Westward Expansion and the Mexican-American War

Duration	4 90-minute block periods
Class/Grade Level	Advanced Placement English Language & Composition/ 11th grade
Number of Students	20 students
Location	Classroom (days 1,3 and 4) and Computer Lab (day 2)

Key Vocabulary

Transcendentalism-	a movement in nineteenth-century American literature and thought, calling on people to trust their individual intuition. Transcendentalism is most often associated with Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau.
Annex	to attach, append, or add, especially to something larger or more important
Manifest Destiny-	the belief that the United States was destined to expand beyond its present territorial boundaries
Missouri Compromise of 1820-	In the years leading up to the Missouri Compromise of 1820, tensions began to rise between pro-slavery and anti-slavery factions within the U.S. Congress and across the country. They reached a boiling point after Missouri's 1819 request for admission to the Union as a slave state, which threatened to upset the delicate balance between slave states and free states. To keep the peace, Congress orchestrated a two-part compromise, granting Missouri's request but also admitting Maine as a free state. It also passed an amendment that drew an imaginary line across the former Louisiana Territory, establishing a boundary between free and slave regions that remained the law of the land until it was negated by the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854.
Compromise of 1850-	Divisions over slavery in territory gained in the Mexican-American War (1846-48) were resolved in the Compromise of 1850. It consisted of laws admitting California as a free state, creating Utah and New Mexico territories with the question of slavery in each to be determined by popular sovereignty, settling a Texas-New Mexico boundary dispute in the former's favor, ending the slave trade in Washington, D.C., and making it easier for southerners to recover fugitive slaves.

Instructional Material(s)

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Print Materials	YouTube Video Worksheet Give One, Get One Worksheet
Technology	Computer (laptop) and Computers in Lab (w/ headphones and internet connection) LCD Projector (for PowerPoint Presentation and Group Scoring/Analysis) Document Reader (for Group Scoring/Analysis)
Enduring Understanding	Upon completion of the lesson, students will understand how the overwhelming objections to the Mexican-American War prompted Thoreau to write *Civil Disobedience*
Essential Question(s)	-What tensions in the United States were created by westward expansion? -How was slavery an important (albeit indirect) issue in the Mexican-American War? -How was the Mexican-American War a prelude to the U.S. Civil War? -What were Thoreau's objections to the Mexican-American War? **-What perception did Americans from the East Coast have of westward expansion?** **-What unintended consequences did the United States suffer as a result of the westward expansion (in general) and the Mexican-American War (specifically)?**
Learning Objectives *SWBAT*	-identify the role Manifest Destiny influenced the United States government's aggressive campaign to acquire California -analyze the myriad factors that contributed to the decision to engage in Mexican-American War -evaluate how some issues contributing to the Mexican-American War then contributed to Civil War -analyze how these issues prompted Thoreau to write *Civil Disobedience*
Standards	US History- Era 4: Expansion and Reform (1801-1861) Standard 2: How the industrial revolution, increasing immigration, the rapid expansion of slavery, and the westward movement changed the lives of Americans and led toward regional tensions
Background	Students *will need* a basic understanding of transcendentalism and the annexation of Texas.

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Procedure

Day 1- Introduce Unit- [Architecture, Key Vocabulary, Essential Understanding, Essential Questions, Objectives, and Culminating Task/Evaluation] (20 minutes)

- Via PowerPoint, students will be briefly introduced to Thoreau, his works, and his influence on non-violent movements. (15 minutes)
- Students will discuss excerpts from *Civil Disobedience* and asked to discuss them with a neighbor or 'elbow partner.' Time will be permitted for occasional share-out. (25 minutes)
- To complete Day 1, students will be asked to write a brief paragraph hypothesizing what they think *Civil Disobedience* will be about, what Thoreau persuades his readers to do, and why they think this. Time will be permitted for occasional share-out. (20 minutes)
- Preview Day 2- Video Clips, Primary Resources, "Give One, Get One" (10 minutes)

Day 2-

- Before viewing 2 video clips embedded in PowerPoint, students will go over questions corresponding with video clips. (5 minutes)
- View *Video Clip 1: Mexican American War* and respond to corresponding questions. (15 minutes)
- View Video Clip 2: *Compromises of 1820 & 1850* and respond to corresponding question. (15 minutes)
- Divide student readings (Documents A-D) to students and have students read 1 document each [and focus on the highlighted portions] (35 minutes)
- Students participate in "Give One, Get One" activity to learn about each document (20 minutes)
- **HOMEWORK: READ REMAINING DOCUMENTS**

Day 3-

- Continue "Give One, Get One" activity (20 minutes)
- Briefly review (with class) the five documents and field any questions (10 minutes)
- Read textbook excerpt from "Civil Disobedience"
- At table groups, students will identify Thoreau's *thesis* and key points salient to his *argument*
- **HOMEWORK: IN A WELL-WRITTEN ESSAY, <u>IDENTIFY</u> THE OVERARCHING PERCEPTION OF EAST COAST TRANSCENDENTALISTS and ABOLITIONISTS REGARDING THE AMERICAN WEST *<u>and</u>* <u>ANALYZE</u> THE RHETORICAL STRATEGIES USED TO SHAPE THIS PERCEPTION**

Day 4-

- Synthesis Essay Response (55-minutes) and Peer Grading/Analysis (25 minutes)
    - Students respond to one of the following prompts using evidence from any 3 of the source documents provided from Day 2
        - What role did Manifest Destiny play in the US government's quest for California?

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- What role did slavery play in influencing Western conquest and the Mexican-American War?
- What issues made opponents (like Thoreau) so vocally opposed to the Mexican-American War?

Evaluation See Rubric (Available on Web-Quest or see attachment)

Extensions

- Students create a timeline chronicling the significant events of the Mexican-American War
- Students create a PowerPoint Presentation on notable Americans influential to both the Mexican-American War and the US Civil War
- Students do a research paper on the Bear Flag Revolt

Resources

Anonymous. "California and the National Interest," *Annals of American History.* <http://america.eb.com/america/article?articleId=385876>. January 1846. Web. 18 July 2011.

Douglass, Frederick "Texas, Slavery, and American Prosperity: An Address Delivered in Belfast, Ireland, on January 2, 1846." Belfast *News Letter*, January 6, 1846. Web. 18 July 2011. Blassingame, John (*et al*, eds.). *The Frederick Douglass Papers: Series One--Speeches, Debates, and Interviews*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979. Vol. I, p. 118.

Gast, John. *American Progress*. 1872.

Mexican-American War. *YouTube - Broadcast Yourself.* History Channel, 28 Sept. 2009. Web. 20 July 2011. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HjUEBDOOSDM>.

"Missouri Compromise — History.com Articles, Video, Pictures and Facts." *History.com — History Made Every Day — American & World History*. Web. 24 July 2011. <http://www.history.com/topics/missouri-compromise>.

Polk, James. "California and Mexico," *Annals of American History.* 7 December 1847.Web. 18 July 2011. <http://america.eb.com/america/article?articleId=385874>

Sectionalism and Compromise. *YouTube - Broadcast Yourself.* 17 Feb. 2011. Web. 20 July 2011. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xOaAJnWOX5A>.

Sumner, Charles. "A War to Strengthen the Slavery Interests," *Annals of American History.* 1847. Web. 18 July 2011. <http://america.eb.com/america/article?articleId=385857>

Thoreau, Henry D. *Civil Disobedience*. Evanston, IL: McDougal Littell, 2006. Print.

