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Texts and Documents

British Consular Dispatches and the Philippine Independence Movement, 1872-1901

NICHOLAS P. CUSHNER

The first British diplomatic representative assigned to the Philippine Islands was John William Farren.¹ In July of 1844 Farren was notified that his commission, granted by Queen Victoria, had been forwarded to Madrid where the necessary *exequatur*, or approval, was to be secured from the Spanish government. The appointment of a British diplomatic representative in the Philippines came as no surprise for British interests in Philippine sugar and tobacco were expanding and Lord Aberdeen, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, thought that an even more rapid expansion was in sight in view of Parliament's contemplated change in sugar duties. The British government also intended to propose in 1844 that no sugar be qualified for admission into the British market unless accompanied by a certificate of origin

¹ Farren was appointed Consul General at Damascus in 1830 by Lord Aberdeen, but in 1837 he was recalled by Lord Palmerston because of critical remarks he had made in dispatches concerning the proceedings of Colonel Cambell, agent and Consul General in Egypt. Palmerston wrote to Farren that "I could not but consider that those dispatches prove that you are not sufficiently acquainted with the nature of your situation and duties." At the time Farren was in considerable debt and he remained so to the end of his life. He was recommended for the post of consul in Manila in May of 1844 by Lord Aberdeen, apparently his patron. See the Private Minute on Farren, Foreign Office, January 27, 1855, Public Record Office (London), Foreign Office, 72/927. (Since all of the documents cited in the following article are from the Public Record Office, Foreign Office section, only the abbreviation FO will be used throughout.)

from a British official, stating that the sugar was not produced by slave labor.² The prediction by Lord Aberdeen of enlarged trade with the Philippines proved not only to be correct but the result far exceeded anticipations. During the final fifty years of the Spanish regime both the export and import trades of the Philippines were largely in the hands of British merchants. Large quantities of machinery and textiles were imported while sugar, tobacco, hemp and a variety of Philippine products were shipped both to England and to her Far Eastern possessions. By 1892 the British consul in Manila could write that "although Germany is making strong efforts to extend her footing, our countrymen still continue to hold their pre-eminent position."³

British consular correspondence from Manila during the Spanish period did not deal exclusively with trade statistics, loss of British vessels or protests from merchants over the high customs duties charged in Manila. The Spanish administration of the Philippine Islands, both political and economic, was an object of great interest and frequent comment. This was especially true from about 1872, when the first stirrings of a Philippine independence movement were felt. However, consular reports on the events of the revolutionary movement must be used carefully. They were often written hurriedly, while events were still in progress, and so are at times inaccurate in detail. But for the same reason they convey the impression of urgency and vividness, composed as they were by observers of the action or from reports of witnesses. They are frequently partial to the Spanish colonial government, and understandably so, since British financial interests in the Philippines were estimated in 1896 at \$100,000,000.⁴ Economic interests demand stability and British merchants did not particularly care whether the stability was granted by Spain or the United States.

The partiality of British subjects, however, does not necessarily reflect the attitude or even less the policy of the home government. While Spain's American colonies were declaring independence in the early nineteenth century, England's policy was one of strict neutrality, although it might be argued that such a policy was to her ultimate advantage. Such was also the attitude of Britain during the Philippine Revolution, the Spanish-American War and the Philippine-American War. At first sight this may not appear to have been true since British gunboats were rushed from Hongkong to Manila after the Cavite Mutiny and at the outbreak of hostilities in 1896. The British consul's sug-

² Lord Aberdeen, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to Farren, Foreign Office, July 1, 1844, FO, 72/663, Draft 3.

³ Alexander Gollan to Lord Salisbury, Manila, January 2, 1892, FO, 72/1913, Confidential Political 1.

⁴ Cf p. 509 and the references therein cited.

gestion to the Spanish Governor that a force of 1,000 foreign troops be landed might also appear to have had less than neutral overtones.⁵ And his constant references to "rebels" and "the enemy" suggest a pro-Spanish position. However, the consul's feelings were not necessarily those of the home government. If the dispatch of British gunboats from Hongkong were approved of by the Foreign Office it was only because the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Admiralty thought that they were required for the protection of British lives and property. They were correct in assuming that the situation was out of the colonial government's control. It is also highly improbable that the Foreign Office would have approved of the British consul organizing a mercenary army. And the fact that the Foreign Office allowed its consul, Rawson-Walker, to act as consul for the United States during the Spanish-American War was merely an act of diplomatic courtesy, and both the Foreign Office and Walker looked upon it as nothing more.

In January of 1872 the Cavite Mutiny took place. The British consul at the time was George T. Ricketts.⁶ He sent the following dispatch.

[1] My Lord: I have the honor to inform Your Lordship that a revolt broke out the night before last at the arsenal of Cavite distant about 7 miles from Manila. The insurgents composed of the native artillerymen of Cavite, the workmen of the arsenal and a few brigands from the interior in all about 350 men seized the fortress and set the government at defiance. The governor of Cavite was wounded and several Spanish officers have I hear been wounded. A number of troops having yesterday been dispatched to the scene of the disturbance, an attack was made on the fortress—the insurgents were shot down and the revolt has been suppressed.

Many think that an insurrection was intended to be set on foot at Manila and that it only failed through he want of concert on the part of those entrusted with the direction of this movement. But this is somewhat doubtful. The rising was purely of a local nature and the cause of the same is I believe to be found in an order issued by the governor of this colony on the 29th of November last, by which the privilege of tribute hitherto guaranteed to the people employed

⁵ Cf. p. 519 and the references therein cited.

⁶ Ricketts became consul in Manila on October 19, 1866.

in the arsenals of Cavite and Manila was abolished. I have the honor to be with the greatest respect, My Lord, Your Lordship's most obedient and most humble servant. W. Ricketts.⁷

Five days after filing the report Ricketts wrote again to Granville, this time including more details. He had been told that the pay of about 200 seamen had been in arrears for the past two months, owing to the expenditures caused by a recent expedition to Sulu.⁸ Many artillerymen had been retained in service against their wishes and beyond the terms of their contracts. But Ricketts was not certain whether these grievances actually existed and, if they did, were major factors in the mutiny. "Various arrests of native priests and mestizos have been made and it would seem that others than the military were implicated in the movement."⁹

Three native priests arrested were Fathers Gomez, Burgos and Zamora. They were executed on February 17, 1872. Ricketts' remarks about the whole affair were prophetic.

[2] "In a country like this where the governing and the governed are of different races, where the administration is corrupt in all its branches and justice as a rule is unable to be obtained unless purchased, where also no attempt is made to remedy existing abuses, it is but reasonable to suppose that acts of rebellion will occur from time to time but these will most probably be confined to certain localities for such is the state of ignorance of this people and such their social and geographical division that any general combination or any united effort by them for the purpose of bringing about a new order of things is at all events for the present hardly to be expected.

⁷ Ricketts to Granville, Manila, January 22, 1872, FO, 72/1322, Dispatch 2.

⁸ A Spanish fleet of three corvettes and five small gunboats was anchored off Sulu in November and December of 1871. The fleet bombarded Jolo but the Joloanos responded with artillery and bolstered their fortress. See the reports of Ricketts to Granville, November 10 and December 8, 1871, FO, 72/1283.

⁹ Ricketts to Granville, Manila, January 27, 1872, FO, 72/1322, Dispatch 3. T. Agoncillo, *The Revolt of the Masses*, Quezon City, 1956, pp. 14-17, calls attention to the nationalist aspect of the mutiny.

