

Dbq for american imperialism

Government



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The period 1875-1920 has been described by some historians as a period of “selflessness” during which the United States helped weaker nations from dominant European powers and spread the “blessings of democracy and civilization.” Others have described the “New Manifest Destiny” as a time of “ruthless American expansion” at the cost of weaker nations and in violation of our own principles of consent of the governed and popular sovereignty.

Using the documents, and your knowledge, how would you characterize this period of “Becoming a World Power”?

Document A

Document B

“The title to territory of indefinite but confessedly very large extent is in dispute between Great Britain and the Republic of Venezuela. . . . Venezuela can hope to establish her claim only through peaceful methods. . . . The Government of the United States has made it clear to Great Britain that the controversy is one in which both its honor and its interests are involved. . . . The people of the United States have a vital interest in the cause of popular self-government. . . . To-day the United States is practically sovereign on this continent, and its fiat is law upon the subjects to which it confines its interposition. . . . Its infinite resources combined with its isolated position render it master of the situation and practically invulnerable as against any or all other powers. . . .

All the advantages of this superiority are at once imperiled if the principle be admitted that European powers may convert American States into colonies or provinces of their own. . . . Great Britain can not be deemed a South

American state within the purview of the Monroe Doctrine. . . . It being clear, therefore, that the United States may legitimately insist upon the merits of the boundary question being determined, it is equally clear that there is but one feasible mode of determining them, viz., peaceful arbitration.” Richard Olney, Secretary of State, 1895.

Document C

Document D

“ The Republic of Hawaii hereby cedes absolutely and without reserve to the United States of America all rights of sovereignty of whatsoever kind in and over the Hawaiian Islands and their dependencies; and it is agreed that all territory of and appertaining to the Republic of Hawaii is hereby annexed to the United States of America under the name of the Territory of Hawaii. . . .

The existing laws of the United States relative to public lands shall not apply to such lands in the Hawaiian Islands, but the Congress of the United States shall enact special laws for their management and disposition. . . . There shall be no further immigration of Chinese into the Hawaiian Islands, except upon such conditions as are now or may hereafter be allowed by the laws of the United States, and no Chinese by reason of anything herein contained shall be allowed to enter the United States from the Hawaiian Islands.” Treaty of Hawaiian Annexation, 1898.

Document E

“ The principles which this Government is particularly desirous of seeing formally declared by His Imperial Majesty and by all the great Powers interested in China, are:

First. The recognition that no Power will in any way interfere with any treaty port or any vested interest within any leased territory or within any so-called " sphere of interest" it may have in China.

Second. That the Chinese treaty tariff of the time being shall apply to all merchandise landed or shipped to all such ports as are within said " sphere of interest" (unless they be " free ports"), no matter to what nationality it may belong, and that duties so leviabale shall be collected by the Chinese Government.

Third. That it will levy no higher harbor dues on vessels of another nationality frequenting any port in such " sphere" than shall be levied on vessels of its own nationality over equal distances.

The declaration of such principles by His Imperial Majesty would not only be of great benefit to foreign commerce in China. . . ." John Hay, Open Door In China , Pg. 168.

Document F

“ On March 31 Captain-General Blanco issued a decree putting an end to reconcentration in the provinces of Pinar del Rio, Havana, Matanzas, and Santa Clara, and on April 9 the Spanish Cabinet decided to grant an armistice to the insurgents, while both the Pope and the great Powers of Europe were using their influence to avert a Spanish-American war. Nevertheless the replies at this time of the Madrid government to President McKinley's demands concerning the pacification of Cuba, notwithstanding the Spanish offer to arbitrate the Maine trouble, led the authorities at

Washington to believe that pacification could not be attained without the armed intervention of the United States.

The President's message to Congress stated the entire issue, rightly considering the Maine disaster a subordinate matter, stated that the only hope of relief and repose from a condition which can no longer be endured is the enforced pacification of Cuba. In the name of humanity, in the name of civilization, in behalf of endangered American interests, which give us the right and the duty to speak and act, the war in Cuba must stop." " Outbreak Of The War With Spain", America, Vol. 10, Pg. 120.

Document G

" For more than a year the exact whereabouts of the elusive chieftain of the insurgent Filipinos had been a mystery. Rumor located Aguinaldo in all sorts of impossible places. Running up the bank toward the house, we were met by Segovia, who came running out, his face aglow with exultation, and his clothing spattered with the blood of the men he had wounded. He called out in Spanish, " It is all right. We have him." We hastened into the house, and I introduced myself to Aguinaldo, telling him that we were officers of the American army, that the men with us were our troops, and not his, and that he was a prisoner of war.

