expenses provided up to a convenient point.

Clearly, even in time of war, Filipino revolutionaries managed to retain their sense of humor.

Path to Peace

As the war intensified in September and October 1900, so did the need for peace negotiations. The revolution was open to the idea as long as the conditions were honorable to both sides. Autonomy as a condition for negotiation, for example, was not acceptable to the revolution because it was viewed as a deceptive form of slavery.⁷¹ Given this position, what could be honorable for both sides? This was Mabini's reply: "First, the agenda for the talks should be acceptable to both parties. For instance, for Filipinos the most effective means to make peace would be for the United States to respect their independence, with limitations the Americans may impose **and** that the Filipinos accept."⁷²

The problem here, however, as Mabini pointed out, was that the word "independence" was distasteful to the Americans just as the word "control" was to Filipinos. For this reason, Mabini stated there had to be a way for the two forces to relate to each other without using these words.

Second, the road to peace could be straight or winding, but the point cited above should dictate the suitable path toward peace. For example, when Aguinaldo appointed Mabini as the official government negotiator, the instruction was to discuss peace only on the basis of American recognition of Filipino independence. This, according to Mabini, was the straight and safe path.⁷³ However, to solve the impasse mentioned above, Mabini suggested that instead of discussing the issue of independence as such, both parties should agree on the following:

- ❑ enjoyment by Filipinos of rights being enjoyed by citizens of cultured and free nations;

- total equality between the Americans and Filipinos within Philippine territory; and
- a government structure that would guarantee these conditions.⁷⁴

Third, the negotiators of both parties should be formally authorized in order to validate whatever agreements were reached during the talks. In 1899, for example, General Otis recognized Aguinaldo's capacity to authorize his representative not as president of the government but merely as leader of an armed force. At the same time, Otis admitted he had no authority to decide on the terms the Philippine government wished to present.⁷⁵ How, therefore, could negotiations be conducted given this situation? Thus Mabini said: "A Government that insists on talks when it is denied the proper legal personality and representation, is either ignorant or has neither honor or dignity. A Government without dignity does not deserve the consideration of the enemy but only its contempt."⁷⁶

The issue of belligerence is as relevant today as it was then; it can also be said that there is not much difference in outlook between the armed revolution then and now. Let us listen to Mabini: "Belligerence is the only thing that can give us the juridical capacity to enter into contracts; therefore, any convention entered into without it is null and constitutes an obvious mockery of the Filipino people."⁷⁷

There is one other point of importance — the role of humanitarian law in time of war. The goal of humanitarian law is to protect the life and property of civilians and treat prisoners of war and the wounded humanely. Mabini strictly prohibited violations of these laws, such as the arrest of women and children.⁷⁸ His insistence upon discipline was very rigid. In one instance he even reprimanded a colonel who had fallen in love with a woman against her mother's wishes. Mabini said: "In your hands I have entrusted an army in order that you may use it in helping our country in the enforcement of its laws but not in utilizing it for selfish and personal purposes. How can we ever form a solid organization if its own founders are the very first ones to weaken its foundation?"⁷⁹

The crime alluded to here was forbidden love. But if Mabini were alive today, you can imagine how he would admonish the syndicates of policemen whose only distinction from common criminals are their uniform and rank!

There were two reasons why Mabini firmly imposed discipline on the army: First, it was important to show the world that the Philippines was a civilized country⁸⁰ and second, because if soldiers became abusive, they would lose the support of the people.⁸¹

From the American standpoint, guerrilla warfare, which was the method of war used by Filipinos, violated humanitarian law. But Mabini explained that if an extremely powerful nation were to wage war against a tiny enemy, what recourse would the latter have but to choose guerrilla methods, especially if the homes and freedom of that country were at stake?⁸²

Both sides complained about the other's violation of the laws of war. (I myself recall the never-ending accusations of cease-fire violations during the 1986-87 peace talks.) Although this issue is a crucial one — because life is at stake — I came across an amusing account of one violation during the war. According to Mabini, an American soldier was slapped by a Filipina resident of Manila whom he had insulted. The soldier got angry and shot the woman. Another woman who witnessed the incident immediately dropped her skirt and the American soldier, taken aback, refrained from touching her.⁸³

