Fall 1898: America at the Crossroads

On August 12, 1898, the United States and Spain signed a preliminary peace treaty. Spain relinquished all claims to Cuba, permitted temporary U.S. occupation of Manila until the status of the Philippines was determined, and gave control of Puerto Rico to the United States. Almost overnight, the United States had an empire under its control.

In the four months that followed, U.S. and Spanish negotiators worked out the details of the final treaty in Paris. Of the five members of the U.S. peace commission appointed by President McKinley, four were backers of expansion. McKinley instructed them to take a firm stance, especially on the Philippines. By October, he insisted that Spain turn over the entire Philippine island archipelago to the United States. Spain was in no position to resist U.S. demands.

The final treaty, signed December 10, 1898, reflected McKinley’s wishes. Cuba was granted independence, and the Philippines and Puerto Rico were transferred to the United States. McKinley agreed to pay $20 million to compensate Spain for government buildings in the Philippines. The treaty was now ready for consideration by the Senate where a two-thirds majority was needed for ratification.

The treaty signing ceremony was overshadowed by an intense debate already raging in the United States over the issues addressed in the document. In many respects, the controversy touched on questions that were as profound as those raised by the clash over slavery or the arguments surrounding the writing of the Constitution.

Ironically, the Philippines—not Cuba—was at the eye of the storm. Before going to war, Congress had clearly committed the United States to upholding Cuba’s independence. In contrast, the future status of the Philippines and its nearly ten million people had not been seriously addressed.

The treaty with Spain put the Philippines front and center. It called for Washington to “annex” the islands—in other words, to add the Philippines to U.S. territory as a colony. Opponents of imperialism were outraged. They formed the Anti-Imperialist League in October 1898 to defeat the treaty in the Senate.

The anti-imperialists contended that the creation of a colonial empire would corrupt America’s political system. Under their banner, they assembled an impressive assortment of prominent Americans, including former President Grover Cleveland, industrialist Andrew Carnegie, and labor leader Samuel Gompers.

“We hold that the policy known as imperialism is hostile to liberty and tends toward militarism.... We insist that the subjugation of any people is “criminal aggression” and open disloyalty to the distinctive principles of our government.”

—Platform of the Anti-Imperialist League

Leading the fight for the annexation of the Philippines was a powerful coalition of politicians, businessmen, religious leaders, and military strategists. Within its ranks were Theodore Roosevelt, Massachusetts Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, and naval historian Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan. The most well-connected expansionists emphasized the economic and military value of imperialism.

“Americans must now look outward. The growing production of the country demands it. An increasing volume of public sentiment demands it. The position of the United States, between the two Old Worlds [Asia and Europe] and the two great oceans, makes the same claim.”

—Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan

Within the imperialist camp, two distinct positions soon emerged. Proponents of what was known as the “large policy” urged the United States to compete with the European powers to build an overseas American empire. Meanwhile, backers of the “small policy” favored limited expansion to areas of significant strategic or commercial importance. As you will learn, all segments in the debate over the Treaty of Paris of 1898 would play a vital role in shaping the direction of U.S. foreign policy in the twentieth century.
OPTIONS IN BRIEF

OPTION 1—FULFILL OUR NATIONAL DESTINY

Just as the courage of our founding fathers opened the door to taming the North American continent, the heroism of our soldiers and sailors in Cuba and the Philippines has revealed a new horizon of expansion and possibility. This is our God-given mission. We must grasp the empire that our brave young men have won and fulfill our national destiny. We have been chosen by God for greatness. We must look overseas, particularly to the Far East, to continue advancing. With their safe harbors and strategic location, the Philippine islands are the gateway to all of Asia. Of course, our role in the Philippines must go well beyond economics. Now that we have rescued the Filipinos from Spanish misrule, we owe it to them to bring the benefits of American civilization to the islands. Let us seize our national destiny and move bravely forward.

OPTION 2—PRESERVE OUR DEMOCRATIC VALUES

In our hearts, we know what is right. We know that ruling over another people without their consent is tyranny. Imperialism flies in the face of our core values of individual freedom and self-government. The imperialists are asking us to annex a far-flung collection of islands half a world away with nearly ten million people. We are being asked to step into the role of colonial master in the Philippines, just as the Spanish before us. Imperialism is a virus that, if permitted to enter our system, would eventually infect our entire society. The burden of administering an empire would swell the power and cost of our central government at the expense of individual liberty. Do we want to exchange the values of a democratic republic for those of a military dictatorship? We must grant the Philippines independence and walk away from the dangerous illusion of empire.

OPTION 3—CAREFULLY CALCULATE OUR INTERESTS

A careful assessment of our national interests will surely lead us to the conclusion that the United States should acquire the harbor of Manila and establish a temporary protectorate over the Filipino people. Plunging headlong down the path of reckless imperialism would inevitably bring us into conflict with the imperial powers of Europe and Japan. At the same time, we can no longer retreat into our earlier isolation from international affairs. We are a great nation, and with greatness comes responsibility on the world stage. Leaving the international arena exclusively in the control of the imperial powers would only heighten the competition for colonies. Trade would be stifled and hostilities would deepen. America must act as a force for peace and moderation in international relations. We must be wise and deliberate in our policies, but we cannot afford to be indifferent.
America’s stunning triumph over Spain has ushered our nation into a new era of opportunity and responsibility. Just as the courage of our founding fathers opened the door to taming the North American continent, the heroism of our soldiers and sailors in Cuba and the Philippines has revealed a new horizon of expansion and possibility. This is our God-given mission. We must grasp the empire that our brave young men have won and fulfill our national destiny.

From the beginning, America has been more than just another country. Rather, we have been chosen by God for greatness. With divine blessing, hard work, and a sense of duty rooted in our Anglo-Saxon heritage, we have built the greatest nation on earth. No other country can compete with the productivity of America’s farms and factories. No other people has demonstrated the same capacity for wise and moderate self-government. Now we have the opportunity—some would say the obligation—to extend the grand American experiment beyond our shores.

America’s economic future lies abroad. The ingenuity, efficiency, and innovation of our people are producing more than our country can consume. As we have witnessed in recent years, the economic problems and social unrest resulting from surplus production threaten to bring down all that we have achieved. We must look overseas, particularly to the Far East, to continue advancing. The markets of Asia hold the key to keeping America’s economy healthy and strong. To reach them, however, we need to control the Philippines in their entirety. With their safe harbors and strategic location, the Philippine islands are the gateway to all of Asia.

Of course, our role in the Philippines must go well beyond economics. Now that we have rescued the Filipinos from Spanish misrule, we owe it to them to bring the benefits of American civilization to the islands. We must accept the responsibilities that have been laid before us. Outside of a small educated elite in Manila and a handful of wealthy landowners, most Filipinos are in a primitive state. During three centuries of Spanish colonial rule, the islands made little progress. To move forward, the Filipinos need the firm and fair government that only the United States can provide. They need order and security as they learn about the American concepts of democracy and freedom. They need our helping hand to develop the resources of their islands and to enter the modern age. The task awaiting us is difficult and probably thankless, but it is the morally correct thing to do.

Consider the alternatives. In this age of ruthless colonialism, the Philippines without U.S. protection would be easy prey for powerful, unscrupulous nations like Japan and Germany. As they were under the Spanish, the Filipinos would again be conquered, exploited, and left in misery. Moreover, Manila Bay—the finest natural harbor in the western Pacific—could fall under the control of an unfriendly power. Both Americans and Filipinos would lose.

