

The Empire and the People

Theodore Roosevelt wrote to a friend in the year 1897: "In strict confidence...I should welcome almost any war, for I think this country needs one."

The year of the massacre at Wounded Knee, 1890, it was officially declared by the Bureau of the Census that the internal frontier was closed. The profit system, with its natural tendency for expansion, had already begun to look overseas. The severe depression that began in 1893 strengthened an idea developing within the political and financial elite of the country: that overseas markets for American goods might relieve the problem of underconsumption at home and prevent the economic crises that in the 1890s brought class war.

And would not a foreign adventure deflect some of the rebellious energy that went into strikes and protest movements toward an external enemy? Would it not unite people with government, with the armed forces, instead of against them? This was probably not a conscious plan among most of the elite—but a natural development from the twin drives of capitalism and nationalism.

Expansion overseas was not a new idea. Even before the war against Mexico carried the United States to the Pacific, the Monroe Doctrine looked southward into and beyond the Caribbean. Issued in 1823 when the countries of Latin America were winning independence from Spanish control, it made plain to European nations that the United States considered Latin America its sphere of influence. Not long after, some Ameri-

The Empire and the People

cans began thinking into the Pacific: of Hawaii, Japan, and the great markets of China.

There was more than thinking. A State Department list of 1962 (presented to a Senate committee to cite precedents for the use of armed force against Cuba) shows 103 interventions in the affairs of other countries between 1798 and 1895. A sampling from the list, with the exact description given by the State Department:

- 1852-53 • Argentina
Marines were landed and maintained in Buenos Aires to protect American interests during a revolution.
- 1853 • Nicaragua
To protect American lives and interests during political disturbances.
- 1853-54 • Japan
The "Opening of Japan" and the Perry Expedition. [The State Department does not give more details, but this involved the use of warships to force Japan to open its ports to the United States.]
- 1853-54 • Ryukyu and Bonin Islands
Commodore Perry on three visits before going to Japan and while waiting for a reply from Japan made a naval demonstration, landing marines twice, and secured a coaling concession from the ruler of Naha on Okinawa. He also demonstrated in the Bonin Islands. All to secure facilities for commerce.
- 1854 • Nicaragua
San Juan del Norte [Greytown was destroyed to avenge an insult to the American Minister to Nicaragua.]
- 1855 • Uruguay
U.S. and European naval forces landed to protect American interests during an attempted revolution in Montevideo.
- 1859 • China
For the protection of American interests in Shanghai.
- 1860 • Angola, Portuguese West Africa
To protect American lives and property at Kissebo when the natives became troublesome.
- 1893 • Hawaii
Ostensibly to protect American lives and property; actually to promote a provisional government under Sanford B. Dole. This action was disavowed by the United States.
- 1894 • Nicaragua
To protect American interests at Bluefields following a revolution.

Thus, by the 1890s, there had been much experience in overseas probes and interventions. The ideology of expansion was widespread in the upper circles of military men, politicians, businessmen—and even among some of the leaders of farmers' movements who thought foreign markets would help them.

Captain A. T. Mahan of the U.S. Navy, a popular propagandist for expansion, greatly influenced Theodore Roosevelt and other American leaders. The countries with the biggest navies would inherit the earth, he said. "Americans must now begin to look outward." Senator Henry Cabot Lodge of Massachusetts wrote in a magazine article:

for the sake of our commercial supremacy in the Pacific we should control the Hawaiian islands...and when the Nicaraguan canal is built, the island of Cuba...will become a necessity.... The great nations are rapidly absorbing for their future expansion and their present defense all the waste places of the earth. It is a movement which makes for civilization and the advancement of the race. As one of the great nations of the world the United States must not fall out of the line of march.

A *Washington Post* editorial on the eve of the Spanish-American War: "A new consciousness seems to have come upon us—the consciousness of strength—and with it a new appetite, the yearning to show our strength.... The taste of Empire is in the mouth of the people even as the taste of blood in the jungle...."

Was that taste in the mouth of the people through some instinctive lust for aggression or some urgent self-interest? Or was it a taste (if indeed it existed) created, encouraged, advertised, and exaggerated by the millionaire press, the military, the government, the eager-to-please scholars of the time? Political scientist John Burgess of Columbia University said the Teutonic and Anglo-Saxon races were "particularly endowed with the capacity for establishing national states...they are entrusted...with the mission of conducting the political civilization of the modern world."

