

## Reflecting on Expanded Horizons

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The end of the Nineteenth century marked a significant change for the United States. Slavery had been abolished thirty-three years prior to 1898.<sup>1</sup> The country no longer focused solely on inward development and growth and now looked to gain more influence within the rest of the world.<sup>2</sup> South Carolina, a former slave state and the first of the thirteen Confederate States to secede, in strong disapproval of a powerful centralized government, valued individual rights and private property.<sup>3</sup> The major development and advancement of South Carolina had come from slave labor. Paternalism developed among the plantation owners, the elite planter class who controlled seventy percent of the wealth in the South and owned more than twenty slaves each.<sup>4</sup> The basis of this ideology was the belief that slaves benefitted from and relied on the slave master's role as the father figure, overseeing and regulating everything. With slavery gone, the South Carolina constitution adopted Jim Crow laws in 1895.<sup>5</sup> Matthew Calbraith Butler was born on the eighth of March 1836 in South Carolina. He came from a distinguished background. His father and grandfather had both been members of the U.S. legislature. Educated at the South Carolina College, Butler became a lawyer and in 1877, served as a South Carolina senator for three terms. After losing the 1895 election, he returned to work as a lawyer. He was a former

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<sup>1</sup> Jacqueline Jones, *Created Equal: A History of the United States* (New York: Pearson Longman, 2009), 457.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 582.

<sup>3</sup> "South Carolina," *Yahoo! Education* [on-line]; available from <http://education.yahoo.com/reference/encyclopedia/entry/SthCar>; Internet; accessed 27 April 2011.

<sup>4</sup> Lillian Marrujo-Duck, "Ideology, Economic, Politics of the American Revolution," (Lecture City College of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA, August, 2010).

<sup>5</sup> "South Carolina."

Confederate soldier in the Civil War that resulted in Butler's loss of seventy slaves and a leg.<sup>6</sup> At sixty-two, he was sent to Havana, Cuba to assist in the evacuation of Spain from Cuba after the U.S. had won the four month long Spanish-American War from April 29 to August 12, 1898.<sup>7</sup> Butler wrote a letter to the Secretary of War Russell Alexander Alger, appointed by President William McKinley, on September 26, 1898 and one letter to the co-editor of a South Carolinian newspaper, *The State*, on November 5, 1898<sup>8</sup> about the conditions in Cuba after the war, stating his observations and perspectives on what actions the U.S. should proceed to take there. **The views expressed in Matthew Butler's letters reflect South Carolina's eagerness for U.S. expansion reasoned from the concept of a possible loss of democratic ideals, to ensure salvation from Christ and revealing the U.S.'s possessive character by displaying U.S. coercion to protect its investments in foreign resources while also portraying how one of America's primary characteristics of assertiveness was a product of pride and the belief in Manifest Destiny.**

One reason that prompted South Carolina to favor U.S. foreign expansion was the long-standing U.S. ideology of paternalism.<sup>9</sup> **America's paternalistic ideology stemmed from a primal fear of possible U.S. colonization and loss of autonomy that would result in a loss of democratic ideals.** At this time, foreign powers like Great Britain and Spain had already

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<sup>6</sup>Eric J. Wittenberg, "Matthew Calbraith Butler," *Rantings of a Civil War Historian* [on-line]; available from <http://civilwar.cavalry.com/?p=270>; Internet; accessed 22 April 2011.

<sup>7</sup> Jones, *Created Equal*, 580-582.

<sup>8</sup> Matthew Calbraith Butler, "Letters from Congressman Matthew Calbraith Butler Regarding the Spanish-American War, 1898," *Teaching American History in South Carolina* [on-line]; available from <http://www.teachingushistory.org/documents/ButlLett.htm>; Internet; accessed 25 Feb. 2011.

