

Leonard Wood, Operational Artist or Scheming Careerist?

**A Monograph
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Abstract

Leonard Wood, Operational Artist or Scheming Careerist? by MAJ Colin M. Fleming, 55 pages.

Leonard Wood served as a Military Governor in Cuba from 1898 (Santiago) and 1899 to 1902, later as the Military Governor of the Moro Province in the Philippines from 1903 to 1906, and eventually as Governor General for the Philippines until his death in 1927. His military operations in support of American strategic aims provide lessons in both stability operations and civil military relations. Wood developed a detailed understanding of both theaters, and arranged his actions (both civil and military) in time, space, and purpose to accomplish American strategic aims.

Leonard Wood conducted a variety of civil and military operations as the Military Governor of Cuba and the Military Governor of the Moro Province in the Philippines. Critics generally praise his military governorship of Cuba, and condemn his military governorship of the Moro Province. The logic these critics use is that Wood was successful in Cuba because he did not use violent military actions to pacify the Cubans, and that he was not successful in the Moro Province because many of his actions to pacify the Moros were violent, and frequently brutal. Critics cite Wood's desire for career advancement, and stubborn, volatile, often arrogant attitude as primary motivations for his use of violence in the Moro Province since it differed from his actions in Cuba. These critiques ignore the unique environments Cuba and the Moro Province presented. Examining Wood's actions in their cultural and doctrinal context provides an understanding of Wood's rationale for his operational approach in each case.

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Introduction

The Spanish-American War produced two unique protectorates that required military support and governance. Although both protectorates became the United States' responsibility due to the same conflict, each presented different historically significant challenges to a young nation and military. The American strategic aim in both cases was to create self-governing independent nation-states. Military stability operations combined with diplomatic support created a foundation for the nascent states.

General Leonard Wood was initially involved in and later at the center of efforts in both Cuba and the Philippines. He served as a Military Governor in Cuba from 1898 (Santiago) and 1899 to 1902, and as the Military Governor of the Moro province in the Philippines from 1903 to 1906. He served as Governor General for the Philippines from 1921 until his death in 1927.

General Leonard Wood's background, confidence, political connections, and force of personality all contributed to his success in both theaters, but with different operations. A wide range of environmental factors including political (Cuban, Philippine and American), social, infrastructure, and others influenced General Wood to choose different actions for similar problems in both states. Identification of those factors and a close examination of General Wood's plans and actions provide a deeper understanding of the variables that create successful stability operations.

Literature Review

General Leonard Wood is the subject of relatively few scholarly works despite the fact that he was a prodigious writer during his lifetime and left volumes of documentation on one of the most challenging and volatile times in American history. There are five major biographies on Leonard Wood. These works present holistic and in some cases detailed accounts of the life and accomplishments of Leonard Wood, and fall into three categories. The early works, some produced during Wood's lifetime, tend toward hero-administrator worship, the second group

consists of violent reactions against Leonard Wood the man, and the third is a mix of both. None of these works achieves a balanced view of Wood by examining the actions he took as the leader of military governments in different cultures within the framework of the national strategic context of his time, comparing his arrangement of tactical military actions in space and time (operational art) to achieve America's strategic goals.

The first group of biographies examines the life and career of Leonard Wood from a personal level. These works are entertaining partly because he was a polarizing personality, both admired and detested, and partly because they provide illumination of the American worldview of the time. Hermann Hagedorn's, *That Human Being, Leonard Wood*, Joseph Hamblin Sears *The Career of Leonard Wood*, and Lieutenant Colonel Eric Fisher Wood's (no relation) *Leonard Wood, Conservator of Americanism*, are examinations of Leonard Wood in a personal sense. Hagedorn, a close friend and biographer of Theodore Roosevelt, develops a portrait of Leonard Wood and examines the personal characteristics that he believes made Leonard Wood successful in his military career.

In Hagedorn's first biography of Leonard Wood, he elevates Wood by posing the question, "what qualities does he possess that make thousands of men and women turn to him for leadership with fervor and trust?"¹ Hagedorn developed a model 'human' and examined Wood's actions in terms of how they met the criteria. Sears uses similar elevated language to establish to towering figure of Leonard Wood, when he describes Wood as someone who "has stood for these elemental truths in and out of boyhood, youth, and manhood."² These works provide a warm, personal view of Wood; however, they do not examine Wood's actions in either Cuba or the Philippines in a detailed or systematic manner to determine what made him (Wood) effective beyond his personal traits or gifts as an administrator.

¹ Hermann Hagedorn, *That Human Being, Leonard Wood* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe, 1920), 6.

² Joseph Hamblin Sears, *The Career of Leonard Wood* (New York; London: D. Appleton, 1919), 15.

Because these early authors were writing during or shortly after Leonard Wood's lifetime, their speculations about actions and events often illuminate the worldview of society during the late 19th and early 20th centuries more clearly than a modern author might. Sears observation that, "the Indians were not able—tragic as the truth is—to move onward, and so they had to move out and give place to the more worthy tenant" highlights beliefs that are anathema to a 21st century audience.³ Understanding this cultural prospective in a clear, unvarnished way is important to any critical analysis of the actions taken by a dynamic leader like Wood. Part of the message in Sears work lies in his clear expression of common ideals that a modern author might have trouble expressing.

These early biographies also establish the view that Wood's organizational abilities rather than his "soldierly skills" were the key to his success in Cuba. Most attribute Wood's success in Cuba strictly to his administrative ability and discount the military component required in implementing civil administration in a hostile environment.⁴ Eric Wood maintains, "Leonard Wood is one of the greatest administrators that American has ever produced."⁵ Any study of Wood's actions in Cuba and the Philippines that focuses exclusively on the administrative aspects of his operations and neglects their military character is incomplete.

The problem with this focus on Leonard Wood's administrative ability is that it distracts from the complexity of Leonard Wood's achievements by taking them out of the military context. Analysis of the civil-military operations of a military commander is different from an analysis of a successful bureaucrat's administration of normal government functions for two reasons. The first reason is that the military context assumes violence, and the second is that a secure environment is a necessary condition for administrative reform.

The primary factor that differentiates civil administration from civil military operations is

³ Ibid., 105.

⁴ Jack Edward McCallum, *Leonard Wood: Rough Rider, Surgeon, Architect of American Imperialism* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 357.

⁵ Ibid., 113.

the inherent violence or threat of violence implicit as a planning consideration. In *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, Stathis Kalyvas describes the tendency to overlook this aspect of war as “political bias,” defined as “the tendency to equate peacetime competition with armed conflict.”⁶ Eric Wood and most subsequent biographers of Leonard Wood are guilty of political bias to a certain degree. The overemphasis of Leonard Woods’s considerable administrative talents in his career leads critics and supporters alike to overwrought criticism of his military actions.

Focusing on Leonard Wood as administrator rather than military commander also detracts from analysis of Leonard Wood’s actions in that it creates a false understanding of the context. Establishing or reforming any part of governance is a difficult, complex task. Describing Leonard Wood’s success solely in administrative terms leads to misinterpretation of the military aspects of Leonard Wood’s accomplishments in Cuba and the Philippines. For example, a more systematic analysis of the military aspect of Leonard Wood’s actions in the Philippines might have led the author to a different conclusion than, “these renegades were slave-dealing polygamist, Mohammeden savages who would neither allow their neighbors to live in peace, nor acknowledge any law or control for themselves.”⁷ This cultural bias distracts from a more grounded reasoning of both the insurgent activity and the series of tactical actions Leonard Wood arranged to deal with them.

Later biographers began to ascribe a darker character to Wood. Jack Lane describes Wood as a driven plotting careerist, “yet obsessive ambition, however distasteful and however injurious to other’s lives and careers, was not the sole characteristic which kept Wood from Greatness.”⁸ Similarly, Brian Linn describes Wood’s selection for the Moro Province governorship as partly because his “capable administration in Cuba had demonstrated both his

⁶ Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 38.

⁷ Eric Fisher Wood, *Leonard Wood, Conservator of Americanism: A Biography* (New York: George H. Doran, 1920), 116.

⁸ Jack C. Lane, *Armed Progressive: General Leonard Wood* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), xvii.

skill and his ruthless intriguing.”⁹ This narrow, negative focus leads the authors to evaluate Wood’s actions through an overly personal lens, similar to earlier biographers, but from the opposite opinion of Wood. Lane and Linn view Wood as a dark and scheming careerist whereas biographers like Sears, Eric Wood, and Herman Hagedorn view Wood as a patriot and leader, and example of what is right and good with America. Linn’s dislike for Wood leads him to assert that Wood’s use of military pacification actions may have been an attempt to “seek to surpass the reputation Pershing had won.”¹⁰ Lane’s dislike for Wood also overly influences his analysis. As a result, both authors condemn Wood’s military actions as self-serving rather than examining those actions through the lenses of pacification doctrine and the different cultural contexts of Cuba, the Philippines, and America in the early 20th century.

To a certain extent all these authors are guilty of ‘partisan bias’ due to the over reliance on Wood’s administrative ability to explain the totality of his actions as military governor. This bias causes misconception in the analysis of violence in civil war.¹¹ Lane describes American forces as “ignorant of Moro Warrior tradition” and asserts, “Wood’s incessant pressure on the Moro to conform to American authority, combined with their independence and fanatical religious beliefs, created conditions in which unnecessary carnage was all too likely.”¹² He does not however speculate as to the prospects for the success of the nascent Moro province government if Wood had not addressed the resistance concurrent with his administrative reforms.

Another biographer, Jack McCallum shares characteristics of both the early biographies by Sears et al, and the more recent work by Lane. He sees Wood’s work in Cuba as successful, but believes (like Lane) that Wood lost his way in the Philippines due to bitterness and frustration with his career progression. McCallum attributes Wood’s military kinetic actions to his desire “to

⁹ Brian McAllister Linn, *Guardians of Empire: The U.S. Army and the Pacific, 1902-1940* (Chapel Hill, NC.: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 33.

¹⁰ Ibid., 34.

¹¹ Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, 485

¹² Lane, *Armed Progressive*, 127

be a fighter and not an administrator,” and in evaluating his non-kinetic actions commented that, “Wood, not having completely forgotten his experience in Cuba, did recommend establishing schools, allowing a degree of local government under the existing chiefs and establishing a constabulary manned by Moros.”¹³ McCallum’s work achieves some balance between administrator worship and overwrought critique, but still fails to analyze Wood’s military actions in the Philippines based on anything but his actions in Cuba.

McCallum also provides a more balanced view of Wood, like Hagedorn in his 1931 biography, and A.J. Bacevich. Hagedorn describes Wood’s integration of “Civil and military work, side by side; cutting down the number of military posts and increasing their efficiency; working out a system of control of the Mohammedan and pagan elements; establishing municipalities.”¹⁴ McCallum also shares the earlier biographies positive view of Wood, while acknowledging his shortcomings more than the earlier biographies, but without Lane’s condemnation or the hero worship tendencies of those written while Leonard Wood was alive. The missing analysis is the connection between Wood’s actions in each theater. This analysis should yield an understanding of how Wood chose tactical tasks and arranged them in space and time to maximize their effectiveness.

Examining Wood’s operational approach based on each operational environment and military doctrine of the time, rather than his personal attributes, provides a better foundation for the analysis. A.J. Bacevich provides perhaps the best insight into Wood’s character and intent. “Wood’s approach was expansive, taking for granted a broader involvement of the army and individual officers in affairs of state.”¹⁵ Bacevich describes Wood’s impact on the young Lieutenant Frank Ross McCoy (Wood’s aide during his time in Cuba, and in the Moro Province

¹³ McCallum, *Leonard Wood: Rough Rider*, 215.

