A CHRONOLOGY OF POSTWAR EXPANSION: THE PACIFIC AND ASIA

When U.S. naval officers claimed the Midway Islands (so named because they were halfway between California and Japan) for the United States in 1867, they triggered a thirty-three-year surge of westward expansion over the Pacific Ocean. In 1867, Americans were trying to rebuild from the ruins of their civil war. By 1900, they had an army on the Asian mainland and had conquered a string of bases across the broad Pacific that linked that mainland to the United States.

The magnificent Hawaiian Islands were the first stop. As early as 1843, so many U.S. traders and missionaries worked there that wary British and French officials asked the United States to sign a treaty guaranteeing Hawaii's independence. The Americans not only refused, but a decade later tried to annex the islands—a move foiled by British opposition as well as by the growing division in Washington over the slavery and expansion issues. In 1867, Seward reopened the campaign to annex by shrewdly trying to seduce Hawaii into the U.S. orbit through a reciprocity treaty. Again, internal U.S. political fighting stopped Seward's move, but in 1875 Grant and Fish did negotiate such a trade treaty. The results were all that expansionists such as Seward and Grant could have desired. With the rich U.S. market at their disposal, Hawaiian planters, between 1876 and 1885, raised their sugar production from 26 million pounds to 171 million pounds. The planters utterly depended on the mainland as their exports to the United States quadrupled to $8.9 million in those ten years. By 1881, Blaine could call the islands "a part of the productive and commercial system of the American states."[32]

President Cleveland, mistakenly labeled by some historians as an antiexpansionist, worked hard to renew the reciprocity treaty in 1885. But domestic U.S. sugar interests hated Hawaiian competition and so opposed the agreement. The Hawaiians further sweetened the deal by giving the United States a lease on Pearl Harbor, an undeveloped but potentially spectacular naval base. Cleveland termed the islands "the stepping-stone to the growing trade of the Pacific." That phrase captured exactly how he and other officials saw Hawaii as a gateway to the great Asian commerce.[33] The Hawaiians, however, were soon shocked by the 1890 reciprocity treaties that allowed cheap Cuban sugar into U.S. markets. The islands' economy began sinking. By this time, the Americans who controlled the plantations also controlled the politics. They had demanded a constitution in 1887 that recognized their power. By the early 1890s, however, a strong-minded native monarch, Queen Liliuokalani, moved to neutralize the Americans' influence. Her attempt to reclaim power for the Hawaiians combined with the economic troubles to produce an American-led rebellion against her in January 1893. Washington's minister to Hawaii, John L. Stevens, actively helped by landing U.S. naval units to aid the rebels.

Queen Liluokalani (1838–1917) was a determined and shrewd leader of her Hawaiian peoples. But in the early 1890s, she was unable to reverse the growing U.S. power on the islands, and in 1893 a coup, supported by the U.S. Navy, in effect ended her power despite President Cleveland's refusal to annex Hawaii at that point.

But now, Cleveland (just returned to the White House for a second term of 1893–1897) rejected the plea by the Americans in Hawaii for annexation. He knew the native Hawaiians had been coerced by U.S. force. Moreover, the president doubted that the U.S. Constitution could work when stretched across thousands of miles of water and imposed on such a non-Caucasian society. Cleveland also had enough problems at home. The 1893 stock-market collapse marked the lowest and most dangerous point in the twenty-five-year depression that had begun in 1873. But time was on the side of the pro-annexation group. Hawaii depended on U.S. markets. That dependence was tightened by an 1894 tariff bill restoring a favored place for the islands in the U.S. market. A new administration and new chance for a Pacific empire in 1898 finally allowed for the annexation of the islands. The annexation climaxed the expansionist drive that had begun more than half a century before.

The next stepping stone across the Pacific was Samoa. These beautiful islands, populated by Polynesians, had long served as an impor-

tant stopping place for whaling vessels and traders (hence their early name, Navigators Islands). By the 1870s, their strategic location had attracted British and German attention. Into that rivalry stepped U.S. Naval Commander R. W. Meade. In 1871, Meade took the initiative to give Samoan chiefs American protection in return for their giving him a lease on the fine harbor of Pago Pago. The U.S. Senate did not accept that pact, but it ratified a similar treaty in 1878. Within a decade, the three Western powers were bitterly immersed in conflict over Samoa. By 1887, Cleveland's secretary of state, Thomas F. Bayard, asked for a conference before war possibly erupted. Bayard, a Delaware patrician with long political experience in an industrializing America, actually saw Samoa as an extension of the U.S. transcontinental railroad that carried U.S. goods to Asian markets. German Foreign Office officials angrily muttered that Bayard was extending the principles of "the Monroe Doctrine as though the Pacific Ocean were to be treated as an American lake."[34]

In 1887, Germany and Britain attempted to cut a deal over Samoa that threatened U.S. claims. Bayard refused to recognize the deal. At the same time, Germany began to bar U.S. meat imports (especially pork) on the grounds that they were tainted by a dangerous parasite. German-American relations, hardly in existence a generation before, suddenly became an intense rivalry over trade rights and access to the distant Pacific islands. The great German chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, had enough worries maintaining the new Germany that he had pieced together since 1860 through conquests and diplomacy. Wanting no war with Great Britain or the United States, in 1889 he called a conference in Berlin to discuss Samoa. Just before the meeting, a hurricane destroyed German and U.S. lives and vessels on the islands. Against this somber background, the Germans, British, and Americans agreed to divide the islands among themselves into a tripartite protectorate. They merely paid lip service to the Samoans' independence.

In 1899, the United States again found itself in a struggle with Germany and Great Britain over control of Samoan politics. British attention, however, was soon drawn off to that country's war in South Africa. London officials finally gave up all claims to Samoa. Germany and the United States then divided the islands between themselves, with the Americans retaining Pago Pago. The ending was peaceful, but, as historian Manfred Jonas observes, Germany, while giving in to U.S. claims, now viewed America as a rival. The Americans feared that German expansionism in Samoa might spread to the Caribbean. During this era, therefore, a "great transformation"[35] (as Jonas calls it) of the normally friendly U.S.-German relations began to strain the ties between Washington and Berlin. Within another generation, that strain would lead to war.

With the 1899 agreement on Samoa, the United States had added another key section in its bridge to Asia. The final destination was the Asian mainland itself, the quest of U.S. traders and missionaries for more than a century. Again, Seward had pointed the way. Since the 1840s, Americans had worked for an "open door" (that is, equality) for their trade in Asia. They did so, however, largely through "scavenger diplomacy"—coming behind the British Lion and taking from Asians whatever the Lion had left behind after its conquests. Seward dramatically changed that approach. In 1863 in Japan, and again in 1866 in Korea, the secretary of state worked alongside the British and French in their attempts to gain concessions. Thus, Seward added two new tactics to U.S. diplomacy in Asia: a willingness to use force, and a willingness to work with European powers to expand Western interests in Asia. These tactics shaped Washington's Asian diplomacy for the next eighty years.

Seward's policy, however, also created a problem—indeed, a contradiction—that bedeviled U.S. policy toward China over those next eighty years. For, in 1868, he signed with China's representative, Anson Burlingame, a treaty that allowed free immigration between the two nations. The agreement also pledged the United States not "to intervene in the domestic administration of China in regard to the construction of railroads, telegraphs, or other material internal improvements." Seward thus recognized China's control over its own internal development. But he refused to give up any claims on China's trade that might be made by the Western powers. While the United States thus recognized China's control of certain domestic affairs, it refused to recognize China as a fully sovereign country in control of its foreign commercial affairs. A month before he died in 1870, Burlingame wrote, "Let us try once, at least, to see what the Chinese will do if let alone by those who would Christianize them with gunpowder." Burlingame's hope was not to be realized. As his biographer, David L. Anderson, writes, Burlingame hoped to use the 1868 treaty to "replace coercion with cooperation" in U.S.-Chinese relations.[36] Instead, the United States merely mentioned Chinese sovereignty while working ever more closely with European powers to control Chinese affairs.

Seward especially got tough with Korea, the "Hermit Kingdom," over which China tried to claim control. Korea was strategically important, for it was at the gateway to the markets and raw materials of

Manchuria and northern China, as well as to eastern Russia itself. When the crew of the U.S. ship *General Sherman* mistakenly made its way into a Korean river, it was slaughtered by outraged Koreans. Seward quickly used his two new tactics. He prepared a U.S. naval attack, and asked the French to cooperate. But France, which had also lost citizens to Korean retaliation, refused to go along. In 1871, the Grant administration finally dispatched a fleet of five U.S. ships up the Han River. When Koreans fired on the ships, the Americans destroyed forts and killed more than two hundred people. Twelve Americans were killed, and the United States remained without any treaty with the tough Koreans. In 1876, Japan entered the scene by recognizing Korean independence from China. Korea now became a prize to be fought over by Japan and the Western powers.

The United States again took up the fight in 1882, when Commodore Robert Shufeldt forced Korea to sign a treaty opening itself to the Western world. An ardent expansionist, Shufeldt colorfully expressed his vision for American destiny in the Pacific:

> The Pacific is the ocean bride of America—China and Japan and Corea—with their innumerable islands, hanging like necklaces about them, are the bridesmaids, California is the nuptial couch, the bridal chamber, where all the wealth of the Orient will be brought to celebrate the wedding. Let us as Americans—let us determine while yet in our power, that no commercial rival or hostile flag can float with impunity over the long swell of the Pacific sea. . . . It is on this ocean that the East and the West have thus come together, reaching the point where search for Empire ceases and human power attains its climax.[37]

But the "bridesmaids"—Korea and China—were soon violated by Japan. The United States could do little about it. Americans certainly were concerned as Japanese power grew. Led by an extraordinary U.S. diplomat, Horace Allen, American interests in Korea temporarily increased. Allen, who nicely combined his Presbyterian missionary dedication with a robber-baron passion for making money, helped Americans develop Korean gold mines (perhaps the richest in Asia) and bribed authorities to obtain streetcar construction contracts.[38] But the U.S. attempt to split Korea from China backfired. Japan was the region's developing power, and it rightly saw Korea as vital to its own security.

As tension built between the rising Japanese and the declining Chinese empires, war finally erupted in 1894. Japan quickly forced China to

quit Korea as well as give in to other demands. The Asian balance of power had shifted. Allen's and other U.S. enterprises were endangered by Japan. A prophetic U.S. senator, Anthony Higgins of Delaware, warned that when China "shall have arisen out of her defeat," she was likely to become the dominant military force of the globe. But most U.S. officials agreed with Secretary of State Walter Quintin Gresham in 1894: Japan was "the most civilized country" in Asia and, as such, could be trusted to respect the United States "as her best friend."[39] The friendship seemed to be reinforced strongly by trade. U.S. exports to China jumped from $3 million in 1890 to $7 million in 1896, but exports to Japan grew from $5 million to $8 million in those years. (The $22 million of imports from China in 1896 and $26 million of goods imported from Japan that year far outstripped U.S. exports to those two nations.)

THE 1865-TO-1896 ERA: A CONCLUSION

The race for the riches of Asia was accelerating. The race for dominance in Latin America, however, had ended. The United States had won that contest by 1896. This historic victory and the growth of American power in Asia signaled fundamental changes in U.S. diplomacy between 1865 and 1896, changes that shaped diplomacy throughout the twentieth century.

