

## THE INDIANA PRESS AND THE COMING OF THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR, 1895-1898

*Carmen González López-Briones*

The Spanish-American war was a landmark in United States foreign policy. For the first time the United States intervened in a foreign war and obtained overseas territories. By the 1880s, the isolationist trend which had been prevalent during its first century as a nation, was decreasing since it was no longer necessary to focus their energies on building their nation. The country had largely completed the frontier process, reconstruction was over, and high level of agricultural and industrial production seemed to require overseas markets and sources of raw materials, as indicated by the Hawaiian affair and rivalries with some European powers. A revival of Manifest Destiny spread across the country, and Americans were receptive to its message. The outbreak of the Cuban conflict in 1895 found the United States ready for overseas adventures.

Among the causes for the Spanish-American war, scholars have emphasized the attitude of the press<sup>1</sup>. Monographic studies have analyzed the attitude of the press toward the Cuban conflict. Marcus M. Wilkerson's study is an analysis of yellow journalism and its impact on the American newspapers<sup>2</sup>. The spectacu-

<sup>1</sup> «Manifest Destiny», economic interests, the De Lome and «Maine» incidents, yellow journalism, military strategy, and the actuation of the Cuban Junta. According to Thomas A. Railey, «The American people, whipped to a white heat by the yellow press, were determined to have their way to free Cuba — and they got it». Thomas A. Bailey, *A Diplomatic History of the American People*. (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1974, orig. pub. 1964), p. 464. The same opinion has been expressed by Samuel F. Bemis in his book *A Diplomatic History of the United States*. (New York: H. Holt and Co. 1965, orig. publ. 1936); and by H. Wayne Morgan, *American's Road to Empire: The War with Spain and Overseas Expansion*. (New York, John Wiley and Sons, Inc. 1965). Specialists in American journalism have come to the same conclusion. Frank L. Mott says: «There seems to be a great probability in the frequently reiterated statement that if Hearst had not challenged Pulitzer to a circulation contest at the time of the Cuban insurrection there would have been no Spanish-American War». Frank L. Mott, *American Journalism. A History of Newspapers in the U.S. through 260 years: 1690-1950*. (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1950), p. 527.

<sup>2</sup> Marcus M. Wilkerson, *Public Opinion and the Spanish-American War. A Study in War Propaganda*. (New York: Russell & Russell, 1932).

larity of the «new journalism» has caused him to neglect other factors in explaining the attitude of the press toward the Cuban conflict. Another study that emphasizes the yellow press is Joseph E. Wisan's *The Cuban Crisis as Reflected in the New York Press. (1895-1898)*. Both authors conclude that the public, aroused by the press, demanded war with Spain<sup>3</sup>.

Disagreeing with this general emphasis on sensational journalism, George W. Auxier has analyzed the press of the Middle West. Auxier considers that the newspapers of this area contributed to generating a favorable feeling toward the American intervention in 1898, though their chief influence was not effected through sensationalism<sup>4</sup>. A further contribution to the subject has been made by Harold J. Sylvester. His study dealing with the 1898 Kansas press agrees with Auxier's conclusions<sup>5</sup>.

This paper attempts to analyze the Indiana press' reaction to the Cuban conflict, from the beginning of the last Cuban uprising to the United States declaration of war on Spain, (February 1895-April 1898). Six newspapers have been used in this study: three from the capital of the state (the *Indianapolis News*, Independent; the *Journal*, Republican; and the *Sentinel*, Democratic); one newspaper from a mining city (the *Terre Haute Express*, Republican), one from an industrial city (the *Evansville Daily Journal*, Republican), and one from an agrarian town (the *Richmond Palladium*, Republican)<sup>6</sup>.

The *Indianapolis News*, the best-written and best edited, was the leading newspaper in the state during this period, with a circulation of 71,211<sup>7</sup>. According to Clifton J. Phillips, it usually adopted a «vigorously independent line on most issues despite its generally Republican position»<sup>8</sup>. Perhaps its Republican influence might be explained by the fact that Senator Fairbanks of Indiana, a close collaborator of President McKinley, owned the paper. The *Indianapolis Journal and the Sentinel* were most useful for political events, as it is possible to know from their respective partisan viewpoints. They both printed less than half the number of copies than the *News*. The *Evansville Daily Journal* had a circulation of 14,073, and the *Richmond Palladium* - a Quaker and ardently Prohibitionist paper, and one of the oldest in Indiana claimed 2,300 copies<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Josep E. Wisan, *The Cuban Crisis as Reflected in the New York Press (1895-1898)*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1934).