¹⁴ Hermann Hagedorn, *Leonard Wood, a Biography*, Vol. 1 (New York; London: Harper & Brothers, 1931), 39.

¹⁵ A. J. Bacevich, *Diplomat in Khaki: Major General Frank Ross McCoy and American Foreign Policy, 1898-1949* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1989), 14.

in the Philippines). McCoy saw Wood as, “a real statesman of high ideals and of great doings.”¹⁶

McCoy’s view of Wood as a diplomat with an expansive approach to the problems encountered as a military governor is a balanced view of the positive attributes that created the American success in Cuba. However, in describing Wood’s voyage to the Philippines to assume his duties as the first Military Governor of the Moro Province, Bacevich describes what he sees as a turn away from his view of Wood (and by extension McCoy) as a diplomat. “The weeks spent at sea and inspecting European possessions completed the conversion of Wood, Scott, and McCoy into single-minded zealots intolerant of opposition to purposes that were in their eyes unimpeachably worthy.”¹⁷ McCoy, like Wood, “believed that the United States would rule only by force.”¹⁸ According to Bacevich, this shared view of the Philippine situation resulted at least partially from the zealotry developed on their voyage.

There is a common thread in the major work about Leonard Wood. Instead of ascribing the difference in Wood’s operational approach between Cuba and the Philippines to the differences in each environment and American military practice, his biographers resort to the view that Wood’s personality, drive for glory, and administrative abilities were the most important factors in his arrangement of tactical actions. This focus on personality and administrative ability derails analysis of Wood’s sequencing of actions in order to accomplish American strategic objectives. It is unlikely that a visionary statesman with an expansive approach to problems in one theater would transform into a “single minded zealot” bent on extensive violence to establish his career, during an ocean voyage. Bacevich too is a victim of overreliance on Wood’s administrative ability as the sole key to his success.

It is necessary to analyze General Leonard Wood’s actions in both Cuba and the Philippines in terms of their arrangement in time, space, purpose, and their intended connection to

¹⁶ Ibid., 15.

¹⁷ Ibid., 26.

¹⁸ Ibid., 31.

American strategic aims, in a military context and in the context of the unique culture where Wood executed them. The structure of this monograph supports a systematic analysis of the cultural factors that influenced Wood's operations in Santiago Cuba and the Moro Province, Philippines.

Structure

The structure of this monograph supports the argument that General Leonard Wood's analysis and actions in both Cuba and the Philippines were appropriate to the American foreign policy at the time and applied consistently in both theaters despite different operational approaches. The monograph presents three critical components: a case study on Wood's experience in Cuba and a second case study on his experience in the Philippines followed by a presentation of findings and analysis of his actions in the environments each case study presents.

Each case study contains a brief discussion of the operational environment, American strategic aims, and Leonard Wood's personal perspective. The monograph also presents operational tenets of pacification including security, counterinsurgency, racial and ethnic perceptions, and the application of violence, which figured strongly in Wood's operational approach. These tenets provide a framework to understand General Leonard Wood's operational approach. Since much of the criticism of Wood cites his application of violence in the Moro Province, it is important to understand prevailing American views on the use of violence (force) and the utility of the use of force.¹⁹

The third section provides a summary of findings and analysis based on the Cuba and Philippine case studies, using the framework of current operational doctrine, but in the context of the early 20th century. Current doctrine provides a structure to examine Wood's actions in both theaters when informed by the social and societal context of Wood's time.

¹⁹ Lane, *Armed Progressive: General Leonard Wood*, 329; Bacevich, *Diplomat in Khaki: Major General Frank Ross McCoy and American Foreign Policy, 1898-1949*, 272; McCallum, *Leonard Wood: Rough Rider, Surgeon, Architect of American Imperialism*, 357.

This monograph focuses on answering four questions. The first is how did Wood decide to arrange his actions in space and time to meet American strategic objectives in Cuba? The second is what American and Cuban cultural factors influenced his arrangement of military actions in Cuba? The third question is how did Wood decide to arrange his actions in space and time to meet American strategic objectives in the Philippines? The final question is what American and Philippine cultural factors influenced his arrangement of actions in the Philippines?

Case Study #1 – Cuba

Both American and international observers viewed Leonard Wood's results as the military governor of Santiago, and later all of Cuba, as resounding successes. Lord Cromer, British pro-consul to Egypt, "the archetypal 'pro-consul' and administrator of Egypt, told the British Foreign Office that there was only one man in the world capable of taking his place but, unfortunately, Wood was an American."²⁰ Cuba provided Wood the stage to both develop his skills as a new senior army leader, and an opportunity to develop a new vision for the American Army. "So, when you think of our Army and its work, do not think of it always as an aggregation of fighting people, bent only on fighting, but remember that it is one of the great constructive life-saving agencies of the Republic"²¹ It is a mistake to credit Wood's success solely to his ability to administer. In Cuba Leonard Wood demonstrated both an understanding of the operational environment, and the ability to arrange military actions in time, space, and purpose to meet American strategic objectives.

Wood had a vision for developing Cuba (eventually) into a free and independent nation, and a vision for the Army's role in achieving that transformation. His "Calvinist morality and rigid commitment to honesty and obedience... stood in sharp contrast to the venality of the

²⁰ McCallum, *Leonard Wood: Rough Rider*, 126.

²¹ Leonard Wood, "The Constructive Work of the American Army," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 1, no. 61 (September, 1915), 261.

colonial government he replaced.”²² These characteristics combined with the almost absolute authority he wielded to shape Cuban society proved tremendously effective. By the time he filed the *Report On Civic Conditions* on September 1, 1899, he could already boast of many significant accomplishments including “increasing the water supply by forty percent, put in five miles of asphalt streets... put under all the streets a thoroughly modern sewerage and water system.”²³

Wood understood however, that individually these accomplishments would not be enough to achieve American strategic aims. Wood imagined an “American occupation that was both ambitious in scope and dynamic in character.”²⁴ In Cuba Wood arranged his actions in time and space to achieve American aims by first conducting a detailed assessment of the environment and prioritizing actions according to the threat they presented to first the American occupation, and second to the forming Cuban state. Wood divided Cuban needs into four categories and prioritized his efforts by the risk associated with each. The categories were food and medical assistance, public health and sanitation, government and rule of law, and finally schools and education.

Addressing the basic human needs of the population was the key first step in Cuba. In meeting the basic human needs of the Cuban population, Wood met two of the three factors that can make a successful occupation possible. In his essay, “Occupational Hazards, why Military Occupations succeed or Fail” David Edelstein states that “Three factors, however, can make a successful occupation possible. The first factor is recognition by the occupied population of the need for occupation.”²⁵ The people of Santiago were already very aware that they needed food, but Wood’s provision for their needs established the American Army as useful to the people.

²² McCallum, *Leonard Wood: Rough Rider*, 126.

²³ Leonard Wood, *Report by Brigadier General Leonard Wood, US Volunteers: On Civic Conditions in the Department of Santiago and Puerto Príncipe* (Washington, D.C.: Adjutant General's Office, 1899), 11.

²⁴ Bacevich, *Diplomat in Khaki: Major General Frank Ross McCoy and American Foreign Policy, 1898-1949*, 12.

²⁵ David M. Edelstein, "Occupational Hazards: Why Military Occupations Succeed Or Fail," *International Security* 29, no. 1 (Summer, 2004), 51.; The other two factors are that there is a common

While the provision of food bought credibility to Wood's administration, his drive to enforce sanitation standards required more force to implement. Alleviating famine would not be enough to create an independent Cuba. In order to understand Wood's actions it is useful to examine his background and the conditions in Cuba prior to the occupation.

Prior to the outbreak of the Spanish-American War Leonard Wood was a surgeon and Captain in the Medical Corps. Through his close personal friendship with Theodore Roosevelt he lobbied for and received a commission as a Colonel of volunteers to raise and command a regiment of the First United States Volunteer Cavalry on May 9, 1898, with Theodore Roosevelt as his subordinate. Leonard Wood's success in recruiting and mobilizing the regiment provided an early glimpse at the administrative ability critics cite as the sole reason for Wood's success in Cuba.

At the outbreak of the Spanish-American War in 1898, Spain had ruled Cuba for over four hundred years, beginning with the landing of Christopher Columbus. Spain considered Cuba to be a province, and was dependent on it as a center of commerce and the export of sugar, coffee, and tobacco.²⁶ Slaves imported to the island provided a majority of the labor for these crops, and a small land-owning elite consisting mostly of Spanish and other European immigrants held political and economic sway.²⁷ This nascent Cuban national identity, while not universal, still provided a foundation on which Leonard Wood could build.

By the time of the first Cuban revolution in 1868, most of Spain's other Caribbean colonies, including Mexico, had fought for and gained independence.²⁸ Cuba, along with Puerto Rico, was one of the last of the Spanish colonies in the Caribbean to gain independence. In 1868 "a sugar planter, Carlos Manuel de Céspedes freed his slaves to fight with him in the battle for a

²⁶ Robert L. Scheina, *Latin America's Wars*, 1st ed., Vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Brassey's, 2003), 30.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 34

²⁸ Mexican independence-1821, Peru-1821, Ecuador-1822, Colombia 1823

free Cuba.”²⁹ In his essay, *Freedom and Slavery*, de Céspedes states, “A free Cuba is incompatible with a slaveholding Cuba.”³⁰ Slavery was a critical component of Cuba’s sugar production, a cornerstone to revenue production for Spain. The rejection of the institution of Slavery by independence-minded Cubans became a cornerstone of their national identity, and put Cuba in direct conflict with the interests of Spain. This nascent sense of Cuban identity was critical in their movement toward independence. It enabled Cubans to envision and articulate a free Cuban society independent of external rule.

Throughout the 19th century, a desire for independence from Spain and a sense of Cuban national identity continued to develop among the Cuban intellectual elite. José Martí “more than any other Cuban is [was] seen as the father of the Cuban nation” published an essay titled “Our America” in 1891 while in exile in the United States.³¹ This essay discussed the need for Cuban leadership to come from Cuban educated leaders and to throw off the yoke of the Spanish who caused Cuba to be “thrown out of gear for three centuries by a power which denied men the right to use their reason.”³²

The major European powers’ scramble for empire intensified in the late twentieth century, “Europeans scrambled for Africa and vied for Asia, grabbing territories with unprecedented velocity and overwhelming ferocity.”³³ America stumbled into empire, conflicted as a nation and with objectives that differed from the global norms of their European counterparts.³⁴ President McKinley stated that we “have come to us in the providence of God and we must carry the burden, whatever it may be, in the interest of civilization, humanity and

²⁹ A. Chomsky, B. Carr, and P. M. Smorkaloff, *The Cuba Reader: History, Culture, Politics*: (Durham: Duke University Press Books, 2003), 115.

³⁰ Ibid., 115.

³¹ Ibid., 122.

³² Ibid., 124.

³³ Stephen Wertheim, "Reluctant Liberator: Theodore Roosevelt's Philosophy of Self-Government and Preparation for Philippine Independence," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 39, no. 3 (2009), 496.

³⁴ Ibid., 496.

liberty.”³⁵

Pacification – Cuba

From 1860 to 1941, the U.S. Army referred to operations such as those conducted in Cuba and the Philippines as “pacification.” “In the broadest sense pacification referred to all actions taken to establish or maintain peace, order, and government authority in an area that was either openly or potentially hostile.”³⁶ According to Andrew Britle, “it [pacification] had two main features: military operations against irregulars and civil operations” and the key to successful pacification was finding the right balance of components depending on the operational environment.³⁷ In Cuba, Wood worked to achieve this balance by arranging his tactical actions (both military and civil) in space and time to achieve the American strategic aim of preparing the Cuban people for self-government.

