

by C. STANLEY URBAN

head of the Social Sciences division at Park
College, Parkville, Missouri.

The Ideology of Southern Imperialism: New Orleans and the Caribbean, 1845-1860

THIS study follows the assumption of social psychologists that frustration causes aggression.¹ As specifically applied, it means that in order to understand the continued enthusiastic support for various filibustering attempts, originating in and around New Orleans in the decade of the 1850's, we must view this phenomenon as a natural outcome of a sectional inferiority complex within the Federal Union. But this motivation was at the subconscious level, and the South needed more attractive ones to rationalize its imperialistic behavior. Whatever the logic used, it was necessary that it strengthen the case for the sectional expansionists while at the same time allowing them to do more than appear as brigands.

Feeling that the South was a community on the defensive, and that the institution of slavery was in jeopardy, an articulate and influential minority resorted to the well-established doctrine of Progress, and its corollary of Manifest Destiny, in order to give ethical justification to imperialistic designs upon the Caribbean area during the period sandwiched between the Mexican and Civil Wars. The hub of this activity was, naturally enough, at New Orleans, largest city in the ante-bellum South and natural enrepôt for the commerce of the Ohio and Mississippi

¹ This paper summarizes principal conclusions of the author's unpublished dissertation, *The Idea of Progress and Southern Imperialism: New Orleans and the Caribbean, 1845-1860*, under the guidance of Isaac J. Cox at Northwestern University, 1943.

valleys. As Southern anxiety deepened during its series of sectional reverses, beginning with the admission of the free state of California in 1850, its outstanding leaders in New Orleans and thereabouts revealed their sense of desperation by becoming more and more anxious to expand in the Caribbean. Circumstances induced an abandonment of the traditional benevolent Jeffersonian imperialism for what may be termed a master-slave concept which, although likewise agrarian, anticipated much of the logic of industrial-financial imperialism in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, particularly on the continent of Africa.²

Without the benefit of the ideology of Progress, and its implication of the White Man's Burden in the Caribbean, the pure self-interest theme of territorial expansion, including that of the acquisition of new slave states to match the colossal strides of the North, could not have attracted and maintained the enthusiastic support of a large Southern minority. This is true because the absence of the ideological factors would not have allowed for the preservation of the image that the South had of itself, as a genteel and Christian society. It is only fair to add that, sociologically speaking, prejudice against races of color in the Caribbean was probably not recognized as an act of aggression, but rather it was perceived as one of defense whereby the in-group was attempting to maintain its own personality and culture.³

It is generally understood that the idea of Progress was conceived in the seventeenth century and that its purpose was an intelligent and judicious use of man's power over nature to promote an orderly and harmonious society. It appeared as a kind of declaration of independence from a miracle-working God, signifying that at last man felt he had his own explanation of the earth's forces and need no longer attribute causation to His mysterious ways. Its optimism for the future was un-

² Imperialism may be defined as the attempt by the in-group to force the out-group to comply with its political, economic, or social will. See William L. Langer, *The Diplomacy of Imperialism, 1890-1902* (2 vols., New York, 1935), I, 67.

³ Gustave Ichheiser, "Misunderstandings in Human Relations, a Study in False Social Perception," *American Journal of Sociology*, LV (1949), 43.

hampered either by the fatalistic theory of meaningless cycles, as held by the classical Greeks, or the burden of original sin, as espoused by Christian theologians from Augustine to the present. As a consequence, its excesses stemmed from its unbounded self-confidence.

Since the idea of Progress is apt to encounter easy acceptance in a society possessing surplus energy and vigor, it is not surprising that the age of Jacksonian Democracy readily accepted it. Here was a new country, sparse in population and abounding in natural resources, where once established aristocratic patterns of thought and behavior fell before the common-sense judgment of whether they worked or not.⁴ In the America of the Middle Period the idea of Progress explained in easily understood terms the national success story.