Of all the crimes committed during the war, Mabini abhorred the abuse of women by Filipino soldiers. Although the incidents were few, Mabini was appalled each time he learned of one. Mabini explained:

How can we rely on foreigners to respect our women if we set a bad example? Can Filipino men aspire for respect if our women are not respected? ... if women within their milieu are accorded with respect and esteem, they will easily obtain dignity that ... when handed down to their sons, will serve as the foundation of bravery and strength for ... great acts.⁸⁴

Conclusion: Lessons from the Past

We can draw several lessons from this period of our history. First is the fact that peace is more than just the absence of war. This is, after all, the fundamental principle of peace studies. Should the people reach a point where they assert, as did the *independentistas*, that “true peace cannot be achieved without war ... or war is a justification for peace,”⁸⁵ this can only be proof of how desperately grim the situation has become and how deeply

rooted the causes of the conflict are. If these causes are not military, as they often are not, it is imperative to seek political, economic and social solutions — but never military.

That the revolution was not principally a military endeavor can be gleaned from Mabini's view that the revolution itself was a training ground for governance. He said: "Those who can rule during time of revolution will learn to fight toward victory, and people who learn to rule themselves in time of struggle will learn to rule during times of peace. This is the more convincing gauge of their capacity to rule."⁸⁶

Second, amnesty was not an effective means of achieving peace. Neither was the demand for surrender before peace negotiations. A year after he declared amnesty, MacArthur himself complained that most of the civilian governments established by the Americans in the pacified towns also served as clandestine revolutionary governments or what we would probably refer to today as shadow governments. They collected money and provisions for the revolution and relayed information to leaders of the revolutionary army. They took in revolutionaries who needed sanctuary or rest.⁸⁷

MacArthur also said that majority of those who accepted amnesty did so to avoid arrest or to receive payment for their rifles.⁸⁸ (The current policy of accepting payment for firearms surrendered by rebel returnees is not original!) In addition, there were instances of coercion in the implementation of amnesty. Municipal officials in Cebu, for instance, protested that they were forced to pledge allegiance to the United States, thus rendering their oath invalid.⁸⁹ I am aware this still happens today.

Lastly, the revolution should guard against polemics within the movement so as to avoid self-destruction. When Rafael Palma censored Mabini's article in the paper *La Independencia* for criticizing the Aguinaldo government, he wrote Mabini that "polemics are not discords, and they cannot harm us, unless they weaken or break our union in our efforts to attain our final goal, which is independence ..."⁹⁰

But in fact the polemics did weaken the revolution. The debate between the *independentistas* and former comrades who had turned to the United States did not only intensify. It made the war uglier. Early in 1901 one revolutionary reported that the *americanistas* had launched a "reign of terror" in the towns in order to force people to accept American sovereignty. As a

result, many Filipinos were captured — rich and poor, revolutionaries as well as citizens not involved in armed struggle.⁹¹

At the same time it is difficult to measure the full effect of this coercion on the revolution because according to MacArthur's report that same year (1901) — although he did not state the war was intensifying — he did observe it would go on because of the support of the masses. MacArthur added that some people probably supported it out of fear, but he also admitted that this did not adequately account for the "united action and apparent spontaneity of several million Filipinos."⁹²

In mid-1900, the Committee for Philippine Independence in Spain declared that the time for advocates of convenience was past, never to return.⁹³ Apparently this was truer then than today. So let us bear in mind the advice of Isabelo de los Reyes: "United, we will be stronger and more respected, and divided, we will not deserve more than the derisive laughter of all."⁹⁴