No self-respecting nation can abandon what was earned by the blood of its fighting men. Our military forces accomplished in a few short months what Filipino and Cuban rebels could not do for themselves in years of struggle. Advancing the cause of civilization in the Philippines gives meaning to those who died in the process, and especially to those who were murdered on the Maine.

If we shirk the challenge before us, if we turn inward, we will both dishonor our nation and deprive future generations of the economic blessings which an empire can provide. We will betray the mission which God has given us to act as a beacon of liberty and Christianity. Let us seize our national destiny and move bravely forward.
FROM THE HISTORICAL RECORD

Senator Orville Platt, Connecticut
“I believe the hand of Providence brought about the conditions which we must either accept or be recreant [cowardly] to duty. I believe that those conditions were a part of the great development of the great force of Christian civilization on earth. I believe the same force was behind our army at Santiago and our ships in Manila Bay that was behind the landing of the Pilgrims on Plymouth Rock.... The English-speaking people, the agents of civilization, the agency through which humanity is to be uplifted, through which despotism is to go down, through which the rights of man are to prevail, is charged with this great mission. We propose to proclaim liberty in the Philippine Islands, if they are ours.”

Senator Knute Nelson, Minnesota
“Today, in substance, the English government is as much a republic as our government. Her colonial development has served to increase the liberties of Englishmen.... That English government in British India, in Egypt, and in all other English colonies, wherever we look at it, has been a great improvement and a great blessing.... Are we incompetent to colonize, to develop, and to govern territorial possessions like England? Is the Yankee inferior to the Englishman? It is our duty under the providence of God to protect the Philippine islanders against anarchy, chaos and confusion, and the despotism that results from it. We owe them a duty now, as in the case of the drowning child snatched from a watery grave.... They are as unfit for self-government as most people on the face of the earth.... We are there for two purposes: to give the people of those islands a just, good, fair, and free system of government in some form, and to keep them out of the hands of the great powers.”

Rand-McNally Bankers’ Monthly
“Railroad building may be expected to boom in all the islands which fall under the influence of the United States. Our sugar and tobacco growing would receive an impetus. The forests may also be made to yield handsome returns, and in fact every industry so long under the blighting rule of Spain, will be exploited and made to show the advantages accruing from better government and wider enterprise.”

The Churchman
“Woe to any nation brought to pass where it is called to guide a weaker people’s future which hesitates for fear its own interests will be entangled and its own future imperilled by the discharge of unmistakable duty.”

Railway World
“One way of opening a market is to conquer it.... Already our enterprising merchants are beginning to take possession of the markets which our army and navy have opened to them.”

Senator Albert Beveridge, Indiana
“The Philippines are ours forever, ‘territory belonging to the United States’ as the Constitution calls them. And just beyond the Philippines are China’s illimitable markets. We will not renounce our part in the mission of our race, trustee, under God, of the civilization of the world. God has marked us as His chosen people, henceforth to lead in the regeneration of the world.... We are not dealing with Americans or Europeans. We are dealing with Orientals. They are not capable of self-government.... Savage blood, Oriental blood, Malay blood, Spanish example—are these the elements of self-government?... The Declaration of Independence applies only to people capable of self-government.

“The power that rules the Pacific, therefore, is the power that rules the world. And with the Philippines, that power is and will forever be the American Republic.... The ocean unites; steam [powered vessels] unites us; electricity unites us; all the elements of nature unite us to this region where duty and interest call us.... Our fathers wrote into the Constitution words of growth, of expansion, of empire, if you will,
“Do you tell me that it will cost us money? When did Americans ever measure duty by financial standards? Do you tell me of the tremendous toil required to overcome the vast difficulties of our task? What mighty work for the world, for humanity, even for ourselves has ever been done with ease?...Pray God that the time may never come when Mammon [material wealth] and the love of ease shall so debase our blood that we will fear to shed it for the flag and its imperial destiny. The American people must move forward to the future of their hope and the doing of God’s work.”

**BELIEFS AND ASSUMPTIONS UNDERLYING OPTION 1**

1. Just as destiny guided our nation across the North American continent, so it now points to expansion southward and eastward across the seas.

2. God has bestowed a special mission on the American people, choosing us to bring progress, Christian virtues, and order to distant and long-suffering lands. For the Filipinos, annexation by the United States offers them their best, and perhaps only, hope of creating a stable, effective government.

3. Our nation’s continued prosperity depends on finding new markets overseas to absorb America’s surplus production.

**ARGUMENTS SUPPORTING OPTION 1**

1. Establishing a U.S. presence in the Philippines will open new commercial opportunities in Asia, particularly in the vast markets of China.

2. Annexing the Philippines will block other countries from seizing the islands and converting them into a base that may threaten U.S. interests.

3. Introducing the American concepts of democracy and liberty to the Filipinos will eventually transform them into reliable allies.

4. Controlling the entire Philippine archipelago will ensure the security of Manila harbor and provide the United States with a strategic naval base for asserting our interests in East Asia.

5. In American hands, the Philippines will quickly emerge as a major exporter of sugar, cotton, tobacco, and other valuable crops.
America today stands at a crossroads. Along one path, we can continue to follow the wisdom of our founding fathers and make further strides toward peace and prosperity. Along the other, we can join the militaristic governments of the Old World and fall into the ruinous trap of imperialism.

In our hearts, we know what is right. We know that ruling over another people without their consent is tyranny, whether the year be 1776 or 1898. Imperialism flies in the face of our core values of individual freedom and self-government. The Filipinos do not want to be governed by us. To impose our will on them will put our young soldiers in the position of the British redcoats, depriving others of liberty. Is this a worthy cause for shedding American blood? Is this the spirit of ’76?

The authors of our Constitution recognized the folly of acquiring overseas colonies and did not address the issue in our country’s most precious political document. Since then, America’s expansion westward has followed a logical course. We have gradually extended our control across the continent, opening new lands to settlement by American citizens and eventual statehood.

This is hardly the case in the Philippines. Rather, the imperialists are asking us to annex a far-flung collection of islands half a world away with nearly ten million people. There is no thought to giving the Filipinos citizenship or granting the islands statehood. Rather, we are being asked to step into the role of colonial master, just as the Spanish before us.

The Filipinos are not like us. They speak a different language, they practice a different religion, and they know little of our civilization. Our country already suffers from serious racial problems. America’s blacks have barely begun to rise from the depths of slavery. Millions of alien immigrants from southern and eastern Europe are pouring into our cities and threatening the stability of our institutions. To aggravate the situation by adding the Filipinos to the mix would be madness.

Imperialism is a contagion that, if permitted to enter our system, would eventually infect our entire society. Acquiring a colonial empire would inevitably plunge America into distant conflicts with Japan, Germany, France, Britain, and other imperialist powers. We would soon find ourselves sucked into the intrigues and squabbles of the Old World. Two vast oceans have protected us from the senseless wars of Europe and Asia. To acquire a far-flung empire would be to throw away the splendid isolation with which God has blessed us.

The burden of administering an empire would swell the power and cost of our central government at the expense of individual liberty. As an imperialist power, the United States would be compelled to enlarge the navy and maintain a large standing army. As our founding fathers rightly feared, we would be setting the stage for the emergence of an American Caesar. Do we want our young men to be seduced by the lure of military glory abroad rather than productive work at home? Do we want to exchange the values of a democratic republic for those of a military dictatorship?

