

Introduction to Spanish-American War



"A Splendid Little War" John Hay,
Secretary of State, 1898

Background:

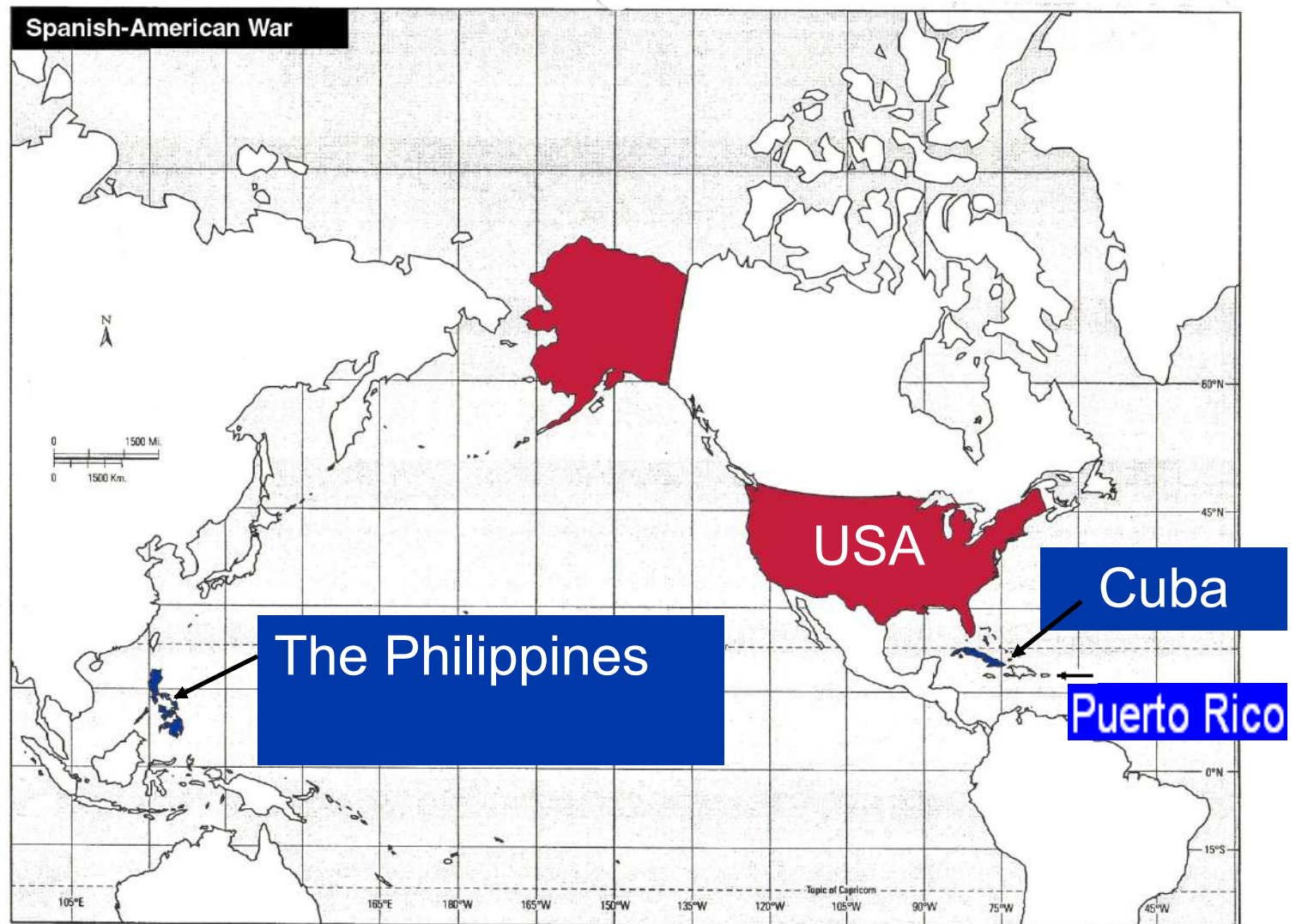
Who?

- Spain vs. America

Where?

- Philippines, Cuba (Spain's Colonies)

Background:



Causes

Cuban Revolution

Yellow Journalism (Press)

American Economic/Expansionist Desires

Sinking of the USS *Maine*

Cuban Revolution/Spain's Reconcentration Plan

The story

Cuba was a colony of Spain and it rebelled against Spanish colonial rule. In an attempt to prevent Cuban civilians from aiding the rebelling Cuban military, Spain forced Cuban civilians into government run concentration camps. Spain called this a "reconcentration" of the Cuban people. In an effort to attract the U.S. to intervene, the Cuban rebels destroyed sugar plantations in Cuba that were owned by U.S. corporations.

