have been left to improvise an explanation to account for McKinley's actions. One line of argument has maintained that the Spanish concessions were, in fact, suspect, and that McKinley lacked confidence in Spain's commitment to peace. "Spanish evasion and delay had destroyed confidence in the good faith of the Spanish government," was the way that William MacDonald saw it. W. E. Woodward speculated that McKinley "may have thought the Spaniards were insincere and playing for time." Nelson Blake and Oscar Barck suggested that McKinley "could thus shrug off the Spanish concession . . . as insincere and worthless." Richard Leopold indicated that Spanish concessions were rejected by "contemporaries who had grown weary of broken promises and the inevitable Spanish *mañana*." It was Thomas Bailey's belief that Spanish acquiescence did not matter, for Spain "had pursued such a tortuous course that McKinley had little faith in her promises, or in her ability to carry them out." According to Arthur M. Schlesinger, McKinley "doubted Spain's good faith in complying," and John Bassett argued that the administration believed that last-minute concessions "would be evaded, as in the past."

Various types of weaknesses have been attributed to McKinley: weakness of character, or of courage, or of conviction were all offered as explanations of why he proceeded to war even after Spain had apparently capitulated to his demands. "Any President with a backbone would have seized this opportunity for an honorable solution," pronounced Samuel Eliot Morison. Randolph Greenfield Adams arrived at a similar conclusion: "left alone, McKinley would probably have avoided a war, as he was a peaceful and gentle man." . . .

In fact, the problem McKinley confronted had less to do with Spain than with Cubans, who, in refusing to observe the cease-fire and suspend military operations, seemed poised to overrun Spanish positions. Indeed, intervention was as much against the expanding Cuban claim of sovereignty as the declining Spanish claim. McKinley could not have accepted Spanish acquiescence to the March 27 ultimatum without Cuban participation, and Cuban participation was predicated entirely on the proposition of independence.

Thus, the war arrived in the early spring of 1898 and its origins have continued to be debated in terms established one hundred years ago. The *Maine* propelled the nation to war, a denouement that was inexorable in the face of an aroused public and timid public officials. In the process, an "unnecessary" war became known an "inevitable" one.

Theodore Roosevelt and the Strenuous Life

GAIL BEDERMAN

In 1882, a newly elected young state assemblyman arrived in Albany. Theodore Roosevelt, assuming his first elective office, was brimming with self-importance and ambition. He was only twenty-three—the youngest man in the legislature—and he looked forward to a promising career of wielding real political power. Yet Roosevelt

Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880–1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 170–171, 187–196. Copyright © 1995, reprinted by permission of the University of Chicago Press.

was chagrined to discover that despite his intelligence, competence, and real legislative successes, no one took him seriously. The more strenuously he labored to play "a man's part" in politics, the more his opponents derided his manhood.

Daily newspapers lampooned Roosevelt as the quintessence of effeminacy. They nicknamed him "weakling," "Jane-Dandy," "Punkin-Lily," and "the exquisite Mr. Roosevelt." They ridiculed his high voice, tight pants, and fancy clothing. Several began referring to him by the name of the well-known homosexual Oscar Wilde, and one actually alleged (in a less-than-veiled phallic allusion) that Roosevelt was "given to sucking the knob of an ivory cane." While TR might consider himself a manly man, it was becoming humiliatingly clear that others considered him effeminate.

Above all other things, Roosevelt desired power. An intuitive master of public relations, he knew that his effeminate image could destroy any chances for his political future. Nearly forty years before women got the vote, electoral politics was part of a male-only subculture, fraught with symbols of manhood. Besides, Roosevelt, who considered himself a man's man, detested having his virility impugned. Although normally restrained, when he discovered a Tammany legislator plotting to toss him in a blanket, TR marched up to him and swore, "By God! if you try anything like that, I'll kick you, I'll bite you, I'll kick you in the balls, I'll do anything to you—you'd better leave me alone!" Clearly, the effeminate "dude" image would have to go.

And go it did. Roosevelt soon came to embody powerful American manhood. Within five years, he was running for mayor of New York as the "Cowboy of the Dakotas." Instead of ridiculing him as "Oscar Wilde," newspapers were praising his virile zest for fighting and his "blizzard-seasoned constitution." In 1898, after a brief but highly publicized stint as leader of a regiment of volunteers in the Spanish American War, he became known as Colonel Roosevelt, the manly advocate of a virile imperialism. Never again would Roosevelt's name be linked to effeminacy. Even today, historians invoke Roosevelt as the quintessential symbol of turn-of-the-century masculinity.

Roosevelt's great success in masculinizing his image was due, in large part, to his masterful use of the discourse of civilization. As a mature politician, he would bring his claim to political power on his claim to manhood. Skillfully, Roosevelt constructed a virile political persona for himself as a strong but civilized white man.

Yet Roosevelt's use of the discourse of civilization went beyond mere public relations: Roosevelt drew on "civilization" to help formulate his larger politics as an advocate of both nationalism and imperialism. As he saw it, the United States was engaged in a millennial drama of manly racial advancement, in which American men enacted their superior manhood by asserting imperialistic control over races of inferior manhood. To prove their virility, as a race and a nation, American men needed to take up the "strenuous life" and strive to advance civilization—through imperialistic warfare and racial violence if necessary.

Thus, TR framed his political mission in terms of race and manhood, nationalism and civilization. Like G. Stanley Hall and Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Roosevelt longed to lead evolution's chosen race toward a perfect millennial future. Yet Roosevelt harbored larger ambitions than either Hall or Gilman. Hall merely wanted to develop a pedagogy that would produce the "super-man." Gilman only wanted to revolutionize society by civilizing women. Roosevelt, on the other hand, yearned

to be the virile leader of a manly race and to inspire his race to wage an international battle for racial supremacy. He hoped that, through this imperialistic evolutionary struggle, he could advance his race toward the most perfect possible civilization. This, for Roosevelt, was the ultimate power of manhood. . . .