Several years before his election to the presidency, William McKinley said: "We want a foreign market for our surplus products." Senator Albert Beveridge of Indiana in early 1897 declared: "American factories are making more than the American people can use; American soil is producing more than they can consume. Fate has written our policy for us; the trade of the world must and shall be ours."

When the United States did not annex Hawaii in 1893 after some Americans (the combined missionary and pineapple interests of the Dole family) set up their own government, Theodore Roosevelt called this hes-

itancy "a crime against white civilization." And he told the Naval War College: "All the great masterful races have been fighting races.... No triumph of peace is quite so great as the supreme triumph of war."

William James, the philosopher, who became one of the leading anti-imperialists of his time, wrote about Roosevelt that he "gushes over war as the ideal condition of human society."

While it was true that in 1898, 90 percent of American products were sold at home, the 10 percent sold abroad amounted to a billion dollars. In 1885, the steel industry's publication *Age of Steel* wrote that the internal markets were insufficient and the overproduction of industrial products "should be relieved and prevented in the future by increased foreign trade."

Oil became a big export in the 1880s and 1890s: by 1891, the Rockefeller family's Standard Oil Company accounted for 90 percent of American exports of kerosene and controlled 70 percent of the world market. Oil was now second to cotton as the leading product sent overseas.

Expansion overseas might be especially appealing if it looked like an act of generosity—helping a rebellious group overthrow foreign rule—as in Cuba. By 1898, Cuban rebels had been fighting their Spanish conquerors for three years in an attempt to win independence. By that time, it was possible to create a national mood for intervention.

It seems that the business interests of the nation did not at first want military intervention in Cuba. American merchants did not need colonies or wars of conquest if they could just have free access to markets. This idea of an "open door" became the dominant theme of American foreign policy in the twentieth century. It was a more sophisticated approach to imperialism than the traditional empire-building of Europe. But if peaceful imperialism turned out to be impossible, military action might be needed.

For instance, in late 1897 and early 1898, with China weakened by a recent war with Japan, German military forces occupied the Chinese port of Tsingtao (Qingdao). Within the next few months, other European powers moved in on China, and the partition of China by the major imperialist powers was under way, with the United States left behind.

At this point, the *New York Journal of Commerce*, which had been advocating peaceful development of free trade, now urged old-fashioned military colonialism. It called for a canal across Central America, the acquisition of Hawaii, and a larger navy.

There was a similar turnabout in U.S. business attitudes on Cuba in 1898. Businessmen had been interested, from the start of the Cuban revolt against Spain, in the effect on commercial possibilities there. There already

was a substantial economic interest in the island. Popular support of the Cuban revolution was based on the thought that they, like the Americans of 1776, were fighting a war for their own liberation. The United States government, however, the conservative product of another revolutionary war, had power and profit in mind as it observed the events in Cuba. Neither Cleveland, president during the first years of the Cuban revolt, nor McKinley, who followed, recognized the insurgents officially as belligerents; such legal recognition would have enabled the United States to give aid to the rebels without sending an army. But there may have been fear that the rebels would win on their own and keep the United States out.

There seems also to have been another kind of fear. The Cleveland administration said a Cuban victory might lead to "the establishment of a white and a black republic," since Cuba had a mixture of the two races. And the black republic might be dominant. This idea was expressed in 1896 in an article in *The Saturday Review* by a young and eloquent imperialist, whose mother was American and whose father was English—Winston Churchill. He wrote that while Spanish rule was bad and the rebels had the support of the people, it would be better for Spain to keep control:

A grave danger represents itself. Two-fifths of the insurgents in the field are negroes. These men... would, in the event of success, demand a predominant share in the government of the country... the result being, after years of fighting, another black republic.

The reference to "another" black republic meant Haiti, whose revolution against France in 1803 had led to the first nation run by blacks in the New World. The Spanish minister to the United States wrote to the U.S. secretary of state about Cuba:

In this revolution, the negro element has the most important part. Not only the principal leaders are colored men, but at least eight-tenths of their supporters.... and the result of the war, if the Island can be declared independent, will be a secession of the black element and a black Republic.