General Leonard Wood understood the American strategic aim of his Military Government in Cuba as, “to prepare the people of Cuba for self-government and to establish conditions which would render the establishment of a Cuban republic possible.”³⁸ Wood saw a number of areas within Cuban society and government that needed to change in order to create a stable self-governing nation.³⁹ Unlike many senior Army officers of his day, Wood believed that Army soldiers and leaders could provide security and organization and be an effective agent of the nation building he envisioned rather than just an instrument of destruction.⁴⁰

³⁵ Howard Gillette, "The Military Occupation of Cuba, 1899-1902: Workshop for American Progressivism," *American Quarterly* 25, no. 4 (October, 1973), 410.

³⁶ A. J. Birtle, *United States Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine, 1860-1941*: United States Government Printing Office, 1998), 4.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.

³⁸ Leonard Wood, "The Military Government of Cuba," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 1, no. 21 (Mar, 1903), 153.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 30.

⁴⁰ Bacevich, *Diplomat in Khaki: Major General Frank Ross McCoy and American Foreign Policy, 1898-1949*, 12.

American strategic aims in Cuba contained two sharply contrasting schools of thought, American Exceptionalism, and anti-imperialism. American Exceptionalism grew from diverse influences. "American businessmen sought enlarged foreign markets; churchmen and philanthropists considered it their duty to liberate and uplift allegedly benighted foreign peoples; and a vocal clique of intellectuals and politicians believed that national greatness required an assertive foreign policy."⁴¹ Together, these influences created both a desire to export American ways, and a reluctance to occupy other nations. In Cuba, the American policy aim was to save "people it barely knew from Spanish oppression."⁴² American policy makers "were only half-aware of the implications of their relationship with Cuba."⁴³ The assumption that "the orderly transfer of power in a system of government was the irreducible condition of stability, and would produce the conditions necessary for an independent stable government" meant that America would only tolerate military involvement in Cuba for a short time.⁴⁴

The anti-imperialist school of thought gained momentum following the initial victory in the war with Spain. Having secured victory in the name of liberating the Cuban people from Spanish oppression, American forces faced domestic opposition to replacing one imperial power with another. American patience for pacification operations has always been very limited because "foreign military occupation is incongruous with the goals of a national group to govern itself, yet the goals of military occupation cannot be accomplished in a short period of time."⁴⁵ Even though Cuba required time to establish a stable, independent form of government, many in the anti-imperialist movement were opposed to the initial war, and saw pacification as an attempt by

⁴¹ Graham A. Cosmas, *An Army for Empire, the United States Army in the Spanish-American War*, 1st ed., Vol. 59 (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1971), 29.

⁴² Alan Reed Millett, *The Politics of Intervention: The Military Occupation of Cuba, 1906-1909*: (Columbus: The Ohio State University Press, 1968), 5.

⁴³ Ibid., vi.

⁴⁴ Ibid., vi.

⁴⁵ Edelstein, "Occupational Hazards," 58.

political leadership to establish an American empire. “Steeped in the principles of liberty and self-determination, much of the American public felt uncomfortable at the prospect of maintaining the type of lengthy stewardship necessary to fundamentally change Cuban Society, if such a change was possible at all.”⁴⁶

In an article describing the Army’s work in Cuba, Wood wrote, “The conscience of the American people decreed that we should not exploit that island, but that we should do all that we could to build up and better the people.”⁴⁷ Wood’s close friend Roosevelt believed that “subject peoples had to acquire a virtuous moral character-honest, disinterested, and self-controlled. They had to prove their fitness to their imperial master, namely by waiting patiently for independence to be conferred.”⁴⁸ Wood struggled with American reluctance to give the time necessary for Cuba to develop to the point he felt that had earned the right to self-government.

Leonard Wood’s operational approach to Cuba was a rejection of “both the populist appeal to the masses and the ‘Mugwump’ commitment to laissez-faire and puritan moralism.”⁴⁹ He resisted both calls from both the expansionists for greater involvement of American business in Cuba (to protect the fragile Cuban economy), and calls from the anti-imperialists for elections and American disengagement from pacification efforts.⁵⁰ Wood was concerned that expansionists would use pacification to increase American involvement to a more permanent arrangement. Wood wrote, “The main thing is to avoid the appearance of correcting abuses which do not exist.”⁵¹ Wood also understood that continued American involvement was necessary to the continued development of Cuban society into a nation capable of self-government.

⁴⁶ Birtle, *United States Army Counterinsurgency*, 108.

⁴⁷ Wood, “The Constructive Work of the American Army,” 258.

⁴⁸ Wertheim, “Reluctant Liberator,” 496.

⁴⁹ Gillette, “The Military Occupation of Cuba,” 410.

⁵⁰ George F. Hoar, *The Attempt to Subjugate a People Striving for Freedom, Not the American Soldier, Responsible for Cruelties in the Philippines* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Congress, 1902), 4. “You are fighting for sovereignty. You are fighting for eternal dominion over that people.”

⁵¹ Wood to Secretary of War Elihu Root, quoted in Hagedorn, *Leonard Wood, a Biography*, vol. 1-269.

Wood received minimal guidance in a hand-written “dispatch scrawled on a page torn from a notebook” (the only order he received when he assumed the role of the Military Governor of the city of Santiago on July 20, 1898).⁵² President McKinley ordered him to take charge, establish order, arrest disturbers of the peace, and “permit no armed men to enter the city except such of our own men as come on duty.”⁵³ There were two paths available from these simple instructions. The first path aligned with the traditional Army view embraced by General John Brooke (Cuba’s first Military Governor) in Havana. Brooke viewed the Army’s role as limited to fighting battles and enforcing the peace and took a passive approach to governing.⁵⁴

Wood’s aggressive implementation of reforms in Santiago clashed with “Brooke, a cautious, apolitical sixty-year-old cavalryman... tempered in the ways of the Old Army, he loyally sought directions from Washington in managing Cuban affairs.”⁵⁵ While Brooke did begin limited efforts to reform government and society in Havana, he was “unable to fathom the McKinley administration’s desires for Cuba in 1899, he shied away from dictating reform on his own initiative.”⁵⁶ Wood’s vision of the American government as a vehicle for social change, and the Army as its implementing agent was a drastic departure from Brooke’s approach.”⁵⁷

In conducting operations, Brooke looked to establish security and stabilize Cuban governance to set the conditions for the transfer of authority to duly elected Cuban officials in short order. He looked to provide only limited support for the reform of infrastructure and facilitate free elections. However, the problems facing Brooke required more than basic services and clean government.⁵⁸ Brooke saw any action beyond the minimum required to be “a kind of

⁵² Ibid., 183.

⁵³ Ibid., 183.

⁵⁴ Bacevich, *Diplomat in Khaki*, 12.

⁵⁵ Millett, *The Politics of Intervention*, 29.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 29.

⁵⁷ Gillette, *The Military Occupation of Cuba, 1899-1902: Workshop for American Progressivism*, 412.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 412.

paternalism which would destroy the self-respect of the people”⁵⁹ Brooke took for granted a smooth transition of authority based on American style elections and assumed a level of experience and competence that was not available in the new Cuban leadership. “It must be remembered, however, that elections are not an endpoint. Elections are only a first step in building local and national legitimacy. This universal requirement for the selection of leaders is a strong indicator—and measure—of governmental moral legitimacy.”⁶⁰

Wood understood that “the devastation and near anarchy of the island suggested immediately the need for extensive social, economic and political reconstruction.”⁶¹ Without significant American involvement, Cuban self-governance would not just magically happen. Wood believed that the American Army could prepare the people of Cuba for self-government and establish conditions that render the establishment of a Cuban republic possible and its orderly and successful maintenance probable.⁶² Brooke believed that free and fair elections were an end; Wood saw them as a step on the way to a self-governing Cuba. Wood’s view aligned more closely to McKinley’s belief that emphasized clearly that the United States Army was not in Cuba simply to expel the Spaniards, but to bring about a new order of things.⁶³

Wood described initial conditions in the province of Santiago as “unfavorable as can be imagined.”⁶⁴ Conditions he needed to address included famine, a wide variety of diseases including “Yellow fever, pernicious malaria, and intestinal fevers” as well as sanitation, police work, the re-establishing of municipal governments, courts all in a “stricken and demoralized

⁵⁹ J. R. Brooke, “Civil Report of Major-General John R. Brooke,” *House Documents*, 56th Congress, 1st Session 7, no. 2 (1 October, 1900), 11.

⁶⁰ Max G. Manwaring and Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, *Ambassador Stephen Krasner's Orienting Principle for Foreign Policy (and Military Management): Responsible Sovereignty* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2012), 11.

⁶¹ Gillette, *The Military Occupation of Cuba, 1899-1902: Workshop for American Progressivism*, 412.

⁶² Wood, “The Military Government of Cuba,” 153.

⁶³ William McKinley, William R. Shafter. McKinley to Shafter, July 18, 1898.in Lane, *Armed Progressive: General Leonard Wood*, 55.

⁶⁴ Wood, “The Military Government of Cuba,” 153.

country.”⁶⁵ What is noticeably absent from his early description of the operational environment is any expression of a need for continued maneuver warfare to defeat an organized counter-insurgency, or other security needs beyond standard police work to establish civic order.

Hugh L. Scott, one of Brooke’s officers described the need for centralizing power, “a military government is the only kind fit to cope with such conditions [as existed in Cuba]... as soon as a military intervention is proclaimed with force to back it, everything falls immediately into place... The will of the commanding General is supreme.”⁶⁶ “More importantly, Brooke and his associates backed by the American army were relatively free of internal political pressure in Cuba. There was no organized resistance to their rule.”⁶⁷

It was Wood, who leveraged his will as commanding general to full effect. “The first work undertaken was feeding the starving, taking care of the sick, cleaning up and removing dangerous material in the city.”⁶⁸ Wood understood, based on his initial assessment of the city of Santiago, that disease and starvation would be two of the greatest initial threats to the stability of the province. He approached the problem of pacification like the surgeon he was, using triage. If Cuba was a patient, then the most obvious would was the lack of food, followed closely by public health. Failure to address either area implied significant risk to American forces. If American forces could not meet the basic needs of the Cuban population, then the Cubans might continue the revolt they had started against Spain in 1865.

Wood’s approach to alleviating famine illustrated his understanding of both the operational environment and the effects of his actions. Wood estimated the population of

⁶⁵ Ibid., 153.

⁶⁶ Hugh L. Scott, *Some Memories of a Soldier* (New York: The Century Company, 1928), quoted in Millett, *The Politics of Intervention: The Military Occupation of Cuba, 1906-1909*, 31

⁶⁷ Ibid., 30.

⁶⁸ Wood, “The Military Government of Cuba,” 153.