How did it lead to war?

- Made Spain look bad in American eyes. The U.S. would go to war with Spain to help defend the defenseless Cubans.

“Yellow Journalism”

What is it?

- Yellow journalism was the practice of newspapers creating highly exaggerated stories

Why did newspapers do it?

- Newspapers make more \$ if they keep you scared and interested

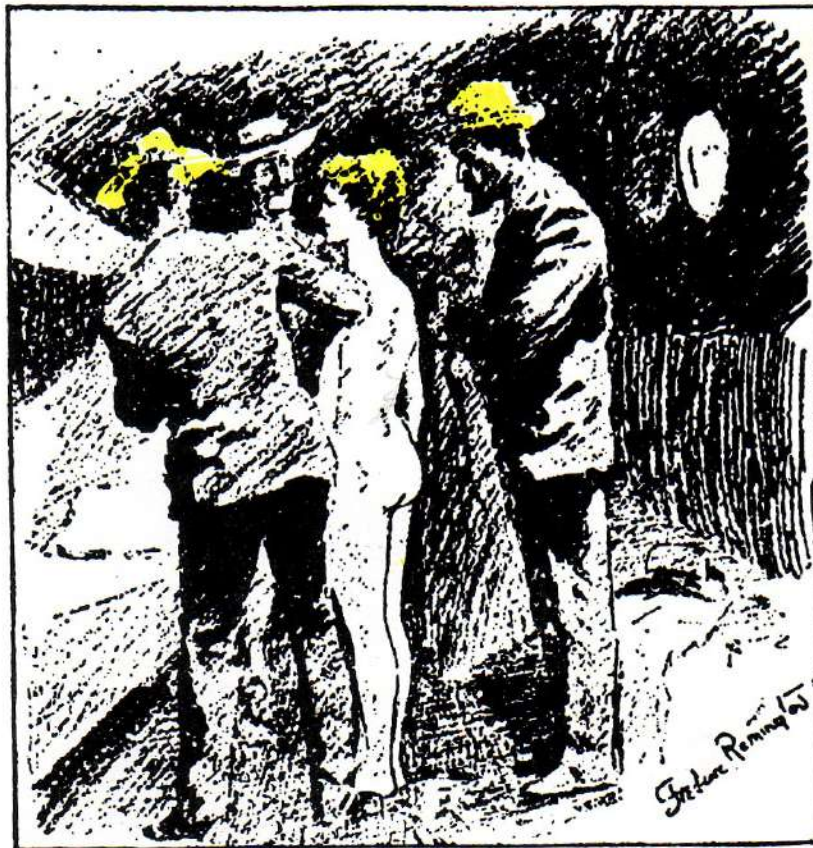
How did it lead to war?

- Made Americans want war! Fabricated or exaggerated stories by William Randolph Hearst increased American sentiment for war. Hearst was in favor of U.S. expansion, so he used his newspaper to convince Americans to go to war w/ Spain. Hearst was given a golden opportunity when the Spanish Ambassador to the U.S., Charles de Lôme, had a letter stolen and published in American newspapers. In the now famous de Lôme letter, the Spaniard criticized President McKinley by calling him “weak.” This of course was played up in newspapers and caused American citizens to intensify their hatred of Spain.

“Yellow Journalism”

“You furnish the pictures, I’ll furnish the war”

William Randolph Hearst



Frederic
Remington's
Disrobing
Propaganda

American Economic and Expansionist Interests

Cuba and the Philippines

- Cuba was a Spanish colony before the SA War began. Many of Cuba's sugar plantations were owned by Americans.
- The Philippines were a Spanish colony before the SA War and were viewed by the U.S. as a desirable territory.

Why did the u.s. have an economic interest in these places?

- American owners of the plantations in Cuba wanted their investments protected.
- The Philippines, if made an American territory, would greatly aid the U.S. in accessing foreign markets in Asia namely China and Japan.

How did it lead to war?

- Made Americans more likely to help out Cuba in order to protect American economic interests on the island. Those American businessmen who were in favor of U.S. expansion offered their approval of the U.S. expanding into Asia (Philippines).

