

## Researching the Causes

### Part A.

Research the following causes of U.S. entry into war with Spain in 1898. Add additional causes listed in your text. For each, describe the event and its importance in provoking the United States into war.

Causes	Description of event	Significance as a cause of war
1. The effects of the Wilson-Gorman Tariff 1894		
2. Cuban revolts against Spanish rule		
3. Pressure from U.S. businesses and their spokespersons		
4. Sinking of the <i>Maine</i>		
5. Influence of yellow journalism		
6. DeLôme letter		
7. McKinley's failure to prevent war		
8. U.S. public opinion		
9. A chance to fulfill our Manifest Destiny		

**Causes given but not listed above**

10.
11.
12.

**Part B.**

Use the following excerpt from President McKinley's War Message to Congress and the Teller Resolution of Congress as resources in answering the questions at the end.

. . . The forcible intervention of the United States as a neutral to stop the war, according to the large dictates of humanity and following many historical precedents where neighboring states have interfered to check the hopeless sacrifices of life by internecine conflicts beyond their borders, is justifiable on rational grounds. It involves, however, a hostile constraint upon both the parties to the contest, as well as to enforce a truce as to guide the eventual settlement.

The grounds for such intervention may be briefly summarized as follows:

First. In the cause of humanity and to put an end to the barbarities, bloodshed, starvation, and horrible miseries now existing there, and which the parties to the conflict are either unable or unwilling to stop or mitigate. It is no answer to say this is all in another country, belonging to another nation, and is therefore none of our business. It is specially our duty, for it is right at our door.

Second. We owe it to our citizens in Cuba to afford them that protection and indemnity for life and property which no government there can or will afford, and to that end to terminate the conditions that deprive them of legal protection.

Third. The right to intervene may be justified by the very serious injury to the commerce, trade, and business of our people and by the wanton destruction of property and devastation of the island.

Fourth, and which is of the utmost importance. The present condition of affairs in Cuba is a constant menace to our peace and entails upon this Government an enormous expense. With such a conflict waged for years in an island so near us and with which our people have such trade and business relations; when the lives and liberty of our citizens are in constant danger and their property destroyed and themselves ruined; where our trading vessels are liable to seizure and are seized at our very door by war ships of a foreign nation; the expeditions of filibustering that we are powerless to prevent altogether, and the irritating questions and entanglements thus arising—all these and others that I need not mention, with the resulting strained relations, are a constant menace to our peace and compel us to keep on a semi war footing with a nation with which we are at peace. . . .<sup>1</sup>

President William McKinley's War Message to Congress, April 11, 1898.

<sup>1</sup> Richard B. Morris, ed. *Great Presidential Decisions* (Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett Publications, Inc., 1961), 318-19.

## **The Independence of Cuba**

### **April 20, 1898 (U.S. Statutes at Large, Vol. XXX, p. 738)**

April 11, McKinley sent his message to Congress recommending intervention in Cuba. The Joint Resolution of April 20 authorized the use of the army and the navy to effect Cuban independence; the formal declaration of war followed April 25. The most important of the resolutions of April 20 was the fourth, known as the Teller Amendment.

Joint resolution for the recognition of the independence of the people of Cuba, demanding that the Government of Spain relinquish its authority and government in the Island of Cuba, and to withdraw its land and naval forces from Cuba and Cuban waters, and directing the President of the United States to use the land and naval forces of the United States to carry these resolutions into effect.

Whereas the abhorrent conditions which have existed for more than three years in the Island of Cuba, so near our own borders, have shocked the moral sense of the people of the United States, have been a disgrace to Christian civilization, culminating, as they have, in the destruction of a United States battle ship, with two hundred and sixty-six of its officers and crew, while on a friendly visit in the harbor of Havana, and can not longer be endured, as has been set forth by then President of the United States in his message to Congress of April eleventh, eighteen hundred and ninety-eight, upon which the action of Congress was invited: Therefore,

*Resolved*, First. That the people of the Island of Cuba are, and of right ought to be, free and independent.

Second. That it is the duty of the United States to demand, and the Government of the United States does hereby demand, that the Government of Spain at once relinquish its authority and government in the Island of Cuba and withdraw its land and naval forces from Cuba and Cuban waters.

Third. That the President of the United States be, and he hereby is, directed and empowered to use the entire land and naval forces of the United States, and to call into the actual service of the United States the militia of the several States, to such extent as may be necessary to carry these resolutions into effect.

Fourth. That the United States hereby disclaims any disposition or intention to exercise sovereignty, jurisdiction, or control over said Island except for the pacification thereof, and asserts its determination, when that is accomplished, to leave the government and control of the Island to its people.<sup>2</sup>

1. How did President McKinley justify United States' intervention in the war between Spain and Cuba?

<sup>2</sup> Henry Steele Commager, ed., *Documents of American History* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1973), 5.

