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THE DEBATE OVER IMPERIALISM IN THE UNITED
STATES, 1898-1900.

Northwestern University, Ph.D., 1966
Speech-Theater

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1967

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

THE DEBATE OVER IMPERIALISM IN THE
UNITED STATES, 1898-1900

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
for the degree
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
Field of Speech

By

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Evanston, Illinois

August, 1966

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The writer wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness to the late Dr. Ernest J. Wrage, from whose tutelage this project was formulated, and Dr. Glen E. Mills, by whose guidance this project was completed.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Subject of the Study

The United States at the turn of the century was complacent, exultant, confident, and self-assertive, eager to take its proper place in world affairs. Our victory over Spain had made us feel that all Europe was decadent and it was time for our young republic to dictate to dying empires.¹

The above passage refers to a most significant, though brief, period in which the United States passed from provincialism to internationalism; from a second-rate to a major world power.² In the first blush of realization of her potential, this nation indulged in what Pratt chooses to call America's Colonial

¹ Claude Moore Fuess, Carl Shurz: Reformer (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1932), p. 366.

² Bemis indicates that the question of imperialism was the ". . . most important question in foreign policy which the nation had been called upon to decide since its independence," and Hofstadter refers to the debate over imperialism as ". . . a turning-point in our history." See Samuel F. Bemis, A Diplomatic History of the United States (4th ed.; New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1955), p. 468; and Richard Hofstadter, "Manifest Destiny and the Philippines," America in Crisis, ed. Daniel Aaron (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1952), p. 173.

Experiment¹ and what Bemis refers to as ". . . a great national aberration.",²

The decisions required to redirect the energies of the United States were not automatic. They evolved from a series of events and accompanying congressional and public debate. In instances debate preceded action; in other instances the debate was, in effect, *ex post facto.*³ The significance lies in the fact that a national policy of maximum import was argued for a period of two and one-half years by political figures and private citizens. Thus there exists a body of speeches including those favoring "expansion" and those opposed to "imperialism." With regard to context and content, these speeches comprising the debate over imperialism are worthy of examination for, as Theodore P. Greene says: "Here was one of the turning points in our history, and the debate from 1898 to 1900 . . . constituted one of the great debates of American history.",⁴

¹ Julius W. Pratt, America's Colonial Experiment (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1950).

² Bemis, p. 475.

³ Several weeks of Congressional debate preceded ratification of the "Treaty of Paris" which ceded the Philippines to the United States. Subsequent debate was primarily concerned with appropriate disposition of the Philippines which had already become U.S. territory.

⁴ Theodore P. Greene (ed.), American Imperialism in 1898 (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1955), p. v.

The Purpose of the Study

This study is undertaken in order to investigate the debate concerning the acquisition by the United States of territorial possessions beyond its own continental limits--in a word--imperialism. As a result of this investigation there should be: (1) a clearer understanding of the events of this period which created public concern for the course of the nation, (2) an insight into the issues and arguments favoring and opposed to imperialism based on an analysis of the speeches in which these arguments are presented, and (3) an evaluation of the arguments, of the positions taken, and of the total debate over imperialism.

Further, the study is undertaken to fill a gap in presently existing literature covering this transitional period in the growth of the United States. No investigation has been made to date into the arguments for and against imperialism as they were enunciated during the height of the controversy by congressmen, presidents, presidential candidates, educators, government officials, and citizens. Historians discuss the events of the period generally,¹ studies have been made of certain characteristics of the era,² anthologists and

¹ Julius W. Pratt seems to be the only historian to have dealt rather fully with the subject. See his Expansionists of 1898 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1936), and America's Colonial Experiment (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1950).

² Some of the more significant of these are: Thomas A. Bailey, "Was the Election of 1900 a Mandate on Imperialism?" The Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXIV (June, 1937), 43-52; George W. Auxier, "Middle Western Newspapers and the Spanish-American War, 1895-1898," The Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXVI (March, 1940), 523-34; and Fred Harvey Harrington, "The

critics have, at times, juxtaposed two or more of the major speeches on imperialism,¹ rhetorical theses concern themselves with various individual speakers and recognize, in part, the role played by the individual under study in the imperialism debate,² and two dissertations touch upon certain aspects of the controversy.³ In none of these works is there reference to any detailed survey and analysis

Anti-Imperialist Movement in the United States, 1898-1900," The Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXII (September, 1935), 211-30.

¹ See Carl C. Brandt and Edward M. Shafter, Jr. (eds.), Selected American Speeches on Basic Issues (1850-1950) (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1960), pp. 218-74, for the contrast of "The Star of Empire" by Albert J. Beveridge and "The Policy of Imperialism" by Carl Schurz; or Ernest J. Wrage and Barnet Bas-kerville (eds.), American Forum (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1960), pp. 343-68, for the contrast of "The March of the Flag" by Beveridge and "Imperialism" by William Jennings Bryan.

² For example: William Auburn Behl, "The Speaking and Speeches of Theodore Roosevelt" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1942); Wayne Carter Eubank, "A Study of William Jennings Bryan as an Orator of Progressive Principles in Politics from 1890 to 1916" (unpublished M.A. thesis, Northwestern University, 1935); and Herold Truslow Ross, "The Oratorical Ca-reer of Albert Jeremiah Beveridge" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, State University of Iowa, 1932).

³ The first of these unpublished Ph.D. dissertations--Arthur Morford Barnes, "American Intervention in Cuba and Annexation of the Philippines: An Analysis of the Public Discussion" (Cornell Uni-versity, 1948)--encompasses the public discussion as represented in periodical literature; the second--Edwin Berkeley Tompkins, "The Great Debate: Anti-Imperialism in the United States, 1890-1920" (University of Pennsylvania, 1963)--presents a narrative history of formal and informal anti-imperialist sentiment, mentions relatively few speeches, and provides a record of dissent from imperialism rather than a full view of the debate.

of the speeches about imperialism which would justify the generalizations presented.

The Scope of the Study

In time, the plot of this study is narrow. The investigation involves selected speeches dealing wholly or in part with expansion or imperialism and presented within the time span from April 25, 1898 through November 6, 1900. The initial date coincides with the formal declaration of war against Spain by the Fifty-fifth Congress. This declaration and the subsequent military and naval efforts of the United States created an unusually favorable opportunity for extraterritorial expansion. The opportunity was not long to be ignored, for two days later, on April 27, 1898, Albert Beveridge, speaking in Boston before the Middlesex Club, sounded the first unmistakably clear call to America to fulfill her "destiny."¹ Prior to this date certain writers² had discussed America's imperialistic potential, and certain individuals in public life³ were concerned about the nation's lethargy in this respect, but no real opportunity for extraterritorial expansion existed until the Spanish-American War provided a heightened nationalistic spirit and a propitious occasion.

¹Claude G. Bowers, Beveridge and the Progressive Era (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1932), pp. 67-70.

²Chiefly Alfred Thayer Mahan, John Fiske, and Josiah Strong.

³Chiefly Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge.

The terminal date of this study coincides with the presidential election of 1900. A portion of the campaign of 1900 centered around imperialism which was called "the paramount issue" by the Democrats.¹ Though the result of the election was a solid defeat for Bryan,² it was not, as Bailey points out,³ a mandate for imperialism. Indeed, after the election the subject of imperialism beyond mere token comment seems virtually to have been dropped from the national vocabulary, and the national concern in this area was bent to the subduing (in the case of the Philippines), organization, administration, and appropriate disposition of territories already acquired.⁴

One would be presumptuous to claim to have examined all the speeches containing allusions to imperialism in the given time span of this study.⁵ The writer, however, has examined, in addition to the Congressional debate as represented in the Congressional

¹ Kirk H. Porter (ed.), National Party Platforms (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1924), p. 212.

² The electoral vote was 292 for McKinley and 155 for Bryan.

³ Bailey, The Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXIV, 43-52.

⁴ See Porter, pp. 246-47, 284, 332, 385, 433-34, and 489 for "imperialism" planks in later Democratic party platforms. See also Pratt, America's Colonial Experiment, chaps. v-viii, for an analysis of the demise of imperialism.

⁵ In the campaign of 1900 alone, the two leading political speakers, Bryan and Roosevelt, presented well over 1,000 speeches. See Henry F. Pringle, Theodore Roosevelt (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1931), p. 225, and Genevieve Forbes Herrick and John Origen Herrick, The Life of William Jennings Bryan (Chicago: Buxton Publishing House, 1925), p. 153.

Record, over five hundred manuscripts of speeches dealing with imperialism. This figure includes all of the speeches on imperialism deemed significant enough to have been mentioned or discussed by major anthologists, biographers, critics, essayists, and historians. This is believed to be a sufficient sample to validate the investigation into the debate over imperialism and to justify deriving conclusions about the debate.

In light of the considerable body of speeches investigated, some discretion must be exercised in the selection of the particular speeches discussed. The major criterion for the inclusion of any speech will be its significance in relation to the total debate. In this way a focus on the central problem--the nature, development, and meaning of the controversy over imperialism--can be maintained.

Sources of the Study

A study seeking to investigate the public debate over a given subject naturally requires access to the public pronouncements on that subject. Unfortunately the passage of even such a brief span of time as the sixty-six years since the debate over imperialism took place creates something of a problem for the researcher. Original manuscripts of speech texts may never have been prepared fully by the speaker, or they may have been lost or even partially destroyed by the ravages of time alone. However, many manuscripts still do exist in their original form, or were printed from stenographic notes, or were prepared as news releases. Also, fortunately, anthologists, alert to the importance of many speeches of the period, collected and published texts of many of the major speeches on imperialism. Newspaper reports of speeches are

also of considerable value, though such reports are often in abridged form.

The most useful repository of primary source material for this study was the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress. Here the papers of Albert Beveridge, William Jennings Bryan, Grover Cleveland, William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, and Carl Schurz included not only speech manuscripts--often originals--but also illuminating correspondence.

The general repository of the Library of Congress also yielded many speeches published in pamphlet form as well as much in the way of general background publications including periodicals circa 1900, and the newspaper collection permitted wide examination of press reports and general data. Naturally, the Congressional Record was the source used for reference to the many speeches delivered in Congress on the question of imperialism.

Special collections were examined at the New York Public Library for the Bourke Cockran papers and the Western Reserve Historical Association Library at Cleveland, Ohio, for additional McKinley materials (a limited collection). Additional libraries consulted included special libraries such as the Henry E. Huntington Library, the John Crerar Library, and the Chautauqua Library at Lake Chautauqua, New York, the general libraries of academic institutions such as Kent State University, Long Beach State College, Northwestern University, University of California at Los Angeles, University of Southern California, and Western Reserve University, and public libraries such as the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore and the Canton (Ohio) Public Library.

Especially useful as a secondary source of speech texts is the scrapbook included in the McKinley papers at the Library of

Congress Manuscripts Division. This scrapbook, number 312 of the McKinley collection, contains the newspaper accounts of Bryan's campaign speeches from his acceptance address of August 3 to his last speeches of the campaign on November 5, 1900. Most of these clippings are from the Washington Post. In addition, there are included clippings from a variety of newspapers around the nation commenting editorially on Bryan's letter of acceptance of the nomination.

From the many general writings concerning imperialism and the United States, one would have difficulty designating any work or works as chief resource for this study. However, the works of Professors Pratt and Hofstadter have been of considerable aid to the writer.

Two sets of restricted manuscripts were consulted in preparation of the study. The writer wishes to thank the New York Public Library for granting permission to investigate and cite from the W. Bourke Cockran papers, and David C. Mearns, chief of the Manuscripts Division of the Library of Congress, for granting permission to investigate and cite from the Albert J. Beveridge papers.

Method and Organization of the Study

In order to accomplish the purposes of this study it will be necessary to pose certain questions and to attempt to discover the appropriate answers to them. Major questions that may be asked are: (1) What was the zeitgeist which permitted the United States to entertain the imperialist movement? (2) What were the propositions to be argued? (3) Who were the debaters? (4) What were the issues and arguments? (5) What were the methods of argument?

- (6) What were the weaknesses and strengths of the cases presented?
- (7) What was the impact or meaning of the debate totally?

The answers to the above questions will be sought through the use of the following organizational pattern (by chapters):

- I. Introduction
- II. The United States imperialist venture
- III. Should the United States acquire colonial possessions?
The initiation of the debate: April 25, 1898, through December 10, 1898
 - A. The course of the debate
 1. The speakers
 2. Events and arguments
 - B. A summary of argument
 - C. A critique of the debate
- IV. Should the United States acquire the Philippines?
The general debate: December 11, 1898, through February 6, 1899
 - A. The course of the general debate
 1. The speakers
 2. Events and arguments
 - B. A summary of general argument
 - C. A critique of the general debate
- V. Should the United States acquire the Philippines?

The Congressional debate: December 11, 1898, through February 6, 1899

- A. The course of the senatorial debate
 1. The speakers
 2. Events and arguments
- B. Executive sessions of the Senate

C. The course of the debate in the House of Representatives

D. A summary of Congressional argument

E. A critique of the Congressional debate

VI. Should the United States relinquish the Philippines?

The conclusion of the debate: February 7, 1899, through
November 6, 1900

A. The course of the debate

1. The speakers

2. Events and arguments

B. A summary of argument

C. A critique of the debate

VII. In retrospect--the debate over imperialism: April 25,
1898, through November 6, 1900

CHAPTER II

THE UNITED STATES IMPERIALIST VENTURE

On April 25, 1898, the United States, then a novice at imperial conquest, entered into war with Spain. Ten months later the nation joined the ranks of empire. During these months United States armed forces destroyed the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay on May 1, destroyed a second Spanish fleet outside Santiago Bay in Cuba on July 3, took Wake Island on July 4, received the surrender of Spanish forces in Cuba on July 17, occupied Porto Rico on July 25, and proclaimed the military occupation of the Philippines on August 14 after the successful assault on Manila of the preceding day. Outside the sphere of military endeavor, Congress, by joint resolution, annexed the Hawaiian Island group on July 7.¹

On August 12 an armistice protocol was concluded which provided for Spain's relinquishing all sovereignty over Cuba and the cession of Porto Rico and all other Spanish-owned islands of the West Indies and one of the Ladrones group to the United States, while holding open the disposition of the Philippine Islands to further negotiations of the peace commissioners who would meet in Paris the first of October.²

¹Richard B. Morris (ed.), Encyclopedia of American History (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1953), pp. 288-90.

²Ibid., p. 290.

The negotiations of the peace commissioners resulted in the Treaty of Paris in which Spain ceded the Philippine Islands to the United States for a payment of \$20,000,000 in addition to accepting the terms of the protocol.¹ This treaty was referred to the Senate on January 4, 1899, considered in executive session, and confirmed on February 6, 1899.

The above account furnishes a list of specific dates and occurrences, but it does not show why the United States, after years of practical isolation and internal development, seemed suddenly willing to set past history aside and embark on a course of extra-territorial expansion. That this did happen, we know. What enabled it to happen is a part of the history of the nation that must be known in order to understand the United States imperialist venture.

The fact that the United States was able to wage war successfully against Spain in 1898 provided the opportunity for imperialism. The achievements of the nation in what John Hay referred to as "a splendid little war,"² were such as to quicken the national pulse. Martial music and heroes were the order of the day. "A turning point in the American policy the war with Spain unquestionably was. But the American spirit had turned the corner somewhere in the ten years before."³

¹Ibid.

²Quoted from a letter, Hay to Roosevelt, in Walter Millis, The Martial Spirit (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1931), p. 340. The remark has become classic.

³Julius Pratt, "The 'Large Policy' of 1898," The Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XIX (September, 1932), 237.

In order to discover the factors involved in the United States imperialist movement, one may be guided by Curti's suggestion that the triumph of this movement "can be explained only in terms of the new conditions prevailing in the country and the world at large at the end of the nineteenth century."¹ What were those new conditions and what was their import?

Prior to 1890 the nation was concerned primarily with internal development. The Civil War had taxed the mental, physical, and material resources of the nation in such a way as to demand almost twenty-five years of reconstruction. Thus a period of national resurgence provided opportunity for "exploiting the nation's natural resources and building its modern systems of industry and transportation. Interest in foreign affairs flagged, the merchant marine decayed, and the fighting fleet was allowed to disintegrate."² In international affairs the pronouncements of Washington and Monroe provided the backbone of United States foreign policy.³

In contrast to this picture of internal development and international lethargy, the beginning of the last decade of the nineteenth century was heralded by the announcement that the frontier in this country was no more.⁴ Such a

¹ Merle Curti, The Growth of American Thought (2d ed.; New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951), p. 667.

² Pratt, The Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XIX, 223.

³ Lecture by Professor Richard W. Leopold, Department of History, Northwestern University, January 6, 1958.

⁴ Frederick Jackson Turner, The Frontier in American History (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1920), p. 1.

condition¹ produced a climate in which Americans turned from their task of rounding out their national domain and "embarked on the task of promoting abroad both American morals and ideals."² Bailey seems to capture this general climate of the times in the following paragraph:

Everywhere in the United States there were evidences of a growing national consciousness. American history was introduced into the lower schools; scores of patriotic societies sprouted up; genealogists pored over musty documents; respect for the flag was taught in the classrooms; and the propriety of displaying the national colors in comic opera aroused serious debate. In 1893 Congress created the rank of ambassador: that of minister would no longer do. All signs indicated that America was turning her eyes outward. She was restless, tired of a drab and colorless life, bored by such prosaic issues as the tariff and currency, eager for new thrills--and a stage commensurate with her bursting power.³

Several writers have examined the factors which seemed to influence or produce what Hofstadter calls "the psychic crisis of the 1890's."⁴ Consensus directs attention to four general areas

¹In actuality internal development was nowise exhausted, but Americans' belief that "young men could no longer move west" was almost as significant as the fact.

²Curti, p. 669.

³Thomas A. Bailey, A Diplomatic History of the American People (3d ed.; New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1946), pp. 459-60.

⁴Richard Hofstadter, "Manifest Destiny and the Philippines," America in Crisis, ed. Daniel Aaron (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1952), p. 173. In addition to Hofstadter's important article, ibid., pp. 173-200, the discussions by Curti, pp. 659-73, and Albert K. Weinberg, Manifest Destiny: A Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1935), pp. 21-22, are especially significant.

of influence of the American populace: first, internal events which may be subdivided into categories of economic influences, political trends, the impact of Darwinian interpretations, and religious influences; second, external events and the national reaction to them; and the following two influences--each related to one of the foregoing but of sufficient impact to be considered as a separate category--the influence of the printed media, and the influence of the Spanish-American War.

The Influence of Internal Events

Economic Influences

The depression of 1893 left a considerable mark on the economy of the nation and the minds of its people. General discontent with the economic structure was reflected in a number of strikes and in the more widespread agrarian revolt which reached its climax in the 1896 election. All indications pointed to a considerable economic upheaval until pressure was relieved by the war. Generally the economic unrest created a dual mood which Hofstadter describes as one of sympathy and of power.¹ Applied to the development of imperialism this could mean sympathy for the Cubans and the application of power in national self-assertion.

From the business point of view the period was one of growth of business, refinement of techniques of manufacture, and the building and consolidation of industrial empires. By 1900

¹Hofstadter, in America in Crisis, p. 175.

1 percent of the population owned 50 percent of the national wealth.¹ Yet initially there seemed to be little agitation for expansion by American businessmen.² About the only real, expressed concern was by Hawaiian sugar planters who, since 1893, had been working for the annexation of Hawaii by the United States,³ and by those businessmen who were engaged in Cuban investments and Cuban trade and were therefore affected by the Cuban Revolution.⁴ During the 1890's, however, the nation's industrial potential exceeded domestic purchasing power,⁵ and business in its search for new markets for surplus goods and for new fields of investment turned to the Pacific area.⁶

With the beginning of the Spanish-American War, business recognized the possibilities inherent in imperialism and tended to favor the "large policy" of the war.⁷ Businessmen became more concerned with retention of the Philippines as a key to commercial

¹ Ray Allen Billington, American History after 1865 (Pater-
son: Littlefield, Adams & Co., 1960), p. 114.