Document A: "A War to Strengthen the Slavery Interests" by Charles Sumner, 1847

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YouTube Video Worksheet

1. Briefly summarize the Texas border dispute between the American and Mexican governments.

2. Upon the Mexican army's response, what did President Polk demand of Congress? Why?

3. President Polk's $30 million offer to Mexico sought
   a.
   b.

4. What would Polk have settled for?

5. Why was it important to keep Congressional balance between slave and free states?

6. List **2** terms of the Missouri Compromise of *1820*.
   a.
   b.

7. Define popular sovereignty (in the context of the clip).

8. List **2** terms of the Missouri Compromise of *1850*.
   a.
   b.

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Document A: "A War to Strengthen the Slavery Interests" by Charles Sumner, 1847

Introduction

The condemnation of the Mexican War that is reprinted here in part was written by the Abolitionist and crusader for peace Charles Sumner and adopted by the Massachusetts legislature in 1847.. Sumner's speech reflects the widespread belief in the North at the time that the war would be fought to fortify the "Slave Power." In fact, however, most of the pro-war sentiment came from the Western states. Practically all the Southern Whigs and some Southern Democrats, including John C. Calhoun of South Carolina, opposed the war. Calhoun wanted Texas, but without war. He feared the acquiring of too much new land would reopen the unsolved problem of slavery in the territories.

Source:
Old South Leaflets, 132: "Report on the War with Mexico." (published by the Directors of the Old South Work, Old South Meeting House, Boston, n.d.).

IT IS A WAR FOR THE EXTENSION OF SLAVERY

A war of conquest is bad; but the present war has darker shadows. It is a war for the extension of slavery over a territory which has already been purged by Mexican authority from this stain and curse. Fresh markets of human beings are to be established; further opportunities for this hateful traffic are to be opened; the lash of the overseer is to be quickened in new regions; and the wretched slave is to be hurried to unaccustomed fields of toil. It can hardly be believed that now, more than eighteen hundred years since the dawn of the Christian era, a government, professing the law of charity and justice, should be employed in war to extend an institution which exists in defiance of these sacred principles.

It has already been shown that the annexation of Texas was consummated for this purpose. The Mexican War is a continuance, a prolongation, of the same efforts; and the success which crowned the first emboldens the partisans of the latter, who now, as before, profess to extend the area of freedom, while they are establishing a new sphere for slavery.

The authorities already adduced in regard to the objects of annexation illustrate the real objects of the Mexican War. Declarations have also been made, upon the floor of Congress, which throw light upon it. Mr. Sims, of South Carolina, has said that "he had no doubt that every foot of territory we shall permanently occupy, south of thirty-six degrees thirty minutes, will be slave territory"; and, in reply to his colleague, Mr. Burt, who inquired whether this opinion was "in consequence of the known determination of the Southern people that their institutions shall be carried into that country, if acquired," said, in words that furnish a key to the whole project, "It is founded on the known determination of the Southern people that their institutions shall be carried there; it is founded in the laws of God, written on the climate and soil of the country: nothing but slave labor can cultivate, profitably, that region of country."

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The recent rejection, in both houses at Washington, of the Wilmot proviso, by which slavery was to be excluded from all new territorial acquisitions, reveals to the world the fixed determination of a majority of Congress to make the war an instrument for the extension of slavery, and the establishment in new regions of what Mr. Upshur called "the grand domestic institution."

IT IS A WAR TO STRENGTHEN THE "SLAVE POWER"

But it is not merely proposed to open new markets for slavery: it is also designed to confirm and fortify the "Slave Power." Here is a distinction which should not fail to be borne in mind. Slavery is odious as an institution, if viewed in the light of morals and Christianity. On this account alone we should refrain from rendering it any voluntary support. But it has been made the basis of a political combination, to which has not inaptly been applied the designation of the "Slave Power."

The slaveholders of the country — who are not supposed to exceed 200,000 or at most 300,000 in numbers — by the spirit of union which animates them, by the strong sense of a common interest, and by the audacity of their leaders, have erected themselves into a new "estate," as it were, under the Constitution. Disregarding the sentiments of many of the great framers of that instrument, who notoriously considered slavery as *temporary*, they proclaim it a *permanent* institution; and, with a strange inconsistency, at once press its title to a paramount influence in the general government, while they deny the right of that government to interfere, in any way, with its existence. According to them, it may never be restrained or abolished by the general government, though it may be indefinitely extended.

And it is urged that, as new free states are admitted into the Union, other slave states should be admitted, in order to preserve, in the Senate, what is called the "balance of power"; in other words, the equipoise between slavery and freedom, though it might, with more propriety, be termed the preponderance of slavery. The bare enunciation of this claim discloses its absurdity. Is it not a mockery of the principles of freedom, which moved the hearts and strengthened the hands of our fathers, to suppose that they contemplated any such perverse arrangement of political power?

It cannot be doubted that His Excellency is entirely right when he says, in his message, that "at the time of the adoption of the Constitution of the United States the final extinction of the institution of slavery was looked for at no very distant day," and that "so carefully was the Constitution formed that, when the event took place, not one word or phrase of it would require to be altered, and no expression in it would give notice to posterity that such an institution ever existed"; and, further, that "the Constitution leaves slavery where it found it, a state institution; and though, as a compromise, it did confer political power upon states which had slaves, by reason of their slaves, *it was not intended* that that power should be extended *beyond the states who were parties to the compromise*."

But the slave power has triumphed over the evident intentions of the framers of the Constitution. It appears that only one new free state has been formed out of territory acquired by treaty, while four new slave states have been established, and the foreign slave state of Texas has been incorporated into the Union by joint resolutions of Congress.

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The object of the bold measure of annexation was not only to extend slavery, but to strengthen the "Slave Power." The same object is now proposed by the Mexican War. This is another link in the gigantic chain by which our country and the Constitution are to be bound to the "Slave Power." This has been proclaimed in public journals. The following passage from he *Charleston* (S.C.) *Courier* avows it: "Every battle fought in Mexico, and every dollar spent there, but insures the acquisition of territory which must widen the field of *Southern enterprise and power in future*. And the final result will be to readjust the balance of power in the confederacy, *so as to give us control over the operations of government in all time to come*."

IT IS A WAR AGAINST THE FREE STATES

Regarding it as a war to strengthen the "Slave Power," we are conducted to a natural conclusion, that it is virtually, and in its consequences, a war against the free states of the Union. Conquest and robbery are attempted in order to obtain a political control at home; and distant battles are fought, less with a special view of subjugating Mexico than with the design of overcoming the power of the free states, under the Constitution. The lives of Mexicans are sacrificed in this cause; and a domestic question, which should be reserved for bloodless debate in our own country, is transferred to fields of battle in a foreign land. …

UNCONSTITUTIONALITY OF THE WAR

The war should not fail, also, to be regarded in the light of the Constitution. And here we must be brief. The stages by which the country has reached it have been as unconstitutional as its objects. First, Texas was annexed, by joint resolutions of Congress, in violation of the Constitution. Second, the President, in undertaking to order General Taylor, without the consent of Congress, to march upon territory in possession of Mexico, assumed a power which belongs to Congress alone. To Congress has been committed the dread thunderbolt of war. "Congress shall have power to declare war," are the words of the Constitution. But the President has usurped its most terrible authority. His order to General Taylor was an unauthorized act of war.

Third, as a war of conquest, and for the extension of slavery, it is contrary to the principles of our Constitution, which, according to the words of the preamble, was formed "to provide for the *common defense*, promote the general welfare, and secure *the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity*." Such a war as that in which we are now engaged can find no sanction in these words: it is *not* for the *common defense*, nor to *secure the blessings of liberty*. Fourth, as a war to strengthen the "Slave Power," it is also unconstitutional. Thus it may be branded as a fourfold infraction of the fundamental law of the land.

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CRIMINALITY OF THE WAR

And it is also a violation of the fundamental law of Heaven, of that great law of Right which is written by God's own finger on the heart of man. His Excellency said nothing beyond the truth when, in his message, he declared that “an offensive and unnecessary war was the highest crime which man can commit against society.” It is so; for all the demons of hate are then let loose in mad and causeless career. Misrule usurps the place of order, and outrage of all kinds stalks “unwhipt of justice.” An unjust and unnecessary war is the dismal offspring of national insensibility, steeping the conscience in forgetfulness, and unkenneling the foul brood of murder, rapine, and rape.