Most notably, the friends and enemies of 1865 exchanged places by the 1890s. During the century after 1776, the United States and England had fought two wars. Another conflict threatened during and after the Civil War, when the British built several ships, including the *Alabama*, for use by the Confederacy. After the war, infuriated Americans, led by Senator Charles Sumner, demanded that London pay millions for the damages that the ships had caused—or, as some Americans indicated, the annexation of Canada, which would be equally satisfactory as payment. As Anglo-American relations grew tense in the late 1860s, President Grant, who had come to despise the pompous Sumner, maneuvered the senator off the chairmanship of the powerful Foreign Relations Committee and made a deal with England. In the 1872 Washington Treaty, the British essentially apologized for releasing the *Alabama* and agreed to pay $15.5 million in the so-called *Alabama* claims. The United States, in turn, agreed to submit other disputes to arbitration. As a result of this agreement and long-held British claims against Americans, the United States finally paid England $7.4 mil-

lion. Both U.S. and Canadian citizens gained free access to the St. Lawrence, St. John, and Yukon rivers, and also to Lake Michigan.[40]

In 1893, U.S. and British diplomats settled a long-festering dispute over the killing of female seals in the Bering Sea. The slaughter was destroying herds that provided rich, highly profitable furs. The United States, moreover, claimed control over the Bering Sea itself. Washington officials finally had to drop that claim, but in 1892–1893 Russians and Japanese, as well as Canadians, agreed with the American demand to protect the seals.

With these agreements of 1872 and 1892–1893, the air cleared between London and Washington. U.S.-British relations also were built on marriages of the children of American robber barons, who sought respectability, to those of British aristocrats, who sought dollars. But of special importance, in the Venezuelan crisis of 1895–1896, the British in fact recognized U.S. dominance in the Western Hemisphere, while in Asia the two English-speaking peoples shared a common commitment to the "open door" to China. Theodore Roosevelt caught this historic turn in 1898 when he wrote a friend, "I feel very strongly that the English-speaking peoples are now closer together than for a century and a quarter . . . ; for their interests are really fundamentally the same, and they are far more closely akin, not merely in blood, but in feeling and principle, than either is akin to any other people in the world."[41]

At the same time, however, relations with Russia, a long-time U.S. ally, turned worse. The tsars and the British monarchs were rivals, especially in the Near and Far East. As U.S.-British relations warmed, U.S.-Russian relations cooled. In Asia, the Russians, lagging far behind British and American industrial development, could not survive in an open-door type of economic competition. They favored outright colonization, which was precisely the policy the open-door approach opposed. Of special importance to many Americans, the tsar launched vicious attacks on Russian Jews in the 1880s. These pogroms, which had deep roots in the nation's history, occurred just as millions of European Jews migrated to seek opportunities in the United States. The attacks also appeared as many U.S. businessmen, including Jews, suffered discrimination when they tried to do business in Russia. U.S. opinion changed radically. "Russia's ambition is sleepless and insatiable," a Baltimore newspaper editor proclaimed in 1886. "It goes ahead step by step, through intrigue, through treachery, through diplomatic mendacity," and she cares not if "her people remain poor." The powerful Louisville newspaper publisher, Henry Watterson, put it simply: the

Russian had "proven his ability to fight like the European, and to deceive like the Asiatic."[42]

This historic switch in their international friendships was mirrored at home, when Americans realized in the 1890s that they had reached a turning point in their domestic life. The 1890 Census announced that the frontier line had finally disappeared. A young University of Wisconsin historian, Frederick Jackson Turner, explored the meaning of the Census finding. He did so in perhaps the most influential essay ever written on American history. In 1893, Turner argued that the U.S. economy and politics had been vigorous and successful because of the frontier. ("Economic power," Turner stated, in fact "secures political power.") The frontier had also produced "individualism" in the American character. Turner then had to conclude with a dramatic warning: "And now, four centuries from the discovery of America, at the end of a hundred years of life under the Constitution, the frontier has gone, and with its going has closed the first period of American history."[43]

To many Americans, the question now became: What can we find to replace the frontier so our economy, politics, and individualism can remain strong? That question took on a special urgency as strikes, riots, political radicalism, and bankruptcy struck the United States during the economic depression of the 1890s. Turner himself argued in 1896 that the frontier's disappearance created "demands for a vigorous foreign policy . . . and for the extension of American influence to outlying islands and adjoining countries."[44]

That conclusion had already been reached by Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan, who became perhaps the most influential military strategist in U.S. history. In 1886, Mahan was a bored, middle-aged naval officer. Then in a Lima, Peru, library he read that ancient Rome's control of the sea had secured its empire. Over the next quarter-century, in a series of widely read books and in lectures at the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island, Mahan built on that insight into Rome to construct a global foreign policy for the United States. He assumed that American surplus production required overseas markets. In order to obtain and protect those markets, the United States needed a great navy and fueling bases as rest stops for that navy. Beginning in 1886—and especially in 1890, when the first modern U.S. battleship was commissioned (and also the year when Mahan's first great book *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660–1783*, appeared)—Americans built the Great White Fleet that fought the 1898 war and formed the basis of the twentieth-century U.S. Navy. Mahan pushed hard to annex an isthmian canal area, as well as bases in the Caribbean, Hawaii, and

Alfred Thayer Mahan (1840–1914) was a friend of presidents and emperors because he knew how to use history to justify expansionism and the building of great navies. His seriousness, stiffness, discipline, and self-esteem are indicated in this portrait.

the distant Pacific to serve the fleet. He focused on the markets of Asia as the supreme prize.

To conquer that prize, he advised the United States to work with Great Britain and Japan (other seagoing powers who wanted the open door), and oppose Russia (a land-based power who opposed the open door). As a devout Christian, he believed that the seeking of this empire was "the calling of God." To do God's work, Mahan demanded a centralized government and powerful president. He blasted the democratic legacy of Thomas Jefferson, who "made a hideous mess in his own day, and yet has a progeny of backwoodsmen and planters who think what he taught a great success." Force was to be used freely, especially force in the form of large battleship fleets. The mere threat of such force, Mahan believed, prevented war. Anyway, he wrote, war had become merely "an occasional excess, from which recovery is

easy."[45] Mahan enormously influenced U.S. officials, especially Presidents William McKinley and Theodore Roosevelt.

Other U.S. naval officers worked for a great navy because, in historian Peter Karsten's words, of "rank, discipline, and boredom."[46] Needing ships and action to gain personal promotion, they lobbied hard in Congress to build a new fleet with the most modern weapons. In 1883, the U.S. Navy was a pitiful collection of 90 woeful ships, 38 made of wood. Mahan and other officers, such as Mahan's mentor at the Naval War College, Stephen B. Luce, worked with Congress and such industrial giants as Bethlehem Steel and Andrew Carnegie to construct a great navy. It marked the success of the first military-industrial complex.[47] U.S. government dollars put laborers to work during the depression. Carnegie and other builders profited from highly subsidized government contracts.

The navy's officers obtained their fleet. And, in 1898, the United States moved to obtain what historian Frederick Drake calls "the empire of the seas."[48]

NOTES

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4. William H. Seward, *The Works of William H. Seward*, ed. George Baker, 5 vols. (Boston, 1853–1883), III, pp. 498–499.
5. Thomas C. Cochran and William Miller, *The Age of Enterprise* (New York, 1942), p. 116.
6. David M. Pletcher, "Growth and Diplomatic Adjustment," in *Economics and World Power*, ed. William H. Becker and Samuel F. Wells (New York, 1984), pp. 120–124. For the agricultural side, the pioneering account is William Appleman Williams, *The Roots of the Modern American Empire* (New York, 1969).
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8. Henry Nash Smith, *Mark Twain's Fable of Progress* (New Brunswick, N.J., 1964), pp. 8–9.
9. Cochran and Miller, p. 157.
10. David Healy, *U.S. Expansionism: The Imperialist Urge in the 1890s* (Madison, Wis., 1970), p. 115.
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7

Turning Point: The McKinley Years (1896–1900)

The Significance of the Late 1890s

As the twentieth century dawned, the United States stepped onto the world stage as a great power. Because of the triumphs scored between 1898 and 1900, it strode confidently now with Great Britain, France, Russia, Germany, and Japan—nations that possessed immense military strength and had used that strength for conquest. Never had a newly independent nation risen so far so fast as did the United States between 1776 and 1900.

Historians have argued not over whether the United States deserved great-power status by 1900 (all agree that it did), but whether Americans consciously intended to follow the expansionist policies after 1896 that projected them into such distant regions. Historian Ernest May believes that the United States had "greatness thrust upon it." But another scholar, Albert K. Weinberg, concludes that U.S. officials were no more passive at key moments than "is the energetic individual who decides upon, plans, and carries out the robbery of a bank."[1] The years 1896 to 1900 thus become critical for the student of U.S. foreign policy in the twentieth century. For if the nation entered the ranks of great world powers at this time, it is of central importance to know how it did so. By accident? Because of a few elite officials who pushed reluctant Americans overseas? Because of the U.S. system's domestic needs that forced that system to assume global responsibilities? The well-

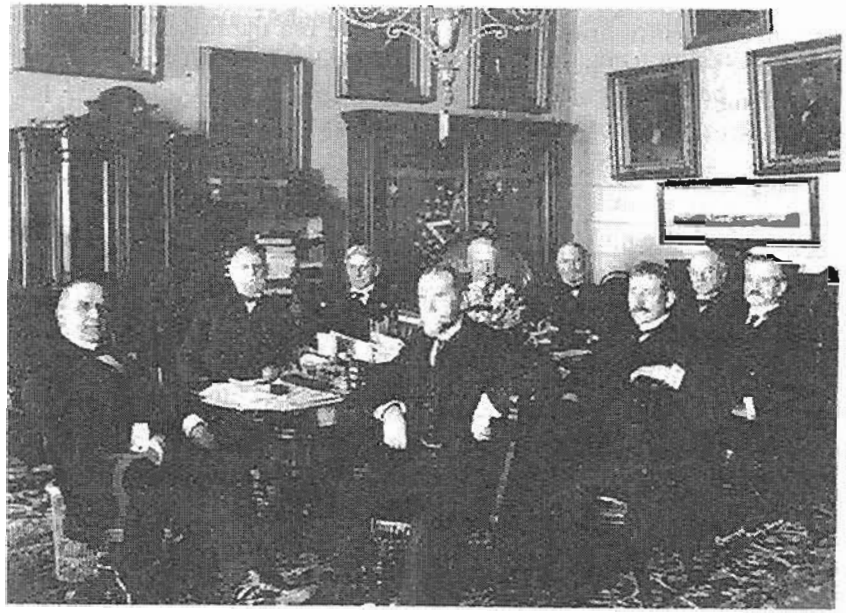
known saying "Just as the twig is bent, the tree's inclined" might have meaning for U.S. diplomatic history. The reasons why the United States moved outward so rapidly in the late 1890s help us understand why it grew from these roots (or twig) into a twentieth-century superpower.