"These islands for the most part being in a state of tranquility, the authorities might without any difficulty have committed the trial of the prisoners to a civil court. They might also have given the accused the liberty of appealing to their sovereign. But instead of this, the investigation has been conducted from first to last by a military tribunal and the punishment carried out within 24 hours after the notification of the sentences. Such a policy might serve for a while to strike terror into the minds of the many, but will it not also be the means for sowing the seeds of future troubles and disorders in this colony—and will the clergy easily forget the indignity thrust upon their order by the strangling of the Padre of Bacod, the Padre of Binondo and the Padre Jacinto. I have the honour to be [etc.] W. Ricketts. P.S. Since writing the above, 22 persons have I find been deported to the Marianas and arrests still continue.¹⁰

On September 15, 1872, Zamboanga was the scene of another mutiny. The convict settlement revolted and about seventy prisoners surprised the guards and took possession of the fort, shouting "Muera España". However, escape was not uppermost in their minds, for the prisoners then went into the town in search of Spaniards. Surprisingly, they found themselves opposed by the townsfolk, "and according to all accounts they [the townsfolk] showed great courage in fighting and pursuing seventy well armed convicts, though they had only a few old flintlock muskets, sticks, stones and long knives. The convicts made three attacks but were repulsed each time. At the end of the second day the settlement was reported tranquil."¹¹ When the fighting was over, forty-five convicts were dead, ten were captured and fifteen escaped to the hills.

Events at Zamboanga might not have had the political overtones which Cavite possessed, but they did contribute to the general unrest of the country. At the request of the Foreign Office, Madrid expressed its concern to the Spanish governor, Rafael de Izquierdo, over the safety and protection of the British consul in Manila. At the same time the Foreign Office directed Vice Admiral Charles Shadwell of the China Station to keep an eye on the Philippines. The *HMS Kastrel* set sail for Manila and Shadwell wrote to Ricketts, "My attention has been directed to the political disquietude existing at present at Manila arising partly from local and partly from the

¹⁰ *Idem to idem*, Manila, March 10, 1872, *Ibid.*

¹¹ Acting Consul Oswald Coates to Granville, Manila, October 19, 1872, FO, 72/1320, Commercial 17.

action of political events in Spain, and it is in consequence my intention to cause Manila to be occasionally visited by some of Her Majesty's ships as opportunities offer."¹² By January 1874 the excitement had died down and Ricketts was able to write to Granville, "I am happy to be able to remark that the state of affairs here as regards myself has of late improved and this may be attributed in no little degree to the action taken by the orders of Your Lordship at Madrid."¹³

Although the state of affairs might have improved as regards the British consul, the same could not have been said for the general political situation in the Philippines. Administrative reforms were pitifully slow in coming and a growing propaganda movement composed of exiled Filipino nationalists became increasingly vocal. A Commission for Reforms in the Philippine Islands assembled in Madrid but their recommendations came to nothing. When Joaquín Jovellar was appointed Governor and Captain General in 1883, the British consul wrote that "great hopes are entertained that so able a man will be sure to exert his energies in bringing about a thorough reform in the system of administration of these islands, a system which has hitherto hindered all progress and which seems as if it had been purposely devised to obstruct the free development of the great natural resources of these islands."¹⁴

On March 4, 1895, a new British consul was appointed for Manila, Edward Henry Rawson-Walker. He brought with him to Manila the experience of over thirty years in the diplomatic service. He was a Vice Consul at Tripoli in 1863, consul at Cagliari, Sardinia, in 1867, Pernambuco, Brazil, in 1867 and at Corunna, Spain in 1879. In 1893 Walker was a consul in the United States.¹⁵ But without doubt Manila was to be his most exciting and dangerous post. The excitement began in August 1896. Walker sent the following telegram to the Foreign Office, London, on August 27, in which he announced the beginnings of the first nationalist uprising in Asia.

[3] Large numbers of natives (in) conspiracy discovered. Important arrests. Rebel forces attacked. There has been no fighting in Manila. Adopted necessary precautions. Hope that tranquility will be restored.

¹² Shadwell to Ricketts, Hongkong, December 19, 1873, FO, 72/1377, following Dispatch 12.

¹³ Ricketts to Granville, Manila, January 5, 1874, FO, 72/1377, Dispatch 12.

¹⁴ Richard Wilkinson to Granville, Manila, April 23, 1883, FO, 72/1650, Political 1.

¹⁵ *The Foreign Office List, 1897*, London [1898], p. 221.

This was followed by another telegram dated August 31.

[4] Very severe engagement between troops and insurgents yesterday morning. Fifty insurgents killed in action, twelve troops, one officer killed. Proclamation of Martial Law.¹⁶

In a letter confirming his telegram of August 27, Walker described the events which led up to what is known in Philippine history as the "Cry of Balintawak"¹⁷ He wrote that on Friday night August 21, "a secret conspiracy was discovered to murder His Excellency the Captain General and overthrow the Spanish rule—the aforesaid conspiracy being organized by separatists composed of Indian 'mestizos.' Many arrests have been made of native merchants of position on suspicion of being implicated in this revolution and a secret printing press has been seized as well as seditious correspondence in Spanish and Tagalog (the Native Indian Language of these Islands). The environs of the town have been attacked by miscreants robbing and murdering those unable to defend themselves and several Chinese have been killed and their shops looted in the immediate neighborhood of this town. There have been several encounters between the Royal troops and the rebels and the latter have escaped to the mountains, leaving behind them guns, lances and other accoutrements. From what I can learn so far there has never been encountered more than a band of 500 men at a time but the action of the government here, acting under...Blanco...has at least up to the date of this letter nipped the rebellion in the bud." After describing the plight of numerous refugees who fled into the Walled City, Walker continued, "I called on His Excellency and while sympathizing with him for the present unsettled state of affairs in the Islands and the trouble and anxiety it caused him, took the opportunity to enquire if he considered the presence of a British Man of War necessary for the protection of British interests, and His Excellency replied that he was perfectly able to cope with any eventuality that might arise in connection with this rebellion and seemed to resent any outside assistance."¹⁸

In a second letter written the same day Walker confirmed his telegram of August 31, and added that there had already been several encounters between Spanish and Filipino troops. He continued:

[5] Many of the English residents here were deserted by their servants who left their employers' houses taking the fire arms belonging to their master with them. The fear is that the

¹⁶ Both of these telegrams are in FO, 72/2016, following Political 1.

¹⁷ See these events described in T. A. Agoncillo, *The Revolt of the Masses*, pp. 146-164, and in Gregorio Zaide, *The Philippine Revolution*, Manila, 1954, pp. 109-119.

¹⁸ Rawson-Walker to Lord Salisbury, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Manila, September 3, 1896, FO, 72/2016, Political 2.

native troops will fraternize with the rebels, in such case it would go very hard with the government and European troops who do not number more than 1200 men. Several of the disaffected soldiers numbering it is said some 500 men were sent away on Saturday last to the Island of Mindanao where there has been fighting going on or guerilla warfare between the natives and Spanish troops for some years. Many arrests have already been made after the severe skirmishes that took place on Sunday last; and there will be severe examples made of those taken with arms in a few days.

I have telegraphed the state of affairs to Admiral Buller China Station who wires me that he is sending *HMS Redpole*. In case matters become worse and telegraphic communication becomes interrupted, (as the telephone wires in the interior of the province and this town have already been cut by the natives) the presence of a British Gun Vessel may not be out of the way.¹⁹

Walker had telegraphed Admiral Buller in Hongkong to secure the presence of a Man of War for the protection of British nationals "in case the rebels forced the Royalists troops back and gained possession of the environs and outer city of Manila."²⁰ The *Redpole* was sent and both the commander of the gunboat and Rawson-Walker visited the Captain General in an attempt to persuade him to allow the gunboat to enter the Pasig River and anchor upstream. Blanco refused, maintaining that foreign vessels were allowed only in the roadstead, two or three miles away from the town. Walker thought that the ship would be useless there and since Blanco was adamant, he asked Admiral Buller in Hongkong to send a larger ship. In the meantime the *Hong Kong Gazette* published an order in council and instructions sent to the British governors of Hongkong and Singapore to the effect that "no arms were to be allowed to be exported from the two colonies to the Philippine Islands and that no employment was to be given to natives of these islands during the rebellion."²¹ The Spanish authorities in Manila were impressed by the order and when Walker visited the Spanish Captain General "he [the Captain General] asked me to express in the name of the Catholic Majesties and also in his own name

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, Political 3.

²⁰ Rawson-Walker to Salisbury, Manila, November 9, 1896, FO, 72/2016, Secret. This letter repeats correspondence of October.