We must not allow ourselves to be deceived by the false promise of imperialism. America’s focus belongs at home, not on seizing distant colonies. We must grant the Philippines independence and walk away from the dangerous illusion of empire.
FROM THE HISTORICAL RECORD

Senator George Hoar, Massachusetts
“A democracy can not rule over vassal states or subject peoples without bringing in the elements of death
into its own constitution. The great doctrine of constitutional liberty and of political morality is that
government derives its just powers from the consent of the governed.... When you raise the flag over the
Philippine Islands as an emblem of domination and acquisition you take it down from Independence Hall.
"[The power to conquer and create colonies] is not among the express powers granted in the Constitution.
This power our forefathers and their descendants loathed and abhorred. They would have cut off their
right hands, every one of them, sooner than set them to an instrument which should confer it. The power
to conquer alien peoples and hold them in subjugation is nowhere implied as necessary for the
accomplishment of the purposes declared by the constitution.

“You can not subjugate them and govern them against their will because you think it is for their good,
when they do not; because you think you are going to give them the blessings of liberty. You have no right
at the cannon’s mouth to impose on an unwilling people your Declaration of Independence and your
Constitution and your notions of freedom and of what is good.”

Senator Ben Tillman, South Carolina
“You are undertaking to annex and make a component part of this government islands inhabited by ten
millions of the colored race, one half or more of whom are barbarians of the lowest type. It is to the injection
into the body politic of the United States of that vitiated blood, that debased and ignorant people, that
we object.”

Senator George Hoar, Massachusetts
“We want to know what rights of citizenship these people are to get by this treaty. The question whether
those Malays and Mohammedans and others can go anywhere in the United States to compete with
American laborers is an important practical question to all of our workingmen.”

Senator Stephen White, California
“When our Constitution was made it was supposed that the United States would never extend its domain
save over those who were not only within the equal protection of the laws, but who were competent to
participate in...the benefits of representative civilization.... If the Filipino knows enough to govern himself,
we should let him alone. If he does not know enough we do not desire to associate with him.... When we
place our giant foot upon those islands, we will seek new scenes for aggression and conquest and will
consider that it is our duty to encircle the earth.”

Senator Alexander Clay, Georgia
“If we undertake to cross the oceans and to establish colonies, we will be driven to an alliance with
England, Russia, Japan, or some other foreign power in order to hold and defend our newly acquired
possessions.... Should we annex and permanently retain those islands, and attempt to force a government
on the Filipinos against their will, such action will doubtless meet with the determined opposition of those
people and a bloody, cruel, and expensive war will necessarily follow between our soldiers and the
inhabitants of the Philippines. The United States has heretofore been solid, compact, contiguous, and
impregnable. Remaining in this condition, the naval forces of the world dare not attack us. When we go
out into the seas beyond the Western Hemisphere and acquire other countries, we increase our
responsibilities, weaken our defenses, and enormously increase the expenses of our Army and Navy.”

Carl Schurz, newspaper editor
“I warn the American people that a democracy cannot deny its faith as to the vital conditions of its being—
it cannot long play the king over subject populations without creating within itself ways of thinking and
habits of action most dangerous to its own vitality.”
General Emilio Aguinaldo, leader of the provisional Filipino government
“American precepts and examples have influenced my people to desire independent government. They established and for seven months have maintained a form of government resembling the American in that it is based upon the right of the people to rule.... It would seem to follow that the present recognition of the first republic of Asia by the greatest Republic of America would be cognizant of right, justice and precedent.”

William Jennings Bryan, Democratic presidential nominee
“Trade cannot be permanently profitable unless it is voluntary. When trade is secured by force, the cost of securing it and retaining it must be taken out of the profits, and the profits are never large enough to cover the expense.... If we have an imperial policy we must have a great standing army as its natural and necessary complement. [This] is a menace to a republican form of government. The army is the personification of force, and militarism will inevitably change the ideals of the people and turn the thoughts of our young men from the arts of peace to the science of war.”

BELIEFS AND ASSUMPTIONS UNDERLYING OPTION 2

1. Imposing our will on a foreign country violates the spirit of America’s most fundamental values.

2. As American leaders have known from the earliest days of the republic, the United States should steer clear of the evil intrigues of the Old World.

3. The American form of democratic government grew out of our country’s unique experience. It is not something that can be transplanted into the soil of an alien culture.

ARGUMENTS SUPPORTING OPTION 2

1. Establishing overseas colonies will be a drain on our government and offer few economic or military advantages in return.

2. Bringing nearly ten million Filipinos under U.S. control will aggravate our country’s racial problems and undercut the position of American workers by opening up a new source of cheap labor.

3. Pursuing an imperialist policy will require a drastic increase in the size of the U.S. Army and Navy, and will give rise to a new set of anti-democratic, militaristic values.

4. Protecting an overseas empire will entangle the United States in alliances with other imperial powers and eventually draw us into war.

5. Annexing territory for the purpose of colonialism rather than statehood will corrupt our political system by creating a new class of subjects denied the benefits of citizenship.
America today faces a crucial decision. Our victory over Spain has presented us with both opportunity and danger. The United States must again draw on its proven ability to resolve difficult issues from a practical point of view. A careful assessment of our national interests will surely lead us to the conclusion that the United States should acquire the harbor of Manila and establish a temporary protectorate over the Filipino people.

While many have been dazzled by the prospect of empire, few of the enthusiasts for foreign adventure have thoughtfully considered the costs and risks. Plunging headlong down the path of reckless imperialism would inevitably bring us into conflict with the imperial powers of Europe and Japan. Huge sums would have to be spent on expanding America’s army and navy. This is money that would be much better invested in railroads, schools, and businesses at home. Imperialism would also threaten our political system. In the past, the United States has fought to advance the cause of liberty. To take up the sword as a conqueror in the Philippines and to wield it permanently as an overlord would change the character of America.

At the same time, we can no longer retreat into our earlier isolation from international affairs. We are a great nation, and with greatness comes responsibility on the world stage. Our continued economic prosperity depends on our success in exporting American goods overseas. Leaving the international arena exclusively in the control of the imperial powers would only heighten the competition for colonies. Trade would be stifled and hostilities would deepen. America must act as a force for peace and moderation in international relations. We must be wise and deliberate in our policies, but we cannot afford to be indifferent.

In the economic sphere, we should press for an “open door” to trade in Asia. All nations should be allowed to compete in the Asian market without restrictions. Given an equal chance, American exporters will earn their fair share of trade. To that end, the harbor of Manila would be an important asset for the United States. We should be thinking in terms enhancing our position in world commerce, not in acquiring colonies. Our values and our people are best suited to trade and industry, not to conquest and empire.

Our only duty is to provide the newly freed Cuban and Filipino peoples with an opportunity to develop without foreign interference. They are welcome to learn from us, but we will not impose the American system on them. We have done our part to bring liberty to the Cubans and Filipinos. The rest is up to them.

By the same token, the United States cannot turn its back on the former Spanish colonies, especially the Philippines. Without U.S. protection, another power would be sure to seize the Philippines. Likewise, the Filipinos themselves would almost certainly slip into chaos and even civil war if they were suddenly deprived of U.S. guidance. The leader of the new Filipino government, Emilio Aguinaldo, himself admires our country’s political ideals and recognizes the need for continued American assistance.

By serving as a protector and a friend in the Philippines, the United States can further both our own national interests and those of the Filipinos. As we take our first steps onto the world stage, we can make our experience in the Philippines an example for future generations to follow.
FROM THE HISTORICAL RECORD

Thomas B. Reed, Speaker of the House of Representatives
“The greatest aim of a nation should be to use all the appliances for advancing knowledge, to assimilate its peoples to a common standard. To that end we must not hasten. Not every opportunity for aggrandizement should be seized. Too much food may mean indigestion.... The middle of our empire [continental United States] lies undeveloped. There is no need to hurry. As we grow, we will spread fast enough. Our strength grows with our years.... Empires which hope for eternity can wait.”