McKINLEY AND McKINLEYISM

Americans living in the late 1890s understood that they were witnessing a historic turn. After the triumph over Spain in 1898 brought the United States new holdings in the Caribbean and the western Pacific, Assistant Secretary of State John Bassett Moore observed that the nation had moved "from a position of comparative freedom from entanglements into the position of what is commonly called a world power. . . . Where formerly we had only commercial interests, we now have territorial and political interests as well."[2]

Moore's boss, President William McKinley, presided over these changes. McKinley won the 1896 election over the highly popular Democrat, William Jennings Bryan. The affection Americans felt for McKinley ranked with the feelings they later had toward the popular Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Dwight D. Eisenhower. A gentle, soft-spoken, highly courteous man, McKinley had long been known for the love and care he had lavished on his wife, an invalid who required much of his attention. Born in Niles, Ohio, in 1843, Major McKinley had been a Civil War hero, then parlayed his reputation and uncanny political instincts into a career in the House of Representatives between 1876 and 1890. By the end of his stay, no one on Capitol Hill better understood the new industrialized America. He dominated debates on the central issues of tariffs and taxes because he had mastered the facts and understood the powerful industrialists who made the country run. Moving on to the governorship of Ohio, he maintained order in an economically depressed state while nearby regions were wracked by riots. He was not reluctant to use state forces to control strikers, but he somehow did so while keeping the good will of the labor leaders. With the help of fellow Ohioan and millionaire steel industrialist Marcus Hanna, who ran a superbly organized campaign, McKinley moved to the White House. The new president named Ohio senator John Sherman as secretary of state and then rewarded Hanna by having him appointed to the empty Senate seat. The United States thus obtained a secretary of state who was aged, sometimes incapacitated, and too often senile; but in Hanna, McKinley enjoyed a

Hanna



William McKinley (1843–1901) of Ohio was the last Civil War veteran to be president (enlisting at age seventeen, he had been a hero) but the first modern American chief executive. He also appointed a modern cabinet—that is, one made up of administrators who owed allegiance to the president. He is at far left. John Hay is at McKinley's right.

trusted power broker in the Senate who followed the president's every wish.

Anyway, McKinley intended to control foreign policy himself. An accomplished negotiator and an experienced politician whose antennae could instantly detect an opponent's weakness, the president knew how to conduct back-room talks and keep secrets. His State Department depended especially on Alvey A. Adee, a long-time professional who served in the department for fifty-five years until his death in 1924. Adee personally wrote or approved nearly every outgoing message. When he once bicycled past, a Washingtonian said, "There goes our State Department now." Though hard-of-hearing, Adee seemed to have learned everything that the president needed to know about international law and diplomatic history. The closed-mouth president, deaf Adee, and senile Sherman led to the complaint that "the President says nothing, the Assistant Secretary hears nothing, and the Secretary of State knows nothing."

Controlling foreign policy in the way that he did, McKinley became

not only the first twentieth-century president, but the first modern chief executive. He developed new powers, especially in maneuvering and controlling Congress, while he kept the control of foreign policy in his own hands (and used the new devices of the telephone and typewriter while doing so). McKinley expanded the Constitution's commander-in-chief powers until, without congressional permission, he used it to dispatch U.S. troops to fight in China. His action set a precedent for the "imperial presidency" of the 1960s and 1970s.

McKinley and Hanna, moreover, cleverly used the backlash caused by the 1893–1897 economic crisis that had driven the Democrats from power in 1894 and 1896. The two men built a political coalition so powerful that only one Democratic presidential nominee would be elected between 1896 and 1932. The new politics had profound influence on presidential power. As a result of the 1890s political realignment, Republicans dominated the North and Democrats controlled the South. This division meant that contests between Republicans and Democrats declined in individual states, voters grew less interested, and many (especially black people in the South) were disfranchised.[3] The president thus broke free of the hard-fought party rivalry that had marked the 1876–1896 years. He enjoyed more freedom and a more dependable political base from which to conduct foreign policy. McKinley exploited these opportunities by becoming the first chief executive to appoint a staff member who dealt with newspaper reporters and prepared press handouts that publicized the administration's case. The Ohioan was even the first president whose inauguration was put on film.

The great Kansas journalist, William Allen White, observed that McKinley survived twenty years in the jungles of Ohio politics, "where survival values combined the virtues of the serpent, the shark, and the cooing dove." White believed that the president was too much "cooing dove," "too polite," for McKinley's "Prince Albert coat was never wrinkled, his white vest front never broken. . . . He weighed out his saccharine on apothecary scales, just enough and no more for the dose that cheers but does not inebriate." White further perfectly caught McKinley's genius for handling people, especially those in Congress. After rejecting one visitor's request for a favor, the president took the carnation he always wore in his coat and told the man to "give this to your wife with my compliments and best wishes." He did it so graciously that the visitor declared, "I would rather have this flower from you for my wife than the thing I came to get."[4]

At the same time, the president understood the brute truths of politics. Historian Henry Adams watched the president closely and described "what might be called McKinleyism; the system of combinations, consolidations . . . , realized at home, and realizable abroad."[5] Under McKinley, an industrialized America moved to Americanize new parts of the world.

TWO CRISES, ONE WAR

McKinley took the presidential oath in March 1897 as a revolution raged just ninety miles from U.S. shores. In 1894–1895, the U.S. tariff policy had kept out Cuban sugar from mainland markets. The island went into an economic tailspin. A revolution against Spanish colonialism had broken out between 1868 and 1878. It now re-emerged with greater force. By late 1895, the rebels claimed to have established a provisional government. Support for their cause swelled in the United States, but neither Cleveland nor McKinley would recognize the revolutionaries. To do so would have released the Spanish government from its responsibility for protecting $50 million of U.S. property in Cuba. Washington officials preferred to hold Spain fully responsible for protecting U.S. lives and property, while pushing the Madrid government to give Cuba enough autonomy so that the revolutionaries would stop fighting.

Spain, however, refused to move the island toward autonomy. Its once-great, four-hundred-year-old empire had rotted away until it amounted to little more than Cuba, Puerto Rico, a few scattered islands in the Pacific, and the Philippine Islands. No government in Madrid could surrender these last holdings and expect to remain in power. The Spanish instead took a tough approach. They dispatched 150,000 soldiers, who, under the command of General Valeriano Weyler (soon nicknamed "Butcher" Weyler by U.S. newspaper editors), tried to destroy rebel support by rounding up thousands of Cubans and placing them in barbed-wire concentration camps. The revolution nevertheless continued to spread. The insurgents burned U.S. property in the hope of forcing McKinley's intervention.

Nineteenth-century Americans had little respect for Spain. They had seized its North American empire piece by piece between 1800 and 1821. The Spanish, wrote one of the first American historians, the Reverend Jedidiah Morse, are "naturally weak and effeminate," and "dedicate the greatest part of their lives to loitering and inactive pleasures." "Their character," he sniffed, "is nothing more than a grave

and specious insignificance."[6] In the 1890s, leading U.S. newspapers picked up Morse's views and demanded that the more civilized Americans help Cuba. The publishers were not unselfish. Technological breakthroughs in making paper and setting type had driven newspaper prices down to a penny or two a copy. These changes opened the possibility for mass distribution and the rich advertising fee that came with such a market. Two giants of the trade, William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer, led the struggle to gain more newspaper readers. Each man sought subscribers through sensational front-page stories, and nothing was more sensational than events in Cuba—unless, of course, it was a U.S. war against Spain. Hearst especially promoted such a conflict. Congress picked up his beat and, in 1897, pressured McKinley to recognize the rebels.

The new president was moved by neither congressional demands nor the sensationalist "yellow journal" press. He feared that U.S. recognition would lead to war, a war whose costs could drag the United States back into the economic crises from which it was finally emerging in 1897. Businessmen and conservative politicians, both Republican and Democrat, warned that such a war could be paid for only by coining more silver. But more silver would cheapen the dollar and threaten U.S. credit overseas. McKinley, moreover, opposed war because it could lead to demands for annexing Cuba. Annexation would raise constitutional problems (for example, Can the Constitution safely stretch across water to take in new states without tearing apart?). Bringing Cuba into the Union would also incorporate a multiracial society at a

José Martí (1853–1895) was the father of the Cuban revolution that erupted in 1895, but he feared U.S. intervention as much as Spanish colonialism: "And once the United States is in Cuba," he asked, "who will drive it out?" A journalist in New York during the 1880s, he returned to Cuba in early 1895 to start the final phase of the uprising but was killed a month later by Spanish troops. Half a century later, he became a great hero of Fidel Castro.

"Yellow journalism" of the 1890s fanned the flames of war by giving Americans immediate news of foreign-policy crises, especially if that news could be sensationalized to sell more newspapers.

time when white Americans were already having problems dealing with black Americans and millions of newly arrived immigrants. McKinley, therefore, pressed Spain to grant enough reforms to undercut the revolutionaries. Madrid began to do so, even recalling "Butcher" Weyler and offering the first steps toward autonomy. The president, however, criticized the response as too little too late.

Spain had lost control. In late 1897, riots erupted in the Cuban capital of Havana. McKinley moved a warship, the *Maine*, into Havana Harbor to protect U.S. citizens and property. In early February 1898, a pro-war group in New York captured a letter in which the Spanish minister to Washington, Dupuy de Lôme, called McKinley "weak and a bidder for the admiration of the crowd." The minister also downplayed the importance of Spain's reforms. The little trust that Americans had in the Spanish evaporated. Six days later, on February 15, an explosion shook the *Maine*. Settling into the muck of Havana Harbor, the ship took more than 250 U.S. sailors to their deaths. In 1976, a thorough investigation of the tragedy concluded that the vessel had probably been destroyed by an internal explosion (perhaps in the engine

room) and not by some external device set by Spanish agents.[7] In 1898, however, Americans quickly concluded that a bomb had taken those lives, and the yellow journals and congressmen screamed for war. McKinley played for time by asking for an investigation. He feared, as he told a friend, that "the country was not ready for war." Military preparations had only begun. Economic dangers still loomed. He worried about the possible results of a victory: "Who knows where this war will lead us," he told a congressional leader. "It may be more than war with Spain."[8]

When making that remark, McKinley may have had in mind a second foreign-policy crisis that emerged in March 1898. It had begun with Japan's victory over China in 1894–1895 (see p. 182). In 1897, Germany blocked Japan from grabbing further territorial spoils. Using as an excuse the murder of two German missionaries, Berlin officials demanded as indemnity from China the port of Kiaochow (now Chiao Hsien). Located at an entrance to the rich Chinese province of Manchuria, Kiaochow controlled a trade route used by an increasing number of Americans. Other European powers and Japan then clamored for important parts of China's territory. The traditional U.S. open-door policy to all of China faced extinction. Great Britain, which shared much of Washington's concern about the open door, asked McKinley for help in stopping the other Europeans. The president sympathized with the British position, but he could not help. China was too far away, Cuba too close. McKinley had to deal with revolution before he could help protect the open door. Meanwhile, worried U.S. exporters and business newspapers began chanting a warning that, in the *Journal of Commerce*'s words, the Far East crisis threatened "the future of American trade."[9]

One possible escape from the dilemma had, however, already appeared. Rebels in the Philippines had begun war against Spanish rule. The islands could become a key military base from which to protect U.S. interests in Asia. McKinley, Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan, and Assistant Secretary of the Navy Theodore Roosevelt closely watched the Philippine struggle in early 1898. On February 25, when his superior was out of the office, Roosevelt sent a series of cables that ordered U.S. naval commanders to prepare their ships for fighting. The next day, the astonished secretary of the navy, John D. Long, rushed to the White House with the news that his assistant had single-handedly tried to push the country to the brink of war. McKinley ordered that all of Roosevelt's cables be recalled—except the order to Admiral George Dewey that his Pacific fleet prepare to attack the Philippines in case of

war with Spain.[10] In actuality, Dewey had earlier received orders to attack the Philippines in case of war with Spain. The president, meanwhile, had been reinforcing Dewey's squadron. McKinley later soft-soaped critics of his Philippine policy by assuring them that he had involuntarily been pushed into conquering "those darn islands," which he could not even quickly locate on a map. His statement was good politics but bad history. The president knew very well before he went to war with Spain how much the Philippine base could mean to preserving the open door in China. The crisis caused by German and Japanese grabs of China's territory left him no alternative—unless he wanted to quit the century-long U.S. quest for Asian markets. And the president had no intention of doing that.

