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## A SPLENDID LITTLE WAR?

Reasons for Support	Reasons for Opposition

## RESOURCES USED ON POSTER

Personal Account	Historical Commentary
Title:	Title:
Why:	Why:
Political Cartoon	Photograph
Title:	Title:
Why:	Why:



## PRIMARY SOURCE EXCERPT

**Alfred T. Mahan, The Influence of Sea Power Upon History: 1660-1783**

*Alfred T. Mahan was a United States naval officer and historian. In The Influence of Sea Power Upon History: 1660-1783, Mahan described factors needed to support sea power and the role sea power had played in wars during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. The book was published in 1890 while Mahan was president of the U.S. Naval War College, and the naval strategies it describes were adopted by many different countries.*

Colonies attached to the mother-country afford, therefore, the surest means of supporting abroad the sea power of a country. In peace, the influence of the government should be felt in promoting by all means a warmth of attachment and a unity of interest which will make the welfare of one the welfare of all, and the quarrel of one the quarrel of all; and in war, or rather for war, by inducing such measures of organization and defence as shall be felt by all to be a fair distribution of a burden of which each reaps the benefit.

Such colonies the United States has not and is not likely to have. As regards purely military naval stations, the feeling of her people was probably accurately expressed by an historian of the English navy a hundred years ago, speaking then of Gibraltar and Port Mahon. "Military governments," said he, "agree so little with the industry of a trading people, and are in themselves so repugnant to the genius of the British people, that I do not wonder that men of good sense and of all parties have inclined to give up these, as Tangiers was given up." Having therefore no foreign establishments, either colonial or military, the ships of war of the United States, in war, will be like land birds, unable to fly far from their own shores. To provide resting-places for them, where they can coal and repair, would be one of the first duties of a government proposing to itself the development of the power of the nation at sea....

The question is eminently one in which the influence of the government should make itself felt, to build up for the nation a navy which, if not capable of reaching distant countries, shall at least be able to keep clear the chief approaches to its own. The eyes of the country have for a quarter of a century been turned from the sea; the results of such a policy and of its opposite will be shown in the instance of France and of England. Without asserting a narrow parallelism between the case of the United States and either of these, it may safely be said that it is essential to the welfare of the whole country that the conditions of trade and commerce should remain, as far as possible, unaffected by an external war. In order to do this, the enemy must be kept not only out of our ports, but far away from our coasts.



## PRIMARY SOURCE EXCERPT

**Senator Redfield Proctor, Speech to the U.S. Senate on March 17, 1898**

*Senator Redfield Proctor served as the Governor of Vermont from 1878-1880, Secretary of War from 1889-1891, and as a Republican senator from 1891 to 1908. He visited Cuba in March 1898 to observe conditions there during the revolution, and upon his return to Washington, D.C. delivered a speech to the U.S. Senate describing what he witnessed.*

It is not within the narrow limits of my vocabulary to portray it. I went to Cuba with a strong conviction that the picture had been overdrawn; that a few cases of starvation and suffering had inspired and stimulated the press correspondents, and that they had given free play to a strong, natural and highly cultivated imagination.

I could not believe that out of a population of one million six hundred thousand, 200,000 had died within these Spanish forts, practically prison walls, within a few months past, from actual starvation and disease caused by insufficient and improper food.

My inquiries were entirely outside of sensational sources. They were made by our medical officers, of our consuls, of city alcaldes, of relief committees, of leading merchants and bankers, physicians and lawyers. Several of my informants were Spanish born, but every time came the answer that the case had not been overstated.

What I saw I cannot tell so that others can see it. It must be seen with one's own eyes to be realized....

I have endeavored to state in not intemperate mood what I saw and heard, and to make no argument thereon, but leave everyone to draw his own conclusions. To me the strongest appeal is not the barbarity practiced by Weyler nor the loss of the Maine, if our worst fears should prove true, terrible as are both of these incidents, but the spectacle of a million and a half of people, the entire native population of Cuba, struggling for freedom and deliverance from the worst misgovernment of which I ever had knowledge. But whether our action ought to be influenced by any one or all these things, and, if so, how far, is another question....



## PRIMARY SOURCE EXCERPT

**Albert Beveridge, *The March of the Flag***

*Albert Beveridge was a historian and Republican senator from Indiana, serving from 1899-1911. The following excerpt comes from a campaign speech he delivered September 16, 1898.*

...Therefore, in this campaign, the question is larger than a party question. It is an American question. It is a world question. Shall the American people continue their march toward the commercial supremacy of the world? Shall free institutions broaden their blessed reign as the children of liberty wax in strength, until the empire of our principles is established over the hearts of all mankind?....

