

Document A

Source: Platform of the American Anti-Imperialist League, October 1899.

Note: A platform is a series of positions or beliefs supported by a group or political party.

We earnestly condemn the policy of the present national administration in the Philippines. It seeks to extinguish the spirit of 1776 in those islands. We deplore the sacrifice of our soldiers and sailors, whose bravery deserves admiration even in an unjust war. We denounce the slaughter of the Filipinos as a needless horror. We protest against the extension of American sovereignty by Spanish methods....

We hold with Abraham Lincoln, that "no man is good enough to govern another man without that other's consent. When the white man governs himself, that is self-government, but when he governs himself and also governs another man, that is more than self-government – that is despotism [rule by a tyrant]."

Document Analysis

1. Generally speaking, what does an anti-imperialist believe?
2. This platform fears that the American governors in the Philippines want to get rid of "the spirit of 1776" in the islands. What does this mean?
3. Does the Anti-Imperialist League believe Abraham Lincoln would have supported the annexation of the Philippines? Explain.
4. How does this document help you answer the question, "Should the United States have annexed the Philippines?"