

origins, but were poor peasants in search of employment. The great majority of them came from the most underdeveloped and economically depressed provinces, like the Ilocos region and the Visayas. Many of them were without formal education—spoke neither Spanish nor English and lacked special skills. Most were young, a large percentage being under 30, and they came without parents, wives or children.

Very soon after arriving in Hawaii and confronting the harsh working conditions and low pay, the Filipinos in the sugar industry began to organize against the growers. This resulted in the massive strike by Filipinos against the sugar growers in 1924. The growers viciously put down this strike, killing many workers in the infamous "Hanapepe Massacre"

into the multi-billion dollar enterprises they are today. The wages they were paid were 10-15 cents an hour for this "stoop labor"—less than a dollar a day. What is more, 70 cents of that was usually deducted for "room and board!"

The Filipinos in California soon followed the pattern established with the Chinese and Japanese by organizing against these conditions. The growers responded again by fanning racial prejudice against Filipinos as more and more Filipinos continued to arrive from Hawaii and the Philippines. By 1917, two California Legislators introduced a bill in Congress which aimed at excluding Filipinos. The bill fell through when it was established by the Courts that Filipinos were not aliens but "nationals" of the U.S. (due to the Philippines colonial status), and thus could not be excluded.

Filipino was killed. His death sparked massive Filipino anger up and down the West Coast. Word about his death reached the Philippines where 100,000 Filipinos demonstrated against the U.S. in a National Day of Humiliation.

During the high point of the Depression, Filipinos remained the major target of white racist attacks on the West Coast. Places like Reedley, Imperial Valley, Sonoma, Turlock, Modesto, Sun Valley and Stockton in California; Hood River, Oregon and Yakima Valley in Washington were stained with Filipino blood.

The contrast between the conditions and treatment of Filipinos in the U.S. and the conditions and treatment of Americans in the Philippines exposes how the U.S. exploits minority groups at home while oppressing whole nations of people abroad. In 1930, some 8,369 Americans were living in the Philippines, enjoying all the rights and privileges of citizens. At that time also, Americans held investments in the islands amounting to \$258 million, including some 63 million acres of land.

The U.S. insisted on an unlimited right of entry for American business and capital and U.S. citizens into the Philippines. While at the same time, the U.S. decided to exclude Filipinos from immigrating to the U.S. by passing the Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1934 & the so-called "Philippine Independence Act") which limited the annual quota to the miniscule total of 50. This figure amounted to exclusion, the same fate suffered by the Japanese and Chinese. Ironically, Filipinos could now migrate anywhere else in the world with greater ease than to the "land of democracy." This move to cut off the first wave of Filipino immigration simply mirrored the unequal relations between the U.S. and the Philippines. The U.S. takes what it wants from the Philippines and simply closes its doors when cheap labor is no longer required. The same pattern gets repeated in the boom/bust economic cycle.

Throughout the Depression year, Filipinos were able to lead successful strikes against the growers for higher wages and better conditions. One notable one was against the lettuce industry in Salinas. They were successful in staging a strike demanding wage increases for 30 to 40 cents an hour and a 48 hour week. The success of the strike was met by the anger of the growers who led a vigilante mob to the labor camp controlled by the Filipino labor union president and burned it to the ground. Over 800 Filipinos were forced out at gunpoint.

These were the conditions faced by the first wave, a harsh life in the fields and canneries which they responded to by militantly organizing to improve their lot.

1976 — TOP FIVE IMMIGRATING GROUPS TO THE U.S.

Philippines	37,281
Mexico	57,863
Korea	30,803
Cuba	29,233
China/Taiwan	18,823

Source: INS Yearbook

and blacklisted thousands of Filipino workers. Those working were then forced to go to the mainland, mainly California, to seek employment. In looking for employment in the U.S., these young men had basically only three occupational choices available to them: 1) domestics, 2) restaurant workers, or 3) field laborers.

From 1923 to 1929, Filipinos arrived in California at the rate of 4,000 a year. Of this number, 56 percent came by way of Hawaii, 35 percent directly from the Philippines, and the other 9 percent from other oriental ports. In all, about 150,000 Filipinos left their homeland between 1907 and 1930 for the U.S.