McKinley carefully prepared his policy to deal with the Cuban and Asian crises at once. After the *Maine*'s destruction, he moved rapidly to prepare the country for war. On March 9, he acquired $50 million from Congress to begin mobilization of the army and navy. On March 17, Republican senator Redfield Proctor of Vermont, one of McKinley's close friends, returned from a visit to Cuba and electrified Americans by announcing that he had changed his anti-war stand. A strong conservative, Proctor declared that his business contacts in Cuba had told him that Spain's reforms had failed. Property was being destroyed. Conservative Cubans wanted autonomy or U.S. annexation. Proctor's fears were underlined when State Department officials in Cuba warned McKinley that unless the fighting was stopped, "there might be a revolution within a revolution."[11] This meant that the rebellion threatened to take a sharp leftward turn that could threaten conservative property holders if the revolutionaries won. McKinley thus not only had to stop the fighting, but control the revolution itself.

On March 25, the president received a telegram from a close political adviser in New York City: "Big corporations here now believe we will have war. Believe all would welcome it as a relief to suspense."[12] This cable revealed that eastern business groups, long afraid of war, now felt that battle was preferable to the fears generated by Proctor's speech and the other events of February and March. New York business leaders had concluded that the United States could safely pay for a war without having to coin silver. Many midwestern and western business groups, as well as nationwide commercial journals who were frightened over the threat to the open door in Asia, had long supported war. The business community was uniting behind McKinley's military preparations.

Between March 20 and 28, the president sent a series of demands to

Spain. The Spanish would have to pay indemnity for the *Maine*, promise not to use the *reconcentrado* policy, declare a truce, and negotiate for Cuban independence through U.S. mediation, if necessary. In the end, Spain surrendered to all the demands except the last. No Madrid government could promise Cuban independence and remain in power. Spain stalled, no doubt hoping that once the rainy season began in Cuba during early summer, McKinley would ease the pressure until the weather cleared for fighting in the autumn. But the president decided to move quickly. On April 11, he sent his message to Congress. He asked for war on the grounds that the three-year struggle on the island threatened Cuban lives, U.S. property, and tranquillity in the United States itself.

The president did not want war. But he did want results that only war could bring: protecting property in Cuba, stopping the revolution before it turned sharply to the left, restoring confidence in the U.S. business community, insulating his Republican party from Democratic charges of cowardice in safeguarding U.S. interests, and giving himself a free hand to deal with the growing Asian crisis. For these reasons, McKinley took the country into war in April 1898.

"A SPLENDID LITTLE WAR . . ."

McKinley's war message triggered a bitter debate in Congress. Since 1895, many congressmen had supported the Cuban junto, which raised millions of dollars in the United States to support the rebels. A number of Americans invested heavily in Cuban bonds to purchase arms for the revolution. These pro-Cuban groups now insisted that McKinley recognize Cuban independence as part of the war declaration. The president instantly rejected the deal. Mistrusting the revolutionaries, he insisted on keeping his freedom of action in handling the island once the fighting ended. The Senate tried to impose the junto's policy on the president, but he blocked the measure in the House. Then, in a week of intense political infighting (during which the usually calm McKinley had to take sleeping potions so that he could rest), he forced the Senate to retreat. The president received exactly what he wanted: only a declaration of war. Theodore Roosevelt, angry because McKinley refused to rush into war, privately complained that the president had "no more backbone than a chocolate eclair" and added that the gentle Ohioan was a "white-livered cur." But as historian Paul Holbo notes, the central question by early April was not whether the country was

going to war, "but who was to direct American policy."[13] The Senate fight demonstrated that the president could dominate Roosevelt, the Congress, and the powerful interests behind the Cuban junto.

Congress included in the war resolution the Teller Amendment. This provision declared that the United States was not entering the war to conquer territory. The Teller Amendment eased some consciences, but it actually aimed to protect American sugar producers from cheap Cuban sugar. (Senator Henry Teller, a Republican, came from the sugar-beet state of Colorado.) Historians later discovered, moreover, that Cuban leaders handed out $1 million in payment to lobbyists and perhaps to members of Congress who voted for the amendment. McKinley accepted the provision. He had no intention of annexing Cuba.[14] But he did want Hawaii—and quickly. The mid-Pacific islands could be vital bases for U.S. ships heading toward the Philippines. Wartime need, however, by no means explained why the United States annexed Hawaii in June 1898. The story begins earlier.

After 1893, when President Cleveland rejected requests from Americans in Hawaii for annexation, the United States paid little attention to the islands. That lack of interest dramatically disappeared in mid-1897, when McKinley received urgent messages that the Japanese were sending several warships to Hawaii. The Tokyo government was angry that its citizens who were attempting to enter the islands were being turned away. The reason for the rejection lay in numbers: in 1884, only 116 Japanese lived in Hawaii; but by 1897, their 25,000 people accounted for one-quarter of the entire population. The Japanese even outnumbered the Americans, Europeans, and native Hawaiians. If they obtained the vote, the power of the white planters who ruled the islands could be shattered. Hawaii could become a Japanese colony.

When Tokyo's two warships appeared in Hawaiian waters during early 1897, McKinley, who had long wanted to annex the islands, ordered U.S. vessels prepared for action. Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan privately warned Roosevelt in the Navy Department to be aware of "the very real present danger of war" with Japan.[15] To the delight of Roosevelt, Mahan, and other expansionists, the president sent a treaty for Hawaiian annexation to the Senate in June 1897. But he moved too quickly. The president could not line up the necessary 60 Senate votes for the two-thirds approval needed to ratify the pact. Americans wanted to think carefully before extending their Constitution that far into the Pacific. Domestic sugar producers especially assailed the pact; they feared Hawaiian sugar imports.

On May 2, 1898, a telegram reached Washington that Admiral George

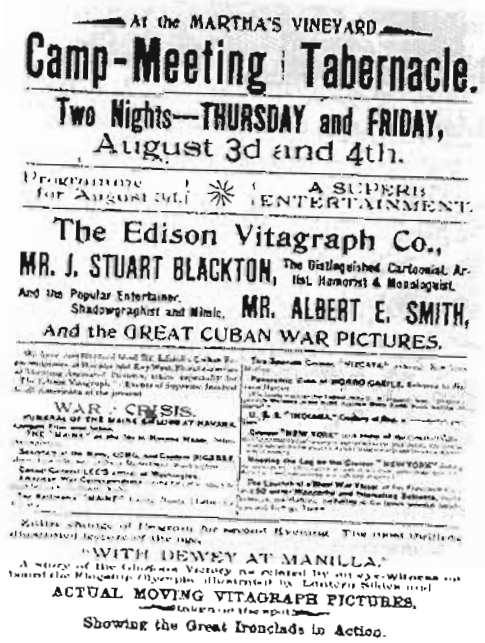
In the far west, the sailing of Dewey's fleet from Hong Kong to Manila made Americans a Pacific power. But U.S. interests had been growing in the region for a century.

Dewey's ships had destroyed the Spanish fleet in the Philippines. Two days later, McKinley again asked the Senate for Hawaiian annexation. He still did not have the needed 60 votes, so he resorted to the device of annexation through joint resolution of the House and Senate. (That same device had been used in 1846 to take Texas, see p. 108.) The majorities needed for passing the joint resolution were easily found in both houses. On August 12, 1898, Hawaii became a U.S. territory.

By then, the islands fit within a grander plan developing in McKinley's mind: "We need Hawaii just as much and a good deal more than we did California. It is manifest destiny," he had declared earlier in 1898.[16] The U.S. Minister to Siam, John A. Barrett, believed that "we need Hawaii to properly protect our cotton, flour, and richly laden ships which . . . will one day ply on the Pacific like the Spanish galleons of old," as they make themselves "masters of the Pacific seas." Mahan chimed in with his influential arguments about the need for mid-Pacific

coaling stations on the route to Asia. The shortest route from California to China's markets was via the Alaskan coast. But, as historian Alan Henrikson has noted in a fascinating analysis, Mahan used Mercator, flat-world maps, not maps viewing the earth from the North and South Poles. Thus, the main U.S. Pacific base was developed at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii rather than on the more direct Alaskan–Aleutian Islands route.[17]

By early August, when Hawaii became a U.S. territory, Americans had already won the easiest conflict in their history. With the declaration of war in April, Dewey had set out from Hong Kong to engage the Spanish fleet in the Philippines. His small squadron appeared so weak that British officers at the Hong Kong Club observed sorrowfully: "A fine set of fellows, but unhappily we shall never see them again." When Dewey arrived at Manila Bay, however, he discovered seven armorless Spanish vessels. The Spanish commander was so certain of his fate that he simply moved his ships to the bay's shallowest waters so his men would not drown when their vessels were shot out from under them. Dewey then destroyed the Spanish flotilla, killing or wounding 400 men. No U.S. ship was badly hit, and only several Americans received scratches. After four hours of cannon fire, the United States had become a power in the western Pacific. "Our crews are all hoarse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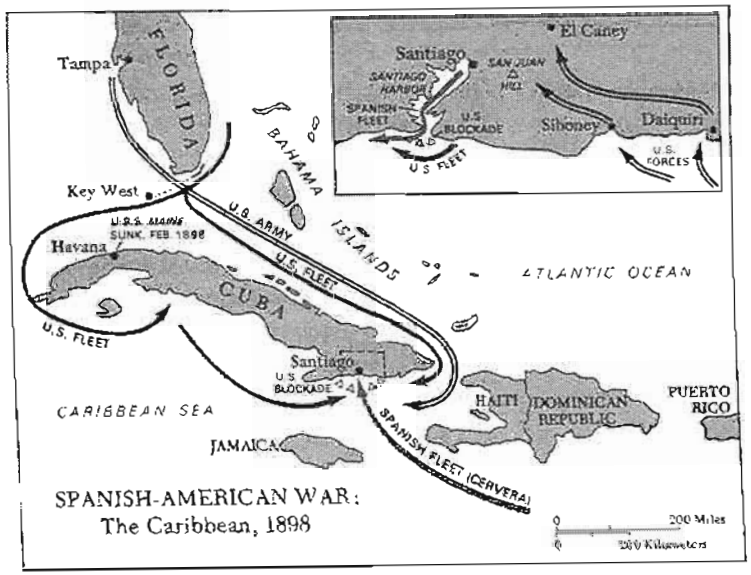
The 1898 meeting of empire, movies, and public education immediately after the "splendid little war" against Spain. Early, quite primitive motion pictures and slides brought home to Americans the thrill of the new overseas empire, as U.S. technology both won a war and then celebrated the winning.

from cheering," a U.S. official cabled Washington from Manila on May 4, "and while we suffer for cough drops and throat doctors we have no use for liniment or surgeons."