Imperialism: The Masterful Duty of the Manly Race

From 1894 until he became president in 1901, Roosevelt wrote and lectured widely on the importance of taking up what Rudyard Kipling, in 1899, would dub "the White Man's burden." Kipling coined this term in a poem written to exhort American men to conquer and rule the Philippines. "The white man" . . . simultaneously meant the white race, civilization itself, and white males as a group. In "The White's Man's Burden," Kipling used the term in all the senses to urge white males to take up the racial burden of civilization's advancement. "Take up the White Man's burden," he wrote, capitalizing the essential term, and speaking to the manly civilized on behalf of civilization. "Send forth the best ye breed"—quality breeding was essential, because evolutionary development (breeding) was what gave "the White Man" the right and duty to conquer uncivilized races.

> Go bind your sons to exile
> To serve your captives' need;
> To wait in heavy harness,
> On fluttered folk and wild—
> Your new-caught, sullen peoples,
> Half-devil and half-child.

. . . [M]anly men had the duty of taking unselfish care of those weaker than themselves—to "wait in heavy harness" and "serve their captives' need." And by calling the Filipinos "half-devil and half-child," Kipling underlined the essential fact that whatever these races were, there were not *men*.

Roosevelt called Kipling's poem "poor poetry but good sense from the expansionist standpoint." Although Roosevelt did not use the term "the white man's burden" in his writings on imperialism, he drew on the same sorts of race and gender linkages which Kipling deployed in his poem. TR's speeches of this period frequently conflate manhood and racial power, and draw extended analogies between the individual American man and the virile American race.

For example, "National Duties," one of TR's most famous speeches, represents both American men and the American race as civilized entities with strong virile characters—in popular parlance, both were "the white man." Roosevelt begins by outlining this racial manhood, which he calls "the essential manliness of the American character." Part of this manliness centered around individual and racial duties to the home. On the one hand, individual men must work to provide for the domestic needs of themselves and their families. On the other hand, the men of the race must work to provide for their collective racial home, their nation. Men who shirked these manly homemaking duties were despicably unsexed; or, as TR put it, "the willfully idle man" was as bad as "the willfully barren woman."

Yet laboring only for his own hearth and nation was not enough to satisfy a real man. Virile manhood also required the manly American nation to take up

imperialistic labors outside its borders, just as manhood demanded individual men to labor outside the home: "Exactly as each man, while doing first his duty to his wife and the children within his home, must yet, if he hopes to amount to much, strive mightily in the world outside his home, so our nation, while first of all seeing to its own domestic well-being, must not shrink from playing its part among the great nations without." It would be as unmanly for the American race to refuse its imperialist destiny as it would be for a cowardly man to spend all his time loafing at home with his wife. Imperialist control over primitive races thus becomes a matter of manhood—part of a male-only public sphere, which TR sets in contradistinction to the home.

After setting up imperialism as a manly duty for both man and race, Roosevelt outlines the imperialist's appropriate masculine behavior—or, should we say, his appropriate masculine appendage? Roosevelt immediately brings up the "big stick." It may be a cheap shot to stress the phallic implications of TR's imagery, yet Roosevelt himself explained the meaning of the "big stick" in terms of manhood and the proper way to assert the power of a man: "A good many of you are probably acquainted with the old proverb: 'Speak softly and carry a big stick—you will go far.' If a man continually blusters, if he lacks civility, a big stick will not save him from trouble; and neither will speaking softy avail, if back of the softness there does not lie strength, power." Just as a manly man avoided bluster, relying instead on his self-evident masculine strength and power, so virile American men should build a powerful navy and army, so that when they took up the white man's burden in primitive lands, they would receive the respect due to a masterful, manly race.

This imperialistic manliness underlay the virile power of both man and race; yet it was not self-seeking. It was intended only for the advancement of civilization. Therefore, Roosevelt insisted, Americans never directed their virile expansionism against any civilized race. "No nation capable of self-government and of developing by its own efforts a sane and orderly civilization, no matter how small it may be, has anything to fear from us." Only barbarous nations incapable of developing "a sane and orderly civilization"—for example, the Hawaiians and the Filipinos—required the correction of the manly American race.

Unfortunately, Roosevelt conceded, this unselfish civilizing duty might well become bloody and violent. Civilized men had a manly duty to "destroy and uplift" lesser, primitive men, for their own good and the good of civilization: "It is our duty toward the people living in barbarism to see that they are freed from their chains, and we can free them only by destroying barbarism itself. The missionary, the merchant, and the soldier may each have to play a part in this destruction and in the consequent uplifting of the people." Yet this unselfish racial uplift would be worth the bloodshed, even for the destroyed barbarians themselves. Both Indians on the Great Plains and the Tagalogs in the Philippines—at least, those who still survived—would be far happier after the white man had conquered them, according to Roosevelt.

Roosevelt closed his speech by reiterating his analogy between the manful race and the race's men. By conquering and civilizing primitive races, the American nation was simply girding up its racial loins to be "men" of the world, just as they had long been "men" at home in the United States: "We gird up our loins as a nation, with the stern purpose to play our part manfully in winning the ultimate triumph;

and therefore . . . with unfaltering steps [we] tread the rough road of endeavor, smiting down the wrong and battling for the right, as Greatheart smote and battled in Bunyan's immortal story." In its imperialist glory, the virile American race would embody a warlike manliness, smiting down and battling its unmanly foes in the primitive Philippines. Were American men to be frightened from this work, they would show themselves, as TR put it, "weaklings."