²¹ *Ibid.*

the deep gratitude that they felt for this mark of sympathy on the part of Her Britannic Majesty's government."²²

The larger ship which Walker asked for arrived in Manila Bay, the *Daphne* under Commander Galloway. And again Walker, accompanied this time by Galloway, visited the Captain General. When the consul asked that the *Daphne* be allowed to anchor in the Pasig, the governor agreed, on condition that the *Daphne* would not receive political refugees. Walker hesitated accepting the condition, "knowing how humane our laws are under this heading and how often we risk the good relationship existing between Great Britain and another friendly power by giving sanctuary to refugees from other countries. However, much was at stake. I have some one hundred and fifty British subjects under my care; we were expecting a general rising of some thirty thousand rebels and an attack on Manila the next night."²³ Both Walker and Galloway agreed that the *Daphne* was next to useless in the bay, and so Walker provisionally accepted the condition and wired the Foreign Office.

[6] Captain General (gives) permission to Ship of War "Daphne" (to) protect lives of British subjects conditionally on political refugees, rebels (not being) allowed on board. "Daphne" promised conditionally. If promise (not) confirmed by British Government "Daphne" must go out of port. In case of emergency she would not be of use.²⁴

On the back of the telegram the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Lord Salisbury, scribbled, "I do not think we can object to the condition." But the Admiralty Office did. In a memorandum on the condition stipulated by the Spanish Governor, they wrote:

[7] The Admiralty object to the condition made by the Governor of the Philippines and to the refusal to allow the *Daphne* to remain in port unless the assurance given by the captain is confirmed by us. Mr. Goschen is I believe writing to you on the subject. If we are to object I think the best cause would be to telegraph to Sir H. Wolf.²⁵

On October 31 Walker was told by the Foreign Office that "such a condition is quite unprecedented and cannot be agreed to. Spanish government will be requested to instruct Captain General to with-

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Rawson-Walker to Foreign Office, Manila, October 30, 1896, *Ibid.*

draw it."²⁶ Within a week Madrid had withdrawn the condition imposed by its Captain General in the Philippines. The Foreign Office telegraphed Walker.

[8] Spanish Government state that there has been some misunderstanding. There is no question of any condition for stay of *HMS Daphne* in port but sanction of Home Government was required which has now been given.²⁷

While the discussion over the presence of the *Daphne* in the Pasig River took place, Spanish troops were arriving from the Peninsula to bolster the government forces. Walker was skeptical of their fighting qualities and described them as "raw recruits taken from the plow and when landed here had to be drilled into the use of the Mauser rifle before taking the field."²⁸ The troops were received with great enthusiasm by the Spanish populace of Manila "and have made quite a so called Triumphant Entry into the town; arches being erected, beautifully decorated with tropical flowers, windows draped with the national colours and pigeons being let loose to fly and welcome the newly arrived troops."²⁹ Between October 3 and November 7, 7,700 troops arrived which brought the Spanish army to about 10,000 strong. In addition there were some 15,000 native troops, "but no implicit reliance can be placed thereon as one or two regiments have as already mentioned been deported from Manila under suspicion to the Island of Mindanao where they broke out into open rebellion and fired on their officers in a fort they were quartered in, rushed over to a neighboring fort hoping the native forces there would fraternize with them, but fortunately they were fired on and many shot, the rest escaping to the mountains."³⁰

Most of the newly arrived troops were rushed off to the provinces and battle zones. They were in great demand by local army commanders for by November nine provinces were under Martial Law. The two provinces of Cavite and Batangas were completely in rebel hands and Walker estimated that both provinces held about 35,000 Filipinos under arms. The skirmishes between government forces and insurgents were indecisive. "Up to the time of writing [November 9] the rebels have so far held their own and the rebellion is increasing. . . . If the indigenous troops had risen *en masse* and joined the rebels,

²⁶ *Ibid.* Following Political 3.

²⁷ Foreign Office to Walker, November 7, 1896, *Ibid.*

²⁸ Rawson-Walker to Salisbury, Manila, November 9, 1896, FO, 72/2016, Political 4.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

Manila and its suburbs would have been taken and there is no saying what might have happened."³¹

Before the arrival of the British Man of War, many British residents of Manila sought refuge on the large ships anchored in the bay. Some boarded ships still in the slips of Cavite. Walker was able to report on November 9 that no British subjects had thus far been lost, except a Mr. Morris who accompanied a Spaniard, Mr. Chofre, into the interior to take photographs. Both were killed by revolutionary troops. "Therefore," wrote Walker, "I have given instructions that no British sailors from the sailing ships lying outside Manila in the Bay are to be given leave, as they come on shore, get intoxicated as a rule and if they came into colisson [?, in the margin]³² with the native soldiers or police, now we are under Martial Law, I could not answer for the consequences."³³ To which the Foreign Office remarked, "This does not quite bear out the Spanish assurance as to the safety of the place. One British subject has been murdered."³⁴ The Foreign Office official, whoever he was, should have been grateful, not indignant. That more British subjects were not killed was due in great part to the foresight and courage of their representative in Manila.

The revolution had been in progress for over two months when Walker sent to the Foreign Office a "Confidential and Secret Communication on the Origin and Cause of the Rebellion." There was no need to classify it so cautiously because what he said was neither confidential nor secret in Manila.

[9] Confidential and Secret Communication on the Origin and Cause of the Rebellion. (Current Spanish Opinion) A society along the lines of the Carbonare was established in Manila about 1891 at first peaceable in its object, improving social and political position of the natives.³⁵ Its immediate effects were noticeable in preventing gambling and cock fighting. For instance in Tondo, the north suburb of Manila, the

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² Walker, or his secretary, was frequently guilty of misspelling words all of which are here retained. A Foreign Office official remarked apropos of Walker's request for an early retirement after the war that "his English is almost incomprehensible and his early retirement would be an unmixed blessing."

³³ Rawson-Walker to Salisbury, Manila, November 9, 1896, FO, 72/2016, Political 4.

³⁴ On overleaf of *Ibid.*

³⁵ See Agoncillo, *The Revolt of the Masses*, pp. 44-62, for the aims and activity of the Katipunan.

cockpits and gambling houses which are a source of revenue to the government were almost deserted and some closed. About 1894 under the direction of Andrés Bonafacio (then president) and at his instigation the objects of the society became a conspiracy. Revolutionary in its tendency and the extermination of the Spaniards its final goal. The name 'Kata-punan' association (tagalo language) was invented by Pío Valenzuela the founder of it. Dr. Rizal exiled to the Island of Mindanao (Philippine Group) for political motives was consulted by the Secretary and advised political agitation instead of murder, his opinion which would have acted powerfully on the Indians was kept secret by the President Bonafacio. The first typhoon during the Feast of Binondo late in October was appointed for the slaughter of all the Spaniards in the Tagalo district. The Tagalos are the tribe whose name means river people from the Tagal banks of a river in their district, [which] extends roughly speaking for 50 miles round Manila. The intention to murder was discovered towards the end of July or beginning of August by the cura of Tondo who denounced it. Amongst the preparations it was intended that 1500 to 2000 Tagolos all desperate characters who were concealed in the woods of San Mateo which come down to within ten miles ENE of Manila and extend for 20 to 30 miles were to descend on Manila and form the nucleus of the army of extermination. And from Japan was requested [arms?] and as far as known refused. But this subject is obscure though the details are known to the Philippine Government, for nearly all the papers connected with [it?] having fallen into their hands. Many of the Philippine troops were supposed to be implicated but the local and unimportant mutinies that afterwards took place may have been due to simple discontent or to resentment at the unappreciated treatment received from their officers after their fidelity at the beginning of the outbreak which undoubtedly saved the lives of the Europeans after the discovery of the plot. The horde of Tagalos from San Mateo came down on Manila and with choppers and a few fire arms and were met at San Juan del Monte and Santa Mesa by some Spanish and Indian infantry and dispersed with great loss on the morning of the 29th August.