<sup>4</sup> George W. Auxier, «Middle Western Newspapers and the Spanish-American War, 1895-1898», *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 26, (1940): 523-534.

<sup>5</sup> Harold J. Sylvester, «The Kansas Press and the coming of the Spanish-American War», *Historian*, XXXI (1969, 251-257).

<sup>6</sup> According to the Twelfth Census of the United States, the aggregate circulation of newspapers in Indiana amounted to one paper for each 2.19 persons. by 1900, 887 newspapers and periodicals were published in the state. In newspaper reading, as given by the Census tables of 1900, Indiana ranks sixteenth in the U.S. *United States Twelfth Census, Manufactures*, Vol. VIII, Part. II, p. 219.

<sup>7</sup> N.W. Ayer, *American Newspaper Annual, 1898-1909*. (Philadelphia: N.W. Ayer & Sons, 1909).

<sup>8</sup> Clifton J. Phillips, *Indiana in Transition. The Emergence of an Industrial Commonwealth. 1880-1920* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau & Indiana Historical Society, 1968), p. 528.

<sup>9</sup> I have not been able to find data about the circulation of the *Terre Haute Express*, although Phillips considers it an important paper in the state. Phillips, *op. cit.*, p. 625.

The reading of these Indiana newspapers shows that they were concerned about the situation in Cuba and its possible implications in the United States. During the period 1895-1898 it is difficult to find a day without news about the island; moreover, articles and editorials about Cuban affairs were very frequent during the whole period of the Spanish-Cuban conflict. Whether the press reflected expansionist, economic, political or humanitarian interests, or simply a fashion, the fact is that there was a demand from the public for news related to Cuba.

In general, the Indiana press reflected most of the issues involved in the United States attitude toward Cuba (economy, strategy, humanitarianism, paternalism, Manifest Destiny, Social Darwinism, politics and the Monroe Doctrine). The question is which ones were the most emphasized by the Indiana press and why; in other words, I am trying to see the interest and mentalities of the people of Indiana through the press' reaction to the Spanish-American conflict.

When, in February 24, 1895, the Cubans began their war of independence, the Indiana press echoed the events on the Island. The news and background articles about Cuba and the insurgent leaders were very soon followed by editorials showing sympathy for the cause of independence<sup>10</sup>. As early as March 8, the editorial of the conservative Indianapolis *Journal* stated

It is natural that Spain should desire to retain her possessions. ...but in the end her efforts will prove unavailing. The present outbreak will be followed by another and another until Cuba independence shall be established<sup>11</sup>.

Also, from the beginning of the uprising, it was obvious that the Americans were not to remain unaffected by the conflict. In addition to American property, trade, and investment in the island, there was the question of the filibustering expedition, which resulted in early problems with Spain. The uprising had been prepared by Cubans in United States territory, and they had gained sympathizers and supporters among the people in this country<sup>12</sup>.

When on March 8 the American steamship «Allianca» refused to halt at the demand of a Spanish gunboat and it was fired upon, a diplomatic controversy developed between both countries' governments<sup>13</sup>. In contrast with a sector of the country press, the Indiana papers made no sensationalistic statements, and the editorials advised waiting for more information before taking action. Moreover,

<sup>10</sup> *Indianapolis Journal*, February 27, 1895; *Indianapolis News*, March 6, 1895.

<sup>11</sup> *Indianapolis Journal*, March 8, 1895; *Indianapolis News*, March 6, 1895.

<sup>12</sup> *Indianapolis News*, February 26, 1895. According to the *Indianapolis Journal*, «The organization ... with headquarters in New York and branches in a number of other cities of the United States, Central America and Mexico, has a membership in this country that numbers many thousands ... the situation is one of interesting possibilities, and it is calculated to enlist the liveliest sympathy of Americans for the brave men who, in spite of the fact of former defeats, have renewed the struggle for independence». *Indianapolis Journal*, March 8, 1895.

<sup>13</sup> James D. Richardson, *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents. 1789-1897* (Washington D.C., 1899, II, p. 1.777).

the Indianapolis *News* criticized the papers that has adopted an aggressive tone with respect to the incident <sup>14</sup>.

During the following months successive filibuster expeditions sailing from the United States caused similar incidents due to the vigilance of the Spanish ships. These events did not help the Spanish image in the United States. The Indiana press, like that of the rest of the country portrayed Spain as the colonial power in Cuba that violated American rights and interests in the Caribbean <sup>15</sup>.