Washington officials also believed that Cuba would be captured by sea power. They, therefore, used much of the $50 million appropriated by Congress in March to prepare the navy, not the army, for action. As a result, the War Department bought few modern weapons or tropical clothing until after the fighting began. When McKinley ordered troops to prepare to invade Cuba and Puerto Rico, they had to wear heavy uniforms designed for northern climates. They ate provisions so badly prepared that one mainstay was accurately called "embalmed beef." Field weapons dated from the Civil War. As 180,000 volunteers trained to join the regular 30,000-man army, scandals rocked the War Department. Despite these disasters, in late May, General William R. Shafter began moving 16,000 troops from Tampa, Florida, to Cuba. His army traveled on 32 transports that could move no faster than 7 miles an hour. They sailed for 5½ days, much of it in well-lit vessels just off the Cuban coast, while the U.S. flagship crew enjoyed a band on deck that played ragtime.[18]



In the Caribbean, the war removed Spain from the region, made the United States the hemisphere's leading power, and opened an era of turbulent U.S.-Cuban relations.

The main U.S. fleet, including the three 10,000-ton battleships authorized in 1890, prepared to fight the Spanish fleet that was steaming across the Atlantic to Cuba. An important U.S. warship, the *Oregon*, arrived only after a highly publicized 68-day voyage from the Pacific around Cape Horn on the tip of South America to the Caribbean. It was a remarkable feat of seamanship that made Americans understand why they needed an isthmian canal cut through Central America. During the *Oregon*'s voyage, inhabitants of New York, Boston, and other coastal cities feared that their homes would be blasted by Spanish shells. They demanded protection, so McKinley sent a few broken-down Civil War coastal defense vessels, although he knew that the danger was nonexistent. The real question was whether the dilapidated Spanish squadron could even make it safely across the Atlantic. When it did, the U.S. fleet quickly cut off the four most respectable vessels in Santiago Harbor. As U.S. troops moved into Santiago by land, the Spanish ships tried to escape.[19] The twelve American vessels destroyed the entire fleet at the cost of one U.S. life. As Americans took target practice, one U.S. officer had to shout the famous order: "Don't cheer, men! Those poor devils are dying."

For nearly all Americans, the conflict gave war a good name. Fighting seemed easy and nearly cost-free. Journalist Richard Harding Davis concluded that "war as it is conducted at this end of the century is civilized."[20] No one benefited more from the conflict than Theodore Roosevelt. He left the Navy Department to organize friends (especially men he had met while living as a cowboy in South Dakota's Black Hills a decade earlier) into the "Rough Riders." Finally getting his long-sought chance to kill, TR determined to do it as a gentleman. For example, he ordered from Brooks Brothers clothiers an "ordinary Cavalry lieutenant Colonel's uniform in blue Cravenette" so that he would be properly outfitted. When he finally reached Cuba, he nearly destroyed his Rough Riders by leading them up the steep Kettle's Hill directly into hostile gunfire. Fortunately for TR, the Spanish weapons could not shoot accurately at slowly moving targets. Roosevelt emerged a national hero. He made certain his heroism was appreciated by publishing in 1899 *The Rough Riders*—a book that humorist Finley Peter Dunne ("Mr. Dooley," as he was known to newspaper readers) suggested could be entitled "Alone in Cubia."[21] But Richard Harding Davis's sarcasm at the time applied to the U.S. war effort as well as Roosevelt's: "God takes care of drunken men, sailors, and the United States."

TABLE 1

PRINCIPAL WARS IN WHICH THE UNITED STATES PARTICIPATED: U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL SERVING AND CASUALTIES

War/conflict	Branch of service	Number serving	Casualties: Battle deaths	Casualties: Other deaths	Casualties: Wounds not mortal
Revolutionary War	*Total*		4,435	—	6,188
(1775–1783)	Army	—	4,044	—	6,004
	Navy	—	342	—	114
	Marines	—	49	—	70
War of 1812	*Total*	286,730	2,260	—	4,505
(1812–1815)	Army	—	1,950	—	4,000
	Navy	—	265	—	439
	Marines	—	45	—	66
Mexican War	*Total*	78,718	1,733	11,550	4,152
(1846–1848)	Army	—	1,721	11,550	4,102
	Navy	—	1	—	3
	Marines	—	11	—	47
Civil War (Union forces only)	*Total*	2,213,363	140,414	224,097	281,881
(1861–1865)	Army	2,128,948	138,154	221,374	280,040
	Navy	—	2,112	2,411	1,710
	Marines	84,415	148	312	131
Spanish-American War	*Total*	306,760	385	2,061	1,662
(1898)	Army	280,564	369	2,061	1,594
	Navy	22,875	10	—	47
	Marines	3,321	6	—	21

Source: Department of Defense.

. . . FOR CONTROL OF CUBA AND PUERTO RICO

America's mood and future were better caught by the U.S. ambassador to France, Horace Porter. He wrote McKinley in November 1898 that European officials "express the opinion that we did in three months what the great powers of Europe had sought in vain to do for over a hundred years." These accomplishments included. Porter observed,

> having secured a chain of island posts in the Pacific, secured the Philippines, captured their trade, paved the way for a Pacific [telegraph] cable of our own, virtually taken possession of that ocean, and occupied a position at Manila . . . only a couple of days in time from the Chinese coast with no fear of Chinese or Russian armies at our back yet near enough to protect our interest in the Orient.[22]

It all seemed miraculous. At the cost of 2,900 lives (with approximately 2,500 the victims of disease, not enemy gunfire) and only $250 million, the United States became a great world power. But if Americans were dreaming big dreams, McKinley refused to be carried away. He had only certain limited diplomatic objectives. In his first public statement on possible terms of peace, McKinley wrote in June 1898 that Cuba, Puerto Rico, and a Philippine naval base had to end up in U.S. hands. By late summer, he had actually rejected the opportunity to take control of Caroline Island and the Marianas, which Spain held in the Pacific.

In Cuba, the question became whether the island should be independent, annexed, or come under informal U.S. control. McKinley quickly ruled out immediate independence. His mistrust of the Cuban revolutionaries increased. Their ill-equipped, barefoot forces proved to be superb guerrilla fighters when working alongside U.S. troops but, in American eyes, became racial inferiors and thieves of U.S. food supplies when the fighting stopped. The U.S. forces "despise" the Cubans, one journalist reported. When General Shafter was asked about possible self-government, he retorted, "Why those people are no more fit for self-government than gun-powder is for hell."[23] McKinley also refused to annex the island. That solution could bring too many unpredictable mixed races into the Union. Moreover, annexation was not needed. Because Cuba was so close to U.S. shores, it, unlike the Philippines, could be controlled informally. The United States could use

the island for its own purposes, but Cubans could have the headaches of day-to-day governing.

This imaginative policy was finally formulated by McKinley and his top military commander in Cuba, General Leonard Wood. The general convened a Cuban constitutional convention in late 1900 and instructed the delegates to establish their own internal laws. Washington required, however, that they include in their new constitution certain foreign-policy provisions: (1) the United States had the right to intervene as it wished to protect Cuba's independence; (2) the Cuban debt had to be limited so that European creditors could not use it as an excuse to use force to collect it—and perhaps take Cuban territory as compensation; (3) the United States demanded a ninety-nine year lease of the naval base at Guantánamo; and (4) an extensive sanitation program was to protect the Cuban people and make the island more attractive to U.S. investors. These provisions, drawn up by McKinley and his advisers, became known as the Platt Amendment after Republican Senator Orville Platt from Connecticut formally proposed them in Congress. Furiously attacking the proposals, the Cuban delegates refused to vote on them. Wood warned that he would keep them meeting until they did vote. He knew, moreover, that the Cubans needed immediate access to the American market for their sugar. Under intense U.S. pressure, the Cuban Constitutional Convention finally accepted the Platt Amendment in 1901 by a vote of 15 to 11. "There is, of course, little or no independence left Cuba under the Platt Amendment," Wood wrote Roosevelt.[24]

The McKinley and Roosevelt administrations then overcame tough opposition from high-tariff Republicans and sugar producers to negotiate and finally ratify a reciprocity treaty in 1903. The pact thoroughly integrated the U.S. and Cuban economies. Cuba's sugar and mineral wealth moved north, as American farm and industrial products flowed south. The U.S. sugar producers lost their fight when the giant American Sugar Refining trust, which wanted cheap sugar to refine for the home market, moved into Capitol Hill and bribed the necessary number of senators.[25] U.S.-Cuban trade skyrocketed from $27 million in 1897 to over $300 million in 1917.

The United States restored order to Cuba but assumed few responsibilities. "When people ask me what I mean by stable government, I tell them money at six percent," General Wood wrote to McKinley in 1900. That kind of "order," however, proved to be dangerous. As historian Lloyd Gardner notes, the Platt Amendment built into Cuba "a revolutionary impetus," because later critics of Cuban poverty could

not effectively attack the island's own government, which had little control over the economy, but had to attack the United States.[26] As early as 1906, U.S. officials had to land troops to maintain order. The Platt Amendment continued to be the basis of U.S. policy in Cuba until 1934.