These Filipinos constituted a floating reserve army of labor to fill the needs of the Alaskan salmon canneries during the summer months and the agricultural fields of California during the rest of the year. Their labor helped build these industries

Then followed the Stock Market Crash of 1929 and the Great Depression of the 30's which shook the lives of all the working people in the U.S. Factories were closing down left and right, millions of people were out of work, bills were mounting up threatening security and raising the possibility of families being put out in the street or even having to go on charity bread lines. Confusion and panic spread throughout the country. This was a particularly hard time for Filipino workers, newcomers to the U.S. Many Whites vented their anger at losing their jobs, etc. on immigrants with the chauvinist logic that "they're taking jobs from Americans." In California, Washington and Oregon, this was directed particularly against Filipinos. Anti-Filipino riots occurred up and down the West Coast. The most infamous was the Watsonville riot early in 1930 in which a 22-year old

The Second Wave

1946-1965

The advent of World War II posed new demands upon the Filipinos in the U.S. and Hawaii. With the Japanese invasion of the Philippines, the tens of thousands of Filipinos here in America rushed quickly to the military recruitment stations to enlist and fight to free the Philippines.

Initially, they were turned away because of the existing draft act which applied only to U.S. citizens and aliens living in the U.S. The peculiar status given to Filipinos during the "Commonwealth" period was neither citizen nor alien, but "national." After joint discussions about Filipino and U.S. officials, an agreement was reached. The agreement granted that all those who registered for military service would be re-classified as U.S. citizens. Further legal action followed allowing qualified Filipinos to work in government offices, in shipyards, or airplane factories.

Thousands of Filipinos enlisted in the U.S. army. These enlistees were formed into the First and Second Filipino regiments.

While many Filipinos enlisted, others stayed behind to work in the fields and canneries. Wholesale withdrawal of Filipino labor from these industries would have led to their collapse.

Joining the U.S. military did little to reverse the pattern of racial and national discrimination against Filipinos. They

were still barred from marrying Caucasian women, while Filipino soldiers in uniform were denied restaurant service, theaters, haircuts in barber shops, hotel accommodations, etc. They were still subject to verbal insults and physical threats from whites.

Once in the Philippines, these Filipino army regiments fought with the combined forces of the Philippine Army, which was part of the United States Armed Forces in the Far East (USAFFE), as well as the Philippine Scouts.

Following the war, those Filipinos who served in the U.S. military plus the Philippine Scouts were granted American citizenship. However, many of the Scouts were not able to benefit from this privilege because the U.S. government did not set up an office in Manila to process them.

After the war, the U.S. Congress passed the War Brides Act which allowed Filipinos who served in the U.S. military and the Philippine Scouts to bring their wives and children from the Philippines. This immigration of Filipinos in the U.S. military and their wives and children is the second wave of Filipino immigration to the U.S.

In addition, a token immigration quota was maintained for Filipinos of 100 per year between 1946-65. Total Filipino immigration amounted to 34,711 between the 1946-65 period, overwhelmingly

military-related people.

After the war, the job status of Filipinos did not alter substantially. The same social job discrimination was still present. Many Filipino servicemen returned to their "traditional" jobs in the hotels, restaurants and fields. In California, agriculture remained the largest employer.

In 1950, nearly 90 percent of Filipinos in the U.S. were engaged in manual work. According to the 1960 census, approximately 15 years after the war, most of the white collar occupations held by Filipinos were in sales and clerical jobs—the lowest paying strata; while 74.4 percent of the 106,406 Filipino workers in America were in manual occupations. Another study done in 1960 analyzes the socio-economic profile of the Japanese, Chinese and Filipinos. It found Filipinos to be the lowest in terms of education, occupation and income.

The second wave settled down mainly on the West Coast and Hawaii. Filipino communities sprang up around the military bases along the West Coast and especially San Diego, San Francisco and Alameda, and Honolulu. During this period, these communities were able to become relatively stable, unlike the previous "Manila towns" of the first wave. By the time the third wave immigration began in 1965, the 1st and 2nd wave had grown to over 250,000.