In February 1898, the U.S. battleship *Maine*, in Havana harbor as a symbol of American interest in the Cuban events, was destroyed by a mysterious explosion and sank, with the loss of 268 men. No evidence was ever produced on the cause of the explosion, but excitement grew swiftly in the United States, and McKinley began to move in the direction of war.

At a certain point in that spring, both McKinley and the business community began to see that their object, to get Spain out of Cuba, could not

be accomplished without war, and that their accompanying object, the securing of American military and economic influence in Cuba, could not be left to the Cuban rebels, but could be ensured only by U.S. intervention.

Before this, Congress had passed the Teller Amendment, pledging the United States not to annex Cuba. It was initiated and supported by those people who were interested in Cuban independence and opposed to American imperialism, and also by business people who saw the "open door" as sufficient and military intervention unnecessary. But by the spring of 1898, the business community had developed a hunger for action. The *Journal of Commerce* said: "The Teller amendment... must be interpreted in a sense somewhat different from that which its author intended it to bear."

There were special interests who would benefit directly from war. In Washington, it was reported that a "belligerent spirit" had infected the Navy Department, encouraged "by the contractors for projectiles, ordnance, ammunition and other supplies, who have thronged the department since the destruction of the Maine."

Russell Sage, the banker, said that if war came, "There is no question as to where the rich men stand." A survey of businessmen said that John Jacob Astor, William Rockefeller, and Thomas Fortune Ryan were "feeling militant." And J. P. Morgan believed further talk with Spain would accomplish nothing.

On March 25, a telegram arrived at the White House from an adviser to McKinley, saying: "Big corporations here now believe we will have war. Believe all would welcome it as relief to suspense."

Two days after getting this telegram, McKinley presented an ultimatum to Spain, demanding an armistice. He said nothing about independence for Cuba. A spokesman for the Cuban rebels, part of a group of Cubans in New York, interpreted this to mean the U.S. simply wanted to replace Spain. He responded:

In the face of the present proposal of intervention without previous recognition of independence, it is necessary for us to go a step farther and say that we must and will regard such intervention as nothing less than a declaration of war by the United States against the Cuban revolutionists....

Indeed, when McKinley asked Congress for war on April 11, he did not recognize the rebels as belligerents or ask for Cuban independence. Still, when American forces moved into Cuba, the rebels welcomed them, hoping the Teller Amendment would guarantee Cuban independence.

Many histories of the Spanish-American War have said that "public

opinion" in the United States led McKinley to declare war on Spain and send forces to Cuba. True, certain influential newspapers had been pushing hard, even hysterically. And many Americans, seeing the aim of intervention as Cuban independence—and with the Teller Amendment as guarantee of this intention—supported the idea. But would McKinley have gone to war because of the press and some portion of the public (we had no public opinion surveys at that time) without the urging of the business community? Several years after the Cuban war, the chief of the Bureau of Foreign Commerce of the Department of Commerce wrote about that period: "The Spanish-American War was but an incident of a general movement of expansion which had its roots in the changed environment of an industrial capacity far beyond our domestic powers of consumption."

American labor unions had sympathy for the Cuban rebels as soon as the insurrection against Spain began in 1895. But they opposed American expansionism.

When the explosion of the *Maine* in February led to excited calls for war in the press, the monthly journal of the International Association of Machinists agreed it was a terrible disaster, but it noted that the deaths of workers in industrial accidents drew no such national clamor. It pointed to the Lattimer Massacre of September 10, 1897, during a coal strike in Pennsylvania... when a sheriff and his deputies opened fire on marching miners, killing nineteen of them, most shot in the back, with no outcry in the press. The labor journal said that "the thousands of useful lives that are annually sacrificed to the Moloch of greed, the blood tribute paid by labor to capitalism, brings forth no shout for vengeance and reparation...."

Some unions, like the United Mine Workers, called for U.S. intervention after the sinking of the *Maine*. But most were against war. The treasurer of the American Longshoremen's Union, Bolton Hall, wrote "A Peace Appeal to Labor," which was widely circulated: "If there is a war, you will furnish the corpses and the taxes, and others will get the glory."