The early talks about annexation were also reported by the Hoosier papers, which opposed it. In spite of the fact that the newspapers did not sympathize with the idea of annexation, they stressed the economic resources of the island, her trade with the United States, and the opportunities that Cuban products and markets would provide for America. «The Island», the Indianapolis *Journal* reported, «is richly endowed by nature but undeveloped» <sup>16</sup>.

Thus, during the first month of the Cuban war, some of the main issues and attitudes of the Americans with respect to the island were clearly shown in the Indiana press: a general moderate attitude and tone, rejection of the jingoistic papers, sympathy toward the cause of independence, and a view of Spain as an obstacle to American ideals and economic interests, but no immediate desire of annexation. During the following months the press was manifesting similar attitudes toward these issues <sup>17</sup>.

If these characteristics were common to the newspapers during the first weeks of the Cuban uprising, different reactions to the events appeared very soon. These reactions were shaped along party lines <sup>18</sup>.

During the Spring of 1895 several incidents similar to the «Allianca» affair resulted in friction between the governments of the United States and Spain.

<sup>14</sup> Indianapolis *News*, March 16 and March 20, 1895; Indianapolis *Journal*, March 15 and 16.

<sup>15</sup> The *Saint Louis Globe-Democrat*, *Chicago Tribune* and the Milwaukee *Sentinel*, March 16, 1895, wrote editorials in a belligerent tone about the «Allianca» affair. The same tone was used by the New York *World*, March 13, and the *New York Sun*, March 13, 1895 (the last two cited by Wilkerson, *op. cit.*, pp. 18-19).

<sup>16</sup> Indianapolis *Journal*, March 21, 1895. For a description of the Indiana economy at the turn of the century see Clifton J. Phillips «The Growth of Manufacturing», in *The Hoosier State*, in Ralph D. Grayed, William B. Eerdman Publishing Co., 1890, pp. 53-62.

<sup>17</sup> «The Jingoos Puzzled», editorial in the Indianapolis *News*, March 18, 1895.

<sup>18</sup> Indianapolis *Journal*, March 19, 23, 25, 31, 1895; Terre Haute *Express*, March 29, 1895; Indianapolis *News*, March 21, 1895. According to Philip R. Van der Meer «Competition was a central characteristic of Indiana politics». From 1896 to 1920 Democrats won an average of 49.4 percent of the two-party vote... This pattern was a continuation of the vigorous rivalry that had prevailed from 1876 to 1894, when Republicans had averaged 49.8 percent of the two-party vote in off-year and in presidential-year elections. Part of the reason for this phenomenon was that competition became self-perpetuating». *The Hoosier Politician, Office Holding and Political Culture in Indiana, 1896-1920*, University of Illinois Press, Urbana 1985, pp. 11-12. This competition in politics resulted in a very active and partisan press. Partisanship was not a new phenomenon in the Indiana press, according to Phillips, «Before the turn of the century most cities and even the smaller county seats in Indiana still maintained the tradition of competing party newspapers... the main center of the political party press was Indianapolis, where the Democratic *Sentinel*... and the Republican *Journal*... served as outstanding examples of partisan journalism». Phillips, *op. cit.*, p. 526.

President Grover Cleveland issued two neutrality proclamations (June 12, 1895 and July 27, 1896), and consequently, the United States authorities made efforts to prevent the sailing of filibustering expeditions and to effect their capture if they succeeded in escaping from American ports<sup>19</sup>. Then, the Republican Indianapolis *Journal* criticized the Administration stating:

(This Government)... is not responsible for and, even if it is wished, could not prevent the growth of popular sympathy with the insurgent. Spanish rule in Cuba is a political anachronism and a misfit, and neither international law nor the international Committee can prevent the American people from hoping that the revolution will succeed<sup>20</sup>.

The partisanship of the Republican press toward Cleveland's Cuban policy increased with the approaching of the 1896 presidential campaign. Thus, the *Journal* in criticizing Cleveland said that «the people are very tired of the Administration's kid-glove manner in dealing with Spain and Cuban affairs, and especially of its failure to protect American citizenship<sup>21</sup>. And the following day, in referring to the projected execution of American citizens by Spanish military authorities, the same newspaper expressed its disagreement with the President's policy saying: «Mr. Cleveland would not be doing his duty if he failed to use every means his command to compel the Spanish authorities to respect our rights, even to the bombardment of Havana»<sup>22</sup>.

