

chapter 18 section 2 the spanish american war scribd

Chapter 18 Section 2: The Spanish American War

The Spanish-American War, a pivotal conflict that occurred in 1898, marked a significant turning point in American foreign policy and its role on the global stage. This war was not merely a clash between the United States and Spain but was also intertwined with the struggles for independence in Cuba and the broader implications of imperialism. This article delves into the causes, key events, outcomes, and lasting effects of the Spanish-American War as outlined in Chapter 18, Section 2.

Background of the Spanish-American War

The roots of the Spanish-American War can be traced back to the long-standing tensions between Spain and its colonies in the Caribbean, particularly Cuba. In the late 19th century, Cuba was embroiled in a rebellion against Spanish rule, which sparked sympathy and support from the American public and government.

Causes of the War

Several factors contributed to the outbreak of the Spanish-American War:

- 1. Cuban Struggle for Independence:** The Cuban War of Independence (1895-1898) was marked by brutal tactics employed by the Spanish, including reconcentration camps that led to widespread suffering and loss of life. The plight of the Cuban people galvanized American public opinion.
- 2. Yellow Journalism:** Sensationalist reporting by newspapers, particularly those owned by William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer, exaggerated the conditions in Cuba and inflamed public sentiment against Spain. Headlines depicting Spanish atrocities captured the imagination of the American public.
- 3. Economic Interests:** American businesses had significant investments in Cuba, particularly in sugar and tobacco. The instability posed by the Cuban revolution threatened these investments, prompting calls for intervention.
- 4. The Sinking of the USS Maine:** The USS Maine, an American battleship, exploded in Havana Harbor on February 15, 1898, killing 266 sailors. Although the cause of the explosion was unclear, yellow journalism quickly blamed Spain, leading to a surge in calls for war.
- 5. Imperialism:** The late 19th century was marked by a wave of imperialism, with major powers competing for colonies and influence. The United States sought to establish itself

as a global power, and the conflict with Spain provided an opportunity to assert its dominance.

Key Events of the War

The Spanish-American War was a relatively short conflict, lasting only about four months, but it was characterized by several key events that shaped its course and outcome.

Declaration of War

On April 11, 1898, President William McKinley asked Congress for the authority to intervene in Cuba, citing humanitarian concerns. On April 25, Congress officially declared war on Spain. The phrase "Remember the Maine!" became a rallying cry for those advocating for military action.

Major Battles

1. Battle of Manila Bay: On May 1, 1898, Commodore George Dewey led a successful naval attack against the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay, resulting in a decisive victory. This engagement showcased the superiority of the modern U.S. Navy and marked the beginning of American military successes in the war.
2. Battle of San Juan Hill: On July 1, 1898, American troops, including the famous Rough Riders led by Theodore Roosevelt, engaged Spanish forces in a fierce battle near Santiago, Cuba. The victory at San Juan Hill was a turning point, leading to the eventual surrender of Santiago.
3. Siege of Santiago: Following the Battle of San Juan Hill, American forces laid siege to Santiago. The city fell on July 17, 1898, effectively crippling Spanish resistance in Cuba.

Conclusion of the War

The war concluded with the signing of the Treaty of Paris on December 10, 1898. The treaty had several key provisions:

- Cuba's Independence: Cuba was granted independence, although the U.S. would exert significant influence over its affairs.
- Territorial Gains: The United States acquired Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines from Spain, marking a significant expansion of American territory.
- Financial Settlement: The U.S. paid Spain \$20 million for the Philippines, reflecting the economic motivations behind the war.

Consequences of the War

The Spanish-American War had profound implications for the United States, both domestically and internationally.

Rise of American Imperialism

The war marked a departure from the traditional isolationist policies that had characterized American foreign relations. The acquisition of overseas territories signaled the United States' emergence as an imperial power. This expansionist mindset would continue to shape American foreign policy in the 20th century.

1. **Philippine-American War:** The annexation of the Philippines sparked conflict with Filipino nationalists who sought independence. The Philippine-American War (1899-1902) was a brutal conflict that highlighted the complexities of imperialism and raised questions about American values and identity.
2. **Increased Military Presence:** The war led to a permanent increase in the size and capability of the U.S. military, laying the groundwork for future interventions in Latin America and beyond.

Domestic Reactions

The Spanish-American War also had significant domestic repercussions:

1. **Debates on Imperialism:** The war ignited heated debates about imperialism within the United States. Some Americans, including prominent figures like Mark Twain and Andrew Carnegie, opposed expansionist policies, arguing they contradicted American democratic ideals.
2. **Nationalism and Patriotism:** The war fostered a sense of nationalism and pride among Americans, with victories celebrated as evidence of the nation's strength and resolve.
3. **Changes in Foreign Policy:** The United States began to take a more interventionist stance in international affairs, leading to policies such as the Open Door Policy in China and the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine.

Conclusion

Chapter 18, Section 2 of the Spanish-American War encapsulates a momentous period in history that transformed the United States from a relatively isolationist nation to an emerging global power. The war was fueled by a combination of humanitarian concerns, economic interests, and the desire for territorial expansion, culminating in a series of key battles and the eventual acquisition of overseas territories. The legacy of the Spanish-

American War continues to influence American foreign policy and the nation's identity, as debates about imperialism and interventionism remain relevant in contemporary discourse. Understanding this historical event provides valuable insights into the complexities of American expansion and its enduring impact on global relations.

Frequently Asked Questions

What were the main causes of the Spanish-American War as discussed in Chapter 18, Section 2?

The main causes included U.S. support for Cuban independence, the sinking of the USS Maine, and sensationalist journalism known as yellow journalism that inflamed public opinion against Spain.

Which territories did the U.S. acquire as a result of the Spanish-American War?

The U.S. acquired Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines following the war.

How did the media influence public perception regarding the Spanish-American War?

The media used yellow journalism to exaggerate and sensationalize events in Cuba, leading to increased public outrage and support for military intervention.

What role did the USS Maine play in the lead-up to the Spanish-American War?

The explosion of the USS Maine in Havana Harbor was a pivotal event that sparked public outrage and was used as a rallying cry for war against Spain.

What was the outcome of the Treaty of Paris in 1898?

The Treaty of Paris ended the Spanish-American War, granting independence to Cuba and ceding Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines to the United States.

How did the Spanish-American War impact U.S. foreign policy?

The war marked a shift in U.S. foreign policy towards imperialism, establishing the U.S. as a global power with overseas territories.

What was the significance of the Rough Riders in the Spanish-American War?

The Rough Riders, led by Theodore Roosevelt, gained fame for their charge up San Juan Hill, becoming a symbol of American bravery and military success in the war.

What were the consequences of the Spanish-American War for Spain?

Spain lost its colonial empire in the Americas and the Pacific, leading to a period of reflection and reform within the country.

In what ways did the war affect the Philippines and its quest for independence?

The war initially resulted in U.S. control of the Philippines, but it sparked a nationalistic movement that led to the Philippine-American War and a continued struggle for independence.

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