<sup>9</sup> Marrujo-Duck, "Ideology, Economic, Politics of the American Revolution."

established colonies in many countries.<sup>10</sup> These powers maintained monarchical governments; a form of government the U.S. had strayed from to become a democratic republic. Butler mentions the “Gadsden Treaty of Guadeloupe-Hidalgo,”<sup>11</sup> merging the two events. The Treaty of Guadeloupe Hidalgo ended the Mexican-American War in 1848, a conflict started from America's annexation of Texas. Mexico ceded territory in Texas, Colorado, Arizona, Wyoming, Nevada, Utah, and all of California.<sup>12</sup> Following in 1853, the Gadsden Purchase exceeded the boundary created with the Guadalupe Hidalgo Treaty.<sup>13</sup> James Gadsden, a South Carolinian who promoted the development of railroads in the South, was an appointed minister to Mexico and with consent of U.S. President Pierce went to acquire more land to develop Southern railroads.<sup>14</sup> Gadsden surpassed his orders and acquired the rest of New Mexico and Arizona.<sup>15</sup> These two events greatly expanded the U.S. and this purchase seemed to have inspired many to continue expanding beyond the established borders. Butler wrote in his letter to Gonzales,

Everyday that passes now without taking some steps to do something for the Cubans increases the difficulties and complication [...] I have no doubt [the Cubans] could be easily managed, but from some unaccountable reason, a prejudice against them appears to have taken possession of the minds of some of those entrusted with authority that I cannot understand.<sup>16</sup>

In another part of his letter, Butler noted, “They seem to be very poorly cared for, as to

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<sup>10</sup> Jones, *Created Equal*, 576.

<sup>11</sup> “Letters from Congressman Matthew Calbraith Butler Regarding the Spanish-American War, 1898.”

<sup>12</sup> “Guadalupe-Hidalgo, Treaty of,” in *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, ed. Barbara A. Chernow (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993): 1153.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> “Gadsden, James,” in *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, ed. Barbara A. Chernow (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993):1031.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> “Letters from Congressman Matthew Calbraith Butler Regarding the Spanish-American War, 1898.”

subsistence pay and transportation. Of the 115,000 reported to us, about 20,000 are sick and they all have a depressed, subdued appearance.”<sup>17</sup> Butler discussed the Cubans in a way that made it appear that Cubans needed someone to look after them, describing the Cubans in a similar way an adult would describe a child. As a people that “could be easily managed,”<sup>18</sup> Butler evidently viewed the Cubans as mistreated, dejected children who only needed the proper guidance and leadership of a stronger and wiser country. He viewed the U.S. as the wiser and stronger country because the U.S. had fought and won for its independence against the British and had expanded its ownership of land in the process. Because of this initial control from Great Britain, the U.S. would naturally fear the possibility of losing the autonomy they had gained. By expanding the U.S. borders to other regions, it would allow more countries and regions to assimilate to the American way of life, thus providing more U.S. allies and a greater defense of America's democratic ideals. By expanding, the U.S. believed it would protect its independence from invasion by countries that were older and already far ahead with colonization throughout the world like Great Britain, France and Spain.<sup>19</sup> Being a new country, the U.S. felt it had to establish a stronger support to feel better protected against these other countries.<sup>20</sup> The knowledge and experience of being colonized by Great Britain was reciprocated through the Southern U.S.'s treatment of slaves.<sup>21</sup> The slaves in South Carolina were treated with the same paternalistic ideology as other countries were later on like the Philippines and Cuba. It wasn't until after the Monroe Doctrine policy ratified in the year 1823 that warned foreign powers not to

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Jones, *Created Equal*, 576.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> “South Carolina.”

get involved in any part of the Western Hemisphere or risk going into war that the U.S. really established itself as a nation.<sup>22</sup> The U.S. no longer had the fear of colonization but its initial presence still affected the American ideology. This idea of having to take care of and run the "weaker" parts of society could have been to ensure that the U.S. remained strong by strengthening the bases of the U.S. foundation that which American lifestyle was supported by. By maintaining strength in the presence of powerful nations, the U.S. believed it protected itself from any foreign invasion. Therefore, the paternalistic ideology that developed in the U.S. partly emanated from an incentive to prevent possible colonization, prevention by strengthening factors of American society such as national size, by extending control.

