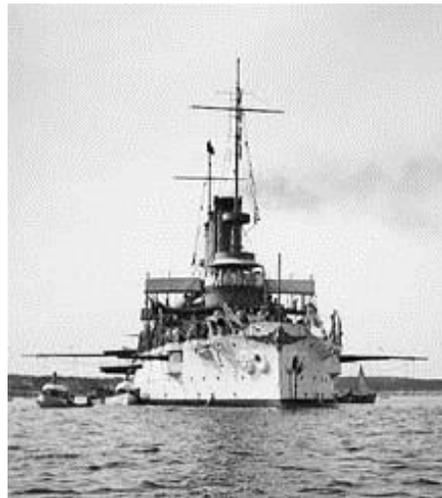


## American Imperialism

- \* Following the Civ. War, Americans focused on domestic issues
  - \* Not interested in getting new territories beyond U.S. borders
    - \* **Purchase of Alaska from Russia (1867)** was an exception
      - \* Called **“Seward’s Folly”**
        - \* \$7.2 million for frozen tundra
- \* **Toward the end of the century, attitudes changed**
  - \* Many began to think that the U.S. needed overseas colonies
    - \* U.S. agriculture and industry was quickly expanding
      - \* **Indiana Senator Albert J. Beveridge** stated that America needed:
        - \* New markets for our goods
        - \* New places to invest our growing capital
        - \* New work for our growing labor force
      - \* **U.S. industries needed raw materials (rubber, tin) only available overseas**
        - \* **Imperialism** – conquering other countries to build an empire - would provide markets and raw materials
  - \* **Americans also wanted to keep up with the European powers**
    - \* They were busy dividing Africa, Asia, Middle East into colonies
      - \* **Many believed in a combination of Darwinian “survival of the fittest” and white racial superiority**
        - \* To them, Whites were the fittest and should dominate
          - \* **“White man’s burden”** to civilize rest of world
- \* Chief advocate of American imperialism – **Admiral Alfred T. Mahan**
  - \* **Said if U.S. is going to be strong in peace and war, would need a strong navy to protect its interests**
    - \* Specifically – would need:
      - \* **Modern naval fleet**
      - \* **Naval bases in the Caribbean**
      - \* **Panama Canal**
      - \* **Hawaii and other Pacific islands**
        - \* The U.S. eventually fulfilled all of Mahan’s suggestions



- \* By 1898 – U.S. had 3<sup>rd</sup> largest fleet
  - \* Get bases after Spanish-American War (1898)
  - \* Panama Canal opened in 1914
- \* U.S. was particularly interested in Cuba
  - \* In the 1<sup>st</sup> war for independence in Cuba (1868-78), Spain beat the rebels but agreed to make changes
    - \* Abolished slavery & promised to allow more self-government
      - \* Failed to honor the second promise
    - \* With slavery gone, U.S. biz invested millions of \$ in Cuba
      - \* Set up huge sugar plantations & became Cuba's main market for sugar
        - \* Cuba prospered until U.S. sugar lobbyists called for a tough tariff (tax on imported goods)
          - \* A 40% tariff was imposed – killed Cuban economy
  - \* Second War for Independence in Cuba (1895)
    - \* Rebels led by José Martí, a Cuban exile who had lived in U.S.
      - \* Rebels unable to defeat Spanish in straight fight
        - \* Turned to guerilla tactics
          - \* Rebels destroyed American-owned property
            - \* Hoped that U.S. would intervene & get rid of Spain
              - \* U.S. divided over who to support
    - \* Spanish sent General Valeriano Weyler to put down the revolt
      - \* Used “reconcentration camps” to contain rural population
        - \* Rebels strongest in countryside
          - \* Disease and famine killed 200K in camps in 2 years
  - \* Atrocities against rebels by Weyler caused outcry in U.S.
    - \* Rebel supporters in U.S. sent \$ & guns to help
      - \* Pulitzer & Hearst fought their circulation war using the situation in Cuba for headlines
        - \* Mixed real stories of atrocities with fake, sensational stories
          - \* Yellow Press instrumental in starting war between U.S. and Spain
            - \* Hearst to illustrator Frederic Remington:
 

“You furnish the pictures and I’ll furnish the war.”

