Mark Twain, Returning Home, an article in New York World (1900)

You ask me about what is called imperialism. Well, I have formed views about that question. I am unsure if our people are for or against spreading themselves over the face of the globe. I should be sorry if they are for it, for I don’t think that it is wise or a necessary development. We have no more business in... any other country that is not ours. There is the case of the Philippines. I have tried hard, and yet I cannot for the life of me comprehend how we got into that mess. Perhaps we could not have avoided it -- perhaps it was inevitable that we should come to be fighting the natives of those islands -- but I cannot understand it, and have never been able to get at the bottom of the origin of our resentment towards the natives. I thought we should act as their protector -- not try to get them under our control. We were to relieve them from Spanish rule to enable them to set up a government of their own, and we were to stand by and see that it got a fair trial. It was not to be a government according to our ideas, but a government that represented the feeling of the majority of the Filipinos, a government according to Filipino ideas. That would have been a worthy mission for the United States. But now -- why, we have got into a mess, a quagmire from which each fresh step renders the difficulty of getting out immensely greater.
Rubén Darío (1867-1916): To Roosevelt

Theodore Roosevelt was the individual who most represented the US incursions into Latin America that outraged even nonpolitical poets such as Rubén Darío (Nicaragua, 1867-1916). Latin Americans had admired the energy, wealth, and democracy of the United States, but now they feared the bullying of their northern neighbor. President Roosevelt supported a 1903 revolution in Panama that resulted in the annexation by the U.S. of territory for the Panama Canal, and in 1904 proclaimed a corollary to the Monroe Doctrine which justified the use of the U.S. military to "police" Latin America.

It is with the voice of the Bible, or the verse of Walt Whitman, that I should come to you, Hunter, primitive and modern, simple and complicated, with something of Washington and more of Nimrod.

You are the United States, you are the future invader of the naive America that has Indian blood, that still prays to Jesus Christ and still speaks Spanish.

You are the proud and strong exemplar of your race; you are cultured, you are skillful; you oppose Tolstoy. And breaking horses, or murdering tigers, you are an Alexander-Nebuchadnezzar. (You are a professor of Energy as today's madmen say.)

You think that life is fire, that progress is eruption, that wherever you shoot you hit the future.

No.

The United States is potent and great. When you shake there is a deep tremblor that passes through the enormous vertebrae of the Andes. If you clamor, it is heard like the roaring of a lion. Hugo already said it to Grant: The stars are yours. (The Argentine sun, ascending, barely shines, and the Chilean star rises...) You are rich. You join the cult of Hercules to the cult of Mammon, and illuminating the road of easy conquest, Liberty raises its torch in New York.
But our America, that has had poets  
since the ancient times of Netzahualcoyotl,  
that has walked in the footprints of great Bacchus  
who learned Pan's alphabet at once;  
that consulted the stars, that knew Atlantis  
whose resounding name comes to us from Plato,  
that since the remote times of its life  
has lived on light, on fire, on perfume, on love,  
America of the great Montezuma, of the Inca,  
the fragrant America of Christopher Columbus,  
Catholic America, Spanish America,  
the America in which noble Cuauhtemoc said:  "I'm not in a bed of roses"; that America  
that trembles in hurricanes and lives on love,  
it lives, you men of Saxon eyes and barbarous soul.  
And it dreams. And it loves, and it vibrates, and it is the daughter of the Sun.  
Be careful. Viva Spanish America!  
There are a thousand cubs loosed from the Spanish lion.  
Roosevelt, one would have to be, through God himself,  
the-fearful Rifleman and strong Hunter,  
to manage to grab us in your iron claws.

And, although you count on everything, you lack one thing: God!

Francisco García Calderón: "Imperialism of Decadence", 1913

Calderón was a Peruvian diplomat and writer. Here he criticizes U.S. policy, as well as US businesses, for exploiting Latin Americans. He also warns of the dangers of cultural imperialism.

Interventions have become more frequent with the expansion of frontiers. The United States have recently intervened in the territory of Acre, there to found a republic of rubber gatherers; at Panama, there to develop a province and construct a canal; in Cuba, under cover of the Platt Amendment, to maintain order in the interior; in Santo Domingo, to support the civilizing revolution and overthrow the tyrants; in Venezuela, and in Central America, to enforce upon these nations, torn by intestine disorders, the political and financial tutelage of the imperial democracy. In Guatemala and Honduras the loans concluded with the monarchs of North American finance have reduced the people to a new slavery. Supervision of the customs and the dispatch of pacificatory (peace-seeking) squadrons to defend the interests of the Anglo-Saxon have enforced peace and tranquility: such are the means employed. The New York American announces that Mr. Pierpont Morgan proposes to encompass the finances of Latin America by a vast network of Yankee banks. Chicago merchants and Wall Street financiers created the Meat Trust in the Argentine. The United States offer millions for the purpose of converting into Yankee loans the moneys raised in London during the last century by the Latin American States; they wish to obtain a monopoly of credit.