² Pratt, Expansionists of 1898, pp. 230-78.

³ Ibid., pp. 110 ff.

⁴ Pratt, America's Colonial Experiment, p. 42.

⁵ Curti, p. 668.

⁶ Foster Rhea Dulles, America in the Pacific: A Century of Expansion (2d ed.; Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1938), p. 221.

⁷ Pratt, Expansionists of 1898, pp. 233 ff.

activities in the Far East.¹ A contemporary commentator noted that "the irresistible tendency to expansion . . . seems again in operation, demanding new outlets for American capital and new opportunities for American enterprise."²

Political Trends

In the political arena during this period the tendency to expansion first made itself felt as the proposal for annexation of Hawaii came before the Senate late in the Harrison administration after Cleveland's election in 1892. Cleveland, upon taking office, withdrew the treaty, and thus annexation was not accomplished until July 6, 1898, some two months after the war with Spain was begun. Though ultimately withdrawn, the Treaty of 1893 was debated vigorously in Congress, and a general alignment was drawn in terms of party--Republicans protreaty and Democrats antitreaty. Partly responsible for such alignment was the circumstance of a treaty's being presented by a Republican president and withdrawn by a Democratic president.³

The party alignment became even more clear-cut in the platforms adopted for the campaign of 1896 in which the Republicans called for a firm, vigorous, and dignified foreign policy, control of

¹ Barnes, "American Intervention in Cuba and Annexation of the Philippines: An Analysis of the Public Discussion," pp. 347-48. See also Pratt, America's Colonial Experiment, pp. 60ff.

² Charles A. Conant, "The Economic Basis of 'Imperialism,'" North American Review, CLXVII (September, 1898), 326.

³ Pratt, America's Colonial Experiment, pp. 28-33.

the Hawaiian Islands, a Nicaragua canal, a naval station in the West Indies, and Cuban independence,¹ while the Democrats endorsed the Monroe Doctrine and sympathized with the Cubans.²

Senator Lodge was not quite accurate when he noted on June 24, 1898, that "the Republican Conventions are all declaring that where the flag once goes up it must never come down."³ The Literary Digest reported that of twenty-seven Republican and twenty-four Democratic conventions for which information was available, twenty made no utterance on the question, none explicitly favored extension of American sovereignty to the entire Philippine group though several implied it, and twelve Republican and three Democratic platforms favored extension of sovereignty to at least a portion of the islands.⁴ Partisanship on the issue of expansion became more clearly evident with the senatorial discussion of the peace treaty in early 1899 and with the advent of the campaign of 1900.

An additional political factor of some importance was the Populist espousal of the cause of the oppressed Cubans. They pressed for intervention in Cuba, and in this joined voices with certain of the imperialist elite (Henry and Brooks Adams, Roosevelt, Lodge, Beveridge, and Hay). Having been defeated in 1896, the

¹ Porter, pp. 204-5.

² Ibid., p. 186.

³ Henry Cabot Lodge (ed.), Selections from the Correspondence of Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge: 1884-1918 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925), I, 313.

⁴ "Party Platforms and the Philippines," Literary Digest, XVII (October 22, 1898), 481-82.

Populists seemed to find an outlet for their domestic frustrations in agitating for war against Spanish tyranny.¹

The Impact of Darwinian Interpretations

A third area of influence on the national scene during the period prior to the war was the popular interpretation of Darwin's evolutionary hypothesis. Hofstadter points out that the subtitle to The Origin of Species, The Preservation of Favored Races in the Struggle for Life referred to pigeons rather than nations,² but few interpreters were restricted by this application--least of all the primary expounders of the "principle." Darwinism's "survival-of-the-fittest" concept was applied to the Anglo-Saxon race generally and the United States particularly in such a way as to sustain the much older concept of national destiny. Throughout the nation's history Americans generally assumed their superiority to other countries. Did not the United States stand at the apex of national evolution, and as such did not the nation have a preeminent social worth, a distinctively lofty mission, and consequently unique rights in the application of moral principles? Was this not manifest destiny?³

This general assumption of superiority was crystallized by men such as John Fiske and Josiah Strong. Fiske was "one

¹Richard Hofstadter, The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F.D.R. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955), pp. 89-91.

²Richard Hofstadter, Social Darwinism in American Thought (2d ed., rev.; Boston: The Beacon Press, 1955), pp. 170-71.

³Weinberg, p. 8.

of the earliest synthesizers of evolutionism, expansionism, and the Anglo-Saxon myth.¹ His book American Political Ideas contained three lectures which Fiske had been delivering successfully to British and American audiences since 1880.² The lectures had been received with great enthusiasm--even when delivered before President Hayes and other members of government in Washington.³ Fiske's doctrine of "Social Darwinism" accepted the universality of conflict and assumed that the superior Anglo-Saxon race would ultimately populate and rule the world.⁴ Lecturer, essayist, historian; friend of Darwin and Spencer; John Fiske might well be called the intellectual harbinger of social Darwinism in America.

Josiah Strong also published in 1885. His book Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis preached the gospel of Anglo-Saxon superiority and looked to the time close at hand when in pure spiritual Christianity "we stretch our hand into the future with power to mold the destinies of unborn millions."⁵ This book "went through many editions and reached hundreds of thousands of

¹ Hofstadter, Social Darwinism in American Thought, p. 176.

² John Spencer Clark, The Life and Letters of John Fiske (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1917), II, 337.

³ Ibid., pp. 165-67.

⁴ Hofstadter, Social Darwinism in American Thought, pp. 176-77.

⁵ Josiah Strong, Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis (2d ed.; New York: The Baker and Taylor Co., 1891), p. 227.

readers.”¹ Strong’s “uncanny capacity for assimilating the writings of Darwin and Spencer to the prejudices of rural Protestant America makes the book one of the most revealing documents of its time,”² writes Hofstadter. “He was against immigrants, Catholics, Mormons, saloons, tobacco, large cities, socialists, and concentrated wealth . . . still . . . undaunted in his faith in universal progress, material and moral, and the future of the Anglo-Saxon race.”³

With the opening of the war and Dewey’s smashing victory, it is not surprising that the nation with the preachments of Fiske and Strong behind it felt a resurgence of dreams of conquest and expansion. “Once again statesmen and editorial writers polished their phrases on ‘manifest destiny. . . .’”⁴ Such an appeal as manifest destiny through the pseudoscientific aegis of Darwinism as applied to society became widely and effectively used by proponents of imperialism. Henry Cabot Lodge, for example, interpreted the imperialistic tendency as not being accidental “but that it all came from the instinct of the race, which paused in California only to learn that its course was still westward, and that Americans, and no one else, must be masters of the cross-roads of the Pacific.”⁵

¹ Curti, p. 671.

² Hofstadter, Social Darwinism in American Thought, p. 178.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Dulles, p. 221.

⁵ Henry Cabot Lodge, The War with Spain (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1899), p. 235.

Religious Influences

Not only did "destiny" direct the nation toward territorial expansion, but it also gave a mandate to "civilize and Christianize the heathen."¹ As Niebuhr points out: "From the earliest days of its history to the present moment, there is a deep layer of Messianic consciousness in the mind of America."² When such an impulse was apparently endorsed by science (the interpretation of Darwinian hypothesis) and underwritten by destiny (made manifest by such writings as those of Fiske and Strong), it was no wonder that this missionary drive found renewed vigor in the closing years of the nineteenth century.

Since 1850 the chief American enterprise in the Pacific had been mission work. Thus, missionaries were more familiar with this area than any other group and were quite cooperative with the State Department. They wrote books and articles about distant lands and were not backward in noting that American influence would be much preferable to that of other nations.³

Another facet of the missionary impulse was a tendency of proexpansionists to discern in the unfolding of events attendant to the Spanish-American War the guiding hand of God and a call to

¹ Louis M. Hacker and Benjamin B. Kendrick, The United States Since 1865 (3d ed.; New York: F. S. Crofts & Co., 1945), p. 352.

² Reinhold Niebuhr, The Irony of American History (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952), p. 69.

³ Merle E. Curti et al., An American History (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1950), pp. 312-13.

perform Christian missionary responsibilities. The remarkable victories (particularly naval) over Spanish forces were easily interpreted as accomplished under the guidance of God,¹ and the missionary spirit is reflected by McKinley in his explanation of the decision to annex the Philippine Islands. He reported "there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all, and to educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them, and by God's grace do the very best we could by them, as our fellow-men for whom Christ also died."²

The Influence of External Events

During the period when a constellation of internal events was creating a rationale for America's experiment in imperialism, conditions in the world at large were also to have their impact. As the frontier in America was assumed to be closed in 1890, so was the world frontier rapidly closing. America in looking about could see that the other powers (chiefly Great Britain, France, Japan, Russia, and Germany) were active in the Pacific and Asiatic areas. "In Senate hall and popular magazine it was pointed out that all the islands of the Pacific with the exception of the Hawaiian, Samoan, and possibly the Tonga groups, had been annexed to one or another of the great European Powers. . . ."³

¹ Hofstadter, America in Crisis, pp. 192-93.

² Charles S. Olcott, The Life of William McKinley, Vols. XXXVIII-XXXIX of American Statesmen (40 vols.; Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1889-1917), XXXIX, 110-11.

³ Pratt, The Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XIX, 224-25.

In 1878 a treaty with Samoa gave the United States a coaling station in Pago Pago Harbor. There developed a conflict of interest with Germany in Samoa which culminated in a near war in 1889,¹ and which "first aroused American opinion to the possibility that the United States might be a loser in failing to participate in the scramble for colonial spoils."² The fear of being excluded from Pacific possessions, and thus from Asiatic markets, began to play a prominent role in the thinking of some American policy-makers, and this fear was later exploited by Assistant Secretary of the Navy Theodore Roosevelt, Chairman Henry Cabot Lodge of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and others.³ In 1895 Lodge was to write for The Forum:

The great nations are rapidly absorbing for their future expansion and their present defense all the waste places of the earth. It is a movement which makes for civilization and advancement of the race. As one of the great nations of the world, the United States must not fall out of the line of march.⁴

The jingoism of the 1890's is believed to have been of considerable importance as it demonstrated the attitude of the United States toward other nations. Hofstadter mentions three instances that occurred between 1891 and 1895: first, the friction with Italy over the lynching of eleven Italians in New Orleans, then the clash with Chile over a riot in Valparaiso in which two American sailors

¹ Pratt, America's Colonial Experiment, pp. 14-16.

² Pratt, The Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XIX, 224.

³ George Marion, Bases and Empire (New York: Fairplay Publishers, 1948), pp. 82-83.

⁴ Cited in Pratt, America's Colonial Experiment, p. 28.

were killed and a number were injured, and finally, the Venezuela boundary dispute involving Great Britain. Each of these instances involved a disproportionate aggressiveness on the part of the United States--in each instance war was contemplated and the response of the public and the press was enthusiastic.¹

Hawaii from the nation's beginning seemed to be in a special relationship to the United States in terms of missionary activities and trade treaties and other forms of commercial development. The question of annexation of the islands was a perennial concern and finally, after failure in 1893, the islands were annexed in 1898.

The strategic value of Hawaii was a factor in its annexation, not only in carrying on a successful war with Spain in the Pacific,² but also in terms of a larger pattern including the development of naval power³ and construction of an Isthmian canal.⁴ Thus the United States would be provided with a naval base and at the same time protection for such a canal beyond its western terminus.⁵

Among the guardians of the eastern approaches to the long-contemplated Isthmian canal lay the Spanish-owned island of Cuba. From the beginning of the nineteenth century there had been movements afoot to secure Cuba's liberty or to annex the island to the United States.⁶ As early as 1860 the Democratic party platform

¹ Hofstadter, America in Crisis, pp. 175-79.

² H. Addington Bruce, The Romance of American Expansion (New York: Moffat, Yard & Company, 1909), p. 198.

³ Pratt, America's Colonial Experiment, pp. 28-29.

⁴ Bailey, pp. 458-59.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Millis, pp. 10 ff.

contained the resolution: "Resolved, that the Democratic party are in favor of the acquisition of the island of Cuba on such terms as shall be honorable to ourselves and just to Spain."¹

In 1895 revolt flamed in Cuba which was to result in the building of sympathy for the insurrectionists in the United States and to culminate in the Spanish-American War. This war was to signal America's emergence as an imperialist power.

The Influence of the Printed Media

The effect of the printed media of the period upon the American people was considerable. "For eight years, readers of books, magazines, and the daily press had been informed that only by extending its boundaries and assuming the position of a world power could the United States realize its proper role."²

Four books stand out as being particularly influential. Two of the four, American Political Ideas and Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis, have already been discussed and their impact has been noted.³ The third volume Political Science and Comparative Constitutional Law was the work of Professor John W. Burgess of Columbia University. This book, published in 1890, gave an academic seal of approval to the idea of Teutonic and Anglo-Saxon superiority and their ability in the creation of political nations. The book justified use of any means in organizing barbaric

¹ Porter, p. 53.

² Pratt, The Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XIX, 242.

³ Supra, pp. 20-22.

and backward races, and this thesis was developed in a way that made such organization almost an obligation.¹

The works of Fiske, Strong, and Burgess were widely read, and "it may fairly be assumed that they did much to shape public opinion in the United States."² Yet a fourth author seems to have been most influential of all. As a contemporary put it: "It is seldom, indeed it is perhaps unique in the history of the world, that historical writings have done so much to influence the policy of nations as have the writings of Captain Mahan."³

The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1783, published in 1890, was the first of a long series of books and articles written by Mahan throughout the following decade.⁴ His theme was simply that national greatness depends upon sea power, and this theme translated into action called for:

predominance in the Caribbean with an American-owned and American-controlled canal and bases at either side of the Isthmus, acquisition of Hawaii, equality in the Far East, a navy adequate to defend all national interests, the employment of sound strategic principles, and the justification of expansion and of war.⁵

¹ Pratt, America's Colonial Experiment, pp. 24-25. It is of interest to note also that Theodore Roosevelt was a student of Burgess while at Columbia.

² Ibid., p. 25.

³ H. Morse Stephens, "Some Living American Historians," Worlds Work, IV (July, 1902), 2322-23.

⁴ See William E. Livezey, Mahan on Sea Power (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1947), pp. 301-11, for a listing of Mahan's works.

⁵ Ibid., p. 296.

Mahan's works not only made a profound impression upon America generally,¹ but were also an important influence upon McKinley's Assistant Secretary of the Navy Theodore Roosevelt,² whose activities in that capacity reflected his faith in naval power. In no less degree were Mahan's ideas an influence on Senator Lodge,³ whose "speeches in the Senate on naval building and annexations embody the whole Mahan philosophy in unmistakable form."⁴

One is unable to estimate, except by speculation, the impact of another form of literature brought into being primarily by the publishing firm of Beadle and Adams. Through the pages of hundreds of dime novels rode "Deadwood Dick," "Mustang Sam," and a motley host of western heroes who always managed to epitomize the triumph of virtue. In the 1890's a new hero joined the ranks. The creation of Horatio Alger, this lad--though appearing under different names in over a hundred stories--always demonstrated that honesty, uprightness, and pluck would bring fame and fortune. Virtue again triumphed. Was not this nation always virtuous and bound to triumph in the face of any adversity? Right was might; anyone could prove it for a dime.

The press is of particular importance to any examination of the preimperialism milieu, for it not only reflected general public reaction to events but also played a role in the creation of public attitude. As a result of his special investigation into the

¹Ibid.

²Marion, pp. 82-83.

³Ibid.

⁴Pratt, The Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XIX, 241-42.

connection between the Cuban crisis and the New York Press,¹ Joseph Wisan drew a number of interesting conclusions. Pointing to the appearance of a new type of journalism--that which used "reckless headlines, 'popular' features, and sensational appeals to the masses. . . ."² --in the decade of the 1890's, Wisan held that the Spanish-American War would not have occurred had not William Randolph Hearst precipitated a battle for top circulation.³ Thus in treatment of Cuban affairs the papers were not concerned with Cuba except as a means to an end.⁴ Though least honestly objective, the New York papers set journalistic standards for the nation⁵ and, further, through news services to other papers, peddled a distorted picture to the entire country.⁶ As "atrocities" followed upon "outrage," little wonder was it that the American citizen, having been bombarded with journalism's most inflammatory fabrications for three years, demanded a war in the name of humanity.

George Auxier, writing in The Mississippi Valley Historical Review, believed that the circulation battle in New York was not sufficient to have produced the effect claimed by Wisan but reported that, on the basis of a study of the editorial policies of a representative group of midwestern newspapers, editorial comment in that area also contributed to the bringing about of the Spanish-American War. This effect was not produced by

¹ Joseph E. Wisan, The Cuban Crisis as Reflected in the New York Press (1895-1898) (New York: Columbia University Press, 1934).

² Ibid., p. 21.

³ Ibid., p. 458.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 458-59.

⁵ Ibid., p. 459.

⁶ Ibid., pp. 459-60.

sensationalism but by a continuing emphasis on "a number of basic factors which led to war. These were: the fundamental interests of the United States in the Caribbean, Spanish violations of these interests, the propaganda activities of the Cuban Junta, and the implications of the Cuban question in the domestic politics of the United States."¹

Printed media nowise can be discounted as an influence, and an important one, on the mind of America. Pseudo science, naval prognostication, dime novel, and two-cent newspaper: they all played a part in creating an atmosphere in which the fact of expansion or imperialism could be realized.

The Influence of the Spanish-American War

In 1895 an armed revolt against Spanish rule in Cuba broke out. Fighting was bitterly waged by both the Spanish and the revolutionaries. The former instituted reconcentration camps to control the Cubans, while the latter applied a "scorched earth" policy in order to reduce the value of the country to render it useless to the Spanish and thus force them to leave. All of this taking place less than one hundred miles from the coast of the United States was tailor-made for the sensationalist press, and Americans were kept abreast of all features of the revolution.

Early in 1896 Congress passed a resolution favoring recognition of Cuban belligerency which President Cleveland chose to ignore. After this representation of the country's sentiment the

¹Auxier, The Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXVI, 524.

enthusiasm for Cuba waned in the face of the presidential campaign featuring McKinley, who remained on his front porch, and Bryan, who toured the nation speaking in favor of free and unlimited coinage of silver in the ratio of 16 to 1.

With McKinley safely in the White House and Bryan gathering strength for "The Second Battle," Cuba again came to the forefront of United States consciousness. The ministry of Spain had changed, but early hopes for peace under the leadership of Sagasta were disappointed as the revolutionists held out for complete autonomy.¹ Hostilities continued and sympathies originally stirred in behalf of the Cubans continued as Hearst and Pulitzer newspapers each sold nearly a million copies a day. Americans were ready for anything. Already they were contributing thousands of dollars for Cuban relief. McKinley contributed \$5,000 anonymously,² and Bryan added \$100 to the cause.³

Even at this juncture war might have been diplomatically avoided had it not been for the publication of the insulting DeLôme

¹ For further elaboration see Julius Pratt, A History of United States Foreign Policy (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1955), pp. 374-81, and Thomas A. Bailey, A Diplomatic History of the American People (6th ed.; New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1958), pp. 451-64.

² Margaret Leech, In the Days of McKinley (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959), p. 150.

³ Letter from J. E. Utt of the Cuban Relief Commission of Nebraska to Bryan dated January 26, 1898, acknowledging contribution of \$100 to assist destitute Cubans; William Jennings Bryan Papers (Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.), Box 20. Cited hereafter as Bryan Papers.

letter on February 9, 1893,¹ and the sinking of the battleship Maine six days later.² On March 17 Senator Proctor, after an inspection tour of Cuba, reported to the Senate and the nation the appalling situation on the island. This report stirred even the conservative elements in the United States. Intervention seemed inescapable.

Between the middle of March and the forepart of April, the President negotiated for a settlement including Spain's putting to an end immediately the reconcentration policy, an armistice with the rebels until October first, and entering into peace talks with the insurgents. On April 9 Spain capitulated to the demands of the United States, and on April 11 McKinley asked Congress for the power of intervention! Such power was granted on April 20 and the war was begun.³

That the United States entered into war with Spain prompted in part by altruism is demonstrated by the Teller amendment,⁴ but

¹ Millis, pp. 95-99.

