

She Is Getting Too Feeble to Hold Them



J. S. Pughe. *Puck*, 1896.

Spain dispatched "Butcher" Weyler to Cuba to put down the rebellion. He promptly herded the population, including women and children, into barbed-wire reconcentration camps, where tens of thousands died.

Sensational exposés of Spanish brutality appeared in the yellow journals of Hearst and Pulitzer. The public clamored for war, and drowned out the voices of U. S. business and commercial interests who opposed it.

McKinley hoped to avoid a conflict by applying a bit of quiet diplomacy. His chances of succeeding were all but torpedoed when the U. S. battleship *Maine* blew up and sank in Havana harbor with over 250 officers and men aboard. (The cause of the explosion remains a mystery to this day, although it was widely assumed at the time to have been a Spanish mine.)

Passions in the country ran high. "Remember the *Maine*! To hell with Spain!" was the slogan of the hour. As some congressmen debated war, others gathered in the lobbies of the Capitol, according to historian Bailey, and sang "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" and "Hang General Weyler to a Sour Apple Tree as We Go Marching On." Pro-interventionists argued that the United States had a humanitarian duty to save Cubans from their Spanish oppressors. Opponents pointed out that we were in no position to lecture Spain on her treatment of Cubans, considering our own treatment of Indians.

Consistency



Joseph Keppler. *Puck*, 1891.

The Continental European powers were almost unanimous in disapproving the United States' aggressive stance. But they didn't want to offend Britain, or, for that matter, the United States. Outside of a fainthearted remonstrance to Washington and a plea for peace, they did little to help Spain. The Spanish premier, Sagasta, was on his own.

"The Boy Stood on the Burning Deck."



Charles Nelan. *The Herald* (New York), 1898.