Roosevelt always considered imperialism a question of both racial and individual manhood. Privately, he scorned anti-imperialists as "beings whose cult is non-virility." Publicly, he derided men who refused to take up the white man's burden as decadent, effeminate, and enemies of civilization. . . .

An unmanly, anti-imperialist race was as despicable as an unmanly anti-imperialist man. As TR saw it, overly peaceful races were like unsexed decadents who refused to breed, whereas expansive races left heirs, just as fathers left sons. "Nations that expand and nations that do not expand may both ultimately go down, but the one leaves heirs and a glorious memory, and the other leaves neither." As TR saw it, the only way to avoid effete, unmanly decadence—on the part of either race or man—was to embrace virile imperialism.

In short, racial health and civilized advancement implied both manhood and imperialism. An effeminate race was a decadent race; and a decadent race was too weak to advance civilization. Only by embracing virile racial expansionism could a civilization achieve its true manhood. This, as TR saw it, was the ultimate meaning of imperialism.

The Rough Rider: The War Hero Models the Power of a Manly Race

Roosevelt was not content merely to make speeches about the need for violent, imperialistic manhood. He always needed to embody his philosophy. The sickly boy had remade himself into an adventure-book hunter-naturalist; the dude politician had remade himself into a heroic Western rancher. The 1898 outbreak of the Spanish-American war—for which he had agitated long and hard—let Roosevelt remake himself into Colonel Roosevelt, the fearless Rough Rider.

Reinventing himself as a charismatic war hero allowed Roosevelt to model the manful imperialism about which he had been writing for four years. TR became a walking advertisement for the imperialistic manhood he desired for the American race. Indeed, from the moment of his enlistment until his mustering out four months later, Roosevelt self-consciously publicized himself as a model of strenuous, imperialistic manhood. In late April 1898, against all advice, Roosevelt resigned as assistant secretary of the navy and enlisted to fight in the just-declared war on Spain. Aged thirty-nine, with an important subcabinet post, a sick wife, and six young children, no one but Roosevelt himself imagined he ought to see active service. Roosevelt's decision to enlist was avidly followed by newspapers all over the country. Several editorialized against his enlistment, saying he would do more good for the war effort as assistant secretary of the navy. Roosevelt enlisted nonetheless and lost no opportunity to publicize his reasons to friendly newspapers. As he explained to the *New York Sun*, it would be unmanly—hypocritical—to allow other men to take his place on the front lines after he had agitated so strenuously for war. "I want to go because I wouldn't feel that I had been entirely true to my beliefs and convictions, and to the ideal I had set for myself if I didn't go." Embracing the glare of publicity, TR demonstrated to all that when a member of the manly American race took up the white man's burden, he risked his life willingly and joyously, for the good of civilization.

Roosevelt, commissioned at the rank of lieutenant colonel, raised a volunteer cavalry regiment which he described as "peculiarly American." It was designed to reflect Americans' masculine racial power as well as their civilized manly advancement. TR accepted only a fraction of the host of men who tried to enlist in his well-publicized regiment. Most of those he accepted were Westerners—rough cowboys and frontiersmen, the heirs and descendants of the masculine Indian fighters who had been forged into the American race on the Western frontier. But, to emphasize the American race's civilized superiority to the Spanish enemy, TR also enlisted several dozen young Ivy League college graduates, many of them athletes. These Harvard and Yale men, presumably the beneficiaries of the race's most advanced moral and intellectual evolution, represented the ever-advancing heights of civilization to which the manly American race could aspire. The regiment's combination of primitive Western masculinity and advanced civilized manliness dramatized the superior manhood of the American race. They would undoubtedly whip the pants off the inferior Latin Spaniards, and show Americans the glories of imperialistic manhood.

The press, fascinated by the undertaking, christened the regiment "Roosevelt's Rough Riders." Roosevelt's heroic frontiersman identity thus came full circle, as he no doubt intended. As Richard Slotkin has pointed out, the term "Rough Riders" had long been used in adventure novels to describe Western horsemen. Thus, by nicknaming his regiment the "Rough Riders," the nation showed it understood the historical connections Roosevelt always drew between Indian wars in the American West and virile imperialism in Cuba and the Philippines.

But lest anyone miss the connections he was trying to draw between continued manhood and racial expansion, Roosevelt made certain the press, and thus the public, remained fully informed about the Rough Riders' doings. He encouraged several journalists to attach themselves to the regiment throughout its sojourn in Cuba and even rounded up an interested motion-picture crew. The public avidly followed the newspaper reports of the Rough Riders' masculine cowboy heroics, manly collegiate athleticism, and overall wartime heroics.

Roosevelt, himself, was the core of the Rough Riders' popularity—he embodied the whole manly, imperialistic enterprise. Like his Western recruits, Roosevelt was both a masculine cowboy-hero and (by reputation and association, although not in reality) an Indian fighter. But TR was also a civilized Harvard man, manfully sacrificing his life of ease and privilege to take up the white man's burden and do his duty by the downtrodden brown Cubans. His widely reported, dashing exploits, including the heroic charge up "San Juan" Hill, proved the American race's violent masculinity had lost none of its potency since the bygone days of the Western frontier. According to Edmund Morris, when Roosevelt returned from the war he was "the most famous man in America."

After his mustering out, TR the politician continued to play the role of virile Rough Rider for all he was worth. In November, he was elected governor of New York, campaigning as a war hero and employing ex-Rough Riders to warm up the

election crowds. By January 1899, his thrilling memoir, *The Rough Riders*, was appearing serially in *Scribner's Magazine*. And in 1900 his virile popularity convinced Republican party leaders that Roosevelt could counter Bryan's populism better than any other vice-presidential candidate. Roosevelt had constructed himself and the Rough Riders as the epitome of civilized, imperialistic manhood, a model for the American race to follow. His success in modeling that imperialistic manhood exceeded even his own expectations and ultimately paved the way for his presidency.

