

Loss of Cuba & The Spanish - American War

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1898

Causes of Conflict in Cuba

- Cuba was evolving from a slowly growing colony into the world's leading sugar producer, and therefore, Cuba's economy became even more closely linked with that of the United States.
- Increasing involvement of the United States led to sugar estates and mining interests being passed from Spanish and Cuban hands into U.S. hands.
- U.S. capital, machinery and technicians helped save and strengthen the sugar mills in Cuba.
- Furthermore, as the dependence of Cuban sugar in the U.S. market increased, the Cuban sugar producers were more and more at the mercy of the U.S. refiners to whom they sold their raw sugar.

Beginning of Conflict

- Cuba was a stable and productive country, able to trade and participate in worldwide markets.
- The war originated due to the Cuban struggle for independence from Spain, which began in February 1895. This was met with resistance from Spain who wanted to maintain control of Cuba as a colony.
- Spain's brutally repressive measures to halt the rebellion were graphically portrayed for the U.S. public by several newspapers, which led to American sympathy for the Cuban rebels.

Conflict Begins

- The U.S. had already been investing money and resources in the sugar plantations and mills in Cuba for years before conflict began.
- Anti-Spanish rioting in Havana and the initial uprising between the Cuban and Spanish caused the U.S. to send the Battleship *USS Maine* to Havana in order to protect U.S. citizens and property.



- The *USS Maine* exploded on February 15, 1898, prompting the United States to enter the war between Spain and Cuba.

Swift Victory

- The ensuing Spanish-American war was pathetically one-sided, since Spain had readied neither its army nor its navy for a distant war with the formidable power of the United States.
- The *Treaty of Paris* ending the Spanish-American War was signed on December 10, 1898. In it, Spain renounced all claim to Cuba, ceded Guam and Puerto Rico to the United States and transferred sovereignty over the Philippines to the United States for \$20 million.
- This year was termed the “Disaster of 1898”.

Summary

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mzGwSxWod6E>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xIGbb91BSs8>

Questions

1. Why did the conflict between Cuba and Spain begin? → Cuban people wanted independence & freedom. Cuba was a productive nation and able to participate in trade and worldwide markets.
1. What was the name of the U.S. Battleship that was sunk? → *USS Maine*
1. List some reasons why the United States became involved in the Spanish-Cuban conflict. →
 1. Newspaper propaganda gaining the sympathy and support of American citizens
 2. U.S. economic/business interests in Cuba
 3. Protecting the many Americans living in Cuba at the time
 4. The sinking of the USS Maine battleship.
1. What was the treaty called that ended the Spanish-American war? → Treaty of Paris