

1 The United States Continues to Expand

TERMS & NAMES
imperialism
William Seward
Queen Liliuokalani

MAIN IDEA

The United States expanded its interest in world affairs and acquired new territories.

WHY IT MATTERS NOW

During this period, the United States acquired Alaska and Hawaii as territories.

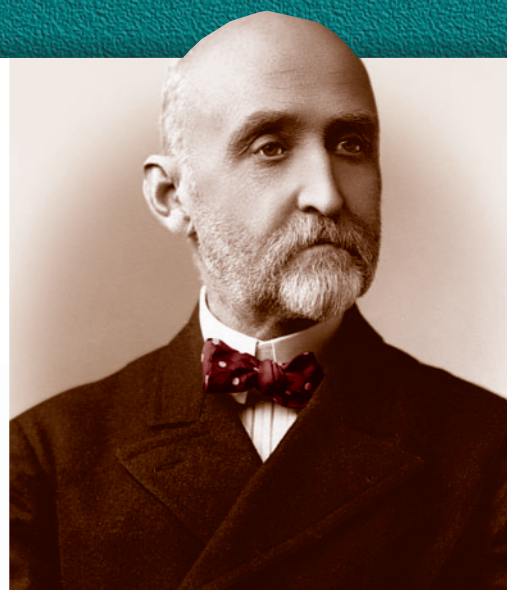
ONE AMERICAN'S STORY

Alfred T. Mahan joined the U.S. Navy in the 1850s and served for nearly 40 years. In the 1890s, Mahan made use of his decades of experience to write several books on the historical importance of sea power. In one passage, he discussed the economic importance of trading stations and colonies.

A VOICE FROM THE PAST

The trading-station . . . [was] the same as the . . . colony. In both cases the mother-country had won a foothold in a foreign land, seeking a new outlet for what it had to sell, a new sphere for its shipping, more employment for its people, and more comfort and wealth for itself.

A. T. Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660–1805*



Naval historian Alfred Thayer Mahan at the turn of the century

Mahan encouraged government officials to build up American naval forces so that the United States could compete with other powerful nations. In this section you will learn how the United States began to extend its influence beyond the national boundaries.

Reasons for U.S. Expansion

Americans had always sought to expand the size of their nation. Throughout the 19th century, they extended their control toward the Pacific Coast. By the 1880s, however, many leaders became convinced that the United States should join the imperialist powers of Europe and establish colonies overseas. **Imperialism**—the policy by which stronger nations extend their economic, political, or military control over weaker territories—was a trend around the world.

European nations had been establishing colonies for centuries. In the late 19th century, Africa became a major area of European expansion. By the early 20th century, only two countries in Africa—Ethiopia and Liberia—remained independent.

Imperialist countries also competed for territory in Asia, especially in China. There, European nations had to compete with Japan, which had also become a world power by the end of the 1800s.

Most Americans gradually came to approve of the idea of expansion overseas. Three factors helped to fuel the development of American imperialism.

1. **Economic Interests.** Economic leaders argued that expansion would increase U.S. financial prosperity. Industry had greatly expanded after the Civil War. Many industrialists saw new colonies as a potential source of cheap raw materials. Agriculture had also expanded. Farmers pointed out that colonies would mean new markets for their products.
2. **Military Interests.** In his books, Alfred T. Mahan had argued that economic interests went hand-in-hand with military interests. Foreign policy experts agreed. They urged U.S. leaders to follow the European example and establish a military presence overseas.
3. **Belief in Cultural Superiority.** Many Americans believed that their government, religion, and even race were superior to those of other societies. Some people hoped to spread democratic ideas overseas. Others saw a chance to advance Christianity. Racist ideas about the inferiority of the nonwhite populations in many foreign countries were also used to justify American imperialism.

Each of these developments—economic interests, military interests, and a belief in cultural superiority—led the United States to a larger role on the world stage.

ReadingHistory

A. Making

Inferences Why might economic and military interests go hand in hand?



Seward and Alaska

A strong backer of expansion was **William Seward**, Secretary of State under presidents Abraham Lincoln and Andrew Johnson. Seward made his biggest move in 1867, when he arranged the purchase of Alaska from Russia.