How, then, must we regard the acts in the present war? Have they any extenuation beyond the sanction of mortals, like ourselves, who have rashly undertaken to direct them? The war is a crime, and all who have partaken in the blood of its well-fought fields have aided in its perpetration. It is a principle of military law that the soldier shall not question the orders of his superior. If this shall exonerate the Army from blame, it will be only to press with accumulated weight upon the government, which has set in motion this terrible and irresponsible machine. …

RESTRAINT AND OVERTHROW OF THE “SLAVE POWER”

A careful examination of the history of our country, exposing the tyranny and usurpation of the “Slave Power,” has not yet been attempted. Our object will be to call attention to a few undeniable facts. The “Slave Power” has predominated over the federal government from its first establishment. It has always absorbed to itself a large portion of all offices of honor and profit under the Constitution. It has held the presidency for fifty-six years, while the free states have held it for twelve years only. It has for several years rejected the petitions of the free states, thus virtually denying the right of petition.

It has denied, to free colored citizens of the free states, the privileges secured to them by the Constitution of the United States, by imprisoning them, and sometimes selling them into slavery. It has insulted and exiled, from Charleston and New Orleans, the honored representatives of Massachusetts, who have been sent to those places in order to throw the shield of the Constitution and law over her colored citizens. It first imposed upon the country the policy of protecting domestic manufactures, contrary to the interests of the free states, and now, when those interests have changed, at a later day has defeated the same policy, contrary to the interests of the same states.

It required the action of the national government to endeavor to secure compensation for certain slaves who, in the exercise of the natural rights of men, had asserted and achieved their freedom on the Atlantic Ocean, and sought shelter in Bermuda. It instigated and carried on a most expensive war in Florida, mainly to recover certain fugitive slaves. It wrested from Mexico the province of Texas, and finally secured its annexation to the United States. And now it has involved the whole country in a causeless, cruel, and unjust war with Mexico. All these things have been done by the “Slave Power.”

Their bare enumeration, without further argument, furnishes a sufficient reason for calling for the restraint and overthrow of this influence. And here we do not encounter any difficulties arising from

constitutional doubts. It is true that slavery is recognized by the Constitution, and a certain political importance is attached to it by the manner in which it is represented in the House of Representatives and the electoral colleges. But the "Slave Power," *as such*, is an element and influence unknown to the original framers of that instrument.

It is not to be supposed that they who anxiously looked for the abolition of slavery could ever have regarded it as the legitimate foundation of an association which was to control the counsels and conduct of the country, and dictate its most important measures. There are but two elements in its existence: first, slavery; and, second, combination among all interested in the preservation of slavery.

The principles of opposition to the "Slave Power" are the natural correlative or complement of these. They are, first, freedom; and, second, a combination among all interested in the preservation of freedom. If it be right, under the Constitution, for men to combine for slavery, they may surely combine for freedom. The country has suffered much under the "Slave Power." It remains to be seen if it may not be restored by a combination not yet attempted, — the "Freedom Power."

And here, as in other movements for the good of the country, Massachusetts must take the lead. She must be true to the spirit of her fathers in the colonial struggles. She must be true to the sentiments of her Bill of Rights. She must be true to the resolutions which she has put forth against the outrages of the "Slave Power" in imprisoning her colored citizens, and in annexing Texas. She must be true to the moral and religious sentiments of her citizens. In one word, she must be true to her conscience, and not allow it to be longer "unquiet" by submission to the "Slave Power."

All of which, with the accompanying Resolutions, is respectfully submitted.

RESOLVES

Concerning the Mexican War and the Institution of Slavery

Resolved, that the present war with Mexico has its primary origin in the unconstitutional annexation to the United States of the foreign state of Texas, while the same was still at war with Mexico; that it was unconstitutionally commenced by the order of the President, to General Taylor, to take military possession of territory in dispute between the United States and Mexico, *and in the occupation of Mexico*; and that it is now waged ingloriously, — by a powerful nation against a weak neighbor, — unnecessarily and without just cause, at immense cost of treasure and life, for the dismemberment of Mexico, and for the conquest of a portion of her territory, from which slavery has already been excluded, with the triple object of extending slavery, of strengthening the "Slave Power," and of obtaining the control of the Free States, under the Constitution of the United States.

Resolved, that such a war of conquest, so hateful in its objects, so wanton, unjust, and unconstitutional in its origin and character, must be regarded as a war against freedom, against humanity, against justice, against the Union, against the Constitution, and *against the Free States*; and that a regard for the true interests and the highest honor of the country, not less than the impulses of Christian duty, should

arouse all good citizens to join in efforts to arrest this gigantic crime, by withholding supplies, or other voluntary contributions, for its further prosecution, by calling for the withdrawal of our army within the established limits of the United States, and in every just way aiding the country to retreat from the disgraceful position of aggression which it now occupies towards a weak, distracted neighbor and sister republic.

Resolved, that our attention is directed anew to the wrong and "enormity" of slavery, and to the tyranny and usurpation of the "Slave Power," as displayed in the history of our country, particularly in the annexation of Texas, and the present war with Mexico; and that we are impressed with the unalterable conviction that a regard for the fair fame of our country, for the principles of morals, and for that righteousness which exalteth a nation, sanctions and requires all constitutional efforts for the abolition of slavery within the limits of the United States, while loyalty to the Constitution, and a just self-defense, make it specially incumbent on the people of the free states to cooperate in strenuous exertions to restrain and overthrow the "Slave Power."

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Document B: "California"

Introduction

President James K. Polk's California policy was partly based on his fear that if the United States did not quickly acquire California, Great Britain would. In the fall of 1845 Polk directed his confidential agent in California, Thomas Larkin, to encourage sentiment there for a voluntary union with the United States, and dispatched John Slidell to Mexico with an offer to purchase the area. President Herrera of Mexico, who was disposed to reestablish relations with the United States, had agreed, in October 1845, to receive a "commissioner," but in December, bowing to public opposition, refused to grant Slidell an audience on the pretext that his appointment had not been confirmed. Within the United States the desire to acquire California was widespread, and the following article, reprinted in part from a Whig journal, the American Review*, was one of many evaluations of the California question.*

Source:
American Review, January 1846: "California."

Letters from Washington, on which we rely, render it probable that Mr. Slidell, our newly appointed minister to Mexico, goes clothed with power to treat with that government for the cession of California to the United States. The intelligence is vague, but we trust it is true, and that the negotiation may prove successful. The natural progress of events will undoubtedly give us that province just as it gave us Texas. Already American emigrants thither are to be numbered by thousands, and we may, at almost any moment, look for a declaration, which shall dissolve the slight bonds that now link the province to Mexico, and prepare the way for its ultimate annexation to the United States.

Regarding, therefore, the accession of California as an event which present tendencies, if not checked or counteracted, must render inevitable, we should prefer to see it accomplished by an agency, at once more direct and less questionable in point of national morality. It cannot be disguised that we stand open to the charge of having colonized Texas, and recognized her independence, for the express purpose of seizing her soil — that we wrested her territory from Mexico, peacefully and by a gradual process, to be sure, but as really and as wrongfully as if we had conquered her by arms in the field of battle. It cannot but be, at least, suspected that the grounds of the revolution which made Texas independent of the central state lacked those essential elements which alone redeem rebellion from crime, and justify the disruption of those political bonds which constitute a state — that no overwhelming necessity for such a step existed — and that the reasons assigned, where not palpably false, were unsound and frivolous. We were not slow to recognize this independence, nor to avail ourselves of it, to transfer to ourselves that sovereignty which had thus been annulled.

