

March of the Flag

Head Note: Beveridge gave this speech while he was campaigning to become a Senator for Indiana. The speech helped him win the election and made him one of the leading advocates of American expansion.

Fellow citizens, — it is a noble land that God has given us; a land that can feed and clothe the world.... It is a mighty people that he has planted on this soil.... It is a glorious history our God has bestowed upon his chosen people; ... a history of soldiers who carried the flag across the blazing deserts and through the ranks of hostile mountains, even to the gates of sunset; a history of a multiplying people who overran a continent in half a century....

... William McKinley is continuing the policy that Jefferson began....

The Opposition tells us that we ought not to govern a people without their consent. I answer, The rule of liberty that all just government derives its authority from the consent of the governed, applies only to those who are capable of self-government. I answer, We govern the Indians without their consent, we govern our territories without their consent, we govern our children without their consent....

They ask us how we will govern these new possessions. I answer: ... If England can govern foreign lands, so can America. If Germany can govern foreign lands, so can America. If they can supervise protectorates, so can America. ...

What does all this mean for every one of us? It means opportunity for all the glorious young manhood of the republic—the most virile, ambitious, impatient, militant manhood the world has ever seen. It means that the resources and the commerce of these immensely rich dominions will be increased....

In Cuba, alone, there are 15,000,000 acres of forest unacquainted with the axe. There are exhaustless mines of iron.... There are millions of acres yet unexplored....

It means new employment and better wages for every laboring man in the Union....

Ah! as our commerce spreads, the flag of liberty will circle the globe.... And, as their thunders salute the flag, benighted peoples will know that the voice of Liberty is speaking, at last, for them; that civilization is dawning, at last, for them—Liberty and Civiliza-

tion, those children of Christ's gospel....

Fellow Americans, we are God's chosen people....

Source: Excerpt from Albert J. Beveridge's Senate campaign speech, September 16, 1898.