**Chapter 17, Section 2: The Spanish American War**

**I. The Coming of War** *(pages 527–529)*

**A.** Cuba, a Spanish colony, provided wealth for Spain with sugarcane plantations. In 1868 Cuban rebels declared independence and began a guerrilla attack against Spanish authorities. After the attack failed, the Cuban rebels fled to the United States to plan a new revolution. **Writer and poet José Martí, an exiled leader of Cuba’s revolution, fled to New York City. He raised money from Americans and began purchasing weapons and training troops to prepare for an invasion of Cuba.**

**B.** In 1894, after the United States imposed new tariffs on sugar, the economy of Cuba was devastated. Martí and his followers began a new rebellion in February of 1895. They seized control of eastern Cuba, declared its independence, and set up the Republic of Cuba in September 1895.

**C. At the start of the Cuban revolution, Americans were neutral. But after reports in two newspapers, the *New York Journal* owned by William Randolph Hearst and the *New* *York World* owned by Joseph Pulitzer, Americans began to side with the rebels. The newspapers, trying to outdo each other, began to use yellow journalism by running exaggerated stories of Spanish attacks on Cubans.**

**D.** The Cuban rebels attacked and destroyed American property, hoping for American intervention in the war.

**E.** The Spanish appointed General Valeriano Weyler to serve as governor. He caused the deaths of tens of thousands of Cuban villagers by sending them to reconcentration camps. This led Americans to call for intervention in the war.

**F. The Spanish ambassador to the U.S., Enrique Dupuy de Lôme, wrote a private letter, describing President McKinley as weak and seeking admiration of Americans. The *New York Journal* printed the letter, causing Americans to become angry over the insult.**

**G. In February 1898, the U.S.S. *Maine*, anchored in Havana, Cuba, exploded, killing 266 American officers and sailors. Although no one knows why the ship exploded, many Americans blamed Spain.**

**H.** President William McKinley did not want to intervene in the war, fearing it would cost the United States too many lives and hurt the economy. Within the president’s own political party, **jingoism** was very strong. **In 1898, after much pressure, McKinley authorized Congress to declare war on Spain.**

**Discussion Question**

What factors led Americans to call for war against Spain in the late 1800s? *(After sensational reports in two newspapers, the* New York Journal *owned by William Randolph Hearst and the* New York World *owned by Joseph Pulitzer, Americans began to side with the rebels. The Cuban rebels attacked and destroyed American property, hoping for American intervention in the war. The Spanish Governor of Cuba, General Valeriano Weyler, caused the deaths of tens of thousands of Cuban villagers by sending them to reconcentration camps. This led Americans to call for intervention in the war. The Spanish ambassador to the U.S. wrote a letter describing President McKinley as weak. This angered Americans. In February 1898, the U.S.S.* Maine, *anchored in Havana, Cuba, exploded, killing 266 American officers and sailors. Many Americans blamed Spain.)*

**II. A War on Two Fronts** *(pages 529–531)*

**A.** The United States Navy’s North Atlantic Squadron blockaded Cuba. **An American fleet in British Hong Kong was ordered to attack the Spanish fleet in the Philippines—a Spanish colony.**

**B. In May 1898, Commodore George Dewey led a squadron that destroyed Spanish warships in Manila Bay in the Philippines.** **McKinley sent 20,000 American troops to the Philippines and, along the way, seized the island of Guam—a Spanish possession in the Pacific.**

**C.** The American army was untrained and unequipped. Poor conditions in training camps resulted in more Americans dying in training than in battle.

**D.** In June 1898, American troops advanced toward Santiago Harbor in Cuba. One group attacked the village of El Caney, and another group attacked San Juan Heights. **Among the American troops were the “Rough Riders” led by Colonel Leonard Wood, with Theodore Roosevelt as second in command.** Both attacks were American victories.

**E.** Along with the Rough Riders were the all-black 9th and 10th Cavalry Regiments. About one-fourth of the American troops fighting in Cuba were African American.

**F. Spanish resistance ended with the surrender of Santiago. On August 12, 1898, Spain and the United States agreed to a cease-fire.**

**Discussion Question**

Who were the “Rough Riders”? *(The “Rough Riders” were a group of volunteer cavalry regiment from the American West. The group was a mix of cowboys, miners, and law officers with Theodore Roosevelt as second in command. They attacked Kettle Hill on foot and assisted in the capture of San Juan Hill.)*

**III. An American Empire is Born** *(pages 531–533)*

**A.** Many Americans supported annexing the Philippines because it would provide a naval base in Asia, a stopover on the way to China, a large market for American goods, and the ability to teach “less civilized” peoples.

**B. On December 10, 1898, the United States and Spain signed the Treaty of Paris. Cuba became an independent country. The United States acquired Puerto Rico and Guam and paid Spain $20 million for the Philippines. This treaty made the United States an imperial power.**

**C. Controlling its new empire was not easy for the United States. Emilio Aguinaldo, a Filipino revolutionary, ordered his troops to attack American soldiers stationed in the Philippines. American General Arthur MacArthur was forced to set up reconcentration camps resulting in thousands of Filipinos dying.**

**D.** William Howard Taft, the first U.S. civilian governor of the Philippines, introduced reforms in education, transportation, and health care to try to win over the Filipino people. These reforms slowly lessened Filipino hostility toward American rule. By April 1902, all Filipino resistance stopped. In 1946 the United States granted independence to the Philippines.

**E.** In 1900 Congress passed the **Foraker Act,** making Puerto Rico an unincorporated territory. Congress gradually allowed the people a degree of self-government. In 1917 Puerto Ricans were made citizens of the United States. In 1947 the island was allowed to elect its own governor. Today the debate on whether to grant Puerto Rico statehood, to become an independent country, or to continue as a Commonwealth and part of the United States still exists.

**F. After the war, the United States set up a military government in Cuba. Steps were taken to ensure that Cuba would remain tied to the United States. The Platt Amendment specified that (1) Cuba could not make a treaty with another nation that would weaken its power or allow another foreign power to gain territory in Cuba; (2) Cuba had to allow the United States to buy or lease naval stations in Cuba; (3) Cuba’s debts had to be kept low to prevent foreign countries from landing troops to enforce payment; and (4) the United States would have the right to intervene to protect Cuban independence and keep order. Cuba reluctantly accepted the Amendment. It was repealed in 1934**

**Discussion Question**

How did the Foraker Act affect Puerto Rico? *(This act meant that the Puerto Ricans were not citizens and had no constitutional rights. It also gave Congress the power to pass whatever laws it wanted for the island.)*