"The Strenuous Life"

On April 10, 1899, Colonel Roosevelt stood before the men of Chicago's elite, all-male, Hamilton Club and preached the doctrine of "The Strenuous Life." As governor of New York and a fabulously popular ex-Rough Rider, he knew the national press would be in attendance; and though he spoke *at* the Hamilton Club, he spoke *to* men across America. With the cooperation of the press and at the risk of his life, TR had made himself into a national hero—the embodiment of manly virtue, masculine violence, and white American racial supremacy—and the antithesis of overcivilized decadence. Now he urged the men of the American race to live the sort of life he had modeled for them: to be virile, vigorous, and manly, and to reject overcivilized decadence by supporting a strenuously imperialistic foreign policy. When contemporaries ultimately adopted his phrase "the strenuous life" as a synonym for the vigorous, vehement manhood Roosevelt modeled, they showed they correctly understood that his strenuous manhood was inextricably linked to his nationalism, imperialism, and racism.

Ostensibly, "The Strenuous Life" preached the virtues of military preparedness and imperialism, but contemporaries understood it as a speech about manhood. The practical import of the speech was to urge the nation to build up its army, to maintain its strong navy, and to take control of Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Philippines. But underlying these immediate objectives lay the message that American manhood—both the manly race and individual white men—must retain the strength of their Indian-fighter ancestors, or another race would prove itself more manly and overtake America in the Darwinian struggle to be the world's most dominant race.

Roosevelt began by demanding manliness in both the American nation and American men. Slothful men who lacked the "desire and power" to strive in the world were despicable and unmanly. "We do not admire the man of timid peace. We admire the man who embodies victorious effort." If America and its men were not man enough to fight, they would not only lose their place among "the great nations of the world," they would become a decadent and effeminate race. Roosevelt held up the Chinese, whom he despised as the most decadent and unmanly of races, as a cautionary lesson: If we "play the part of China, and be content to rot by inches in ignoble ease within our borders," we will "go down before other nations which have not lost the manly and adventurous qualities." If American men lacked the manly fortitude to go bravely and willingly to a foreign war, the race would decay, preached TR, the virile war hero.

In stirring tones, the Rough Rider of San Juan Hill ridiculed the overcivilized anti-imperialists who had lost the "great fighting, masterful virtues." Lacking the masculine impulse toward racial aggression and unmoved by virile visions of empire, these men had been sapped of all manhood. . . . Like "cloistered" monkish celibates these "over-civilized" men "shrink, shrink, shrink" from carrying the "big stick." Dishonorably, they refused to do their manly duty by the childish Filipinos. Had the United States followed these anti-imperialists' counsel and refused to undertake "one of the great tasks set modern civilization," Americans would have shown themselves not only unmanly but also racially inferior. "Some stronger, manlier power would have to step in and do the work, and we would have shown ourselves weaklings, unable to carry to successful completion the labors that great and high-spirited nations are eager to undertake." As TR saw it, the man, the race, and the nation were one in their need to possess virile, imperialist manhood.

Then TR got down to brass tacks, dwelling at length on Congress' responsibility to build up the armed forces. After again raising the specter of Chinese decadence, which American men faced if they refused to strengthen their army and navy, Roosevelt stressed America's duty to take up the white man's burden in Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. If the American race was "too weak, too selfish, or too foolish" to take on that task, it would be completed by "some stronger and more manful race." He ridiculed anti-imperialists as cowards who "make a pretense of humanitarianism to hide and cover their timidity" and to "excuse themselves for their unwillingness to play the part of men."

"The Strenuous Life" culminates with a Darwinian vision of strife between races for the "dominion of the world," which only the most manful race could win.

> I preach to you then, my countrymen, that our country calls not for the life of ease but for the life of strenuous endeavor. . . . If we stand idly by . . . then the bolder and stronger peoples will pass us by, and will win for themselves the domination of the world. Let us therefore boldly face the life of strife, resolute to do our duty well and manfully.

American men must embrace their manly mission to be the race which dominates the world. Struggle for racial supremacy was inevitable, but the most manful race—the American race—would triumph, if it made the attempt. Its masculine strength was proven by military victories over barbarous brown races. Its manly virtue was evident in its civilized superiority to the primitive childish races it uplifted. White American men must claim their place as the world's most perfect men, the fittest race for the evolutionary struggle toward a perfect civilization. This was the meaning of "The Strenuous Life."

We can now answer the question, "How did the title of an essay calling for American dominance over the brown races become a catchphrase to describe virile masculinity?" Roosevelt's desire for imperial dominance had been, from the first, intrinsically related to his views about male power. As he saw it, the manhood of the American race had been forged in the crucible of frontier race war; and to abandon the virile power of that violence would be to backslide toward effeminate racial mediocrity. Roosevelt wanted American men to be the ultimate in human evolution, the world's most powerful and civilized race. He believed that their victory over the Indians on the frontier proved that the American race possessed the racial superiority and masculine power to overcome any savage race; and he saw a glorious future for the race in the twentieth century, as it pressed on toward international dominance and the perfection of civilization. The only danger which Roosevelt saw menacing

this millennial triumph of manly American civilization came from within. Only by surrendering to overcivilized decadence—by embracing unmanly racial sloth instead of virile imperialism—could American men fail. Thus, American men must work strenuously to uphold their civilization. They must refuse a life of ease, embrace their manly task, and take up the white man's burden. Only by living that "strenuous life" could American men prove themselves to be what Roosevelt had no doubt they were—the apex of civilization, evolution's most favored race, masterful men fit to command the barbarous races and the world's "waste spaces"—in short, the most virile and manly of men.