In New Orleans the press apparently made no attempt to restrain a tone of self-adulation when describing the national progression from wilderness to world power. There is little doubt that it was empirical factors, such as growth of population and cities, exploitation of natural resources, and rapid development of technology, which furnished the basic motivation of the idea of Progress.⁵ The great International Exhibition at London in 1851 served to convince Americans that their national energies were harnessed to the cause of universal advancement. The principle of utility for the masses, rather than the appreciation of art forms for the few, was exalted.⁶

The same identification with the masses was evident when Americans referred to the advantages of their political system, regarded as yet another proof of national superiority. Our system of republicanism was interpreted as the final product of the philosopher's age-old search to reconcile liberty with social

⁴ Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, translated by Henry Reeve (2 vols., New York, 1900), II, 3-5; Arthur A. Ekirch, Jr., *The Idea of Progress in America, 1815-1860* (New York, 1944), 13.

⁵ New Orleans *Bee*, July 4, 1846; New Orleans *Daily Delta*, October 5, 1850; New Orleans *Picayune*, March 11, 1860.

⁶ New Orleans *Louisiana Courier*, July 7, 1851; New Orleans *Picayune*, October 26, 1851.

order.⁷ Here the individual was liberated from reactionary and unintelligent authority in order that his genius might be free to conceive and execute matters of great import.⁸ Ralph H. Gabriel says much the same thing when he declares that the doctrine of the "free individual" was an article of faith in the Middle Period and that Progress was deemed the result of that freedom.⁹ One may perceive the influence of Hegelianism with its emphasis upon history as process and freedom as the meaning of the historic process itself. But Americans of that day were quick to point out the contrast between the blessings of republicanism and the curse of European monarchism.¹⁰ This is an essential point to recall if we are to account for the fears of the South with regard to a predominance of reactionary Europe in the Caribbean, particularly after the collapse of the republican cause in Europe in 1849.¹¹ No doubt this contributed to the insecurity of the South.

There was a marked tendency in the 1850's to equate Progress with territorial expansion, or the extension of the area of freedom. As one journal aptly summarized it, "the Anglo-Saxon carries with him the Bible and the ballot box; liberty of conscience and the elective franchise; trial by jury and the protection of the law."¹² It was admitted that the United States acquired Florida, Texas and the Mexican Cession "because they were needed by our Republic . . . because a fertile territory, susceptible of high cultivation, was diverted from the purpose for which it was designed, of sustaining a large and happy population, to the mere use of corrupt and retrograde dynasties."¹³

⁷ New Orleans *Commercial Times*, November 26, 1846; New Orleans *Picayune*, August 25, 1858.

⁸ New Orleans *Louisiana Courier*, May 4, June 28, 1849; June 19, 1855.

⁹ Ralph H. Gabriel, *The Course of American Democratic Thought, an Intellectual History Since 1815* (New York, 1940), 19.

¹⁰ New Orleans *Louisiana Courier*, March 17, 1851.

¹¹ Governor Paul O. Hebert told the Louisiana legislature in 1854 that the purpose of the European concert of nations was "to thwart and impede our progress." New Orleans *Louisiana Courier*, January 18, 1854.

¹² New Orleans *Bee*, February 17, 1857.

¹³ New Orleans *Daily Delta*, January 3, 1853.

A final argument was the political and moral regeneration which would occur to the local inhabitants of the acquired territories. Many Americans were convinced that an inexorable law of national growth was in operation which they could not halt if they wished. On the very eve of the Civil War such a sentiment was voiced in a report by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.¹⁴

The concept of Manifest Destiny developed in the mid-1840's. Sometimes called the "spread Eagle" doctrine, it has received considerable historical attention despite the fact that there is neither basic agreement as to its origins or the nature of the movement itself. Was it, for instance, peaceful penetration or rapacious imperialism? Certainly there was widespread interest at New Orleans in territorial acquisition by the United States as soon as national military successes were apparent during the Mexican War,¹⁵ and this absorption was in large measure retained until the crucial national election of 1860. But to dismiss this doctrine as mere land grabbing, or as an attempt to spread slavery, is not to do it justice. This attitude ignores the new and vibrant idealism with its roots in what might be called the national ego. Its basic purpose was the extension of the area of freedom.¹⁶ With the union of materialism and altruism one had the effect of a crusading spirit which was to extend freely, if not impose, its republicanism upon its presumably oppressed neighbors. Its ultimate logic was that it was America's destiny, by God's will, to control eventually the whole of the North American continent and its adjacent islands.¹⁷ If the meaning

¹⁴ Presenting a report of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations in 1859, John Slidell remarked: "The law of our national existence is growth. We cannot, if we would, disobey it." *United States Senate Report No. 351*, 35 Cong., 2 Sess., 9.

