

Was Manifest Destiny Justified?

In 1845 a magazine editor named John L. O'Sullivan declared that it was the "manifest destiny" of the United States to expand westward to the Pacific Ocean. Manifest Destiny did have its opponents, however. Long-time public servant Albert Gallatin expressed his opposition to Manifest Destiny.

NO

*It is said, that the people of the United States have an hereditary superiority of race over the Mexicans, which gives them the right to **subjugate** and keep in bondage the inferior nation. . . .*

*Is it compatible with the principle of Democracy, which rejects every hereditary claim of individuals, to admit an hereditary superiority of races? . . . At this time the claim is but a pretext for covering and justifying unjust **usurpation** and unbounded ambition. . . .*

*Among ourselves, the most ignorant, the most inferior, either in physical or mental faculties, is recognized as having equal rights, and he has an equal vote with any one, however superior to him in all those respects. This is founded on the **immutable** principle that no one man is born with the right of governing another man."*

ALBERT GALLATIN

YES

*Texas is now ours. Already, before these words are written, her Convention has undoubtedly ratified the acceptance, by her Congress, of our **proffered** invitation into the Union. . . . The next session of Congress will see the representatives of the new young State in their places in both our halls of national legislation, side by side with those of the old Thirteen. . . .*

Other nations have undertaken to intrude themselves [into the question of Texas. They have come] between us and the proper parties to the case, in a spirit of hostile intervention against us, for the avowed object of thwarting our policy and hampering our power, limiting our greatness and checking the fulfillment of our manifest destiny to overspread the continent allotted by Providence for the free development of our yearly multiplying millions."

JOHN L. O'SULLIVAN

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