Santiago to be approximately fifty-thousand people in his 1899 report.⁶⁹ In the early days after the fall of Santiago, rations were issued “eighteen to twenty-thousand a day; on one day fifty-one thousand.”⁷⁰ Wood knew however, that providing food with Army resources and labor was a short-term solution, and he would need to combine this effort with other efforts to create a stable society, and the Soldiers he had available were not enough to feed fifty-thousand people. “We seized all the carts and wagons we could find in the streets, rounded up the drivers and laborers with the aid of the police, and worked them under guard, willing or unwilling.”⁷¹ For the unwilling, Wood showed that he was still capable of wielding a more forceful hand in accomplishing civic tasks, “Men who refused and held back soon learned that there were things far more unpleasant than cheerful obedience, and turned to work with as much grace as they could command.”⁷²

Wood’s approach to this and future operational problems was to involve the civilian populace (willing or unwilling) in the solution. This approach accomplished an important goal beyond the simple provision of food. It provided employment to a great number of the populace who would have been without a means of support. “All were paid a fair amount for their services, partly in money, partly in rations, but all worked; some removing the waste refuse from the city, others in distributing food...”⁷³

While addressing hunger was Wood’s initial priority, he understood that addressing public health and sanitation would set the conditions for the long-term success of his Cuban operations. “It is yellow fever we must fight, and it is going to be a life and death struggle.”⁷⁴ The initial death rate in Santiago (from all causes) in the early days of Wood’s administration was

⁶⁹ Wood, *Report by Brigadier General Leonard Wood, US Volunteers: On Civic Conditions in the Department of Santiago and Puerto Príncipe*, 24.

⁷⁰ Hagedorn, *Leonard Wood, a Biography*, 187.

⁷¹ Leonard Wood, “Santiago since the Surrender,” *Scribner’s Magazine* 25 (1899), 516.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 516.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 517.

⁷⁴ Hagedorn, *Leonard Wood, a Biography*, 188.

over two hundred a day. “Men could not bury the dead fast enough and they were burned in great heaps of eighty or ninety piled high on gratings of railroad iron and mixed with grass and sticks.”⁷⁵ Burning the dead was only addressing the symptom of the greater problem, open sewage, and four-hundred years of garbage building up in the street. In order to combat these conditions, Wood instituted projects to “drain certain unhealthy surroundings of the city, improve the water supply, and render the place more habitable.”⁷⁶

Once again these sanitation and public health projects were organized by Wood and undertaken by the populace in order to “give occupation to the thousands of idle people...some were paid in money and some in rations.”⁷⁷ Cubans sometimes chafed at the requirement to work, and the new sanitation requirements. Robert Porter, McKinley’s special commissioner to the island said, “People making sewers of the thoroughfares were publicly horsewhipped in the streets of Santiago” and “eminently respectable citizens were forcibly brought before the commanding general and sentenced to aid in clearing the streets they were in the habit of defiling.”⁷⁸ Harsh measures were called for, because Wood believed that the sanitary conditions were the root cause of the many epidemics they faced.⁷⁹ Wood’s use of violence to compel cooperation did not result in violent popular uprisings.

Another problem Wood needed to solve in order to meet American strategic aims was governance. Wood observed inefficiency inherent in the former Spanish system, and moved swiftly to remedy the situation. “Cuba was governed from the first [occupation by Spain] by men sent out from Spain...really a military despotism. The ruler was invested with unlimited power

⁷⁵ Ibid., 189.

⁷⁶ Wood, “The Military Government of Cuba,” 154.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 154.

⁷⁸ Robert P. Porter, *Industrial Cuba: Being a Study of Present Commercial and Industrial Conditions, with Suggestions as to the Opportunities Presented in the Island for American Capital, Enterprise, and Labour*: (GP Putnam’s sons, 1899). Quoted in Lane, *Armed Progressive: General Leonard Wood*, 58.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 58.

and accountable only to the sovereign at home.”⁸⁰. While Wood did not support this type of absolute control for mature nations, he lobbied for and received similar authority in Cuba. “A few days after assuming command of the department [provincial governor of Santiago] Wood set out on a tour of the interior to supervise personally the reestablishment of civil government. No one could hold office without the consent of the military governor.”⁸¹ In order to avoid replacing Spanish military despotism with American military despotism, Wood needed to establish Cuban self-governance, but he also realized that it would require time and training to prepare the people of Cuba to govern.

Wood and his deputies personally shaped the municipal governments at the local level from a list locals submitted of “the better class.”⁸² Prior to this selection, “the government, which they did not share, was an economic institution for individual gain.”⁸³ Wood understood that in order for the Cuban people to accept their new government that government would have to be effective, efficient and operate in the interest of the people. “There was no time to write an electoral law and put in in force. The method adopted was to go to a town, assemble from sixty to a hundred men representing all classes of the people, and ask them to name municipal officers and to present their list as soon as completed.”⁸⁴

As Wood’s actions to address the desperate public health situation early in the occupation began to show effect, by 1899 Wood believed that the courts and judicial system represented the next most “most immediate and pressing need of reform and improvement” for the long-term health of Cuban society.⁸⁵ Wood instigated court and prison reform, reestablished police forces,

⁸⁰ Leonard Wood et al., *The New America and the Far East: Cuba, Porto Rico*, Vol. 8 (Boston: Marshall Jones, 1907), 1327.

⁸¹ Lane, *Armed Progressive*, 67.

⁸² McCallum, *Leonard Wood: Rough Rider, Surgeon, Architect of American Imperialism*, 128.

⁸³ Millett, *The Politics of Intervention*, 26.

⁸⁴ Wood, “The Military Government of Cuba,” 154.

⁸⁵ Wood, *Report by Brigadier General Leonard Wood, US Volunteers: On Civic Conditions in the Department of Santiago and Puerto Príncipe*, 20.

and established public order in urban and rural areas. A functioning judicial and police system was critical to establishing confidence in the Cuban government's ability to provide essential services to the Cuba populace. The starting point for the reform Wood sought was the previous Spanish legal system that had produced a backlog of court cases.

"By the order of the President of the United States, of July 13, 1898, published in General Orders No. 101, A.G.O. of that year, the municipal law prevailing in the island was continued in force so far as was compatible with the result of the American occupation of the province."⁸⁶ This order re-established the former Spanish system with Cuban judges and magistrates. The major shortfall in this system, according to Wood, was that it did not provide for the individual right to a speedy trial which Wood viewed as fundamental. The process was cumbersome, particularly for felony level offenses, and the backlog of cases left over from the Spanish did not inspire the support of the Cuban population. Witnesses, victims, and offenders all had to travel to a central location (called the Audencia) until police concluded an investigation and a trial held.⁸⁷

Wood again showed his understanding of the Cuban environment by incorporating the Cuban people in restoring and reforming the rule of law in Cuba. Wood's first action in this area was to establish a rural guard composed for "the maintenance of order in the rural districts."⁸⁸ This action had three positive effects on the situation in Cuba, increased security in rural Cuba, the disbanding of the potentially dangerous rebel army and the restart of domestic food production.

The first, obvious effect was to provide an increased level of security in rural Cuba. This increased security facilitated the return of Cubans to their rural homes and farms, and relieved some of the population pressure on the cities where they had gone to escape the previously lawless areas. While these Cubans remained in the large cities, the American Army and nascent

⁸⁶ Ibid., 19.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 19.

⁸⁸ Wood, "The Military Government of Cuba," 154.

Cuban Government had to feed and shelter them. Once back at their farms they could take care of themselves as they had always done. These rural Cubans were mostly farmers, and their return to the rural areas restarted large-scale domestic food production.

The second positive effect was to provide an opportunity for the former Cuban rebels for employment in the guard. "It [the rural guard] was conceived originally at a time of mounting pressure to disband the Cuban army, and thereby offered an ideal means through which to hasten the dissolution of the insurgent force."⁸⁹ Soldiers and leaders from the rebel army had expected to assume leadership positions in the new government, but Wood favored the educated Cuban's and the Spaniards who remained behind for those positions. This resulted in resentment and tension between American and Cuban forces. This former rebel army represented a threat to Wood's progress while it existed, and "some of the soldiers had turned to banditry. Not all Cubans who turned to banditry were either deserters or desperados many were former soldiers honorably discharged, and immediately destitute."⁹⁰

The third effect was that "the rural guard was also seen as a way of relieving post-war employment pressure, thereby a measure to prevent banditry."⁹¹ Instead of ten thousand hungry soldiers, Wood increased security and boosted economic production and consumption by the formation of the rural guard. The rural guard's assistance in controlling this banditry was critical to the success of Wood's operations because:

A government committed publicly to the restoration of order and promotion of prosperity as the central purpose of its presence, but unable to end conditions of disorder and disruption, could not long expect to obtain either the confidence of producers or collaboration of the propertied.⁹²

Aside from providing employment opportunities to the Cuban populace, Wood also faced

⁸⁹ Luis A. Perez, "The Pursuit of Pacification: Banditry and the United State's Occupation of Cuba, 1889-1902," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 18, no. 2 (1986), 322.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 317.

⁹¹ Ibid., 323-324.

⁹² Ibid., 322.

market pressures that threatened to derail his pacification efforts. Economic recovery was also critical to Wood's pacification plan. Wood took action to stabilize prices, put Cubans to work and restart agriculture but "there is [was] nothing outside of sanitary work that is more important than opening up of roads through the interior."⁹³ The road infrastructure was important to increasing the viability of rural economy in that better roads would connect the rural populace to markets in the city, and connect rural farm areas to markets and consumers in the cities. This highlight of this effort was between 1900 and 1902 when he "assisted railroad entrepreneurs....to charter and construct a railway in eastern Cuba."⁹⁴

Wood also controlled Cuban and foreign merchants looking to take advantage of shortages by price gouging. He issued directives to prevent any activity detrimental to Cuban business, including lobbying unsuccessfully to reduce protectionist American import tariffs on Cuba goods.⁹⁵ He also angered American Congressmen by denying American business efforts to exploit Cuban markets during the initial years of the occupation.

The reform of the school system was critical in Wood's mind, to the future success of Cuban Society, "I believed that the success of the future government would depend as much upon the foundation and extension of its public schools as upon any other factor."⁹⁶ According to Wood, "the public school system in Cuba prior to the occupation was...a system in name only. Wood drafted his Lieutenant Matthew E. Hanna, who had taught school in Ohio prior to attending West Point, to create a law on which to base a school system. Hanna created the law based on the school law of Ohio, and put the substance of that law in Spanish."⁹⁷ Once put in place the law met

⁹³ Wood, *Report by Brigadier General Leonard Wood, US Volunteers: On Civic Conditions in the Department of Santiago and Puerto Príncipe*, 13.

⁹⁴ Millett, *The Politics of Intervention*, 39.

⁹⁵ Senator Teller of Colorado was a particularly fierce opponent in protecting the Colorado sugar beet industry against Cuban sugar imports.

⁹⁶ Wood, "The Military Government of Cuba," 164.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 162.

Wood's intent of providing a "well-defined plan of administration."⁹⁸

With Hanna's Ohio school law enacted on the island, Wood had the foundation to begin the training of Cuban teachers, with the help of Harvard University. "In 1900, Harvard University invited one thousand Cuban teachers to spend the summer at Cambridge."⁹⁹ Wood paid the teachers well, and on a year round basis (provided they attended the Harvard training during the summer, or trained in Cuba) in order to attract "young women from the best families in the island."¹⁰⁰

Wood again demonstrated both his preference for the 'better class of Cuban' and his understanding the importance of educating Cubans in the tasks they would be responsible for following the American occupation. Wood dismissed the suggestion to employ American teachers because he understood that "such action on our part would have been very unwise, as the people were rather suspicious of our motives and of the sincerity of our declaration that we were to ultimately withdraw from the island."¹⁰¹ Wood's approach to education is consistent with his approach to rural security. He employed Cuban forces rather than American military power to chase Cuban bandits; he employed Cuban teachers rather than importing American teachers.