² Ibid., pp. 100-111.

³ Ibid., pp. 124-45. (Actually the war resolution was passed on April 25 and made retroactive to April 21.)

⁴ "The United States hereby disclaims any disposition or intention to exercise sovereignty, jurisdiction, or control over said island except for the pacification thereof, and asserts its determination, when that is accomplished, to leave the government and control of the island to its people." This idea, worded essentially as above, was presented by Senator Teller and failed as a substitute resolution. Senator Davis then proposed the same idea in the above wording as a fourth section to Senate joint resolution 149. This was agreed to and Senate joint resolution 149, as amended by Davis, was passed by a vote of sixty-seven to twenty-one. Thus, this vitally important statement became known as the Teller amendment though Davis actually was the responsible party. See U.S., Congressional Record, 55th Cong., 2d Sess., 1898, XXXI, Part 4, 3954, 3988, and 3993.

the defeat of Spain was to leave the United States holding several possessions of the erstwhile Spanish empire. Thus, the Spanish-American War was the largest single contributing factor to American imperialism because it made readily available the means of imperialism at a time when the national spirit was willing.

Actually, this "little war,"¹ was short--just over three months in duration--and produced a casualty list of only 289 killed in action.² Yet the result was not entirely due to the might of the United States. Spain was beaten by her own defeatist attitude before beginning to fight.³

During the war, Dewey's victory at Manila did more to stir the spirit of imperialism than did any other single factor. Of course the destruction of the Spanish fleet at Santiago made a fine Fourth of July present to the nation, and the capitulation of the Spanish garrison there was hailed as a great victory (for Roosevelt and his horseless Rough Riders), but Dewey was first. In a virtually unknown section of the globe⁴ the American fleet had sailed into an enemy harbor, "Gridley fired when ready" and in about five hours, with a break for breakfast, a feared enemy squadron had

¹The words used by Theodore Roosevelt were: "I shan't speak of the Civil War, but I shall speak of that little war, the Spanish War, in which I was." "Proceedings of the Conference on Military History," Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1912 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1914), p. 191.

²Billington, p. 108.

³Millis, pp. 169, 266, and 304.

⁴Even McKinley was vague about the location of the Philippines. Leech, pp. 138 and 162.

been destroyed and the route to colonial possessions in the Pacific was cleared. Congress arranged to have Dewey raised in rank from Commodore to Rear Admiral, \$10,000 was appropriated for a jeweled sword and medals, and over the nation blossomed Dewey watch charms, hat pins, cigars, teething rings, and a brand of gum called "Dewey chewies."¹ On May 5, four days after the news of the great victory arrived in Washington, discussion of Hawaiian annexation began again in Congress, and popular sentiment touched off a demand for annexation of the Philippines.²

Spanish resistance was practically at an end when on July 18 Spain negotiated for termination of hostilities; the armistice protocol was agreed to on August 12. The contents of the protocol³ committed Spain to the loss of Cuba, Porto Rico, and other small islands of her former empire, but the disposition of the Philippines was left open to negotiation.

On August 26 the United States peace commissioners were appointed. Included were Senator Cushman K. Davis, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Republican, and avowed imperialist; Senator William Pierce Frye, also a member of the Foreign Relations Committee, a Republican, and inclined to favor expansion; Senator George Gray, also a member of the Foreign Relations Committee and ranking Democrat thereon who represented the anti-imperialist point of view; Whitelaw Reid, editor of the New

¹ Ibid., pp. 208-9.

² Foster Rhea Dulles, America's Rise to World Power 1898-1954 (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1954), pp. 42-43.

³ Supra, p. 12.

York Tribune and expansionist; and chairman of the commission William R. Day, the Secretary of State and mild expansionist.¹

Before sailing for Paris on September 17 the commissioners were instructed not to accept less than full sovereignty over Luzon, and a month after the beginning of negotiations in Paris they were re-instructed that the United States must retain the entire Philippine Archipelago.² Final negotiations included the payment of \$20,000,000 to Spain. The Spanish acquiesced, and the Treaty of Paris was concluded on December 10, 1898.³

The acts of William McKinley, leader of the nation and commander-in-chief of the armed forces, deserve examination with regard to the initiation of the war, its conduct, and its termination in a peace treaty that included colonial dependencies. It seems unlikely that McKinley, though elected on a platform including a call for Cuban independence,⁴ was originally inclined toward imperialism.⁵ In fact, McKinley had assured Carl Schurz informally that

¹ Millis, pp. 372-73.

² On October 26, 1898, Secretary of State John Hay communicated to William R. Day, chairman of the Peace Commission in Paris: "The information which has come to the President since your departure convinces him that the acceptance of the cession of Luzon alone, leaving the rest of the islands subject to the Spanish rule, or to be subject of future contention, cannot be justified. . . . The cession must be of the whole archipelago or none. The latter is wholly inadmissible and the former must be required." Millis, p. 385.

³ Pratt, America's Colonial Experiment, pp. 64-68.

⁴ Supra, pp. 18-19.

⁵ Pratt, America's Colonial Experiment, p. 58. See also Millis, passim, pp. 73-96.

there would be no "jingo nonsense" during his administration.¹ In his inaugural address on March 4, 1897, after invoking the blessings of God and discussing economic conditions, naturalization and immigration laws, and the merchant marine, McKinley took up the question of foreign policy, saying:

Our diplomacy should seek nothing more and accept nothing less than is due us. We want no wars of conquest; we must avoid the temptation of territorial aggression. War should never be entered upon until every agency of peace has failed; peace is preferable to war in almost every contingency.²

In his first annual message to Congress, presented on December 6, 1897, President McKinley referred to Cuba by saying, "Forcible annexation . . . cannot be thought of. That, by our code of morality, would be criminal aggression."³ This statement was repeated by the President on April 11, 1898, as he asked Congress for the power to intervene in Cuba.⁴

In the face of his own avowed opposition to territorial aggrandizement, why did McKinley deliver a virtual war message to Congress after Spain had capitulated to our demands concerning Cuba? Hacker and Kendrick sum up possible answers in four interesting conjectures:

¹Fuess, p. 349.

²William McKinley, Speeches and Addresses of William McKinley from March 1, 1897 to May 30, 1900 (New York: Doubleday & McClure Co., 1900), p. 12.

³U.S., Congressional Record, 55th Cong., 2d Sess., 1897, XXXI, Part 1, 4.

⁴Ibid., 1898, XXXI, Part 4, 3702.

1. He had no faith in the Spanish government. . . . 2. He could not believe in the ability of the government to carry out its whole program in the face of a hostile Spanish public opinion. . . . 3. He had no assurances of the permanence of the Liberal ministry. . . . 4. He was tired of fighting the American jingoes, the sensational press, and his fellow Republicans. He knew the slurs that Roosevelt had cast on his strength of character.¹ He knew that war would be popular, short, and would probably redound to his everlasting fame. He was a resourceful politician--none among his contemporaries was his superior --and he saw, no doubt, the political advantages of a war as clearly as did the most obscure hack. War would take the minds of men from more vexing domestic concerns. War would make him, McKinley, the undisputed leader of his party and of the nation. War would assure the election of a Republican Congress in 1898 and would make his own reelection in 1900 inevitable.²

Whatever McKinley's reasons may have been for directing the nation to war, there seems little doubt that he heeded popular and politic demands in the prosecution of the war and the treaty which followed. The President was doubtful, vacillating, and cautious about the possible fruits and conquest. In June he jotted: "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."³ In August he said: "If old Dewey had just sailed away when he smashed that

¹ Roosevelt had apparently compared McKinley's backbone to that of a chocolate eclair or a jellyfish. See Leech, pp. 169 and 628, and Arthur Wallace Dunn, From Harrison to Harding (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1922), I, 235.

² Hacker and Kendrick, p. 339. There are no pat answers. McKinley's friendly biographer perhaps comes closest in indicating that the President, in the first days of April, lost control of his party. Leech, pp. 178-87.

³ Quoted in Leech, p. 238.

Spanish fleet what a lot of trouble he would have saved us."¹ In September he expressed himself to the peace commissioners as follows:

It is my earnest wish that the United States in making peace should follow the same high rule of conduct which guided it in facing war. It should be as scrupulous and magnanimous in the concluding settlement as it was just and humane in its original action. The lustre and the moral strength attaching to a cause which can be confidently rested upon the considerate judgment of the world should not under any illusion of the hour be dimmed by ulterior designs which might tempt us into excessive demands or into an adventurous departure on untried paths.²

Somewhat later, to Jacob Schurman who was to head the first Philippine Commission, the President said: "I didn't want the Philippine Islands, either; and in the protocol to the treaty I left myself free not to take them; but--in the end there was no alternative."³

The poignancy of McKinley's predicament was also felt by Mr. Dooley as he discussed current events with Mr. Hennessy:

"I know what I'd do if I was Mack," said Mr. Hennessy. "I'd hist a flag over the Ph'lippeens, an' I'd take in th' whole lot iv them."

"An' yet," said Mr. Dooley, "tis not more thin two months since ye larned whether they were islands or canned goods. . . . The war is still goin' on; an' ivry night, whin I'm countin' up the cash, I'm askin' meself will I annex Cubia or lave it to the Cubians? Will I take Porther Ricky or put it by? An' what shud I do with the Ph'lippeens? Oh, what shud I do with thim? I can't annex thim because I don't know where they ar-re. I can't let go iv thim because some wan else'll take thim if I do."⁴

¹Ibid., p. 323.

²Ibid., p. 331. Italics mine. ³Ibid., p. 344.

⁴Finley Peter Dunne, Mr. Dooley in Peace and in War (Boston: Small, Maynard & Company, 1905), pp. 43-44.

A part of McKinley's discovery that the Philippines must be taken was undoubtedly derived from his tour through the Midwest from October 10 to 22. On this tour which included six states and fifty-seven speeches,¹ the President's references to "duty," "humanity," and the "flag" brought such enthusiastic cheers that, though he did not commit himself to expansion, he could easily interpret the responses to mean the people welcomed the idea of overseas possessions. Four days after the tour ended, the peace commissioners were restructured to demand the whole of the Philippines.

McKinley's own explanation of his decision to take the Philippines, though probably sincere, seems not to have included all the facts. In an interview with representatives of the Methodist Episcopal Church, McKinley described his torment of indecision and his prayer for guidance which was answered by God's direction to take them all.² Yet all seems to point to David Starr Jordan's explanation of McKinley as Jordan says: "His weakness as well as his strength lay in 'holding an ear to the ground'--in other words, in leading wherever the people seemed willing to push him."³

¹ Fifteen speeches in Illinois, twenty-two in Iowa, two each in Nebraska and Missouri, ten in Indiana, and six in Ohio. McKinley, pp. 85-154.

² Olcott, The Life of William McKinley, Vol. XXXIX of American Statesmen, pp. 110-11.

³ David Starr Jordan, The Days of a Man (Yonkers-on-Hudson: World Book Company, 1922), I, 614.

The Treaty of Paris was signed by the commissioners of both countries on December 10, 1898. McKinley celebrated with the nation as he toured the South from December 14 to 19, talking with the people on eleven occasions.¹

Thus was the stage set for the debate over imperialism. Internal events in the history of this country coupled with and responding to external situations--both of which were interpreted for the nation via the printed media--culminated in a war of altruism which provided opportunity for an expansionist surge and created the living question of empire. In order to examine the debate, the first controversial question can now be posed: Should the United States acquire colonial possessions?

¹McKinley, pp. 158-84.

CHAPTER III

SHOULD THE UNITED STATES ACQUIRE COLONIAL POSSESSIONS? THE INITIATION OF THE DEBATE: APRIL 25, 1898, THROUGH DECEMBER 10, 1898

How the United States was brought to the point of serious consideration of imperialistic adventure was the substance of the previous chapter.¹ Events, both internal and external to the nation, and the reaction to those events by the citizenry and the government of the United States wove such a pattern that empire was no longer a subject of philosophical conjecture but a matter of immediate opportunity if the nation so chose.

During the seven and one-half months between the declaration of war against Spain by Congress on April 25, 1898, and the formalization of the treaty of peace on December 10, 1898, national policy with regard to annexation of new territories underwent rapid modification. This change, to a very considerable extent related to the overwhelming military and naval successes of the United States, brought the nation to the threshold of colonial opportunity.

This chapter undertakes a presentation of the several speakers who placed their ideas concerning expansion and imperialism before popular audiences, a consideration of their speeches and the

¹ Supra, Chapter II.

arguments contained therein, and a discussion of the various events which also led toward a clearer definition of the national policy with regard to the annexation of new possessions. Thus we now turn to the investigation of debate over the initial, somewhat general question: Should the United States acquire colonial possessions?

The Course of the Debate

The Speakers

At this time of the original and more general consideration of the nation's colonial opportunities, at least eleven speakers presented a minimum of seventy speeches which tended to reflect the varying possibilities confronting the nation and the reasoning which might support national decision concerning colonialism. Among the speakers¹ who directed their efforts to an illumination of the subject of prospective empire were Albert J. Beveridge,² David Starr Jordan,³ Harvey W. Wiley,⁴ William Jennings Bryan,⁵

¹The speakers are listed in order of their first speech presentations.

²For biographical material see Claude G. Bowers, Beveridge and the Progressive Era (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1932).

³See autobiography, Jordan, The Days of a Man.

⁴See Harvey W. Wiley, Harvey W. Wiley: An Autobiography (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1930).

⁵See Paolo E. Coletta, William Jennings Bryan: Political Evangelist 1860-1908 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1964), or Paul W. Glad, The Trumpet Soundeth: William Jennings Bryan and His Democracy, 1896-1912 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1960).

Grover Cleveland,¹ W. Bourke Cockran,² Carl Schurz,³ Theodore Roosevelt,⁴ William McKinley,⁵ George F. Hoar,⁶ and Franklin MacVeagh.⁷

Events and Arguments

Albert J. Beveridge, "Grant the Republican"⁸

The nation had been at war but two days, Theodore Roosevelt was preparing to resign his position as assistant secretary of

¹ See Allan Nevins, Grover Cleveland: A Study in Courage (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., Inc., 1932).

² See James McGurrin, Bourke Cockran: A Free Lance in American Politics (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), or Ambrose Kennedy, American Orator: Bourke Cockran, His Life and Politics (Boston: Bruce Humphries, Inc., 1948).

³ See Fuess, Carl Schurz: Reformer.

⁴ See Pringle, Theodore Roosevelt.

⁵ See Olcott, The Life of William McKinley, Leech, In the Days of McKinley, or H. Wayne Morgan, William McKinley and His America (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1963).

⁶ See George F. Hoar, Autobiography of Seventy Years (2 vols.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905).

⁷ See Robert I. Fulton and Thomas C. Trueblood, Patriotic Eloquence (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1900), p. 358, and Bowers, Beveridge and the Progressive Era, p. 378, for brief biographical materials on MacVeagh.

⁸ Delivered April 27, 1898, in Boston before the Middlesex Club of Massachusetts celebrating the anniversary of Ulysses S. Grant. Source: Ross, Appendix II, pp. 80-90 (transcribed from a

the navy in order to lead a regiment of volunteer cavalry, and William Jennings Bryan had already tendered his services to Commander-in-Chief William McKinley,¹ when Albert Beveridge rose to speak before the Middlesex Club of Boston on April 27, 1898. Beveridge, a young Indianapolis lawyer with political aspirations, had given a number of memorable speeches during the previous several years throughout the Midwest² and, as a result, had been invited to speak at the Grant anniversary banquet. The setting provided Beveridge an opportunity to be the first of many speakers who were to offer a favorable picture of empire.³

pamphlet of the speech by Mr. Beveridge, printed by the Middlesex Club, Boston, 1898). The version appearing in Albert J. Beveridge, The Meaning of the Times and Other Speeches (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1908), pp. 37-46, has been edited by numerous deletions of partisan materials and by word changes. Even the title is changed to "Grant the Practical."

¹ Bryan to McKinley, April 25, 1898, Bryan Papers, Box 20.

² Among these would be "The Answer to Altgeld," Chicago, 1896; "Forefather's Day," St. Louis, 1896; "Abraham Lincoln," Chicago, 1897; and "The Vitality of the American Constitution," 1898. See Bowers, pp. 55-64.

³ Apparently the philosophy of expansion was not new to Beveridge. Among the Beveridge papers in the Library of Congress is a manuscript in Beveridge's handwriting entitled "Our Diplomatic Relations." Evidently written in early 1889, this 23-page paper reveals Beveridge's attitude as he wrote depreciatingly of the United States owning no single colony. He favored the annexation of Canada--particularly Quebec and Vancouver--and Haiti, Cuba, and San Domingo. Undated manuscript in Albert Jeremiah Beveridge Papers (Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.), Box 326. Cited hereafter as Beveridge Papers.

After acknowledging a glowing introduction by Governor Brackett who presided over the meeting, Beveridge discussed Grant as a "partisan of principle" in one paragraph; referred to the necessity of "the partisanship of patriotism" in the next two paragraphs; talked of currency, labor, and commerce as related to the war and to Grant's pronouncements in the next eight paragraphs; and then began to move into an entirely new interpretation of the war which had just begun. Arguing that the nation is not necessarily restrained by "axioms applicable to thirteen impoverished colonies,"¹ Beveridge dismissed the traditions of the past and swiftly developed the remainder of the speech around a choice between "a Chinese policy of isolation and decay, or a living policy of progress, prosperity and power."² Selecting the obviously more desirable of these two alternatives, he then set about establishing the meaning of progress, prosperity, and power for the nation.

Beveridge assumed a quick and successful end to the war which would then enable the nation to take advantage of its industrial and agricultural potential in entering largely into the trade of the world. Such trade would be protected by the navy and would be augmented by a system of trading posts throughout the world. Thus, the Stars and Stripes would fly over an Isthmian canal, Hawaii, Cuba, the South Seas, and the Philippines. Such a development, argued Beveridge, would be to the advantage of the former Spanish possessions, the United States, and all of civilization. Nor was this eventuality deemed unrealistic for, as Beveridge believed, the nation was free from archaic tradition, had ample power, could follow

¹Ross, p. 85.

²Ibid., p. 87.

England's example, and was influenced and guided by the hand of God.

Beveridge's own words provide a summary, as he said:

The ultimate result we can leave to the wisdom of events. Victory will be ours. . . . And in that victory I see a blessing, not only for the people of Cuba, but for the oppressed of the Philippines--for the enslaved wherever floats Spain's saffron flag. And in freeing peoples, perishing and oppressed, our country's blessing will also come; for profit follows righteousness, saith the Holy Writ.

The first gun of our war for civilization will be also the morning gun of the new day in the Republic's imperial career.¹

David Starr Jordan, "Lest We Forget"²

This speech, which Jordan, then president of Leland Stanford Jr. University, claimed to have marked a turning point in his life,³

¹ Ibid., p. 89.

² Delivered May 25, 1898, at Stanford University, Palo Alto, California, before the graduating class of 1898. Source: David Starr Jordan, Lest We Forget (Palo Alto: John J. Valentine, Esq., August 10, 1898).

³ Jordan, The Days of a Man, I, 618-19. Despite Jordan's statement of its importance, the date of his first speech against imperialism is in doubt. In the first volume of his autobiography, on p. 616, Jordan gives the date of May 2, 1898, and says: "I was to speak in Metropolitan Hall, San Francisco, on an educational subject. Asking permission of the audience to discuss instead the risks which might follow our success, I took as the title of my address Kipling's phrase, 'Lest We Forget.'" There then follows a brief excerpt of the speech and a considerable excerpt on pp. 695-98 in Appendix D. These excerpts match exactly certain sections taken from the pamphlet of the speech Lest We Forget, published on August 10, 1898. Jordan remarks in the Prefatory Note thereto that the address was delivered "before the graduating class of Leland Stanford, Jr.

was the first major pronouncement against a national policy of imperialism. Strangely enough, on the same day the speech was presented, three ships, carrying the first Army expeditionary force in fifty years, passed through San Francisco's Golden Gate and headed for Manila.¹

Jordan began his speech by recognizing that there was no doubt but that the United States could capture Manila, Havana, Porto Rico, or the Canaries. His concern was whether, after the war, we would again be as the United States or as England.