In later years, as Americans came to take international involvement for granted and as imperialism came to seem less controversial the phrase "the strenuous life" underwent a subtle change of meaning. Always associated with Roosevelt, it came to connote the virile manhood which he modeled for the nation as imperialistic Western hero and Rough Rider—the peculiar combination of moral manliness and aggressive masculinity which he was able to synthesize so well. As Roosevelt's presidency wore on, Americans grew accustomed to taking up the white man's burden, not only in the Philippines, but also in Cuba, Panama, and the Dominican Republic. The "strenuous life" came to be associated with any virile, manly effort to accomplish great work, whether imperialistic or not. Yet on a basic level, "the strenuous life" retained TR's original associations with the evolutionary struggle of the American race on behalf of civilization. "The strenuous life," as it came to be used, meant the opposite of "overcivilized effeminacy." Or, as Roosevelt summed it up himself in his *Autobiography*, the man who lives the strenuous life regards his life "as a pawn to be promptly hazarded whenever the hazard is warranted by the larger interests of the great game in which we are all engaged." That great game, for Roosevelt, was always the millennial struggle for Americans to perfect civilization by becoming the most manly, civilized, and powerful race in the world.

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CHAPTER
10

Race and Power Under Jim Crow

Although high hopes and faith in an ever-expanding order of progress marked most Americans at the turn of the century, the situation was different in the black community, in the North as well as in the South. In the eyes of many post-slavery historians, this period represented the nadir of African American influence in U.S. public life. In the South, the de facto reinstatement of one-party white rule was accompanied by a sharp rise in lynchings of blacks, the general exclusion of African Americans from active citizenship via disfranchisement statutes, and the erection of a virtual caste system of institutional segregation, called Jim Crow after the name of an old blackfaced vaudeville character. By 1900, the principle of segregation extended into every area of southern life, including street railways, hotels, hospitals, restaurants, recreational facilities, and the workplace. Discrimination was the norm in the North as well, but there it was enforced less by specific legislation than by restrictive real-estate zoning, employment practices (on the part of both employers and many trade unions), and popular racism. The very density of such ghettoized northern black neighborhoods as Harlem in New York and Chicago's Back o' the Yards, however, offered a creative, self-governing cultural space, which by the 1920s suggested new possibilities for a mass politics.

Even the black educated elite found early twentieth-century America a tough world to negotiate, since the strategic maneuvering room for black advancement as a whole was severely limited. Nevertheless, the realities of Jim Crow elicited a wide range of responses. The conservative strategy, associated most closely with Booker T. Washington at Tuskegee, Alabama, recognized the impossibility of frontal resistance to white racial norms and opted instead for politically inoffensive self-improvement efforts that might win not only white acceptance but even financial endowment. The more radical course, advocated by sociologist W. E. B. Du Bois and a tiny minority of northern professionals, counseled a direct challenge to the legal, political, and ideological props of Jim Crow. Most contemporary black leaders fell somewhere between these two poles, struggling to gain a foothold amidst an outrushing tide.

left.) I will ward off this injury with all the force of my patriotism! (*New applause and bravos from the same benches.*)

Gentlemen, there are certain considerations which merit the attention of all patriots. The conditions of naval warfare have been profoundly altered. ("Very true! Very true!")

At this time, as you know, a warship cannot carry more than fourteen days' worth of coal, no matter how perfectly it is organized, and a ship which is out of coal is a derelict on the surface of the sea, abandoned to the first person who comes along. Thence the necessity of having on the oceans provision stations, shelters, ports for defense and revictualing. (*Applause at the center and left. Various interruptions.*) And it is for this that we needed Tunisia, for this that we needed Saigon and the Mekong Delta, for this that we need Madagascar, that we are at Diégo-Suarez and Vohemar[6] and will never leave them! (*Applause from a great number of benches.*) Gentlemen, in Europe as it is today, in this competition of so many rivals which we see growing around us, some by perfecting their military or maritime forces, others by the prodigious development of an ever growing population; in a Europe, or rather in a universe of this sort, a policy of peaceful seclusion or abstention is simply the highway to decadence! Nations are great in our times only by means of the activities which they develop; it is not simply "by the peaceful shining forth of institutions" that they are great at this hour. . . .

The Republican Party has shown that it is quite aware that one cannot impose upon France a political ideal conforming to that of nations like independent Belgium and the Swiss Republic; that something else is needed for France: that she cannot be merely a free country, that she must also be a great country, exercising all of her rightful influence over the destiny of Europe, that she ought to propagate this influence throughout the world and carry everywhere that she can her language, her customs, her flag, her arms, and her genius. (*Applause at center and left.*)

[6]Madagascar port cities.

Imperialism and the Life of Manly Courage

2 ◆ *Theodore Roosevelt, THE STRENUOUS LIFE*

The expanding role of the United States in world affairs is one of the twentieth century's momentous developments. As late as the 1890s, the United States was on no one's list of "great powers" despite its growing population, resources, and industrial expansion. It had no colonies, a tiny army, a "washtub" navy, and a diplomatic corps notorious for its unprofessionalism. The United States had played a key role in opening Japan to foreign trade in the 1850s and 1860s, and although it intervened frequently in Latin American affairs, the U.S. government and the American people showed little interest in the affairs of Europe or Asia.

This changed in the late 1890s. Motivated by nationalism, anticipated economic gains, a sense of national mission, and fears that European imperialism might spill over into the Caribbean and Latin American, the United States built up its navy, annexed Hawaii in 1898, assumed a more aggressive role in China, and, after the Spanish American War (1898), became an imperialist power when it took over Cuba, the Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico.