¹⁵ *New Orleans Daily Delta*, January 6, April 23, 1847; *New Orleans Bee*, July 30, 1846; August 3, 1847.

¹⁶ Albert K. Weinberg, *Manifest Destiny, a Study of Nationalist Expansionism in American History* (Baltimore, 1935), 100-101, 121-122; A. Curtis Wilgus, "Official Expression of Manifest Destiny Sentiment Concerning Hispanic America, 1848-1871," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XV (1932), 486.

¹⁷ *New Orleans Daily Delta*, May 5, June 21, 1850; J. D. B. DeBow, "The South American States," *DeBow's Review*, VI (1848), 9.

of universal history was to be found in the steady march of mankind toward the realization of the ideals of freedom and morality, and it was assumed that the United States was far in the vanguard of all the nations, then it would appear that the country had a world mission as a chosen people to extend these blessings at least to its neighbors in this hemisphere. Enthusiasts did not hesitate at the thought of forcibly ejecting the enervating hand of European monarchism from the Caribbean.¹⁸

With its appeal to Providence, Manifest Destiny was essentially religious, and was never invoked other than in a framework of national expansion, whereas the idea of Progress was much older and rooted in the triumphs of science and technology, and was dedicated to humanistic ethics and morality. The union of the two doctrines proved extremely useful in providing an ethic for the national mood of territorial expansion.

Despite the argument of some historians that the South characteristically felt itself to be a minority section, it was not until after the introduction of the Wilmot Proviso, and particularly the Compromise of 1850,¹⁹ that ardent Southerners in and around New Orleans, reacting to Northern discrimination against slavery, began gradually to apply the idea of Progress to specific territorial designs in the Caribbean. Perhaps on the theory that the best defense is to assume the offensive, ardent Southerners began to assert that the most progressive section in the world's most progressive country was the South, and that its prosperity was due to the institution of slavery.²⁰ Conversely, they held the premature liberation of Negroes throughout most of the Caribbean following the Wars of Liberation was a grievous error, the result of which was to be found in the

¹⁸ *New Orleans Daily Delta*, May 5, June 21, 1850.

¹⁹ For evidence of local resentment against the Wilmot Proviso, which would have excluded slavery from any territory won from Mexico, see the *New Orleans Bee*, March 4, 1847; *New Orleans Louisiana Courier*, February 5, 1849; *New Orleans Bulletin*, April 19, 1852.

²⁰ *New Orleans Daily Delta*, December 21, 1858; *New Orleans Louisiana Courier*, November 18, 1857; *New Orleans Crescent*, October 27, 1859; *New Orleans True Delta*, October 19, 1859.

declining productivity of these countries as well as in a lapse from Christianity and a reversion to barbarism. The red men, as well as the black and the bastard breed of each, needed the strong hand of the white to discipline and teach by example. Primitive patterns of indolence must give way to Puritan concepts of duty, work, and God in order that the wilderness be made to blossom like the rose.²¹

It is against this backdrop of national ideologies and sectional appetites that we project the various filibustering expeditions against Cuba and Central America in the 1850's. In this wise we may best understand the popular local support given these illegal affairs in opposition to the will of the national government.