Sinking of the Maine in Havana Harbor

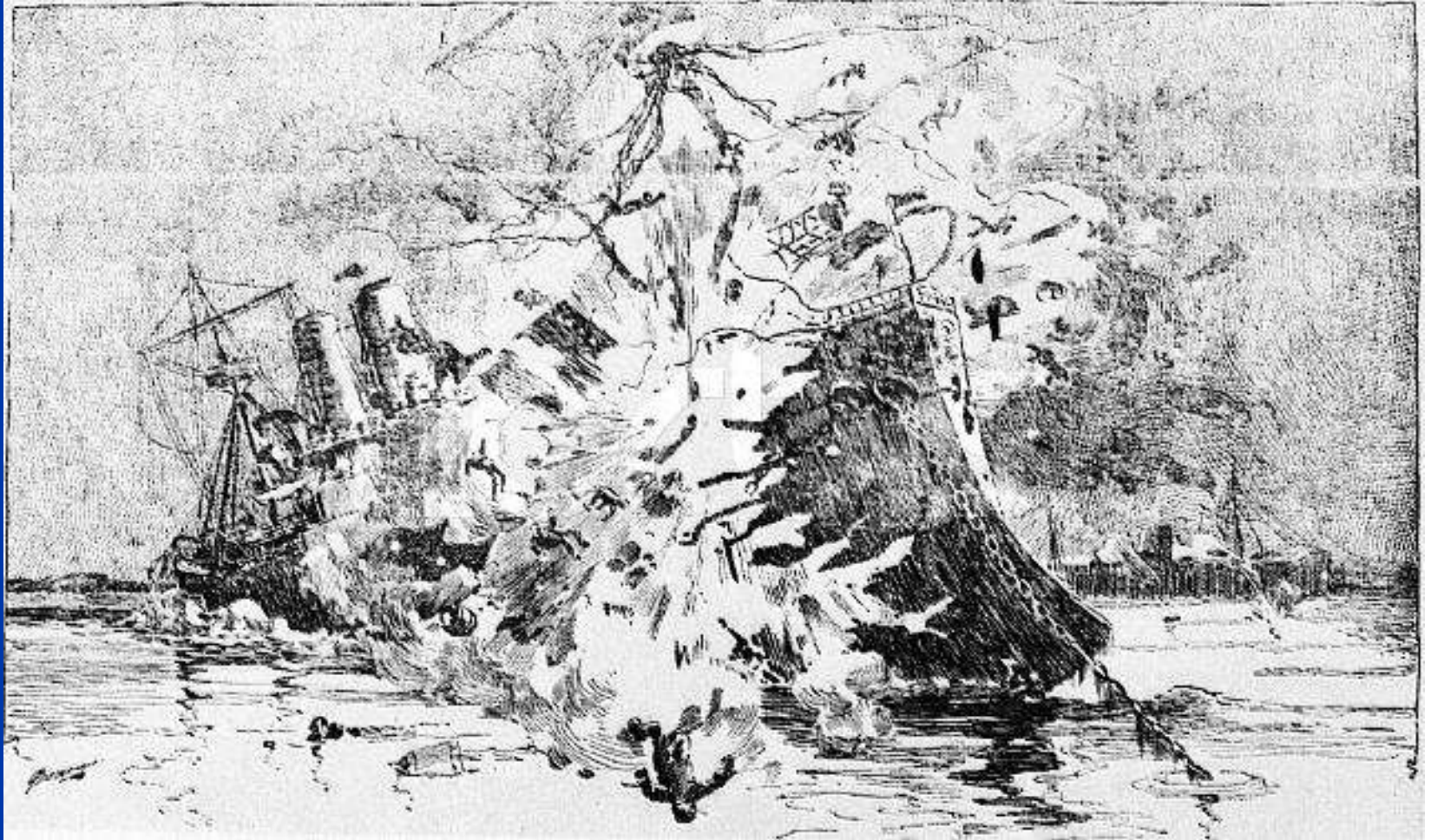
What?

- The *USS Maine*, a U.S. naval warship, explodes in Havana, Cuba Harbor killing 266 American troops.
- Most Americans believe it was Spain's fault. The Yellow Press takes advantage of the situation and writes articles calling for war with Spain. They would prove to be very influential in getting American public support for the war.
- 1976 US Navy analyzed the sunken ship. Conclusion was drawn that the explosion came from within the ship. Latter studies in the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s have produced indecisive reasons for what caused the Maine to sink.
- In conclusion, there was no definite proof that Spain sunk the Maine, but the Spanish were blamed for it and the loss of American lives that came with it.