It will be impossible, under all the circumstances of this transaction, to persuade the world that these events had no connection with each other, either in fact or in the intentions of our government which, directly or indirectly, gave vigor and success to them all. Until the memory of this achievement shall have somewhat faded, we do not desire to see the experiment renewed. If we are to have a further accession of territory, we hope to see it effected by an open purchase and a voluntary cession. Thus did

we come in possession of Florida, including the Oregon dispute, and on terms which the country, we believe, thus far at least, does not deem extravagant. Texas, it seems not at all unlikely, may yet cost us more than would in the beginning have bought it outright; and California, it may fairly be presumed, may now be purchased, at least *nemine contradicente*, for a sum which the country will deem small for so valuable an acquisition.

For, certainly, we do regard it as extremely desirable that California — a part, at least, of the province known by that name — should become the property, and remain forever under the exclusive jurisdiction, of the United States. Lower California, as it is called, embracing the long, narrow peninsula between the Gulf and the Pacific, stretching from the 21° to 33° latitude, a distance of above 800 miles, with an average breadth of about 60, is universally represented by travelers as sterile and hopelessly desolate. It consists, indeed, of a chain of volcanic, treeless, barren mountains of rock, broken only by still more dreary plains of sand, destitute of streams, swept by fierce tornadoes, and of necessity abandoned almost entirely to sterility and desolation.

Scattered spots now and then occur where the torrents of rain have not washed away the soil, or where, being surrounded by rocks on every side, it has been protected from those influences which have made the peninsula, on the whole, the most uninhabitable region of the northern temperate zone. These, however, are neither frequent enough nor large enough to redeem, or relieve, the general character of the country; and Lower California must always remain an undesirable possession for any country, except one that sways a barren scepter and to which extent, not fertility, of territory seems attractive. It may well, therefore, be left to Mexico.

With Upper California the case is different. The southern and eastern portions — indeed nearly the whole province except that part bordering on the Pacific — is scarcely more valuable than the lower province. Through the eastern section extends the chain of the Rocky Mountains, broken into fragments, and converting a wide space of the country, through its entire length, into a waste perfectly uninhabitable, producing very little vegetation, and through which the traveler, with danger and difficulty, finds a casual and precarious path. West of this chain lies a vast, sandy plain, nearly 700 miles in length, with a width of 100 miles at its southern, and 200 at its northern, extremity. The whole valley of the Colorado is utterly barren, and is described by an American traveler as a great burial place of former fertility, which can never return.

Like its branches the river is not navigable. The Gila, which forms the southeastern boundary of the province, is a rapid stream, and its upper portion flows through rich and beautiful valleys, capable of supporting a numerous population. In the center of the northern section of Upper California lies the Timpanigos Desert, between 400 and 500 miles square, and probably the most utterly desolate region of so great an extent upon the western continent. On its north-west border Mary's River takes its rise, and flows southwestwardly about 160 miles, into its own lake, which is about 60 miles in length, and half as wide. The valley of the stream has a rich soil, which, were not the atmosphere too dry, would be well adapted to agricultural purposes, and contains many fine groves of aspen and pine, that shelter deer, elk, and other game.

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The remaining part of Upper California — that which lies nearest the Pacific coast — is not only by far the best portion of the province but one of the most beautiful regions on the face of the earth. It embraces the whole country drained by the waters which empty into the Bay of San Francisco. These are, first, beginning at the south, the San Joaquin, which rises in a lake called Bonavista, in latitude 36°, and about 300 miles northwest of the mouth of the Colorado; it runs thence, northwest some 600 miles, with a deep and tranquil current, navigable for 250 miles above its mouth, and through a valley 600 miles in length, and from 40 to 100 in width; bounded on every side by mountains, which thus enclose a prairie surface, covered with trees which skirt the streams, of above 40,000 square miles in superficial extent.

Among the highlands which enclose this valley are vast forests filled with the loftiest and finest cedars and pines in the world, with every variety of soil, freshwater lakes, and every element of unbounded agricultural wealth, except a propitious climate. From November to March the whole valley is flooded by heavy and incessant rains; and from April until autumn an intolerable heat converts this vast fen of stagnant waters into a valley of the Shadow of Death. This evil, however, it is confidently asserted, is susceptible of an easy remedy by draining these accumulated waters into the river. …

Here, then, lies upon the Pacific coast, adjoining our western border, included between the parallels which embrace the southern sections of the United States and stretching northward to the southern boundary of Oregon, a region of country capable of sustaining a greater population than now inhabits the entire American Union. Traversed, through its entire length and from its most remote corners, by noble rivers all concentrating their waters, and forming at their common mouth, the finest harbor perhaps in the world; abounding in timber of the best quality for shipbuilding and all naval purposes, easily floated to a common point, and that the beautiful and capacious harbor of San Francisco, containing measureless waterpower, immense agricultural resources, and all the elements which nature can furnish of national wealth and national consequence — it is yet shut out from the influences of Christian civilization and abandoned to a people who neither know its capacities, nor feel the pressure of any obligation to develop and expand them.

The aggregate population is probably below 20,000. The harvested crops in 1839 amounted to 69,000 bushels of wheat, 22,000 of maize, and 15,000 of barley; and the whole annual merchantable production of the country, including cattle and furs, its staple commodities, is estimated by Captain Wilkes at less than $1 million. Nor is there anything in the history of the country to induce the hope that under its present control it will ever attain that position, and serve those ends in the great scheme of the world's civilization, for which Providence has so clearly designed it. …

No one who cherishes a faith in the wisdom of an overruling Providence, and who sees, in the national movements which convulse the world, the silent operation of an invisible but omnipotent hand, can believe it to be for the interest of humanity, for the well-being of the world, that this vast and magnificent region should continue forever in its present state. Capable of sustaining millions of people, of conferring upon them all the physical comforts of life, and of raising them to the highest point of mental and moral cultivation, if only they have the energy and the ability to use its resources — so long as desolation broods upon it, so long as the shadows of ignorance, indolence and moral degradation hang around it — the manifest designs of Providence are unfulfilled, and the paramount interests of the

world lack due advancement. While California remains in possession of its present inhabitants and under control of its present government, there is no hope of its regeneration. This will demand a life, an impulse of energy, a fiery ambition of which no spark can ever be struck from the soft sluggishness of the American Spaniard. …

California, to become the seat of wealth and power for which nature has marked it, must pass into the hands of another race. And who can conjecture what would now have been its condition, had its first colonists been of the stock which peopled the Atlantic coast? …

It seems to us improbable that a government marked and swayed by Mexican temper, which persisted against the advice and example of the leading nations of the earth in refusing to recognize the independence of Texas for a long series of years of enforced inaction; which has, from first to last, charged upon the United States the robbery and despoilment of the fairest of her possessions, should now, so soon after the obnoxious deed is finally and fully accomplished, manifest even an intemperate eagerness to resume with us friendly relations, and to negotiate for a boundary upon so liberal a basis as she is said to have proposed. We fear these measures are but the fair-seeming dictates of a "necessity of present life."

They have already relieved her seaboard from the presence of our squadron, and her Texan frontier from the pressure of our troops. They have averted, or at least deferred, a blow against which she had found it impossible to interpose the shield of British power, and have released her from the fatal necessity of engaging, single-handed, the power of the United States. Of such a struggle the result has repeatedly been predicted in Europe. The French *Journal des Débats* has declared that "the conquest of Mexico would be a wide step toward the enslavement of the world by the United States, and a levy of bucklers by the Mexicans *at this moment* would lead the way to this subjection." The London *Times* remarks that Mexico has had the sagacity to perceive that a declaration of war would enable the United States to seize upon and retain the Mexican territory. These views were doubtless enforced upon the Mexican administration by the representatives of both France and Great Britain; and the result has been that all thought of immediate war has passed away.