Among the advocates of an expanded international role for the United States, none was more enthusiastic and vociferous than Theodore Roosevelt. Born in 1858 in New York and a graduate of Harvard, Roosevelt was an author, rancher, state assemblyman, New York City police commissioner, and undersecretary of the navy before being elected vice-president on the Republican ticket in 1900. He became president in 1901 after the assassination of President McKinley, and was reelected in 1904. As president, Roosevelt directed the construction of the Panama Canal, helped broker an end to the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, sent the Navy on a world cruise to "show the flag," and announced the "Roosevelt Corollary" to the Monroe Doctrine, by which the United States proclaimed the right to intervene in the political affairs of Latin American states.

Roosevelt delivered the following speech in early 1899 during the heated national debate following the U.S. victory over Spain in the Spanish American War. According to the armistice agreement of August 12, 1898, Spain ceded to the United States Puerto Rico, Cuba, and Guam. In December the two sides negotiated the Treaty of Paris, by which the United States would receive the Philippines in return for twenty million dollars. Senate ratification of the treaty was bitterly opposed by most Democrats and members of the Anti-Imperialism League, who believed that annexing the Philippines clashed with the nation's commitment to liberty and freedom. In his Chicago speech; "The Strenuous Life," and in many other statements, Roosevelt vigorously opposed the anti-imperialists' arguments. He and other supporters of the new U.S. imperial role won the day when the Senate narrowly approved the Treaty of Paris in February 1899.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. According to Roosevelt, what lessons does the example of China offer for the United States?
2. In Roosevelt's view, what is the ultimate purpose of colonialism?
3. Roosevelt often refers to "duty" in his speech. What does he mean by the term?
4. What are Roosevelt's views of the people of Cuba and the Philippines? How do these views resemble his views of Native Americans?
5. How does Roosevelt characterize the opponents to increased U.S. military spending and expansion?

We of this generation do not have to face a task such as that our fathers faced, but we have our tasks, and woe to us if we fail to perform them! We cannot, if we would, play the part of China, and be content to rot by inches in ignoble ease within our borders, taking no interest in what goes on beyond them, sunk in a scrambling commercialism; heedless of the higher life, the life of aspiration, of toil and risk, busying ourselves only with the wants of our bodies for the day, until suddenly we should find, beyond a shadow of question, what China has already found, that in this world the nation that has trained itself to a career of unwarlike and isolated ease is bound, in the end, to go down before other nations which have not lost the manly and adventurous

qualities. If we are to be a really great people, we must strive in good faith to play a great part in the world. We cannot avoid meeting great issues. All that we can determine for ourselves is whether we shall meet them well or ill. In 1898 we could not help being brought face to face with the problem of war with Spain. All we could decide was whether we should shrink like cowards from the contest, or enter into it as beseemed a brave and high-spirited people; and, once in, whether failure or success should crown our banners. So it is now. We cannot avoid the responsibilities that confront us in Hawaii,[1] Cuba, [Puerto] Rico, and the Philippines. All we can decide is whether we shall meet them in a way that will redound to the national credit, or whether we shall make of our dealings with these new problems a dark and shameful page in our history. . . .

. . . The timid man, the lazy man, the man who distrusts his country, the over-civilized man, who has lost the great fighting, masterful virtues, the ignorant man, and the man of dull mind, whose soul is incapable of feeling the mighty lift that thrills "stern men with empires in their brains" — all these, of course, shrink from seeing the nation undertake its new duties; shrink from seeing us build a navy and an army adequate to our needs; shrink from seeing us do our share of the world's work, by bringing order out of chaos in the great, fair tropic islands from which the valor of our soldiers and sailors has driven the Spanish flag. . . .

. . . The guns that thundered off Manila and Santiago[2] left us echoes of glory, but they also left us a legacy of duty. If we drove out a medieval tyranny[3] only to make room for savage anarchy, we had better not have begun the task at all. It is worse than idle to say that we have no duty to perform, and can leave to their fates the islands we have conquered. Such a course would be the course of infamy. It would be followed at once by utter chaos in the wretched islands themselves. Some stronger, manlier power would have to step in and do the work, and we would have shown ourselves weaklings, unable to carry to successful completion the labors that great and high-spirited nations are eager to undertake. . . .

The problems are different for the different islands. [Puerto] Rico is not large enough to stand alone. We must govern it wisely and well, primarily in the interest of its own people. Cuba is, in my judgment, entitled ultimately to settle for itself whether it shall be an independent state or an integral portion of the mightiest of republics. But until order and stable liberty are secured, we must remain in the island to insure them, and infinite tact, judgment, moderation, and courage must be shown by our keeping the island pacified, in relentlessly stamping out brigandage, in protecting all alike, and yet in showing proper recognition to the men who have fought for Cuban liberty. The Philippines offer a yet graver problem. Their population includes half-caste and native Christians, warlike Moslems, and wild pagans. Many of their people are utterly unfit for self-government, and show no signs of becoming fit. Others may in time become fit but at least can only take part in self-government under a wise supervision, at once firm and beneficent. We have driven Spanish tyranny from the island. If we now let it be replaced by savage anarchy, our work has been for harm and not for good. I have scant patience with those who fear to undertake the task of governing the Philippines, . . . or that they shrink from it because of the expense and trouble; but I have even scanter patience with those who make a pretense of humanitarianism to hide and cover their timidity, and who cant about "liberty" and the "consent of the governed," in order to excuse

[1]The United States annexed Hawaii in 1898 after almost a century of economic penetration and missionary activity.