He was given assurance that he need fear no bad treatment. He said in a dazed sort of way, " Is this not some joke?" I assured him that it was not, though, as a matter of fact, it was a pretty bad one, on him. With Aguinaldo in our hands, the Filipinos soon lost heart and the insurrection collapsed."

Senator George Frisbie Hoar, Subjugation of the Philippines Iniquitous, The World's Famous Orations, Vol. 3, Pg. 220.

Document H

“ The Republic of Panama grants to the United States in perpetuity, the use, occupation and control of a zone of land and land under water for the construction, maintenance, operation, sanitation and protection of said Canal of the width of ten miles extending to the distance of five miles on each side of the center line of the route of the Canal to be constructed; the said zone beginning in the Caribbean Sea three marine miles from mean low water mark and extending to and across the Isthmus of Panama into the Pacific Ocean to a distance of three marine miles from mean low water mark with the proviso that the cities of Panama and Colon and the harbors adjacent to said cities, which are included within the boundaries of the zone above described, shall not be included within this grant. . . .

The Republic of Panama further grants in like manner to the United States in perpetuity, all islands within the limits of the zone above described and in addition thereto, the group of small islands, in the Bay of Panama, named Perico, Naos, Culebra and Flamenco. . . . The Republic of Panama grants to the United States all the rights, power and authority within the zone mentioned and described in Article II of this agreement, and within the limits of all auxiliary lands and waters mentioned and described in said Article II which the United States would possess and exercise, if it were the sovereign of the territory within which said lands and waters are located to the entire exclusion of the exercise by the Republic of Panama of any such sovereign

rights, power or authority.” Theodore Roosevelt, Convention Between U. S. And Panama, Pg. 480.

Document I

“ In view of the constant reiteration of the assertion that there was some corrupt action by or on behalf of the United States Government in connection with the acquisition of the title of the French Company to the Panama Canal and of the repetition of the story that a syndicate of American citizens owned either one or both of the Panama Companies, I deem it unwise to submit to the Congress all the information I have on the subject.

These stories were first brought to my attention as published in a paper in Indianapolis, called the " News," edited by Mr. Delavan Smith. The stories were scurrilous and libelous in character and false in every essential particular. Mr. Smith shelters himself behind the excuse that he merely accepted the statements which had appeared in a paper published in New York, the " World," owned by Mr. Joseph Pulitzer.” Theodore Roosevelt, Purchase Of The Panama Canal, Pg. 240.

Document J

“ Alfred Thayer Mahan (1840-1914), American naval officer and historian, born in West Point, New York, and educated at the United States Naval Academy. A Union naval officer during the American Civil War(1861-1865), Mahan served in the navy for nearly 40 years. He was promoted to the rank of captain in 1885. In 1886, Mahan was invited to lecture at the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island. He also served as president of the college from 1886 to 1889, and again in 1892 and 1893. His lectures were published

under the title of *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1783* (1890). The book received international recognition as a comprehensive exposition of naval strategy. Mahan stressed the important role of sea power in the world, and this idea had a profound influence on the policies of many nations, including the United States and Germany.” Microsoft Encarta

Document K

“ And now of a sudden, without cool deliberation, without prudent preparation, the nation is hurried into war, and America, she who more than any other land was pledged to peace and good will on earth, unsheathes her sword, compels a weak and unwilling nation to a fight, rejecting without due consideration her [Spain's] earnest and repeated offers to meet every legitimate demand of the United States. It is a bitter disappointment to the lover of his country; it is a turning back from the path of civilization to that of barbarism. There never was a good war," said Franklin. There have indeed been many wars in which a good man must take part. . . .

But if a war be undertaken for the most righteous end, before the resources of peace have been tried and proved vain to secure it, that war has no defense. It is a national crime. The plea that the better government of Cuba, and the relief of the reconcentrados, could only be secured by war is the plea either of ignorance or of hypocrisy. But the war is declared; and on all hands we hear the cry that he is no patriot who fails to shout for it, and to urge the youth of the country to enlist, and to rejoice that they are called to the service of their native land. The sober counsels that were appropriate before the war was entered upon must give way to blind enthusiasm, and the voice of condemnation must be silenced by the thunders of the guns and the

hurrahs of the crowd. Stop! A declaration of war does not change the moral law.

" The Ten Commandments will not budge" at a joint resolve of Congress. . . . No! the voice of protest, of warning, of appeal is never more needed than when the press and too often the pulpit, is bidding all men fall in and keep step and obey in silence the tyrannous word of command. Then, more than ever, it is the duty of the good citizen not to be silent, and spite of obliquity, misrepresentation, and abuse, to insist on being heard, and with sober counsel to maintain the everlasting validity of the principles of the moral law." Public Opinion 24 (June 23, 1898): 775-776.