Socialists, with few exceptions (the Jewish *Daily Forward* was one), opposed the war. The *Appeal to Reason*, the major Socialist newspaper, said the movement for war was "a favorite method of rulers for keeping the people from redressing domestic wrongs." In the San Francisco *Voice of Labor* a Socialist wrote: "It is a terrible thing to think that the poor workers of this country should be sent to kill and wound the poor workers of Spain merely because a few leaders may incite them to do so."

But after war was declared most unions went along. Samuel Gompers

called the war "glorious and righteous." It did bring more employment and higher wages, but also higher prices and higher taxes.

On May Day, 1898, the Socialist Labor party organized an antiwar parade in New York City, but the authorities would not allow it to take place, while a May Day parade called by the Jewish *Daily Forward*, urging Jewish workers to support the war, was permitted.

The prediction made by longshoreman Bolton Hall, of wartime corruption and profiteering, turned out to be remarkably accurate. Richard Morris's *Encyclopedia of American History* gives startling figures:

Of the more than 274,000 officers and men who served in the army during the Spanish-American War and the period of demobilization, 5,462 died in the various theaters of operation and in camps in the U.S. Only 379 of the deaths were battle casualties, the remainder being attributed to disease and other causes.

The same figures are given by Walter Millis in his book *The Martial Spirit*. In the *Encyclopedia* they are given tersely, and without mention of the "embalmed beef" (an army general's term) sold to the army by the meatpackers—meat preserved with boric acid, nitrate of potash, and artificial coloring matter, but now rotten and putrid. Thousands of soldiers got food poisoning. There are no figures on how many of the five thousand noncombat deaths were caused by that.

The Spanish forces were defeated in three months, in what John Hay, the American secretary of state, later called a "splendid little war." The American military pretended that the Cuban rebel army did not exist. When the Spanish surrendered, no Cuban was allowed to confer on the surrender, or to sign it. Gen. William Shafter said no armed rebels could enter the capital city of Santiago, and told the Cuban rebel leader, Gen. Calixto Garcia, that not Cubans, but the old Spanish civil authorities, would remain in charge of the municipal offices in Santiago. Garcia wrote a letter of protest: "... when the question arises of appointing authorities in Santiago de Cuba... I cannot see but with the deepest regret that such authorities are not elected by the Cuban people, but are the same ones selected by the Queen of Spain...."

Along with the American army in Cuba came American capital.

The *Lumbermen's Review*, spokesman for the lumber industry, said in the midst of the war: "Cuba still possesses 10,000,000 acres of virgin forest abounding in valuable timber... nearly every foot of which would be saleable in the United States and bring high prices."

Americans began taking over railroad, mine, and sugar properties when

the war ended. In a few years, \$30 million of American capital was invested. United Fruit moved into the Cuban sugar industry. It bought 1.9 million acres of land for about \$.20 an acre. The American Tobacco Company arrived. By the end of the occupation, in 1901, at least 80 percent of the export of Cuba's minerals were in American hands, mostly Bethlehem Steel.

During the military occupation a series of strikes took place. In September 1899, a gathering of thousands of workers in Havana launched a general strike for the eight-hour day. The American General William Ludlow ordered the mayor of Havana to arrest eleven strike leaders, and U.S. troops occupied railroad stations and docks. Police moved through the city breaking up meetings. But the economic activity of the city had come to a halt. Tobacco workers struck. Printers struck. Bakers went on strike. Hundreds of strikers were arrested, and then some of the imprisoned leaders were intimidated into calling for an end to the strike.

The United States did not annex Cuba. But a Cuban constitutional convention was told that the United States army would not leave Cuba until the Platt Amendment, passed by Congress in February 1901, was incorporated into the new Cuban Constitution. This amendment gave the United States "the right to intervene for the preservation of Cuban independence, the maintenance of a government adequate for the protection of life, property, and individual liberty...."

The Platt Amendment was now seen, not only by the radical and labor press, but by newspapers and groups all over the United States, as a betrayal of the idea of Cuban independence. A mass meeting of the American Anti-Imperialist League at Faneuil Hall in Boston denounced it, ex-governor George Boutwell saying: "In disregard of our pledge of freedom and sovereignty to Cuba we are imposing on that island conditions of colonial vassalage."

