



U.S. Department of State

On December 2, 1823, United States President James Monroe declared in his State of the Union address that the “American continents . . . are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers.” The idea—that the Americas, including North and South America and the Caribbean, were a sphere of influence for the United States—would become known as the Monroe Doctrine. The United States at that time did not have the ability to enforce the Monroe Doctrine, but no new European colonies were established in the Americas in the 1800s. This was in part because the traditional powers in the region, Portugal and Spain, were considerably weaker than they had been in the past.

The United States also made several plans and attempts to gain control of Caribbean and Central American land. Before the Civil War, southern politicians wanted to annex new land in the Americas to add as pro-slavery states. In 1849, for example, Democratic politician John Louis O'Sullivan supported the efforts of adventurer Narciso López to sail to Cuba and seize control of the government with the goal to annex Cuba to the United States. Similarly, in 1856, American lawyer, adventurer and revolutionary William Walker overthrew the leadership of Nicaragua and pushed for the United States to annex the country.

By the late 1800s, the United States developed an industrial economy and business leaders began to look outside the country's borders for new goods markets. The same industry allowed the United States government to manufacture multiple steam-powered, ironclad battleships for a powerful navy. Naval officer and historian Alfred T. Mahan influenced U.S. foreign policy by incorporating these ideas into his 1890 book, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1783*. The book argued that controlling the oceans to protect trade was the key to the success of past empires such as the British Empire. Mahan further recommended that the United States expand and establish military bases in the Caribbean, Hawai'i, and the Philippine Islands. These bases would support a navy to protect U.S. merchant ships and grow the economy.

When the Cuban War for Independence began in 1895, President Grover Cleveland declared that the United States would be neutral. News of the war and the suffering of the Cuban people at the hands of the Spanish army angered many in the United States. Many urged the government to support the Cubans. On February 28, 1896, the United States Senate voted overwhelmingly to recognize the Cuban movement for independence. On December 7, President Cleveland declared that the United States might take military action if the war continued. A new president, William McKinley, was inaugurated on March 4, 1897, and faced pressure to act on Cuba. Not everyone urging the United States to go to war against Spain did so for the same reasons. Some in the United States were sympathetic to the Cuban people and their goal of independence. Some wanted to send humanitarian aid. Others wanted Cuba with its sugar and tobacco production to be a new colony of the United States. When the U.S. battleship *Maine* exploded in Havana harbor in February 1898, war seemed certain even though it was not clear that the Spanish were responsible.

Opening Position:

- Wants ports and coaling stations in the Caribbean and Pacific Ocean so commercial ships can transport goods to worldwide markets.
- Wants favorable terms to access sugar and tobacco from Cuba.
- Wants Spain to have no colonies in the Caribbean.

Questions to Consider:

- How should the United States balance commercial interests with promoting democracy in Cuba and the Philippines?

What can the United States negotiate with?

Remember that you don't have to offer these right away in a negotiation.

- Offer U.S. Treasury loans at a reduced interest rate to compensate Spain for the loss of her colonies.
- Purchase Spain's colonies for \$3 million.
- Reassure Spain if it sells its colonies to the United States that it will be able to retain 10% of current investments in Cuban sugar and rubber production from Philippine plantations.
- If Spain does not agree to the above, sweeten the deal by promising to convince the U.S. tire and sugar refinement industry to buy exclusively from Cuban and Philippine plantations.



United States Press Corps

The press in the United States followed the Cuban War of Independence very closely. Newspapers across the country covered the war. Two newspapers in New York, the *New York Journal* run by William Randolph Hearst and the *New York World* run by Joseph Pulitzer, were particularly aggressive in covering stories about the Spanish army's actions against the Cuban population. Spanish general Valeriano Weyler's policies of forcing Cubans in rural areas to move to cities and his imprisonment and execution of Cuban rebels led to outcry throughout the United States. Notable stories included "Death of Rodríguez" in the *New York Journal* on January 19, 1897, on the execution of Cuban rebel Adolfo Rodríguez and the article on October 8, 1897, on the rescue of Cuban Evangelina Cisneros from a prison on the Isle of Pines. On February 9, 1898, the *New York Journal* published the confidential letter of Spanish Ambassador Dupuy de Lôme critical of President William McKinley. In the letter, Ambassador de Lôme wrote that "McKinley is weak and a bidder for the admiration of the crowd besides being a would-be politician who tries to leave a door open behind himself while keeping on good terms with the jingoes of his party." After the explosion of the U.S.S. *Maine* on February 15, 1898, many newspapers were quick to blame the Spanish and demanded that the United States invade Cuba and defeat the Spanish army. Whether these newspapers wanted Cuba to become independent or wanted the United States to take control was not always clear.

Compared to the Cuban War for Independence, the Philippine Revolution against Spain received less U.S. press coverage. If the United States seemed likely to intervene in the Philippines, the press would likely have published more stories about the situation there.