The American ideology of paternalism<sup>23</sup> that helped justify expansion could have been viewed by Americans as helpful for countries in distress. Therefore, a moral reasoning of expansion would have commenced in the United States. Another vindication for South Carolina to be anxious to expand was produced by earlier movements like the Second Great Awakening and the Social Gospel.<sup>24</sup> **The assumption of Christ's return could also have subtly inspired South Carolinian support for the U.S. to take on the international hero role to be saved by Christ.** In Butler's description of Havana, the tone of disgust was coupled with his words. He described the presence of yellow fever, a virus transmitted from mosquitoes that has many unpleasant symptoms such as fever, vomiting and yellowing of the skin.<sup>25</sup> South Carolina had

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<sup>22</sup> Jones, *Created Equal*, 953.

<sup>23</sup> Lillian Marrujo-Duck, "The South," (Lecture City College of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA, December, 2010).

<sup>24</sup> Jones, *Created Equal*, 551.

<sup>25</sup> "Yellow Fever," *World Health Organization* (2011): [on-line]; available from <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs100/en/>; Internet; accessed 14 March 2011.

historically been affected by yellow fever.<sup>26</sup> During the Spanish-American War for every person killed in battle, thirteen died of yellow fever.<sup>27</sup> Also at this time, the knowledge of how the virus was transmitted was unknown so many Americans assumed it was contracted by humid and unsanitary living conditions.<sup>28</sup> Butler mentioned that one U.S. Colonel, George E. Waring Jr. had been more susceptible to the disease because his immune system was weakened by consuming alcohol and other drugs without restriction.<sup>29</sup> Adding to this, Butler conferred that entertaining oneself in alcohol would induce retribution, meaning contracting yellow fever and dying.<sup>30</sup> Butler wrote, "Havana itself is a veritable cesspool of filth and dirt and speaks volumes that its inhabitants are not decimated with plague, much less fevers."<sup>31</sup> The word "cesspool" was used to describe places of filth and corruption. Historically in the U.S., cleanliness was correlated with purity and drunkenness was seen as sinful.<sup>32</sup> These past concepts affected the later views of Americans, demonstrated in Butler's description of the uncleanliness and drunkenness in Cuba. Drunkenness, because of its correlation with sin would have made sense to be seen as the reason behind contracting yellow fever because it would have been punishment for the crime. This sense of justification subtly hints at the religious aspect of paying for one's sins. Adding to the

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<sup>26</sup> "South Carolina."

<sup>27</sup> Sylvia Whitman, "The Flanking Attack of 'Yellow Jack'," *Cobblestone* 20, no. 5 (1999): 32 [journal on-line]; available at <http://web.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.ccsf.edu/ehost/detail?vid=3&hid=126&sid=4882dfc0-7814-4d91-b204-3f144f9d4dce%40sessionmgr115&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWVhc3QtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#db=f5h&AN=1840670>; Internet; accessed 22 March 2011.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> "Letters from Congressman Matthew Calbraith Butler Regarding the Spanish-American War, 1898."

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Lillian Marrujo-Duck, "Modern U.S. History," (Lecture City College of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA, February, 2011).

proposed causes of contracting yellow fever, Butler also included, “Every case, so far, except Williams has been brought on by the impudence of the victim.”<sup>33</sup> Butler referred to impudence as behaving in an overly confident manner and disregarding others. An additional detrimental characteristic Butler observed in Havana was the increased vagrancy amongst the Cubans, many of whom were farm workers that had lost their jobs when fields and plantations were burned down in the struggle.<sup>34</sup> Vagrancy was sternly frowned upon in all of American society<sup>35</sup> because it related to being idle and that related to an additional sin of laziness, better known as sloth.<sup>36</sup> All of the traits had been publicly confirmed as a hindrance to oneself and society and unsuitable to retain.<sup>37</sup> These characteristics that Butler reprimanded in his letter to Gonzales were products of sins identified in the Bible. Thus the connection between what the U.S. viewed as immoral lined up with what the Bible viewed as immoral. In addition to this, the religious movements of the Second Great Awakening had passed previously in America. The Second Great Awakening occurred between 1790s through the 1830s.<sup>38</sup> It was a movement that strongly advocated the second coming of Jesus Christ and its many followers were trying to quickly prepare for his return by trying to eliminate as much sin as possible and increase the moral actions of America. It inspired a lot of social reform in the U.S. including the ban of slavery, improved public