Hawaii is ours; Porto Rico is to be ours; at the prayer of her people Cuba finally will be ours; in the islands of the East, even to the gates of Asia, coaling stations are to be ours at the very least; the flag of a liberal government is to float over the Philippines, and may it be the banner that Taylor unfurled in Texas and Fremont carried to the coast.

The Opposition tells us that we ought not to govern a people without their consent. I answer, The rule of liberty that all just government derives its authority from the consent of the governed, applies only to those who are capable of self-government. We govern the Indians without their consent, we govern our territories without their consent, we govern our children without their consent. How do they know what our government would be without their consent? Would not the people of the Philippines prefer the just, humane, civilizing government of this Republic to the savage, bloody rule of pillage and extortion from which we have rescued them?

And, regardless of this formula of words made only for enlightened, self-governing people, do we owe no duty to the world? Shall we turn these peoples back to the reeking hands from which we have taken them? Shall we abandon them, with Germany, England, Japan, hungering for them? Shall we save them from those nations, to give them a self-rule of tragedy?

They ask us how we shall govern these new possessions. I answer: Out of local conditions and the necessities of the case methods of government will grow. If England can govern foreign lands, so can America. If Germany can govern foreign lands, so can America. If they can supervise protectorates, so can America. Why is it more difficult to administer Hawaii than New Mexico or California? Both had a savage and an alien population: both were more remote from the seat of government when they came under our dominion than the Philippines are to-day.

Will you say by your vote that American ability to govern has decayed, that a century's experience in self-rule has failed of a result? Will you affirm by your vote that you are an infidel to American power and practical sense? Or will you say that ours is the blood of government; ours the heart of dominion; ours the brain and genius of administration? Will you remember that we do but what our fathers did—we but pitch the tents of liberty farther westward, farther southward—we only continue the march of the flag?



## PRIMARY SOURCE EXCERPT

**Carl Schurz, *Manifest Destiny***

*Carl Schurz was a German immigrant who had a lifelong career in politics and journalism. After fighting for democratic reforms in his native Germany, he served as a general in the Union Army from 1862-1865, Republican senator from Missouri from 1869-1875, Secretary of the Interior from 1877-1881, and worked as the editor of the New York Evening Post and The Nation in the 1880s. The following excerpt is from an article of his published in Harper's Magazine in October 1893.*

Whenever there is a project on foot to annex foreign territory to this republic the cry of manifest destiny is raised to produce the impression that all opposition to such a project is a struggle against fate....The new manifest destiny precept means, in point of principle, not merely the incorporation in the United States of territory contiguous to our borders, but rather the acquisition of such territory, far and near, as may be useful in enlarging our commercial advantages, and in securing to our navy facilities desirable for the operations of a great naval power....

....The advocates of the annexation policy advance some arguments which require but a passing notice. They say that unless we take a certain country offered to us Hawaii, for instance some other power will take it, and that, having refused ourselves, we cannot object. This is absurd.

We are told that unless we take charge of a certain country it will be ill-governed and get into internal trouble. This is certainly no inducement. This republic cannot take charge of all countries that are badly governed. On the contrary, a country apt to get into internal trouble would be no desirable addition to our national household.

We are told that the people of a certain country wish to join us, and it would be wrong to repel them. But the question whether a stranger is to be admitted as a member of our family it is our right and our duty to decide according to our own view of the family interest.

We are told that we need coaling stations in different parts of the world for our navy, also if it be a small one, and that the rich resources of the countries within our reach should be open to American capital and enterprise. There is little doubt that we can secure by amicable negotiation sites for coaling stations which will serve us as well as if we possessed the countries in which they are situated. In the same manner we can obtain from and within them all sorts of commercial advantages. We can own plantations and business houses in the Hawaiian Islands. In the American tropics we can build and control railroads; we can purchase mines, and have them worked for our benefit; we can keep up commercial establishments in their towns-in fact, we are now doing many of these things and all this without taking those countries into our national household on an equal footing with the States of our Union, without exposing our political institutions to the deteriorating influence of their participation in our government, without assuming any responsibilities for them which would oblige us to forego the inestimable privilege of being secure in our possessions without large and burdensome armaments. Surely the advantages we might gain by incorporating the countries themselves in the Union appear utterly valueless compared with the price this republic would have to pay for them.



## PRIMARY SOURCE EXCERPT

**William Jennings Bryan, *The Paralyzing Influence of Imperialism***

*William Jennings Bryan was a prominent Democratic politician and orator from Nebraska who served in the House of Representatives from 1891-1895, as Secretary of State from 1913-1915, and unsuccessfully ran for president in 1896, 1900, and 1908. The following excerpt is from a speech he delivered at the Democratic National Convention in July 1900.*

Those who would have this nation enter upon a career of empire must consider not only the effect of imperialism on the Filipinos but they must also calculate its effects upon our own nation. We cannot repudiate the principle of self-government in the Philippines without weakening that principle here....