Walter Hines Page, editor of The Atlantic Monthly
“Today we are face-to-face with the sort of problems that have grown up in the management of world empires.... Shall we still be content with peaceful industry at home, or does there yet lurk in us the adventurous spirit of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers?...The continued progress of the race in the equalization of opportunity and in well-being depends on democratic institutions, of which we, under God, are yet, in spite of all our shortcomings, the chief beneficiaries and custodians. Our greatest victory will not be over Spain but over ourselves—to show once more that even in its righteous wrath the republic has the virtue of self-restraint.”

Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan, naval historian
“Three things are needful: First, protection of the chief harbors, by fortifications and coast defense ships.... Secondly, naval force, the arm of offensive power, which alone enables a country to extend its influence outward. Thirdly, no foreign state should henceforth acquire a coaling position within three thousand miles of San Francisco.”

Senator Alexander Clay, Georgia
“I do not pretend to say that these people [the Filipinos] are as capable of self-government as the Americans, and where will you find a population that will compare with ours? They are capable of putting in operation a government suitable to their taste, surrounding, and conditions, and one that will bring to them much more happiness and satisfaction than a government established by a foreign power against their will.... Let us declare that it is our purpose to give aid and direction to the people of those islands to form such a government for themselves.”

William Jennings Bryan, Democratic presidential nominee
“A war of conquest is as unwise as it is unrighteous. A harbor and coaling station in the Philippines would answer every trade and military necessity and such a concession could have been secured at any time without difficulty. It is not necessary to own a people in order to trade with them. We carry on trade today with every part of the world, and our commerce has expanded more rapidly than the commerce of any European empire.”

Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, Massachusetts
“It is not the policy of the United States to enter, as England has done, upon the general acquisition of distant possessions in all parts of the world. Our government is not adapted to such a policy; but at the same time it must be remembered that while in the United States themselves we hold the citadel of our power and greatness as a nation, there are outposts essential to the defense of that citadel which must neither be neglected nor abandoned.”
BELIEFS AND ASSUMPTIONS UNDERLYING OPTION 3

1. Our primary goal in determining U.S. policy toward Spain’s former colonies should be to promote American economic interests abroad.

2. Creating an empire simply for the sake of empire runs counter to our country’s principal interests and core values.

3. Americans must put aside the childish notion that the purpose of U.S. foreign policy is to spread our country’s values overseas. On the contrary, U.S. leaders must carefully choose when and where our country becomes involved in international affairs.

ARGUMENTS SUPPORTING OPTION 3

1. Establishing naval bases and fueling stations in strategic locations overseas, such as Manila, will serve as an important instrument in advancing American commercial and security interests around the world.

2. Controlling Manila’s harbor will give American exporters easy access to the Chinese market without burdening our country with the demands of maintaining an empire.

3. Setting up a protectorate over the Philippines will allow the Filipinos to make progress toward self-government without interference from predatory imperialist powers.

4. Asserting America’s presence abroad will strengthen U.S. foreign policy efforts to promote an “open door” for international trade in China and elsewhere in Asia.

5. Taking on limited challenges and responsibilities in the world will allow our country to gradually expand its strength and influence.
Considering Your Option—Fall 1898

The Setting: Your group has been asked to present your views on the treaty with Spain at a town hall meeting of the citizens of Springville, the small town where you live. At Springville’s last town hall meeting, a majority of citizens voted to express Springville’s position on the treaty in a petition to the U.S. Senate. Now, your group will have an opportunity to persuade your fellow citizens that Springville should accept your option as the town’s position.

Your Assignment: This worksheet will help you prepare a three-to-five minute presentation that your group will deliver on Day Four. Keep in mind that your group’s presentation may include only information that was available in the fall of 1898. After all of the groups have presented their options, your fellow citizens will have an opportunity to challenge your arguments.

Your Role: Each member of your group should play a specific role to help bring forward the strong points of your option. Below are some roles you might consider adopting.

- Business leader (to speak on economic issues)
- Small farmer (to speak on concerns facing farmers)
- Retired military officer (to speak on foreign policy and military issues)
- Religious leader (to speak on moral issues)
- History teacher (to speak on the lessons of the past)

In addition, your group will need a group director to organize your presentation.

Consider the following questions as you prepare your presentation:

1. According to your option, what are the main problems currently facing the United States?

2. How important is overseas trade and the possession of colonies to America’s economic prosperity?

3. Which values should guide our country’s role in the world?

4. If your option is adopted, how will it shape America’s direction in the twentieth century?

5. What specific course of action does your option recommend with respect to the Philippines?
Concerned Citizens—Fall 1898

Your Assignment
You have been called upon to express the concerns of a resident of the small town of Springville in the fall of 1898. Although many of your fellow citizens still earn their living from farming, Springville has changed markedly since a railroad line was built through your town a decade ago. Springville now has a small factory that produces furniture. The railroad has also brought a steady stream of immigrants to your town, most of whom work in the factory or as farm hands. The immigrants generally live in a poorer section of town, not far from Springville's small black community.

Your town was hit hard by the depression that began in 1893. Both farmers and the furniture factory are just beginning to recover from the downturn. Since the outbreak of the war with Spain, however, foreign policy has replaced economics as the main topic of conversation in Springville. Several of the young men in your town enlisted in the volunteer forces that fought in Cuba and the Philippines. A few remain stationed in the Philippines.

Now that a treaty with Spain has been signed, the citizens of Springville have decided to express your town's position on the agreement in a petition to the U.S. Senate. You and your fellow citizens will attend a town hall meeting to hear three distinct positions, or options, on U.S. policy.

Defining Your Role
First, you will need to define a role for yourself. Use what you have learned about the United States in the 1890s to design a character that would fit the town of Springville.

1. Describe your role. (For example, your description might include information on your character’s age, gender, occupation, ethnic background, family, and the important events in his or her life.)

2. What are your character’s main concerns and hopes for the future?

Developing Questions
Once you have defined a role for yourself, you should prepare two questions from the perspective of your character regarding each of the options. The questions should reflect the values and interests of your role. Keep in mind that your questions should be based only on information that was available in the fall of 1898. For example, an appropriate question about Option 1 from the perspective of a returning soldier would be:

Under Option 1, wouldn’t we have to send increasing numbers of our troops overseas to defend our colonies?

On Day Four, the three option groups will present their positions. After their presentations are completed, your teacher will call on you and your fellow citizens to ask questions. The “Evaluation Form” you receive is designed for you to record your impressions of the option groups. At the end of the activity, you will be expected to turn in the “Evaluation Form,” as well as your responses to the “Concerned Citizens—Fall 1898” worksheet.
Evaluation Form
Concerned Citizens—Fall 1898

Instructions: Answer the questions below from the perspective of your character.

**Part I**
What was the most persuasive argument presented in favor of this option?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option 1</th>
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What was the most persuasive argument presented against this option?

**Part II**
Which group presented its option most effectively? Explain your answer.
The Spanish-American War
Four Corners of Perspectives

Causes of war:

American perceptions of others (Cubans, Spanish, Filipinos):

Spanish perceptions of others (Cubans, Americans, Filipinos):

Cuban perceptions of others (Americans, Spanish, Filipinos):

Filipino perceptions of others (Cubans, Spanish, Americans):

Perception of their role:

Desired outcomes:
Specific Case: The Spanish-American War

What was the international status of the U.S. at this point in history?