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<sup>33</sup> “Letters from Congressman Matthew Calbraith Butler Regarding the Spanish-American War, 1898.”

<sup>34</sup> Jerry A. Sierra, “Cuban Sugar, Part Two,” *History of Cuba* (2011): [on-line]; available at <http://www.historyofcuba.com/history/havana/Sugar1b.htm>; Internet; accessed 23 March 2011.

<sup>35</sup> “Vagrancy.” *Yahoo! Education* [on-line]; available at <http://education.yahoo.com/reference/encyclopedia/entry/vagrancy>; Internet; accessed 17 Mar. 2011.

<sup>36</sup> Cliff Williams, “The Seven Deadly Sins,” *Trinity International University*: (2006): [on-line]; available at <http://tiunet.tiu.edu/faculty/cwilliam/seven.htm>; Internet; accessed 29 April 2011.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> “The First and Second Great Awakening.” *Encyclopedia.com* [on-line]; available at <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1O119-GreatAwakeningFirstndScnd.html>; Internet; accessed 27 Apr. 2011.

education, and women's rights.<sup>39</sup> During the end of the nineteenth century, the Social Gospel pushed for moral reform after the prominence of industrialization.<sup>40</sup> Moral reform indicated reducing the level of corruption and filth that was spawned from the introduction of big businesses and factories. Alcohol consumption and drunkenness increased after further urbanization of America. Helping out members of one's community like workers and immigrants were main aspects of the movement along with improvements in practiced hygiene. The movement sought to better the U.S. moral to create a more Christian society.<sup>41</sup> Both of these religious movements influenced the ideals and beliefs of America later in the 1890s as seen in Butler's categorization of similar immoral traits to that of the religious movements in his letters.<sup>42</sup> The connection between the values of Butler, an active man in South Carolinian and U.S. politics, and Christian values of the religious movements imply that the goals of U.S. society in 1898 were to continue reforming the morality of the nation. By helping Cuba gain independence from Spain when Butler described as "corrupt and merciless," the U.S. believed it would not only be spreading American virtues, its core values of democracy, but would also be improving the lifestyle of Cubans who according to Butler had suffered the "direst tyranny and oppression that ever afflicted mankind."<sup>43</sup> This would be thought to increase American morale. It would effectuate Christ's return to the U.S. for judgment and secure American salvation.

Not only did Butler's letters demonstrate religious reasoning for expansion and the ideology behind it, it presented the idea that the U.S. rationalized its expansion from personal

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Jones, *Created Equal*, 551.

<sup>41</sup> Jones, *Created Equal*, 551.

<sup>42</sup> "Letters from Congressman Matthew Calbraith Butler Regarding the Spanish-American War, 1898."

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

gain. **South Carolina was eager to expand to protect its interests in Southern democracy and wealth.** One example of this idea was proved by the evidence presented in R.A. Alger's letter from Butler. Mr. Artis, Butler acknowledged, was a large sugar planter from Cuba who was issuing a statement about the conditions on the island after the war.<sup>44</sup> Sugar was Cuba's cash crop and main trading good with the United States.<sup>45</sup> During the revolts prior to the Spanish-American War, Cuban insurgents and their followers burned down a large number of sugar plantations. In the year 1894 there were 1,100 sugar mills registered in Cuba and 1,400,000 acres of sugar plantations cultivated in the year 1895. After the war those numbers declined significantly. Out of all the sugar mills registered previously, only two hundred and seven survived. The remaining sugar plantations were producing only half of what they had before.<sup>46</sup> Because of the wealth the U.S. had gained from trading with Cuba, the U.S. was motivated to help Cuba bounce back from its economic disintegration.<sup>47</sup> In the long run, investing in the Cuban sugar-plantations would increase annual U.S. profits. During this time, the U.S. was in the process of annexing Hawaii, the islands that provided the U.S. imported, duty free sugar.<sup>48</sup> By annexing Hawaii, the U.S. expanded its access to available resources and grew stronger as a nation.<sup>49</sup> Butler then took time to mention in his letter to Gonzales that the United States was deciding whether to take over the Philippines or not and noted,