During the period of the Narciso Lopez expeditions to Cuba from 1849 to 1851, the prevailing concepts of agrarian imperialism in New Orleans was couched in benevolent or Jeffersonian terms. Then, as well as during the entire decade, the logic of the expansionists rested on the premise that Spain had forfeited its right to Cuba because of its unprogressive rule. The island was to be acquired by the United States in the name of Progress.²² But Jeffersonian imperialism meant that not only was the new territory to be acquired with the free consent of the inhabitants, but, equally significant, was the fact that the natives were to retain all their old rights while favored with new ones conferred by the United States.²³ Like her sister states of the South, Cuba enjoyed the blessings of slavery, and this was to be left undisturbed by the transfer of political alle-

²¹ John A. Quitman, former governor of Mississippi, voiced these sentiments with great vigor and clarity in 1855-1856. See J. F. H. Claiborne, *Life and Correspondence of John A. Quitman* (2 vols., New York, 1860), II, 348-349, 354-355. Similar sentiments are to be found in the *New Orleans Bee*, November 18, 1851; *New Orleans Crescent*, November 17, 1856; *New Orleans Picayune*, July 11, 1857; *New Orleans Orleanian*, July 17, 1852, May 1, 1855; *New Orleans True Delta*, September 27, 1854.

²² F. R. Ritter to John A. Quitman, October 17, 1854, in John A. Quitman Papers (Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, Mississippi).

²³ *New Orleans Louisiana Courier*, January 20, 1848; *New Orleans Commercial Times*, November 28, 1848; *New Orleans Picayune*, July 15, 1853.

giance.²⁴ Its ruling classes were of a pure race and possessed genuine culture and charm, reminiscent of that of Southern planters.²⁵ In short, the expansionists were prepared to accept individual and class status in Cuba as defined by custom and tradition.

The only modification of the Jeffersonian pattern anticipated was that of the character of the American migration to the island once it was acquired. The density of population would prevent a characteristic Anglo-Saxon migration, such as had occurred following the annexation of Louisiana. Instead there would be a peaceful penetration by Southern planters to raise the usual staples of tobacco and sugar in an almost virginal soil, as well as that of entrepreneurs who would bring commercial and industrial know-how.²⁶ Peace and prosperity under republican institutions would usher in a millennium for the Cubans while the United States would enjoy greater security and prosperity. Meanwhile, the South would be able to redress the balance of political power upset by the admission of California as a free state in 1850.²⁷ Parenthetically, it had been the inability of conservative Southerners to apply the Jeffersonian formula to the millions of free but backward Indians and mestizos of Mexico which caused their disinterest in the radical suggestion of 1848 that the whole of Mexico be brought into the Union. Such ideological difficulties were now dispensed with and the cause of Cuban annexation advanced because the Jeffersonian formula was both familiar and popular with a people which was fond of idealizing itself.

While a question exists whether General Narciso Lopez

²⁴ *New Orleans Louisiana Courier*, July 9, 1850.

²⁵ *New Orleans Picayune*, September 3, 1854; Samuel R. Walker, "Cuba and the South," *DeBow's Review*, XVII (1854), 521-524.

²⁶ This factor would cause a rise in land values there and tend to equalize production costs of Cuban and Louisiana sugar. See John S. Thrasher, "Cuba and the United States," *DeBow's Review*, XVII (1854), 46; *New Orleans Daily Delta*, January 10, July 17, 1853.

²⁷ *New Orleans Daily Delta*, November 5, 1850; August 1, 1851; *New Orleans Louisiana Courier*, July 1, August 19, 1851.

intended annexation or independence for the island,²⁸ both his American and Cuban associates seemed to anticipate the former course of action. In at least one proclamation addressed to the American filibusters in 1850, General Lopez called on them to free Cuba in order that it be eventually annexed to the United States.²⁹ John L. O'Sullivan, key figure in the enterprise, believed that the General intended annexation.³⁰ While we have no correspondence of L. J. Sigur, Lopez's host in the Crescent City, it is true that his journal, the *New Orleans Daily Delta*, was the most enthusiastic of all the local press for Cuban annexation.³¹ Ambrosio José Gonzales, intimate of General Lopez, was annexationist in sentiment.³² Finally, when attempting to recruit exiled Cubans in his country for his cause, Lopez at times expressly declared that his intent was to bring Cuba into the Union.³³

It is, however, not a crucial question whether or not Lopez's American supporters extracted a *quid pro quo* of annexation from him. Apparently, it was the general assumption that, like the much larger state of Texas, the free but tiny island of Cuba could not long withstand the political and economical attractions of the great land mass that composed the Federal

²⁸ The Narciso Lopez Papers (in the possession of Señor Herminio Portell-Vila, Havana, Cuba) contain statements by Lopez in which he variously supported Cuban independence and a plan to allow the question of independence or annexation to be determined by the people of the island themselves.