After a discussion of "true patriotism" and the war, Jordan pointed out that acquisition of colonial dependencies was undesirable, for "to keep Cuba or the Philippines would be to follow the example of conquering nations,"² and "ours is a war of mercy not of conquest. This we have plainly declared to all the nations."³

Next, Jordan discussed the traditional foreign policy of the nation and asked: "Are times not already ripe for a change in

University in connection with the granting of degrees, on May 25, 1898. In the collection of his speeches, Imperial Democracy, published in 1899, Jordan remarks in the Prefatory Note that the speech "Lest We Forget" was "one of the very first of many of its kind. . . ."

This writer is inclined to believe that by the time Jordan wrote his autobiography (1922) he may have forgotten the exact circumstances and date of the speech "Lest We Forget" and has cited the date for the speech as represented by Jordan in the earlier publications.

¹ Millis, pp. 225-26.

² Jordan, Lest We Forget, p. 16.

³ Ibid.

national policy?"¹ To answer the question, he discussed the imperial policy of England and indicated that America's course had never paralleled England's.

He spoke depreciatingly of the nation's attitude toward Alaska and then moved to an ironic denunciation of the argument of manifest destiny by extending the areas of expansion to Hawaii (we "are certain to take Hawaii. . . ."²), the Philippines ("The Philippines are not very far away."³), Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Guatemala, the Caroline Islands, Samoa ("We have a literary interest in Samoa. . . ."⁴), the Ladrones ("in the name of the Ladrones, the islands of the great thieves, we ought to find something suggestive."⁵), a port in China such as Swatow, the Canaries (from them we can "keep our watch on the politics of Europe."⁶), and the assets of Spain.

We must take what we can get, and we cannot get much except by force. Still we must have it. For all this and more, according to Theodore Roosevelt and a host of others is our "manifest destiny." To help along "manifest destiny," is the purpose of the war with Spain.⁷

To seize these possessions would cost too much, argued Jordan. He measured cost in terms of life, money (in support of a larger naval establishment and enlarged army), a change of national attitude (to one of belligerency), and a change from constitutional checks and balances (to a centralization of power).

¹ Ibid., p. 19.

² Ibid., p. 24.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., p. 25.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

As his concluding argument Jordan said:

There are three main reasons for opposing every step toward imperialism. First, dominion is brute force; second, dependent nations are slave nations; third, the making of men is greater than the building of empires.¹

After developing each of these reasons Jordan ended the speech by saying that "the primal duty of Americans is never to forget that men are more important than nations; that wisdom is more than glory, and virtue more than dominion of the sea."²

Harvey W. Wiley, "Imperial Liberty",³

In this semiphilosophical address, Wiley argued on an entirely different plane than did the previous speakers. He took the position that the United States had been selected by destiny to lead in the imperialism of liberty. Said Wiley: "The idea which late events has ripened into a conviction in my mind is that liberty is the true imperator, who must eventually rule all nations."⁴ After discussing the flow of liberty from Caesar's conquests of Germany

¹Ibid., p. 31.

²Ibid., p. 36.

³ Delivered June 6, 1898, at Hanover College, Hanover, Indiana, before the literary societies. Source: Harvey W. Wiley, Imperial Liberty (Easton, Pa.: Chemical Publishing Co., 1898). On March 21, 1898, one George T. Gunter dispatched an invitation to Harvey Washington Wiley, then director of chemistry in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, to return to Hanover College and address the Union, Philalathean, Zetelathean, and Chrestomathean Literary Societies on the Monday evening preceding commencement. Two days later the acceptance of the invitation was in the mail and six weeks later Dr. Wiley took the platform to deliver "Imperial Liberty."

⁴Ibid., p. 20.

and England, Wiley denied these nations the capability of being the "defender of the liberty of the world,"¹ and turned then to a discussion of America:

Where else then but to America shall the world look for that direction which is necessary for continued progress? The march of events, the progress of time . . . has designated this nation as the evangel of the new gospel of political liberty for all men.²

Pursuing his theme, Wiley put race at the center of the human quest for political and religious liberty, and in the vanguard was that race "speaking the great tongue of liberty, the English language. . . . Here again Destiny has made America the banner-bearer of English-speaking people. . . ."³ The purveyors of liberty, he continued, would not permit that "the flag of freedom . . . be replaced by an emblem of despotism. . . ."⁴ for the flag meant liberty of church, state, action, and thought to the world.

In summary, Wiley stated:

This imperial liberty regnant to-day is not permeated with the thirst for conquest. We have no vain ambition for territorial aggrandizement, no desire for military glory in itself. The duties which are imposed upon us by the destiny of liberty do not intoxicate but make us sober.⁵

Then reiterating that the war was not for conquest and that it could not be one of relinquishment ("We dare not leave again to misrule and anarchy any spot where the fortunes of war have placed our

¹ Ibid., p. 24.

² Ibid., p. 26.

³ Ibid., pp. 30-31.

⁴ Ibid., p. 38.

⁵ Ibid., p. 45.

flag.''¹), Wiley concluded: "In our hearts the great purpose of the ages; in our hands the flag of imperial liberty."²

William Jennings Bryan, "First Speech against Imperialism"³

On April 25, 1898, the same day the war resolution passed Congress, William Jennings Bryan wrote McKinley:

Hon William McKinley President
My Dear Sir--

I hereby place my services at your command during the war with Spain and assure you of my willingness to perform to the best of my ability any duty to which you, as the commander in chief of the army and navy, may see fit to assign me.

Respectfully yours
W. J. Bryan⁴

Frustrated by McKinley's noncommittal response,⁵ Bryan enlisted as

¹Ibid., p. 46.

²Ibid.

³Delivered June 14, 1898, at the auditorium in Omaha, Nebraska, during the Trans-Mississippi Exposition. Source: Manuscript, Bryan Papers, Box 50. This manuscript is evidently an extract from a longer speech. The extract appears to be that portion dealing with imperialism. It compares almost exactly with the extract of Bryan's "First Speech against Imperialism" appearing in William J. Bryan et al., The Second Battle (Chicago: W. B. Conkey Company, 1900), pp. 84-87.

⁴Bryan Papers, Box 20.

⁵McKinley's response was as follows: "Your tender of services in the war with Spain has been received and is appreciated. If you will indicate the service which you prefer and for which you deem yourself best equipped, I will be glad to give such suggestions careful consideration." Copy of a letter dated May 7, 1898, in McKinley Papers.

a private in the Nebraska National Guard on May 19, 1898,¹ and, upon Governor Holcomb's request, set about raising a regiment--the Third Nebraska Volunteers²--of which Bryan was appointed colonel.

Not only did Bryan actively engage in military service, but he also supported McKinley's leadership. In response to a request to editorialize about the national policy,³ Bryan replied:

I do not think it would be proper for me to put myself in the attitude of either criticising what has been done or advising what should be done in regard to the ordinary conduct of the war. You remember that the Republicans tried to make capital of my remarks in regard to the Recognition of Independence [of Cuba; Bryan favored recognition⁴]. I would not feel justified in expressing an opinion unless the Government was about to make an important departure in its general Policy.⁵

During his tour of duty, Colonel Bryan, unlike Colonel Roosevelt, was given no opportunity for military action against the enemy but spent the war months in camps in Florida and

¹Bryan Papers, Box 20.

²From the middle of May until the twenty-first of July, hundreds of men volunteered to join the "Silver" Regiment. The Bryan Papers for this period contain letters in all kinds of handwriting, written on all kinds of paper and from all states, from men asking to go with Bryan in any capacity. Bryan Papers, Boxes 20-21.

³Telegram, Willis J. Abbot to Bryan, May 20, 1898, Bryan Papers, Box 20.

⁴Leech, p. 184.

⁵Telegram, Bryan to Abbott, May 21, 1898, Bryan Papers, Box 20.

Georgia.¹ Bryan's sense of honor would not permit his discussing political matters during his tour of duty.² In fact, he turned down an offer of nomination for governor of Nebraska.³ However, Bryan's "military lockjaw" did not go into effect until he was sworn in:

After I began to recruit a regiment, but before I was sworn in, I had occasion to make a speech at a dinner in Omaha, where the subject of imperialism was approached, and I then announced my opposition to colonialism. . . .⁴

Bryan may not yet have been able to spell the name of the Philippine island group with any accuracy,⁵ but he could sense the drift of the national attitude toward acquisition as well as the next person. In his speech delivered on the same day the United States invasion fleet cleared for Cuba, he outlined his position against imperialism, which he was to develop later.

¹ Herrick and Herrick, p. 189.

² William Jennings Bryan and Mary Baird Bryan, The Memoirs of William Jennings Bryan (Chicago: The John C. Winston Company, 1925), p. 120.

³ Telegram, O. V. Humphrey to Bryan, August 1, 1898: "We are anxious to nominate you for governor." Bryan brusquely responded: "Am not candidate. Do not allow my name to be mentioned for nomination." Bryan Papers, Box 21.

⁴ Bryan and Bryan, p. 120.

⁵ In letters to his wife, Bryan spelled the word variously. At times it was "Phillippens," at others "Philippines." Letters, Bryan to Mrs. Bryan, Bryan Papers, Box 21.

Bryan first discussed the resources of Nebraska and its support of the war effort. He went on to observe that: "Jehovah deals with nations as he [sic] deals with men, and for both decrees that the wages of sin is death. Until the Right has triumphed in every land and love reigns in every heart, governments must, as a last resort, appeal to force."¹

After recalling the "principles" invoked at the war's inauguration, Bryan said that if the "contest undertaken for the sake of humanity degenerates into a war of conquest, we shall find it difficult to meet the charge of having added hypocrisy to greed."² He then asked four rhetorical questions:

Is our national character so weak that we cannot withstand the temptation to appropriate the first piece of land that comes within our reach?

. . . shall we contemplate a scheme for the colonization of the Orient merely because our fleet won a remarkable victory in the harbor of Manilla [sic]?

Our guns destroyed a Spanish fleet but can they destroy that self-evident truth, that governments derive their just powers--not from superior force--but from consent of the governed?

Shall we abandon a just resistance to European encroachment upon the Western hemisphere, in order to mingle in the controversies of Europe and Asia?³

Bryan declared that Nebraska would support the flag and the government, and that when war was over she would plead

for the maintenance of those ideas which inspired the founders of our government and gave the nation its proud eminence among the nations of the earth.

¹ Manuscript, Bryan Papers, Box 50, p. 1.

² Ibid., p. 2.

³ Ibid.

If others . . . yield allegiance to those who clothe land-covetousness in the attractive garb of "national destiny," the people of Nebraska will . . . plant themselves upon the disclaimer entered by Congress and insist that good faith shall characterize the making of peace as it did the beginning of war.¹

He then concluded with a quotation from Goldsmith and the thought that others may dream of empire but we "shall be content to aid in bringing enduring happiness to a homogeneous people, consecrated to the purpose of maintaining a government of the people, by the people and for the people."²

Bryan drew upon Lincoln, Goldsmith, the Declaration of Independence, and Jehovah in order to indicate his position against imperialism. At this point, early in the debate and with military duty of indeterminate length awaiting him, Bryan seemed content to substantiate his position on imperialism primarily through the posing of rhetorical questions. As in all speeches of Bryan, this, as short and nondetailed as it was, included the vivid language and the moral tone characteristic of the "Orator of the Platte."

Grover Cleveland, "Good Citizenship"³

Tuesday, June 21, 1898, was commencement day at Lawrenceville School in Lawrenceville, New Jersey. At the exercises that

¹Ibid., pp. 2-3.

²Ibid., p. 3.

³Delivered June 21, 1898, as the Founder's Day Address of the commencement exercises of the Lawrenceville School, Lawrenceville, New Jersey. Source: Newspaper report in Grover Cleveland Papers (Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.), Book 352. Cited hereafter as Cleveland Papers.

afternoon the graduates received their diplomas and seated themselves to listen to a former President of the United States. Grover Cleveland paid tribute to the school and then began his prepared address.

Cleveland set out to make "a few observations concerning true American citizenship. . . ."¹ and its obligations. He did this by pointing out the responsibility of each citizen for the nature of government in terms of interest, information, and even "interference to guard it against abuses and insidious perversion as well as against open attack."²

Further, Cleveland decried interest in public affairs for selfish purposes or personal ends. Good citizenship, said Cleveland, is thoughtful, intelligent, understands fundamental doctrines of government, rejoices in tradition, glories in American objects and purposes, and is content with the mission of the United States, and depends upon patriotism, sound American judgment, and the ability to resist temptation. Today, said Cleveland, we are beset with "alluring words of conquest and expansion, and . . . glory of war."³

He then warned against "imperfect ideas of civic duties, and . . . certain dangers which threaten . . . true American citizenship. . . ."⁴ First, participation in politics is not inconsistent with culture and education. Then, misconceptions of patriotism should be avoided. It is not "something bellicose and defiant, best illustrated by noisily bragging of our National prowess, quarrelsomely

¹Ibid., p. 1.

²Ibid., p. 2.

³Ibid., p. 3.

⁴Ibid.

seeking some one who dare dispute it, and threatening war against the combined world on the slightest pretext.”¹

True patriotism lies with those at home who do their duty in preserving national integrity and honor as well as with heroic armies in the field. Therefore, learn the purposes and objects of our government that you may detect any proposed departures from them. Our government was formed “for the express purpose of creating in a new world a new Nation, the foundation of which should be man’s self-government whose safety and prosperity should be secure in its absolute freedom from Old World complications and in its renunciations of all schemes of foreign conquest, and whose mission should be the subjection to civilization and industrial occupation of the vast domain in which it has taken root.”²

Thus, for our nation to “abandon its old landmarks and to follow the lights of monarchical hazards”³ or to construe the machinery of our domestic government “to serve the schemes of imperialism. . . .”⁴ or to take up “foreign conquest and unnatural extension or annexation. . . .”⁵ is a dangerous perversion of our national mission. Such brings demoralization and decay more “destructive to the Republic than armies with banners. . . .”⁶

With “adherence to our original designs and purposes. . . .”⁷ we have had a century of tremendous growth and advance and still have a domain of millions of unpopulated acres to be settled. In the

¹ Ibid., p. 4.

² Ibid., pp. 4-5.

³ Ibid., p. 5.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

face of what we have done only the best of reasons would warrant a change in policy or conduct such as in the acquisition of new and distant territory.

An excuse for acquisition is that it is necessary for warlike preparation or precaution. However, such has not been the case in the past. Such precaution and the attendant large military establishment have never been needed by a people "whose immunity from armed conflict is found in their freedom from foreign relationships that give birth to war. . . ."¹ The gay trappings of war only divert attention from its ugly features.

War is "antagonistic to the objects of our National existence . . . threatening demoralization to our National character, and . . . obstructive to our National destiny."² Even such great military leaders as Grant, Sherman, Sheridan, and Dewey believe war to be a terrible thing. It can be justified only if the nation's existence is imperiled or the rights and interests a nation holds in trust for its people, humanity, and civilization are threatened.

People can protect themselves against departure from their national purposes and unjustifiable war by study of "their part of the character of the Government and the exaction of a clear apprehension on the part of those who would represent them in public life of their National mission and of the baleful effect of war. . . ."³ Nothing will protect "the people against betrayal if conscience and moral courage are lacking."⁴

¹ Ibid., p. 6.

² Ibid., p. 7.

³ Ibid., p. 9.

⁴ Ibid.

In this long and wordy speech, almost as ponderous as Cleveland himself (many sentences run to a hundred or more words), the former President addressed himself to the topic "good citizenship" but managed to include many of his views on expansion as well. It is a wonder that the boys of Lawrenceville were not restless at its conclusion, but Cleveland said of it:

Though I did not think over much of the thing . . . I was fully repaid for my trouble, by the very close attention the students gave to what I had to say, and by the resulting feeling that I might have done them a little good.¹

Approximately four months later, Cleveland surrendered to a mood of pessimism:

I am however amazed beyond expression by the extent to which they [Americans] tolerate the fatal un-American idea of imperialism and expansion. . . . I am by no means certain that the time has arrived for me to speak further than I have, with any profit. I take the negative side of this question.²

A better time did not arrive, and Cleveland gave no more speeches on imperialism during the period under consideration.

The two-week period following Cleveland's speech discussed above and preceding that of Bourke Cockran, next to be discussed, was one of considerable import for the United States. On June

¹ Letter of Cleveland to Richard Olney, June 25, 1900, Cleveland Papers, Book 355. The date is a transcribing error. It should be June 25, 1898.

² Letter of Cleveland to John P. Irish, November 9, 1898, in John P. Irish Papers (Stanford University Library, Stanford, California), as reported by G. H. Knoles, "Cleveland on Imperialism," The Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXXVII (September, 1950), 303-4.

twenty-second, twenty-third, and twenty-fourth, the landing of United States troops on Cuban soil had been accomplished and brief battle had been joined with the Spanish. Roosevelt had led the charge up Kettle Hill and into history on July first and, by July third, the city of Santiago was besieged by the nation's armed forces.

In Washington, D.C., President McKinley waited in anxiety for information that did not come. That Schafter was contemplating retreat was known, and that the Spanish fleet under Admiral Cevera had escaped from Santiago Harbor was also known. Then, in the middle of the night came news. Schafter had asked for the surrender of Santiago, and the Spanish fleet had been destroyed in a running battle to the west of the harbor.

Congress had also made a major contribution to the nation. The joint resolution of annexation of Hawaii passed the House on June 15 and was voted upon by the Senate on July 6. The vote was forty-two to twenty-one in favor of annexation, and Hawaii became territory of the United States as the President signed the resolution the following day. Thus Hawaii became the first significant insular territory of the United States.¹

¹ Though arguments affecting the annexation of Hawaii included those of opportunity related to the war effort--i.e., "aid to Dewey," "naval bases," "protection of the west coast," etc.--the debate did not center around the acquisition of colonial possessions per se. Hawaii was to be a territory; the former possessions of Spain were to be possessions or dependencies. See Pratt, America's Colonial Experiment, p. 68. In many instances the favoring arguments were very similar to those serving the interests of imperialism--"Manifest Destiny," etc.--while opposing arguments tended to parallel those of the anti-imperialist group: "Non-contiguous," etc.

It has been noted that the expansionist tide ran much more strongly in the nation after the annexation of Hawaii.¹ The Literary Digest, in keeping with its purpose as "a Weekly Compendium of the Contemporaneous Thought of the World," reported on July 9 that "the leading Republican Party papers of the cities, with a few exceptions, advocate a policy of expansion and territorial acquisition conditioned on the final outcome of the war; that is to say, they think we shall retain the territory that we get,"² and added that "among regular Democratic papers which commit themselves there seems to be general opposition to expansion."³

At this juncture, Bourke Cockran stepped forward to deny the possibility of colonial expansion.

W. Bourke Cockran, "The American Soldier"⁴

Bourke Cockran began by noting that the turn of the century marked an epoch in history, for the motives of the war were neither a spirit of violence nor a scheme of conquest, but rather a defense of civilization's principles. He expressed disbelief of any desire for conquest, any greed, or any feeling of hate. "I do not believe that we would expend a dollar or risk one human life in a war for

¹ Harold U. Faulkner, Politics, Reform and Expansion (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959), p. 251.

² Literary Digest, XVII (July 9, 1898), 32.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Delivered July 6, 1898, at Carnegie Music Hall, New York City. Source: W. Bourke Cockran Papers (The New York Public Library, New York, N.Y.), Speeches, 1898-1901. Cited hereafter as Cockran Papers.

conquest,"¹ said Cockran, for our position is so exalted that "no mere military success could add to its splendor, while an act of wanton aggression might diminish it."²

He then spoke of the nature of the American soldier as "a pioneer of civilization, a champion of Christianity [sic]"³ whose triumph would show America's sincerity in the purposes proclaimed at war's beginning. The American soldier was then eulogized as fighter, statesman, and citizen through the history of the nation. Cockran said "that Hobson and Wainwright and Dewey and Schley and Sampson and all the rest are not isolated instances of American valor, but all the American fleet are Hobson's and Wainwright's and Dewey's and Sampson's? [sic]."⁴

Cockran then referred to the duties of those who remained at home to aid the families of the fighting men and concluded by a brief allusion to the American Republic as a result of Christianity and the bulwark of Christian civilization in which all men are equal in the sight of God.

