



I. Read this excerpt the "Policy of Imperialism," by Carl Schurz. Answer the questions that go with the reading.

More than eight months ago I had the honor of addressing the citizens of Chicago on the subject of American imperialism, meaning the policy of annexing to this Republic distant countries and alien populations that will not fit into our democratic system of government. I discussed at that time mainly the baneful effect that the pursuit of an imperialistic policy would produce upon our political institutions. After long silence, during which I have carefully reviewed my own opinions, as well as those of others in the light of the best information I could obtain, I shall now approach the same subject from another point of view.

We all know that the popular mind is much disturbed by the Philippine war, and that, however highly we admire the bravery of our soldiers, nobody professes to be proud of the war itself. There are few Americans who do not frankly admit their regret that this war should ever have happened. I think I risk nothing when I say that it is not merely the bungling conduct of military operations, but a serious trouble of conscience, that disturbs the American heart about this war, and that this trouble of conscience will not be allayed by a more successful military campaign, just as fifty years ago the trouble of conscience about slavery could not be allayed by any compromise.

Many people now, as the slavery compromisers did then, try to ease their minds by saying: "Well, we are in it, and now we must do the best we can." In spite of the obvious futility of this cry in some respects, I will accept it with the one proviso, that we make an honest effort to ascertain what really is *the best* we can do. To this end let us first clearly remember what has happened.

In April, 1898, we went to war with Spain for the avowed purpose of liberating the people of Cuba, who had long been struggling for freedom and independence. Our object in that war was clearly and emphatically proclaimed by a solemn resolution of Congress repudiating all intention of annexation on our part, and declaring that the Cuban people "are, and of right ought to be, free and independent." This solemn declaration was made to do justice to the spirit of the American people, who were indeed willing to wage a war of liberation, but would not have consented to a war of conquest. It was also to propitiate the opinion of mankind for our action. President McKinley also declared with equal solemnity that annexation by force could not be thought of, because, according to our code of morals, it would be "criminal aggression."

Can it justly be pretended that these declarations referred only to the island of Cuba? What would the American people, what would the world, have said if Congress had resolved that the Cuban people were indeed rightfully entitled to freedom and independence, but that as to the people of other Spanish colonies we recognized no such right; and if President McKinley had declared that the forcible annexation of Cuba would be criminal, but that the forcible annexation of other Spanish colonies would be a righteous act? A general outburst of protest from our own people, and of derision and contempt from the whole world, would have been the answer. No, there can be no cavil — that war was proclaimed to all mankind to be a war of liberation, and not of conquest, and even now our very imperialists are still boasting that the war was prompted by the most unselfish and generous purposes, and that those insult us who do not believe it.

- 1) What is Senator Schurz's most likely purpose for mentioning Cuba?
  - a. He is concerned that a lot of criminals live there
  - b. to argue that Cuba should be forced under American rule
  - c. To make reference to the injustice of Spanish imperial rule
  - d. To argue that the U.S. should help other countries without the intent of imperialism
- 2) Identify the word Schurz could have inserted in place of the word "bungling"?
  - a. Misguided
  - b. organized
  - c. loosely
  - d. intense
- 3) Another way one could say "Well we are in it, and now we must do the best we can" is?
  - a. "The glass is half full, not half empty."
  - b. "It is our way or the highway."
  - c. "We have no choice but to make the most of this bad situation we got ourselves into."
  - d. "Big deal, we got bored so we fought a war we shouldn't have. Whoop-dee-doo."
- 4) Why did Senator Schurz approach the issue from a different point of view?
  - a. He changed his mind to thinking that imperialism is a necessary evil
  - b. He wants to provide further support for his perspective
  - c. He is proposing that Chicago be named the imperial capitol of the world
  - d. He can not make up his mind in regards to the issue of imperialism
- 5) What did Senator Schurz discuss in Chicago?
  - a. He plans to teach a class at the local university on imperialism
  - b. He reviewed his prior opinions on the issue of American imperialism
  - c. He talked about the destructive effects of imperialism upon American politics
  - d. He announced his plans to resign from the Senate
- 6) What was the original intent of the United States' war with Spain in 1898?
  - a. President McKinley was looking to annex Cuba into the United States
  - b. Americans were protecting the land they acquired from Mexico
  - c. The United States military was implementing its conquer and divide strategy
  - d. The United States wanted to free Cubans from the colonial rule of Spain
- 7) It is clear from this article that:
  - a. President McKinley and Senator Schurz were best friends
  - b. The military actions of the United States in the Phillipines were very unpopular
  - c. Many people died of heart attacks from worrying about the war
  - d. The liberated Cuban government was very strong and stable
- 8) Senator Schurz's reference to the American injustice of slavery is an example of:
  - a. Onomatopoeia
  - b. Hyperbole
  - c. Allusion
  - d. alliteration
- 9) Identify the statement which Senator Schurz would agree with.
  - a. "Wars have always happened, so why try to prevent them."
  - b. "The United States should rule the world with a big stick."
  - c. "Who cares about freeing Cuba? We need to focus on domestic issues."
  - d. "When you get into a bad situation, you must honestly try to make the best of it."
- 10) Which of the following is NOT likely a reason that Senator Schurz went through a period of silence?
  - a. to consider new information
  - b. He was sick and tired of talking about the issue
  - c. To review his own opinions
  - d. To reevaluate how he should approach the issue

Answer Key

- 1) D. The primary purpose of the article is to denounce American imperialism. While Schurz does reference the injustice of Spanish imperial rule over Cuba, the overarching theme of the speech is Schurz's to denounce the practice of imperialism by the United States.
- 2) A. Schurz is pointing out that the Americans are not happy with the way the American leadership carried out the war in the Phillipines in 1898. The clear definition for the word bungling is "misguided" and that can be easily understood from inserting the word "misguided" in place of the word "bungling" within the text.
- 3) C. Schurz is clearly communicating that because the Americans have gotten involved in the war, they have no choice to make the best come out of it.
- 4) B. Schurz took a break from addressing the issue to gather his thoughts and allow more evidence to build supporting his position. He never changed his position. Rather, the case for his position simply got stronger by what happened during the time that he was silent on the issue.
- 5) C. After months of silence, Schurz has taken some time to review his own opinions. In Chicago, he presented the conclusions that he came to after reviewing his own opinions which led him to still believe that imperialism had a "baneful" or "destructive" effect on American politics.
- 6) D. The Americans went into the war with Spain having "avowed" to liberate the island of Cuba from Spanish imperialism.
- 7) B. Schurz mentioned that there are few Americans who do not frankly admit their regret that the war in the Phillipines took place. From this, we can make a direct inference that the war was not popular with the American people.
- 8) C. Senator Schurz alludes to the American injustice of slavery in order to establish a connection between slavery and imperialism.
- 9) D. Throughout the passage, Schurz talks about how the United States got into a bad situation but since they were in it, they had to make the most of it.
- 10) B. During his period of silence, Schurz, processed new information in order to review his own opinions about the issue. He further decided that perhaps the issue needed to be approached from a different perspective. He clearly was not sick and tired of talking about the issue. Otherwise, he would not have taken the time to once again address the matter as he does in this speech in Chicago.