The Press's Position:

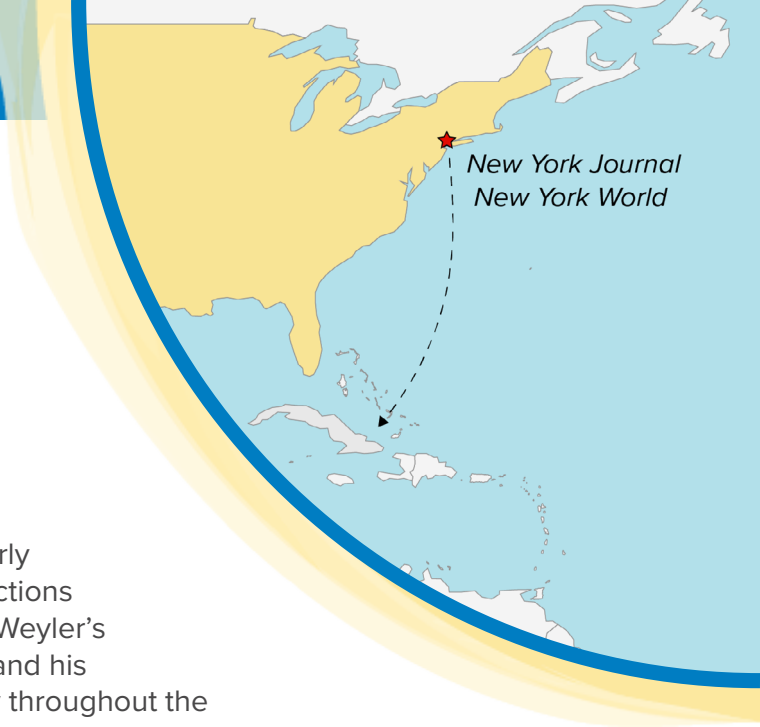
- The United States must take action against the Spanish in Cuba.
- The press wants compelling stories that people will want to read.

Questions to Consider:

- How should the press cover events in Cuba?
- Should the press also focus on events in the Philippines?
- How should the press balance the interests of the United States and the interests of Cuban and Filipino independence movements?

What can the Press negotiate with?

Remember that you don't have to offer these right away in a negotiation.



- Urge American citizens to support the U.S. Government's plan.
- Urge American citizens to support independence for Cuba and/or the Philippines.
- Portray the revolutionaries in Cuba and the Philippines as freedom fighters.
- Portray the Spanish as cruel tyrants.



Spain

At one time the Spanish Empire controlled vast areas around the globe including territories in North and South America, Asia, Africa, and the Pacific. However, after the Napoleonic Wars (1803–1815), Spain lost most of its colonies. Left under Spanish control were Cuba and Puerto Rico in the Caribbean and the Philippines and Guam in the Pacific along with several smaller colonial holdings in Africa.

In the 1890s, nationalist movements began in Cuba and the Philippines. *El Partido Revolucionario Cubano* (Cuban Revolutionary Party) in Cuba and the *Katipunan* in the Philippines called for armed struggle to achieve their countries' independence from Spanish rule. The Spanish governors of each of these colonies used brutal tactics in an attempt to put down the rebellions. In February 1896, Spanish General Valeriano Weyler instituted a policy of *reconcentración* (reconcentration) in Cuba. This forced Cubans living in rural areas to move to towns and cities which could be guarded by the Spanish army. However, the policy led directly to famine when the farmers were separated from their land. Reconcentration caused outrage in the United States both in the government and in the press. It also was heavily criticized in Spain. While one Spanish political party, the Conservatives, supported Weyler's methods, the opposition party, the Liberal Party, were very critical. When the Liberal Party's Práxides Mateo Sagasta became Prime Minister in August 1897 he moved to replace Weyler. Weyler was removed as governor-general of Cuba in October 1897.

Opening Position:

- Maintain its position as a world power.
- Avoid war with the United States.

Questions to Consider:

- What kind of relationship should Spain pursue with Cuba?
- What are the costs of trying to maintain control of Cuba and the Philippines?
- What are the risks of going to war with the United States?

What can Spain negotiate with?

Remember that you don't have to offer these right away in a negotiation.

- Make an offer to the United States for an agreement in which it will not make separate commercial or military alliances with French or British.
- Offer a treaty to the United States that acknowledges its sphere of influence in the western hemisphere and promises not to politically interfere in the region.

- Offer tobacco, sugar, abaca (a plant used to make rope and other textiles) as a trade if Spain can keep its colonies.
- Incentivize Cuba with limited sovereignty and democratic elections for governor of island, but continued status as an imperial colony.
- Threaten to begin bargaining trade agreements with independent Latin, South American and Caribbean nations, threatening U.S. commercial interests.
- Propose agreement to sell the Philippines and/or Cuba to the United States for \$100 million to avoid war.
- Offer the U.S. a naval base in either Manila or Cuba in exchange for a Spanish naval base and a coaling station in Miami.



