

**Excerpt from “To the Person Sitting in Darkness,” by Mark Twain,
published February, 1901**

There must be two Americas: one that sets the captive free, and one that takes a once-captive’s new freedom away from him, and picks a quarrel with him with nothing to found it on; then kills him to get his land. . . .

True, we have crushed a deceived and confiding people; we have turned against the weak and the friendless who trusted us; we have stamped out a just and intelligent and well-ordered republic; we have stabbed an ally in the back and slapped the face of a guest; we have bought a Shadow from an enemy that hadn’t it to sell; we have robbed a trusting friend of his land and his liberty; we have invited clean young men to shoulder a discredited musket and do bandit’s work under a flag which bandits have been accustomed to fear, not to follow; we have debauched America’s honor and blackened her face before the world. . . .

And as for a flag for the Philippine Province, it is easily managed. We can have a special one—our States do it: we can have just our usual flag, with the white stripes painted black and the stars replaced by the skull and cross-bones.

Twain, Mark. “To the Person Sitting in Darkness.” *The World of 1898. Hispanic Division.* Library of Congress. Web.