Operational Art in Cuba

Wood's sequencing of his pacification actions was also critical to his success in Cuba. He created a secure environment by addressing basic human needs before attempting longer-term pacification actions such as governance education and legal reform. Pacification is a pyramid built on a base of a secured environment. In unstable environments, collaboration of the population is limited because the competition to meet basic human needs overwhelms all other

⁹⁸ Ibid., 163.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 164.; Wood and Hanna also arranged to send sixty teachers to the New York State Normal School at New Paltz to grow a cadre of Cuban teachers, but funding was cut after the first 30 students graduated from the program.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 164.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 163.

concerns. In order to create lasting reforms, Wood needed to first show the Cubans that participation in those reforms would be reasonably safe and benefit them. Providing security builds trust with the population and facilitates collaboration in support of civil actions leading to native governance, and finally to self-governance. If Wood had not addressed Cuban's basic needs such as famine, then civil unrest, crime, and rioting were inevitable as the Cubans fought to meet those basic needs.

In order to expand American pacification over a greater space, Wood appointed temporary municipal leadership in rural areas based on Cuban recommendations. This action encouraged broader Cuban collaboration and provided additional stability outside municipal areas directly controlled by American forces. Wood created the conditions necessary for Cuban participation in the building of their new nation by first providing a secure environment, second restarting the Cuban economy, third conducting governance and legal reform, and finally providing necessary education and training to develop qualified Cuban leaders for self-government. Incorporating Cubans into a reformed government made Cubans more likely to give their support to Wood's pacification efforts, and allowed him to expand pacification efforts over a greater area.

In Cuba, Wood's initial tactical actions addressed the basic needs of the Cubans, human suffering, and security.¹⁰² Public health, sanitation, and security were areas where Wood exercised stewardship throughout his pacification of Cuba, not just during the initial stages. After establishing initial security, Wood was able to focus on rebuilding the economic system so Cubans could become self-sustaining. The Cuban economy provided a means for Cubans to feed themselves, and provided the revenue needed to pay for government services.

His third area of emphasis was to replace the Spanish system with a system of governance and rule of law to benefit and protect the Cubans. Finally, he focused on long-term

¹⁰² Ibid., 153.

training and education that was critical to preparing (uplifting in his words) the Cuban population so they would become capable of self-government.¹⁰³ Wood synchronized all these actions under a unified purpose, to prepare the Cuban people for independence.

He understood that each action provided a component necessary to achieve the American strategic aim of an independent Cuba. He also understood that he could not begin building the new Cuba without a foundation. By providing initial security and expanding governmental control first, restarting the economy second and executing longer-term reforms such as governance and rule of law after he met basic human needs, Leonard Wood successfully pacified Cuba and set her on the path to self-government.

Wood's actions demonstrate that he understood the Cuban environment, and appreciated the judicious application of American military and economic power. By resisting the temptation to rely solely on American power, Wood avoided many pitfalls early in the American occupation. He prioritized his pacification operations in space and time, addressing the most critical (famine, sanitation) first, and conducting his operations in a manner that underscored the American commitment to temporary occupation. By putting Cubans in front where possible, providing security and organization, and establishing education programs to prepare them for self-governance Wood achieved success in Cuba on a scale that was not possible without arranging his actions to achieve a combined effect.

Case Study #2- Philippines

When Leonard Wood assumed his duties as the first Military Governor of the Moro Province in the Philippines, he believed that it was an interim assignment before he assumed command of the Philippine Division.¹⁰⁴ He could not know that this Military governorship would last for three years, and be one of the most politically contentious assignments of his career.

¹⁰³ Wood, "The Military Government of Cuba," 156.

¹⁰⁴ Bacevich, *Diplomat in Khaki*, 24.

While the Philippines presented many of the same challenges as Wood had faced in Cuba (governance and rule of law, security, and employment), they also presented a spate of new complex conditions (warlike tribal system, piracy, insurgency, and slavery) that required different actions. Despite the more complex situation, Wood brought the same tremendous energy, creativity, and nuanced approach he used to make his name in Cuba. He employed civil actions in stable areas, and took military action to pacify rebellious areas. “In contrast to the Cubans, the Moros in 1903 were unbroken, independent, and disinclined to accept American domination.”¹⁰⁵

The situation in Moroland was very different from Cuba, but American strategic aims were the same, to prepare indigenous population for self-rule. Wood’s detractors maintain that he took a radically different approach to the Philippines and forgot the lessons he learned during his successful tenure as the Military Governor of Cuba. However, even staunch Wood critic, Jack Lane acknowledged,

In the debate that raged over the annexation of the Philippines and the subsequent Filipino insurrection, critics then and scholars since have often overlooked the fact that the nation acquired not only a rebellion but also a society in the southernmost islands of the archipelago that was totally alien to the American experience.¹⁰⁶

In the Philippines as he had in Cuba, Leonard Wood demonstrated both an understanding of the operational environment, and the ability to arrange military actions in time, space, and purpose to meet American strategic objectives.

In the Moro Province, Wood faced a fragmented tribal society that lacked any kind of unifying identity (Spanish, Muslim or Philippine), and was violently opposed to outside interference in their long-established cultural traditions. The Moros were a fragmented society that the Spanish had never successfully ruled in their four hundred years of occupation. According to Wood, “The element which has been most difficult to deal with is the Moro.” The

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 30.

¹⁰⁶ Lane, *Armed Progressive*, 119.

Moro Province consisted of

A number of peoples are included under this general head [Moro], all of them Mohammedan, all of them intolerant and, as a rule, hating and despising Christians and living largely by piracy, slave trading and robbery of the weaker and less warlike savage races of the province.¹⁰⁷

From 1899 until Wood's assumption of the newly created Governorship in 1903, American relations in the Moro province were based on the Bates Agreement, and a conception of military-civilian government developed by Major General Adna Chaffee who "recommended establishing a military-civil government headed by a commander-governor selected for his administrative ability in civil as well as military affairs."¹⁰⁸ Chaffee's duty description for the incoming military governor fit Leonard Wood like no other American.

Wood summarized the difficulty he faced in his first Annual Report to Congress,

The mixed character of the population, the varying degree of intelligence ranging from a few fairly well educated Filipinos on the seacoast to cannibalistic savages in the interior, the intense animosities due to religious differences, growing out of the struggle between Christians and Mohammedans covering several centuries, the entire absence in many sections of interior ways of communication and the amount of time required to visit the seacoast and remote island settlements have all combined to render the problem of establishing government and exercising control over the mixed peoples of this province a very difficult one.¹⁰⁹

Wood understood that accomplishing American strategic aims in the Philippines involved both the civil and military components of pacification, and required him to arrange his actions so that their effect would be greater than their individual sum.

After his selection for the post, Wood and his aides, First Lieutenant Frank McCoy and Major Hugh Scott, traveled by steam ship to "study the handiwork of the world's other imperial

¹⁰⁷ Leonard Wood, *Annual Report of the Governor of the Moro Province* (Washington D.C.: Bureau of Insular Affairs, War Department, 1904), 4.

¹⁰⁸ United States Army Division of the Philippines, *Annual Report of Major General Adna R. Chaffee, United States Army, Commanding the Division of the Philippines* (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Insular Affairs, War Department, 1902), 12. Quoted in Lane, *Armed Progressive: General Leonard Wood*, 120.

¹⁰⁹ Wood, *Annual Report of the Governor of the Moro Province*, 4.

powers...Wood decided to tour the principal European possessions in Asia on his way to the Philippines.”¹¹⁰ During this trip Wood’s party gained further confidence in the approach Wood had taken in Cuba. They also gained additional insights that proved useful in the Philippines. In Java McCoy observed that “the key to Dutch success...was their assumption that the natives are the simplest of children and the governor general their father and protector.”¹¹¹ Their time in Egypt, India, and Turkey provided Wood with first hand observations of imperial powers actively governing populations similar in his mind to those he would encounter in the Moro Province.

Many factors shaped the Moro Province prior to Wood’s arrival. When the United States defeated the Spanish in 1899, President McKinley insisted that American forces replace the departing Spanish posts in “Mindanao, Jolo and the small post of Siassi. Samar and Leyte were occupied in late January 1900 to open the hemp ports as well.”¹¹² For these lightly manned garrisons, the “Bates Agreement” negotiated by Brig. Gen. John C. Bates on 20 August 1899, promoted a policy of non-interference with the native culture, provided a nominal Moro leader (the Sultan of Sulu), and gave an American promise to respect the Islamic and tribal traditions of the Moro people. This agreement allowed the United States to garrison the province with only 2600 soldiers, while General Otis estimated that without the Bates Agreement, “he would have required 15,000 soldiers to garrison the Moro Provinces.”¹¹³

The American Army in the northern Philippines needed the fighting strength that the Bates agreement preserved between 1899 and 1902 to end the insurgency in the northern Philippines, and establish a security situation that would be more conducive to continue pacification efforts there. The tradeoff the American force accepted in the southern islands was

¹¹⁰ Bacevich, *Diplomat in Khaki*, 24.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 27.

¹¹² Brian McAllister Linn, *The Philippine War, 1899-1902* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2000), 225.

¹¹³ P. G. Gowing, *Mandate in Moroland: The American Government of Muslim Filipinos, 1899-1920*: (Manila: Philippine Center for Advanced Studies, University of the Philippines System, 1977), 219. Quoted in Linn, *The Philippine War, 1899-1902*, 123.

the continuation of practices that were antithetical to American strategic aims and sensibilities such as “slavery, blood feuds, polygamy, and draconian punishments for trivial offenses.”¹¹⁴ With the formal establishment of the Moro Province, Wood would see these practices as evidence of the savagery of the Moros and take action to eliminate them.

Pacification – Moro Province

As he did in Cuba, Wood leaped directly into the work. Within forty-eight hours of his arrival in the provincial capital of Zamboanga, he started on a rigorous tour of his new province to assess the operational environment first-hand. He conveyed his initial impression in a letter to his wife, “It’s a wild country, and the people are a curious lot, all Moslems...it will be many years before they can govern themselves.”¹¹⁵ Wood believed that, “The Moros held their qualities and defects in common as a race, not as a nation. They were aggressively disunited. Wherever he went, Wood found looting and murder, oppression and misery.”¹¹⁶

At the start of his tenure, Wood inherited a military government organized into five districts, Zamboanga, Sulu, Cottabato, Davao, and Lanao. Wood issued four primary instructions to the military governors of these districts to “gain the confidence of the natives, establish friendly relations, explain the purpose of the new government, and influence the people to discontinue the practice of slavery and other vicious practices.”¹¹⁷ In three of the districts, Sulu, Cottabato and Lanao, this measured approach “was mistaken for timidity and lack of power” and made military actions necessary to “bring to and end all organized resistance therein.”¹¹⁸ Wood’s operational approach was to attempt civil measures first, and follow those measures with decisive military action where the security environment was not conducive to civil reform. This approach

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 226.

¹¹⁵ Hermann Hagedorn, *Leonard Wood, a Biography*, Vol. 2 (New York; London: Harper & Brothers, 1931), 6.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 4.