In Havana, a torchlight procession of fifteen thousand Cubans marched on the constitutional convention, urging them to reject the amendment. A black delegate from Santiago reported to the convention: "For the United States to reserve to itself the power to determine when this independence was threatened, and when, therefore, it should intervene to preserve it, is equivalent to handing over the keys to our house so that they can enter it at any time, whenever the desire seizes them, day or night, whether with good or evil design."

With this report, the convention overwhelmingly rejected the Platt Amendment.

Within the next three months, however, the pressure from the United

The Empire and the People

States, the military occupation, the refusal to allow the Cubans to set up their own government until they acquiesced, had its effect; the convention, after several refusals, adopted the Platt Amendment. Gen. Leonard Wood wrote in 1901 to Theodore Roosevelt: "There is, of course, little or no independence left Cuba under the Platt Amendment."

Cuba was not an outright colony, but it was now in the American sphere. However, the Spanish-American War did lead to a number of direct annexations by the United States. Puerto Rico, a neighbor of Cuba in the Caribbean, belonging to Spain, was taken over by U.S. military forces. The Hawaiian Islands, one-third of the way across the Pacific, which had already been penetrated by American missionaries and pineapple plantation owners, and had been described by American officials as "a ripe pear ready to be plucked," was annexed by joint resolution of Congress in July of 1898. Around the same time, Wake Island, twenty-three hundred miles west of Hawaii, on the route to Japan, was occupied. And Guam, the Spanish possession in the Pacific, almost all the way to the Philippines, was taken. In December of 1898, the peace treaty was signed with Spain, officially turning over to the United States, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines, for a payment of \$20 million.

There was heated argument in the United States about whether or not to take the Philippines. As one story has it, President McKinley told a group of ministers visiting the White House how he came to his decision:

I walked the floor of the White House night after night until midnight, and I am not ashamed to tell you, gentlemen, that I went down on my knees and prayed Almighty God for light and guidance more than one night. And one night late it came to me this way—I don't know how it was, but it came:

That we could not give them back to Spain—that would be cowardly and dishonorable.

That we could not leave them to themselves—they were unfit for self-government—and they would soon have anarchy and misrule over there worse than Spain's was; and

That there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them, and by God's grace do the very best we could by them, as our fellow men for whom Christ also died. And then I went to bed and went to sleep and slept soundly.

The Filipinos did not get the same message from God. In February 1899, they rose in revolt against American rule, as they had rebelled

several times against the Spanish. Emilio Aguinaldo, a Filipino leader, now became leader of the *insurrectos* fighting the United States. He proposed Filipino independence within a U.S. protectorate, but this was rejected.

It took the United States three years to crush the rebellion, using seventy thousand troops—four times as many as were landed in Cuba—and thousands of battle casualties, many times more than in Cuba. It was a harsh war. For the Filipinos the death rate was enormous from battle casualties and from disease.

The taste of empire was on the lips of politicians and business interests throughout the country now. Racism, paternalism, and talk of money mingled with talk of destiny and civilization. In the Senate, Albert Beveridge spoke, January 9, 1900, for the dominant economic and political interests of the country:

Mr. President, the times call for candor. The Philippines are ours forever.... And just beyond the Philippines are China's illimitable markets. We will not retreat from either.... We will not renounce our part in the mission of our race, trustee, under God, of the civilization of the world.... It has been charged that our conduct of the war has been cruel. Senators, it has been the reverse.... Senators must remember that we are not dealing with Americans or Europeans. We are dealing with Orientals.

The fighting with the rebels began, McKinley said, when the insurgents attacked American forces. But later, American soldiers testified that the United States had fired the first shot. After the war, an army officer speaking in Boston's Faneuil Hall said his colonel had given him orders to provoke a conflict with the insurgents.

William James, the Harvard philosopher, was part of a movement of prominent American businessmen, politicians, and intellectuals who formed the Anti-Imperialist League in 1898 and carried on a long campaign to educate the American public about the horrors of the Philippine war and the evils of imperialism.

The Anti-Imperialist League published the letters of soldiers doing duty in the Philippines. A captain from Kansas wrote: "Caloocan was supposed to contain 17,000 inhabitants. The Twentieth Kansas swept through it, and now Caloocan contains not one living native." A volunteer from the state of Washington wrote: "Our fighting blood was up, and we all wanted to kill 'niggers'."

