

Why did many Americans support an imperialistic foreign policy during the late 19th century?

Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, 1895

From the Rio Grande to the Arctic Ocean there should be but one flag and one country. . . . In the interests of our commerce and of our fullest development we should build the Nicaragua canal, and for the protection of that canal and for the sake of our commercial supremacy in the Pacific we should control the Hawaiian Islands and maintain our influence in Samoa. . . . Whether they will or not, Americans must now look outward. The growing production of our country's factories needs new markets.

The tendency of modern times is toward consolidation. It is apparent in business, and it is also true of nations. Small countries are of the past and have no future. The modern movement is all toward the concentration of people and territory. As one of the great nations of the world, the United States must not fall out of the line of march.

Alfred Thayer Mahan (1888)

The possession of colonies allows a country the surest means of supporting abroad a strong navy. They allow for coaling stations and naval bases to be established.

Having no such colonies, the ships of war of the United States, in war or peace, will be like land birds, unable to fly far from their own shores. To provide resting-places for them, where they can coal and repair, would be one of the first duties of a government proposing to itself the development of the power of the nation at sea.

Reverend Josiah Strong, "Our Country", 1895

A marked characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon (people of English ancestry) is what may be called an instinct or genius for colonizing.

It seems to me that God is training the Anglo-Saxon race for an hour sure to come in the world's future. There are no more new worlds. The unoccupied fertile lands of the earth are limited, and will soon be taken by other countries. The time is coming when the pressure of population on the ability to feed itself will be felt here as it is now felt in Europe and Asia. Then will the world enter upon a new stage of its history--the final competition of races, for which the Anglo-Saxon is being trained. This race of unequaled energy, and the greatest liberty, the purest Christianity, the highest civilization will spread itself over the earth. If I read not amiss, this powerful race will move down upon Mexico, down upon Central and South America, out upon the islands of the sea, over upon Africa and beyond. And can anyone doubt that the result of this competition of races will be the "survival of the fittest"?

President William McKinley takes up *The White Man's Burden* (1900)

When I realized that we had the opportunity to take the Philippines. I did not know what to do with them. . . And one night late it came to me this way. . .

We could not leave them to themselves-they are unfit for self-government-and they would soon have anarchy and misrule over there worse than Spain's was.

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.

Motives behind Late 19th century Imperialism

| Document | What area's did the person want the U.S. to acquire? | What reason(s) does the person give in favor of expansion? |
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| Senator Henry Cabot Lodge | | |
| Alfred Thayer Mahan | | |
| Rev. Josiah Strong | | |
| McKinley takes up Rudyard Kipling's White Man's Burden | | |