¹¹⁷ Wood, *Annual Report of the Governor of the Moro Province*, 5.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 5.

followed “President McKinley’s policy of benevolent assimilation [that] initially focused the military on civil-military actions to improve the lives of the Filipinos.”¹¹⁹

Wood believed that “order and the acceptance of American dominion were prerequisites to reorganizing Moro society along more efficient lines.”¹²⁰ While the violent military suppression of tribal elements that resisted American governance receives the most coverage in written history, those efforts were a supporting effort to Wood’s goal of reforming of Moro society through civil means. Based on his initial assessment of the Moro Province, Wood categorized the needs of the Moro province into five areas. The first four were governance, education, public works, and administration of justice. The fifth focus area, provincial income, was perhaps the most critical. It provided domestic revenue, which was necessary to create a self-sustaining government. “It is proposed to devote 25 percent of the total revenue to public education and an equal amount for public works. The balance will be consumed in aid to municipalities, maintenance of the government, charities, administration of justice, and incremental expenses.”¹²¹

The increase in Moro provincial revenues between 1904 and 1905 (44% for Provincial revenues and 18% for Customs revenues) was impressive. However, the most impressive aspect of revenue collection was Wood’s ability to collect revenues from the Moros at all.¹²² According to Islamic law, paying a tax is a form of ‘tribute’ to something other than Allah, which is forbidden. “Among the Moros taxation is tribute; tribute is degrading and an attempt to collect it meant certain war.”¹²³ The American military solution to this problem was to charge “a two, five,

¹¹⁹ R. D. Ramsey III, *Savage Wars of Peace: Case Studies of Pacification in the Philippines, 1900-1902*. (Kansas: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2007), 117.

¹²⁰ Bacevich, *Diplomat in Khaki: Major General Frank Ross McCoy and American Foreign Policy, 1898-1949*, 31

¹²¹ Wood, *Annual Report of the Governor of the Moro Province*, 12.

¹²² Geo T. Langhorne, *Second Annual Report of the Governor of the Province of Moro* (Zamboanga, Mindanao, P.I.: Manila, Bureau of Printing, 1905), 13.

¹²³ Robert L. Bullard, "Military Pacification," *Journal of the Military Service Institution of the United States* 46 (1910), 13.

or den dollar “pass” for their persons, houses, horses, boats or business was no such thing, and the United States wisely began taxation among Moros upon those things.”¹²⁴

By the end of 1904, seven thousand Moros had taken out cedula in the Cottabato district providing funding for projects in that district. The other districts, particularly Lanao and Sulu had far lower participation “owing to the active and determined character of the opposition in these districts to the establishment of government and control.”¹²⁵ Wood noted in his 1904 report that the opposition in those provinces was at an end, and predicted, “The inhabitants will comply with the obligations imposed on them.”¹²⁶ Wood’s prediction was correct. The 1905 Annual report showed a 92% increase for the Sulu province, and a 96% increase for the Lanao district in the revenue on hand by 1905.¹²⁷ Wood’s ability to work within Moro cultural sensitivities, where they did not conflict with American principles, allowed the Moro Province to move closer to an integrated, functioning society.

With the beginnings of an effective provincial income system in place, Wood was able to focus work on the other critical areas, beginning with governance. Wood believed that, “there is nothing to be gained by the codification of the Moro laws, and the outcome will necessarily be confusion.”¹²⁸ Wood understood the need to consider traditional Moro tribal customs, but believed that it would be a mistake to codify them as laws, since “many of them are revolting, and but few embody principles which we would wish to perpetuate.”¹²⁹ Wood believed that the best solution to Moro governance was to “adopt...the laws in force in other portions of the Philippines and bring all the people of these islands under a common system of justice.”¹³⁰

¹²⁴ Ibid., 13.

¹²⁵ Wood, *Annual Report of the Governor of the Moro Province*, 12.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 12.

¹²⁷ Langhorne, *Second Annual Report of the Governor of the Province of Moro*, 13.

¹²⁸ Wood, *Annual Report of the Governor of the Moro Province*, 10.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 10.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 10.

There were two great obstacles to the implementation of the system of laws in force in the other Philippine provinces. The first was that it required the abrogation of the Bates agreement. The second obstacle was the potential alienation of the Moro Dattos (tribal leaders) who derived their authority and influence from Moro tribal custom. Finding a way to integrate the Dattos into the new government would facilitate Wood's implementation of Philippine law. The abrogation of the Bates agreement required careful diplomacy both in the Moro Province, and in the United States. In Moroland, the abrogation called American honesty into question and created the possibility of Moro rebellion, and resistance to other American programs. In the United States, anti-imperialists described abrogation as an example of a growing American imperial desire.

Wood used a two-pronged approach to address these issues. He implemented Tribal Ward system of government, and he incorporated qualified Moros into the new municipal government structure wherever possible as he had in Cuba.¹³¹ Wood's intent with these efforts was to, "develop individualism among these people, and, little by little, teach them to stand upon their own feet independent of petty chieftains." Wood felt that "in order to do this the chief or headman has to be given some position of more or less authority under the government, but he ceases to have any divine rights."¹³² By preserving some Muslim traditions in the Tribal Ward system, Wood avoided the specter of rebellion under the guise of religious war.

"Reception of these administrative measures by many traditional chiefs was positive and army officers reported enthusiastic support from Muslim communities for the tribal ward idea."¹³³ By incorporating the dattos into the new government, Wood established the initial consent of the governed in most areas. Achieving this consent was also important to the American audience because, "the consent of the governed in some form is a principle of our government and a

¹³¹ Ibid., 10.

¹³² Wood to Strachey in McCallum, *Leonard Wood: Rough Rider*, 218-19.

¹³³ Patricio N. Abinales, "American Military Presence in the Southern Philippines: A Comparative Historical Overview" (paper presented at the East-West Center, Honolulu, HI, February 20-22, 2003).

condition precedent to our governing any people...we reject the idea of ruling by conquest, force alone.”¹³⁴

Another benefit of incorporating local leaders into the new system of governance was that it gave Moro leaders a stake in the American Army’s pacification efforts, while allowing him to ‘save face’ while still collaborating with Americans.¹³⁵ While the Moro leaders saw the gradual eroding of their power under the Spanish system, the new system of governance without the tribal ward system, threatened to remove their authority entirely. The Army’s administration of the tribal ward system, and Wood’s emphasis on an education system to give Moro leaders the skills to participate in self-government provided Moro leaders with reasons for optimism and collaboration.

Wood understood that continued effective participation in governance by the Moros required a more substantial group of educated Moro leaders, and an educated population that would develop future leaders. “American involvement in Philippine education began almost before the fighting had stopped. Existing schools were reopened as quickly as possible and, in some cases, American soldiers were assigned to serve as teachers.”¹³⁶ “ Since the existing schools were almost exclusively within the areas previously controlled by Spain, they included few, if any, schools serving Muslim children.”¹³⁷ Extending education to the Muslim Moros provided challenges and “In 1904 only 240 of the 2114 children enrolled were Muslim.”¹³⁸ Part of this challenge lay in finding qualified Muslim teachers and, “Only 15 of the teachers were American and 16 Muslim Filipino.” While the Moros preferred Muslim teachers, they were in short supply.

¹³⁴ Bullard, "Military Pacification," 5.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 14. Bullard highlighted the importance of ‘face saving’ by pointing out that demonstrating restraint with superior force facilitated collaboration.

¹³⁶ David P. Barrows, "The Memoirs of David Prescott Barrows," *Bulletin of the American Historical Collection* 23 (1995), 47.

¹³⁷ Jeffrey A. Milligan, "Democratization Or Neocolonialism? The Education of Muslims Under US Military Occupation, 1903–20," *History of Education*, 33, no. 4 (2004), 453.

¹³⁸ Wood, *Annual Report of the Governor of the Moro Province*, 13.

Wood believed that it was important to make English the primary language of instruction for both Filipino and Moro children. Wood pointed to the many different dialects of the Moro language, and the generally poor facility with the Spanish language as factors in favor of using English as the primary language of instruction.¹³⁹ At the same time, he believed that, “It will probably be necessary...to give a certain amount of instruction in Moro for a time in order that children...be able to use and understand their own language.”¹⁴⁰ While he did not harbor much respect for the Moro language, Wood still understood the necessity for conducting some instruction in Moro dialects, particularly with the lack of teachers qualified to teach in English. Wood also believed that the combination of education in English and the conduct of government and commercial business would succeed in making “English the main language and the medium of transacting all official and most commercial business in the comparatively near future.”¹⁴¹

In 1906, the curriculum consisted of four years of instruction with a heavy emphasis on trades and practical life skills. General Tasker Bliss, Wood’s successor, described the educational purpose as “Industrial and agricultural education, then, with this model as its regulative ideal, became the beginning [of] our attack upon Moro and pagan savagery”¹⁴² Critics of this policy cite Wood’s low opinion for Moro language, culture, and religion in seeking to educate them in the English language. One problem with this critique is that it discounts the utility of Wood’s and later Governor’s actions in setting the conditions for a prosperous, stable society. In educating the populace, Wood was both attempting to qualify Moros for participation in a broader economy, and establishing a single common language to provide a basis for cooperation among the hundreds of isolated rival tribal groups. Replacing intertribal warfare, slave trading, and piracy

¹³⁹ Ibid., 13.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 13.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 13.

¹⁴² Tasker Bliss, *The Annual Report of the Governor of the Moro Province for Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1907* (Manila, P.I.: Manila Bureau of Printing, 1907), quoted in Milligan, “Democratization Or Neocolonialism?,” 456.

required a direct effort to change the culture of the Moros. Wood felt the foundation of that effort was education.¹⁴³

Along with the increased provision of education, Wood also saw the need for government investment in public works. After spending most of the first year of his governance organizing the public works department, Wood's priority for public works became the construction of durable roads and trails. The work was, "to open up road and trail communication where conditions demanded, to construct necessary provincial, district and school buildings, [and] repair the wharves" in order to "facilitate the transaction of public business, commerce, and agriculture."¹⁴⁴ In the districts where traffic volume did not warrant construction of a full durable road, Wood's policy was to construct durable trails to facilitate connection to sparsely populated areas. The municipal government could convert these trails to roads as traffic increased.¹⁴⁵

This investment in public works, particularly establishing lines of communication that connected towns and villages in the province, contributed significantly to pacification in two ways. The first is that the improvements provided the Moros with undeniable physical evidence of one benefit of occupation. The improved roads provided inland Moros with more rapid access to markets, and the resulting trade decreased individual reliance on tribal structures and created increased economic opportunity.

The second impact that the improved lines of communication had was to facilitate the projection of power for the new government that also reduced dependence on traditional tribal structures. This helped address one of the primary challenges in state building, "to project authority of inhospitable territories that contain relatively low densities of people."¹⁴⁶ The Army

¹⁴³ Bullard, "Military Pacification," 19. Bullard disagreed with Wood's view on education, referred to it as a fad, and believed that it was ineffective for pacification.

¹⁴⁴ Wood, *Annual Report of the Governor of the Moro Province*, 14.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 15.

¹⁴⁶ Jeffrey Herbst, *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control*: Princeton University Press, 2011), 11. While this quote refers to Africa, the Moro Province had similarly dispersed populations, and traditions of limited or no governance in inaccessible areas.

and the new municipal government were able to project civil power, and military force when necessary to provide services and begin establishment of a uniform governance and rule of law through the new roads.

Establishing a new system for the administration of justice (rule of law) was one of the most contentious and necessary activities of pacification Wood undertook. The Bates agreement had preserved a race-based double system of justice with “Americans, Europeans, and the subjects of Asiatic powers on the one part, and Moros or other non-Christians on the other.”¹⁴⁷ This dual system enforced the fragmentation of society in the province by providing unequal punishments for identical crimes depending on the racial, religious, or ethnic identity of the parties involved. Adherence to the tribal customs also facilitated the continuation of tribal conflict, slavery and human trafficking and piracy, based on Moro custom and tradition.

