

"december didn't  
have an infinite  
source of

[History](#)



" December 7, 1941 A Date Which Will Live in Infamy" 1, as said by Franklin Delano Roosevelt soon after the atrocious attack on Pearl Harbor, but was this tragic event also an eye opener to Americans—that they should have a stance on the world stage? The event of Pearl Harbor has essentially paved way for the U. S. to be recognized as a.

.. or even the leading world power; setting a new mindset of involvement in national affairs and eventually even acts resembling that of an imperialistic state, however subtle. It may be presumptuous to say Pearl Harbor was the cause of American Imperialism, however there are shown signs that the event itself has at least been the initial starting point of the true beginning.

American Imperialism itself shouldn't be viewed as a derogatory term exactly, but as a turning point in U. S. policies regarding neutrality and nonintervention. In fact, historians refer to this as " new imperialism" 2, due to the fact that it resembled European imperialism during the age of colonization.

The differentiating factor was that America themselves didn't acquire colonies but annexed territories—later to be called commonwealths.

Whatever difference there is, there is no ignoring the fact that America went out of its borders and especially the western hemisphere to spread its influence just as any imperialist state would. America's thirst to expand upon its economy is the primary reason to adoption of " new imperialism". First off, in the 19th the U. S. realized early on that they didn't have an infinite source of raw materials to supplement their booming economy. 3 Therefore,

they use their territories annexed throughout the years to compensate for this, expand their influence, and gain new consumers at the same time.

America, like the Europeans, absorbed these territories but only settle the land to a small extent. In other cases, such as Hawaii where there was a majority population of Americans they would annex as a state absorbing and displacing the native population<sup>4</sup>. However, under Theodore Roosevelt's presidency the Good Neighbor Policy was enacted releasing the Latin American territories from the U.

S. economic subjugation<sup>5</sup>. Furthermore, as time progressed and the arrivals of multiple financial panics and the great depression itself, America became more isolationist and would forget ideas of imperialism until the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Going back to the question at hand, why is Pearl Harbor the starting point of imperialistic actions taking place? There is no denying that America has shown acts of imperialism years before Pearl Harbor, and they did have territories outside North America as well. However, during those various time periods the American government still had a strong belief in isolationism and nonintervention, as well as strong principles surrounding internal domestic and economic affairs.

This is reinforced by the event of the Great Depression, in which the U. S. was forced to concentrate all efforts into economic repair. Only until economic stability was reached, the U. S. would be able to recommence its "new imperialism".

Fortunately, the Allied victory of WWII would provide just this, and the U. S. would progressively begin to resemble an imperialist state.

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As WWII finally saw its end, the U. S. had finally received its stance on the world stage and unlike in the previous war, it decided to actively participate in the Paris peace conference. Shedding its previous isolationist ways, the U. S. decided to take temporary control of former Axis territory along with the other Allied nations. With this the U. S. was able to begin a small form of imperialism which would slowly, and subtly grow. However, the only obstacle towards this was Soviet Union who like U.

S, although not admittedly, was recognized as one of the world powers causing constant dispute between influences within the new territories. There was understandable fear towards the Soviet Union, who " after World War II had acted quickly to annex most of Eastern Europe." 6 The U. S. who began to become more imperialistic acted as any other imperialist state would by—challenging any threat. The main cause of concern was a " naive generalization and paranoia" 7of communism or more so the threat of the U. S. S. R. on America itself. Thus, the Cold War began creating years of tension between the two countries, without a single blood shed or bullet shot between the two. Unfortunately, this cannot be said for the future wars between the U. S. and Communism.

The first conflict seen between the U. S. and Soviet Union is between east and west Berlin. The Soviets decided to challenge the U.

S. first by enacting a blockade; which the U. S. responded with the Berlin airlift allowing the U. S. to claim its first victory when the blockade was called

off. Then came the Berlin Wall, which to generalized, separated any contact between the east and west.

However, as the cold war began to thaw so did Soviet presence in Eastern Europe<sup>8</sup> and the wall was soon demolished and Germany united with it. 1 "Speech by Franklin D. Roosevelt, New York (Transcript)," The Library of Congress, , accessed January 2018, [https://www.](https://www.loc.gov/resource/afc1986022.afc1986022_ms2201/?st=text)

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4 Crashcourse, "American Imperialism: Crash Course US History #28," YouTube, September 03, 2013, , accessed January 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QfsfoFqsFk4>. 5 "Toward War: U.

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