Cuba

In the early 1500s, Spanish conquistadors brutally conquered the native Taíno Indians and took control of the island that became Cuba. The colony became profitable for Spain through the introduction of cash crops such as tobacco and sugar. Enslaved Africans were brought to the island as well to work on sugar plantations—grueling labor with a high mortality rate. Spain remained in control of Cuba even as its empire weakened in the 1800s. Independence movements in Cuba, including the *Guerra de los Diez Años* (Ten Years' War) 1868–1878, were mostly led by wealthy planters born in Cuba. While these movements did not achieve independence, they did result in reforms, most notably the abolition of slavery in Cuba in 1886.

In addition, many of those involved in the Ten Years' War played a major role in the Cuban struggle for independence of the 1890s. These included Máximo Gómez and José Martí. Martí fled Cuba for the United States in 1878, rather than live under Spanish rule. While living in New York, Martí founded *El Partido Revolucionario Cubano* (Cuban Revolutionary party) on January 5, 1892. Martí and his followers worked to start a new movement for Cuban independence. On February 24, 1895, the revolution began with a proclamation issued in the village of Baire in western Cuba calling for *independencia o muerte* (independence or death).

The Cuban liberation forces, led by General Máximo Gómez, had success especially in the Cuban countryside. In an effort to deprive the Cuban rebels of their strength, Spanish Governor-General Valeriano Weyler instituted a policy of *reconcentración* (reconcentration) in February 1896. This policy forcibly moved 300,000 Cubans from rural areas to cities and towns to be guarded by the Spanish Army. The goal was to separate the public from the revolutionary forces. The policy had a disastrous effect on the Cuban population. Approximately 150,000 to 400,000 Cubans died of starvation or disease because the Spanish were unable to provide food and medical care. The conditions were publicized in the United States and many were outraged, leading to increased sympathy for the Cuban independence movement.

Cuban liberation forces reached out to the United States, which officially recognized them in 1896. Official recognition by a foreign government is an important step to establish independence. Cuban forces were also aware of the influence of the press in the United States and tried to shape press coverage of the war with Spain.

By 1897, Cuban liberation forces controlled the eastern half of the country with the exception of a few towns and also had support in the countryside in the west. In general, the Spanish controlled towns and cities while the liberation forces controlled the countryside.

The explosion of the U.S.S. *Maine* in Havana Harbor is an opportunity for Cuban liberation forces to gain the help of the United States, but this also presents new risks. Cuba views the United States as an ally, but a potentially dangerous one. While the United States can help Cuba defeat the Spanish, they might also try to take Spain's place and turn Cuba into a colony of its own.

Opening Position:

- Cuba must be an independent country free from foreign interference.

Questions to Consider:

- What kind of relationship should Cuba pursue with the United States after Cuba achieves independence?
- What kind of relationship should Cuba pursue with Spain after Cuba achieves independence?

What can Cuba negotiate with?

Remember that you don't have to offer these right away in a negotiation.

- Offer a trade agreement with the United States for “most favored nation” status. This would provide favorable terms on sugar and tobacco exported to the United States in exchange for recognition of Cuba’s sovereignty.
- Lease port as a naval base for 50 years.
- Establish a coaling station for U.S. commercial ships.



The Philippines

The Philippines is an archipelago of over 7,000 islands in the western Pacific Ocean near Southeast Asia. Spanish conquistadors conquered the inhabited islands that became the Philippines in the mid-1500s using brutal tactics against the native population to gain control. The name “Philippines” comes from King Philip of Spain who ruled the country at the time of this conquest. The colony became profitable for Spain as a waypoint in the trade between Asia and Europe for luxuries such as spices, porcelain, and silk. Over time the colony also produced tobacco, sugar, and *abaca* (a plant that yields a fiber used in rope and some paper products) for export. Spain controlled the Philippines even as its empire weakened in the 1800s. Rebellions against Spanish authority such as the Cavite Mutiny (1872) were put down.

In 1887 and 1891, Filipino author and doctor, José Rizal, published *Noli Me Tangere* (Touch Me Not) and *El filibusterismo* (The filibusterism), novels that criticized the Spanish government’s policies in the Philippines. These books helped awaken a new sense of national identity for people in the Philippines. A secret anti-colonial group known as the *Katipunan* organized a plan for revolution in the 1890s and in late August 1896 the Philippine Revolution began in the capital city of Manila. By August 30, the revolt had spread to eight provinces on the island of Luzon and the Spanish governor, Ramón Blanco, declared a state of war.

By the time the U.S.S. *Maine* exploded in Havana, the rebels and Spanish forces were locked in a stalemate and it was unclear who would prevail. Note: the Philippines are much farther from the United States than Cuba. Any action taken by the United States would be greatly delayed.

Opening Position:

- The Philippines must be an independent country free of foreign occupation.

Questions to Consider:

- What kind of relationship should the Philippines pursue with the United States after the Philippines achieves independence?
- What kind of relationship should the Philippines pursue with Spain after the Philippines achieves independence?

What can the Philippines negotiate with?

Remember that you don’t have to offer these right away in a negotiation.

- Create a trade agreement with the United States for “most favored nation” status. This would provide favorable terms on sugar, tobacco, and abaca exported to the United States in exchange for recognition of sovereignty.

- Lease port as a naval base for 50 years.
- Establish a coaling station for U.S. commercial ships.