How did the U.S. perceive itself at this point in history?

What role did race play in U.S. foreign policy at this point in history?

What were the driving forces behind imperialism?

Why did the U.S. declare war on Spain in 1898?

Why did Cuba matter to the U.S.?

What was the outcome of this war?

Why did the U.S. occupy the Philippines?
Imperialism and the Open Door

Student Name ___________________________________________________ Date ________________

John Hay’s Open Door Note, September 6, 1899: http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/opendoor.htm

American Secretary of State John Hay was a leading architect of the rise of the United States to world power status. He had begun his public career as a secretary to President Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War. Hay had recently returned to Washington after serving as U.S. ambassador to Britain. Hay was an advocate of close Anglo-American cooperation but because of domestic and international politics, chose to issue the Open Door Notes as a unilateral U.S. initiative. After President McKinley’s assassination he continued to serve as Theodore Roosevelt’s Secretary of State until his death in 1905. This note was sent to the German government through the American Minister in Berlin. Copies were sent to American diplomats in Britain and Russia, and later in Italy, France and Japan.

At the time when the Government of the United States was informed by that of Germany that it had leased from His Majesty the Emperor of China the port of Kiao-chao and the adjacent territory in the province of Shantung, assurances were given to the ambassador of the United States at Berlin by the Imperial German minister for foreign affairs that the rights and privileges insured by treaties with China to citizens of the United States would not thereby suffer or be in anywise impaired within the area over which Germany had thus obtained control.

More recently, however, the British Government recognized by a formal agreement with Germany the exclusive right of the latter country to enjoy in said leased area and the contiguous "sphere of influence or interest" certain privileges, more especially those relating to railroads and mining enterprises; but as the exact nature and extent of the rights thus recognized have not been clearly defined, it is possible that serious conflicts of interest may at any time arise not only between British and German subjects within said area, but that the interests of our citizens may also be jeopardized thereby.

Earnestly desirous to remove any cause of irritation and to insure at the same time to the commerce of all nations in China the undoubted benefits which should accrue from a formal recognition by the various powers claiming "spheres of interest" that they shall enjoy perfect equality of treatment for their commerce and navigation within such "spheres," the Government of the United States would be pleased to see His German Majesty's Government give formal assurances, and lend its cooperation in securing like assurances from the other interested powers, that each, within its respective sphere of whatever influence--

First. Will in no way interfere with any treaty port or any vested interest within any so-called "sphere of interest" or leased territory it may have in China.

Second. That the Chinese treaty tariff of the time being shall apply to all merchandise landed or shipped to all such ports as are within said "sphere of interest" (unless they be "free ports"), no matter to what nationality it may belong, and that duties so leviable shall be collected by the Chinese Government.
Third. That it will levy no higher harbor dues on vessels of another nationality frequenting any port in such "sphere" than shall be levied on vessels of its own nationality, and no higher railroad charges over lines built, controlled, or operated within its "sphere" on merchandise belonging to citizens or subjects of other nationalities transported through such "sphere" than shall be levied on similar merchandise belonging to its own nationals transported over equal distances.

The liberal policy pursued by His Imperial German Majesty in declaring Kiao-chao a free port and in aiding the Chinese Government in the establishment there of a custom-house are so clearly in line with the proposition which this Government is anxious to see recognized that it entertains the strongest hope that Germany will give its acceptance and hearty support.

The recent ukase of His Majesty the Emperor of Russia declaring the port of Ta-lien-wan open during the whole of the lease under which it is held from China to the merchant ships of all nations, coupled with the categorical assurances made to this Government by His Imperial Majesty's representative at this capital at the time and since repeated to me by the present Russian ambassador, seem to insure the support of the Emperor to the proposed measure. Our ambassador at the Court of St. Petersburg has in consequence been instructed to submit it to the Russian Government and to request their early consideration of it. A copy of my instruction on the subject to Mr. Tower is herewith inclosed for your confidential information.

The commercial interests of Great Britain and Japan will be so clearly served by the desired declaration of intentions, and the views of the Governments of these countries as to the desirability of the adoption of measures insuring the benefits of equality of treatment of all foreign trade throughout China are so similar to those entertained by the United States, that their acceptance of the propositions herein outlined and their cooperation in advocating their adoption by the other powers can be confidently expected. I inclose herewith copy of the instruction which I have sent to Mr. Choate on the subject.

In view of the present favorable conditions, you are instructed to submit the above considerations to His Imperial German Majesty's Minister for Foreign Affairs, and to request his early consideration of the subject.

Copy of this instruction is sent to our ambassadors at London and at St. Petersburg for their information.
Imperialism and the Open Door

Student Name ___________________________________________________ Date ________________

Read the following documents and list their key points on the 5x7 piece of construction paper given to you to construction a class timeline of events. Be prepared to present your document to the class.

Group 1: Britain Reacts to the Open Door Note, November 30, 1899:
http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/opbrit.htm

I have the honor to state that I have carefully considered, in communication with my colleagues, the proposal . . . that a declaration should be made by foreign powers claiming "spheres of interest" in China as to their intentions in regard to the treatment of foreign trade and interest therein.

I have much pleasure in informing your excellency that Her Majesty's Government will be prepared to make a declaration in the sense desired by your Government in regard to the leased territory of Wei-hai Wei and all territory in China which may hereafter be acquired by Great Britain by lease or otherwise, and all spheres of interest now held or that may hereafter be held by her in China, provided that a similar declaration is made by other powers concerned.

Russian Response to the Open Door Note, December 18, 1899:
http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/rusdoor.htm

I had the honor to receive your excellency's note ... relating to the principles which the Government of the United States would like to see adopted in commercial matters by the powers which have interests in China.

In so far as the territory leased by China to Russia is concerned, the Imperial Government has already demonstrated its firm intention to follow the policy of "the open door" by creating Dalny (Ta-lien-wan) a free port; and if at some future time that port, although remaining free itself, should be separated by a customs limit from other portions of the territory in question, the customs duties would be levied, in the zone subject to the tariff, upon all foreign merchandise without distinction as to nationality.

As to the ports now opened or hereafter to be opened to foreign commerce by the Chinese Government, and which lie beyond the territory leased to Russia, the settlement of the question of customs duties belongs to China herself, and the Imperial Government has no intention whatever of claiming any privileges for its own subjects to the exclusion of other foreigners. It is to be understood, however, that this assurance of the Imperial Government is given upon condition that a similar declaration shall be made by other powers having interests in China.

With the conviction that this reply is such as to satisfy the inquiry made in the aforementioned note, the Imperial Government is happy to have complied with the wishes of the American Government, especially as it attaches the highest value to anything that may strengthen and consolidate the traditional relations of friendship existing between the two countries.
Imperialism and the Open Door

Student Name ___________________________________________________ Date ________________

Read the following document and list its key points on the 5x7 piece of construction paper given to you to construction a class timeline of events. Be prepared to present your document to the class.


The Reverend Gilbert Reid was an American missionary who established the International Institute of China in Peking (Beijing) and Shanghai. He was a scholar of comparative religion whose publications on Chinese affairs were widely read in the United States.

THE unusual attention given to Chinese affairs for two years past has been largely due to affairs in China which are foreign as well as Chinese. The scramble of European Powers has shifted from Constantinople to Peking, and into this scramble Japan and the United States have entered. The destiny of China seems to depend upon action taken in London, Berlin, St. Petersburg, Paris and Tokyo. The future of Europe and America, and the question of the new “balance of power,” depends on action taken in Peking. After all, in an unexpected way, one-fourth of the human race as concentrated in China must be reckoned with in making the map of the world.