The Republican platform of 1896 emphasized the Cuban issue, and it criticized the Democrats for diverting attention from this problem to domestic reform and free silver as their main plans. The Democratic newspapers supported the administration's refusal to recognize the Cuban belligerence on the grounds that there was not a real government to recognize<sup>23</sup>. In contrast, the Republican papers asked for recognition and even intervention in the island for humanitarian and commercial reasons. Thus, the Indianapolis *Journal* asserted in its editorial «Time for Interference»:

After nearly two years of warfare which has proved destructive to American interests, with no prospects of a termination will not the U.S. be warranted in interfering as the people which is suffering most? Such was said to be the Cleveland policy nearly a year ago... it seems time that Mr. Cleveland should consult other nations with a view of ending the devastation in Cuba which has fallen so heavily upon Americans and their interests<sup>24</sup>.

Significantly, the *Journal* changed its mind immediately after the end of the presidential campaign. On December 27, its editorial «The Real Question» stated

<sup>19</sup> Richardson, *op. cit.*, pp. 6.023-24; 6.126-27.

<sup>20</sup> Indianapolis *Journal*, June 16, 1895.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, June 15, 1895, pp. 6.023-6.024, 6.126-6.127.

<sup>22</sup> Indianapolis *Journal*, June 16, 1895.

<sup>23</sup> Indianapolis *Sentinel*, December 21, 22, 1896; Vincennes *Sun*, December 23, 1896; New Albany *Ledger*, December 24, 1896.

<sup>24</sup> Indiana *Journal*, September 6, 1896.

that «the United States should mind its own business by keeping off from the Cuban question until the rebels had organized a recognizable government»<sup>25</sup>.

The Indianapolis *News*—which generally adopted positions closer to the Republican party's—moderately supported the idea of recognition during the electoral campaign. In this sense, the paper pointed out that «the whole country would be glad if, in some way, the Government could feel that the time had come to give them the moral support of recognition as belligerent»<sup>26</sup>. However, when the campaign was over, the *News* declared that the United States should not recognize the Cuban belligerency, because there was not a real government to recognize<sup>27</sup>. The basically conservative attitude of this paper toward the Cuban problem led it to approve both President Cleveland's and McKinley's policies. Only during the campaign of 1896 did the *News* advise recognition, showing a slight discrepancy with the administration's attitude<sup>28</sup>. In fact, both presidents' Cuban policies were similar until Spring, 1898.

The Cuban Junta—already very active in getting material and moral aid for the Cuban cause—intensified its efforts during the electoral campaign. The Junta organized «sympathy meetings» in many cities<sup>29</sup>. The Philadelphia gathering invited Governor Claude Matthews of Indiana to give his views on the Cuban situation in the principal address. According to Auxier, the Governor's speech was printed by the Junta as a propaganda pamphlet<sup>30</sup>. This kind of meeting was conducted in several cities of the Middle West during late 1896. The Indianapolis papers reported favorably about one that was celebrated at Franklin, Indiana<sup>31</sup>.

Another aspect of the Junta's activities was recruiting. The Press reported frequently about enlistments for the Cuban army. These recruitings apparently were growing with the increasing of new stories of Spanish repression of the insurrections<sup>32</sup>. During these months the Indiana newspapers criticized the recruiting activities<sup>33</sup>.

In spite of the fact that most of the editorials of these papers were not enthusiastic about the Cuban Junta (there are even many skeptical comments about it), they reported the activities and goals of this organization, and they were very influenced by it. This influence is especially evident in their reports about the war, the Cuban victories and their portrayal of Spanish inefficiency and repressive

<sup>25</sup> Indianapolis *Journal*, December 27, 1886.

<sup>26</sup> Indianapolis *News*, November 12, 1896.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, December 8, 1896.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, November 17 and 26, December 11 and 18, 1896.

<sup>29</sup> Indianapolis *Journal*, March 8, 1895, Terre Haute *Express*, June 29, 1895.

<sup>30</sup> George W. Auxier, «The propaganda activities of the Cuban Junta in precipitating the Spanish-American war, 1895-1898». *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 29, 1939, 296.

<sup>31</sup> Indianapolis *Sentinel*, December 17, 1896.

<sup>32</sup> Evansville *Daily Journal*, November 30, 1897; Richmond *Palladium*, April 8, 1898; Indianapolis *News*, October 20, 1896.

<sup>33</sup> The Indianapolis *Journal*, criticized the recruiting activities accusing directly Democratic Governor Matthews of participating. Indianapolis *Journal*, December 15 and 20, 1896.

activities. The indirect influence of the Cuban Junta on Indiana newspapers lasted during the whole period of the war.

