

I. Arguments for Imperialism

A. Economic Motivations

- 1. The rapid, and unchecked, growth of American industry in the North created a market glut**
 - a) The supply of raw materials, ranging from coal, steel, oil, textiles and finished goods (the U.S. was the largest creator of market products) exceeded the domestic demand for goods
 - b) Testified by the creation of department stores, mail order, and chain stores
 - c) Supply up, demand down
- 2. The growth of labor unions and social demands for greater economic equity.**
 - a) The AFL and Knights of Labor (along with the growth of other labor unions) forced business owners to pay higher wages, expect fewer hours, and submit to federal oversight
 - b) Labor unrest, evident with the Anthracite Coal Strike, the Haymarket Riot, and the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory galvanized the American polity to reform
 - c) More stringent federal enforcement of existing regulation required new markets
- 3. Sound economic policy: The growth of export would balance trade and economy**
- 4. Recent Recessions: The Panic of 1893 proved that the market could not bear unchecked growth**

B. Ideological Motivations

- 1. Manifest Destiny: International expansion must replace the geographic barriers of the North American continent**
 - a) White Man's Burden: U.S. must spread democracy and Christian principles throughout the world—advocated by Josiah Strong and the American missionary movement
- 2. American Nationalism**
 - a) Articulated throughout the 1896, 1900, 1904, (and ever after?) elections
 - b) America was the destined to be the most powerful protector of all things good—money to spend, food to eat, human rights, culture, entertainment, industry, inventions
 - c) America must compete with the imperial drive of European counterparts, notably German, Austria-Hungarian, British, French, and Russian (the World Powers up to WWI)
 - d) America is/was responsible to share the principles of democracy, provide instruction in self-government, protect self-determination, and ensure human rights
- 3. Social Darwinism**
 - a) Prevailing ideology throughout the modern age, stating that those cultures/states which could most adapt to current issues would survive

C. Political / Strategic Motivations:

- a) America required a developed and well supported military—including Army and Navy

- b) Based on Alfred T. Mahan's Power of the Seas, a fully modern navy ensured domestic tranquility, global economic control, and world peace
- c) Intervention in the Caribbean and Latin America would reinforce the Monroe Doctrine, supporting US's control of the Western Hemisphere
- d) Intervention in the Pacific would support Open Door Policy with China and check Japan's rising power
- e) Control/support of the Pacific islands would provide naval stations throughout the Pacific Ocean
 - (1) *Refueling stations*
 - (2) *Protection*
 - (3) *Open locations for raw materials*
- f) International arms race, militarization, and mobilization—Germans, French, Austria-Hungarians, Russians, Japanese, and British were all expanding empires

II. Arguments Against Imperialism

A. *Economic Motivations*

1. The expense of expanding/participating in an imperialist foreign policy is prohibitive
 - a) Cost derived from building and maintaining a well developed army and navy is expensive (payroll, munitions, coal, oil, steel must be purchased, or requiring federal contracts and competitive bidding)
 - b) Cost of foreign campaigns (to quell revolts, to suppress insurrections, to "build nations") very expensive
2. Federal government does not have the capital to invest in campaigns
3. Money must be made available through contracts with industry (creating alliances between industry and government), or by piggy-backing on the infrastructure of existing industrial programs
4. Too much labor unrest, urban poverty, agricultural depression, and unemployment which were not treated

B. *Ideological Motivations*

1. **Anti-Democratic**
 - a) Subjecting people "for their own good" is inherently hypocritical to democracy/self-determination
 - b) Manifest Destiny is an excuse to dominate for selfish gain=greed
2. **Racism**
 - a) White Man's Burden is patronizing and inherently racist—there is no fundamental, psychological difference between races
 - b) Only difference between cultures is socialization and history
3. **Social consideration**—the federal government thus far failed to ensure democracy to the African-American population, the immigrant population, and the urban and agricultural poor