McKinley also took Puerto Rico away from Spain in 1898. The conquest was a surprise. Few Americans knew or cared about that island when war began. For that reason, however, McKinley's decision to annex it (as partial indemnity from Spain for U.S. war costs) raised little debate. The Puerto Ricans were not pleased. In a rare moment of Spanish colonial wisdom, Madrid officials had given Puerto Rico a large amount of autonomy, including its own elected legislature. McKinley destroyed that autonomy. General Nelson Miles, the U.S. military commander, conquered the country without opposition, then announced that the United States intended to give "the immunities and blessings of the liberal institutions of our government." But instead of granting such blessings, Congress passed the Foraker Act of 1900, which made Puerto Rico an "unincorporated territory" subject to the whim of Congress. For one of the few times since the 1787 Ordinance (see p. 33), the United States annexed a large territory with no intention of making the inhabitants U.S. citizens. Puerto Ricans had no guaranteed rights. As one of their newspapers complained in 1901, "We are and we are not a foreign country. We are and we are not citizens of the United States. . . . The Constitution . . . applies to us and does not apply to us."[27]

The U.S. Supreme Court proved the newspaper correct when it handed down a series of judgments between 1901 and 1904. In these historic decisions, known as the Insular Cases, the Court ruled that the Foraker Act was constitutional. The United States could annex an area, make it an "unincorporated" territory, and refuse to grant its people citizenship. Thus, the Constitution did not automatically "follow the flag," as many Americans had long believed. The territory's people were at Congress's mercy. The U.S. attorney general told the Court that the government had to have such power. In the future, he prophesied, a Puerto Rico–like situation might arise in Africa or even China, given the course of U.S. expansionism. The Constitution had to be interpreted to fit that expansionism. Later, the Insular Cases did provide a legal justification for the U.S. rule of Guam and other Pacific territories.[28]

Congress, meanwhile, passed tariff legislation that integrated Puerto Rico—and especially its increasing number of sugar plantations—into the U.S. economy. In 1850, the country's landholding had been fair

A cartoonist, who captioned this work "Find the Constitution," portrays in 1901 his belief that Americans were paying a high price to acquire overseas possessions. This is from the Philadelphia North American.

and equitable when compared with other countries in the Caribbean and Central America. By 1917, the best lands had fallen into the hands of a few wealthy owners who grew crops for export. In that year, the United States finally gave Puerto Ricans citizenship through the Jones Act. In 1947, the country won the right to elect its own governor. After that, Third World and Soviet-bloc countries in the United Nations regularly proposed resolutions condemning Washington's "colonial" policy. Puerto Ricans, meanwhile, divided among a small group demanding independence, a larger faction wanting U.S. statehood, and the largest number who preferred the tax and trade preferences obtained from the United States because of their commonwealth status. But Puerto Rico remained a poor country whose people increasingly sought work in the United States. Nearly a century after the 1898 conquest, Washington officials have not been able to devise a workable policy for development.[29]

. . . AND THE CONQUEST OF THE FILIPINOS

The best-known version of how McKinley decided to annex the Philippine Islands came from the president himself, when he talked with a group of Methodist church leaders in 1899:

> 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 it came to me in this way—. . . . (1) that we could not give [the Philippines] 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 . . . , . . . that there was nothing left to do but take them all, and educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize them, and by God's grace do the very best by them as our fellow-men for whom Christ also died. And then I went to bed, and went to sleep and slept soundly.[30]

It is a dramatic story, but few historians believe it. Recent scholarship reveals that the president's reasons were both more complex and fascinating. From the moment he had heard of Dewey's smashing victory in Manila Bay, the president wanted at least to annex that port for the use of U.S. commerce and warships. Indeed, he ordered troops to leave for the Philippines even before he received official word that Dewey won. It marked the first time a president had ever ordered U.S. soldiers outside the Western Hemisphere to fight. McKinley delayed deciding whether to annex all the Philippine islands, which stretched over 115,000 square miles. McKinley did not want the responsibility for governing them, especially since a strong Filipino revolutionary army, which had been effectively fighting Spain before 1898, intended to govern its own homeland. Nevertheless, as fighting continued in the summer of 1898, McKinley kept his options open: "While we are conducting war and until its conclusion we must keep all we get; when the war is over we must keep what we want."[31] On October 25, 1898, the president finally instructed the U.S. commissioners in Paris, who were negotiating peace terms, to demand all the islands. In return, the United States offered Spain $20 million.

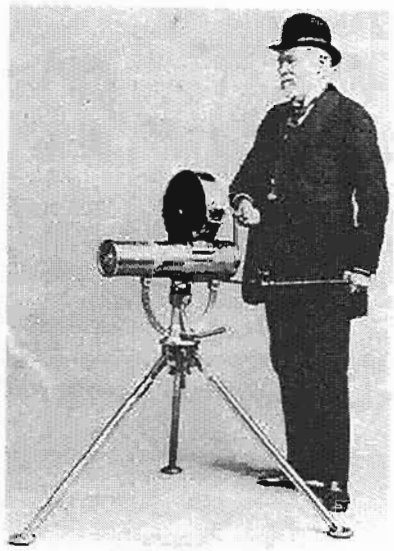
McKinley made the decision for a number of reasons. He concluded that the Filipinos could not run their own country. Dewey had cabled him in mid-October that "the natives appear unable to govern." The problem was similar to the Cuban situation: the revolutionaries were divided among themselves, and one radical faction threatened property holdings. That difficulty led to a second reason for McKinley's decision: a civil war could allow those whom he termed "our commercial rivals in the Orient" (France, Germany, and Great Britain) to seize the islands. McKinley, moreover, had to make his decision just as the China cauldron began boiling again. Russia threatened to close Chinese ports, including Port Arthur, that were vital for U.S. commerce. Great

Britain considered quitting the open-door policy and joining the race for Chinese loot. To protect U.S. interests, the president needed a secure base. To use Manila for that purpose, however, required control of Luzon, Manila's home island. But to protect Luzon, McKinley learned, meant controlling the adjoining islands. As one U.S. army officer testified in mid-October, with "over 400 islands in the group . . . a cannon shot can be fired from one to another in many instances." Thus, the final and most important reason for McKinley's decision: to protect the naval base at Manila, he had to take all the islands.[32]

American public opinion had little to do with his decision. That opinion, as usual, was sharply divided. The *Presbyterian Banner* declared in August 1898 that the religious press, almost without exception, agreed on "the desirability of America's retaining the Philippines as a duty in the interest of human freedom and Christian progress." Three months later the same journal announced: "We have been morally compelled to become an Asiatic power. . . . America and Great Britain will see to it that China is not Russianized."[33] On the other side, many Americans, especially Democrats, feared extending the Constitution across the Pacific. Even McKinley's own cabinet was divided. His wartime secretary of state (and close friend from Ohio days), William R. Day, opposed annexation.

During a congressional campaign swing through the Midwest in October, the president decided he would test opinion on the annexation question. But he did so in an odd fashion. McKinley repeatedly brought crowds to their feet with rousing, patriotic speeches, such as one in Hastings, Iowa: "We want new markets, and as trade follows the flag, it looks very much as if we are going to have new markets." The president nevertheless seemed struck by how hard he had to work to arouse his audiences. As historian Ephraim Smith concludes, McKinley "seemed more concerned about the public's apprehension about accepting new responsibilities."[34]

Proof of that apprehension appeared on February 6, 1899, when the Senate accepted McKinley's peace treaty 57 to 27, a mere one vote more than the two-thirds needed to ratify. Until the final twenty-four hours, victory was in doubt. McKinley, aided by Republican Senate leaders, lobbied hard and distributed patronage plums with a free hand to obtain votes. Oddly, the president received unneeded last-minute help from his old Democratic opponent, William Jennings Bryan. The Democrat had fought annexation, then suddenly switched to urge Democratic senators to vote for the treaty. Bryan later argued that he wanted ratification so that the war would officially end, lives would be



Richard Jordan Gatling stands by his Gatling Gun, the parent of the machine gun. Samuel Colt and others had developed a repeating rifle before the Civil War, but Gatling's 1862 patent led to the most famous rapid-fire weapon. Not used in the Civil War, the Gatling Gun was used to quell riots in New Orleans during 1868, to kill Indians during the 1870s–1880s campaigns, and, most famously, to help win the battle of Santiago, Cuba, against Spain in 1898, and to put down the Philippine revolt.

saved, and the Philippine mistake would then be corrected through diplomacy.[35] It was, however, one of Bryan's many unrealized dreams. Of even greater importance than Bryan's turn was the news that reached Washington on the evening before the vote: Filipino rebels had attacked U.S. soldiers. The revolt against American control had begun. McKinley immediately understood that he had won: a vote against his treaty could now be seen as a vote against supporting the U.S. soldiers embattled by the Filipinos.

The insurrection marked the first of many antirevolutionary wars fought by the United States in the twentieth century. The rebels were led by Emilio Aguinaldo (a moderate who had executed the more radical opponent within the revolutionary movement, Andres Bonifacio). They had originally welcomed the U.S. force that defeated Spain. Welcome turned to hostility when they learned that the Americans intended to remain. McKinley paid little attention to Aguinaldo until the rebel declared the creation of a Philippine republic in January 1899. The war that erupted the next month continued for three years. At first, U.S. officers believed that they could subdue the barefoot opponents with 20,000 or 30,000 men. Soon, the commanders asked McKinley for 40,000, then 60,000 regulars. In all, 120,000 U.S. troops finally fought in the Philippines. Nearly 4,200 were killed and 2,800 wounded. In turn, they killed outright 15,000 rebels, and estimates run as high as 200,000 Filipinos dying from gunfire, starvation, and the effects of

U.S. troops had to fight a vicious four-year war to defeat the Filipino resistance and consolidate the American hold over Manila's valuable port, where this picture of street fighting was taken.

concentration camps into which the United States crowded civilians so that they could not help Aguinaldo's troops.[36]

Viewing the Filipinos as they had viewed Native Americans, U.S. soldiers coined the term "gooks" to describe them. These racial views allowed the war to be fought even more savagely. As a young infantryman from New York reported home: "Last night one of our boys was found shot and his stomach cut open. Immediately orders were received . . . to burn the town and kill every native in sight. . . . About 1,000 men, women, and children were reported killed. . . . I am in my glory when I can sight my gun on some dark skin and pull the trigger."[37] When rebels massacred a squad of U.S. troops, an American commander ordered the killing of every male over the age of ten—an order, fortunately, that was quickly countermanded by his superiors.

The revolution was finally quelled after McKinley moved General Arthur MacArthur to top command in 1900. The new leader (father of General Douglas MacArthur, who governed the Philippines in the 1930s and was U.S. commander in the Pacific during World War II) took a different tack. He fought the war vigorously but also offered amnesty to rebels who surrendered. MacArthur worked closely with the islands' wealthy elite, who prospered by cooperating with the Americans. In 1901, U.S. troops captured Aguinaldo. The back of the revolt was broken, although fighting continued at reduced levels until 1913. After that, U.S.-trained and -directed Filipino forces fought a continual series of wars against rebels, wars that lasted from 1915 until at least the 1990s.[38] The Philippines have never remained pacified for very long. For his part, Aguinaldo finally had revenge by collaborating with Japanese forces, who drove the United States out of the Philippines in World War II.

Warriors such as Theodore Roosevelt argued that Americans had to remain in the Philippines to develop their own character and teach the natives self-government. Democratic senator Edward Carmack from Tennessee acidly observed that Roosevelt admitted that it had taken Anglo-Saxons one thousand years to learn self-government. Thus, "we are not to hold [the islands] permanently," Carmack quipped, "we want to experiment with them for only a thousand years or so." Famed sociologist William Graham Sumner was more pointed: "We talk of civilizing lower races, but we have never done it yet. We have exterminated them." Despite such criticisms, Carmack and Sumner could not slow McKinley's and Roosevelt's policies for taking the Philippines. After all, as Assistant Secretary of the Treasury (and banker) Frank Vanderlip observed, the Philippines were to be the U.S. Hong Kong so Americans could "trade with the millions of China and Korea, French Indo-China, the Malay Peninsula and the islands of Indonesia."[39]

McKINLEY'S TRIUMPHS IN CHINA

In 1899–1900, the president vividly demonstrated why the Philippines were vital for his foreign policy. At long last, he was free to fight the threat to the open door in China. The crisis had begun in 1897–1898 (see p. 200). By mid-1899, the Russians and Germans threatened to colonize and close off strategic areas of China. Meanwhile, the British, French, Japanese, and Americans scrambled to protect their trade and other interests. None of the powers was primarily concerned about the Chinese themselves. As Americans, for example, pressed for greater rights in China, they closed off Chinese rights of immigration obtained in the 1868 Burlingame Treaty.

