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Presenting Your Option

The Setting: It is fall 1898. Your group has been asked to present your views on the future of the Philippines and the treaty with Spain at a Top Level Presidential Cabinet meeting. President McKinley is scheduled to make a speech to the American people in Los Angeles next week. He is asking that your group prepare a policy recommendation regarding the current international situation following the Spanish American War. Your group will have an opportunity to persuade President McKinley that he should accept your option as the administration’s position.

Your Assignment: Your group represents one of three factions that has evolved during the debates about the Treaty of Paris. Your assignment is to persuade the undecided President McKinley that your option should become the basis for Congressional and Presidential action. On the day of the presentation your group will be called upon to present a persuasive 10 to 15 minute summary of your option to the President and his Advisors. You will be judged on how well you present your option. This worksheet will help you prepare.

Organizing Your Group**:** Each member of your group will take a specific role. Below is a brief explanation of the responsibility of each role. Before preparing your sections of the presentation, work together to address the questions below. The **group director** is responsible for organizing the presentation of your group’s option to the President. The **business leader** is responsible for explaining why your option is most appropriate in light of economic and trade issues. The **retired military officer** is responsible for explaining why your option takes the United States in the most appropriate foreign policy direction. The **religious leader** will speak on moral issues, and the **history teacher** will speak about the lessons of the past. All of you must use the primary source documents and historical facts of the time period to develop your position. Your job is to apply historical content to the creation of an argument.

1. According to your option, what are the main problems currently facing the United States?

2. How important is overseas trade to America’s economic prosperity?

3. If your option is adopted, how will it shape America’s direction in the twentieth century?

4. What specific course of action does your option recommend for the Philippines?

5. On what principles does your option believe the United States was founded? How are those principles expressed in your option?