

come a radically different society. Such are the causes that make so profound a separation between the two families and give us the right to call ourselves Americans and not Spaniards.

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John J. Ingalls

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## America's War for Humanity, 1898

*In the United States the Spanish-American War provided a new opportunity for expressions of the Black Legend. The Cuban independence movements of the nineteenth century were understood as legitimate protests against tyranny, late versions of the same struggle for freedom that had created the United States in the late eighteenth century and that had brought the independent Spanish-American nations into being in the early nineteenth century. In the 1890s United States patriots denounced Spanish imperialism in familiar terms. We quote from a statement of the period by John J. Ingalls (1833-1900), a Republican ex-senator from Kansas.*

Cuba, the largest of the West Indian Islands, one hundred miles south of Key West, separated from the United States by the Straits of Florida, and from Mexico by the channel of Yucatan, was discovered by Christopher Columbus, October, 1492, and since 1511 it has been a Spanish province.

The aborigines, whose numbers are not definitely known, an innocent, simple and pacific people, believing in a Su-

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From John J. Ingalls (ed.), *America's War for Humanity Related in Story and Picture, Embracing a Complete History of Cuba's Struggle for Liberty, and the Glorious Heroism of America's Soldiers and Sailors* (New York, 1898), pp. 13-20.

preme Being and the immortality of the soul, were slaughtered and exterminated by the Spaniards in less than fifty years after the conquest.

Of its 40,000 square miles, not above one-third are cultivated; and at least fifteen million acres are covered with dense, impenetrable forests of mahogany, ebony, cedar and palm, of great value for ship-building and cabinet work.

Deposits of gold, silver, copper, iron, coal and petroleum wait for development.

The climate is tropical, though the temperature sometimes sinks below the freezing point in the mountains; but snow is unknown, except in one instance, elsewhere mentioned.

Along the coast and in the seaports yellow fever is destructive, its virulence being increased by defective sanitation; but the interior is temperate and healthful.

The soil is of incomparable fertility; its chief products are sugar, tobacco, coffee, chocolate, pine-apples, oranges, and alimentary plants.

On account of the disorder that has so long prevailed, no recent census has been taken, and estimates of population are conjectural. In the absence of official data, the most reliable authority places the number of inhabitants at 1,600,000. Of these, 400,000 are mulattoes and negroes, freed from slavery by the edict of 1880 and excluded by law from all political rights; 1,000,000 Cuban merchants, farmers, brokers, professional men and free skilled laborers; 200,000 native Spaniards, holding all the civil and military offices, collecting and disbursing the revenues, and regarding the other classes with intolerance and contempt.

The established religion is the Roman Catholic, and the official language is Spanish.

There is no system of public education, and illiteracy is extreme. Society, both in the cities and in the country, is sunken in ignorance, squalor and degradation.

Having no manufactures, and being destitute of enterprise, and engaged almost exclusively in agriculture, Cuba depends on other nations for the necessaries of life, im-

porting beef, fish, flour, lumber, furniture, machinery, tools and fabrics, generally in Spanish ships, on account of heavy differential duties.

The government is an absolute military despotism, with no popular representation except in name.

The Governor is appointed by the Crown, from the rank of Lieutenant-General in the Spanish army, for a term of three to five years, and has supreme jurisdiction and authority in church and state, responsible only to the sovereign of Spain.

The office has been administered by a succession of criminals, whose annals are an unbroken record of infamy. It has been bestowed upon guilty favorites as an avenue to the rapid acquisition of fortune by pillage, plunder, spoliation and extortion.

For three centuries the unhappy people have been subjected to poverty and misery by tyranny without precedent in the history of mankind. Duties have been levied upon imports, exports and tonnage. Taxes have been laid on manufactures, amusements, religion and incomes. Offices have been sold and salaries assessed, and tribute demanded for exemption from military service.

Deprived of civil rights and political liberty, excluded from all places of trust, honor and profit, burdened with intolerable taxation to maintain an army and navy to make the chains and fetters of their bondage more secure, implacable hatred has resulted between the oppressors and the oppressed, manifesting itself in frequent revolts and outbreaks for freedom. They have seen their trade decreasing, productions diminishing, their youths emigrating, their commerce disappearing, their roads impassable, their poverty becoming more intolerable, while taxes have multiplied to fill the coffers of thieves and pay interest on debts contracted for their own destruction. . . .

Exasperated and enraged by unexpected assaults, by attacks from ambush, by raids, by forays and sudden incursions from fugitive forces, who delivered their volleys and disappeared in inaccessible fastnesses of the mountains, the

Governor-General, Weyler, resorted to the tactics of Alva in the Netherlands, of Pizarro in Peru, of Cortez in Mexico, and, since he could not conquer, resolved to exterminate. Like the warriors described by Tacitus, he determined to make a solitude and call it peace.