How did it lead to war?

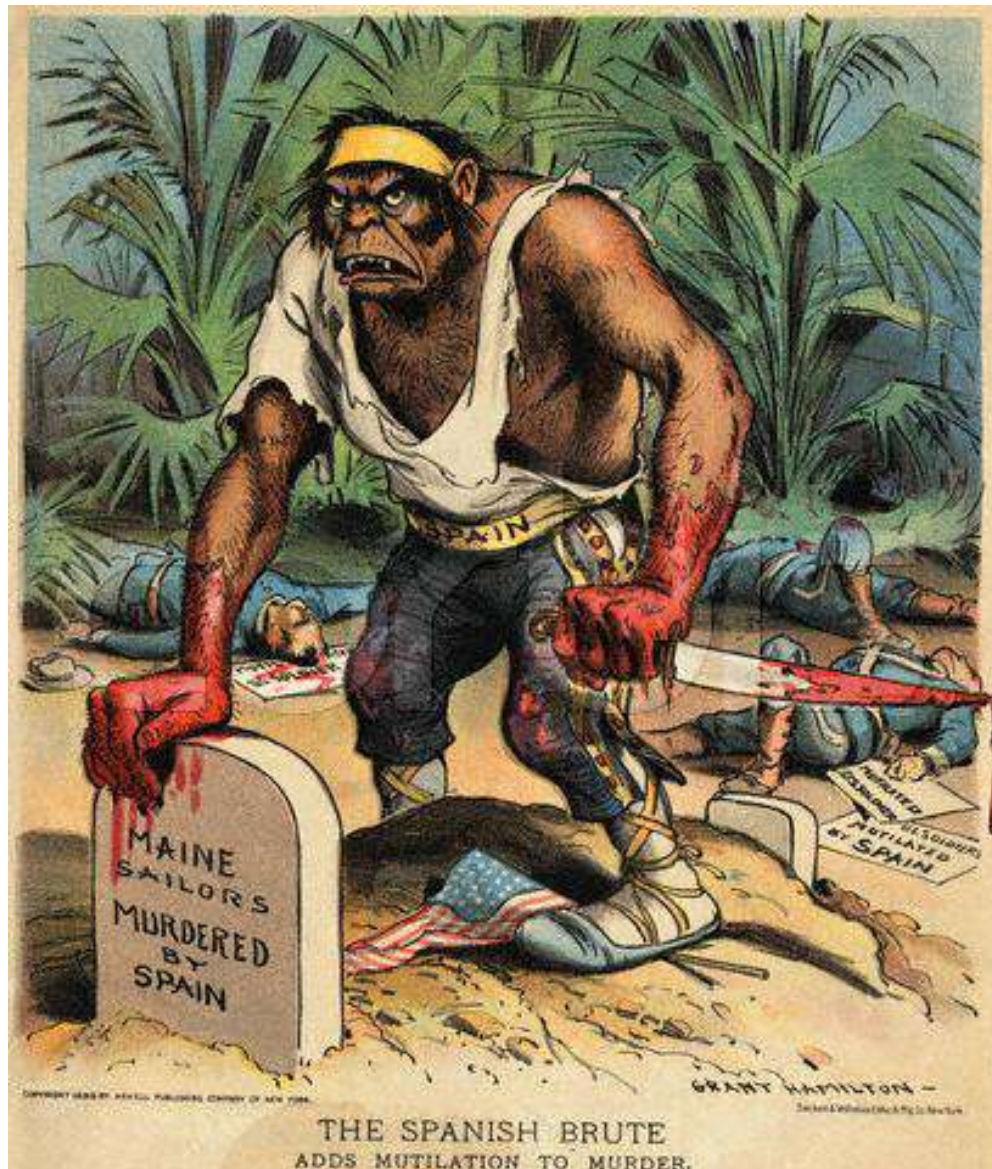
- "Spark" that started the war. "Remember the Main, to hell with Spain" became the American war cry.