Meantime, a negotiation has been set on foot with Great Britain for the cession of California, and is "now in progress." Suppose it to be successful, and the British power to be planted in the Bay and around the tributary waters of San Francisco. Will not the European powers be then in a condition to attempt to reduce to practice the theory of M. Guizot, that "the integrity of existing powers in America must be maintained"? "Between the autocracy of Russia on the East, and the democracy of America, aggrandized by the conquest of Mexico on the West," says the *Journal des Débats*, the official paper of the French government, "*Europe may find herself more compressed than she may one day think consistent with her independence and dignity*."

It cannot be disguised that apprehensions of the future power of the American people are arousing the fears and influencing the policy of the principal nations of Europe. The leading journal of Great Britain but a few days since, declared that "no European politician can look forward to the power of the United States, within the present century, but with the most *appalling* prospects." And so the Paris *Débats* remarks that "for the political balance of the world, the conquest of Mexico by the United

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States may create eventual dangers, which, although distant, it may not be superfluous to *guard against*."

And so again, upon another occasion, the same official journal employed this still more emphatic language:

A cry of war between America and Mexico has been raised; although it is not believed that the threats will be followed by acts, yet it would be well for us to be prepared for anything. North America presents her ambitious plans for conquering all the American continent. She began by the annexation of Texas, by which she divides Mexico, and a war will give her a welcome pretense for possessing herself of all Mexico. Soon the smaller states will follow, and the Isthmus of Panama fall into the hands of North America. *Europe should not tolerate this*, nor suffer North America to increase, or the independence of Europe might sooner or later be wedged in by the two colossuses of Russia and North America, and suffer from their oppression.

It seems well-nigh incredible that any or all the European powers should seriously resolve upon measures to prevent and check the growth, in power and influence, of the United States. To the casual observer we seem to be so far removed from them, the ocean that rolls between us seems so broad, as to stifle and destroy that envy and jealousy which, under other circumstances, might ripen into displeasure and end in open and effective hostility. But further reflection, we apprehend, will weaken the force of these considerations. The affairs of the whole world are, in many very important respects, linked and even fused together. Commerce, which has come to be the ruling power upon this globe, makes its home upon the broad sea that knows no bounds — its familiar paths are upon the world's great highways; and it knows comparatively little, in its highest and most far-reaching relations, of those national limits which divide, and therefore weaken, the aggregate of human power.

That nation of the earth which has most power, upon land and sea, must have over every other, and over all others, advantages, the weight of which no distance from them can ever seriously impair. Supremacy of this kind long enjoyed will never be readily yielded; nor can any prospect, however remote, that it will be snatched away by some vigorous and growing competitor fail to be met with discontent which may ripen into scowling defiance and open hostility. These considerations, and others which must readily occur to everyone upon slight reflection, must remove or at least modify the incredulity with which the chance of European intervention for the purpose, whether avowed or not, of checking and fixing limits to the growth of American power, is very naturally received. …

The existence of this feeling among the sovereigns of Europe toward this country cannot be cloaked by honied diplomatic assurances of distinguished consideration, nor disproved by angry or contemptuous denial. We look upon it as a fact — a *fixed fact* — which must have weight in any speculations that claim to be intelligent, concerning our present and future foreign relations. We have introduced it here for the purpose of saying that Mexico cannot be ignorant of its existence, and that, in our judgment, she intends, with more of wisdom than we have given her credit for, to make it serviceable in "feeding fat the grudge" she bears us.

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She cannot lack the sagacity to perceive that, with Great Britain firmly fixed in California, she could not engage in war with the United States without a certainty, or, at the least, a very strong probability of having Great Britain for an active ally. This is an object worthy her endeavor. It is one likely, we fear, to be attained through the "negotiation now in progress for the adoption of a frontier parallel," on her northern border, deemed, by Great Britain, "*necessary to British interests*." Should it prove successful, our government, we fear, will find reason to regret its forbearance in not having regarded the declarations and acts of Mexico, consequent upon the annexation of Texas, as, in fact declarations of war against a portion of the American Union, and thus forcing her to a speedy and final adjustment of all points of disagreement.

We deem it impossible that Great Britain should expect to occupy California, either as a colony or "somewhat in the manner of the East India Company," with the acquiescence or indifference of the United States. In no spot upon the continent could she establish her power where it could be so effectually wielded to our lasting injury. It can scarcely be doubted that the Pacific Ocean is hereafter to bear upon its bosom a far greater commerce than now floats upon the Atlantic. Whatever may be its relation to Europe, to the United States, it is destined to be the highway to Asia, the avenue to the unbounded wealth of the "gorgeous East." …

With this port for her naval depot, Great Britain would indeed be *mistress of the seas*,

——— not for a day, but for all time!

An armed squadron, sailing thence, by a single blow could sink millions of American property, seize upon tens of thousands of our citizens, sweep our commerce, and drive our flag from the Pacific seas. With California in that part of our dominions, Canada upon our northern frontier, Halifax overhanging our northeastern coast, a portion of the West India Islands whence to hurl her brands of open war, and her infernal enginery for exciting civil contention, in our southern section, with Mexico for an ally, and her ports as *points d'appui* for assailing our southern and southwestern cities, she would certainly have enfolded us as completely in her net as the bloodiest intentions of extermination could possibly desire!

Such a consummation, we venture to say, and England must know, can never be effected with the acquiescence, or without the utmost possible resistance, on the part of the United States.

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Document C: "California and Mexico" by James K. Polk

Introduction

In his third annual message to Congress on December 7, 1847, which is reprinted here in part, President James K. Polk reiterated the minimal territorial objectives for which the United States had originally gone to war with Mexico. New Mexico and the Californias (divided into upper and lower at that time), as Polk had instructed special envoy Nicholas Trist in June to insist upon, were the only bases for an honorable peace. Trist, however, had failed to negotiate a treaty and was recalled to the United States in October. By the time Polk was addressing Congress, sentiment in favor of annexing all of Mexico had increased, partly because the Mexicans had refused Trist's terms but also because of the ease with which the army had overrun Mexico. Had another envoy been sent at this time it is likely that he would have gone demanding additional territory, but Trist refused to resign, stayed on in Mexico as an unauthorized agent, and in February 1848 negotiated a treaty that conformed to his original instructions. Polk was reluctant to change the treaty once he had it in hand and on May 30 the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was ratified. Trist, however, was repudiated and Polk refused to pay his salary and expenses.

Source:
A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents 1789–1897, James D. Richardson, ed., Washington, 1896–1899, Vol. IV, pp. 532–564.

A state of war abrogates treaties previously existing between the belligerents, and a treaty of peace puts an end to all claims for indemnity for tortious acts committed under the authority of one government against the citizens or subjects of another, unless they are provided for in its stipulations. A treaty of peace which would terminate the existing war without providing for indemnity would enable Mexico, the acknowledged debtor and herself the aggressor in the war, to relieve herself from her just liabilities. By such a treaty our citizens who hold just demands against her would have no remedy either against Mexico or their own government. Our duty to these citizens must forever prevent such a peace, and no treaty which does not provide ample means of discharging these demands can receive my sanction.

A treaty of peace should settle all existing differences between the two countries. If an adequate cession of territory should be made by such a treaty, the United States should release Mexico from all her liabilities and assume their payment to our own citizens. If instead of this the United States were to consent to a treaty by which Mexico should again engage to pay the heavy amount of indebtedness which a just indemnity to our government and our citizens would impose on her, it is notorious that she does not possess the means to meet such an undertaking. From such a treaty no result could be anticipated but the same irritating disappointments which have heretofore attended the violations of similar treaty stipulations on the part of Mexico. Such a treaty would be but a temporary cessation of hostilities, without the restoration of the friendship and good understanding which should characterize the future intercourse between the two countries.