Endnotes

1. Mohammed Ahsen Chaudri, "Peace Research and the Developing Countries," *Journal of Peace Research (JPR)* 5, 4 (1968): 366; Johan Galtung, "Violence, Peace and Peace Research," *JPR* 6, 3 (1969): 183.
2. *Philippine Insurgent Records (PIR)*, Box I-37 (Public Instructions), 12 July 1910.
3. James M. Callahan, *American Relations in the Pacific and the Far East: 1784-1900* (Baltimore, 1901), p. 151.
4. Apolinario Mabini, "El Mensaje del Presidente McKinley," 11 January 1900, *La Revolucion Filipina (con otros documentos de la epoca)* (Manila, 1931), II: 138.
5. *Report of the Philippine Commission to the President*, 1900 (Washington, 1900), I: 175.
6. Letter from Gen. J.F. Bell, 28 August 1900, *The Letters of Apolinario Mabini (LAM)* (Manila, 1965), p. 265.
7. *Ibid.*, p.266
8. "La exposicion de los vecinos de Manila," *Filipinas Ante Europa (Madrid)*, II, 22 (10 September 1900): 181.
9. Answer to letter of Gen. Bell, 31 August 1900, *LAM* p. 261.
10. "La intransigencia," 6 November 1899, *La Revolucion Filipina (LRF)*, II: 111.
11. "El Partido Federal," 29 December 1900, *LRF* II: 216.
12. "Independencia verdad," *Filipinas Ante Europa (FAE)* II, 29 (25 December 1900): p. 235

13. Letter from Bell, *LAM*, p. 265.
14. Answer to Buencamino, 20 July 1900, *LAM*, p. 253.
15. "Duelo a Muerte," *EAE* I, 4 (10 December 1899): 2.
16. Letter to Felipe Buencamino, 3 July 1899, *LAM*, p. 193.
17. Answer to Buencamino, *LAM*, p. 254.
18. Letter to Pedro Paterno, 20 June 1900, *LAM*, p. 248.
19. "America en Filipinas," 30 June 1899, *LRF* II: 14.
20. Answer to Buencamino, *LAM*, p. 254.
21. According to one description: "some (have) high education, other(s) wealthy and involved in business, and other(s) are interested in dollars ..." See "*Sentimiento manifesto en el mundo filipino*," *PIR* Box I-37 (Poems), no date.
22. Quoted from the Philippine Commission Report 1900, I:3.
23. James Le Roy, *The Americans in the Philippines* (Boston, 1914), II: 78.
24. *De una carta a lino*, 15 May 1899, *LRF* I: 291.
25. "¿Cual es la verdadera mision de la revolucion filipina?," *LRF* II: 55-56.
26. C. de E.M., A.Z., "A Mindanaw," *Ang Bayang Kahapishapis*, *PIR* Newspaper No. 1, 31 August 1899, p. 2.
27. Letter to Kanoy and Ikkis, 25 July 1899, *LAM*, p. 201.
28. This was the term used by Mabini to refer to Paterno's meetings on peace. See interview of him, *LRF* II: 182-183.
29. *Un Batangueno*, "A mis compatriotas," July 1900, *PIR* Box No. PMI.

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30. Letter to Paterno, 20 June 1900, *LAM*, p. 248.
 31. "*La reunion de los pseudo-nacionalistas*," *EAE* II, 20 (10 August 1900): 164.
 32. Le Roy, p. 248.
 33. Mabini wrote to Buencamino saying he cannot attend the meeting because "I should not attend it because I am neither the people nor have I been authorized by the people to represent them." See his reply to Buencamino, *LAM*, p. 253.
 34. *Carta de Buencamino*, 14 July 1900, *LRF* II: 181.
 35. "Interview" *sobre las fiestas de la paz*, *LRF* II: 183.
 36. Isabelo de los Reyes, "*Filipinos y yankees*," *EAE* I, 1 (25 October 1899): 3-4.
 37. "*La reunion de los pseudo-nacionalistas*," p. 164.
 38. Letter to Apacible and Santos, 24 April 1899, *LAM* p. 164.
 39. Letter to Kanoy and Ikkis, *LAM*, p. 201.
 40. "*La dignidad de un pueblo y el honor de un ejercito*," *EAE* II, 25 (25 October 1900): 200.
 41. *Comite de Independencia Filipina en Espana*, "*A los filipinos en armas*," *EAE* II, 21 (25 August 1900): 170.
 42. "*A los filipinos en armas: conclusion*," *EAE* II, 22 (10 September 1900): 176.
 43. Letter without addressee, *LAM*, p. 257.
 44. "*A los filipinos en armas*," p. 170.
 45. *Ibid.*
 46. "*Independencia verdad*," *EAE* II, 29 (25 December 1900): 236.