Slide Analysis: Headline of the Maine Explosion



Maine Explosion Caused by Bomb or Torpedo?
2/17/1898 *New York World*

Slide Analysis: Judge Cartoon

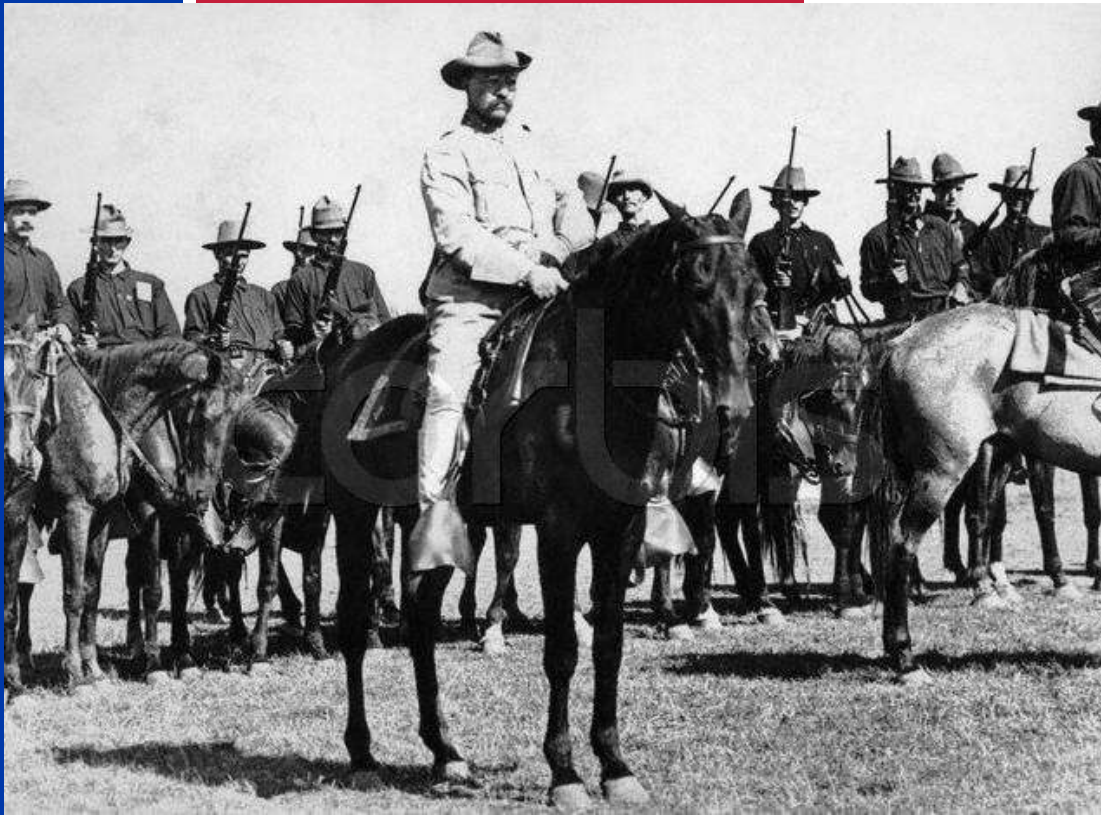


Thinking Slide:

Which of these do you think
was most responsible for the
nation going to war?

The War in Cuba

Teddy Roosevelt



- There was little actual land fighting in Cuba against Spain. The U.S. Navy had managed to trap the Spanish fleet in Santiago Harbor and defeated it with relative ease.
- The most famous land battle was the U.S. victory at San Juan Hill. Teddy Roosevelt resigned his position as Asst. Secretary of the Navy to lead a "Cowboy Calvary" known as the Rough Riders. Roosevelt's victory earned him fame back home.
- TR Brought his own photographer
- Teddy's popularity from this leads to his becoming v.p. and president

Rough Riders

What famous Battle did they participate in?



Some of our brave colored Boys who helped to free Cuba.
Copyright 1899 by J. F. Jarvis.