That Congress contemplated the acquisition of territorial indemnity when that body made provision for the prosecution of the war is obvious. Congress could not have meant, when in May 1846, they

appropriated $10 million and authorized the President to employ the militia and naval and military forces of the United States and to accept the services of 50,000 volunteers to enable him to prosecute the war, and when, at their last session, and after our Army had invaded Mexico, they made additional appropriations and authorized the raising of additional troops for the same purpose, that no indemnity was to be obtained from Mexico at the conclusion of the war; and yet it was certain that if no Mexican territory was acquired, no indemnity could be obtained.

It is further manifest that Congress contemplated territorial indemnity from the fact that at their last session an act was passed, upon the executive recommendation, appropriating $3 million with that express object. This appropriation was made "to enable the President to conclude a treaty of peace, limits, and boundaries with the Republic of Mexico, to be used by him in the event that said treaty, when signed by the authorized agents of the two governments and duly ratified by Mexico, shall call for the expenditure of the same or any part thereof." The object of asking this appropriation was distinctly stated in the several messages on the subject which I communicated to Congress. Similar appropriations made in 1803 and 1806, which were referred to, were intended to be applied in part consideration for the cession of Louisiana and the Floridas.

In like manner it was anticipated that in settling the terms of a treaty of "limits and boundaries" with Mexico a cession of territory estimated to be of greater value than the amount of our demands against her might be obtained, and that the prompt payment of this sum in part consideration for the territory ceded, on the conclusion of a treaty and its ratification on her part, might be an inducement with her to make such a cession of territory as would be satisfactory to the United States; and although the failure to conclude such a treaty has rendered it unnecessary to use any part of the $3 million appropriated by that act, and the entire sum remains in the treasury, it is still applicable to that object should the contingency occur making such application proper.

The doctrine of no territory is the doctrine of no indemnity, and if sanctioned would be a public acknowledgment that our country was wrong and that the war declared by Congress with extraordinary unanimity was unjust and should be abandoned — an admission unfounded in fact and degrading to the national character.

The terms of the treaty proposed by the United States were not only just to Mexico but, considering the character and amount of our claims, the unjustifiable and unprovoked commencement of hostilities by her, the expenses of the war to which we have been subjected, and the success which had attended our arms, were deemed to be of a most liberal character.

The commissioner of the United States was authorized to agree to the establishment of the Rio Grande as the boundary from its entrance into the Gulf, to its intersection with the southern boundary of New Mexico, in north latitude about 32°, and to obtain a cession to the United States of the provinces of New Mexico and the Californias and the privilege of the right of way across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. The boundary of the Rio Grande and the cession to the United States of New Mexico and Upper California constituted an ultimatum which our commissioner was under no circumstances to yield.

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That it might be manifest, not only to Mexico but to all other nations, that the United States were not disposed to take advantage of a feeble power by insisting upon wresting from her all the other provinces, including many of her principal towns and cities which we had conquered and held in our military occupation, but were willing to conclude a treaty in a spirit of liberality, our commissioner was authorized to stipulate for the restoration to Mexico of all our other conquests.

As the territory to be acquired by the boundary proposed might be estimated to be of greater value than a fair equivalent for our just demands, our commissioner was authorized to stipulate for the payment of such additional pecuniary consideration as was deemed reasonable.

The terms of a treaty proposed by the Mexican commissioners were wholly inadmissible. They negotiated as if Mexico were the victorious, and not the vanquished party. They must have known that their ultimatum could never be accepted. It required the United States to dismember Texas by surrendering to Mexico that part of the territory of that state lying between the Nueces and the Rio Grande, included within her limits by her laws when she was an independent republic, and when she was annexed to the United States and admitted by Congress as one of the states of our Union.

It contained no provision for the payment by Mexico of the just claims of our citizens. It required indemnity to Mexican citizens for injuries they may have sustained by our troops in the prosecution of the war. It demanded the right for Mexico to levy and collect the Mexican tariff of duties on goods imported into her ports while in our military occupation during the war, and the owners of which had paid to officers of the United States the military contributions which had been levied upon them; and it offered to cede to the United States, for a pecuniary consideration, that part of Upper California lying north of latitude 37°. Such were the unreasonable terms proposed by the Mexican commissioners.

The cession to the United States by Mexico of the provinces of New Mexico and the Californias, as proposed by the commissioner of the United States, it was believed would be more in accordance with the convenience and interests of both nations than any other cession of territory which it was probable Mexico could be induced to make.

It is manifest to all who have observed the actual condition of the Mexican government, for some years past and at present, that if these provinces should be retained by her she could not long continue to hold and govern them. Mexico is too feeble a power to govern these provinces, lying as they do at a distance of more than 1,000 miles from her capital; and if attempted to be retained by her they would constitute but for a short time even nominally a part of her dominions. This would be especially the case with Upper California.

The sagacity of powerful European nations has long since directed their attention to the commercial importance of that province, and there can be little doubt that the moment the United States shall relinquish their present occupation of it and their claim to it as indemnity, an effort would be made by some foreign power to possess it, either by conquest or by purchase. If no foreign government should acquire it in either of these modes, an independent revolutionary government would probably be established by the inhabitants and such foreigners as may remain in or remove to the country as soon as it shall be known that the United States have abandoned it. Such a government would be too feeble

long to maintain its separate independent existence, and would finally become annexed to or be a dependent colony of some more powerful state.

Should any foreign government attempt to possess it as a colony, or otherwise to incorporate it with itself — the principle avowed by President Monroe in 1824 and reaffirmed in my first annual message — that no foreign power shall with our consent be permitted to plant or establish any new colony or dominion on any part of the North American continent must be maintained. In maintaining this principle and in resisting its invasion by any foreign power, we might be involved in other wars more expensive and more difficult than that in which we are now engaged.

The provinces of New Mexico and the Californias are contiguous to the territories of the United States, and if brought under the government of our laws their resources — mineral, agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial — would soon be developed.

Upper California is bounded on the north by our Oregon possessions, and if held by the United States would soon be settled by a hardy, enterprising, and intelligent portion of our population. The bay of San Francisco and other harbors along the Californian coast would afford shelter for our Navy, for our numerous whale ships, and other merchant vessels employed in the Pacific Ocean, and would in a short period become the marts of an extensive and profitable commerce with China and other countries of the East.

These advantages, in which the whole commercial world would participate, would at once be secured to the United States by the cession of this territory; while it is certain that as long as it remains a part of the Mexican dominions they can be enjoyed neither by Mexico herself nor by any other nation. …

In proposing to acquire New Mexico and the Californias, it was known that but an inconsiderable portion of the Mexican people would be transferred with them, the country embraced within these provinces being chiefly an uninhabited region.

These were the leading considerations which induced me to authorize the terms of peace which were proposed to Mexico. They were rejected, and negotiations being at an end, hostilities were renewed. An assault was made by our gallant Army upon the strongly fortified places near the gates of the city of Mexico and upon the city itself, and after several days of severe conflict the Mexican forces, vastly superior in number to our own, were driven from the city, and it was occupied by our troops.

Immediately after information was received of the unfavorable result of the negotiations, believing that his continued presence with the Army could be productive of no good, I determined to recall our commissioner. A dispatch to this effect was transmitted to him on the 6th of October last. The Mexican government will be informed of his recall, and that in the existing state of things I shall not deem it proper to make any further overtures of peace, but shall be at all times ready to receive and consider any proposals which may be made by Mexico.

Since the liberal proposition of the United States was authorized to be made, in April last, large expenditures have been incurred and the precious blood of many of our patriotic fellow citizens has

been shed in the prosecution of the war. This consideration and the obstinate perseverance of Mexico in protracting the war must influence the terms of peace which it may be deemed proper hereafter to accept.

Our arms having been everywhere victorious, having subjected to our military occupation a large portion of the enemy's country, including his capital; and negotiations for peace having failed, the important questions arise, in what manner the war ought to be prosecuted and what should be our future policy. I cannot doubt that we should secure and render available the conquests which we have already made, and that with this view we should hold and occupy by our naval and military forces all the ports, towns, cities, and provinces now in our occupation or which may hereafter fall into our possession; that we should press forward our military operations and levy such military contributions on the enemy as may, as far as practicable, defray the future expenses of the war.