The present, has been in favor of maintaining the integrity of China. Parties have been agreed on this matter. So long as Great Britain was the predominant Power in China, this policy was unmodified. With the growing advance of other Powers, and especially with the increasing influence of Russia at the capital of China, the present Salisbury Government drifted into a policy of passivity. Instead of insisting on maintaining the integrity of China, it excused itself from that task, and insisted on maintaining British interests, whatever became of China. The strong position sustained in the speeches of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach in the early part of 1898 for the “open door,” was relinquished for the new theory of “spheres of interest,” as enunciated by the Rt. Hon. A. J. Balfour, and as illustrated by the agreement made with Russia concerning spheres of railway and mining concessions. All the time, however, the Government has declared that the open door is not closed, and plainly shows a desire to have China kept intact.

…Russians with reference to China is about equalled by Russian suspicion of Great Britain. British suspicion arises from an ignorance of what the Russians really think or intend to do. Russian suspicion arises from the open declarations and threatening propositions of the British public and its free press. Russia wants to take possession of the whole of China, or at least of Peking and all North China. Our personal conviction to the contrary has always been received with surprise as a strange hallucination.

…Different from the influence of the European Powers in China is that of the United States. While the equal of any of the Powers, this advancing Republic, the predominant Power on the American continent, has maintained from the year 1842 a friendly attitude to China. Even with the cry for expansion and her presence in Asiatic waters, she has displayed no inclination to participate in the dismemberment of
China. Certain Americans are inclined to unite with the British in some definite China policy, while others look with favor on closer relations with Russia, but the National Government, in so far as it has a policy, puts forth no positive action either to divide China or maintain her integrity, but seeks to protect American interests as guaranteed by treaties. Naturally, this policy, like that of the British Government, is more allied to an “open door,” with equality of opportunity, but there is no readiness to resist the aggressions of other Powers, so long as American trade is not hampered nor American citizens molested. It is, therefore, possible for the United States to maintain equally friendly relations with China, with Great Britain, with Russia, or any other Power, if nothing is done to eliminate China as a treaty-making Power, or to make sections of China partial to some one country in rights, privileges and opportunities. If China is not to be dismembered, there is no need for the United States to interfere, but if dismemberment is to be undertaken, the very existence of extensive American interests, commercial and missionary, and the fact that for over half a century the United States has had in Eastern Asia diplomatic relations equally with others, will require that the United States be not only consulted, but given an equal share in the distribution of new opportunities.

All seek their own interests first, from what some would term patriotic motives, and yet this very self-interest is dependent on the preservation of China. A scramble for conquest, possessions, sovereignty, in China would endanger the peace of the whole world. Even a struggle for established spheres of influence, with Chinese authority weakened more and more, would not only be treacherous to China but provoke such discord, animosities, riots and resentments as to make the loss and trouble of the participants greater than the gain and honor. Each nation, while anxious for more influence, is opposed to the increased influence of any other nation. The whole territory of China presents so many opportunities for foreign enterprise that all prefer competition to exclusiveness and dismemberment.
Imperialism and the Open Door

Read the following document and list its key points on the 5x7 piece of construction paper given to you to construct a class timeline of events. Be prepared to present your document to the class.

Group 3: McKinley’s Annual Address to Congress, 1900:

…In our foreign intercourse the dominant question has been the treatment of the Chinese problem….The recent troubles in China spring from the anti-foreign agitation which for the past three years has gained strength in the northern provinces. Their origin lies deep in the character of the Chinese races and in the traditions of their Government…foreign activity made itself felt in all quarters, not alone on the coast, but along the great river arteries and in the remoter districts, carrying new ideas and introducing new associations among a primitive people which had pursued for centuries a national policy of isolation.

The telegraph and the railway spreading over their land, the steamers plying on their waterways, the merchant and the missionary penetrating year by year farther to the interior, became to the Chinese mind types of an alien invasion, changing the course of their national life and fraught with vague forebodings of disaster to their beliefs and their self-control.

…Posting of antiforeign placards became a daily occurrence, which the repeated reprobation of the Imperial power failed to check or punish. These inflammatory appeals to the ignorance and superstition of the masses, mendacious and absurd in their accusations and deeply hostile in their spirit, could not but work cumulative harm. They aimed at no particular class of foreigners; they were impartial in attacking everything foreign. An outbreak in Shan-tung, in which German missionaries were slain, was the too natural result of these malevolent teachings.

…The sect, commonly styled the Boxers, developed greatly in the provinces north of the Yang-Tse, and with the collusion of many notable officials, including some in the immediate councils of the Throne itself, became alarmingly aggressive. No foreigner's life, outside of the protected treaty ports, was safe. No foreign interest was secure from spoliation.

…The increasing gravity of the conditions in China and the imminence of peril to our own diversified interests in the Empire, as well as to those of all the other treaty governments, were soon appreciated by this Government, causing it profound solicitude. The United States from the earliest days of foreign intercourse with China had followed a policy of peace, omitting no occasions to testify good will, to further the extension of lawful trade, to respect the sovereignty of its Government, and to insure by all legitimate and kindly but earnest means the fullest measure of protection for the lives and property of our law-abiding citizens and for the exercise of their beneficent callings among the Chinese people.

Mindful of this, it was felt to be appropriate that our purposes should be pronounced in favor of such course as would hasten united action of the powers at Peking to promote the administrative reforms so greatly needed for strengthening the Imperial Government and maintaining the integrity of China, in
which we believed the whole western world to be alike concerned. To these ends I caused to be addressed to the several powers occupying territory and maintaining spheres of influence in China the circular proposals of 1899, inviting from them declarations of their intentions and views as to the desirability of the adoption of measures insuring the benefits of equality of treatment of all foreign trade throughout China.

With gratifying unanimity the responses coincided in this common policy, enabling me to see in the successful termination of these negotiations proof of the friendly spirit which animates the various powers interested in the untrammeled development of commerce and industry in the Chinese Empire as a source of vast benefit to the whole commercial world.

…As was then said, "The policy of the Government of the United States is to seek a solution which may bring about permanent safety and peace to China, preserve Chinese territorial and administrative entity, protect all rights guaranteed to friendly powers by treaty and international law, and safeguard for the world the principle of equal and impartial trade with all parts of the Chinese Empire."

Faithful to those professions which, as it proved, reflected the views and purposes of the other cooperating Governments, all our efforts have been directed toward ending the anomalous situation in China by negotiations for a settlement at the earliest possible moment. As soon as the sacred duty of relieving our legation and its dependents was accomplished we withdrew from active hostilities, leaving our legation under an adequate guard in Peking as a channel of negotiation and settlement—a course adopted by others of the interested powers. Overtures of the empowered representatives of the Chinese Emperor have been considerately entertained.
Imperialism and the Open Door

Read the following document and list its key points on the 5x7 piece of construction paper given to you to construct a class timeline of events. Be prepared to present your document to the class.

Group 4: Fei Ch’i-hao: The Boxer Rebellion: http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1900Fei-boxers.html

Fei Ch’i-hao was a Chinese Christian. Here he recounts the activities of the millenialist "Boxers" in the Boxer Rebellion of 1900.