On this occasion they came within two miles of the city. The leader, another Valenzuela, a rope manufacturer, was shot a few days later by sentence of Court Martial. And almost simultaneous with this movement was an attack on Cavite arsenal which was repulsed without much difficulty. The provinces of Cavite and Batangas at the same time fell into the hands of the insurgents who found abundant provisions in the grange of the two immense estates belonging to the Order of Austin Friars who own a great part of the province of Cavite, since which a guerilla warfare has been kept up.³⁶

Just a week after Walker wrote his "Confidential" report, the train running between Manila and Dagupan was wrecked by the insurgents. The passengers were taken prisoner but eventually managed to escape. The telegraph cable connecting Luzon with the outside world was cut. Obviously the situation was growing worse, and so the British merchants requested that an even larger war vessel than the *Daphne* be sent from Hongkong in order to provide the means for a ready escape for British subjects in Manila and to assist in the protection of British property. Admiral Buller dispatched the *Pique* under Commander Graham. Walker explained that "this precaution was taken by me in case business town of Manila was taken by insurgents, as the British merchants including the Hong Kong and Shanghai Banks have property to value *One Hundred Million Dollars* and the government here have published in *Official Gazette* that they will not hold themselves responsible for property damaged during rebellion by their own troops or the insurgents."³⁷ As an added precautionary measure, Walker herded the 150 or so British subjects into Intramuros, "which is surrounded by strong fortifications dating from the 16 century and moat—the drawbrige being raised every night."³⁸ He also formed a Committee of Public Safety composed

³⁶ Rawson-Walker to Salisbury, Manila, November 14, 1896, FO, 72/2016, Political 5.

³⁷ Rawson-Walker to Salisbury, Manila, December 3, 1896, *Ibid*, Political 3. Rawson-Walker thought that the responsibility for the destruction of British property should rest with the Spanish government. The Foreign Office thought otherwise and wrote to Walker that "the general principle governing such cases is that foreign subjects suffering from a war have no greater title to compensation than the natives of the country where it is being carried on, except in cases of wanton and unnecessary destruction of neutral property and of other excesses in breach of military discipline." Foreign Office, February 12, 1897, FO, 72/2045, Draft Political 1.

³⁸ Rawson-Walker to Salisbury, Manila, December 3, 1896, FO, 72/2016, Political 7. In 1901 the British consul estimated that there

of the principal British merchants "and a service of steam launches to be stationed every night with steam up at three principal districts up the Pasig river, embracing a distance of four miles, *HMS Daphne* Commander Galloway forming the base; the *Daphne* moreover has been connected by telephone with the shore in case there is a necessity in calling for armed assistance during the night. I experienced great difficulty in obtaining permission for the three aforesaid steamers to ascend the river but I must say that I have received much courtesy and assistance from His Excellency, Don Ramón Blanco, Marquis de Peña Plata, the Captain General and Governor of these Islands who when possible has conceded to my urgent requests facilitating measures; I have together with the senior naval officer here [arranged] for the escape of our nationals in case of necessity."³⁹

In his dispatch of December 3 Walker reported that the Marqués de Polavieja along with 1300 Spanish marines had arrived the day before. The rumor was current that the Marqués would replace Blanco as Governor and Captain General for Blanco "was blamed by the public for his clemency in not punishing more severely by death those rebels taken prisoner and for not trying to crush the rebellion at its commencement without waiting the arrival of European troops from Spain."⁴⁰ Walker did not agree with the objection. He thought Blanco had acted for the best in awaiting the arrival of European troops, "for if the few European troops here had met with a reverse at the commencement of the rebellion the whole of the native troops might have gone over to the rebels and no one then could have answered for the consequences."⁴¹ In any case, the rumor proved to be correct. Polavieja replaced Blanco as Governor and Captain General on December 18, 1896.

If the Spanish populace had accused Blanco of leniency at the outset of the rebellion, they could not have done so by the 18th of December. On the afternoon of December 8 the workers in Cavite arsenal revolted. Mass executions followed. Walker reported them on December 20.

[10] On the afternoon of December 6, 140 rebels imprisoned in jails at naval arsenal at Cavite murdered the Alcalde and Mayor, also Governor of the prison and sentinels. Many of the fugitives were shot in the streets by the soldiers

were 300 British subjects in Luzon and none in the other islands. A.H. Harford to Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs Villiers, Manila, March 9, 1901, FO, 5/2469.

³⁹ Rawson-Walker to Salisbury, Manila, December 3, 1896, FO, 72/2016, Political 7.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

and citizens and 21 were retaken and being tried by a military court martial were condemned to death and shot a few days afterwards in the public square. Also another public execution of 4 rebels on Monday morning, 14th, and several more rebels, rich proprietors and merchants, are lying in prison awaiting judgment—which most probably will end in their condemnation and death sentence—their property having already been confiscated by the State.⁴²

The Spanish reply to the disturbances was to increase the number of troops in the Islands. By the end of December 10,279 had arrived, 6,151 were *en route*, and it was said that Polavieja had asked for 10,000 more! Again, however, Walker was skeptical of their fighting qualities. They were raw recruits, unfamiliar with the Mauser rifle. "They are so far completely ignorant how to handle it."⁴³

In December 1896 the English consul became involved in a highly complicated and delicate operation, the protection of the Chinese in the Manila area. The Chinese in the Philippines had a long but far from glorious past. As middle-men they occupied an essential role in the Island economy, but by the same token they were suspect to both Spaniards and Filipinos, and this suspicion was periodically fanned into such a pitch of hatred that attempts were made to exterminate them. But somehow the Chinese survived. In 1892 there were an estimated 70,000-80,000 Chinese in the Philippines, nearly one half of them residing in Manila and its environs.⁴⁴ By reason of their industriousness and intelligence they had gained the confidence of British and foreign merchants and had managed to monopolize the retail business of foreign trade. They were the almost exclusive medium between the foreign importers and the consumer.⁴⁵ But they were despised as pagans by both Filipinos and Spaniards who were not a little envious of their astute business qualities.⁴⁶ In 1892, as before, their expulsion from the Islands was openly advocated but never attempted, probably because of the important role they played in the economic structure of the Philippines. Consequently, when war broke

⁴² Rawson-Walker to Salisbury, Manila, December 20, 1896, *Ibid.*, *Political* 8.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Alexander Gollan to Salisbury, Manila, January 2, 1892, FO, 72/1913, *Confidential Political* 1.

⁴⁵ Farren to Earl Russell, Manila, November 20, 1862, FO, 72/1042, *Dispatch* 37.

⁴⁶ The position of the Chinese in the Philippines in the nineteenth century has been studied in depth in Edgar Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life, 1850-1898*, New Haven and London, 1965.

out between Filipino nationalists and the Spanish government, the Chinese feared for their lives. This fear was communicated to the Chinese government which immediately appealed to London for assistance. Salisbury telegraphed Walker on December 8, 1896.

[11] The Chinese government request that their subjects in Manila and Straits Settlements may be placed under your protection. Spanish government maintain there is no danger for Chinese but under the circumstances you are authorized to listen to any application which Chinese may make to you and to afford them such unofficial assistance and advice as may seem necessary.⁴⁷

To which Walker replied that he would "give Chinese best advice under the circumstances. Will Chinese government pay all the expenses connected with the same? Fifty-six thousand Chinese here."⁴⁸ Salisbury replied by wire that he could not understand to what expenses Walker referred, and he directed the consul in Manila to communicate directly with Sir Claud Maxwell Macdonald, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to China, which Walker immediately did.⁴⁹ Walker explained to Macdonald that if assistance were given to the Chinese it should be done "officially" and not "unofficially", and that he should have full power to protect Chinese interests. He explained that extra funds were needed to hire an interpreter, for the Chinese did not speak Spanish and extra clerks to handle the anticipated flow of requests as well as more office space. Macdonald answered from Peking on December 19 requesting that Walker "state approximate amount monthly expenditure for unofficial assistance and advice to Chinese—that Spanish government consent your giving the above in case of danger, but object to your acting in official capacity." From this date the coded telegrams sent by Macdonald arrived in a mutilated and often unintelligible state and had to be repeated continually. Walker was puzzled and annoyed at the term "unofficial assistance" and wrote as much to Macdonald. Macdonald's reply of December 23 was unintelligible but he did clearly state that "granting [official] protection by England would therefore create bad impression." As regards extra financial help, Macdonald said that the "Chinese government object paying extra expenses; therefore you should not incur expenditure which

⁴⁷ Salisbury to Walker, Foreign Office, December 8, 1896, FO, 72/2045, Secret and Confidential.