Wood believed that in order to remove the “savage” practices of slavery, piracy and tribal warfare, he needed to incorporate the Moro Province into a single legal system. “There should be but one system of law in force by organized civil government in the Philippine Islands, and the judges who are appointed to administer it among the non-Christian and savage races should be men of sufficient judgment to apply it justly and reasonably.”¹⁴⁸ Wood understood that the application of the new system of justice should be “tempered with that degree of consideration and clemency to which his condition of ignorance and savagery is entitled.”¹⁴⁹ While he believed that there should be equal punishment for anyone guilty of the same crime under the law, Wood also understood that the Moro cultural shift would require time to learn and adjust to the requirements under the consolidated legal system.

Wood also showed consideration for Moro customs and traditions by addressing practices individually, rather than attempting to outlaw every practice that differed from American or

¹⁴⁷ Wood, *Annual Report of the Governor of the Moro Province*, 15.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 16.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 16.

Christian tradition. An example of this tolerance was the contrast between his approach to slavery, and his approach to Muslim marriage traditions. Wood felt that slavery produced conditions that “most unfortunate not only for the slaves, but also for the owners, as the institution seems to paralyze all true development and to accentuate the various forms of vice to which the Moro is commonly a victim.”¹⁵⁰ Wood addressed this issue with an anti-slavery law in the province, and reported that, “The antislavery law prohibiting the forcible holding and trafficking in slaves is working well...in the diminished amount of slave dealing and slave hunting.”¹⁵¹ Slavery violated Wood’s and the American public’s sense of basic human rights and he did not condone it even though it was a Moro cultural tradition.

The Muslim practice of polygamy also violated Wood’s sense of decency, while Moro cultural tradition held it as a value. Wood took an enlightened approach to this practice by “making no attempt to interfere with the Mohammedan marriage laws.”¹⁵² While this tradition was foreign to American sensibilities, Wood did not view it as an impediment to Moro progress to an integrated functioning society. “American fidelity to the principle of separation of church and state also compelled top administrators to seek alternative ways to administer their wards.”¹⁵³ This separation allowed Wood to both respect Moro cultural identity where it did not interfere with the pacification effort, and instigate change where it did.

Finally, no analysis of Wood’s military governorship is complete without an examination of his use of the military component in pacifying the Moros. Critics excoriate Wood for his use of force in the Moro Province based on one of three arguments. First, that the actions he took in Cuba were not violent but still effective, second that Wood had a lack of cultural sensitivity to the Moro people, and finally that his personal desire for military career advancement was the reason

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 8.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 16.

¹⁵² Ibid., 16.

¹⁵³ Abinales, "American Military Presence in the Southern Philippines," 3.

for his military actions. The details of the over one hundred punitive expeditions undertaken during Wood's tenure are beyond the scope of this monograph, but each of these three factors provides some insight into how Wood understood the utility of military force in pacification.

Evaluating Wood's actions in the Philippine environment based on the Cuban environment overlook tremendous social and cultural differences, but the primary factor in favor of Wood's aggressive military actions is, "The warlike, military Moros...having no conception of any power except military force, suffer nothing else."¹⁵⁴ This opinion, expressed by Wood's subordinate Lieutenant Colonel Bullard, illustrates the violence inherent in the Moro Province. Wood responded violently to a violent resistance and with moderation where he could. Acceptance of the reforms Wood advocated would not last even in compliant areas if he allowed rebellious areas to continue to raid and enslave pacified Moros. "He [Wood] and other officers expressed satisfaction with the results of these devastating campaigns."¹⁵⁵

The criticism that Wood lacked cultural sensitivity in his violent suppression of the Moro resistance is ironic, since violence and respect for strength was a central aspect of Moro culture. Moro tribes fought each other, and raided and enslaved each other using brutal means. An example of the brutality on the Moro's side was the massacre on Samar where Charlie Company of the Ninth Infantry were "seated around long tables in mess tents...when a mob of rebels and local civilians wielding razor sharp bolos broke in and commenced slashing every soldier they could reach."¹⁵⁶ While this incident produced violent retaliation by American forces, it illustrates that the violence in the Philippine war was not one sided, nor limited to reactions provoked by Wood since it happened before his tenure as military governor.

Finally, the argument that Wood pursued the military component of pacification simply to enhance his career discounts both the need for the new Moro government to provide security in

¹⁵⁴ Bullard, "Military Pacification," 23.

¹⁵⁵ Charles Byler, "Pacifying the Moros: American Military Government in the Southern Philippines, 1899-1913," *Military Review* 85, no. 3 (2005), 43.

¹⁵⁶ McCallum, *Leonard Wood: Rough Rider*, 203.

order for reforms to take hold. There is no question that Wood was an aggressive, often abrasive personality. His confirmation hearing for the rank of Major General was a battle between the many enemies he created in Washington, and the presidential administration that backed him.¹⁵⁷ Wood often reacted badly to setbacks and irritated even his closest supporters including President Roosevelt.¹⁵⁸ Brian Linn writes that “once freed from a personal stake in subduing the Moro, the most aggressive and provocative governor in the Moro Province’s history became a spokesman for conciliation and tact.”¹⁵⁹ Linn’s view of Wood is in contrast to his view of Bliss who he sees as employing “benevolent policies” and states that “it is a unfortunate that he [Bliss] is remembered more for the bloody disarmament campaign on Jolo than for the benefits he sought to bring.”¹⁶⁰ This critique might also apply to Wood. Wood’s personality in many cases influenced critics who could not separate his vigorous self-promotion with his job performance.

Jack McCallum asserts that the bitter confirmation hearing caused Wood to decide, “If vilification was the reward for his Cuban performance, there was no reason to reproduce that performance in the Philippines.”¹⁶¹ McCallum insists that Wood went to the Philippines as “policeman, and enforcer, but not as nation builder.”¹⁶² Jack Lane came to a similar conclusion saying that “it was not a coincidence that in the midst of the struggle over the nomination [to Major General] Wood embarked upon large punitive campaigns in the Lake Lanao district.” To prove he was a fighting soldier.¹⁶³ This criticism overlooks Wood’s substantial civic undertakings

¹⁵⁷ United States Congress, Senate Committee on Military Affairs, "Nomination of Leonard Wood to be Major-General: Hearings before the United States Senate Committee on Military Affairs, Fifty-Eighth Congress, First Session and Fifty-Eighth Congress, Second Session," (Nov. 19-21, 23, 24, 27, 30, Dec. 3, 7-10, 14-16, 1903).

¹⁵⁸ Lane, *Armed Progressive: General Leonard Wood*, 130. Wood wrote a 16-page letter to Roosevelt complaining about not receiving Command of the Philippine division in 1904 that Roosevelt called a ‘wild protest.’

¹⁵⁹ Linn, *Guardians of Empire*, 35.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 35-36

¹⁶¹ McCallum, *Leonard Wood: Rough Rider*, 211.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 212.

¹⁶³ Lane, *Armed Progressive: General Leonard Wood*, 126.0

in the Moro Province. While they decried the “harsh but eventually effective tactics,” none of the critics asserted that replicating his Cuban actions would have produced success in Moroland.¹⁶⁴ In fact, most concluded, “Wood’s campaign effectively ended large-scale resistance by the Moros in Mindanao.”¹⁶⁵

Operational Art in the Moro Province

Leonard Wood’s arrangement of his tactical actions in time, space, and purpose was even more important in the Moro Province than it had been in Cuba. The Moros had never submitted to any governmental authority beyond the tribal Dattos. As a result, the people of the Moro Province were a fragmented culture subject to arbitrary applications of cultural tradition such as tribal raiding and slave trading. This violence affected individual Moros, weaker non-Muslim tribes and Christian Filipinos alike. Similar to the initial situation in Cuba, Wood first needed to take actions to establish a secure environment so the Moro people would participate in the new system of government.

Unlike the Cuban populace, many of the Moro people did not perceive any need to submit to American sovereignty or change their culture to conform to American plans. The Moro who resisted saw no reason to relinquish their culture, and believed that their honor required violent resistance to American pacification efforts.¹⁶⁶ Since parts of the Moro cultural tradition involved slavery and violent aggression against other tribes and Filipinos, no new system of governance or justice would last as long as some of the tribes continued these practices. A tribe that submitted to American authority and rule was vulnerable if neighboring tribes continued traditional violent ways, and American reforms would collapse under the cycle of violence and recrimination. In order to pacify the Moros, Wood first needed to compel the reluctant Moros to submit to American sovereignty.

¹⁶⁴ Steven L. Ossad, "The Frustrations of Leonard Wood," *Army* 53, no. 9 (2003), 46.

¹⁶⁵ Byler, "Pacifying the Moros," 43.

¹⁶⁶ Bullard, "Military Pacification," 23.

Wood's initial instructions to his subordinate commanders required them to explain his intent to Moro leaders in order to convince them of the need for the American occupation and reforms.¹⁶⁷ In the areas where the Moros were resistant, Wood moved quickly and violently to end Moro resistance. Despite the criticism Wood received for the tremendous violence he imparted to resistant Moros, his staunchest critics cite the effectiveness of his policy in establishing rapid Moro submission to American sovereignty.¹⁶⁸ Wood understood, based on what he felt was an early exit from the Cuban theater, that he had a limited amount of time to achieve American strategic aims. The speed and intensity of his response allowed him to move forward more quickly with civic pacification actions because his actions established the necessary security conditions.

Wood's use of violent suppression of Moro resistance was only effective because it was an early part of his overall plan to sequence his actions. The overall purpose that linked Wood's actions was to prepare the Moros for eventual self-government. Simultaneous to his military actions, Wood worked to establish governance, education, public works, and administration of justice, and the system of revenue generation to support these new services and structures. These lines of effort worked to provide tangible benefits to residents of the Moro province who already accepted American sovereignty, and provided a disincentive to resistant Moros by making collaboration more attractive than resistance.

Wood provided an alternative to Dattos engaged in or considering resistance (collaboration) that allowed them to retain some leadership and influence because he incorporated them where he could in the municipal leadership, and especially the tribal ward system.¹⁶⁹ Moro collaboration was the key to the expansion of the space influenced by American control. Incorporating existing Moro leaders into the future of their province contrasted sharply with the

¹⁶⁷ Wood, *Annual Report of the Governor of the Moro Province*, 5.

¹⁶⁸ William H. McMichael, "What we Learned from the Moro Rebellion," *Military History* 27, no. 6 (March, 2011), 17.

¹⁶⁹ Abinales, "American Military Presence in the Southern Philippines," 3.

extreme devastation imparted on the resistant dattos. Moros in collaborative districts were receiving new services and their leaders were able to maintain some influence. Moros in resistant districts were subject to violent fighting, sieges, and death. The combined effect of this synchronized violence and incentive linked by a clear simple purpose to prepare the Moros for self-government accelerated the pacification process in a way that the actions would not have accomplished separately.

Wood's actions in the Moro province were a carefully arranged series of tactical actions designed to produce a stable, functioning society capable of local governance. In order to accomplish this strategic aim, Wood followed President McKinley's vision of benevolent assimilation where it was practical by enabling Moro participation in the municipal government, establishing the tribal ward system, and pursuing public works, finance, education and administration of justice. Where Moro tribes were resistant to his reforms, Wood took aggressive military measures to subdue rebellion and force the reluctant tribes into compliance. The impact of Wood's actions was that, "evolving Muslim elites retained a certain loyalty to the United States...even the pragmatic ones hoped General Leonard Wood, past governor of the Moro province, would return some day to save them from the Filipinos."¹⁷⁰

Analysis

Leonard Wood approached pacification at the beginning of the century in much the same way the United States Military approaches stabilization today. Most of Wood's approach was consistent with the current American approach to stability/counterinsurgency operations. Current doctrine defines the lines of effort for counterinsurgency as, "establish civil security, establish civil control, support Host Nation security forces, restore essential services, support to economic

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

and infrastructure development, support to governance, and conduct information engagement.”¹⁷¹ Wood arranged tactical actions in each one of these lines of effort both in Cuba and in the Moro province.