Document L

Caribbean interventions

Document M

" Even if the condemnation of barbarous warfare in the Philippines by the imperialist press is somewhat belated, we welcome it, as we welcome everything that compels Americans to give attention to a subject to which too many of them have become increasingly indifferent. Silence, we know, is consistent with shame, and may be one of the signs of its existence; and the fact that only a few of the more unblushing or foolish newspapers have defended Gen. Smith's policy of extermination shows what the general sentiment is. To allege the provocation which our soldiers had is to set up a defense which President Roosevelt brushed aside in advance.

To fall back on the miserable sophistry that " war is hell" is only another way of making out those who engage in that kind of war to be fiends. It is,

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besides, to offer an excuse for ourselves which we did not tolerate for an instant in the case of Spanish atrocities. That is our present moral humiliation in the eyes of the world. We made war on Spain four years ago for doing the very things of which we are now guilty ourselves. As the Chicago News pointedly observes, we are giving Spain as good reason to interfere with us on the ground of humanity as we had to interfere with her. Doubtless she would interfere if she were strong enough and thought she could acquire some islands in the virtuous act." Nation (New York) 74 (May 8, 1902): 357.

Document N

" How long are the Spaniards to drench Cuba with the blood and tears of her people? How long is the peasantry of Spain to be drafted away to Cuba to die miserably in a hopeless war, that Spanish nobles and Spanish officers may get medals and honors? How long shall old [Cuban] men and women and children be murdered by the score, the innocent victims of Spanish rage against the patriot armies they cannot conquer? How long shall the sound of rifles in Castle Morro at sunrise proclaim that bound and helpless prisoners of war have been murdered in cold blood? How long shall Cuban women be the victims of Spanish outrages and lie sobbing and bruised in loathsome prisons?" New York Journal, 1898

Document O

" When next I realized that the Philippines had dropped into our laps, I confess I did not know what to do with them. I sought counsel from all sides-- Democrats as well as Republicans--but got little help. I thought

first we would take only Manila; then Luzon; then other islands, perhaps, also. 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:

(1)

That we could not give them back to Spain--that would be cowardly and dishonorable; (2) That we could not turn them over to France or Germany, our commercial rivals in the Orient--that would be bad business and discreditable. (3) That we could not leave them to themselves--they were unfit for self-government, and they would soon have anarchy and misrule worse than Spain's was; and (4) 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, and the next morning I sent for the chief engineer of the War Department (our map-maker), and I told him to put the Philippines on the map of the United States (pointing to a large map on the wall of his office), and there they are and there they will stay while I am President!" This document is a report of an interview with McKinley at the White House, November 21, 1899, written by one of the interviewers and confirmed by others present. Published in Christian Advocate, January 22, 1903.

Document P

“ It is not true that the United States feels any land hunger or entertains any projects as regards the other nations of the Western Hemisphere, save such as are for their welfare. All that this country desires is to see the neighboring countries stable, orderly, and prosperous. . . . If a nation shows that it knows how to act with reasonable efficiency and decency in social and political matters, if it keeps order and pays its obligations, it need fear no interference from the United States.

Chronic wrongdoing, or an impotence which results in a general loosening of the ties of civilized society, may in America, as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation, and in the Western Hemisphere the adherence of the United States to the Monroe Doctrine may force the United States, however reluctantly, in flagrant cases of such wrongdoing or impotence, to the exercise of an international police power. . . . Our interests and those of our southern neighbors are in reality identical. We would interfere with them only in the last resort. . . .” [Theodore Roosevelt] A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents (New York: Bureau of National Literature, 1906) vol. 16 (December 6, 1904), pp. 7053-7054.

Document Q

“ There is not a civilized nation which does not talk about its civilizing mission just as grandly as we do. . . . We assume that what we like and practice, and what we think better, must come as a welcome blessing to Spanish-Americans and Filipinos. This is grossly and obviously untrue. They hate our ways. They are hostile to our ideas. Our religion, language, institutions, and manners offend them.” W. G. Sumner, War and Other Essays (1919), pp. 303-305.

Document R

“ No document has proved more harmful to the prestige of the United States in the Western Hemisphere [than the Roosevelt corollary]. No White House policy could be more distasteful to Latin Americans--not even, perhaps, outspoken imperialism. Latin Americans are usually inclined to admire strength, force, a nation muy hombre [very manly]. This was imperialism without military glamour. . . . Moreover, it was a total distortion of the original Message. Monroe's Doctrine was defensive and negative: defensive, in that it was essentially an opposition to eventual aggression from Europe; negative, in that it simply told Europe what it should not do--not what the United States should do.