⁴⁸ Rawson-Walker to Salisbury, Manila, December 16, 1896, FO, 72/2016, Following Political 7.

⁴⁹ The telegrams dealing with the Chinese are in FO, 72/2045, Secret and Confidential.

leads recovering from individual applicants. You must decide what you can give in accordance with instructions Minister Foreign Affairs. At this distance I cannot advise you." To which Walker impatiently replied on December 31, "Please inform me how is extra office rent, interpreter (Mandarin and Spanish clerk) hire to be paid?" To which Macdonald replied, "See my telegram of 23 December. Any expenditure that cannot be recovered from individual application may probably have to be met by yourself." At which Walker must have thrown up his hands in exasperation. But he asked Macdonald to intercede with Lord Salisbury to obtain more funds for his unofficial assistance to the Chinese. He explained that a delegation of Chinese had already asked him to help free 500 Chinese prisoners then in rebel hands at Imus.⁵⁰ But Walker was obviously confused about the extent of his authority. He told Polavieja that he was to "take charge of Chinese interest." On hearing this the Governor immediately telegraphed a protest to Madrid which brought a reprimand to Walker from the Foreign Office.

[12] Spanish government complain of statement made by you to Captain General that in accordance with instructions you will undertake charge of Chinese interests. This is not in accordance with instructions sent you on December 8 to which you must be careful to conform strictly. (Repeated to Peking).⁵¹

Still bothered by that fine diplomatic distinction between "official" and "unofficial" protection, Walker explained to Macdonald on January 5, 1897, what he understood his obligations to be.

[13] With regard to the above enumerated instructions I have respectfully to observe that the interpretation of the whole as far as I can understand is to give advice and counsel to the Chinese when asked for but that I cannot officially obtain the redress of any grievance or injustice; that in case of Manila being raided by the rebels, which has been threatened on three different occasions, I am (if Spanish Government will allow it) to obtain armed assistance from the British Men of War stationed here to

⁵⁰ The Spanish Governor said that the Chinese in Cavite were there voluntarily making arms and ammunition for the insurgents. Foreign Office to Rawson-Walker, January 27, 1897, FO, 72/2045, Diplomatic.

⁵¹ Foreign Office to Rawson-Walker, December 23, 1896, FO, 72/2016, Diplomatic.

protect life and property. I therefore consider it absolutely necessary if I have to attend "unofficially" when they are not in danger and to afford them armed protection when they are in danger that an extra allowance should be granted whilst this rebellion lasts, as my consular staff and accommodation are totally inadequate to meet the calls the 56,000 Chinese would be continually making thereon.⁵²

After settling his status with regard to the Chinese, Walker began to report on the military campaigns of the revolution. Captain General Polavieja left Manila for the front on February 14, 1897, and established himself at Parañaque, "six miles from Manila and a mile from Las Piñas beyond which the rebels are strongly entrenched on the right bank of the river Zapote."⁵³ The next day Colonel Barraquer marched a column to Pamplona, seven miles from Manila. He took the town which was defended "with great frenzy and determination" by the Filipinos. A third column under General Jaramillo marched from the south, from the left side of Lake Bonbon, Batangas, "and his intention I am informed is to join with this left wing the troops under the command of Generals Lachambre, Marine and Cornell, who with the right wing of the army of some 10,000 men are marching from the Lake de Bay, Province of Cavite, and endeavouring to envelope the whole of the rebels in the two provinces and drive them to the sea and retake the strongholds which the rebels have occupied since the commencement of the rebellion and gradually march on to Imus, the tragic stronghold or Sebastopol of the rebels."

On Friday, February 19, Silang fell. "This is considered the key to the stronghold of Imus. Some four hundred of the enemy are reported killed in this engagement and the Spaniards confess to some 18 Spanish troops and a few officers." On Wednesday, February 24, the town of Pérez Dasmariñas fell, "after desperate resistance by enemy commanded by Emilio Aguinaldo." Great importance was attached to the fall of Dasmariñas and Silang since they barred the way to Imus. Walker concluded his report of the military campaign on a commercial note. "I trust I may be able in a short time to announce the taking of Imus and the decline and fall of the rebellion which is already causing an immense amount of damage to trade, and will also, I am afraid, affect the sugar and hemp production, as the cultivators of the soil in the aforesaid sugar and hemp district

⁵² Rawson-Walker to Macdonald, Manila, January 5, 1897, FO, 72/2045.

⁵³ The campaigns of February were reported by Rawson-Walker to Salisbury, Manila, March 3, 1897, FO, 72/2046, Political 1. Compare Rawson-Walker's accounts with Manuel Sastrón, *La insurrección en Filipinas y guerra hispano-americana en el archipiélago*, Madrid, 1901, pp. 225-244.

have in most cases joined the rebels."⁵⁴ On March 27, Walker cabled that Imus was in Spanish hands. "Imus taken. Great loss of enemy, Pardon granted insurgents who surrender."⁵⁵

Although Imus fell at the end of March 1897, eight months passed before a peace was proclaimed, which proved shortlived. On December 29, 1897, Walker telegraphed the Foreign Office, "Peace proclaimed. 27 insurgent leaders embark for Hong Kong December 27, receiving indemnification."⁵⁶ A week later Walker confirmed his telegram but expressed his misgivings.

[14] I have the honor to confirm my telegram under date of 29th ultimo, reporting to Your Lordship that peace had been proclaimed in these islands, the Rebel Chiefs receiving an indemnification of some say *Two Million Dollars*, surrendering their arms and being banished from these islands. On the 27th ultimo the *S.S. Uranus* belonging to the *Compañía Marítima* of Manila under charter of the Spanish Government left Sual to the north of the Island of Luzon for Hong Kong. It is said there are some twenty-seven chiefs that were deported to Hong Kong on the day above mentioned, and the generals Fernández, Tejeiro and Monet remaining at Biac-na-bato (also to the north of this island in the Province of Pangasinan [read Bulacan]) to receive the arms that the rebels had engaged to hand over to the representative of His Excellency the Captain General of these Islands. The two generals above mentioned returned to the capital on the 4th instant having the arms surrendered at San Miguel de Mayumo in the same province.

It is perhaps rather premature to offer an opinion on the steps taken by His Excellency the Captain General to patch

⁵⁴ In a separate dispatch Rawson-Walker reported that the Customs House was raided by thirty *tulisanes* who fled with ammunition boxes. The "Carbineers" or Native Guard joined the raiders, some of whom were recaptured in the suburbs. About sixty Filipinos were also arrested among whom was an English sailor, John Robertson. Robertson had jumped ship in Iloilo, worked his way to Manila and was living with fishermen when caught in the Spanish police net. The Spaniards did not seem to know what to do with him, and so released him in Rawson-Walker's custody, who was equally perplexed. See Walker's report in FO, 72/2046, Political 1.

⁵⁵ Telegram Following FO, 72/2046, Political 1.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, Following Political 4.

up a peace with the rebels and a great reflection appears to exist on the want of military tactics used in putting down a rebellion which has been going on now for the last sixteen months against the natives who have been badly armed with bows and arrows, lances made of bamboo, a few rifles from their enemies and primitive guns and cannon, made from iron tubes wrapped around with wire. The Spaniards have had some twenty-seven thousand soldiers from the Spanish Peninsula from the commencement of this rebellion of whom now few remain, many having died in battle or fallen victims to the climate or become completely incapacitated from wounds or sickness, some four thousand alone being in the hospitals of Manila without counting those lying sick in the various hospitals in the provinces.

Since peace was proclaimed a train has been wrecked on the Manila and Dagupan line of the railway on the 1st instant by the rebels, some say at the instigation of the priests who wish the troops to have their hands full here in order that the Carlists may have less forces brought against them in the Spanish Peninsula.⁵⁷ A few days ago the rebels murdered some eighteen to twenty soldiers in the Island of Panay near to Capiz and Iloilo. So far therefore it does not look as if these islands were in a state of pacification or the rebellion knocked on the head.⁵⁸

Walker's misgivings over the peace were fully justified, for by March 1898 the rebellion was once again in full progress. Walker wrote to Salisbury.