Had the government of Mexico acceded to the equitable and liberal terms proposed, that mode of adjustment would have been preferred. Mexico having declined to do this and failed to offer any other terms which could be accepted by the United States, the national honor, no less than the public interests, requires that the war should be prosecuted with increased energy and power until a just and satisfactory peace can be obtained. In the meantime, as Mexico refuses all indemnity, we should adopt measures to indemnify ourselves by appropriating permanently a portion of her territory.

Early after the commencement of the war, New Mexico and the Californias were taken possession of by our forces. Our military and naval commanders were ordered to conquer and hold them, subject to be disposed of by a treaty of peace. These provinces are now in our undisputed occupation, and have been so for many months, all resistance on the part of Mexico having ceased within their limits. I am satisfied that they should never be surrendered to Mexico. Should Congress concur with me in this opinion, and that they should be retained by the United States as indemnity, I can perceive no good reason why the civil jurisdiction and laws of the United States should not at once be extended over them.

To wait for a treaty of peace such as we are willing to make, by which our relations toward them would not be changed, cannot be good policy; while our own interest and that of the people inhabiting them require that a stable, responsible, and free government under our authority should as soon as possible be established over them. Should Congress, therefore, determine to hold these provinces permanently, and that they shall hereafter be considered as constituent parts of our country, the early establishment of territorial governments over them will be important for the more perfect protection of persons and property; and I recommend that such territorial governments be established. It will promote peace and tranquillity among the inhabitants, by allaying all apprehension that they may still entertain of being again subjected to the jurisdiction of Mexico. I invite the early and favorable consideration of Congress to this important subject.

*General Taylor never surrenders.*Thomas L. Crittenden, reply, on behalf of General Zachary Taylor, at the Battle of Buena Vista, Feb. 22, 1847, when summoned to surrender by General Santa Anna.The phrase became the slogan of the presidential campaign of 1848, when Taylor was elected.

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Document D: "Texas, Slavery, and American Prosperity" by Frederick Douglass

Texas, Slavery, and American Prosperity: An Address Delivered in Belfast, Ireland, on January 2, 1846

Belfast *News Letter*, January 6, 1846.

1. Mr. Frederick Douglass rose—his coming forward upon the platform was greeted with applause which lasted more than a minute. He said—Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, according to the notice that has been given to this highly respectable and intelligent audience, I rise for the purpose of calling your attention to the subject of the Annexation of Texas to the United States. A question may rise in your minds as to what the Annexation of Texas to the States has to do with Slavery in America. This question I think I shall be able to answer during the remarks I shall have to make this evening.
2. I regret my inability to give you in one short lecture the history of the various circumstances leading to the consummation of the Annexation of Texas. If I were able to do so, you would see that it was a conspiracy from beginning to end—a most deep and skilfully devised conspiracy—for the purpose of upholding and sustaining one of the darkest and foulest crimes ever committed by man. But I will not attempt to give you a minute history of the incidents and occurrences which have led to the present position of the question.
3. Texas is that part of Mexico, north [south] of Arkansas and extending from the Gulf of Mexico to the Rio Del Norte. The extent of this country is almost equal to that of France, and its fertility is such that it is estimated as being able to support not less than twenty millions of souls. In 1820 this vast territory, as well as all the rest of Mexico, was subject to the Spanish Government. The history of the settlement of Texas by its present population is briefly as follows: In the year just mentioned, Moses Austin, of the State of Tennessee—a slave holding State—obtained a grant from the Royal Government of Spain to settle in that territory 300 families, on the condition that they should be industrious, sober, upright men, and professors—mark this—of the Roman Catholic religion. Austin obtained by this grant, great advantages to himself, and when he died his son Stephen Austin became the legal representative of his father, and prosecuted the work of settling the 300 families, for whom his father had obtained the large grants of land, with vigour, stimulating many who would not have otherwise thought of leaving their homes to go into this beautiful country, that they might enrich themselves, and lay the foundations of wealth for their children. During the prosecution of this design, however, the revolution broke out in Mexico, by which that country was severed from the Spanish government, and this event rendered the original contract of settlement null and void, so that Austin applied for and obtained a similar grant from Mexico, by which he succeeded in completing the number of families intended to be settled in Texas.
4. The settlers soon spread abroad reports of the fertility and salubrity of the country, and these reports induced a general spirit of speculation, and thus a way was opened for the practice of the grossest hypocrisy. Many persons were induced, from the love of gold, to pretend the profession of the Roman Catholic religion, thus obtaining large quantities of land. This spirit of speculation was entered into by the people of different nations, including many from England, Ireland, and Scotland. I have the names of several persons even from this town who took part in the settlement of Texas, but the territory was chiefly settled by the citizens of the United

States—of the slaveholding states—of America. It was early seen by them that this would be a delightful spot to curse with slavery. They accordingly took their families and slaves to Texas, from the blighted and blasted fields of Virginia—fields once fertile as any under Heaven—(hear)—and which would have still remained so had they not been cursed by the infernal spirit of slavery.

5. We do not hear of much confusion in Texas, until 1828 or 1829, when Mexico after having erected herself into a separate government and declared herself free, with a consistency which puts to the blush the boasted "land of freedom," proclaimed the deliverance of every captive on her soil. Unlike the boasted republic of America, she did this at an immense cost to her own slaveholders—not proclaiming liberty with her lips, while she fastened chains on the slave—not securing liberty for her own children but also for the degraded bondsman of Africa. (Cheers.) This act of the Mexican government was resisted at once by the settlers who had carried their slaves into Texas, though they were bound by a solemn agreement to submit to the laws of Mexico. They remonstrated with the government. They said their slaves were too ignorant and degraded to be emancipated. The Mexican government, desirous to treat amicably with those whom it had welcomed to its bosom, listened to this remonstrance, and consented that the Texian slaves should be only gradually emancipated under a system of indentured apprenticeship. Even this restriction was evaded by the Texians, making the indentures binding for 99 years. In fact they showed themselves to be a set of swindlers. Well, Mexico attempted an enforcement of her law, making it impossible for any man to hold an apprentice more than ten years. This was resisted on the plea that the slaves would not be fit for freedom even then. One would think ten years long enough to teach them the value of liberty, but these wise Americans could not understand how that could be the case.
6. The Texians still persisted in holding their slaves, contrary to the express declaration of their legislature—contrary to the law of the land—to drive them before the biting lash to their hard tasks, day after day, without wages. Again, the Mexican Government attempted to enforce its law, but then Texas revolts—defies the law—and calls upon the people of the United States to aid her in, what they termed their struggle for religious liberty! (Hear.) Yes, they said they could not worship God according to the dictates of their conscience, alluding to the contract entered into by them as professing Roman Catholics. I am not prepared to say whether that contract was a righteous one or not, but, I do say, that after possessing themselves of the land, on the faith of their being Roman Catholics, they should be the last to complain on that score. If they had been honest, they would have said, in regard to their religious opinions, "We have changed our minds; we feel we cannot longer belong to the Church of Rome; we cannot, according to our contract, worship God as our conscience dictates; many of us are Methodists—many are Presbyterians; if you will allow us to worship God as we think right, we will stay in the soil; if not, we feel compelled to abandon it, and seek some other place." (Cheers.) That is the way that common honesty would force them to act, but the people of the United States—and here is one of the darkest acts of their whole history—understanding the terms upon which the Texians had obtained the territory, and well-knowing the exact nature of the contract—offered them the means of successfully resisting Mexico—afforded them arms and ammunition, and even the men who. at San Jacinto, wrested the territory from the rightful owners. Here was an act of national robbery perpetrated, and for what? For the re-establishment of slavery on a soil which

had been washed pure from its polluting influence by the generous act of a "semibarbarous" people! (Hear.)