The Indiana press was not free of other influences. Although yellow journalism and jingoism, so rampant in other sections of the country were not characteristics of the state's newspapers, it is possible to see some influence of this phenomenon even in the most serious and objective papers —indeed, in the same papers that had criticized these excesses. Some newspapers bought news services from the yellow chains, but the main influence was effected through the Associated Press. During the years of the Cuban war of independence, the majority of the country's newspapers were members of this news-gathering organization<sup>34</sup>. Since the most outstanding New York yellow papers (Joseph Pulitzer's *World* and William R. Hearst's *Journal*) also belonged to this agency, their news, articles, and special correspondents' reports became available to the association for transmission to other member papers. Thus, as Wilkerson has pointed out,

A few aggressive papers made available to the cooperative news gathering association through their special Cuban correspondents, unconfirmed 'news' reports dealing with the activities of the rebels, which were, in turn transmitted to every section of the United States. Through the persistence of these correspondents in seeking news in violation of Spanish orders, the Cuban question was further agitated in this country, and the Spanish Government presented in the light of infringing upon the inalienable rights of American citizens. Thus was the groundwork laid for an effective campaign for the Cuban cause<sup>35</sup>.

The *Indianapolis Journal* frequently used news from the Associated Press, and it even printed articles from the *World* and the *New York Journal*, thus it was accused of yellow practices. This influence was evident not only in the kind of stories printed but also in the tone of some of its statements. Some other newspapers, although they carried Associated Press news items, denounced in their editorials the sensationalistic and jingoistic press. The *News* is an example of clear contradiction between its front page and the moderate attitude of its editorials<sup>36</sup>. It is improbable, however, that occasional editorial denouncements of sensationalist

<sup>34</sup> According to George S. Cotteman, the *Indianapolis News* was the first paper in Indiana that belonged to Associated Press. George S. Cotteman, «The Early Newspapers of Indiana», *The Indiana Magazine of History* II (September, 1906), p. 113. During the last part of the Spanish-Cuban conflict, most of Indiana dailies belonged to it; with respect to the papers analyzed, all three from Indianapolis and the Richmond *Palladium* were members of A.P. I have no data about the Terre Haute *Express* and the Evansville *Daily Journal* membership, but since both reprinted articles from other newspapers, it is very likely that they also were influenced by the sensationalistic press.

<sup>35</sup> Wilkerson, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

<sup>36</sup> According to Wilkerson, «The *Indianapolis Journal* used the Associated Press stories of the Ruiz case, which were evidently taken from the *New York World* reports». Wilkerson, *op. cit.*, 86. Moreover, the *Journal* printed reports from the *New York Journal* about the rescue of Miss Cisneros (*Indianapolis Journal*, October 12, 1897) and it also reprinted the Hearst's news about the «Maine» affair (*Indianapolis Journal*, February 26, 1898). The *Sentinel*, then, accused the *Journal* of yellow practices. *Sentinel*, April 18, 1898. See also Wilkerson, *op. cit.*, p. 14; See also *Indianapolis News* March 18, and December 8, 1898.

practices were sufficient to neutralize the effect of the frequent publication of dispatches concerning stories of Spanish atrocities.

But it would be a mistake to define the Indiana press as jingoistic or yellow. In spite of these unavoidable influences, the reading of the papers during the whole period shows a generally calm attitude. The editorials advocated neither war nor annexation of Cuba, although the printing of some exaggerated stories more than likely promoted anti-Spanish feelings among the Indiana readers.

The main disagreement among the papers was the question of recognition of the Cuban belligerency. At the national as well as the state level, Democrats pressed for recognition, while the President, supported by most republicans, refused to grant recognition to the Cuban insurgents. This was a reversal of the positions adopted before the electoral campaign. Thus, it seems to be mainly a matter of internal politics.

In Indiana, Democratic Governor Claude Matthews recommended in his message to the legislature in January 1897 that a resolution be passed by the state congressmen urging the federal government to recognize the Cuban belligerency<sup>37</sup>. Two resolutions relating to this question were introduced in the General Assembly, as well as another asking the President of Congress to take measures to stop the war and recognize Cuban Independence, but the legislature having a Republican majority, rejected all three resolutions<sup>38</sup>.