The people of Shansi are naturally timid and gentle, not given to making disturbances, being the most peaceable people in China. So our Shansi Christians were hopeful for themselves, even when the reports from the coast grew more alarming... The wicked Governor, Yü Hsien, scattered proclamations broadcast. These stated that the foreign religions overthrew morality and inflamed men to do evil, so now gods and men were stirred up against them, and Heaven's legions had been sent to exterminate the foreign devils. Moreover there were the Boxers, faithful to their sovereign, loyal to their country, determined to unite in wiping out the foreign religion. He also offered a reward to all who killed foreigners, either titles or office or money. When the highest official in the province took such a stand in favor of the Boxers, what could inferior officials do? People and officials bowed to his will, and all who enlisted as Boxers were in high favor. It was a time of license and anarchy, when not only Christians were killed, but hundreds of others against whom individual Boxers had a grudge.

...Late in July a proclamation of the Governor was posted in the city in which occurred the words, "Exterminate foreigners, kill devils." Native Christians must leave the church or pay the penalty with their lives. Li Yij and I talked long and earnestly over plans for saving the lives of our beloved missionaries. "You must not stay here waiting for death," we said. Yet we realized how difficult it would be to escape. Foreigners with light hair and fair faces are not easily disguised. Then where could they go? Eastward toward the coast all was in tumult. Perhaps the provinces to the south were just as bad.

...August had come, and we were still alive. Could it be that God wishing to show His mighty power, would out of that whole province of Shansi save the missionaries at Fen Chou Fu and Tai Ku?

...At this time it seemed as if the Boxer trouble might be over. There were few rumors on the streets, and there had never been organized Boxer bands in Fen Chou Fu. So our hearts were more peaceful. Perhaps it was God's will after all to save our little band. Still no word reached us from the outside world.

...We had been imprisoned within walls for two or three months, and our hearts had all the time been burdened and anxious. Now suddenly we were outside the city in the pure, bracing air, in the midst of flowers and trees, luxuriant in summer beauty, riding through fields ripe for the harvest. It was all so beautiful and peaceful and strength-giving. So as soon as we were out in the country air our spirits rose and fresh life and joy came to us.
The sun had risen when I opened my eyes in the morning. I forced myself to rise, washed my face, and asked for a little food, but could not get it down. Sitting down I heard loud talking and laughter among the guests. The topic of conversation was the massacre of foreigners the day before! One said:

"There were ten ocean men killed, three men, four women, and three little devils.

" Another added, "Lij Cheng San yesterday morning came ahead with twenty soldiers and waited in the village. When the foreigners with their soldier escort arrived a gun was fired for a signal, and all the soldiers set to work at once."

Then one after another added gruesome details, how the cruel swords had slashed, how the baggage had been stolen, how the very clothing had been stripped from the poor bodies, and how they had then been flung into a wayside pit…The poor remains of the missionaries would have been left on the village street had not the village leaders begged that they be taken away. So the soldiers dragged them to a pit outside the city, where they found a common grave.
Imperialism and the Open Door

Read the following document and list its key points on the 5x7 piece of construction paper given to you to construct a class timeline of events. Be prepared to present your document to the class.

**Group 5:** Remarks by Kaiser Wilhelm II on the Boxer Rebellion: [http://www.h-net.org/~german/gtext/kaiserreich/china.html](http://www.h-net.org/~german/gtext/kaiserreich/china.html)

*Kaiser Wilhelm II was the German Emperor during the Boxer Rebellion. He advocated an assertive foreign policy for the newly-reunited Reich and “a place in the sun” for the German people. Strongly influenced by the geopolitical writings of Alfred Thayer Mahan, Wilhelm II supported the development of a naval fleet rivaling that of Britain and the acquisition of overseas colonies and claims of special economic rights. His address to the German troops dispatched to deal with the Boxer Rebellion was widely cited at the time as an example of his personal bellicosity—as well as the attitude of foreign powers towards China.*

Into the midst of the deepest peace--alas, not surprising to me--the torch of war has been hurled. A crime unprecedented in its brazenness, horrifying in its cruelty, has struck my trusted representative and carried him off. The ambassadors of the other powers are in danger of their lives and along with them your comrades who were dispatched for their protection. Perhaps, they have today fought their last battle. The German flag has been insulted, and the German Empire held up to scorn. This demands an exemplary punishment and revenge.

With fearful speed the conditions have become extremely serious. Since I have summoned you to arms, [the situation has become] still more serious. What I had hoped to restore with the help of the marines will now require the united contingents of troops from all the civilized nations. Today the chief of the cruiser squadron has implored me to consider sending an [entire] division.

You will oppose an enemy no less resolute in the face of death than yourselves. Trained by European officers, the Chinese have learned the use of European weapons. Thank God your comrades in the marines and in my navy, with whom you will join, have asserted and maintained the old German repute in combat; they have defended themselves with glory and victory and eased your task.

Thus I send you now to avenge injustice, and I shall not rest until the German flag, united with those of the other powers, waves victoriously over the Chinese, planted on the walls of Peking, and dictating peace to the Chinese.

Maintain a good comradeship with all the troops whom you will join with there. Russians, Englishmen, Frenchmen, and whoever else--they all fight for one cause, for civilization.

Yet we also bear in mind something higher, our religion, and the defense and protection of our brothers overseas, some of whom have stood up for their Savior with their life.

Think also of our military honor, of those who have fought for you, and depart with the old motto of the flag of Brandenburg: "Trust God, defend yourself bravely. In that lies all your honor! For whoever ventures on God with a full heart will never be routed."

The flags that wave above you here go into fire for the first time. Bring them back to me pure, unblemished, and without stain!

My thanks and my concern, my prayers and my solicitude will not leave you. With these I accompany you.
Imperialism and the Open Door

Student Name ___________________________________________________ Date __________________

Read the following document and list its key points on the 5x7 piece of construction paper given to you to construction a class timeline of events. Be prepared to present your document to the class.

Group 6: The Future of the Chinese People, by D.Z. Sheffield, January 1900: (http://cdl.library.cornell.edu/cgi-bin/moa/moa-cgi?notisid=ABK2934-0085-10)

Davello Z. Sheffield, a Congregationalist minister, as Principal of TungChow Boy’s Boarding school, North China College and North China Union College from 1869 to 1912. He was an advocate of an assertive Western role in the reform and modernization of China.

THE question “What is to be the future of the Chinese people?” is not identical with the question What is to be the future of the Chinese nation? The nation in its present form of government may disappear, and the people come under the government of other nations, and yet the Chinese race continue, and the civilization in its essential features be perpetuated.

…If the Chinese are conquered by other nations, they must still be left in their places, must be given a government, and must be taken into account in the international problems of the future.

…It is a principle of international law that every nation should be left to itself to develop its form of government and regulate its internal affairs; but no nation has the right to close the door to intercourse with other nations, and decline to have with them either political, social, or mercantile relations. There is no doubt that, down to the present hour, this is what is desired by the vast majority of the officials, the literati, the merchants, and the common people of China. They would shut and bolt the door against other nations, and live on into the ages of the future as they have lived from the ages of the past; praising the institutions that have been bequeathed to them by the ancients; straggling with one another to secure from nature a sufficient ministry to the necessities of the masses, and to the comforts and luxuries of the few; and not doubting that, in spite of the sorrows which they experience in life, their inheritance from the past is vastly superior to that of the outside nations.

It is clear that in dealing with China, with her petrified and exclusive civilization, the principles of Western international law must have a modified application. It would be difficult to do a greater wrong to the people of China than to leave the nation to itself, — to the operation of those forces of evil that have their source in the selfishness, the passions, and the ambitions of men, and are of the nature of an organic disease in all strata of government and all conditions of society. It is a fact deeply regretted by the best friends of China that she has failed to improve the opportunities for reform that have been presented to her during the last forty years.