It was a time of intense racism in the United States. In the years between 1889 and 1903, on the average, every week, two Negroes were

lynched by mobs—hanged, burned, mutilated. The Filipinos were brown-skinned, physically identifiable, strange-speaking and strange-looking to Americans. To the usual indiscriminate brutality of war was thus added the factor of racial hostility.

In November 1901, the Manila correspondent of the *Philadelphia Ledger* reported: "...our men have been relentless, have killed to exterminate men, women, children, prisoners and captives, active insurgents and suspected people from lads of ten up, the idea prevailing that the Filipino as such was little better than a dog...."

Secretary of War Elihu Root responded to the charges of brutality: "The war in the Philippines has been conducted by the American army with scrupulous regard for the rules of civilized warfare...with self-restraint and with humanity never surpassed."

In Manila, a marine named Littletown Waller, a major, was accused of shooting eleven defenseless Filipinos, without trial, on the island of Samar. Other marine officers described his testimony: "The major said that General Smith instructed him to kill and burn...that it was no time to take prisoners, and that he was to make Samar a howling wilderness. Major Waller asked General Smith to define the age limit for killing, and he replied 'Everything over ten.'"

Mark Twain commented on the Philippine war: "We have pacified some thousands of the islanders and buried them; destroyed their fields; burned their villages, and turned their widows and orphans out-of-doors.... And so, by these Providences of God—and the phrase is the government's, not mine—we are a World Power."

American firepower was overwhelmingly superior to anything the Filipino rebels could put together. In the very first battle, Admiral Dewey steamed up the Pasig River and fired 500-pound shells into the Filipino trenches. Dead Filipinos were piled so high that the Americans used their bodies for breastworks. A British witness said: "This is not war; it is simply massacre and murderous butchery." He was wrong; it was war.

For the rebels to hold out against such odds for years meant that they had the support of the population. Gen. Arthur MacArthur, commander of the Filipino war, said: "I believed that Aguinaldo's troops represented only a faction. I did not like to believe that the whole population of Luzon—the native population, that is—was opposed to us." But he said he was "reluctantly compelled" to believe this because the guerrilla tactics of the Filipino army "depended upon almost complete unity of action of the entire native population."

Despite the growing evidence of brutality and the work of the Anti-Imperialist League, some of the trade unions in the United States supported imperial expansion. But the *Carpenters' Journal* asked: "How much better off are the workingmen of England through all its colonial possessions?"

When the treaty for annexation of the Philippines was up for debate in Congress in early 1899, the Central Labor Unions of Boston and New York opposed it. There was a mass meeting in New York against annexation. The Anti-Imperialist League circulated more than a million pieces of literature against taking the Philippines. While the League was organized and dominated by intellectuals and business people, a large part of its half-million members were working-class people, including women and blacks. Locals of the League held meetings all over the country. The campaign against the treaty was a powerful one, and when the Senate did ratify it, it was by one vote.

The mixed reactions of labor to the war—lured by economic advantage, yet repelled by capitalist expansion and violence—ensured that labor could not unite either to stop the war or to conduct class war against the system at home.

The reactions of black soldiers to the war were also mixed: there was the simple need to get ahead in a society where opportunities for success were denied the black man, and the military life gave such possibilities. There was race pride, the need to show that blacks were as courageous, as patriotic, as anyone else. And yet, there was with all this the consciousness of a brutal war, fought against colored people, a counterpart of the violence committed against black people in the United States.

Black soldiers encamped in Tampa, Florida, ran into bitter race hatred by white inhabitants there. A race riot began when drunken white soldiers used a Negro child as a target to show their marksmanship; Negro soldiers retaliated, and then the streets "ran red with negro blood," according to press dispatches.

The chaplain of a black regiment wrote to the *Cleveland Gazette* of black veterans of the Cuban war "unkindly and sneeringly received" in Kansas City, Missouri. He said that "these black boys, heroes of our country, were not allowed to stand at the counters of restaurants and eat a sandwich and drink a cup of coffee, while the white soldiers were welcomed and invited to sit down at the tables and eat free of cost."

But it was the Filipino situation that aroused many blacks in the United States to militant opposition to the war. The senior bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Henry M. Turner, called the cam-

paign in the Philippines "an unholy war of conquest" and referred to the Filipinos as "sable patriots."