By 1882, so many Chinese had found work in the United States that Americans were fearful. In that year, Congress passed the first anti-immigration measure in U.S. history when it stopped Chinese immi-

gration for ten years. Anti-Chinese outbreaks nevertheless spread. In 1885, a mob killed twenty-eight Chinese in Wyoming. Observers feared even worse bloodshed would occur in California, where many Asian immigrants had settled. By the 1880s and 1890s, Americans were increasingly discriminating against immigrants just as the Americans themselves were moving out into other countries such as China and the Philippines. This historic turn was dramatized in 1886, when, in magnificent ceremonies, the United States dedicated the Statue of Liberty, placed in New York City Harbor as a gift from France. Not one speech in the ceremonies mentioned the lines Emma Lazarus had written for the statue: "Give me your tired, your poor, / Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free." Instead, the speakers stressed how Americans must go forth to spread liberty throughout other lands.[40]

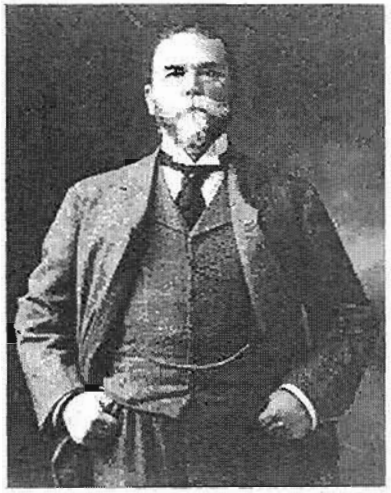
In China, however, Americans seemed less interested in liberty for the Chinese than the liberty to sell goods for profit and save souls for Christianity. Economically, U.S. exports to China nearly quadrupled to $15 million between 1895 and 1900.[41] The Chinese took only 1 percent to 2 percent of total U.S. exports, but Americans focused on the potential (hundreds of millions of Chinese) and that market's rapid growth since 1895. Certain industries and sections in the United States depended utterly on the China market. No producers needed it more than those making textiles. That product ranked first among exports, with petroleum second, iron and steel products third. New England textile plants had overexpanded, then were badly stung by the 1873–1897 economic depression. Some moved to the South, but, as one spokesman warned, it was better to avoid "destructive competition" at home by developing markets abroad. "We want the open door," a Georgia senator exclaimed, "and a big one at that."[42] Historian Patrick Hearden concludes that by 1899, "the New South's rapidly growing China trade promised to keep the entire American cotton industry in a healthy condition."[43]

But no group surpassed the Christian missionaries' involvement in China. It was an era of extraordinary growth: between 1870 and 1900, Americans increased their Protestant overseas missions by 500 percent. In the single decade of the 1890s, U.S. missionaries in China doubled in number to over one thousand. This great movement arose in part out of the churches' determination to defy threats to their beliefs posed by new science and Darwinian challenges. The movement also sprang from colleges, where religious revivalism on such campuses as Oberlin, Cornell, and Yale produced the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions in 1887. By 1900, the Student Volunteers, who

marched under the proud banner proclaiming "The Evangelization of the World in This Generation," had chapters in nearly every Protestant college. These groups reflected the profit seeking as well as soul seeking of the late nineteenth century. Some missionaries invested in foreign land and minerals; others preached morality and profit at once by asking that saved souls wear North Carolina textiles.[44] The missionaries patriotically represented their country as well as their religion. They also became more interested in mass conversion than in the slower saving of individual sinners from the fires of hell. Thus, they looked increasingly to the U.S. government for help and protection, especially as the other foreign powers crowded into Asia. This new approach was exemplified in 1896, when the U.S. government ordered a commission to travel to the Chinese government and insist on American rights. As Professor Thomas McCormick explains, "The commission consisted of the American Consul at Tientsin, a missionary, and a naval officer—the expansionist trinity."[45]

Women, especially a rising feminist movement, became an important source of missionary expansionism both at home and abroad. In 1880, about twenty women's foreign missionary societies existed. The number doubled by 1900. By 1915, 3 million women belonged to these forty societies. Some of the groups aimed to carry abroad the values of middle-class America. As one leader wrote, "The aim of this woman's work we conceive to be *in heathen lands*— . . . in bringing the women into His Kingdom, in the creation of Christian mothers." The "fathers and brothers" were to "strike vigorous blows at the brains of heathendom, to superintend large educational and evangelistic enterprises." But "to woman belongs the quiet, patient labour in the homes of the people." Women also understood, however, how they were to bring creature comforts and new values of an industrialized America to the "heathen." As one woman declared, foreign missionary work "should appeal to every broad-minded Christian woman who is interested in education, civics, sanitation, social settlements, hospitals, good literature, the emancipation of children, the right of women to health, home and protection; and the coming of the Kingdom of our Lord." As historian Patricia R. Hill observes, by this time, it seems, the Lord's kingdom tended to come at the end of the list.[46] American goods and social values went into China with the missionaries, both male and female.

The belief grew, as Secretary of State John Hay noted in 1900, that whoever understood China "has the key to world politics for the next five centuries."[47] No one tried harder to understand, or—after Seward—contributed more to U.S. policy in China than did Hay, the author of

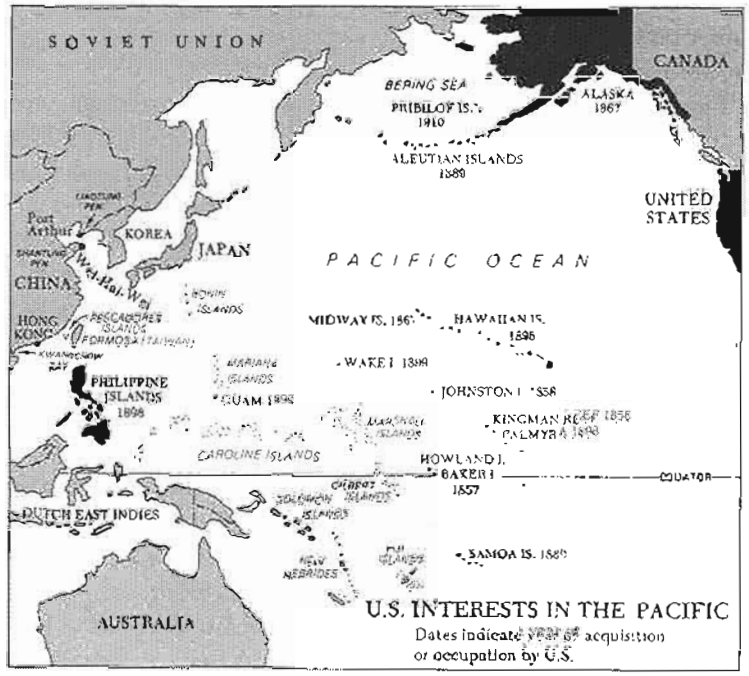


John Hay (1838–1905) was born in Indiana and had a distinguished career as secretary to Lincoln, an official in the Department of State, industrialist in Ohio, and U.S. ambassador to Great Britain before becoming a powerful secretary of state (1898–1905). A poet and novelist as well, Hay drafted the historic "open-door" notes of 1899–1900.

the 1899–1900 open-door notes. Nor did anyone better understand how U.S. business and politics related to policy in China. Born in Indiana in 1838, Hay went to Brown University, then used his midwestern political contacts to become Abraham Lincoln's secretary at the age of twenty-three. Hay grew to fear the mass, urbanized, industrialized society that developed after 1865. His fear multiplied when he entered the steel business in Cleveland and had to deal with the rising labor movement. He anonymously published a novel, *The Bread-Winners*, that remains one of the bitterest attacks ever made on the labor movement, especially the movement's foreign members. But he also worried that "the rich and intelligent" were so busy making money, they ignored the dangers: they "hate politics" and so "fatten themselves as sheep which could be mutton whenever the butcher was ready." Hay had no intention of becoming mutton. He supported McKinley in 1896, and the new president named him U.S. ambassador to Great Britain in 1897. Hay greatly admired England. He believed passionately that the British and Americans could save themselves and the best parts of their societies only by fighting Russia's, France's, and Germany's attempts "to divide and reduce China to a system of tributary provinces." McKinley knew Hay well and recalled him in 1898 to lead the fight for China as secretary of state.[48]

Hay's first initiative was an open-door note of 1899 that asked the other powers (especially Russia and Germany) to charge foreigners no more than their own citizens paid for shipping and railway privileges within so-called "spheres of interest" in China that each power claimed.

Hay's note also insisted that the general Chinese tariff apply to all the spheres of interest, and that China collect the duties itself. Chinese territorial integrity was to be reinforced. No other power rushed to agree with Hay's note, but none directly defied it either. Russia did not as yet believe that it had sufficient power to challenge the Americans, who were supported to some degree by Great Britain and Japan. Hay finally gained assent through an ingenious diplomatic tactic. He first gained agreement from the British and Japanese, who he knew were closest to his position, then obtained France's assent. Germany and Russia then had to agree or defy the other powers. The two nations did go along, but with considerable grumbling. With no U.S. military force in China and without making any political alliance with other powers, Hay had maneuvered them into declaring their agreement with U.S. open-door policy—a policy, as Hay neatly defined it, of "fair field and no favor" for anyone who wanted to compete in the China market. He and other knowledgeable Americans knew that with such ground rules, they could use their growing industrial power to undersell nearly any-



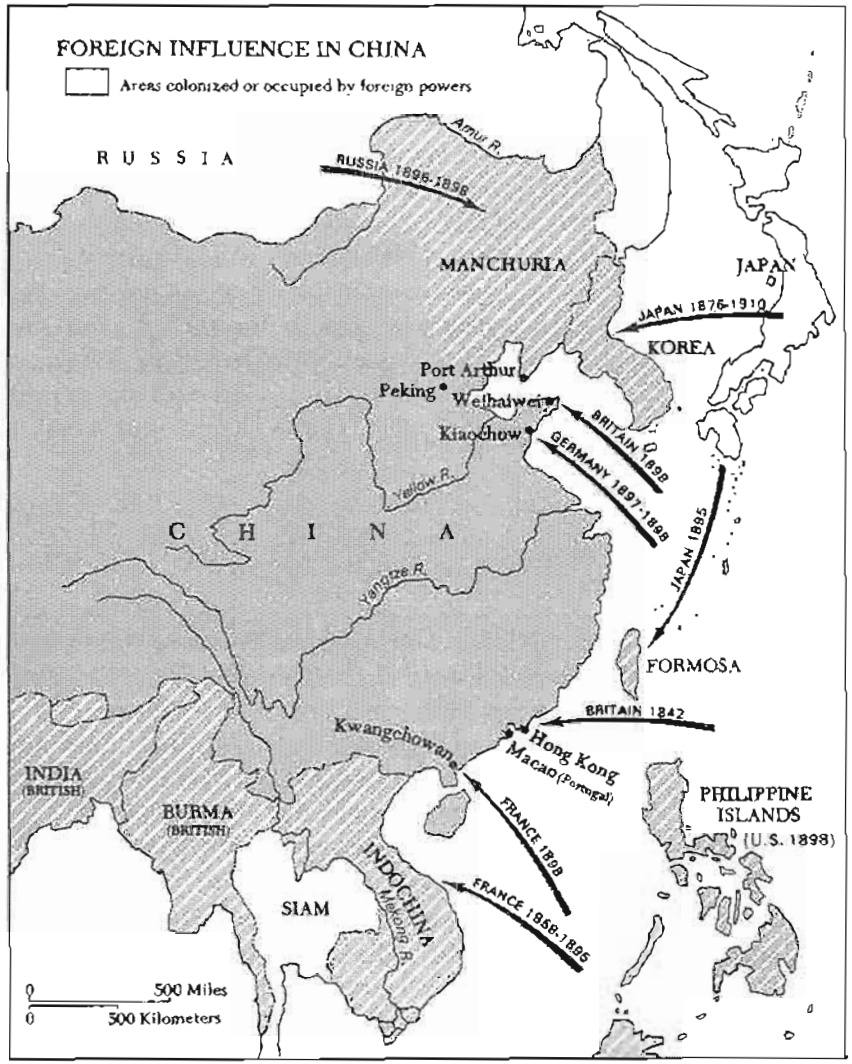
By 1900, the new U.S. economic and military interests had stepping stones for crossing the Pacific to reach Asia. The dates indicate when the United States acquired its possessions.