[15] I have with regret to inform Your Lordship that the rebellion is again broken out in the provinces of Pangasinan and Zambales to the north of Luzon. A secret religious society was discovered plotting against the government, the ringleader was arrested, tried by court martial and shot.

⁵⁷ At this time there did not exist in Spain any military activity by the Carlists. Carlism as a military threat ended in 1876. See Raymond Carr, *Spain, 1808-1939*, Oxford, 1966, p. 353. However Chapter IX, "Restoration and Disaster, 1874-1898," gives a good indication of the chaos existing on the Spanish political scene.

⁵⁸ Rawson-Walker to Salisbury, Manila, January 7, 1898, FO, 72/2076, Political 1.

The rebels have cut the cable that connects us with the outside world, have taken possession of the pueblos or hamlet of Sual, Salasa and San Isidro, and owing to the small detachments left to garrison these villages, have committed all kinds of depredations. Sual is the harbour or port designated for the new naval station. It is premature to anticipate what may be the result of this new rising but as it has had its origin in those provinces that have heretofore remained loyal, the outlook is not encouraging.

I have written to General Black, Commander in Chief Hong Kong, forwarding a telegram to Your Lordship reporting this unfortunate occurrence. I have also written officially to Vice Admiral Seymour, Commander in Chief of the China Squadron.⁵⁹

When fighting also broke out in Cebu, Walker expressed fear that a general uprising was imminent.

[16] The Island of Cebu I have also to report is in the hands of the rebels and the governor and the friars have taken refuge in the fort. A few days ago a Spanish gunboat bombarded the town of Cebu, destroyed the whole of the Chinese quarter where the rebels had congregated, landed troops who marched to the fort, but all telegraphic communication with Cebu is now cut off and matters are as serious as they can be. I am extremely afraid that there will soon be a general rising throughout these islands, as there is great discontent and none of the reforms promised to the natives have as yet been carried out.⁶⁰

Meanwhile across the Pacific a crisis was rapidly developing between the United States and Spain. In answer to the American Congress' resolution demanding that Spain relinquish sovereignty over Cuba, Spain declared war on the United States on April 24, 1898. Apparently the Foreign Office had known what was coming. On April 7 Walker received a telegram authorizing him to take charge of the United States Consulate if he were asked to do so, but with the prior

⁵⁹ Rawson-Walker to Salisbury, Manila, March 11, 1898, *Ibid.*, Political 2.

⁶⁰ Rawson-Walker to Salisbury, Manila, April 15, 1898, *Ibid.*, Political 3.

consent of the Spanish authorities in Manila.⁶¹ The authorities did consent on April 15.

Once war was declared between Spain and the United States on April 24 and the danger of an even greater conflagration threatened Manila, the Chinese in the city once again requested and received English aid and protection. The following telegrams were exchanged on the subject.

[17] [a] Telegram to Mr. Walker. FO, April 29, 1898. Chinese gov't have asked that British protection of Chinese may be renewed in view of present state of affairs. You should act accordingly, bearing in mind instructions sent to you in December 1896 and your correspondence with HM Minister at Peking. [with the telegram] The Chinese Minister brought today a message from the Tsungli Yamen [Chinese Foreign Affairs Office, established in 1861] referring to our having given British protection to Chinese in the Philippines during the rebellion there. They desire to thank HM Gov't for that protection and they ask that it may be renewed in view of the impending attack on the islands by the American squadron. (F.S.) [in another hand] I think this may be done. Issue instructions accordingly to consul and inform Chinese Minister and Chinese Gov't.

[b] Decypher Consul Rawson Walker. Manila, 1:50 AM-10:30 P.M. April 30, 1898. Spanish authorities resented previously consul giving unofficial protection to Chinese. State they are under peculiar circumstances; each [?] other individual pays heavily poll tax. Have no British Men of War. Small gun-boat is to be sent.

[c] [On May 28, 1898, Walker cabled the Foreign Office through Hongkong.] Captain General states he has no objection to Consulate giving unofficial protection to Chinese but conditions imposed so detrimental depriving them of returning under any conditions even if they repaired to neutral ground within this province during operations rendering entirely impossible acceptance of British unofficial protection. Captain General also states as previously in 1896 that he has no instruc-

⁶¹ *Ibid.* The same authority was given to British consuls in Puerto Rico and Santa Cruz de Tenerife.

tions from Madrid further than negotiations pending. Official Chinese representative of Spanish government making difficulties against and denies any sanction of interference [from] British Consul. Please cause Captain General to be instructed to facilitate matters as British Consul can do little or nothing for Chinese.⁶²

With the somber prospect of an American bombardment and invasion of Manila, chaos returned to the city. Walker was apparently distraught when he wrote to Salisbury on May 26.

[18] I have the honor to inform Your Lordship that since taking over the United States Consulate and archives, I have had a most disagreeable time. I have had my life threatened and it is given out that when Manila is bombarded by the Americans the Spanish low class will shoot me. The Captain General and Spanish Admiral although they treat me with studied politeness, are only as polite as courtesy obliges them to be. All I have to state most respectfully is that if my life is sacrificed in the Public Service that my wife and children may not be unprovided for as there is no pension in our service similar to the French for consul's widows. I have now here *HMS Immortalité*, Captain Chichester, *HMS Pique*, Captain Corry, and Gun Vessel *Swift*, Commander Spencer Beaumont.

His Excellency at an interview I had with him yesterday in which I brought before him the advisability to allow a detachment of two-hundred men from each of the five foreign Ships of War, British, French, German and Japanese to be landed after the bombardment of the Manila (Viejo) or fortified town which will certainly take place when the fifteen thousand United States troops and volunteers arrive, most decidedly refused to allow foreign troops to be landed although I stated it would not be a foreign occupation but merely to protect that part of (New Manila) where the British Banks existed and the British and foreign mercantile firms and goodowns were situated. I stated that I feared much looting would take place and how would he guarantee the security of life and property for foreign subjects if his troops retired in-

⁶² All these telegrams are in *Ibid.*

land after bombardment. His Excellency replied the volunteers would have that. I replied, Your Excellency remembers a month ago when the great fire took place, how Spanish soldiers looted foreign and Chinese property, (in time of peace). I dread what will take place after Manila has been bombarded. He shrugged his shoulders. Be this as it may, I have made arrangements with Rear Admiral Dewey, United States Admiral, to allow me to send over British, German and other foreign subjects to the Arsenal of Cavite some eight miles distance from Manila and obtained permission that Captain Chichester may send an armed guard there. This is the only way I can see how we are to protect women and children when hostilities again commence. There is a very bitter feeling against Great Britain having thrown in as it is supposed, her lot with the United States and the Hong Kong press which comes over here and is translated into Spanish does not improve matters.

The Rebel Chief Emilio Aguinaldo has returned from Hong Kong on board the United States dispatch vessel *Hugh MacColloch* and it is stated has several thousand followers outside Cavite waiting to assist the Americans when hostilities again commence.⁶³

On May 1, 1898, Commodore George Dewey's squadron had defeated the Spanish navy in the Battle of Manila Bay. On shore the government forces were harassed by the Filipino Revolutionary Army which had taken Cavite province and was threatening Manila. And the future was no brighter for Spain in the Philippines, as American troops were on their way to invade the Islands. In what must have been a city of chaos Rawson-Walker was busy seeing to the safety of British and Chinese civilians. Walker received permission from Dewey to send British residents to places of safety in Spanish vessels flying the Union Jack. He also arranged for the departure to Hongkong of 1,000 Chinese on the *Esmeralda* and another 1,000 "celestials" on the British ship *Juensang* to Amoy. Spanish women and children were also allowed to take refuge on the foreign ships in Manila Bay: the English ship *Immortalité*, the French ironclad *Beaux*, the German cruiser *Irene*, and the Japanese *Matsushima*. Walker lauded Dewey for his magnanimity and described him as "most courteous and ready to oblige me in the numerous applications I have been obliged to make and he has kindly consented that the *S. S. Juensang*

⁶³ *Ibid.*, Political 6.