Not everyone was pleased by Seward's move, though. At the time, the \$7.2-million deal was widely criticized. Newspapers called Alaska a "Polar Bear Garden" and "Seward's Icebox." Even so, the purchase of the resource-rich territory turned out to be a great bargain for the United States.

Throughout his career, Seward continued to pursue new territory. Before he retired in 1869, he considered acquiring the Hawaiian Islands, a group of volcanic and coral islands in the central Pacific Ocean. That would not happen, however, for almost 30 more years.

Background

In the late 1800s, large gold fields were discovered in Alaska. The territory was also rich in fur-bearing animals, timber, copper, coal, and oil.

ReadingHistory

B. Reading a Map

Locate the Hawaiian Islands on the map on page 258.

Vocabulary

annex: to add

The Annexation of Hawaii

In the early 1800s, Christian missionaries from the United States had moved to the Kingdom of Hawaii to convert the local population. Some of the missionaries' descendants started sugar plantations. By the late 1800s, wealthy planters dominated Hawaii's economy.

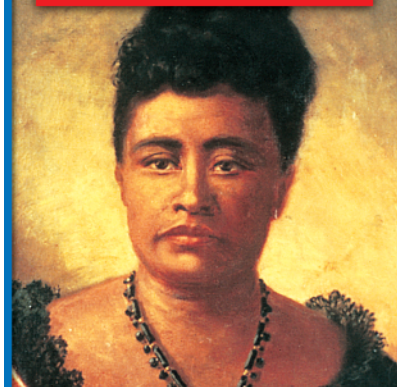
In 1891, **Queen Liliuokalani** (lee•LEE•oo•oh•kah•LAH•nee) became the leader of Hawaii. Believing that planters had too much influence, she wanted to limit their power. Around the same time, U.S. trade laws changed to favor sugar grown exclusively in American states.

American planters in Hawaii were upset by these threats to their political and economic interests. In January 1893, they staged a revolt. With the help of U.S. Marines, they overthrew the queen and set up their own government. They then asked to be annexed by the United States.

U.S. leaders already understood the value of the islands. In 1887, they had pressured Hawaii to allow a U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor, the kingdom's best port. The base became an important refueling station for American merchant and military ships bound for Asia.

Thus, when President Benjamin Harrison received the planters' request in 1893, he gave his approval and sent a treaty to the Senate. But before the Senate could act, Grover Cleveland became president. He did not approve of the planters' actions and withdrew the treaty. Hawaii would not be annexed until 1898, during the Spanish-American War. In the next section, you will read about the events that led to that war.

AMERICA'S HISTORY MAKERS



QUEEN LILIUOKALANI

1838–1917

As a young princess, Liliuokalani received a Western education and toured the world. Although she learned about many cultures, she remained committed to Hawaii. An excellent musician, she wrote the famous Hawaiian song "Aloha Oe [Farewell to Thee]."

She was the first queen of Hawaii and proved to be a good leader. She resisted the foreign takeover of Hawaii and inspired a revolt against the planters. Only in 1895, when the safety of her supporters was threatened, did she agree to give up her throne.

How did Queen Liliuokalani protect her followers after planters seized power?

Section 1 Assessment

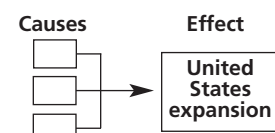
1. Terms & Names

Explain the significance of:

- imperialism
- William Seward
- Queen Liliuokalani

2. Taking Notes

Use a chart like the one shown to record causes of U.S. expansion overseas in the late 1800s.



Which was the most important cause?

3. Main Ideas

- Where was the focus of U.S. expansion before the late 1800s?
- How did William Seward contribute to U.S. expansion?
- Why did the American planters' request for the annexation of Hawaii fail in the early 1890s?

4. Critical Thinking

Making Inferences What benefits were American planters looking for when they staged a revolt in 1893?

THINK ABOUT

- the new policies of Queen Liliuokalani
- changes in U.S. trade laws

ACTIVITY OPTIONS

TECHNOLOGY

ART

Read more about Hawaii's Queen Liliuokalani. Outline a **video presentation** on the overthrow of the queen or plan a **mural** that depicts the event.