In this speech, which mainly eulogized the American soldier, Cockran repeated again and again that the purpose of the war was not for conquest, territory, or ambition. That he found a receptive audience is indicated by the numerous instances of applause noted in the transcript.

By August nineteenth, the date on which Carl Schurz spoke to the Anti-Imperialist Conference at Saratoga, New York,

¹Ibid., p. 3.

²Ibid., p. 4.

³Ibid., p. 5.

⁴Ibid., p. 26.

hostilities between Spain and the United States were history. General Schafter's policy of standing fast and demanding surrender had succeeded in that Santiago capitulated on the sixteenth of July. General Miles and the Porto Rico invasion forces that had started for that island on July twenty-first had overrun about half of it in the face of little resistance when notified of the armistice which was concluded with Spain on August twelfth. Not aware of the cessation of hostilities, General Merritt moved on Manila and took that city in one day, August thirteenth.

The armistice protocol, negotiated through the offices of the French ambassador, M. Jules Cambon, set forth the terms on which peace might be concluded in all areas but one. That Cuba must be independent was a foregone conclusion. The demand for Porto Rico and insignificant Spanish-owned islands in the West Indies and one from the Ladrone group was generally acceptable to the administration. To force Spain to cede Manila was no particular problem. The question was whether or not to require the cession of a larger territory. This was finally left to be a part of the negotiation of the peace commissioners who would meet in Paris no later than the first of October.¹

Carl Schurz, "Our Future Foreign Policy"²

Schurz had maintained a consistent record of opposition to imperialism throughout his long career. He had opposed the

¹ Leech, pp. 283-91.

² Delivered August 19, 1898, at the National Anti-Imperialist Conference, Saratoga, New York. Source: Carl Schurz Papers (Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.), Box 66. Cited hereafter as Schurz Papers.

agitation for war with Spain and now sought to divert the nation from the course of empire.¹ As early as May 17, 1898, Schurz was being consulted by other intellectuals concerned about the problem of a United States colonial system.² By personal correspondence with influential people, by petitions, and by platform speeches, Carl Schurz attempted to stem the tide of imperialism.³

In this address Carl Schurz discussed the nation's foreign policy in terms of the question as to whether or not Spanish colonies should be annexed to the United States and concluded the address with a suggestion for a long-range policy. Concerning the annexation problem he presented a threefold analysis.

First, Schurz examined annexation as a question of morals and honor. He recalled McKinley's statements about forcible annexation being criminal aggression and suggested that it would be foolish to adhere to this in the case of Cuba but find it was not criminal aggression to annex the Philippines or Porto Rico by force. Cuba had been liberated, argued Schurz, and the purpose of the war accomplished. Why turn it into a land-grabbing scheme? Honesty, said Schurz, is the best policy. What will it profit us to stand before mankind as a nation whose word cannot be trusted?

¹ Joseph Harr Mahaffey, "The Speaking and Speeches of Carl Schurz" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Northwestern University, 1951), p. 449.

² Letter of Wm. M. Sloane to Carl Schurz, May 17, 1898, in Schurz Papers, Book 125A.

³ Fuess, pp. 354-66.

Schurz next discussed annexation as a question of institutional policy. If, said Schurz, we annexed the Spanish colonies they would either be states or subject provinces. If they became states they would affect the character of the government adversely because they knew little and would always know little of democracy and yet would add up to twenty senators and and sixty representatives to Congress, and up to eighty votes to the electoral college. We should not take the first step toward annexation for there would be no stopping. As subject provinces they could not be governed without doing violence to the spirit of the Constitution. We would have a carpet-bag problem as we did in the South. We would have a greater race problem than presently. A virtual slavery in contract labor would again be with us. We would become involved in quarrels and even wars with other nations. And, finally, we would have the perpetual military burden necessary to quell unrest and protect our colonies.

Finally, Schurz talked of annexation as a question of commercial interest. Our commerce and industry were not in distress for outlets, for we already competed favorably with other nations, and commercial expansion could be accomplished without annexation.

What then should be done? Schurz suggested making Cuba and Porto Rico independent republics while arranging for commercial and industrial relations to be maintained. This could be done by initial occupation until civil governments could be formed. Though the problem of the Philippines was more complex, it could be handled by the same principle as the others. These procedures would result in additional commercial advantages and yet maintain our high prestige among nations. In addition, for a long-range

policy Schurz recommended the principles articulated and exemplified by George Washington.

In this speech, the first to have been devoted almost exclusively to the problem of colonial expansion, Schurz denied the alternative of annexation of colonies and affirmed the alternative of making former Spanish possessions independent republics. Each alternative was explored by use of the hypothetical syllogistic structure: if we take colonies then results will be undesirable; if they are independent republics then results will be desirable. He also made his argument concrete as he calculated the numbers of senators, representatives, and electoral college votes gained by annexation and employed graphic analogies, such as that pertaining to our holding coaling stations in the Philippines as he compared this with Great Britain owning Spain in order to hold Gibralter.

By the middle of September volunteer troops were being mustered out of the service. Theodore Roosevelt was again a private citizen and eying the governorship of New York. While the press of the nation was yet divided on what course to follow in the Philippines,¹ McKinley had determined to hold the island of Luzon.² The political campaign of 1898 was at hand.

¹The Literary Digest reported that, of 192 journals responding, 84 favored American possession of the whole group, 63 favored a naval station only, and the remaining 45 divided among making the Philippines an American protectorate, a joint protectorate, returning the islands to Spain, or selling them. Literary Digest, XVII (September 10, 1898), 321.

²Leech, pp. 328-32.

In Indiana Albert Beveridge was preparing to create his own destiny. He had hoped for the chairmanship of the state convention, but, when this prize eluded him, the opportunity to keynote the state campaign was his. He took full advantage of the occasion.

On September seventh Beveridge made a speech which was dress rehearsal for the campaign-opener. He spoke of new markets, investment opportunities, and industrial stimulation. All of these, he claimed, would produce an enduring prosperity.¹

Nine days later Beveridge spoke in Tomlinson Hall in Indianapolis. Speaking before a packed house, Beveridge presented an address that was to become a Republican campaign document and bring him a Senatorship. Despite this "keynote" speech the 1898 elections did not revolve about the issue of imperialism.²

Albert J. Beveridge, "The
March of the Flag"³

Beveridge began by paying tribute to our noble land, mighty people, and glorious history, and then called for an endorsement of the war and the administration under which it was initiated and successfully concluded.

To repudiate the administration, argued Beveridge, would be a repudiation of destiny. It would dishonor America's heroes and

¹ Beveridge Papers, Box 297. These ideas appear as an incomplete manuscript in the collection.

² Leech, p. 333, and Bowers, p. 73.

³ Delivered September 16, 1898, at Tomlinson Hall, Indianapolis, Indiana, on the occasion of opening the Republican political campaign in that state. Source: Albert J. Beveridge, The March of the Flag (This pamphlet is from a stenographic report of the speech.).

give credence to the lies of politicians who claimed corruption in the war and who claimed we should not govern people without their consent.

Beveridge noted that the rule of liberty applied only to those capable of self-government, that we already governed many areas without consent, that we did not know if the Filipinos would not consent, that we could not abandon the Philippines, and that we certainly knew how to govern new possessions. We will do no more than our fathers have done by continuing the march of the flag, and distance or the crossing of oceans is no barrier to its march, declaimed Beveridge.

He then turned to the nation's need for territories and pointed out that territories would supply an outlet for our oversupply of workers, occupation for capital, and resources for future commercial struggles. All this, said Beveridge, was in keeping with God's purpose. After a discussion of fiat monetary systems, he concluded by alluding to the nation's wealth, its future opportunities, and the conquering march of the flag.

This was a free-wheeling, partisan, avowedly imperialistic speech. Liberally punctuated by cheers and applause during its delivery, the speech was equally lauded by Republicans generally. It was described to have been an "intellectual and oratorical treat.

. . ."¹ by the Indianapolis Journal which editorially praised speech and speaker.²

¹ Indianapolis Journal, September 17, 1898, pp. 4-5.

² Ibid., p. 4.

The speech included emotional appeals of patriotism, loyalty, Americanism, and appeals to God and destiny. Rhetorical questions, comparisons, figures of speech, allusions to political opponents, trade and population statistics, and historical fact were all utilized effectively. It was a masterpiece of construction designed to arouse and excite the hearers--which it did.

As the peace commissioners were meeting in Paris and President McKinley was contemplating a Midwestern tour, the leader of the Rough Riders began his campaign for governor of New York. Theodore Roosevelt was probably ineligible for the office on the basis of a residence requirement, but claim was not pressed and Roosevelt ran.¹ His first major address was set in Carnegie Hall amid festoons of flags. An escort of Rough Riders was on the platform.²

Theodore Roosevelt, "The Duties of a Great Nation"³

Roosevelt opened the speech by declaring that he would keep campaign promises and govern with integrity. He then turned to a discussion of the great responsibilities facing the nation and said that if we stood aside from rivalry with other nations we would

¹ Pringle, pp. 203-4.

² Ibid., p. 205.

³ Delivered October 5, 1898, in Carnegie Hall, New York, New York, on the occasion of opening the gubernatorial campaign in that state. Source: Herman Hagedorn (ed.), Campaigns and Controversies, Vol. XVI: The Works of Theodore Roosevelt (Memorial ed.; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925), pp. 441-50.

deny the "mighty mission of the American Republic. . . ."¹ and become another China in "fossilized isolation."² "Greatness," said Roosevelt, "means strife for nation and man alike."³

After alluding to the recent war with Spain, the flag, duty, and destiny, Roosevelt next said that to deny the McKinley administration would be to repudiate the war which, in turn, would make more difficult the reaping of fruits of triumph. He then discussed national defense for eleven paragraphs and concluded with an examination of national, state, and municipal affairs.

In this speech, Roosevelt made full use of the ethical appeal associated with his war record and thus managed to relate the campaign to the successful war with Spain. He generalized local issues most thoroughly in a speech which sounded as if he were addressing a national audience--as, indeed he might have been.

William McKinley's Midwestern tour⁴

McKinley's Midwestern speaking tour began with a speech at DeKalb, Illinois, on October 11, 1898, and concluded with a speech at Newark, Ohio, on October 21, 1898. The fifty-seven speeches presented formally from the platform and informally from the train are quite uniform in their avoidance of the topic of expansion. Yet these speeches are significant to this study because they enabled McKinley to draw the conclusion that the American people desired

¹ Ibid., p. 442.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ The fifty-seven speeches given on this tour are reported in McKinley, pp. 84-154.

colonial expansion, cheering as they did his allusions to the Spanish-American War, its heroes, the peace, duty, destiny, the flag, and the treaty of peace then being negotiated.

At Hastings, Iowa, on October 13, McKinley came closer to committing himself than at any other time on the tour. He said: "We want new markets, and as trade follows the flag, it looks very much as if we were going to have new markets."¹ At Chicago on October 19 McKinley remarked that "duty determines destiny."² Two days later at Indianapolis he was declaiming: "We cannot shirk the obligations of the victory if we would, and we would not if we could."³

The speeches themselves are models of political oratory. McKinley opened each speech with a tortured local allusion and continued with perfunctory political generalizations. There was no sufficient treatment of any idea to jar the intellect or mar the tone of confidence in America's greatness.

The President had taken the trouble to have a stenographer make notes on the intensity and duration of responses from the audience.⁴ After evaluating this report and his own observations McKinley took the step committing the nation to annexation of the Philippines. Through his new Secretary of State John Hay, the President informed the chairman of the Peace Commission, William R. Day, that the cession of the entire archipelago was required and

¹ McKinley, p. 109.

² Ibid., p. 134.

³ Ibid., p. 145.

⁴ Ernest R. May, Imperial Democracy (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1961), p. 259.

negotiations could be continued only on that basis.¹ This message was sent four days after McKinley returned to Washington.

On the same day that McKinley's ultimate demand for the Philippines was being transmitted across the Atlantic, Bryan too was engaged in correspondence. In a curiously revealing letter to his wife, Bryan said:

If I consulted my own comfort or happiness I would come home and forsake public as well as military life forever but I am not free to please myself. I have consecrated whatever talents I may have to the service of my fellow men. To aid in making the government better and existence more tolerable to the producers of wealth is my only ambition and the one question which I am considering now is whether I can be more useful in the army or out of it.

.....

Amid this uncertainty I have scarcely known what to do. Added to this is the uncertainty in regard to the President's policy in the Philippines [sic].''²

David Starr Jordan, "Colonial Expansion",³

Though Bryan suffered through October in public silence and private doubts as to his proper course, another spoke again against colonial expansion. David Starr Jordan, in as detailed a treatment

¹ U.S., Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1898, p. 935.

² Letter of William Jennings Bryan to Mrs. Bryan, October 26, 1898, Bryan Papers, Box 21.

³ Delivered in October, 1898, before the Congress of Religious at Omaha, Nebraska. Source: Jordan, Imperial Democracy (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1899), pp. 41-59.

as that of Carl Schurz two months earlier, pointed out the deficiencies of imperialism.

The overall theme of this speech was that America should stand above imperialism. In order to explore this theme Jordan divided the crisis into four parts which he characterized by four questions:

Shall our armies go where our institutions cannot? Shall territorial expansion take the place of Democratic freedom? Shall our invasion of the Orient be merely an incident . . . of a war of knight-errantry . . . ? Or is it to mark a new policy, the reversion from America to Europe, from Democracy to Imperialism?¹

He then proceeded to discuss each of the areas introduced by the above questions. Naturally his ultimate answer to each question was "no." Jordan conceded that the nation probably could not escape responsibility for Cuba and Porto Rico. Thus most of his argument pertained to the Philippines.

Comparison was the backbone of Jordan's method as he again discovered incompatible differences between the best colonial system, that of England, and America in terms of America's capacity to develop such a system in defiance of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. He compared our governing of Alaska to that of island possessions and depreciated both. Contrast also was much in evidence as Jordan related colonial expansion to the general American tradition. Jordan also suggested two alternatives to the acquisition of the Philippines. The righteous thing to do would be to recognize their independence under American protection, but the

¹Ibid., p. 43.

sensible thing to do would be to pull out some dark night as suddenly and dramatically as we arrived.

Beyond expressing his own point of view directly, Jordan recognized and took exception to some of the specific arguments of those favoring the proposition. This direct refutation was as follows:

1. "Wherever our flag is raised it must never be hauled down" is false argument, since hauling down the flag is no insult.
2. We can find our place among the nations without spreading imbecility over a hundred scattered islands.
3. It is not true that "trade follows the flag," since trade follows the open door.
4. "Manifest destiny" means the leveling of the nations.
5. We cannot show American civilization where American institutions cannot exist.
6. We can having coaling stations without colonies.
7. To desire "nobler political problems" is to ignore our greatest of all problems, those of free men in a free society.

George F. Hoar, "No Vassal States",¹

The political campaign of 1898 seemed to be governed by lethargy.² Not much time was spent on issues growing out of the war, perhaps because of the administration's inability to solidify policy regarding acquisition of territories. "The Democrats were

¹ Delivered on November 1, 1898, before the Republicans of Worcester, Massachusetts. Source: George Frisbie Hoar, No Vassal States (pamphlet).

² Cleveland Plain Dealer, November 7, 1898, p. 2.

campaigning on silver and Populistic platforms in states where the old issues were still live, and confined themselves to local questions elsewhere.”¹

Though not up for re-election himself, Senator George Frisbie Hoar campaigned for the Republican cause in his native state of Massachusetts. Speaking in Worcester, he praised the ability of Representative Joseph H. Walker, the incumbent who sought re-election, and then referred to the war and discussed the responsibilities of victory. To revel in mercenary or territorial gains, averred Hoar, was to degrade and belittle the great occasion afforded to deliver those oppressed by Spain. He saw no parallel between former Spanish possessions and previous territory acquired by the United States and denied the claim that destiny was forcing us to obtain an Eastern empire. He discussed problems such as the question of citizenship or slavery for the inhabitants, the nature of colonial government, expansion of the military establishment, and increased taxation that would accompany such a course, and then closed with the expressed belief that America would remain America and would aid rather than annex the former Spanish subjects.

Franklin MacVeagh, “Inevitable National Expansion”²

On the same day that Senator Hoar was predicting that the nation would not acquire colonial possessions, Franklin McVeagh

¹ Leech, p. 333.

² Delivered on November 1, 1898, in Chicago, Illinois.
Source: Franklin MacVeagh Papers (Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.), Box 15.

spoke in Chicago. In the most objective manner yet displayed, MacVeagh set about trying to discover what the future held in store for the nation.

He began by noting the adjustments of nations to one another and saw in this an eventual struggle between the Germanic race and representative government on the one hand and the Slavonic race and absolute government on the other. He sought to interpret the drift of the United States within this alignment after its seemingly sudden plunge into the current of world events. MacVeagh held that the metamorphosis was more apparent than real and that, in fact, the nation was not novice at territorial expansion or participation in world affairs. He then discussed national experience at territorial expansion, including Louisiana, Florida, Texas, the Gadsden Purchase, California, and Alaska, and concluded that the experience confronting the nation in 1898 differed from these in degree but not in kind. Thus a current expansion would not upset tradition.

Next, MacVeagh took up the assumed inexperience of the United States in international politics and found from numerous past instances that the nation was not untried in this field. Then, arguing from negative experiences of the nation while it was a colony of Great Britain, MacVeagh held that the nation should be capable of governing colonial possessions wisely. He found the Constitution no barrier to expansion for it was always subject to appropriate modification.

The second portion of the speech reflected an attempt by MacVeagh to estimate the measure of inevitable expansion which would accrue to the nation. First, he believed that the nation would never return to isolation and that the world would be viewed with a new outlook. Second, he believed it to be highly probable that there

would be permanent expansion of territory--at least coaling stations.

MacVeagh saw three forces driving the nation to expanded relations with the world. They were trade, the force of institutions and political ideas, and the nation's sense of responsibility.

In light of the foregoing analysis, MacVeagh felt that the taking of the Philippines as a service to humanity was only consistent with our duty and character.

This speech represents the first deliberate analysis of the question of expansion in the debate thus far. For the first time a speaker attempted to apply the inductive process to the situation confronting the nation--a refreshing contrast to those who took a position on the proposition and then sought arguments to support that position. The reasoning at times may be somewhat tenuous and the evidence may not fully support the generalizations discovered, but MacVeagh cannot be accused of extreme partisanship.

Carl Schurz, "At the Citizens' Union Meeting"¹

Carl Schurz lost no opportunity to speak against the policy of imperialism toward which he believed the nation was tending. Thus, when Roosevelt's evasion of state issues was leaving him open to attack during his gubernatorial campaign in New York,² Schurz

¹Delivered November 3, 1898, at the Citizens' Union Meeting held in Chickering Hall, New York City. Source: Press clippings attached to four pages in Schurz Papers, Box 66.

²Pringle, pp. 206-7. Roosevelt had been frantically appealing to Washington for the Congressional Medal of Honor which he hoped would aid in his campaign. His appeals were in vain.

denounced both the Republican candidate for governor and imperialism. He told his audience that they should not vote for Roosevelt because of his stand favoring imperialism and then presented reasons why an imperial policy would be undesirable.

Schurz argued that imperialism would be morally wrong as a result of a war declared expressly by Congress to be for humanitarian purposes, that a democracy was unfit to rule dependencies, that administrative corruption would follow, and that peace would be constantly imperiled through international involvements and involvements with the inhabitants of possessions. Further, Schurz pointed out that new markets were not needed and that two alternatives to annexation were available: the formation of a Spanish West Indies confederation under American influence and a Philippine government based on actuality.