If the Government concludes to hold the entire Phillippine group as I hope it will,

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> "Cuban Sugar, Part Two."

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> "Letters from Congressman Matthew Calbraith Butler Regarding the Spanish-American War, 1898."

<sup>48</sup> Jones, *Created Equal*, 578.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

it might be just as well to pay for all except the Ladrones, as we did with Mexico, under the Gadsden Treaty of Guadeloupe-Hidalgo. Perhaps that may be the solution after all. We have sent the Spanish Com. here a note in the form of an ultimatum that they must complete the evacuation by January 1<sup>st</sup> but this is not to prejudice the right of the U.S. Government to take possession at an earlier date [...]<sup>50</sup>

The colonies in the Philippines still remained under Spanish control but the U.S. was in the process of assisting the Philippines in gaining independence from Spain. The U.S. supplied Filipino nationalist leader Emilio Aguinaldo with weapons to use against the Spanish. The U.S. also led the Philippines to believe that they would become an independent nation after the removal of Spain from the islands.<sup>51</sup> However, it was in the best interests of the United States to establish itself as the main power in the Philippines.<sup>52</sup> The Philippines had been under Spanish rule since 1571, following colonization with a continuous occurrence of unsuccessful revolts against Spain.<sup>53</sup> The importance of the Philippines to the U.S. lay in the resources that the Philippines had to offer. The tropical climate and volcanic soil made it a perfect place for the cultivation of numerous goods unable to grow in the northern hemisphere.<sup>54</sup> Not only that but the Philippines, located southeast of China, was in a prime location for trade with countries in the Far East. The lives of all Americans would be benefitted by the increased flow of wealth into the American economy. Therefore, Butler's hope to take over all of the Philippines, although it only would benefit the U.S., was understandable. By annexing Hawaii, possibly Cuba and possibly the Philippines, the U.S. government would have increased the magnitude of the nation and

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<sup>50</sup> "Letters from Congressman Matthew Calbraith Butler Regarding the Spanish-American War, 1898."

<sup>51</sup> Jones, *Created Equal*, 580.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 581.

<sup>53</sup> "Philippines Republic of the," in *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, ed. Barbara A. Chernow (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993): 2133-34.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

protected its democratic ideals by assimilating more followers to protect those ideals. With more allies, the U.S. believed that its unique democratic ideals would be under much less threat from dissipation. By keeping this in mind, the incentive of the U.S. to increase expansion was great and produced many U.S. supporters.

Because the U.S. was reasoning expansion with the hope of protecting its democratic ideals, Butler's letters to Alger and Gonzales exposed the less-known facts about the U.S.'s presence in Cuba during the Spanish-American war. From Butler's description about the situation in Cuba, a concept emerged that **the U.S. government was planning to blackmail Cuba to ensure continuous democracy in the U.S., thus exhibiting the possessive nature the U.S. developed from its initial fear of U.S. colonization.** Butler confides in his letter to Alger,

I shall expect to find a large proportion of this branch favoring annexation. While all classes are now suspicious and guarded in their expressions from habit, prudence and fear, there are already indications in that direction. Our real trouble is going to be with the Insurgents and their sympathizers, if they are not handled with cleverness and care.<sup>55</sup>

Butler was referring to the Spanish population living in Cuba as the ones who would be favoring annexation because Butler believed the Spanish elite in Cuba would accept any form of government offering a more peaceful lifestyle than the Spanish government provided in Cuba.<sup>56</sup> Butler's deduction of what the Spanish population was willing to do, presented to the Secretary of War made it seem as though there had already been plans for the U.S. government to set itself up as the main government in Cuba.<sup>57</sup> The word 'annexation'<sup>58</sup> was used like it had been clearly

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<sup>55</sup> "Letters from Congressman Matthew Calbraith Butler Regarding the Spanish-American War, 1898."