may return and take another consignment of Chinese. He has also kindly offered to allow me the use of the mercantile dry dockyard at Cavite for any Chinese who may wish to take refuge there."⁶⁴ However, Walker had less praise for the British residents of Manila. "Nothing that one does appears to content them." They refused to go to Cavite because they thought that "it would injure their position with the Spaniards when the war was over, putting themselves under the protection of the United States."⁶⁵ As a result of this vacillation, Dewey withdrew his offer, "and now they have to ride out in the Bay exposed to all the inclemency of the Monsoon season."⁶⁶ Walker himself was driven from his house in Santa Ana caught in a cross fire between Spanish and rebel troops. He lived in a friend's house for a while but was soon driven out of that. He then took up residence on the British ship *Immortalité*, but his frequent correspondence with Dewey and affairs involving the Chinese forced him to move to a house in the commercial section of Manila. In what must have been the understatement of the decade Walker wrote to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that "I may state to Your Lordship that I have never been in a more trying a consulate since I had the honour of entering the Consular service."⁶⁷

On July 9, 1898, Walker wrote one of his last dispatches to Lord Salisbury. He reported that the first contingents of American troops had arrived, 3,500 men in all, "the greater portion raw recruits and even students from Stamford [Stanford?] College United States. These men will require a good deal of drill to make them soldiers and the time that elapses before the other troops arrive will give time for them to be licked into shape."⁶⁸ The blockade of the city caused food prices to rise. "A fowl that cost formerly ten pence now is sold for one dollar and a half. Beef is almost impossible to obtain and we have to be content with the Water Buffalo which is nasty in the extreme."⁶⁹ Once the exodus of Chinese ceased, Admiral Dewey refused to allow any steamers from Hongkong to enter the bay. As regards the land war, Walker wrote that "the Spanish forces are gradually retreating before the rebel forces and will in the end be obliged to enter the fortified town where they will be like rats in a trap."⁷⁰

⁶⁴ Rawson-Walker to Salisbury, Manila. June 17, 1898, FO, 72/2076, Political 6.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, Political 8.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

At 8:15 on the morning of August 2 Rawson-Walker died of dysentery.⁷¹ As a particular mark of esteem the foreign Men of War in the bay flew their national ensigns at half mast. The commander of the non-existent Spanish fleet, Montojo, sent his Aide de Camp and Chief of Staff to accompany the body to its temporary niche in the Catholic Cemetery at Paco. The Protestant Cemetery was in rebel occupied territory. No Spanish government representative attended the funeral service, probably because Walker had been acting American consul and Dewey's guns were still pointed towards Manila.

Less than two weeks after Walker's death, Manila fell to the American forces. The capture of the city was reported to Lord Salisbury by Acting Consul H. A. Ramsden.

[19] I beg to report to Your Lordship the capture of Manila by the United States land and naval forces on the 13th instant and consequently the suspension of the blockade of this port.

It is with pleasure that I communicate to Your Lordship the latter part of the above, as it is to be hoped that the suffering of the population will be relieved. Provisions and staple products had reached high prices and the indigenous population suffered in consequence, the poorer classes living on boiled rice and the juice of saltfish. The European classes fared better as a good supply of tinned and dried provisions had accumulated before the commencement of the blockade. Some had stocked their compounds with cows, sheep and fowls. During the last week flour gave out. The Spanish soldiers were fed on bread made of rice. They ultimately preferred boiled rice which the natives use instead of bread. The water supply had been cut off by the insurgents but as the rainy season was a wet one, the want was not felt. The scarcity of diet, change of water and trying times produced many cases of diarrhoea and dysentery.

On 5th instant His Excellency Lieutenant General Don Basilio Agustín y Dávila, Governor and Captain General of of these Islands, under instructions from Madrid, handed over the command and governorship to Lieutenant General Don Fermín Jaudenes, who was second in command.

⁷¹ Ramsden to Salisbury, Manila, August 2, 1898, FO, 72/2081, Consular 76.

On the 6th instant the United States Military forces which had arrived from San Francisco in three expeditions reached the aggregate number of 11,000 men. Generals Merritt, Anderson and Green were in command. The United States Squadron, Rear Admiral Dewey in command, had also been strengthened by the cruiser *Charleston* (which convoyed the first expedition) and the coast defence ship *Monterey*.

On Sunday the 7th instant I received a dispatch from Rear Admiral Dewey, transmitting a joint communication from General Merritt and himself addressed to His Excellency the Captain and Governor General. I presented in person the above communication to His Excellency at 12:30 noon. The document manifested that at any time after the expiration of 48 hours, hostilities might commence on the part of the United States land and naval forces against Manila. The time was calculated from the receipt of the document. The period was given so that non-combatants could leave the town. His Excellency acknowledged the receipt of the communication and replied that he could not avail himself of the humane offer to remove all non-combatants as the insurgents surrounded the town. In the afternoon I arranged and had notices posted up to the effect that several launches (six in number) would take the British community who so desired on board the ships under the British flag in the bay.

Some launches had fixed hours, others when a sufficient party had assembled, and continued plying up till 10 o'clock of the 9th instant. Many Spanish ladies and children availed themselves of these opportunities. A special launch was arranged to carry the Chinese refugees to the three ships in the bay kept for this purpose. On the 9th an extra launch was contracted for the Chinese.

On the evening of the 7th instant the foreign consular corps at this port assembled at the palace where His Excellency the Captain General officially communicated the purport of the communication received and the reply sent to the United States commanding officers. His Excellency wished the foreign consular corps to interpose and request the U.S. commanders to allow time so as to communicate with Madrid

by cable from Hong Kong. After consultation the consular corps were of the opinion that they could not interpose for that object which was the natural consequence after a blockade of three months, more so, the Madrid government having given full powers to His Excellency the Captain General. Notwithstanding, early on the following morning the consul of France, Germany, Japan, Belgium and myself started for Cavite to use our good offices for the cause of humanity with Admiral Dewey. The bay being very rough and the distance to Cavite great and as it would have taken the greater part of the day to achieve our object, it was decided that our services were urgently required on shore for the protection of our subjects and the launch was again turned towards Manila.

After the expiration of the 48 hours I delivered in person to His Excellency another joint communication asking for the surrender of Manila. His Excellency, after consulting with the Board of Defence, replied that he could not surrender the town, but requested time to communicate with Madrid. This request was not acceded to. At 9:35 A.M. on the 13th instant the United States squadron commenced bombarding the forts and trenches at Malate and Ermita. At 11 A.M. the bombardment ceased, the Spanish guns having been silenced. A short time after mid-day the white flag was hoisted in the Walled City. In the meantime the American troops under the command of General Anderson entered the town at Malate after meeting with little resistance. General Green entered the Walled City and the capitulation was accomplished after conferencing with the Spanish Captain General at about 4 P.M. The American colours were hoisted over the city a little later when it was saluted by the Men of War in the bay. The terms of surrender, I am led to believe are almost unconditional, officers retaining side arms and horses. The bombardment caused little or no damage to property and the United States troops patrol and police the town. On the American side small casualties are reported, some 6 or 7 dead and some 35 wounded. I have been unable to ascertain the loss on the Spanish side, but although greater than the

American, I am inclined to believe that it does not reach a very high figure. Very little street fighting took place and this was due to some small bodies of rebels entering after the Americans.

In the extreme suburbs it is reported that the insurgents have been looting especially Chinese shops, but the Americans are gradually getting acquainted with the locality and impose strict measures so as to avoid pillaging. It is feared that some trouble may arise with the insurgents some of whom have been disarmed. They are not permitted to enter either the town or near suburbs with their arms. I remained on shore during the bombardment together with some other British subjects. I have the honour to be [etc].⁷²

The American presence in the Philippines was alarming for British merchants. They wondered what was to become of their property, investments and business associations. Thinking that the United States was interested only in acquiring a base of operations for a China trade, they imagined that the United States and Spain would partition the Islands between them. This they opposed and Ramsden expressed their opposition to the Foreign Office. The British consul sent the following telegram on August 28, 1898.