Pressure for recognition of the Cuban belligerency was brought to bear by the Democrats at the national level during the entire period. During the spring of 1897 they initiated a debate on the United States Senate to achieve this goal. Senator Charles W. Fairbanks of Indiana was one of the leaders in opposing the measure, which, he said, might involve the United States in «unnecessary international entanglements and possibly War»<sup>39</sup>. He proposed an amendment recommending negotiations with Spain to end the war and achieve the independence of Cuba. He added that the debate over Cuba was postponing necessary domestic legislation<sup>40</sup>. His amendment was not accepted by the Senate, but since the original resolution was not approved by the House, the United States did not recognize the Cuban belligerency.

The reaction of the Indiana press to the recognition issue was shaped along political lines. As it has been shown, the newspapers reversed their positions after the electoral campaign. After this, the Democratic *Sentinel* reported the attempts made by its party to achieve the recognition of Cuba by the Government. Moreover, this newspaper advocated intervention to halt the war on the island<sup>41</sup>.

The *Sentinel* used the Cuban question to attack the Republican Administration, printing statements as follows: «Democrats throughout the country applaud the Cuban patriots ... the American people are always in the side of the native

<sup>37</sup> *Indiana Senate Journal*, 1897, pp. 55-56.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 86-88.

<sup>39</sup> *Indiana House Journal*, 1897, pp. 236.

<sup>40</sup> *Congressional Record*, 55 Congress, Ass. pp. 1.178-9.

<sup>41</sup> *Indianapolis Sentinel*, January 19, 21, February 12, 16, 20, 1898.



patriots, the Republican party is opposed to the Democrats' purpose of action for active relief. The bond holders and gold-standard money power fear the war»<sup>42</sup>. The paper added that the United States should recognize Cuba «on the grounds of humanity and for the protection of American rights and interests»<sup>43</sup>.

The *News* advised a moderate, pro-current American administration policy with respect to Cuba. «The wise thing to do», the paper advised, «is to leave this complicated problem to the executive branch of the Government»<sup>44</sup>. The *Journal*, on its own, defined the Democrats' attempts to achieve recognition of Cuba with these words: «Jingoes to the fore. Democrats attempt to override the rulers of the House and force a vote in the question of recognizing the belligerency of Cuban insurgents»<sup>45</sup>. The Republican *Terre Haute Express* also supported the administration<sup>46</sup>.

The Indiana reaction of the press to talks of annexing new territories was not unanimous. Almost every paper, regardless of political affiliation, opposed the annexation of Cuba, but they disagreed with respect to Hawaii<sup>47</sup>. The *Terre Haute Express* and the *Indianapolis Journal* supported the annexionist treaty with Hawaii on the grounds of the necessity of acquisition of markets and naval stations in the Pacific. Thus, the *Terre Haute Express* stated in an editorial «how many realize the peril in Chinese waters... and the peril that exists in lack of protection and of fighting power on the part of any nation... (thus) the Senate is favorable to the annexation of Hawaii and the acquirement thereby of an important naval station in the Pacific»<sup>48</sup>. The same paper declared in another editorial that the United States had a long tradition of annexation policy<sup>49</sup>. Moreover, the paper showed the advantages that annexation would bring to the Hawaiian people, because «wherever the Anglo-Saxon has gone he has carried a high form of civilization»<sup>50</sup>.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*, January 22, 1898. Scholars disagree with respect to the big businessmen's attitude toward the U.S. intervention in the Cuban-Spanish war for two different points of view. See Julius W. Pratt «The Business Community was reluctant», in Richard H. Miller, ed. *American Imperialism in 1898. The Quest for National fulfillment*, John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1970, and Walter Lafeber, «The Business Community was the most influential lobby for war», *Ibid*. See also the excellent introduction to a selected collection of articles dealing with the motivations for overseas expansion by Thomas G. Paterson, etc., *American Imperialism & Anti-Imperialism. Problem Studies in American History*, Thomas H. Crowell, New York, 1973.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid* February 24, 1898.

<sup>44</sup> *Indianapolis News*, January 1898. The same attitude was expressed in its editorial of April 11, 1898.

<sup>45</sup> *Indianapolis Journal*, January 19, 1898.

<sup>46</sup> *Terre Haute Express*, January 21, and February 23, 1898.

<sup>47</sup> There were some exceptions, such as the *Anderson News*, that in its editorial of March 28 stated: «In the settlement of the Cuban question there is only one desirable and equitable way. That is the immediate annexation of this country. American enterprise and capital would soon convert the desolate island into a blooming and fruitful garden... Annex it».

<sup>48</sup> *Terre Haute Express*, January 22, 1898.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid*, January 26, 1898.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid*, March 3, 1898.

