

Imperialism of decadence assignment



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Imperialism of Decadence Modern History Sourcebook: Francisco Garcia Calderon: “ Imperialism of Decadence”, 1913 Calderon was a Peruvian diplomat and writer. Here he criticizes U. S. policy, as well as US businesses, for exploiting Latin Americans. He also warns of the dangers of cultural imperialism. Interventions have become more frequent with the expansion of frontiers.

The United States have recently intervened in the territory of Acre, there to found a republic of rubber gatherers; at Panama, there to develop a province and construct a canal; in Cuba, under cover of the Platt Amendment, to maintain order in the interior; in Santo Domingo, to support the civilising revolution and overthrow the tyrants; in Venezuela, and in Central America, to enforce upon these nations, torn by intestine disorders, the political and financial tutelage of the imperial democracy. In Guatemala and Honduras the loans concluded with the monarchs of North American finance have reduced the people to a new slavery.

Supervision of the customs and the dispatch of pacificatory squadrons to defend the interests of the Anglo-Saxon have enforced peace and tranquility: such are the means employed. The New York American announces that Mr. Pierpont Morgan proposes to encompass the finances of Latin America by a vast network of Yankee banks. Chicago merchants and Wall Street financiers created the Meat Trust in the Argentine. The United States offer millions for the purpose of converting into Yankee loans the moneys raised in London during the last century by the Latin American States; they wish to obtain a monopoly of credit.

It has even been announced, although the news hardly appears probable, that a North American syndicate wished to buy enormous belts of land in Guatemala, where the English tongue is the obligatory language. The fortification of the Panama Canal, and the possible acquisition of the Galapagos Island in the Pacific, are fresh manifestations of imperialistic progress.... Warnings, advice, distrust, invasion of capital, plans of financial hegemony all these justify the anxiety of the southern peoples....

Neither irony nor grace nor scepticism, gifts of the old civilizations, can take away against the plebeian brutality, the excessive optimism, the violent individualism of the [North American] people. All these things contribute to the triumph of mediocrity; the multitude of primary schools, the vices of utilitarianism, the cult of the average citizen, the transatlantic M. Homais, and the tyranny of opinion noted by Tocqueville; and in this vulgarity, which is devoid of traditions and has no leading aristocracy, a return to the primitive type of the redskin, which has already been noted by close observers, is threatening the proud democracy.

From the excessive tension of wills, from the elementary state of culture, from the perpetual unrest of life, from the harshness of the industrial struggle, anarchy and violence will be born in the future. In a hundred years men will seek in vain for the “ American soul,” the “ genius of America,” elsewhere than in the undisciplined force or the violence which ignores moral laws.... Essential points of difference separate the two Americas. Differences of language and therefore of spirit; the difference between

Spanish Catholicism and multiform Protestantism of the Anglo-Saxons; between the Yankee individualism and the omnipotence of the State natural to the nations of the South. In their origin, as in their race, we find fundamental antagonism; the evolution of the North is slow and obedient to the lessons of time , to the influences of custom; the history of the southern peoples is full of revolutions, rich with dreams of an unattainable perfection. Source: From Francisco Garcia Calderon: Latin America: Its Rise and Progress (London: T. F. unwtn, 1913), pp. 392-393.