Never in her annals, that are written in blood and illuminated by the torch, has Spain exceeded in remorseless and unrelenting inhumanity the record of this malignant monster of iniquity. Surrounding the towns and villages of the four western provinces with rifle-pits, consisting of a ditch and a barbed wire fence, within these enclosures, by his edict, May 29, 1896, were driven all the inhabitants of the rural country, the farmers and laborers, non-combatants, the aged and infirm, women and children, about 400,000 in the aggregate. Those who refused to obey the order of reconcentration were declared rebels, and directed to be treated as such.

In these prison pens, guarded by soldiers, with orders to shoot any who attempted to escape, these wretched and guiltless victims were permitted to build huts of palm branches, and left, without food, furniture or medicine, to die of disease or perish of starvation.

Lying upon the ground, exposed to sun and rain, with foul air, putrid water, and scanty food, not less than 200,000 are reported to have died, and 100,000 more to be so enfeebled by famine that recovery is impossible. . . .

Other wars have been waged for ambition; for conquest; for revenge; for the balance of power; for a dynasty or a throne; but no such passions animate the people of the United States in the war with Spain.

In obedience to the comity of nations, we have, for half a century, enforced the obligations of neutrality against the Cuban patriots, with whose struggles for liberty we have had the deepest sympathy.

At enormous expense we have policed our coasts to prevent supplies, munitions, and re-enforcements from reaching the insurgents.

The property of American residents on the island has been confiscated and destroyed. Invidious discriminations have been laid against our commerce. We have been silent spectators of excesses, compared with which the outrages of the Turks in Armenia seem harmless diversions. We have sought no advantage from the misfortunes of Spain, but to longer tolerate her atrocities in Cuba would make us participants and accomplices in her crimes.

War is the last argument of kings. Nothing is so terrible as the arbitrament of the sword. For nineteen centuries the time has been foretold when swords should be beaten into plowshares and spears into pruning-hooks and nations learn war no more; but there are crimes which are beyond the reach of private justice.

When nations are the criminals, a victorious army is the executioner that pronounces sentence upon the malefactor, and wields the axe upon the scaffold.

Spain has been tried and convicted in the forum of history. Her religion has been bigotry, whose sacraments have been solemnized by the faggot and the rack. Her statesmanship has been infamy: her diplomacy, hypocrisy: her wars have been massacres: her supremacy has been a blight and a curse, condemning continents to sterility, and their inhabitants to death.

We enter upon this war, therefore, with no ignoble or selfish purpose, but moved, rather, by that lofty moral impulse which has inspired the heroes of every history, and the martyrs of every religion.

We are ministers of that eternal justice for which every place should be a temple. We draw the sword to avenge the wrongs of the helpless. Our cannon speak for those who are voiceless. Our flags float above our armaments on land and sea, as an assurance alike to tyrants and their victims that the creed of human liberty is not an unmeaning formula, nor the brotherhood of man an empty dream.

Our victory will be the triumph of the Nineteenth Century over the Middle Ages; of democracy over absolutism; of

self-government over tyranny; of faith over bigotry; of civilization over barbarism.

It will open new avenues for commerce, new fields for enterprise, new careers for ambition.

It will abolish insularity and provincialism and admit us to the front rank in that fraternity of nations that is to complete the moral conquest of the world.

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George Washington Crichfield

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## American Supremacy, 1908

*From the point of view of the United States, the condition of the Spanish-American nations, including Cuba, still left much to be desired. Their independence had been won under the leadership of a few bold and far-sighted individuals. But the people everywhere seemed incapable of further progress, of sound moral principles, of self-control, and of order. The United States' view combined an abstract sympathy for Spanish-Americans with a practical distaste, and standard Black Legend attributes came to be applied more directly to Spanish America than to Spain. Organized cruelty, as in the historic conquests and the Inquisition, played a reduced role in this new direction of the Black Legend. A kind of diffused, private cruelty remained, however, and other Latin traits that contributed to the image were laziness, impracticality, bad faith, political corruption, and uncleanness. United States observers were not alone in viewing Spanish America in these ways, but a variety of factors combined to give the United States commentaries a special significance. The following selection is from the work of a vigorous American entrepreneur with*

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From George W. Crichfield, *American Supremacy. The Rise and Progress of the Latin American Republics and their Relations to the United States under the Monroe Doctrine*, 2 vols. (New York, 1908), vol. I, pp. 389-393, 400-401, 403-404, 406-408, 417-418, 449.