[2]The naval battles of Manila Bay, in the Philippines, and Santiago, in Cuba, were major U.S. victories in the Spanish American War.

[3]This is a disparaging reference to Spain.

themselves for their unwillingness to play the part of men. Their doctrines, if carried out, would make it incumbent upon us to leave the Apaches of Arizona to work out their own salvation, and to decline to interfere in a single Indian reservation. Their doctrines condemn your forefathers and mine for ever having settled in these United States. . . .

I preach to you, then, my countrymen, that our country calls not for the life of ease but for the life of strenuous endeavor. The twentieth century looms before us big with the fate of many nations. If we stand idly by, if we seek merely swollen, slothful ease and ignoble peace, if we shrink from the hard contests where men must win at hazard of their lives and at the risk of all they hold dear, then the bolder and stronger peoples will pass us by, and will win for themselves the domination of the world. Let us therefore boldly face the life of strife, resolute to do our duty well and manfully; resolute to uphold righteousness by deed and by word; resolute to be both honest and brave, to serve high ideals, yet to use practical methods. Above all, let us shrink from no strife, moral or physical, within or without the nation, provided we are certain that the strife is justified, for it is only through strife, through hard and dangerous endeavor, that we shall ultimately win the goal of true national greatness.

The Economics of Imperialism

Throughout history, imperialism has meant not just political subordination but also economic exploitation in the form of land confiscation, plunder of wealth and resources, new taxes, and forced labor. Western imperialism before World War I had its share of outright plunder, but its economic ramifications went well beyond simple exploitation. In Africa and Asia, the imperialists built railroads, deepened harbors, strung telegraph lines, brought in machines to extract minerals and metals from deep in the earth, and mandated the cultivation of crops they needed to feed their people and supply their factories. They transformed isolated agrarian economies into component parts of a single world economy driven by Western industrialization and capitalism.

Furthermore, late nineteenth-century imperialism involved more than newly drawn boundaries and direct political control by colonial administrators. For many states that remained theoretically sovereign, imperialism meant economic, not political, subordination. Latin America became a vast area of U.S. and European investment, with a country such as Nicaragua becoming almost a private fiefdom of the United Fruit Company, the Boston-based corporation that supplied Europe and North America with bananas. The Ottoman Empire and Persia acquiesced to extensive foreign control of their finances and economic development. China by 1900 was divided into "spheres of influence," in which Britain, Germany, France, Japan, Russia, and to a degree the United States enjoyed exclusive trading rights and favorable tariffs, leased large tracts of land, and held concessions to build railroads, exploit mines, and establish banks. Such examples of Western economic penetration are just as much a part of the history of imperialism as the political takeover of Africa and Asia.

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Transcript of Theodore Roosevelt's Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine (1905)

(Excerpted from Theodore Roosevelt's Annual Message to Congress, December 6, 1904)

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In treating of our foreign policy and of the attitude that this great Nation should assume in the world at large, it is absolutely necessary to consider the Army and the Navy, and the Congress, through which the thought of the Nation finds its expression, should keep ever vividly in mind the fundamental fact that it is impossible to treat our foreign policy, whether this policy takes shape in the effort to secure justice for others or justice for ourselves, save as conditioned upon the attitude we are willing to take toward our Army, and especially toward our Navy. It is not merely unwise, it is contemptible, for a nation, as for an individual, to use high-sounding language to proclaim its purposes, or to take positions which are ridiculous if unsupported by potential force, and then to refuse to provide this force. If there is no intention of providing and keeping the force necessary to back up a strong attitude, then it is far better not to assume such an attitude.

The steady aim of this Nation, as of all enlightened nations, should be to strive to bring ever nearer the day when there shall prevail throughout the world the peace of justice. There are kinds of peace which are highly undesirable, which are in the long run as destructive as any war. Tyrants and oppressors have many times made a wilderness and called it peace. Many times peoples who were slothful or timid or shortsighted, who had been enervated by ease or by luxury, or misled by false teachings, have shrunk in unmanly fashion from doing duty that was stern and that needed self-sacrifice, and have sought to hide from their own minds their shortcomings, their ignoble motives, by calling them love of peace. The peace of tyrannous terror, the peace of craven weakness, the peace of injustice, all these should be shunned as we shun unrighteous war. The goal to set before us as a nation, the goal which should be set before all mankind, is the attainment of the peace of justice, of the peace which comes when each nation is not merely safe-guarded in its own rights, but scrupulously recognizes and performs its duty toward others. Generally peace tells for righteousness; but if there is conflict between the two, then our fealty is due first to the cause of righteousness. Unrighteous wars are common, and unrighteous peace is rare; but both should be shunned. The right of freedom and the responsibility for the exercise of that right can not be divorced. One of our great poets has well and finely said that freedom is not a gift that tarries long in the hands of cowards. Neither does it tarry long in the hands of those too slothful, too dishonest, or too unintelligent to exercise it. The eternal vigilance which is the price of liberty must be exercised, sometimes to guard against outside foes; although of course far more often to guard against our own selfish or thoughtless shortcomings.