Schurz also employed direct refutation of Roosevelt's remarks by citing materials from Roosevelt's campaign speeches such as: we must "dare to be great."¹ and responded, "we must first dare to be honest,"² and "we must dare to be sane."³ He used McKinley's words about forcible annexation being criminal aggression. He picked up McKinley's phrase from his Chicago speech of October 19, "Duty determines destiny," and then discussed what he believed to be the nation's duty. In addition, Schurz called the manifest destiny argument a "swindle,"⁴ and labeled the speeches of expansionists "war-whoops and . . . declamatory cant."⁵

¹ Schurz Papers, press clippings, p. 1.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., p. 3.

⁴ Ibid., p. 2.

⁵ Ibid., p. 4.

By the end of November, 1898, many could be thankful. Republicans had retained majorities in both houses of Congress.¹ The Spanish commissioners at Paris had been offered \$20,000,000 in exchange for the cession of the Philippines, a sum which--together with the other United States terms--they were soon to accept. Theodore Roosevelt minus the coveted Medal of Honor could look forward to being inaugurated governor of the Empire State by virtue of his not-so-resounding victory majority of 17,794 votes.² And the nation could thank God for peace.

Among those opposed to national expansion, matters may have appeared more bleak. Yet, below the surface, they were in a stage of ferment. Colonel Bryan was still serving silently, but there had been some suspicion that he was planning to resign.³ Bryan had been working on a plan which he felt to be so important that he would not even write of it to his wife.⁴

¹ Samuel Eliot Morison and Henry Steele Commager, The Growth of the American Republic (4th ed., rev.; New York: Oxford University Press, 1950), II, 907.

² Pringle, p. 207.

³ Cleveland Plain Dealer, September 20, 1898, p. 1.

⁴ Letter, Bryan to Mrs. Bryan, Bryan Papers, Box 21. This letter is misplaced among the Bryan manuscripts. It is found in the July folder but must be September, for further in the letter he talks of accompanying Governor Holcomb to see the President shortly. This occurred in September. The date of the letter is no help. It is dated "Sunday 19." The nineteenth of September, 1898, was a Monday. In the letter Bryan wrote: "I have a plan laid out but will not put it on paper at present."

Other persons of anti-imperialist bent were initiating the organizations which were to bear that name.¹ Charles Francis Adams wrote Carl Schurz of the activity going on in Boston and of the persons involved.² Shortly thereafter an Anti-Imperialist League was formed,³ and Schurz was notified of his vice-presidency in the organization.⁴

The anti-imperialist movement, now in its organizational infancy, would be an important factor on the American political stage for the next two years.⁵ It would operate through conferences, public meetings, pamphlets, magazine articles, poems, and speeches.⁶

On the twenty-eighth of November the Spanish commissioners gave up their ineffective efforts to forestall United States demands. The proffer of \$20,000,000 had carried the day, and all that remained was to formalize the conclusion of negotiations in the Treaty of Paris. To this the representatives of both nations bent their

¹ Harrington, The Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXII, 216.

² Letter of Charles F. Adams to Carl Schurz, November 14, 1898, Schurz Papers, Book 126A.

³ Letter of David Greene Haskins, Jr., to Schurz, November 23, 1898, Schurz Papers, Book 126A. The date of formation was November 18, 1898.

⁴ Letter of Erving Winslow to Schurz, November 22, 1898, Schurz Papers, Book 126A.

⁵ Harrington, The Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XXII, 211.

⁶ Ibid., p. 223. See also Tompkins, "The Great Debate. . . ."

efforts. Meanwhile the last session of the Fifty-fifth Congress opened on the first Monday in December.

Vice-President Garret A. Hobart called the Senate to order at twelve o'clock noon, while Thomas B. Reed performed the same function for the House. Prayer was offered, roll was called, and new members were sworn and seated. The President was informed that Congress was assembled, and he responded by written communication.¹

The message of the President contained a review of events leading to war with Spain, the war itself, and other internal and external matters involved in the conduct of national affairs. Of the United States peace commissioners the President said:

Their negotiations have made hopeful progress, so that I trust soon to be able to lay a definitive treaty of peace before the Senate, with a review of the steps leading to its signature.²

Of the possibility of new possessions the President had this to say:

I do not discuss at this time the government or the future of the new possessions which will come to us as the result of the war with Spain. Such discussion will be appropriate after the treaty of peace shall be ratified. In the meantime and until Congress has legislated otherwise it will be my duty to continue the military governments which have existed since our occupation and give to the people security in life and property and encouragement under a just and beneficent rule.³

The following day, December 6, Senator Vest of Missouri, a Democrat, introduced Senate Resolution number 191:

¹ U.S., Congressional Record, 55th Cong., 3d Sess., 1899, XXXII, Part 1, 1-2; 14-15.

² Ibid., p. 6.

³ Ibid.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That under the Constitution of the United States no power is given to the Federal Government to acquire territory to be held and governed permanently as colonies.

The colonial system of European nations can not be established under our present Constitution, but all territory acquired by the Government, except such small amount as may be necessary for coaling stations, correction of boundaries, and similar governmental purposes, must be acquired and governed with the purpose of ultimately organizing such territory into States suitable for admission into the Union.¹

The Senator directed that it be printed and laid upon the table to be called up for discussion at a later date.²

On December 7, Representative John A. T. Hull of Iowa, a Republican, introduced H.R. 11022. This resolution--“A bill for the reorganization of the Army of the United States, and for other purposes”--was referred to the Committee on Military Affairs.³

December 10, 1898, marked the end of the first phase of the debate over imperialism in the United States. On that date the secretary of state, John Hay, received a long-awaited telegram from the chairman of the Peace Commission, William R. Day. The telegram contained these six words: “Treaty signed at 8:50 this evening.”⁴

¹ Ibid., p. 20.

² This resolution was to provide the focus of debate in the Senate regarding retention of the Philippines.

³ U.S., Congressional Record, 55th Cong., 3d Sess., 1899, XXXII, Part 1, 51. This resolution became a focus of debate in the House of Representatives regarding retention of the Philippines.

⁴ U.S., Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1898, p. 965.

Article II of the treaty was as follows:

Spain cedes to the United States the Island of Porto Rico and other islands now under Spanish sovereignty in the West Indies, and the island of Guam in the Marianas or Ladrones.¹

Article III was as follows:

Spain cedes to the United States the archipelago known as the Philippine Islands. . . .

The United States will pay to Spain the sum of twenty million dollars (\$20,000,000) within three months after the exchange of the ratifications of the present treaty.²

That which anti-expansionists had feared was now one step nearer culmination. All that remained to be accomplished in order to become an "imperial" power was Senate confirmation of the treaty.

In addition to Day's message concerning the treaty, another message sped to Washington that day. William Jennings Bryan submitted his resignation as colonel of the Third Nebraska Volunteers. "I am so glad to be able to talk again," wrote Bryan to his wife. "I believe our country is in more danger now than Cuba was when I enlisted."³

A Summary of Argument: April 25, 1898,
through December 10, 1898

The first phase of the debate over imperialism began with the declaration of war against Spain by Congress on April 25, 1898, and ended with the signing of the Treaty of Paris on December 10, 1898. During this period of seven and one-half months, at least eleven

¹Ibid., p. 831.

²Ibid.

³Letter, Bryan to Mrs. Bryan, Bryan Papers, Box 21.

speakers spoke a minimum of seventy times to popular audiences. Their arguments, in one form or another, turned on the question of whether or not the United States should acquire colonial possessions.

Of these eleven speakers, Albert Beveridge, Theodore Roosevelt, and Franklin MacVeagh delivered speeches favoring acquisition of colonial possessions, whereas David Starr Jordan, Harvey W. Wiley, William Jennings Bryan, Grover Cleveland, W. Bourke Cockran, Carl Schurz, and George F. Hoar delivered speeches opposing acquisition of colonial possessions. The remaining speaker, President McKinley, must be regarded as having taken a tentative position with regard to the question of acquisition of colonial possessions.

An examination of the speeches of those affirming the proposition that the United States should acquire colonial possessions reveals a recognition of three issues inherent in that proposition. These were: (1) Is the acquisition of colonial possessions possible? (2) Is the acquisition of colonial possessions desirable? (3) Is the acquisition of colonial possessions necessary?

The first of these issues (Is the acquisition of colonial possessions possible?) was affirmed by four arguments. Both Beveridge and MacVeagh argued the possibility of acquiring colonial possessions in terms of America's capability for dealing with such possessions. Next, the argument of tradition was advanced by Beveridge as supporting the possibility of acquisition. Curiously enough, he argued first that America was not tied to its traditions, and thus acquisition was possible,¹ and in a second speech he argued that acquisition of colonial possessions was in keeping with tradition.²

¹ Beveridge's speech of April 27, 1898.

² Beveridge's speech of September 16, 1898.

A third argument rendering acquisition possible was the claim by Beveridge that acquisition was under God's direction. The fourth argument, developed by MacVeagh, was that the Constitution was no barrier to the acquisition of colonial possessions.

The second issue (Is the acquisition of colonial possessions desirable?) received the greatest amount of affirmation. The arguments revolved about six considerations. First, Beveridge and Roosevelt argued the desirability of acquiring colonial possessions in terms of "the great unknown." This category of argument included citations of destiny, God's purpose, and the mission of America. Next, Beveridge and Roosevelt both advanced the political argument that a repudiation of a policy of colonial expansion would amount to a repudiation of the McKinley administration. Beveridge and MacVeagh presented a third argument that recognized the benefits accruing to others--the present Spanish possessions, humanity, and civilization--following the adoption of a policy of colonialism. A fourth argument alluded to the benefits, chiefly those of trade, that would accrue to the United States. Both Beveridge and MacVeagh argued to this point. Fifth, Roosevelt and Beveridge argued in terms of patriotism. These arguments usually featured allusions to American heroes or the American flag. And finally, acquisition of colonial possessions was deemed desirable by MacVeagh and by Roosevelt in terms of such acquisition fulfilling the duty or responsibility of the nation.

The third issue (Is the acquisition of colonial possessions necessary?) was affirmed by Beveridge. His arguments, economic in nature, revolved about the necessity for new opportunities for labor and capital, and additional resources for commerce.

The affirmative position as developed in the speeches of those who favored acquisition of colonial possessions can be outlined as follows:

The United States should acquire colonial possessions, for

I. The acquisition of colonial possessions is possible,
for

- A. America is capable of administering colonial possessions, and
- B. American tradition will not prevent acquisition of colonial possessions, and
- C. Such acquisition is in keeping with American tradition, and
- D. Such acquisition is under the direction of God, and
- E. Such acquisition is not prohibited by the Constitution.

II. The acquisition of colonial possessions is desirable,
for

- A. Such acquisition will verify the future, and
- B. Such acquisition is politically desirable, and
- C. Such acquisition will benefit others, and
- D. Such acquisition will benefit the nation, and
- E. Such acquisition is patriotic, and
- F. Such acquisition is the duty of the nation.

III. The acquisition of colonial possessions is necessary,
for

- A. Such acquisition will provide new opportunities for labor, and

- B. Such acquisition will provide new opportunities for capital, and
- C. Such acquisition will provide new resources for commerce.

An examination of the speeches of those denying the proposition that the United States should acquire colonial possessions reveals a recognition of the same three issues that were argued by speakers supporting the proposition. The first of these issues (Is the acquisition of colonial possessions possible?) was admitted by Jordan in the first speech opposing the policy of imperialism. However, two other speakers, Cockran and Hoar, chose to deny the possibility of acquiring colonial possessions. Cockran believed that the purpose and motives of the war were such as to remove the possibility of annexation, and Hoar believed it impossible to reconcile annexation with the governmental conduct which would thus be required.

The second issue (Is the acquisition of colonial possessions desirable?) was denied by all opposition speakers. Seven general arguments were applied to this issue. First, Jordan, Bryan, and Schurz argued that acquisition was undesirable since it would violate the declared intentions of the nation. Next, Jordan, Bryan, Cockran, and Hoar advanced the argument that such acquisition would be contrary to American traditions. A third argument was that of acquisition of colonial possessions being contradictory to the spirit of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. This argument was advanced by Bryan, Schurz, Jordan, and Hoar. Fourth, Cleveland and Schurz argued that peace might be imperiled by such acquisition. All negative speakers argued in terms of national purpose

and patriotism. These arguments were various, for they held the acquisition of colonial possessions to be incompatible with destiny, with God's purpose, with patriotism, or with the honor of the flag. A sixth argument involved the concern of Jordan, Cleveland, and Hoar about the expansion of the military establishment and the cost of such a policy. The last category of argument denying the desirability of colonial possessions pertained to the proposed colonies themselves. Jordan, Hoar, and Schurz believed that it would be disadvantageous to such colonies in that the nation would be inclined to neglect them, not extend its institutions to them, and possibly treat the inhabitants as slaves.

The third issue (Is the acquisition of colonial possessions necessary?) was denied by four of the seven negative speakers. Cleveland advanced arguments to show the nation would gain little in power or prestige. Bryan and Hoar argued that the war itself provided no cause for colonialism. Bryan denied the necessity of following examples of other nations. Schurz indicated that commercial interests could be served without acquiring colonies. And Bryan and Hoar disclaimed the agency of destiny in empire building.

Beyond recognizing and responding to the three issues as cited above, speakers for the negative believed procedures other than acquisition of colonial possession to be desirable. The following suggestions, in the nature of counterproposals, provided a fourth contention for the negative. Harvey W. Wiley proposed that the United States was to become the evangel of political liberty for all men, David Starr Jordan suggested that the United States could recognize the independence of the Philippine Islands or could just "pull out," Senator Hoar proposed that the United States would support the released Spanish possessions in the exercise of self-government,

and Carl Schurz suggested a confederacy of the West Indies and that the Philippines be given a practicable government.

The negative position as developed in the speeches of those who opposed acquisition of colonial possessions can be outlined as follows:

The United States should not acquire colonial possessions, for

I. The acquisition of colonial possessions is not possible, for

- A. Such acquisition would contradict the purpose of the war, and
- B. Such acquisition would be contrary to proper governmental conduct.

II. The acquisition of colonial possessions is undesirable, for

- A. Such acquisition would violate the declared intentions of the United States, and
- B. Such acquisition would be contrary to American traditions, and
- C. Such acquisition would be contrary to the Constitution and Declaration of Independence, and
- D. Such acquisition might imperil peace, and
- E. Such acquisition is not in keeping with the nation's purpose, and
- F. Such acquisition would require a large military establishment, and
- G. Such acquisition would be injurious to the proposed colonies.

III. The acquisition of colonial possessions is not necessary, for

- A. Such acquisition will not promote the nation's welfare, and
- B. Such acquisition is not a required result of the war, and
- C. The nation is not required to follow other nations' example, and
- D. The nation's commercial interests can be served without acquiring colonial possessions, and
- E. Destiny does not require the acquisition of colonial possessions.

IV. There are more desirable ways of handling the territories which may be given up by Spain, for

- A. The United States could become the evangel of political liberty, or
- B. The United States could recognize Philippine independence, or
- C. The United States could withdraw from the Philippines, or
- D. The United States could initiate a West Indian confederacy and give the Philippines a practicable government.

President McKinley's speeches during the period under consideration can not be considered as argumentative in terms of upholding or denying the propriety of acquiring colonial possessions. Yet, these fifty-seven speeches must be recognized in any considered

study of the debate over imperialism in the United States, for McKinley's interpretation of the public reaction to patriotic allusions contained in his speeches undoubtedly had an effect on his administration concerning Spain and the potential territorial acquisitions.

A Critique of the Debate: April 25, 1898,
through December 10, 1898

Through the process of investigation into each of the speeches of significance to this preliminary and general period of the debate over imperialism, major issues and the particular arguments supporting each of those issues have been discovered and aligned into what may be termed affirmative and negative case structures. As one examines these argumentative composites, or cases as they are summarized and outlined in the previous section, a number of characteristics of the debate over acquisition of colonial possessions come to light.

If one were formally to analyze the policy proposition, "The United States should acquire colonial possessions," the first question asked might well be, "Is there a problem existing in the nation for which the acquisition of colonial possessions provides an answer?" One notes, however, that neither the affirmative nor the negative considers what, in common debate parlance, would be termed a "need" issue. In fact, only Beveridge, of all the speakers, came close to arguing to this issue, and then only by implication as he spoke of new opportunities for labor and capital, and new resources for commerce in his speech "The March of the Flag." Thus, the burden of proof for the affirmative was considerably narrowed, and the

negative chose to argue primarily on grounds other than those of presumption.

Another characteristic of the debate as observed in the composite cases is that the affirmative argument supporting their contention that acquisition of colonial possessions is possible outweighs considerably the negative argument to that same point. In fact, one negative speaker (Jordan) admitted that acquisition was possible. Other negative speakers, however, tended to be less realistic and fashioned their arguments around philosophical impossibility rather than factual impossibility--a contention which would indeed have been difficult to establish.

Easily observed also is the considerable clash on the issue of desirability of acquiring colonial possessions. In terms of weight of argument, the major clash was on this subproposition (or issue) of value within the overall proposition of policy.

Finally, one observes from comparing the composite cases that the negative presented a series of counterproposals. These, up to this point in the debate, are ignored by the affirmative.

Moving from the examination of case composites to more general considerations of the debate, one may note that all speakers tended to support their arguments with the evidence of their own opinions. This is true both in speeches for and against the proposition. In each case the speakers apparently found themselves committed to or opposed to a policy of colonial expansion. Having thus, through whatever process invoked, discovered their position, they then proceeded to develop reasons for supporting the position to which they had already committed themselves. Most of these reasons were merely unsupported assertions of opinion. To suggest that acquisition of colonial possessions is fostered by or flouts

tradition is not so much based on fact as interpretation of fact, and the argument that Providence favors or opposes the acquiring of colonies by a given nation is rather more subjective than objective. Notable exceptions to the general tendency to argue by assertion are found in Schurz's August 19 speech at Saratoga, New York, to some extent in Beveridge's financial observations on expansion in his September 16 speech at Indianapolis, and in MacVeagh's fairly objective analysis presented on November 1 in Chicago.

In the development of arguments to support the position already taken, one can detect in most instances a partisan approach to expansion--those favoring the administration also favoring its developing policy of colonial expansion, and those opposed to the administration also opposing its policy in this case. The exceptions to partisanship are the Republican Hoar and the Independent Schurz.

There also was one speaker who apparently did not proceed from ready-made conclusions to supporting arguments. This was Franklin MacVeagh. In his speech, "Inevitable National Expansion," delivered on the first of November in 1898, he sought to discover the proper course for the nation through examining its past experiences and newly acquired international position. This speech was the only example of the inductive method applied to the problem of colonial expansion, and thus it stands also as the only apparently nonpartisan inquiry seeking to discover an appropriate course of action.

Naturally, in their partisan cast and with the development of ideas dependent chiefly upon assertion, the speeches were emotionally toned. This is easily established by examining the speeches themselves and, particularly, in noting the relationship drawn between the war and the nation's projected policy. The association of

patriotism and colonial policy was intensely applied by proexpansionists, thereby causing antiexpansionists a considerable problem in the presentation of arguments which amounted to national self-denial in regard to colonies.

Though those taking the negative on the proposition, "The United States should acquire colonial possessions," argued with vehemence equal to or surpassing that of those who argued in its favor, they did not seem to realize that the fact of our participation in the Spanish-American War and its surprisingly quick termination had altered the nation's position both internally and internationally. Thus the negative, in arguing essentially for a return to prewar status, were in a relatively untenable position. To be sure, certain "counter proposals" were advanced tentatively by some few speakers, but these, to this point in the debate, were neither fully developed nor presented as a major part of any particular speech.

Early in the debate, speakers were inclined to take a philosophical position with regard to expansion and to argue directly to the proposition. As the debate progressed there was an increasing tendency toward an awareness of the arguments presented by the opposing speakers. Thus speakers began not only to focus on the proposition but to take up specific arguments advanced by the opposition and to refute these in terms of the inadequate reasoning and inappropriate conclusions. Such was the case in speeches by Jordan and Hoar in which they noted and reacted to Beveridge's economic arguments favoring colonialism which were presented on September 16. Also Schurz's campaign speech against Theodore Roosevelt (and incidentally McKinley) would serve as a further illustration of such direct refutation.