7. The man who goes into your ship on the high seas, puts out the captain, takes down the ensign and declares himself the owner—is no greater robber than the people of the United States. And what are their excuses, their apologies, their reasons—for they always give reasons for what they do? One of them is, that Mexico is unable to defend her territory, and that therefore they have a right to take it! What do you think of a great heavy-fisted fellow pouncing on every little man he meets, and giving as his reason that the little man is unable to take care of himself? (Cheers.) We don't see this pretext made use of in the case of Canada. (Hear.) Mexico, nevertheless, is a sister republic, which has taken that of the United States for a model. But Mexico is a weak government, and that is the reason America falls on her—the British territories are safe because England is strong. (Hear.)
8. Oh, how superlatively base—how mean—how dastardly—do the American people appear in the light of justice—of reason—of liberty—when this particular point of her conduct is exposed! But here there was a double point to be gained—on the part of the Southern planters to establish and cultivate large plantations in the South—and on that of the Northern ones, to support what Daniel O'Connell says should not be called the internal, but the infernal, slave-trade, which is said to be worse than the foreign slave-trade, for it allows men to seize upon those who have sported with them on the hills, and played with them at school, and are associated with them in so many ways and under so many interesting circumstances. This is more horrible still than to prowl along the African shore and carry off thence men with whose faces at least we are unfamiliar, and to whose characters we are strangers. Still the chief object of the Annexation of Texas was the quickening of the foreign slave-trade, which is the very jugular vein of slavery, and of which, if kept within narrow limits, we would soon be rid. But the cry of slavery is ever "Give, give, give!" That cry is heard from New England to Virginia. It goes on, leaving a blighted soil behind—leaving the fields which it found fertile and luxuriant, covered with stunted pines. From Virginia it has gone to North Carolina, and from that to South Carolina, leaving ruin in its train, and now it seizes on the fertile regions of Texas, where it had been previously abolished by a people whom we are wont to call semi-civilized. They say they only want to increase their commerce, and add to their security. Oh what a reason to give for plunder! (Hear.) The pirate of the high seas might make the same excuse.
9. Mankind thinks that whatever is prosperous is right. Henry Clay said that what the law has made property is property, and that 200 years of legislation has made the negro slave property. With a *sang froid* more like that of a demon than a man he added, "It will be asked will not slavery come to an end? Why, that question has been asked fifty years ago, and answered by fifty years of prosperity." Prosperity is the rule of conduct. Justice is nothing—humanity is nothing—Christianity is nothing—but prosperity is everything. (Hear.) I was some time since, on the same principle, spoken to by a member of the church, who told me I was mistaken in my views and laboring against the will and wisdom of God, in this manner—"Don't you see," said he, "that we have been adding to our numbers, lengthening our cords and strengthening our stakes—don't you see the church growing in the favor of the world." This element of character is peculiar to the Americans; all they ask is prosperity, and therefore we see their bony fingers pointing towards the Pacific, threatening to overwhelm and destroy every other power which may dispute their claims. I am sorry that England, on this occasion, did not act with that high spirit of

justice which led her to emancipate 800,000 of her own slaves elsewhere. I am sorry that she stepped forward with almost indecent haste to recognise the Texian banditti as an independent Republic. (Hear.) Oh, the love of money! rightly has it been called the root of all evil—with this lust for gold has England too been contaminated, and hence the result we witness.

10. Two years ago, I had hoped that there was morality enough, Christian-mindedness enough, love of liberty enough, burning in the bosoms of the American people, to lead them to reject for ever the unholy alliance in which they have bound themselves to Texas. When I first heard of this event, at a meeting in Massachusetts, I was covered with confusion of face, for I believed we had religion enough among us to have prevented the horrid consummation. That event threw a gloom over the hearts of the struggling abolitionists, and led them to feel that the powers of darkness had prevailed against them. I hung my head, and felt that I was deceived in the people among whom I lived, and that they were hurrying their own destruction by dipping their hands in the blood of millions of slaves. However, I recovered when I remembered that ours was not a ca[u]se in which the human arm was the only agent—when I remembered that God was God still, I took courage again, and resolved to continue to pray to that God who has the destinies of nations in his hand to change their hearts.
11. We are still, however, strong, for the last intelligence I had from the United States was, that 40,000 good men and true, in Massachusetts, had petitioned the Government not to allow Texas to be received as a State until she had abolished slavery. (Cheers.) What will be the immediate result, I know not, but Texas in the Union or out of it—slavery upheld or slavery abolished—one thing I do know—that the true words now spoken, in Massachusetts, will create a resistance to this damning measure, which will go on under the smiles of an approving God, augmenting in power till slavery in the United States will be abolished. (Hear.) I know not how that consummation will be achieved. It may be in a manner not altogether agreeable to my own feelings. I do not know but the spirit of rapine and plunder, so rampant in America, will hurry her on to her own destruction. I hope it will not, for although America has done all that a nation could do to crush me—although I am a stranger among you—a refugee abroad, an outlaw at home—yet, I trust in God, no ill may befall her. I hope she will yet see that it will be her duty to emancipate the slaves. The friends of emancipation are determined to do all they can—

    Weapons of war we have cast from the battle,—
    Truth is our armour, our watchword is love;
    Hushed be the sword and the musketry's rattle,
    All our equipments are drawn from above.

12. Let no one accuse me of attempting to stir up a spirit of war. You may accuse me of being an impostor, or trying to make money—you may accuse me of what you please—but not of stirring up a war against that land which has done me and my race so much injury. For, though, If ever a man had cause to curse the region in which he was born, I am he—though my back is scarred with the lash of the driver—nature, law, and Christianity bind me to the United States of America.
13. Mr. Douglass then alluded to the charges which had been made against him, and which are fully disposed of in the letter in reply to "Civis," already alluded to. He then spoke of 36 ministers of Belfast having signed a resolution to the effect that slave-holders should not be admitted as

members of the Christian Church. That circumstance had cheered his heart, and he would remember the 2d of Jan. 1846, as a most glorious day, inasmuch as with the recollections of that day would always be associated what 36 Christian ministers of Belfast had done in furtherance of the great cause he advocated. Their protest would cross the Atlantic, and fall as a bomb-shell amongst the slave-holders, filling their souls with terror and dismay.

14. Mr. Douglass then alluded to the many kind friends he had met with In Belfast, and said they would always be dear to his heart wherever his lot might be cast. Their Christian and fatherly advice would never be forgotten; and he would take care so to walk, that they would never hear that he had by any conduct of his retarded the progress of the holy cause of which he was the humble advocate, or that he had acted a part unbecommg an humble follower of the Lord Jesus. He then resumed his seat amid the warmest and most enthusiastic demonstrations of applause.

Westward Expansion and the Mexican-American War

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You're the resident expert on your assigned text, Document A, B, C or D. Upon completing your column, collaborate with three peers who read a different document and exchange information. **Your homework tonight is to READ the three supplemental documents. You'll need this information for writing the identification/ analysis essay tonight AND the synthesis essay tomorrow.**

Document A: "A War to Strengthen Slavery Interests"- Sumner (1847)	**Document B: "California"- Anonymous (1846)**
Thesis:	**Thesis:**
Key Points (select 3): • • •	**Key Points (select 3):** • • •
Audience:	**Audience:**
Tone:	**Tone:**
Mode(s) of Discourse:	**Mode(s) of Discourse:**

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Document C: "California and Mexico"- Polk (1847)	**Document D: "Texas, Slavery, and American Prosperity"- Douglass (1846)**
Thesis:	**Thesis:**
Key Points (select 3): • • •	**Key Points (select 3):** • • •
Audience:	**Audience:**
Tone:	**Tone:**
Mode(s) of Discourse:	**Mode(s) of Discourse:**