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

decided and no further discussion of annexation needed to happen. The insurgents referred to the Cuban rebels and revolutionaries who had fought for independence during the Ten Years War that spanned from 1868 to 1878.<sup>59</sup> The Ten Years War was fought between the insurgents and the Spanish government.<sup>60</sup> No one won the war and Spain signed agreement with the revolutionaries, saying it would make reforms in society and allow its subjects more independence and autonomy.<sup>61</sup> Spain did not hold up its agreement and because of this, more failed riots broke out leading up to the extreme oppressiveness of the Spanish government by sending in General Valeriano Weyler.<sup>62</sup> After setting up concentration camps and violently suppressing uprisings against the government of Spain, the U.S. was prompted to help Cuba get rid of Spain for moral reasons, and partly because of the destruction of U.S. invested sugar plantations.<sup>63</sup> However, the main reason for U.S. involvement was to insert a democratic government into Cuba, or at the very least a government that would be under U.S. control.<sup>64</sup> This would enforce the democratic ideals of the U.S. on neighboring Cuba who during the control of the Spanish government was affecting the morality of Americans.<sup>65</sup> It affected the moral standards of the U.S. citizens by influencing their behavior toward the U.S. government and each other, possibly in doubt of their own morality because it was not being similarly practiced by others. This started causing citizens

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<sup>59</sup> "Cuba," in *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, ed. Barbara A. Chernow (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993): 693-94.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Jones, *Created Equal*, 580.

<sup>64</sup> "Cuba," 693.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

to lose faith in the values in which they stood for. South Carolina was deeply rooted in democracy and individual freedoms. Their previous stance to preserve the South Carolinian practice of slavery led to the U.S.'s Civil War and the resulting loss of their valued system.<sup>66</sup> Any further loss of individual freedoms would naturally try to be prevented. Controlling the government in Cuba would safeguard the democratic ideals of the U.S. by not allowing its citizens to be affected by foreign actions that conflicted with their ideals. The U.S. congress had ratified the Teller Amendment that guaranteed Cuba's independence as a country after Spain's defeat and evacuation from Cuba.<sup>67</sup> Yet after the U.S. had defeated Spain and had set up an evacuation date for the first of January, Butler was still discussing annexation in his letter, even debating the proper way to handle the Cuban leaders who had risen up against the Spanish government. In Butler's letter, it is clear that the U.S. did not want to allow Cuba to run itself.<sup>68</sup> The reasons for the U.S. not wanting to allow them to run themselves are also expressed in Butler's letter. Because the insurgents had tried many times but had failed at getting rid of the Spanish,<sup>69</sup> Butler believed that the Cubans were not ready to govern themselves and still needed plenty of U.S. assistance to become an up-and-running country again.<sup>70</sup> If the U.S. government remained somewhat in control, it would protect Cuba from another possible invasion and in doing so, protect American democratic ideals from foreign influence and dissipation.

Democratic ideals also came with ideal traits that South Carolinians really seemed to value. A core U.S. trait displayed was assertiveness. **America's core value of characteristically**

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<sup>66</sup> "South Carolina."

<sup>67</sup> Jones, *Created Equal*, 580.

<sup>68</sup> "Letters from Congressman Matthew Calbraith Butler Regarding the Spanish-American War, 1898."

<sup>69</sup> "Cuba," 693.

<sup>70</sup> "Letters from Congressman Matthew Calbraith Butler Regarding the Spanish-American War, 1898."