If *these self-evident truths are kept* before us, and only if they are so kept before us, we shall have a clear idea of what our foreign policy in its larger aspects should be. It is our duty to remember that a nation has no more right to do injustice to another nation, strong or weak, than an individual has to do injustice to another individual; that the same moral law applies in one case as in the other. But we must also remember that it is as much the duty of the Nation to guard its own rights and its own interests as it is the duty of the individual so to do. Within the Nation the individual has now delegated this right to the State, that is, to the representative of all the individuals, and it is a maxim of the law that for every wrong there is a remedy. But in international law we have not advanced by any means as far as we have advanced in municipal law. There is as yet no judicial way of enforcing a right in international law. When one nation wrongs another or wrongs many others, there is no tribunal before which the wrongdoer can be brought. Either it is necessary supinely to acquiesce in the wrong, and thus put a premium upon brutality and aggression, or else it is

necessary for the aggrieved nation valiantly to stand up for its rights. Until some method is devised by which there shall be a degree of international control over offending nations, it would be a wicked thing for the most civilized powers, for those with most sense of international obligations and with keenest and most generous appreciation of the difference between right and wrong, to disarm. If the great civilized nations of the present day should completely disarm, the result would mean an immediate recrudescence of barbarism in one form or another. Under any circumstances a sufficient armament would have to be kept up to serve the purposes of international police; and until international cohesion and the sense of international duties and rights are far more advanced than at present, a nation desirous both of securing respect for itself and of doing good to others must have a force adequate for the work which it feels is allotted to it as its part of the general world duty. Therefore it follows that a self-respecting, just, and far-seeing nation should on the one hand endeavor by every means to aid in the development of the various movements which tend to provide substitutes for war, which tend to render nations in their actions toward one another, and indeed toward their own peoples, more responsive to the general sentiment of humane and civilized mankind; and on the other hand that it should keep prepared, while scrupulously avoiding wrongdoing itself, to repel any wrong, and in exceptional cases to take action which in a more advanced stage of international relations would come under the head of the exercise of the international police. A great free people owes it to itself and to all mankind not to sink into helplessness before the powers of evil.

We are in every way endeavoring to help on, with cordial good will, every movement which will tend to bring us into more friendly relations with the rest of mankind. In pursuance of this policy I shall shortly lay before the Senate treaties of arbitration with all powers which are willing to enter into these treaties with us. It is not possible at this period of the world's development to agree to arbitrate all matters, but there are many matters of possible difference between us and other nations which can be thus arbitrated. Furthermore, at the request of the Interparliamentary Union, an eminent body composed of practical statesmen from all countries, I have asked the Powers to join with this Government in a second Hague conference, at which it is hoped that the work already so happily begun at The Hague may be carried some steps further toward completion. This carries out the desire expressed by the first Hague conference itself.

It is not true that the United States feels any land hunger or entertains any projects as regards the other nations of the Western Hemisphere save such as are for their welfare. All that this country desires is to see the neighboring countries stable, orderly, and prosperous. Any country whose people conduct themselves well can count upon our hearty friendship. If a nation shows that it knows how to act with reasonable efficiency and decency in social and political matters, if it keeps order and pays its obligations, it need fear no interference from the United States. Chronic wrongdoing, or an impotence which results in a general loosening of the ties of civilized society, may in America, as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation, and in the Western Hemisphere the adherence of the United States to the Monroe Doctrine may force the United States, however reluctantly, in flagrant cases of such wrongdoing or impotence, to the exercise of an international police power. If every country washed by the Caribbean Sea would show the progress in stable and just civilization which with the aid of the Platt Amendment Cuba has shown since our troops left the island, and which so many of the republics in both Americas are constantly and brilliantly showing, all question of interference by this Nation with their affairs would be at an end. Our interests and those of our southern neighbors are in reality identical. They have great natural riches, and if within their borders the reign of law and justice obtains, prosperity is sure to come to them. While they thus obey the primary laws of civilized society they may rest assured that they will be treated by us in a spirit of cordial and helpful sympathy. We would interfere with them only in the last resort, and then only if it became evident that their inability or unwillingness to do justice at home and abroad had violated the rights of the United States or had invited foreign aggression to the detriment of the entire body of American nations. It is a mere truism to say that every nation, whether in America or anywhere else, which desires to maintain its freedom, its independence, must ultimately realize that the right of such independence can not be separated from the responsibility of making good use of it.

In asserting the Monroe Doctrine, in taking such steps as we have taken in regard to Cuba, Venezuela, and Panama, and in endeavoring to circumscribe the theater of war in the Far East, and to secure the open door in China, we have acted in our own interest as well as in the interest of humanity at large. There are,

however, cases in which, while our own interests are not greatly involved, strong appeal is made to our sympathies. Ordinarily it is very much wiser and more useful for us to concern ourselves with striving for our own moral and material betterment here at home than to concern ourselves with trying to better the condition of things in other nations. We have plenty of sins of our own to war against, and under ordinary circumstances we can do more for the general uplifting of humanity by striving with heart and soul to put a stop to civic corruption, to brutal lawlessness and violent race prejudices here at home than by passing resolutions and wrongdoing elsewhere. Nevertheless there are occasional crimes committed on so vast a scale and of such peculiar horror as to make us doubt whether it is not our manifest duty to endeavor at least to show our disapproval of the deed and our sympathy with those who have suffered by it. The cases must be extreme in which such a course is justifiable. There must be no effort made to remove the mote from our brother's eye if we refuse to remove the beam from our own. But in extreme cases action may be justifiable and proper. What form the action shall take must depend upon the circumstances of the case; that is, upon the degree of the atrocity and upon our power to remedy it. The cases in which we could interfere by force of arms as we interfered to put a stop to intolerable conditions in Cuba are necessarily very few. Yet it is not to be expected that a people like ours, which in spite of certain very obvious shortcomings, nevertheless as a whole shows by its consistent practice its belief in the principles of civil and religious liberty and of orderly freedom, a people among whom even the worst crime, like the crime of lynching, is never more than sporadic, so that individuals and not classes are molested in their fundamental rights--it is inevitable that such a nation should desire eagerly to give expression to its horror on an occasion like that of the massacre of the Jews in Kishenef, or when it witnesses such systematic and long-extended cruelty and oppression as the cruelty and oppression of which the Armenians have been the victims, and which have won for them the indignant pity of the civilized world.

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