one and capture much of China's market. That was, indeed, another sign of the high stakes for which McKinley and Hay played: they wanted to sell to all of China, not just a sliver or a sphere they might annex.

But the Chinese themselves refused to stand still while the powers exploited them. In early 1900, the empress dowager, head of the collapsing Manchu dynasty, encouraged a radical antiforeign and militaristic society known as the Boxers to attack foreigners and their property. By May, foreign compounds in Chinese cities were besieged. On May 29, U.S. minister Edwin Conger captured the terror when he cabled Washington from the capital of Beijing (Peking): "Boxers increasing. Nine Methodist converts brutally murdered at Pachow. The movement has developed into open rebellion. Chinese government is trying but apparently is unable to surpress it. Many soldiers disloyal."[49] The foreign powers, including the United States, sent in troops to protect their citizens. It became clear, however, that Russia, Germany, and even Japan were using the Boxers as an excuse to seal off parts of China into their own spheres of interest.

After McKinley ordered 5,000 U.S. troops to move from Manila into China, Hay used the force as a bargaining chip. He tried to pressure the other powers to agree to a policy of July 3, 1900, that became known as the second open-door notes. He asked all powers to declare directly that they promised to preserve "Chinese territorial and administrative integrity." This key point had only been implied in the 1899 notes. With the powers nervously eying each other as well as the Boxers, all of them fell into line behind Hay. McKinley and his secretary of state had pulled off a remarkable victory. By 1901, Russia seemed checked. The president had greatly increased his executive power by sending thousands of U.S. troops onto the mainland of China without bothering to consult Congress. And the foreign powers maintained the Manchu dynasty as the ruler of China, although that victory was short-lived. In 1911, internal conflict again erupted, and this time the dynasty disappeared amid the beginnings of the Chinese Revolution.

Hay understood both sides of U.S. policy in China: the American need for markets both commercial and religious, and the relatively little power the United States could exert in the region. In August 1900, a crisis flared when Russia again made threatening moves. This time, the British indicated that they might join the Russians. McKinley, in the middle of a tough re-election fight against Bryan, uncharacteristically panicked. He seriously considered carving off an area of China for the United States—that is, giving up the open-door policy and joining the other colonial powers. From a sickbed in New Hampshire, Hay



China became an object of big-power competition and colonialism—"the bone" amid the dogs, as a later U.S. official called China.

convinced the president not to surrender the open-door approach. He did so by giving McKinley a lesson in power politics:

> The inherent weakness of our position is this: we do not want to rob China ourselves, and our public opinion will not permit us to interfere, with an army, to prevent others from robbing her. Besides, we have no army. The

talk of the papers about "our preeminent moral position giving the authority to dictate to the world" is mere flap-doodle.[50]

Hay concluded that McKinley had no alternative but to remain in China and try to keep the powers *voluntarily* lined up behind the open-door policy. This could be accomplished not through U.S. military force, but only by playing power off against power, as Hay had done in 1899 and again in 1900. The secretary of state himself weakened only once. In late 1900, the U.S. War Department insisted that the navy needed a base in China. No doubt with some embarrassment, Hay asked the Chinese for a lease at Samsah Bay. Japan, which had plans of its own for China, quickly objected by throwing Hay's policy back at him. the U.S. request violated the open-door policy. The secretary of state dropped the request.

. . . AND A FINAL TRIUMPH AT HOME

By November 1900, the crisis in China had apparently passed—and none too soon. Throughout 1899–1900, Bryan and the Democrats had planned to club McKinley's re-election hopes with the issues of the bloody Philippine campaign and the volatile China crisis. Throughout the summer of 1900, both sides hotly debated foreign policy. The Democrats termed it "the paramount issue" in the election fight.

An "anti-imperialist" movement had grown rapidly after mid-1898 to oppose McKinley's policies. This movement was led by wealthy and upper-middle-class professionals (especially lawyers), mostly from the Northeast and Midwest. But it also included an increasing number of women. Historian Judith Papachristou estimates that in the five years after 1898 tens of thousands of women became foreign-policy activists: "Never before had American women involved themselves in foreign affairs in such a way and to such an extent." When the Anti-Imperialist League began to form at a meeting in Boston's Faneuil Hall during June 1898, more than half the audience was female. Women determined to have voting rights easily identified with Filipinos who were to be governed without their consent. Some anti-imperialists, both female and male, feared that extending the Constitution to the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and even Hawaii might change the basic provisions of the document and bring into the system certain races who were considered dangerous to traditional American values. Many anti-imperialists argued that these peoples were not ready for self-government; but if the United States tried to rule them, it would turn into an imperialist power and thus destroy its own democratic values. A South Carolina senator warned against "the incorporation of a mongrel and semibarbarous population into our body politic."[51]

That warning hit home in the North as well as the South. About 150 black people were lynched each year in the United States during the early 1890s. Race riots erupted in New York City in 1900, as well as earlier in southern states. It was not the time, Bryan and other anti-imperialists argued, to try to teach democracy to Filipinos with the tips of bayonets. Henry Blake Fuller caught the spirit with his anti-imperialist poetry of 1899. He dealt with the president of the United States as follows:

> G is for Guns
> That McKinley has sent,
> To teach Filipinos
> What Jesus Christ meant.

Fuller also provided a self-portrait of McKinley's vice-presidential running mate, Theodore Roosevelt, as anti-imperialists painted it:

> I'm a cut and thrusting bronco-busting
> Megaphone of Mars.
> And it's fire I breathe and I cut my teeth
> On nails and wrought-iron bars.[52]

Such extreme rhetoric could be discounted, but McKinley could not disregard Andrew Carnegie's large bankroll which financed many anti-imperialist activities.

The president directly challenged the anti-imperialists by naming Theodore Roosevelt to the Republican ticket. No one was more identified with, or more loudly defended, U.S. expansionism. Governor of New York in 1900, Roosevelt at first did not want to be only a vice-president. ("I would rather be professor of history in some college," he wrote a friend.) But he finally gave in, rightly noting that "it was believed that I would greatly strengthen the ticket in the West, where they regard me as a fellow barbarian and like me much."[53] While McKinley remained in Washington or in his hometown of Canton, Ohio, Roosevelt spun across the country, giving as many as ten speeches a day until he finally lost his voice on the eve of the election.

He blasted the anti-imperialist arguments. Because "the Philippines

are now part of American territory," the only question was whether the Democrats planned "to surrender American territory." He attacked the anti-imperialists as antiexpansionist and thus, he charged, they had deserted the ideals of their own father—Thomas Jefferson—who had taken all of Louisiana. Dealing with the Indians, TR argued, established the needed precedents for dealing with the Filipinos, who were also "savages." If whites were "morally bound to abandon the Philippines, we were also morally bound to abandon Arizona to the Apaches." Bayonets were needed because "the barbarian will yield only to force." Other Republicans mocked Democrats who urged self-government in the Philippines or Hawaii by asking when the Democrats planned to extend the Declaration of Independence to southern black people. One observer commented on "Democrats howling about Republicans shooting negroes in the Philippines and the Republicans objecting to Democrats shooting negroes in the South. This may be good politics, but it is rough on the negroes."[54]

McKinley and Roosevelt decisively won the argument. By September, the president's policy in China and TR's attacks from the stump forced Bryan to reverse his campaign strategy. The Democratic nominee dropped foreign policy and began to emphasize Republican economic policy. His decision turned out to be politically fatal. The United States had emerged from its twenty-five-year depression to bask in prosperity in 1900. McKinley ran on the slogan "Let Well Enough Alone." He defeated Bryan more decisively in 1900 than he had four years before and even captured Bryan's home state of Nebraska. In the end, many anti-imperialists, including Andrew Carnegie, found that they could not tolerate Bryan's more radical economic program (especially after he dropped foreign-policy issues) and joined McKinley.

The president had led the United States into the small, select circle of great world powers. He did so not by following those powers and conquering large colonies. Between 1870 and 1900, Great Britain added 4.7 million square miles to its empire, France 3.5 million, and Germany 1.0 million. Americans, however, added only 125,000 square miles. They wanted not land, but more markets to free them of the horrors that had resulted from the post-1873 depression. Louisville newspaper publisher and Democratic party boss Henry Watterson explained what had occurred in 1898:

> From a nation of shopkeepers we became a nation of warriors. . . . We escape the menace and the peril of socialism and agrarianism, as England escaped them, by a policy of colonization and conquest. It is true that we exchange domestic dangers for foreign dangers; but in every direction we multiply the opportunities of the people. We risk Caesarism certainly; but even Caesarism is preferable to anarchism.[55]

In September 1901, Watterson's "Caesar" traveled to Buffalo, New York, to explain to Americans the new world in which they lived. The president was greeted by a spectacular fireworks display that climaxed with the exclamation in the sky: "WELCOME MCKINLEY, CHIEF OF OUR NATION AND EMPIRE." As historian Edward Crapol summarizes, Americans were—finally—the equal of the British, and rapidly becoming more than equal.[56] The United States, McKinley told the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, now had "almost appalling" wealth. Consequently, "isolation is no longer possible or desirable." Americans had to frame new tariff and other policies to conquer world markets.

The next day, a deranged man shot and mortally wounded McKinley. That "wild man," as Marcus Hanna had called Theodore Roosevelt, suddenly became president of the United States. Once again, historian Robert Beisner notes, Americans were to test whether "a republic can prosper in a career of empire."[57] They would have to do so under the leadership of a person more flamboyant—and unpredictable—than McKinley.

NOTES

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4. William Allen White, *The Autobiography of William Allen White* (New York, 1946), p. 292, Paul Boller, Jr., *Presidential Anecdotes* (New York, 1981), p. 189.
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