

American imperialism

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Government



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

APUSH Mrs. Cox 3/7/2013 (B) In the late 1800s, the United States embarked on a new wave of expansionism during which it acquired overseas territories. Explain the reasons for this new wave of expansionism.

American Imperialism has been a part of United States history since the American Revolution. Imperialism is practice by powerful nations or people seeking to expand and maintain control or influence over weaker nations. The United States switch to imperialist behavior in 1898 has caused great historical attention.

After all, the United States had generally claimed to stand in opposition to the practice of taking colonies, instead being an advocate of freedom, democracy, and self-government for all. However, the United States saw a need for expanding more. The United States embarked on a new wave of expansionism in the late 1800's because of its desire for new markets, America's aggressive mood, and new military strength. In the late 1800's, agricultural and industrial production was booming in the United States. In fact the production was so high that Americans could no longer buy all of the products created.

Because of this, big businesses supported expansionism so they had new markets to trade with and make more profit. The businesses also feared running out of natural resources. Many believed that overseas markets would provide a safety valve to relieve the pressures of labor violence and agrarian unrest. During this time, there was a large volume of American business men visiting Hawaii. These men saw Hawaii not only as a place to vacation, but a place of investment. The ports in Hawaii would allow the American business men to trade with other nations such as Asia and China.

America saw the need to expand their belief in "White Anglo-Saxon superiority". During the late 1800's, America was very aggressive. This can be attributed to people interpreting Darwinism to mean that the earth belonged to the strong and fit, like the United States. It also can be attributed to the belief that if America was to survive in the competition of modern nation-states, it would have to become an imperial power. Africa being divided up by the Europeans worried Americans about losing its status as a world power. There are multiple examples of this new aggressive mood.

For example, the lynching of 11 Italians in 1891 brought the two countries to the brink of war. Another example is when two sailors were killed in Chile. When Chile rejected American protests, hostilities seemed inevitable. The willingness of Americans to risk war over such distant and minor disputes demonstrated the aggressive new national war. After the Civil War, America's navy was not that powerful compared to European Countries. The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, written by Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan in 1890, showed how important a strong navy is and spurred development in the United States.

The development of the new steel navy in the late 1800s opened up possibilities overseas such as controlling the Hawaiian Islands and the Samoas. Hawaii was considered as the "crossroads of the Pacific". Ports like Pearl Harbor was seen fit to be used as a coaling station to help supply the US Navy in future operations in the Pacific. In fact, Hawaii could have easily worked as a coaling station without formal annexation, since American businessmen essentially controlled the island anyway. Nonetheless, keeping

with the spirit of the times, the US annexed Hawaii on July 7, 1898 granting Hawaiians with full US citizenship.

This new military strength played a big role in expansionism. With the new military strength, America was able to obtain more territories like Cuba and the Philippines. America embarked on a new wave of expansionism in the late 1800's because of its economic benefits, America's aggressive mood, and its new military strength. Although the United States had generally claimed to stand in opposition to the practice of taking colonies, instead being an advocate of freedom, democracy, and self-government for all. The United States saw a need for expanding more, this was the need to become a strong world power!