When Wood took over as the Military Governor of Santiago, he assessed the immediate threats as famine, sanitation, disease, governance, lack of adequate medical care and schools and education.¹⁷² The operational environment in the Moro province shared some of the same threats including a need for governance, schools, and education. Each of these threats negatively affected the populace, and created the risk of societal collapse and American failure. In order to address these factors, Leonard Wood organized his campaign using lines of effort, although he did not use that terminology. According to current doctrine, “A line of effort is a line that links multiple tasks using the logic of purpose rather than geographical reference to focus efforts toward establishing operational and strategic conditions.”¹⁷³ Wood matched his understanding of the operational environment to his arrangement of military actions using a concept similar to lines of effort. He structured his annual reporting to Congress using his lines of effort (governance, public works, administration of justice...) for both Cuba and the Moro province, and described past and future actions and results within those categories.

Lines of effort are not a checklist of actions American forces apply in every circumstance, nor are they a restrictive list of options. They provide a conceptual framework and allow the commander to visualize the “execute[ion] of multiple, related, and mutually supporting tasks in different locations at the same time, producing greater effects than executing each task in isolation.”¹⁷⁴ For example, based on his understanding of the complex environment in Cuba

¹⁷¹ FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 2006), 4-6,4-8.

¹⁷² Wood, "The Military Government of Cuba," 2.

¹⁷³ ADRP 3-0, *Unified Land Operations*, ed. Army Doctrine Reference Publication (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 2012), 4-5.

¹⁷⁴ ADP 3-0, *Unified Land Operations*, ed. Army Doctrine Publication (Washington, D.C.: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 2011), 9.

Wood's Rural Guard supported multiple lines of effort. The Rural Guard helped establish civil security, and supported economic development by providing employment to former rebel army soldiers.¹⁷⁵

The context for these lines of effort is "the operational environment," which is, "a composite of the conditions, circumstances, and influences that affect the employment of capabilities and bear on the decisions of the commander."¹⁷⁶ In stabilization/pacification operations, subtle differences in operational environment can dictate the need for a dramatically different operational approach. Because differences in operational environment can be subtle, rationale for a different operational approach from one environment to the next is difficult to communicate. When he arrived in the Philippines, Wood developed his understanding of the operational environment and created an operational approach based on that environment, rather than trying to apply his Cuban solution irrespective of the different environment.

Establishing civil security is the most critical line of effort to stability operations because "the societal insecurity that violence brings discourages or precludes nonmilitary organizations [or actions], particularly external agencies, from helping the local populace."¹⁷⁷ Wood tailored his operational approach this line of effort to the environment in both Cuba and the Moro province based on his hard-earned understanding of each. In both theaters, Wood traveled thousands of miles through difficult terrain, and met with local and regional leaders to develop his understanding of the situation, and to inform the inhabitants of the American government's intent. Many critics cite his use of force in the Moro province as a mistake; however, Wood's approach to civil security in the Moro province is a credit to his understanding of the different environment he faced. A fragmented society that had cultural attachments to inter-tribal violence, slavery, and piracy was a barrier to the American strategic aim of establishing a self-governing society. The

¹⁷⁵ Wood, "The Military Government of Cuba," 154.

¹⁷⁶ ADP 3-0, *Unified Land Operations*, 9.

¹⁷⁷ FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, 2-1.

Moros were determined to resist Wood's pacification efforts, and the military actions Wood used were effective. Wood continually assessed and refined his understanding of the operational environment to determine both the effectiveness of actions, and the need to adjust plans. This process ensured that he was "not bound by preconceived notions of solutions."¹⁷⁸

Another challenge Wood faced in his operations was in establishing civil control. In Cuba, Wood employed sometimes-harsh methods, including public horsewhipping for citizens who resisted labor in support of the city.¹⁷⁹ This action and military actions against resistant Moro tribes created American domestic problems for Wood. Taken out of context, violent military actions are often unpalatable to the American public.¹⁸⁰ The American public reacted against harsh measures that appeared to them as infringements on individual liberty, a basic human right.¹⁸¹ Wood's use of force, especially the high profile putative expeditions in the Moro province reduced American support to Army actions.¹⁸²

One way Wood reassured the American populace that the Army was not just subjugating the Cuban and Moro people was to incorporate Cubans and Moros into the newly formed security forces. Wood's incorporation of Cubans and Moros into native security forces is an example of his support of host nation security forces. There were two major benefits to this line of effort. First, it helped provide a measure of self-respect for the people by giving them employment and a role in the security of their society. Second, it provided the foundation for permanent security

¹⁷⁸ ADP 3-0, *Unified Land Operations*, 10.

¹⁷⁹ Porter, "Industrial Cuba," 58.

¹⁸⁰ Similar problems faced the U.S. Military in Viet Nam, and the current conflict in Afghanistan. Actions seem (to the American populace) disconnected from operational realities, and complex situations require more description than fits in a thirty second newsreel.

¹⁸¹ Wertheim, "Reluctant Liberator," 508., "If his private correspondence of August 1907 is to be believed, the ideals of self-government and anti-imperialism—operating in a political system whose presidential term limits and dual parties made opposition rule a not too distant prospect—convinced Roosevelt that generations-long or perpetual American occupation of the Philippines was undesirable if not impossible."

¹⁸² See New York Times sarcastic headline, "Women and Children Killed in Moro Battle, President Wires Congratulations to Troops," quoted in McCallum, *Leonard Wood: Rough Rider, Surgeon, Architect of American Imperialism*, 230.

forces. Wood incorporated Cubans and Moros into civil government as well. Incorporating Cubans and Moros into the new leadership was critical to establishing consent of the governed. This consent was critical to sustaining American support for pacification operations in both theaters.

The “restore essential services” line of operations presented another opportunity for Wood to arrange tactical actions that would both sustain American support, and achieve strategic aims in both Cuba and the Moro province. In Cuba Wood worked to reestablish the agricultural economy so the Cubans could feed themselves and provide employment for more of the population devastated by war. In the Moro province, his task was more complex. Rather than restoring essential services, Wood needed to establish a system of taxation in order to fund government provided essential services in the non-coastal areas for the first time. This line of operation was important in both provinces to both justify American actions in each theater for humanitarian reasons, and to help the local populations see a benefit from occupation.

One of the most important essential services that influenced multiple lines of operation was transportation. In both Cuba and the Moro province Wood undertook projects to restore, improve, or create transportation networks. These networks provided a basis for economic development, and extending governance and security. These road networks linked rural populations with the larger coastal and urban markets they needed for economic development. They also provided government and security force access to the interior and allowed for the extension of other essential services, security, and the administration of justice.

Wood’s actions to support governance were extensive in both theaters. In Cuba, Wood relied heavily on educated better classes of Cubans in reestablishing local governance. He was “convinced that an educated populace was prerequisite to full democracy, but felt obligated to take a few steps toward limited self-government.”¹⁸³ Wood incorporated many local qualified

¹⁸³ Ibid., 164.

Cubans and Moros in their new respective governments, and encouraged training and American military and government oversight. “Institutions of specialized training for government service such as the University of the Philippines...were instrumental in training a new cadre of collaborators.”¹⁸⁴

In addition to improving basic education in the Moro province and Cuba, Wood understood the importance of educating Moros and Cubans for the practical responsibilities of self-government before they assumed the responsibility. Many Moros took advantage of these opportunities, for example, Datto Piang (a prominent Moro leader at the time) sent his sons to Manila “to further their training in different fields – law, agriculture, and education – areas that were geared toward the expanding roles of the colonial state.”¹⁸⁵ In Cuba, Woods efforts at forming municipal governments also suffered from “a lack of administrative experience at the local level” and required more centralized control that was not acceptable to the independent Moros, who preferred the local control of the American Army to that of the Filipinos in Manila.¹⁸⁶ “Prior to the advent of U.S. colonial state, Muslim groups never saw themselves as part of an evolving Filipino polity.”¹⁸⁷ Wood’s focus on both practical and basic education to develop long-term capacity and elevate each society reflects his operational approach; that supporting an educational line of effort was critical to accomplishing the American strategic aim of creating the capacity for self-government.

Wood devoted a tremendous amount of time and energy in developing his understanding of the complex environments of both Cuba and the Moro province. Based on this understanding he arranged operational pacification actions into categories that equate to lines of effort in today’s doctrinal terminology. In arranging these actions in time, space, and purpose, he understood that

¹⁸⁴ Lou J. Dangzalan, *Desiring Similitude: The Directions of Moro Integration and Nationalism*: (National University of Singapore, 2010), 3.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 4.

¹⁸⁶ Abinales, “American Military Presence in the Southern Philippines,” 3.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

his efforts would work together to achieve the American strategic aim of preparing both the Cubans, and the Moros for self-government. The Cuban theater required more immediate humanitarian assistance to address famine and disease, where the Moro Theater required military force to impose the order on a fragmented culture. Wood's operational approach to each theater was different because each situation was different, despite a nearly identical strategic aim in each case.

Conclusion

General Leonard Wood was a polarizing figure. He was brash, aggressive, opportunistic, opinionated, and lacked patience with anyone who did not see things the way he did. He was also a strong, dynamic leader with a vision for the American Army as an agent capable of bringing civilization to less fortunate countries. He, like his close friend President Roosevelt, believed that America had a responsibility "to rule disinterestedly for their benefit by inculcating them with the standards of civilization."¹⁸⁸ He worked to accomplish these aims pursuing the Army pacification doctrine of the day, with courage, energy and the determination of a missionary. His sense of duty led him to pursue these aims directly and forcefully both in civil/administrative measures and with military force where necessary.

Wood's application of force entailed the greatest risk for the withdrawal of American civilian support. However, the application of force also creates opportunity, since operational art is "how commanders balance risk and opportunity." This application of force is important because, "COIN's [counterinsurgency's] own history reflects the need for a stunning amount of brutality" because, "soft approaches don't impel enough people to change their ways fast enough."¹⁸⁹ When American leadership pulled Wood out of Cuba before the Cuban people were

¹⁸⁸ Wertheim, "Reluctant Liberator," 501.

¹⁸⁹ Anna Smith, "Soft War = Smart War? Think again," Foreign Policy Research Institute, <http://www.fpri.org/enotes/2012/201204.simons.soft-war-smart-war.html> (accessed April/14, 2012).

fully ready to assume control of their government, Wood learned a valuable lesson about the limits of American patience with pacification operations.¹⁹⁰ Critics continue to cite Wood's use of force in the Moro province because of his ego, or desire to prove his military talents and advance his career. Those same critics almost universally acknowledge that those same violent measures were effective within his short time in the Moro province.

In 1921, Wood returned to the Philippines to serve as the Governor General. His view of the mission was almost the same as he held in Cuba twenty years earlier. He stated, "We are convinced that it would be a betrayal of the Philippine people...and a discreditable neglect of our national duty were we to withdraw from the islands and terminate our relationship without giving the Filipinos the best chance possible to have an orderly and permanent stable government."¹⁹¹ He believed that pacification was in the best long-term interest of both the United States, and the countries he was actively pacifying.

¹⁹⁰ Wood must have felt somewhat vindicated when the Army had to return to Cuba four years later to reestablish stability in Cuba.

¹⁹¹ Leonard Wood and W. Cameron Forbes, "To Go Slowly in the Philippines," *Advocate of Peace through Justice* 83, no. 12 (December, 1921), 435.

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