**being assertive stemmed from pride and the idea of Manifest Destiny.** In his letter to Alger, Butler wrote that he wished his perspectives of the situation in Cuba would be read by the President so as to enact a quick change.<sup>71</sup> Butler discussed the U.S. troops, the Gadsden Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, and also wrote, “We have sent the Spanish Com. here a note in the form of an ultimatum that they must complete the evacuation by January 1<sup>st</sup> but this is not to prejudice the right of the U.S. Government to take possession at an earlier date.”<sup>72</sup> Butler's evidence portrayed in his letters showed how assertive acts by U.S. individuals was rewarded by U.S. society with praise and how failing to act in an assertive manner would bring public shame or ridicule. When President McKinley was prompted to go to war with Spain, he hesitated and his hesitation brought on a lot of criticism and mockery from the press.<sup>73</sup> His assistant secretary Theodore Roosevelt, blatantly described McKinley as a spineless leader<sup>74</sup> and from overseas, McKinley was ridiculed in the de Lôme letter that scorned McKinley for wanting to stay neutral.<sup>75</sup> When McKinley finally decided to go to war, he was praised for his decision.<sup>76</sup> R.A. Alger was Secretary of War but he was hesitant when making decisions in war and was described as being passive.<sup>77</sup> Because of this, Alger was asked to step down from his role

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<sup>71</sup> “Letters from Congressman Matthew Calbraith Butler Regarding the Spanish-American War, 1898.”

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Red Reeder, “Nightmare for the President.” *The Story of the Spanish-American War*, (New York: Meredith 1966), 14-24.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Red Reeder, “El Caney.” *The Story of the Spanish-American War*, (New York: Meredith 1966), 27-29.

because of public disapproval of his actions.<sup>78</sup> The Gadsden Purchase and Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo happened because the U.S. acted promptly by going into war and making sure all the land the U.S. wanted was ceded by Mexico.<sup>79</sup> In addition, James Gadsden was ambitious about his plans for the southern railroad so he acted assertively and purchased even more land than the President had instructed to buy.<sup>80</sup> This led to the 1848 U.S. discovery of gold in California in the area the U.S. had purchased in the Gadsden treaty,<sup>81</sup> proving the U.S.'s belief of Manifest Destiny. The idea of Manifest Destiny had been embedded in U.S. history ever since the U.S. gained independence from Great Britain.<sup>82</sup> The success of the United States in North America sparked national pride in its citizens; success in which the U.S. achieved through decisive and forthright actions.<sup>83</sup> Therefore, South Carolinians and other American citizens view assertiveness as an important value to possess.

Through the observations and descriptions of another society, Matthew Butler's letters exposed South Carolina's enthusiasm for U.S. expansion, rationalizing that by taking the necessary steps to do so would decrease the possibility of loss of democratic ideals, ensure salvation from Christ's judgment and protect U.S. investments in foreign resources. Analyzing the letters Butler sent in the year 1898 reveals how the American people believed to be destined to be one of the most powerful nations by many events that worked to the advantage of the U.S., how assertiveness was a strong value because it was that characteristic that was at the root of

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> "Guadalupe Hidalgo, Treaty."

<sup>80</sup> "Gadsden, James."

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Marrujo-Duck, "Ideology, Economic, Politics of the American Revolution."

<sup>83</sup> Jones, *Created Equal*, 576.

many U.S. successes and triumphs as a nation and how expanding was a way to ward off possible degradation of democratic ideals by increasing the number of societies that share the same values. Also, by instilling what the U.S. believed to be a morally correct way of life through expansion, bring about a swift return of Christ. This analysis helps convey underlying reasoning of why the U.S. goes into war today with the hopes of spreading democracy to other nations. The U.S. wants to spread its ideals, believing that other countries may improve their quality of living to the American standard of high quality life. Unfortunately, the U.S. seems to do this without really taking into account whether the country wants to share the same ideology as the U.S. or if it even accepts the same opinions concerning basic standards of quality life. Understanding the reasoning of the U.S. to expand during this time can help the U.S. reflect more on whether or not its expansion is for the benefit other countries or purely itself.

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