The *Journal*, on its own, accused the sugar trust of being the opposition to the Hawaii treaty, and stated that the United States needed naval bases, quoting Captain Mahan's theories; moreover, the paper stressed the necessity for worldwide markets<sup>51</sup>.

The *Journal* and the *Express* also emphasized repeatedly the idea of world markets. Since both newspapers were very business-oriented, it is possible that they reflected expansionist interests of some of Indiana's economic leaders<sup>52</sup>.

In contrast, the *Sentinel* and the *News* opposed the annexation of Hawaii. The democratic paper said that annexation would mean the admission to American territory of people «who are wholly unfitted for self government and an entry on a policy of colonization and foreign extension that is contrary to traditional American sentiment»<sup>53</sup>. The *News* opposed the treaty on the grounds that «we do not need (Hawaii) ... and annexation is against the will of probably nine-tenths of the people inhabiting that country»<sup>54</sup>. Some of these reasons were stated by the newspapers in their opposition to the annexation of Cuba.

Critical statements about the Spanish presence in Cuba were common in all newspapers, even before General Weyler's reconcentration policy in the Island. The editorials pointed out that Spain violated America's economic, strategic, and political interests in the Caribbean, and that her presence in that area was contrary to the consumation of American's «Manifest Destiny»<sup>55</sup>. Then, when the war and violence increased and the military of the island hardened measures, the newspapers reported and commented on stories of Spanish atrocities and the starving civilian population. Thus, the Evansville *Daily Journal* pointed out, «the pitiable conditions of the non-combatant Cubans. They are being punished to slow death by the cruelest order ever issued during time of war. They are being starved to death». The rest of the Indiana newspapers reported in the same vein<sup>56</sup>.

Editorials maintained that Spain violated the American conception of humanitarianism, and as the Evansville *Journal* said, «the repetition of the shocking tales of distress in Cuba is having its effects upon the sympathetic people of this country. The conviction grows stronger every day that some way must be found to put

<sup>51</sup> Indianapolis *Journal*, January 9, 11, 15, February 12, 1898.

<sup>52</sup> Two days after the declaration of war on Spain, Albert J. Severidge gave his famous speech on expansionism, beginning his imperialist career. Moreover, according to Phillips, when Beveridge announced his candidacy to the United States Senate he «Had the backing of over a hundred business leaders from all over the state». Phillips, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

<sup>53</sup> Indianapolis *Sentinel*, February 9, 1898.

<sup>54</sup> Indianapolis *News*, January 6, 1898. Both the *Sentinel* and the *News* applauded Indiana's Senator H. Johnson in his speech against annexation in February, 1898. *Congressional Record*, 55 Congress, 2 sess., pp. 2.031-2.034.

<sup>55</sup> Indianapolis *News*, March 23, 1895; Indianapolis *Journal*, October 14, 1895; March 8, April 9, 1898. Terre Haute *Express*, March 18, June 6, 17, 20, 22, 1895.

<sup>56</sup> Indianapolis *News*, November 17, 26, December 26, 1896, January 10, 13, 18, 1898; Evansville *Daily Journal*, March 10, 15, 18, 23, April 9, 22, 1898. Indianapolis *Sentinel* January 3, 4, 11, 18, 21, 23, 28, 30, February 15, 16, 17; Indianapolis *Journal*, December 4, 15, 1896, January 12, 1898; Terre Haute *Express*, December 12, 25, 1896, January 18, 30, February 7, March 11, 20, 25; Richmond *Palladium*, pp. 21, 98.

an end to these horrors in the name of common humanity»<sup>57</sup>. The anti-Spanish feelings increased after two unfortunate incidents, which definitely destroyed any prospects for non-intervention. These were the De Lome letter and the «Maine» affair. On February 9, 1898, the New York press published a private letter of the Spanish Minister in Washington. In this letter he spoke slightly of President McKinley calling him a cheap politician concerned with the support of the jingoists of his party. He also said that Spanish-American relations depended on political and military success in Cuba. The De Lome letter aroused indignation among the public. The Indiana press manifested its disapproval and, if De Lome's authorship was proved, the press clamored for his recall. But its general tone was cooler and more objective than the statement of the New York yellow journals<sup>58</sup>.