The principal arguments, however, advanced by those who enter upon a defense of imperialism are:

First, that we must improve the present opportunity to become a world power and enter into international politics. Second, that our commercial interests in the Philippine Islands and in the Orient make it necessary for us to hold the islands permanently. Third, that the spread of the Christian religion will be facilitated by a colonial policy. Fourth, that there is no honorable retreat from the position which the nation has taken....

It is sufficient answer to the first argument to say that for more than a century this nation has been a world power. For ten decades it has been the most potent influence in the world. Not only has it been a world power but it has done more to affect the policies of the human race than all the other nations of the world combined. Because our Declaration of Independence was promulgated, others have been promulgated. Because the patriots of 1776 fought for liberty, others have fought for it. Because our Constitution was adopted, other constitutions have been adopted....

...[The commercial argument] is based upon the theory that war can be rightly waged for pecuniary advantage and that it is profitable to purchase trade by force and violence.....

To me it seems that neither the obtaining nor retaining of any trade, howsoever valuable, is an object for which men may justly spill each other's blood; that the true and sure means of extending and securing commerce are the goodness and cheapness of commodities, and that the profits of no trade can ever be equal to the expense of compelling it and holding it by fleets and armies....

The religious argument varies in positiveness from a passive belief that Providence delivered the Filipinos into our hands for their good and our glory to the exultation of the minister who said that we ought to "thrash the natives (Filipinos) until they understand who we are," and that "every bullet sent, every cannon shot, and every flag waved means righteousness."

We cannot approve of this doctrine in one place unless we are willing to apply, it everywhere. If there is poison in the blood of the hand, it will ultimately reach the heart. It is equally true that forcible Christianity, if planted under the American flag in the far-away Orient, will sooner or later be transplanted upon American soil....

The argument made by some that it was unfortunate for the nation that it had anything to do with the Philippine Islands, but that the naval victory at Manila made the permanent acquisition of those islands necessary, is also unsound. We won a naval victory at Santiago, but that did not compel us to hold Cuba.

...The fact that the American flag floats over Manila does not compel us to exercise perpetual sovereignty over the islands; the American flag waves over Havana today, but the President has promised to haul it down when the flag of the Cuban republic is ready to rise in its place. Better a thousand times that our flag in the Orient give way to a flag representing the idea of self-government than that the flag of this republic should become the flag of an empire.



## PRIMARY SOURCE EXCERPT

**Richard Harding Davis, Notes of a War Correspondent**

*Richard Harding Davis was a journalist and writer who wrote for numerous publications, including the New York Journal, New York Herald, The Times of London, and Scribner's Weekly. He worked as a war correspondent during multiple conflicts, and the 1911 book Notes of a War Correspondent contains a collection of his dispatches from the Greek-Turkish War (1897), Spanish-American War (1898), Second Boer War (1899-1902), and Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905). The excerpt below is taken from the chapter on the Battle of San Juan Hill, Cuba, which occurred on July 1, 1898.*

The enemy saw the advance and began firing with pitiless accuracy into the jammed and crowded trail and along the whole border of the woods. There was not a single yard of ground for a mile to the rear which was not inside the zone of fire. Our men were ordered not to return the fire but to lie still and wait for further orders...

For a time it seemed as though every second man was either killed or wounded; one came upon them lying behind the bush, under which they had crawled with some strange idea that it would protect them, or crouched under the bank of the stream, or lying on their stomachs and lapping up the water with the eagerness of thirsty dogs. As to their suffering, the wounded were magnificently silent, they neither complained nor groaned nor cursed...

This was endured for an hour, an hour of such hell of fire and heat, that the heat in itself, had there been no bullets, would have been remembered for its cruelty. Men gasped on their backs, like fishes in the bottom of a boat, their heads burning inside and out, their limbs too heavy to move. They had been rushed here and rushed there wet with sweat and wet with fording the streams, under a sun that would have made moving a fan an effort, and they lay prostrate, gasping at the hot air, with faces aflame, and their tongues sticking out, and their eyes rolling...

I have seen many illustrations and pictures of this charge on the San Juan hills, but none of them seem to show it just as I remember it. In the picture-papers the men are running uphill swiftly and gallantly, in regular formation, rank after rank, with flags flying, their eyes aflame, and their hair streaming, their bayonets fixed, in long, brilliant lines, an invincible, overpowering weight of numbers. Instead of which I think the thing which impressed one the most, when our men started from cover, was that they were so few. It seemed as if some one had made an awful and terrible mistake. One's instinct was to call to them to come back. You felt that some one had blundered and that these few men were blindly following out some madman's mad order. It was not heroic then, it seemed merely absurdly pathetic. The pity of it, the folly of such a sacrifice was what held you.