There were four black regiments on duty in the Philippines. Many of the black soldiers established rapport with the brown-skinned natives on the islands, and were angered by the term "nigger" used by white troops to describe the Filipinos. An "unusually large number" of black troops deserted during the Philippines campaign.

From the Philippines, William Simms wrote: "I was struck by a question a little Filipino boy asked me, which ran about this way: 'Why does the American Negro come... to fight us where we are much a friend to him and have not done anything to him. Why don't you fight those people in America who burn Negroes...?'"

A black infantryman named William Fulbright wrote from Manila in June 1901 to the editor of a paper in Indianapolis: "This struggle on the islands has been naught but a gigantic scheme of robbery and oppression."

Back home, while the war against the Filipinos was going on, a group of Massachusetts Negroes addressed a message to President McKinley:

We... have resolved to address ourselves to you in an open letter, notwithstanding your extraordinary, your incomprehensible silence on the subject of our wrongs....

...you have seen our sufferings, witnessed from your high place our awful wrongs and miseries, and yet you have at no time and on no occasion opened your lips on our behalf....

With one accord, with an anxiety that wrenched our hearts with cruel hopes and fears, the Colored people of the United States turned to you when Wilmington, North Carolina was held for two dreadful days and nights in the clutch of a bloody revolution; when Negroes, guilty of no crime except the color of their skin and a desire to exercise the rights of their American citizenship, were butchered like dogs in the streets of that ill-fated town... for want of federal aid, which you would not and did not furnish....

And when you made your Southern tour a little later, and we saw how cunningly you catered to Southern race prejudice.... How you preached patience, industry, moderation to your long-suffering black fellow citizens, and patriotism, jingoism and imperialism to your white ones....

The "patience, industry, and moderation" preached to blacks, the "patriotism" preached to whites, did not fully sink in. In the first years of the twentieth century, despite all the demonstrated power of the state, large numbers of blacks, whites, men, women became impatient, immoderate, unpatriotic.

Exercises

1. Why might Teddy Roosevelt have thought that the United States needed a war in 1897?
2. In what sense was expansion overseas "not a new idea"? If it was not new, then why did it not begin until 1898?
3. How many times did the U.S. government intervene in the affairs of other countries between 1798 and 1895?
4. Senator Henry Cabot Lodge believed that the United States needed to control the balance of trade in the Pacific. Which island and countries did he believe were key acquisitions toward attaining such a goal?
5. Senator Albert Beveridge argued in 1897 that "the trade of the world must and shall be ours". What might his motivations and reasons have been for making such a statement?
6. The ideology justifying American aggression in 1846–48 was similar to or different from the same ideology of 1896?
7. U.S. business interests favored an "open door" policy over the conquest of colonies. From this point of view, what were the pros and cons of intervening in the Cuban revolt that began in 1895? Why did intervention ultimately win out?
8. How did the Cuban rebels react to McKinley's ultimatum to Spain?
9. What were labor's arguments against going to war with Spain? Why did most unions not oppose the war once it was declared?
10. During the Spanish-American War, what was the ratio of American soldiers who died in battle to those who died from disease or other causes?

11. How long did hostilities last between the United States and Spain once they began in 1898?
12. Why were the Cuban rebel leaders shut out of the negotiations for peace?
13. What did the American victory in the Spanish-American War allow American business to accomplish in Cuba? What role did the U.S. military occupation force play in the relationship between American investors and Cuban workers?
14. Was the Teller Amendment honored by the U.S. government?
15. How did the Filipinos respond to the U.S. decision to take over their country?
16. How did Beveridge justify American cruelty toward the Filipinos in 1900? Why did the U.S. government resort to such brutality? (Consider the following when answering the previous question: race relations in the United States; the Filipino population's relationship to the guerrillas; and the U.S. government's goals of the Spanish-American War.)
17. What explains the heavy opposition to the passage of the Treaty of Annexation? (For example, why was it ratified by only one vote?)
18. According to an open letter to President McKinley by "a group of Massachusetts Negroes," what was the federal government's response when whites attacked and murdered blacks for two days in Wilmington, North Carolina?
19. *Debate Resolution:* The United States consciously provoked a war with Spain in order to acquire colonies from Spain.
20. *Draw a map* that identifies the following: the boundaries of the United States as of 1896, Hawaii, the Philippines, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Guam.