47. "A los filipinos en armas: conclusion," p. 176.
48. "Burla sangrienta: ¡Ya no nos dan ni la autonomia ofrecida!" EAE II, 8 (10 February 1900): 59.
49. "¿Cual es la verdadera mision?," LRF II: 57.
50. Le Roy, p. 249.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 252.
52. "El programa Paterno" (Interview), July 1900, LRF II: 186.
53. Le Roy, p. 252.
54. de los Reyes, "Filipinos y yankees," p. 4.
55. de los Reyes, "Labor de paz," EAE II, 25 (25 October 1900): 204.
56. "Nuestro lema," EAE I, 1 (25 October 1899): 1.
57. Quoted from Marshall Everett (ed.), *Exciting Experiences in our Wars with Spain and the Filipinos (The Life of Admiral Dewey)* (Illinois, 1899), p. 483.
58. *Instrucciones*, 1 May 1899, LRF I: 286-287.
59. *De una carta a Lino*.
60. *De una carta a Apacible y Santos*, 31 May 1899, LRF I: 291-292.
61. "America en filipinas," LRF II: 14.
62. "La intransigencia," LRF II: 110.
63. "El mensaje del Presidente McKinley," LRF II: 136.
64. de los Reyes, "¡Independencia y revolucion! Carta resumen a Mr. McKinley," EAE II, 19 (25 July 1900): 151.
65. "El programa Paterno," LRF II: 188-189.

66. *LRF* II: 257.
67. “*No cabe otra solucion que la independencia*,” *EAE* II, 18 (10 July 1900): 143.
68. Le Roy, pp. 247-248.
69. “*Otro insulto al pueblo filipino*,” *EAE* II, 18 (10 July 1900): 145.
70. Le Roy, p. 265.
71. “*Nuestro lema*,” p. 2.
72. Memorandum to Gen. MacArthur, *LAM*, pp. 269-270.
73. *Ibid.*, p. 270.
74. Answer to Bell, *LAM*, p. 262.
75. *Contestacion de Mabini*, 17 October 1899, *LRF* II: 98-99.
76. Disadvantages of Talks without Preliminary Requirements, *LAM*, p. 227.
77. “*La intransigencia*,” *LRF* II: 110.1
78. Draft of letter to Daniel Tirona, 1 October 1898, *LAM*, p. 73.
79. Letter to Colonel Montenegro, 31 August 1898, *LAM*, p. 57.
80. *Ibid.*
81. Letter to Arcadio Maxilom, 11 April 1899, *LAM*, p. 158.
82. Answer to Bell, *LAM*, p. 260.
83. Letter to Apacible, 16 February 1899, *LAM*, p. 117.
84. *La Revolucion Filipina*, *LRF* II: 321-322.

85. "La guerra y la paz," *La Federacion*, PIR Newspaper No. 7 (10 September 1899), p. 2.
86. "Algo para el Congreso," 19 July 1899, *LRF* II: 30.
87. "Desmintamos a Mac-Kinley," *EAE* III, 34 (10 March 1901): 277.
88. Le Roy, pp. 255-256.
89. *Ibid.*, p. 248.
90. Letter to Kanoy and Ikkis, *LAM*, p. 204.
91. *El Capitan Lara*, "¡Pobres filipinos pacíficos!", *EAE* III, 32 (25 February 1901): 265.
92. "Desmintamos a Mac-Kinley," p. 278.
93. "A los filipinos en armas," p. 170.
94. "Labor de paz," p. 203.

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"*La exposicion de los vecinos de Manila (II)*," *Filipinas Ante Europa* II, 25 (25 October 1900): 205-206.

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