…China ought not to have been left to herself to decide as to what reforms should be undertaken, or as to the time and manner of carrying them out. Adequate pressure should have been used to compel China to move. She should have been made to open her doors more rapidly and completely to foreign trade and intercourse, and to give more thorough protection to foreigners in her midst. She should have been
made to administer proper punishment to the instigators of mobs and persecutions, and to call her officers to strict account for their neglect of duty toward foreigners residing in China. She should not have been allowed to resist the introduction of telegraph lines for half a generation, and of railroads for an entire generation. She should have been pressed to reform her antediluvian system of education, to introduce Western learning, to multiply schools under the care of foreign instructors, and to send selected students abroad for a wider education. If these and other lines of national reform had not only been proposed, but insisted upon, the international problems of the Far East would have been wholly different from those that now occupy the thoughts of statesmen.

The time for change and reform has fully come to China. New ideas from the Western world are already operating in the thoughts of many of the people, and new aspirations and hopes are beginning to be awakened. She must move from this time forth, and her great need is that type of sympathetic guidance and help that will promote her best interests; but under existing international complications it is not easy to give such assistance.

…Men are disposed to think lightly and superficially of problems that do not immediately concern themselves; but the question What of China? will not down by its being dismissed from thought. It enters as an important factor into the great world problems that are now pressing for solution. It is a question not only concerning the future of one fourth of the human race, but also concerning the influence of that portion of the race upon the other three fourths. The vast potential resources of China, the labor power of the people, and their undeveloped capacity to share in the consumption of the products of the world’s industries will compel statesmen and students of political and social problems to acquire that knowledge of China which as yet is possessed only by the few; and the opportunity for the religious and social renovation of that people will more and more draw out the interest and claim the help of Christian teachers and philanthropists. Already the forces that are destined to create a new China are beginning to operate upon the lives of the people. The nation is waking from its long dream of the past to live in the present. There are many “signs of the times” which assure us that the day is not distant when China will be delivered from its effete civilization, will enjoy a stable and well-ordered government, will enter upon a period of material prosperity, and will come under the power of those motives which have their source in the vital truths of the Christian revelation.
Directions: The following question requires you to construct a coherent essay that integrates your interpretation of Documents A-H and your knowledge of the period referred to in the question. High scores will be earned only by essays that both cite key pieces of evidence from the documents and draw on outside knowledge of the period. Some of the documents have been edited, and wording and punctuation have been modernized.

1. To what extent was late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century United States expansionism a continuation of past United States expansionism and to what extent was it a departure?

Use the documents and your knowledge of United States history to 1914 to construct your answer.

Document A

It seems to me that God, with infinite wisdom and skill, is training the Anglo-Saxon race for an hour sure to come in the world's future. . . . The unoccupied arable lands of the earth are limited, and will soon be taken. . . . Then will the world enter upon a new stage of its history — the final competition of races, for which the Anglo-Saxon is being schooled. . . . Then this race of unequalled energy, with all the majesty of numbers and the might of wealth behind it — the representative, let us hope, of the largest 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 any one doubt that the result of this competition of races will be the "survival of the fittest"?

Is the United States . . . prepared to allow Germany to acquire the Dutch stronghold of Curacao, fronting the Atlantic outlet of both the proposed canals of Panama and Nicaragua? Is she prepared to acquiesce in any foreign power purchasing from Haiti a naval station on the Windward Passage, through which pass our steamer routes to the Isthmus? Would she acquiesce to a foreign protectorate over the Sandwich Islands [Hawaii] that great central station of the Pacific?

Whether they will or no, Americans must now look outward. The growing production of the country demands it. An increasing volume of public sentiment demands it. The position of the United States, between the two Old Worlds and the two great oceans, makes the same claim, which will soon be strengthened by the creation of the new link joining the Atlantic and Pacific. The tendency will be maintained and increased by the growth of the European colonies in the Pacific, by the advancing civilization of Japan, and by the rapid peopling of our Pacific States.

Three things are needful: First, protection of the chief harbors, by fortifications and coast-defense ships. . . . Secondly, naval force, the arm of offensive power, which alone enables a country to extend its influence outward. Thirdly, no foreign state should henceforth acquire a coaling position within three thousand miles of San Francisco. . . .
Document D

Source: Platform of the American Anti-Imperialist League, 1899.

... Much as we abhor the war of “criminal aggression” in the Philippines, greatly as we regret that the blood of the Filipinos is on American hands, we more deeply resent the betrayal of American institutions at home ... .

Whether the ruthless slaughter of the Filipinos shall end next month or next year is but an incident in a contest that must go on until the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States are rescued from the hands of their betrayers. Those who dispute about standards of value while the foundation of the Republic is undermined will be listened to as little as those who would wrangle about the small economies of the household while the house is on fire. The training of a great people for a century, the aspiration for liberty of a vast immigration are forces that will hurl aside those who in the delirium of conquest seek to destroy the character of our institutions.

Document E

Source: Senator Albert J. Beveridge. Speech to 56th Congress, Congressional Record. 1900.

The Philippines are ours forever. ... And just beyond the Philippines are China’s illimitable markets. We will not retreat from either. We will not repudiate our duty in the archipelago. We will not abandon our opportunity in the Orient. We will not renounce our part in the mission of our race, trustee, under God, of the civilization of the world. And we will move forward to our work ... with gratitude ... and thanksgiving to Almighty God that He has marked us as His chosen people, henceforth to lead in the regeneration of the world. ...

Our largest trade henceforth must be with Asia. The Pacific is our ocean. ... And the Pacific is the ocean of the commerce of the future. ... The power that rules the Pacific, therefore, is the power that rules the world. And, with the Philippines, that power is and will forever be the American Republic.
It is not true that the United States feels any land hunger or entertains any projects as regards the other nations of the Western Hemisphere, save such as are for their welfare. All that this country desires is to see the neighboring countries stable, orderly, and prosperous. Any country whose people conduct themselves well can count upon our hearty friendship. If a nation shows that it knows how to act with reasonable efficiency and decency in social and political matters, if it keeps order and pays its obligations, it need fear no interference from the United States.

Chronic wrongdoing, or an impotence which results in a general loosening of the ties of civilized society, may in America, as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation, and in the Western Hemisphere the adherence of the United States to the Monroe Doctrine may force the United States, however reluctantly, in flagrant cases of such wrongdoing or impotence, to the exercise of an international police power. If every country washed by the Caribbean Sea would show the progress in stable and just civilization which, with the aid of the Platt amendment, Cuba has shown since our troops left the island, and which so many of the republics in both Americas are constantly and brilliantly showing, all question of interference by this Nation with their affairs would be at an end.
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Source: "American Diplomacy", 1900.

We are also of opinion that the power to acquire territory by treaty implies, not only the power to govern such territory, but to prescribe upon what terms the United States will receive its inhabitants, and what their status shall be in what Chief Justice Marshall termed the “American empire.” . . . Indeed, it is doubtful if Congress would ever assent to the annexation of territory upon the condition that its inhabitants, however foreign they may be to our habits, traditions, and modes of life, shall become at once citizens of the United States. In all its treaties hitherto the treaty-making power has made special provisions for this subject. . . . In all these cases there is an implied denial of the right of the inhabitants to American citizenship until Congress by further action shall signify its assent thereto. . . .

It is obvious that in the annexation of outlying and distant possessions grave questions will arise from differences of race, habits, laws and customs of the people, and from differences of soil, climate and production, which may require action on the part of Congress that would be quite unnecessary in the annexation of contiguous territory, inhabited only by people of the same race, or by scattered bodies of native Indians.