Along with the tendency of speakers to narrow to some extent their approach to the proposition in terms of recognizing and answering the voices of opposition as the debate progressed was a tendency to narrow the definition of the proposition. Originally "acquisition of colonial possessions" meant all such possibilities. During the summer and early fall Porto Rico and lesser potential possessions were virtually conceded to be within the national purview. Thus the debate tended to concentrate upon the Philippine Islands as the sine qua non of empire.

Of considerable interest is the positioning of speakers in the debate. Beveridge was first to disclose publicly the potentialities of the war with Spain. With ink scarcely dry on the war declaration, Beveridge stated the case for colonial expansion. From that time, April 27, 1898, until Beveridge rose again on September 16, 1898, to reveal to an Indianapolis audience the vistas to be encompassed by "The March of the Flag," no speaker enjoined the nation to follow its imperial destiny. On the other hand, in the four and one-half months between these two speeches, no fewer than six speakers including Bryan, the nominal leader of the Democratic party, Cleveland, recently retired from the presidency, and Schurz, an elder statesman, made major pronouncements against colonial expansion. Apparently proexpansionists were content that the military accomplishments of the nation were sufficient rejoinder to antiexpansionist sentiment during this period. The doubt as to what President McKinley's position with regard to the Philippines would be was very probably a factor also.

The formulation of national policy by the President in regard to expansion is not the least interesting feature of this phase of the debate. McKinley's October speaking tour provided him the

opportunity for discerning public reaction to the war, and apparently he had little difficulty construing the public responses to patriotic phrases to be a public approval of the acquisition of colonial possessions. McKinley's proclivity for "leading where pushed" undoubtedly had a considerable bearing on his ultimate demand for the whole of the Philippines. Spain finally capitulated and the treaty was concluded. The peace treaty, when signed and submitted to the United States government for approval on December 10, 1898, served to remove the debate from the realm of the hypothetical and bring it to the sphere of imminent reality.

CHAPTER IV

SHOULD THE UNITED STATES ACQUIRE THE PHILIPPINES? THE GENERAL DEBATE: DECEMBER 11, 1898, THROUGH FEBRUARY 6, 1899

In its initial stage, the debate over imperialism took place in a hypothetical or theoretical sense. Though an opportunity for acquisition of colonial possessions was created by United States military, naval, and diplomatic successes during the greater part of 1898, there had been no national commitment to empire.

Despite the fact that numerous speakers anticipated the potential issue of extraterritorial possessions and presented vehemently their points of view, it was not until the negotiations between the United States and Spain produced the Treaty of Paris that the question of imperialism was placed squarely before the nation. To ratify the treaty without alteration would mean retention of a number of former Spanish colonies of which the most important were Porto Rico, Guam, and the Philippine Islands.¹

Thus from the tenth of December, 1898, the day the Treaty of Paris was signed by the peace commissioners, through the sixth of

¹ Cuba was effectively eliminated from consideration by the Teller amendment (*see supra*, p. 33), and by President McKinley, who spoke of assisting the people of Cuba "to form a government which shall be free and independent. . . ." U.S., Congressional Record, 55th Cong., 3d Sess., 1899, XXXII, Part 1, 6.

February, 1899, the date of Senate confirmation of that Treaty, the debate over imperialism intensified in both numbers of speeches and focus of argument, and progressed in two distinct arenas: the general public platform and the halls of Congress. Since these differing areas of the debate existed simultaneously and occurred during a fifty-eight-day period, the process of analysis seems to indicate separate consideration of that portion of the debate which may be referred to as "general" and that portion which may be called "Congressional." The present chapter will present the general debate, and the next, Chapter V, will present the Congressional debate on the question: Should the United States acquire the Philippines?

The Course of the General Debate

The Speakers

Of those speakers who took the public platform to express their views on American empire during the period extending from the tenth of December, 1898, through the sixth of February, 1899, all but four had participated in the earlier, more general debate. The familiar figures are William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, William Jennings Bryan, Carl Schurz, and W. Bourke Cockran. These were jointed by former Vice-President Adlai E. Stevenson,¹

¹ A brief biographical sketch may be found in U.S., Congress, House, Joint Committee on Printing, Biographical Directory of the American Congress, House Document No. 442, 85th Cong., 2d Sess., 1961, p. 1654. See also campaign biographies appearing in such works as Lawrence F. Prescott, Living Issues of the Campaign of

Yale professor of political and social science William Graham Sumner,¹ the former senator and recent ambassador to France James B. Eustis,² and the American Federation of Labor president Samuel Gompers.³

Events and Arguments

Though the McKinley administration managed to overlook William Jennings Bryan's request for military appointment in April, it could and did expedite his resignation from the Third Nebraska Volunteers eight months later. Two days after submitting his resignation,⁴ special orders number 292 were cut, and on December 12, 1898, Bryan was a civilian in possession of a telegram from H. C. Corbin, adjutant general, United States Army, which confirmed his honorable discharge.⁵

The following day in a press interview held at Savannah, Georgia, Bryan expressed his general objections to a colonial policy by noting that such a policy was not compatible with the doctrine of government deriving just power from the consent of the governed.

1900: Its Men and Principles (Philadelphia: Globe Bible Publishing Co., 1900).

¹ See Harris E. Starr, William Graham Sumner (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1925).

² Brief biographical sketch in Congress, Committee on Printing, 1961, p. 867.

³ See Samuel Gompers, Seventy Years of Life and Labor (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1925).

⁴ Supra, p. 84.

⁵ Bryan Papers, Box 21.

More specifically, he distinguished between expansion into contiguous territories for purposes of future settlement and expansion outside the Western Hemisphere which would lead to involvement in foreign quarrels and which would be designed to secure alien races for subjugation. Bryan noted that under certain conditions Porto Rico might be annexed but that the Philippines were too far away and their people too different for annexation to be successful.¹

Regarding the peace treaty soon to be a concern of the Senate, Bryan finally revealed the strategy which he had been contemplating since September.² In essence, he proposed that the treaty be ratified rather than rejected. This would end the war and enable Congress to declare its attitude against imperialism by a resolution indicating the nation's purpose to be the establishment of stable government in Cuba, Porto Rico, and the Philippines, and then the turning over of government to the people concerned.³

Having expressed what he believed to be the most favorable procedure to frustrate the nation's inclination toward imperialism, Bryan went to Washington, D.C., where he discussed his plan with various legislators. After spending December 15 and 16 in Washington, he went to New York for two days and was back in

¹ William Jennings Bryan et al., Republic or Empire (Chicago: The Independence Company, 1899), pp. 13-15.

² Supra, p. 80.

³ Bryan et al., Republic or Empire, pp. 13-15. The publication of this interview touched off a lengthy correspondence between Bryan and Andrew Carnegie who agreed with Bryan's anti-imperialist position, but disagreed as to method of accomplishment. See Bryan Papers, Box 21 and Box 22.

Washington on Monday, the nineteenth, before starting for Nebraska on the twentieth of December.¹

As Bryan journeyed from Georgia to Washington to promulgate his plan, President McKinley, in what was probably a coincidence of dates, was traveling into Georgia from Washington. Ostensibly the President's Southern tour was to enable him to attend the Atlanta Peace Jubilee. However, such a trip provided McKinley with an excellent opportunity to make known the administration's attitude toward the peace treaty and new territories.

William McKinley's Southern tour²

McKinley's itinerary included three speeches in Atlanta, Georgia, on December 14 and 15; a speech at Tuskegee Institute and a speech in Montgomery, Alabama, on December 16; two speeches in Savannah, Georgia, on December 17 and 18; and, on December 19, speeches in Macon, Milledgeville, and Augusta, Georgia, and in Columbia, South Carolina. Two of these speeches, one at Tuskegee Institute on December 16 and one at the Georgia Agricultural and Mechanical College in Savannah on December 18, were particularly appropriate to the student audiences and did not touch on matters of expansion. Of the remaining nine speeches, seven may be classified

¹ Much has been made of the influence wielded by Bryan in obtaining votes for the treaty. For contrasting views see W. Stull Holt, Treaties Defeated By the Senate (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1933), pp. 173-79, and Faulkner, pp. 257-58. Bryan's itinerary is mentioned in the New York Herald for December 15, 16, 18, 19, and 20, 1898, in front-page news stories in each instance.

² The eleven speeches given on this tour are reported in McKinley, pp. 158-84.

as brief ceremonial appearances in which the President spoke in from one to six paragraphs. The other two speeches, one in the Auditorium in Atlanta on December 15, and one before the Board of Trade and Associated Citizens in Savannah on December 17, were major addresses.

The seven brief speeches contain little in the way of explicit argument. However, their appeals through ethos and pathos were considerable. In each of them McKinley stressed the healing of the scars of civil war in present unity and was greeted with cheers and applause.

Before a joint assembly of the Georgia legislature in Atlanta on December 14, McKinley noted that "the old flag again waves over us in peace, with new glories which your sons and ours have this year added to its sacred folds,"¹ and thus discovered that dignified "flag-waving" could win favor sufficient to be used again at Macon ("Never was there an army mustered . . . under a more glorious flag than the Stars and Stripes."²) on December 19, at Milledgeville ("a common destiny under the dear old banner of the free"³) the same day, and at Columbia, South Carolina ("Each [section] has rivaled the other in devotion to the old flag."⁴) later the same day.

In addition to the impact of allusions to national unity and the flag, allusion to the future brought prolonged applause and repeated cheers as McKinley concluded his remarks before the Georgia legislature by saying: "What a glorious future awaits us if unitedly, wisely, and bravely we face the new problems now pressing upon

¹Ibid., p. 158.

²Ibid., p. 179.

³Ibid., p. 180.

⁴Ibid., p. 183.

us, determined to solve them for right and humanity."¹ At the banquet which concluded the President's visit in Atlanta, McKinley again viewed the future as he said:

It [the war] has brought new problems to the republic, whose solution will tax the genius of our people. United we will meet and solve them with honor to ourselves and to the lasting benefit of all concerned.²

The recently signed treaty of peace also provided McKinley with materials heavily weighted with emotion. Before the Georgia legislature he noted his pleasure in sharing with his audience "the general rejoicing over the signing of the treaty of peace."³ Later at Macon, Georgia, to the applause of his listeners, McKinley said: "On the twenty-fourth day of this month, the day before Christmas, our peace commissioners will deliver to the President of the United States a treaty of peace--peace with honor, peace with the blessings of liberty to struggling peoples, East and West."⁴

In this way did McKinley, in these seven brief speeches, bring to bear the weight of his office and the emotionality of symbols as general support for the administration. However, the President went well beyond this approach in the two major addresses of his tour.

Speaking in the Auditorium in Atlanta on December 15,⁵ McKinley first acknowledged his invitation to the celebration, touched upon the recently signed treaty which provided additional reason for

¹ Ibid., p. 159.

² Ibid., p. 165.

³ Ibid., p. 158.

⁴ Ibid., p. 179.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 159-64.

celebration, reiterated his typical theme of the now-healed schism of earlier times, and then moved to his most direct, to that date, support of expansion. Turning to the symbolism of the flag, McKinley built his argument to a climax of three rhetorical questions:

This government has proved itself invincible in the recent war. . . . No worthier contributions have been made in patriotism and in men than by the people of these Southern States. . . . Intrusted with the able leadership of men dear to them, who had marched with their fathers under another flag, now fighting under the old flag again, they have gloriously helped to defend its spotless folds, and added new luster to its shining stars. That flag has been planted in two hemispheres, and there it remains the symbol of liberty and law, of peace and progress. Who will withdraw it from the people over whom it floats its protecting folds? Who will haul it down? Answer me, ye men of the South, who is there in Dixie who will haul it down?¹

His answer was "tremendous applause."²

With the above paragraph standing as an emotional climax, McKinley continued by commenting that the peace presaged good to humanity and that the domains named in the treaty came as a reward of "temperate, faithful, and fearless response to the call of conscience."³ "This," said the President as he noted that the task was just beginning, "is the time for earnest, not faint, hearts."⁴

McKinley spoke of the great trust which civilization had imposed upon the nation, of past instances in which the problems of territorial acquisition had been handled wisely, and of the present instance in which the nation was more capable and better prepared to subserve "the great interests which shall be confided to our

¹ Ibid., pp. 160-61.

² Ibid., p. 161.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

keeping."¹ He stated that intervention in Spanish affairs was unavoidable and that from acting with such high purpose the nation's honorable reward was inevitable. The President then closed the speech to prolonged applause as he declaimed:

Thus far we have done our supreme duty. Shall we . . . turn timidly away from the duties imposed upon the country by its own great deeds? And . . . may we not go forth rejoicing in a strength which has been employed solely for humanity and always tempered with justice and mercy, confident of our ability to meet the exigencies which await us, because confident that our course is one of duty and our cause that of right?²

In this speech the first presidential sanction for expansion was expressed through the use of both indirect and direct arguments. The substance of McKinley's rhetorical questions, if presented unemotionally and apart from the flag, would normally amount to no more than a statement about returning troops to America, but as utterance of the President and in the context given, these questions were powerful argument. More directly the President argued by analogy, by reference to destiny or the inevitability of rewards to the righteous, and by reliance on the implications of the idea of national duty.

Two days later, on December 17, the President spoke in Savannah, Georgia, at a banquet of the Board of Trade and Associated Citizens.³ After his usual allusion to the present unity of the North and the South, the President seemed to digress for the

¹Ibid., p. 163.

²Ibid., p. 164.

³Ibid., pp. 172-75. It is interesting to recall that William Jennings Bryan had presented his views on imperialism to the press in this same city just four days earlier. Supra, pp. 100-101.

space of five sentences in which he said that the financial and revenue policies of the nation were stable for at least four years. Thus business could proceed without apprehension of serious or sudden change due to major domestic differences.¹

The President moved smoothly on by noting that without domestic differences the nation was free to consider in a nonpartisan spirit the new questions immediately before it. The key to these new questions, according to McKinley, was duty. Emphasizing the humanitarian aspects of duty, McKinley argued that it was the nation's responsibility to guide and protect an alien people by providing a better government for them in place of the one destroyed by war.

"It is not a question of keeping the islands of the East," said McKinley, "but of leaving them."² To substantiate this point, the President asked if it was right to send Dewey to Manila to attack the Spanish fleet and to send General Merritt with troops to reinforce Dewey. If it was so, then it would follow that duty required them to remain, destroy the fleet, take Manila, and destroy Spanish sovereignty. "Having done all that in the line of duty," continued McKinley, "is there any less duty to remain there and give to the inhabitants protection which will secure to them peace and order and security in their life and property and in the pursuit of happiness?"³ After the anticipated response to this question, the President quoted seven lines from a poem by Bryant indicative of

¹ Ibid., p. 173. This commentary can reasonably be assumed to be a recognition of Bryan's recent presence, for in no other speech on this tour is the subject touched upon. Naturally, the Board of Trade would be interested in this view.

² Ibid., p. 174.

³ Ibid., p. 175.

the greatness of the nation and concluded to "enthusiastic and prolonged applause" as he said, "My fellow-citizens, whatever covenants duty has made for us in the year 1898 we must keep."¹

As in his major address in Atlanta, McKinley made use of the rhetorical question but then argued much more substantively by presenting humanitarianism and duty as major, though related, reasons for maintaining the Philippines.² In establishing duty to be fundamental, McKinley engaged in a long chain of causality in which he overlooked the significant shift from the necessities of war which dictated the destruction of Spain's military and naval strength to an assumed effect, the resultant "necessity" or "duty" of acquiring control of the entire Philippine Archipelago. Such argument, it may be noted, admits of no honorable alternative to acquisition.

An analysis of the President's Southern tour by the Literary Digest indicated what might well have been discerned some weeks earlier. Its report: "After leaving Atlanta the President's utterances on national issues were received by the press of the country as thoroughly committing the Administration to a Philippine policy."³

Not only did the press interpret the administration's position, but also expressed its own point of view. During the President's tour the New York Herald conducted a canvass of 533 "most influential" newspapers from all states and found that 329 favored

¹ Ibid.

² This was the first time the President expressed his views particularizing the Philippines.

³ Literary Digest, XVII (December 31, 1898), 764.

expansion while 203 opposed expansion--a favorable majority of slightly over two to one.¹

At about the same hour as the President was being applauded by the Savannah Board of Trade, the Columbia University Debating Union was informally debating the resolution, "Under Existing Circumstances We Favor Expansion." At the conclusion of the debate a vote was taken which revealed the students' attitudes. Eighty-four favored the proposition and eighty-seven opposed it.²

Theodore Roosevelt, "True Americanism and Expansion"³

Having thus renewed himself once again at the fount of public acclaim, President McKinley returned to Washington and the problems of state: announcement of the Philippine cession in Manila,⁴ troop

¹ New York Herald, December 17, 1898, p. 4. A further breakdown by political inclination revealed 195 Republican, 50 Democrat, and 35 Independent papers favoring expansion, while 38 Republican, 124 Democrat, and 20 Independent papers opposed expansion. It is of some significance that, at the time of the President's tour, a sectional breakdown of newspaper opinion indicated the South to be the only section showing a majority antiexpansionist opinion (55 favored, 64 opposed).

² New York Herald, December 18, 1898, p. 4.

³ Thomas B. Reed (ed.), After-Dinner Speeches, Vol. III in Modern Eloquence (10 vols.; Philadelphia: John D. Morris and Company, 1900), pp. 1002-7.

⁴ On the same day as Roosevelt's speech, December 21, 1898, the President sent the announcement of cession of the Philippines to the Secretary of War. This announcement included directive for procedural take-over of the Philippines and expressed the attitude to be assumed by the military commander in the Philippines in announcing the cession to the populace. In addition to specifying the attitude of

movements, and the presentation of the treaty to the Senate, as the kaleidoscope of the debate turned to the soon-to-be-inaugurated governor of New York. Losing no opportunity to advance the administration (and his own) point of view, Theodore Roosevelt, who had not presented any speeches since his successful gubernatorial campaign,¹ attended the nineteenth annual dinner of the New England Society of Brooklyn held on the twenty-first of December, 1898, and took opportunity, when introduced to the membership, to underscore the ideas expressed by McKinley a few days earlier.

Ostensibly Roosevelt was responding to a toast, "The Day We Celebrate." In actuality, he quickly acknowledged his introduction, alluded to the toast, and moved to the support of expansion.²

Roosevelt first took an unequivocal position as a "Darwinist" by saying that "every man should realize that it is for the interests of mankind to have the higher supplant the lower life."³ With this as context for further commentary, he then briefly noted the advantage accruing from other nations', chiefly Russia and England, supplanting barbarism in backward areas of the world and implied that such a course was desirable for America to follow, particularly

the United States with regard to public and private property, commerce, taxation, and the like, the announcement referred to the mission of the United States as being one of "benevolent assimilation . . . under the free flag of the United States." See U.S., Congressional Record, 55th Cong., 3d Sess., 1899, XXXII, Part 1, 572-73.

¹ See "Chronology of the Governorship" in Elting E. Morison (ed.), The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt (8 vols.; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1951-54), II, 1497.

² Reed, III, 1002-3.

³ Ibid., p. 1003.

since his generation had not had an opportunity to take part in "the greatest struggle for righteousness that this century has seen, the great Civil War. . . ."¹ "It is a good thing for us," said Roosevelt, "that we should have interests outside of our own borders."² And a moment later he characterized these "interests" as "moral considerations."³

Roosevelt continued by disavowing those who cried out against the national assumption of responsibilities akin to those of the days of Washington and Lincoln and, as had McKinley a few days earlier,⁴ called upon the nation to meet its responsibilities "in a sincere and earnest desire to do our duty as it is given us to see our duty."⁵ Roosevelt's interpretation of the nation's duty was the governing of the Philippines by whatever principles of government which were found to be applicable in the instance. He suggested that, though America might profit by the experience of other nations, this nation was producing able administrators such as Leonard Wood who should be entrusted with island government.⁶

In closing, Roosevelt affirmed that he was an expansionist and expressed pleasure in the territorial acquisitions. He called for a "truly American policy, . . . a policy which decrees also that we shall be just, and that the peoples whose administration we have taken over shall have their condition made better and not worse by the fact that they have come under our sway."⁷

¹ Ibid., p. 1004.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid., p. 1005.