Then, on February 15, the public was profoundly shocked and outraged to know that the U.S. battleship «Maine» had been sunk in Havana harbor with the loss of 266 American sailors' lives. Again, in contrast to the warlike and sensationalistic attitude of the yellow journals, the Indiana press advised the public to remain calm and to wait until the Supreme Court inquiry of the case informed it of possible responsibilities. «We are a stable people», the *Terre Haute Express* said, summarizing the Indiana press' general feelings, «if the investigations find Spain guilty, there will be demands for reparation, until then, the United States people prefer to keep cool»<sup>59</sup>.

According to Phillips, although most of the Indiana newspapers did not react to the sinking of the «Maine» by demanding war, there were some exceptions, such as the Democratic Vincennes *Western Sun* and the Indianapolis *American Tribune*. The latter revealed «a strong streak of jingoism». The editor castigated McKinley for his patience with Spain and was eager for military measures. Moreover, his editor remarking upon the lack of jingoism in the city's press said that «The Indianapolis papers are more than one year behind the New York *American Tribune*»<sup>60</sup>. Although most of the Indiana papers did not ask for war as an immediate result of the «Maine» affair, their attitude toward Spain was further embittered. After the De Lome letter, the papers showed little trust in the Spanish Government. They further portrayed the Spanish Government and nation as decadent and in internal chaos. The sinking of the «Maine», although it was never proved as intended by Spain, further pictured her as an undesirable neighbor<sup>61</sup>.

As Spanish-American relations became more tense, the newspapers printed Associated Press reports from Madrid about the Spanish reaction to the events,

<sup>57</sup> *Evansville Journal*, February 10, 1898.

<sup>58</sup> Statements in the *New York Journal*, February 9, 1898, *World*, February 10; *Sun*, February 13, 1898, quoted in Wisan, *op. cit.*, pp. 382-383. Editorials of the Indianapolis papers on the same dates.

<sup>59</sup> *Terre Haute Express*, February 28, 1898. The rest of the Indiana papers adopted a similar position. *Journal*, February 16, 18; *Sentinel*, February 19, 26; *News*, February 16, 17; *New Albany Weekly Tribuna*, February 17, 1898.

<sup>60</sup> Quoted in Phillips, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

<sup>61</sup> For a good study of Spanish politics during these crucial times see Jose Varela Ortega, «Aftermath of Splendid Disaster»; Spanish Politics before and after the Spanish-American War of 1898», *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 15 (1980), 317-44.

as well as the Spanish Navy's movements and preparedness for war. Though the editorials stated that they were hoping for peace, these reports were another step towards preparing the people to accept the war<sup>62</sup>.

In the last weeks before the declaration of hostilities there were frequent political controversies about Cuba. The Democratic papers asked for intervention to stop the war—an intervention that would not necessarily mean war—proposing international mediation or pressure by the United States Government. They also supported the Democrats petitions or recognition of Cuba as a belligerent, and they accused the Republican Administration of being dominated by Wall Street and bond holders both opposed to U.S. intervention<sup>63</sup>.

All the Republican papers in Indiana supported President McKinley's policy during the last months. Finally, both Republican and Democratic papers supported the President's war message. Yet, Indiana's Democratic Senator David Turpie attempted to add recognition of Cuban independence to the war resolution, but his amendment though passed by the Senate, was rejected by the House.

The conclusions of this study support Auxier's thesis concerning the Middle West press' attitude. The Indiana newspapers did not ask for war in a sensational manner in order to increase their circulation<sup>64</sup>. However, they prepared Indiana's people for war through their increasing and continued emphasis on U.S. interests in the Caribbean, the spreading of Manifest Destiny and Social Darwinist theories, their negative portrayal of Spain, and their transmission—more or less consciously—of propaganda of the Cuban Junta. The only important factor that differentiates the newspapers' attitude toward Cuba was not economic but political, a factor neglected by most historians in explaining U.S. intervention in the Cuban war against Spain.



<sup>62</sup> Indianapolis *Sentinel*, March 20, 23, 24, 35, 30; Fort Wayne *Sentinel*, March 26; Evansville *Courier*, March 28; Jeffersonville *News*, April 12; Muncie *Herald*, April 12; Frankfort *Crescent*, April 12, 1898.

<sup>63</sup> See the April editorials of Marion *News*, Logansport *Journal*, Lafayette *Call*, Rushville *Republican*, Plymouth *News*, Kokomo *Tribune*, Muncie *Times*, Connersville *News*, Seymour *Republican* and Fort Wayne *Gazette*.

<sup>64</sup> All papers analyzed protested against the jingo and sensationalistic Eastern press, including the Indianapolis *Journal*, that was subject to its influence in greater degree than the rest of the newspapers.