The Monroe Doctrine of later corollaries became aggressive and positive; aggressive, because, even without actual European attack, it urged United States " protection" of Latin America--and that was outright intervention; positive, because instead of telling Europe what not to do, it told the United States what it should do in the Western Hemisphere. From a case of America vs. Europe, the corollaries made of the Doctrine a case of the United States vs. America. President Monroe had merely shaken his head, brandished his finger, and said to Europe, " Now, now, gentlemen, if you meddle with us, we will not love you any more," while Teddy Roosevelt, brandishing a big stick, had shouted, " Listen, you guys, don't muscle in--this territory is ours." Luis Quintanilla, *A Latin American Speaks* (New York: The Macmillan Company 1943), pp. 125-126.

Document S

“ Open Door or not, patriotic Chinese did not care to be used as a doormat by the Europeans. In 1900 a superpatriotic group known as the “ Boxers” broke loose with the cry “ Kill Foreign Devils.” Over two hundred missionaries and other ill-fated whites were murdered, and a number of foreign diplomats were besieged in the capital, Beijing (Peking). A rescue force of some eighteen thousand soldiers, hastily assembled, arrived in the nick of time. This multi nation contingent consisted of Japanese, Russian, British, French, German, and American troops, with the American contribution some twenty-five hundred men. Such participation in a joint military operation, especially in Asia, was plainly contrary to the nation's time-honored principles of nonentanglement and noninvolvement.” David Kennedy, *The American Pageant*, Chapter 31.

Document T

“ . . . largely as a result of the dislocations and tax burdens, numerous Japanese laborers, with their wives and children, began to pour into California. By 1906 approximately seventy thousand Japanese dwelt along the Pacific Coast. Nervous Californians, confronted by another “ yellow peril,” feared being drowned in an Asian sea. . . . Following the frightful earthquake and fire in San Francisco, the local school authorities, decreed that Japanese children should attend a special school. Instantly, this brewed an international crisis, and irresponsible war talk sizzled. This led to the Gentleman’s Agreement.” David Kennedy, *The American Pageant*, Chapter 31.

Document U

" Cuba, scorched and chaotic, presented another headache. An American military government, set up under the administrative genius of General Leonard Wood of Rough Rider fame, wrought miracles in government, finance, education, agriculture, and public health. Under his leadership a frontal attack was launched on yellow fever. Spectacular experiments were performed by Dr. Walter Reed and others upon American soldiers, who volunteered as human guinea pigs; and the *stegomyia* mosquito was proved to be the lethal carrier.

A cleanup of breeding places for mosquitoes wiped out yellow fever in Havana, while removing the recurrent fear of epidemics in cities of the South and Atlantic seaboard. The United States, honoring its self-denying Teller Amendment of 1898, withdrew from Cuba in 1902. Old World imperialists could scarcely believe their eyes. But the Washington government could not turn this rich and strategic island completely loose on the international sea; a grasping power like Germany might secure dangerous lodgment near America's soft underbelly. The Cubans were therefore forced to write into their own constitution of 1901 the so-called Platt Amendment. The hated restriction severely hobbled the Cubans. They bound themselves not to impair their independence by treaty or by contracting a debt beyond their resources.

They further agreed that the United States might intervene with troops to restore order and to provide mutual protection. Finally, the Cubans promised to sell or lease needed coaling or naval stations, ultimately two and then only one (Guantanamo), to their powerful " benefactor." The United States is still there on about twenty-eight thousand acres under an agreement that

can be revoked only by the consent of both parties.” Thomas A. Bailey, *The American Pageant*, Chapter 30.

Document V

A thorny legal problem was posed by the various territorial acquisitions: did the Constitution follow the flag? Did American laws, including tariff laws, apply with full force to the newly acquired possessions, chiefly the Philippines and Puerto Rico? Beginning in 1901 with the Insular Cases, a badly divided Supreme Court decreed, in effect, that the flag did outrun the Constitution, and that the outdistanced document did not necessarily extend with full force to the new territories. The Congress was therefore left with a free hand to determine the degree of applicability.

“ The question before us is, has Congress incorporated Puerto Rico into the Union as distinguished from merely belong to the United States? Constitutional guarantees clearly apply in territories destined for statehood, but not in those not destined for statehood. . . . Mr. Balzac, the editor of a Puerto Rican newspaper, was convicted of criminal libel in the territorial court without trial by jury. He appealed to the Supreme Court for his right of trial by jury. . . . Without express provision by Congress, territory acquired by the nation remains unincorporated and the inhabitants are not entitled to all the protections of the Constitution.” *Balzac v. Puerto Rico* 258 U. S. 298, 1922.