⁴ Supra, pp. 107-8.

⁵ Reed, p. 1005.

⁶ Ibid., pp. 1006-7.

⁷ Ibid., p. 1007.

Basically, as represented by the contents of this speech, Roosevelt's arguments stemmed from an assumption of national superiority which in turn was then equated with "righteousness" and "morality." Thus the procedure to be followed should be "meeting responsibilities" or "doing our duty" (i.e., whatever we believed our duty to be) by a pragmatic approach to the governing of possessions through able administrators. Only incidentally, Roosevelt noted that some attempt ought to be made to improve the condition of the inhabitants of the island territories.

William Jennings Bryan, "The National Emblem"¹

Bryan's homecoming in Lincoln, Nebraska, was celebrated on December 23, 1898, at a reception given in his honor by the Women's Bimetallic League, the Lancaster County Bimetallic League, and the University Bimetallic Club.² On this occasion Bryan acknowledged the cordial welcome accorded to him by his neighbors and then justified his resignation from the Army by indicating that there were more important problems confronting the people of the United States than facing the Army and that he had resigned in order to take part

¹An edited manuscript of this speech is to be found in Bryan Papers, Box 50, labeled "Speeches, Articles, Reports." A portion of the speech appears in Bryan et al., The Second Battle, pp. 89-90, and also in Bryan et al., Republic or Empire, pp. 15-16. In these last two sources the speech is given the title that appears above. The manuscript copy bears no title. Though edited, the manuscript provides more information about the speech and more of its content than do the other sources, and thus will be the basis for commentary here.

²Bryan et al., The Second Battle, p. 90.

in a fight. Assuring his audience that he was still a reformer, Bryan then alluded briefly to the gold question, to trusts, and to the question of enlarging the regular army.

At this point Bryan apparently moved on to a detailed discussion of the subject of imperialism. He indicated that President McKinley was misinterpreting the people's opposition to returning the Philippine Islands to Spain and construing this response to be an enthusiasm for embarking upon a colonial policy. Bryan held that the people had not yet had an opportunity to deliberate fully upon such a change in national goals.¹

The concluding argument of Bryan constituted a direct confrontation of President McKinley's emotion-laden question directed to his Atlanta audience eight days earlier: "Who will haul it [the flag] down?"² Bryan pointed out that the flag was a national emblem subject to the national will; when the people want it raised, they raise it, and when they want it lowered, they haul it down, such as in Canada after the War of 1812 and at Chapultepec after the Mexican War, and indicated that such was to be the case in Cuba in the future according to the President's message to Congress.

Bryan then considered the symbolism of the flag in that each star represented a state and each territory hoped in the future to be represented by a star. He further inquired as to what symbol

¹The term "apparently" is used to introduce this paragraph, for the manuscript of the speech has been condensed into a form other than direct address at this point.

²Supra, p. 105.

in the flag could represent vassal colonies too good to be cast away but not good enough to become states:

Shall we keep the Philippines and amend our flag? Shall we add a new star,--the blood-star, Mars--to indicate that we have entered upon a career of conquest? Or shall we borrow the yellow, which in 1896 was the badge of gold and greed, and paint Saturn and his rings to suggest a carpet-bag government with its scheme of spoilation? Or shall we adorn our flag with a Milky Way composed of a multitude of minor stars representing remote and insignificant dependencies?¹

To these questions Bryan responded: "No, a thousand times better to haul down the stars and stripes and substitute the flag of an independent republic than to surrender the doctrines that give glory to 'Old Glory.'"²

This speech by Bryan included a direct response to two questions raised by the President. The first of these questions, posed by McKinley while speaking in Atlanta, was, in effect: "Who will haul down the flag?" This question implied that the nation could not, or should not retire from its position with regard to the former Spanish possessions. Bryan pointed out that the nation had retired in the past from areas held by military conquest and that such retirement was planned insofar as Cuba was concerned. Thus the nation was able to withdraw in honor. Further, Bryan argued that the nation ought to withdraw in that there had been no provision for vassal colonies in the design of the nation or of the flag.

The second, and more subtle question of McKinley, to which portions of Bryan's speech provide partial answer, was, in effect:

¹Manuscript, pp. 2-3.

²Ibid., p. 3.

"What else is there to do but to keep the Philippines?"¹ Bryan referred to the possibility of the Philippines becoming an independent republic and implied that they might be treated in the same manner as was contemplated for Cuba. In this manner did Bryan, after long silence, set himself against the general administration attitude regarding national expansion in the wake of the Spanish-American War.

The eight days which intervened between this speech of Bryan's and his next public pronouncement on imperialism were to contain a flurry of correspondence between Bryan and Andrew Carnegie. This correspondence does more to establish the relationship of Bryan, the Democratic leader and potential presidential candidate, to the debate over imperialism than the often asserted idea that Bryan was trying to create an issue by the use of which he might gain the presidency in the campaign of 1900.²

In a telegram to Carnegie, Bryan stated flatly:

I am not a candidate for any office at this time. Whether I ever shall be again, depends upon circumstances[.] I not only ask no pledge of support, conditional or unconditional, but believe a pledge or prophesy likely to injure the cause of constitutional government against imperialism--a cause which is more dear to me than political preferment. I am making the fight in my own way and hope to see the question disposed of before 1900, so

¹This second question is from McKinley's Savannah speech, supra, p. 107.

²For example, see John M. Blum et al., The National Experience (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1963), pp. 510-11; or Richard Hofstadter, The American Political Tradition (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1948), pp. 196-97.

that the fight for silver and against trusts and bank notes may be continued.¹

Back to Bryan came a letter from Carnegie dated December 26, 1898, and marked "confidential" saying in part: "We can make your fight for Independence just the same, if Treaty be ratified-- and better if it be discredited. . . . I know you prefer the Countrys [sic] good beyond party, so do I[.]"² On the following day a letter from Carnegie marked "private" predicted that if Bryan were to run for president and champion the "policy of the Fathers," he could win; whereas if he were to add silver or other "disturbing issues," he would lose.³ To this advice Bryan responded with a letter detailing his position with regard to silver, trusts, bank currency, and imperialism. "The lines of the next campaign," said Bryan, "cannot be seen at this time, but you need not delude yourself with the idea that silver is dead."⁴

In this correspondence Bryan emphatically denied any interest in creating an issue of imperialism whereby he might ascend to the presidency in 1900. To the contrary, he maintained that a disposition of the question of imperialism prior to 1900 would enable him to continue his fight for silver and against trusts and currency. One must very nearly take the burden of proof on the proposition

¹ Copy of telegram, Bryan to Carnegie, December 24, 1898, in Bryan Papers, Box 21.

² Letter of Andrew Carnegie to William Jennings Bryan, December 26, 1898, Bryan Papers, Box 21.

³ Ibid., December 27, 1898, Bryan Papers, Box 21.

⁴ Copy of letter, Bryan to Carnegie, December 30, 1898, in Bryan Papers, Box 21.

that Bryan was a liar or else conclude that he was taking an ethical position in supporting "the cause of constitutional government against imperialism."

William Jennings Bryan, "Who Saves the Country Saves Himself"¹

In the presence of the 250 guests attending the third annual banquet of the Nebraska Travelling Men's Bryan Club which was held at the Lincoln Hotel in Lincoln, Nebraska, on December 31, 1898, Bryan was called upon to respond to the toast, "America's Mission."² Bryan first referred to fidelity shown by the members of the club to the Chicago platform,³ and commended them in this regard. He then turned to a consideration of the Philippine question.

Bryan indicated first that a colonial policy violated fundamental principles of the nation and then directed his attention to the development of an argument to show that annexation of the Philippines (either forcible or by consent of the people) would result in

¹ The concluding paragraphs of this speech appear under the above title in Bryan et al., The Second Battle, pp. 91-92, and in Bryan et al., Republic or Empire, pp. 17-18. A more complete manuscript is to be found in Bryan Papers, Box 50. The manuscript is in some disarray and this writer chose to reorganize the pages into what appears to be (judging from internal evidence) the original delivery sequence.

² News stories in the New York Herald, December 31, 1898, p. 5, and in the Indianapolis Journal, December 31, 1898, p. 5. The Journal story bore the headline, "Col. Bryan Once More," with a subheading, "Nebraska's Agitator Finds Another Opportunity to Talk."

³ This refers to the Democratic political platform wrought in Chicago in 1896. More particularly, it is often used as a reference to the stand on silver taken by the Democrats in 1896.

financial loss. In developing this argument he first discussed prior acquisitions of territories by the United States such as Florida, the far western lands, Hawaii, and Alaska, and in each instance noted that the acquisition either added strength and security from attack or secured broader opportunities such as land suitable for settlement for American citizenry. Neither of these advantages pertained, according to Bryan, in the case of the Philippines.

Further, argued Bryan, the cost of maintaining an army and a navy so far from home, and the cost of subjugation of the eight millions of peoples located six thousand miles from our shores and scattered over twelve hundred tropic islands would be prohibitive even if receipts in dollars were eventually to equal expenditures. "Who," asked Bryan, "will place a price upon the blood that will be shed?",¹

Bryan then moved into the conclusion of this speech by saying: "It has been the boast of our nation that right makes might; shall we abandon the motto of the republic and go back a century to the monarchical motto which asserts that might makes right?"² He then concluded:

Imperialism finds its inspiration in dollars, not in duty. It is not our duty to burden our people with increased taxes in order to give a few speculators an opportunity for exploitation; it is not our duty to sacrifice the best blood of our nation in tropical jungles in an attempt to stifle the very sentiments which have given vitality to American institutions; it is not our duty to deny to the people of the Philippines the rights for which our forefathers fought from Bunker Hill to Yorktown.

¹ Manuscript, p. 2.

² Manuscript, page beginning, "At the Travelling Men's Banquet."

Our nation has a mission, but it is to liberate those who are in bondage--not to place shackles upon those who are struggling to be free.¹

In this speech Bryan addressed himself primarily to financial considerations of colonialism. He first pointed to the earlier acquisitions of territory and indicated their value in providing security for or development by citizens. Neither of these reasons was pertinent insofar as the Philippines were concerned, maintained Bryan. In fact, he found the contrary to be true and generalized that rather than be financially rewarding, the expenditure in money and in blood required for the subjugation of the islands would be prohibitive. In this speech, at least, Bryan did not inquire into whether or not the Philippines, as possessions, would contribute to national security. He simply asserted that they would not and moved on to his arguments showing that financial losses would accrue.

In his concluding remarks, Bryan presented a general and assertive reaction to the many arguments favoring acquisition of the Philippines on the basis of "duty" supplied by President McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, and others who had spoken previously. He claimed that financial gain was motivating the desire to acquire the Philippines and that it would be better to free the Filipinos than to enslave them.

Not only did the last day of December, 1898, find Bryan speaking against imperialism in the speech discussed above, but it also found one of the chief proponents of national expansion ascending to a major executive position. On this day Theodore Roosevelt

¹ Ibid.

stood before the secretary of state of New York, John Palmer, and took the oath of office as governor of that state.¹ The following Monday (January 2, 1899), Roosevelt was inaugurated governor in the Assembly Chamber of the New York legislature at Albany.² With Roosevelt, temporarily at least, involved in affairs demanding gubernatorial consideration, the next speaker to engage in the debate over imperialism, the speaker who had unsuccessfully campaigned against Roosevelt's election as governor,³ was Carl Schurz.

Carl Schurz, "American Imperialism,"⁴

According to his biographer, the speech delivered by Schurz as the convocation address at the University of Chicago on January 4, 1899, was designed to answer every argument advanced or that could possibly be advanced by proponents of imperialism.⁵ It was ironic that on this same date President McKinley submitted to the Senate for confirmation the treaty of peace between the United States and Spain.⁶

¹ Morison, II, 1498.

² Ibid.

³ Supra, pp. 78-79.

⁴ Carl Schurz, American Imperialism. This speech is bound as a titled pamphlet which contains no facts of publication. It is available (by call number E713-S39) from the main desk in the reading room of the Library of Congress. The speech is also included under the title "The Issue of Imperialism" in Frederic Bancroft (ed.), Speeches, Correspondences and Political Papers of Carl Schurz (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1913), VI, 1-36.

⁵ Fuess, p. 359.

⁶ U.S., Congress, Senate, Message from the President of the United States Transmitting a Treaty of Peace between the U.S. & Spain, Signed at the City of Paris on Dec. 10, 1898, Senate Document No. 62, Part I, 55th Cong., 3d Sess., 1899.

Schurz began the speech by an acknowledgment of the occasion and an expression of gratitude for the opportunity to speak frankly about the proposed imperialistic policy. He then moved quickly to the development of his theme by a brief discussion of the growth of the nation prior to the Spanish-American War. He realized the easy victories in the war had put conquest within reach, and the demand for retention was on the basis of a claim that the nation's whole history had been one of expansion. Schurz, however, distinguished five differences which he believed to invalidate the analogy. These were:

1. All the former acquisitions were on this continent, and, excepting Alaska, contiguous [sic] to our borders.
2. They were situated . . . in the temperate zone. . . .
3. They were but very thinly peopled. . . .
4. They could be organized as territories in the usual manner. . . .
5. They did not require a material increase of our army or navy. . . .¹

Having discussed in detail the manner in which the current potential possessions were in contrast to these five characteristics, Schurz posed the questions as to how, in the case of Cuba, forcible annexation would be criminal aggression, whereas in the case of any other territory such annexation would not be criminal aggression; if the Cubans are and of right ought to be free and independent, how then that the Filipinos and Porto Ricans ought not of right be free and independent? Concluding that to turn a war of liberation and

¹Schurz, p. 6.

humanity into a victory for conquest and self-aggrandizement would be to forfeit the nation's moral credit in the world and invalidate the philosophy embodied in the Declaration of Independence, Schurz then took up twelve arguments which advocates of imperialism put forward to justify such a change in the nation's policy.

The argument that the nation was now too small to support its population Schurz brushed aside by labeling ridiculous. The economic argument including claims of overproduction and thus need for new markets in colonies was answered in two ways: that it was absurd to think we must own the countries with which we trade, for the cases of Germany and the United States showed expansion of trade without colonies, whereas the greatest colonial power, Great Britain, was showing a decline in exports; and that foreign conquest was not necessary to add new markets when we already had adequate foreign markets and were constantly getting more without such conquest.

To the argument that future commerce would be with China and that visible presence of power--i.e., possession of the Philippines--would be necessary to get our share of the trade, Schurz retorted that though China trade was worth having its importance would be in the future and improved commercial methods would prove more successful in achieving that trade than would a show of military might. As to the need for coaling stations, Schurz responded: "Must Great Britain own the whole of Spain in order to hold Gibraltar?",¹ He then disposed of the claim for civilizing the native populations by asking: "Are we not ingenious and charitable enough

¹ Ibid., p. 28.

to do much for their civilization without subjugating and then ruling them by criminal aggression?"¹

The remaining seven arguments Schurz believed to be composed of "high-sounding catch-words," and, therefore, were to be viewed with suspicion. These arguments, briefly, were: that the United States ought to become a world power; the flag, once raised, ought never to be hauled down; the nation should break its contemptible isolation; the nation ought to cast off reverence for Washington's farewell address; the nation could not get out of annexation; the nation's victories had brought with them duties to the people of conquered islands; and the populations of the Spanish islands were incapable of independent government.

Answering each argument in turn, Schurz said that the United States was already a world power, had been so for years, and did not need the Philippines to establish the fact; the flag, while revered by patriots as it waved in justice, ought to be hauled down by them when raised not in justice or the country's best interest; the nation was not living in either economic or political isolation; the nation had grown great under the wisdom of Washington's farewell address and should not reject it; to get out of the business of annexation, while difficult, would prove a lesser difficulty than maintaining it; the nation's duties to Cubans, Porto Ricans, Filipinos, and Tagals were less than its duties to its own citizens and its future; and the populations of the Spanish islands were as capable of self-government as this nation was originally.

Schurz then, moving toward conclusion, suggested that self-government would be possible if the United States aided to that end

¹ Ibid.

by staying on the islands only as long as necessary and then guaranteeing the islands' neutrality. In short, the United States could be their best friend, not their foreign ruler, and thus achieve the grandest triumph of the democratic idea.

In this speech Schurz very nearly accomplished his desire to encompass the arguments of those favoring imperialism. Yet, as total counterargument, the speech might be considered to fall short of the goal in the sense that several points are mentioned only briefly¹ or dismissed as "absurdities" or "ridiculous." Nor can the speech be deemed a comprehensive attack against the threat of imperialism, for merely to meet argument with argument can result in impasse unless one presents additional arguments favoring one's own position.² Yet the two major divisions of the speech, the first being a consideration of the present problems of acquisition of territory in light of past history of the nation and the second being a consideration of twelve major appeals of expansionists, provided Schurz with ample opportunity for a wide compass of discussion. Additionally, he included his own suggestion for appropriate disposition of the islands in question.

¹ Arguments of "destiny" and "moral" or "religious" responsibility, for example, are merely mentioned. See ibid., p. 14.

² An example would be the question of constitutionality which was merely mentioned. See ibid., p. 9.

William Jennings Bryan, "Cincinnati Speech",¹

Two days after Carl Schurz's University of Chicago address was presented, William Jennings Bryan spoke before the Duckworth Club's Jackson Day Banquet held at the Gibson House in Cincinnati. Bryan was "introduced amid a storm of applause",² and proceeded to discuss the silver plank of the Chicago platform and the expansion of the army before turning to the question of annexation of the Philippines.

Stating that the President had based his interpretation of national attitude upon the reactions of a public intoxicated by military triumph, Bryan noted that "the sentiment of the people upon any great question must be measured during the days of deliberation and not during the hours of excitement."³ The basis of such a deliberation, said Bryan, should not be whether or not we can govern colonies but whether or not we should undertake colonialism.

Beginning an examination of the desirability of colonialism, then, Bryan cited the following disjunction:

The real question is whether we can, in one hemisphere, develop the theory that governments derive their just power from the consent of the governed, and at the same time, inaugurate, support, and defend, in the other hemisphere, a government which derives its authority entirely from superior force.⁴

¹ Manuscript, Bryan Papers, Box 50. See also Bryan et al., The Second Battle, pp. 92-96, or Bryan et al., Republic or Empire, pp. 18-22. The speech was presented on January 6, 1899.

² Manuscript, p. 1.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid., p. 2.

Bryan's position was that forcible annexation of the Philippines could not be justified on the grounds of religious duty without confusing religious dicta and it could not be justified in terms of assumed accrual of profits, for, though title might be purchased, no estimate could assure whether national profits would in the future exceed national expenditures. Moreover, the transfer of title to the land would not necessarily conclude the purchase of a people who desired a voice in their own affairs. Additionally, reliance on military rule not only was antagonistic to the doctrines underlying the Republic but presupposed availability of military governors, honest, unselfish, and wise, in the mold of Senator Hanna. Such men had already been delegated positions of responsibility, and only inferior men were available.

A colonial policy, continued Bryan, would require silence from the opposition for fear that questioning, dissent, or allusion to inalienable rights or taxation without representation would stir unrest among oriental subjects. "We must muffle the tones of the old Liberty Bell and commune in whispers when we praise the patriotism of our forefathers."¹

Bryan then concluded his address by developing the idea that the nation would face an impossible task if it were to try to obliterate every vestige of inspiration for or hope of freedom. "The conflict between right and might will continue here and everywhere," said Bryan, "until a day is reached when the love of money will no longer sear the National conscience and hypocrisy no longer hide the hideous features of avarice behind the mask of philanthropy."²

¹Ibid., p. 4.

²Ibid., p. 5.