[20] British Merchants ratify telegram twenty first instant. Vitally important secure American or British administration entire archipelago with uniform tariffs under one central government. Deprecate any partition islands under separate governments as destructive British interests centred in Manila. Spanish rule Luzon impossible and other islands are revolting. Chichester, senior naval officer, can vouch for these being merchants general views.⁷³

The concern of the British merchants over the sovereignty of the Islands was somewhat premature. The American troops were still battling the forces of the Filipino Revolutionary Government.

⁷² Ramsden to Salisbury, Manila, August 16, 1898, FO, 72/2076, Political 9. On August 22 Ramsden handed over the charge of the American consulate to Mr. O. F. Williams who was the returning United States Consul. Ramsden to Salisbury, Manila, September 21, 1898, FO, 72/2081, Treaty 2.

⁷³ Ramsden to Salisbury, Manila, August 28, 1898, FO, 72/2076, Following Political 10

Acting Consul Ramsden sent the following report which was printed and circulated through the Foreign Office.

[21] *Confidential* Acting Consul Ramsden to the Marquess of Salisbury. (Received January 30, 1899). Manila, December 22, 1898 My Lord: Political events of great importance have been few during the last month, but as the minor events have been frequent, I consider it my duty to inform your Lordship of the general situation of these islands, as the situation at any moment may become aggravated.

Island of Luzon. The relations between the United States' authorities and the Revolutionary Government have become strained. When the termination of the Paris Conference was made known, the rebel papers began a strong campaign advocating complete independence, and some went so far as to indulge in proposing severe measures if opposed to the realization of their ideal, and it was even hinted that force of arms would be employed if necessary.

The arrival, during the past month, of some 8,000 or 10,000 troops from San Francisco, together with a series of articles contributed by prominent Americans advising patience, somewhat abated these manifestations, but the recent news of the anti-annexation rumours from the United States has been the sign for the papers (revolutionary) to again clamour for complete independence. Although little news leaks out from the interior, it is now positively known that the Revolutionary Government is divided into factions, some of which have resorted to force of arms, the most notable being the "Guardia de Honor", in the Province of Pangasinan, and already some skirmishes have taken place, several villages having fallen into their possession. This party is composed of officers and men who had served during the revolution against Spain, and as the Government of Malolos does not recognize their rank or services, they have openly shown resentment of this treatment.

The troops of the Revolutionary Government, it is reported, are deserting, which would appear reasonable, as they receive no pay, and the food, when obtainable, is very meagre.

To accentuate the strained relations, it is persistently rumoured that the Revolutionary Government have published orders prohibiting the importation of either cattle or rice into Manila, but up to the present no want of the above commodities has been felt. Aguinaldo, notwithstanding the levying of taxes and war contributions, is unable to secure enough money for the peremptory needs of the Government. The collection of these taxes is resented by the people as the Presidents of the various provinces, who are intrusted with the carrying out of these orders, avail themselves of the opportunity of reaping for their own pockets, and consequently the contributions exacted are higher than those stipulated by the Government, which in their turn is considered heavier than those exacted by the Spanish Government.

Notwithstanding these petty factions, the want of provisions and munitions of war by the insurgents, I am inclined to believe that, in the event of rupture, the rebel parties will consolidate, and make common cause against the Americans.

Numerous trenches, some with artillery and machine-guns, have been thrown up by the insurgents in the neighbourhood of Manila.

Aguinaldo, at the end of last month, forwarded a second reply to the Commander-in-chief of the United States' forces, giving his reasons for not setting at liberty the Spanish prisoners. A week ago, when it was finally known that Spain would not retain possession of these islands, the insurgent papers gave out that the Malolos Government had given orders that the civil Spanish prisoners and the military who were ill were to be set at liberty, but news that it was possible that the ratification of the Paris Conference might have some difficulty in being sanctioned by the United States' Congress has caused a reaction, and the prisoners have not been as yet set at liberty.

On the other hand the American authorities have shown but little activity. The establishing of camps under canvas, the building of straw-covered quarters for the contingent newly arrived, and the constant drilling of the troops have been the

only military operations since my last despatch. On account of rumours, some undoubtedly with foundation, the outposts have been doubled, and on several occasions troops have been hurriedly moved to the outskirts; several small incidents such as friction between sentries of the opposing forces have given momentary anxiety, but have luckily been amicably settled. This was due to the lack of the most natural precaution, the providing of an ample neutral zone. These small events tend to prove the strained relations, and as the United States' Government publish no official news and do not deny the allegations of the press, the public is led to believe that the situation is conflicting. The water-works at St. Olan, which supplies the town being held by the rebels, may perhaps cause anxiety in event of hostilities, the privations of Manila on this occasion, would be felt as the dry season has commenced.

Many complaints have been rife regarding the arbitrary proceedings of the American authorities, and it is reported that bribery exists principally in the Custom-house to a greater extent than in the time of the Spaniards. The American Government have had to proceed cautiously, both on account of the little knowledge of the country and the scarcity of interpreters, as very few of the officials performing civil functions can speak the Spanish language, and one has been apt to complain as matters are not being settled with the anticipated promptness. Many godowns within the American lines have been pillaged, especially those containing petroleum. Robberies are frequent, in some cases accompanied by violence and murder. Parties armed have assaulted houses in public thoroughfares, and the American police do not appear capable, notwithstanding their stringent measures and willing efforts, to cope with these abuses. The American authorities attribute these outrages to the revolutionary soldiers, who, they claim, being under-fed, resort to these measures so as to be able to live. The insurgents, on the other hand, accuse the Indian soldiers, who have been and are still, loyal to the Spanish cause, as the perpetrators.

The "Isla de Cuba," "Isla de Luzon," and "Don Juan de Austria" (part of the sunken squadron of the Spanish fleet

under Admiral Montojo) have been raised and floated by the American naval authorities, and are to proceed to Hong Kong under their own steam. The United States' ships "Petrel" and "Raleigh" have left for the United States, the latter vessel via the Suez Canal. The "Boston" is expected to return from China, and the "Buffalo" is due from European waters. The Astor Battery and part of the Nebraska Regiment have returned to the United States via San Francisco. Between 22,000 and 25,000 American troops now garrison Manila.

Bisayas or Southern Group of Islands. News From Iloilo, the capital of Bisayas group, is very irregular. The Spaniards have abandoned all the smaller towns, and have concentrated in the capital, which is surrounded by the rebels in great numbers. Firing is taking place every night, and the situation there is similar to that of Manila during the blockade. They are better off for provisions as the port is open. It appears that General Rios had arranged an armistice with the insurgents, declaring certain outskirts neutral ground. Both parties claim that the other has broken the terms of the armistice, and hostilities were begun on both sides. Some soldiers arrived from the Carolines to reinforce the garrison of the city, but as the number is small the Spaniards have been compelled to act purely on the defensive.

The Bisayas insurgents have established a separate Government, and although they do not recognize Aguinaldo's authority, they do not wish to go against the Malolos Government. The situation there may become critical as it is already rumoured that the Spaniards, now that it is definitely known that they will not retain possession of the Philippines, may any moment abandon the town of Iloilo and take refuge on board the steamers and gun-boats in the bay. I have consulted with Major-General Otis regarding this matter, and his Excellency informed me that he had cabled to Washington for instructions, but that he was unable to act unless ordered. I have heard that American troops may leave at any moment for Iloilo and succour the besieged Spanish garrison.

Cebu, the third town of importance in the Philippines, has been abandoned by the Spanish civil population; the mili-

tary, under General Montoro, remain there, but it is thought possible that they may also abandon the town if hard pressed.

Although there is a British Vice-Consul at that port, I have received no communication from him for over three months. I have, etc. (Signed) H. A. Ramsden.⁷⁴

On March 23, 1901, General Aguinaldo was captured and for all practical purposes the war against the United States ended. A final communication on the war mentioned that "organized resistance to the United States authorities is practically at an end, but trouble is being given by bands of free-booters leavened and led by deserters from the American forces. These latter are prolonging the struggle in hopes of obtaining an amnesty."⁷⁵

The struggle was not prolonged for too long and when it ended a new and difficult period of adjustment began both for the Philippines and for the British merchant colony in Manila.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ W. H. Sinclair to Marquess of Lansdown, Manila, July 10, 1901, FO, 5/2469, Political 10.