- San Juan Hill

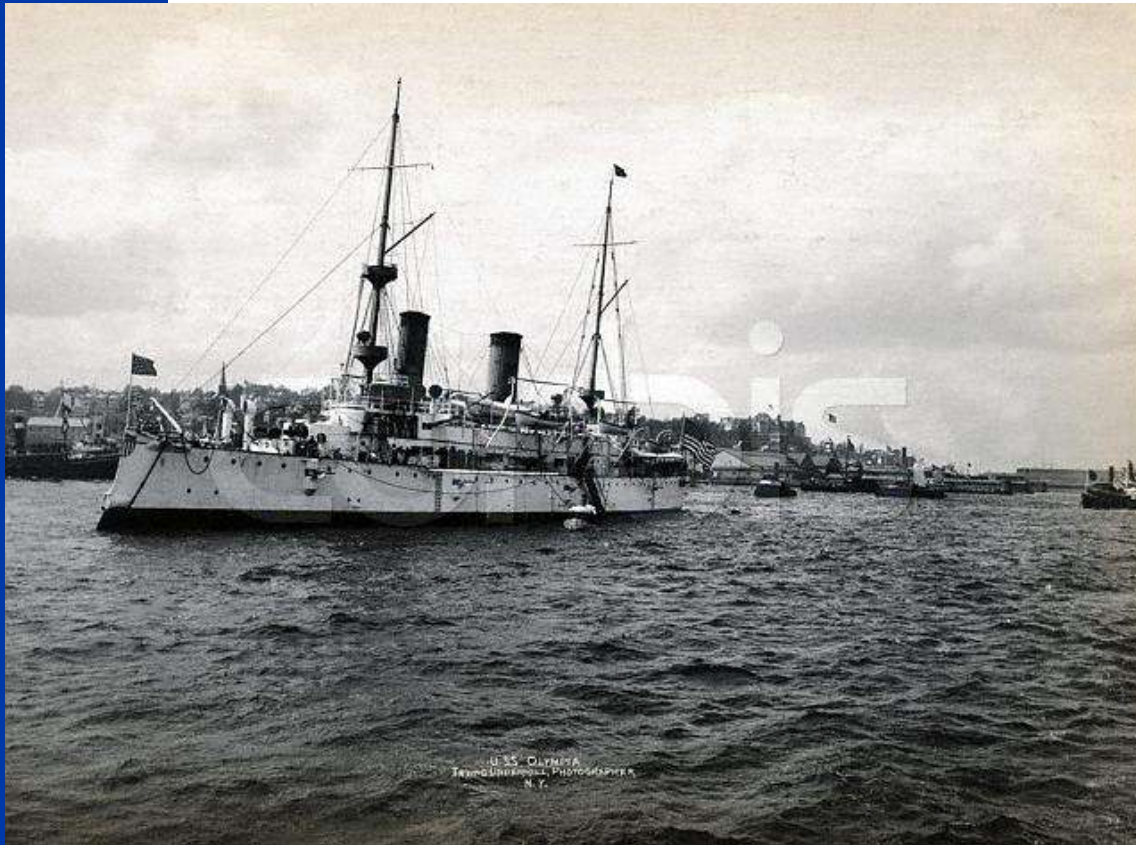
- African Americans troops played a significant role in victory at this battle, but do not get credit

Teddy Roosevelt



The War Against Spain in the Philippines

Manila Bay



- **Admiral George Dewey was in charge of the American fleet. He was stationed in Hong Kong and received orders via cable (yay technology) to attack the Spanish fleet in the Philippines.**
- **The surprise naval attack on May 1, 1898 sunk the crumbling Spanish Navy while it was still at anchor in Manila Bay, Philippines.**
- **Demonstrated U.S. Naval Superiority**

The War Against Spain in the Philippines

Dewey: “You may fire when you are ready, Gridley”

Spanish Fleet sunk at anchor

–Superior American gunnery

- Americans → 170 hits
- Spanish → 15 hits

Dewey becomes a national hero

Siege of Manila (Philippines)

–After defeating the Spanish Navy, U.S. troops invaded mainland Philippines and defeated Spanish ground forces in quick fashion.

War against the Philippines

- Having been allies w/ the U.S. against Spain during the SA War, Filipinos looked forward to independence in the wake of Spain's defeat. This would not be the case.
- From 1899-1902, U.S. forces would fight against Filipinos resisting U.S. occupation.
- Filipino forces were lead by Emilio Aguinaldo.



- Aguinaldo was captured in 1902 and the resistance faded quickly.
- The Philippines were put under civilian control by the U.S. and William Howard Taft (future president) was appointed as the first governor of the Philippines.

Consequences

- US defeats Spain & becomes a world power
- Influence of Media on Foreign Policy (Yellow Journalism)
- US acquires Guam, Puerto Rico, Philippines (U.S. paid Spain \$20 million)
- Platt Amendment (gives U.S. control over Cuban foreign affairs)
- Increased Support of Panama Canal (expanding empire in the Pacific requires faster transport from the Atlantic to the Pacific)
- Changing Perception of U.S. by Europe and Japan. The U.S. has just fought and won a war essentially in the name of imperialism...the U.S. did not grant freedom to people in Cuba, the Philippines, Puerto Rico and Guam.

Thinking Slide

Do you think the war was a good idea?