²⁹ "Soldiers of the Liberating Expedition of Cuba," MS No. 182, in C. I. Faysoux-William Walker Papers (Department of Middle American Research, Tulane University).

³⁰ John L. O'Sullivan to "My dear Sir," December 21, 1849, in Lopez Papers.

³¹ A creole of French and German origin, Sigur was a talented lawyer and an ardent Democrat. He had served as senator from New Orleans in the state legislature, and was one of the proprietors and editors of the ultra-expansionist *New Orleans Daily Delta*. James Dunlap to John A. Quitman, July 3, 1850, in Quitman Papers.

³² Ambrosio José Gonzales to John A. Quitman, January 25, 1853, in Quitman Papers; Gonzales to Caleb Cushing, March 29, 1849, in Caleb Cushing Papers (Library of Congress).

³³ Narciso Lopez to Cristobal Madan, December 3, 1849 (Museo Nacional, Havana, Cuba).

Union.³⁴ While some privately confessed that the Cuban creoles lacked the capacity to maintain independence for an appreciable length of time,³⁵ the expansionists were confident that they could competently discharge the full duties of statehood in the Union.³⁶

Annexationist sentiments by the leading expeditionaries appealed to the sectional interests of the South. Governor John A. Quitman, who proclaimed that the admission of California had upset the balance of power in the Union,³⁷ was secretly allied with General Lopez.³⁸ Other "Fire-Eaters" asserted that the annexation of Cuba would restore the balance.³⁹ Apparently, Pierre Soulé, Louisiana Democrat and political Hotspur, was responsible for a pronounced change in the editorial policy of the local *Louisiana Courier* late in 1850.⁴⁰ Under his influ-

³⁴ *New Orleans Bee*, January 18, 1849; *New Orleans Bulletin*, June 19, 1850; "The Cuban Debate," *United States Magazine and Democratic Review*, XXXI (1852), 438-439, 445. See also John Marshall to John A. Quitman, September 18, 1854, in John A. Quitman Papers (Houghton Library, Harvard University).

³⁵ Herminio Portell-Vila, "El Gobierno de Polk y los Conspiraciones Cubanas de 1848," *Universidad de la Habana*, VI (1938), 113.

³⁶ Alexander Walker to A. G. Haley, June 16, 1854, in Jefferson Davis Papers (Library of Congress); Walker, "Cuba and the South," 521-524.

³⁷ "Address of Southern Rights Committee to People of Mississippi, December 10th, 1850," in John A. Quitman Papers (University of North Carolina).

³⁸ On their way from New York to New Orleans in 1850, Lopez and Gonzales stopped at Natchez to offer the command of the expedition to Quitman. Although he declared his first duty was to the people of Mississippi in resisting Federal aggression, Quitman promised to take charge of a relief expedition to Cuba, provided the inhabitants first rose in rebellion. Ambrosio José Gonzales to John A. Quitman, March 20, 1850, in Quitman Papers (Mississippi Department of Archives and History).

³⁹ *New Orleans Bulletin*, May 9, 1851; *New Orleans Daily Delta*, November 5, 1850; August 1, 1851.

⁴⁰ While in Washington fighting the Compromise of 1850, Soulé was antagonized by the moderate editorial policy of the old line Democrat, Colonel P. K. Wagner, editor of the *Louisiana Courier*. Following his return to New Orleans, a radical article, attributed to Soulé, appeared in the paper. Wagner resigned rather than to "propagate principles that he considered treasonable." His post was assumed by J. F. H. Claiborne, who had already received Soulé's thanks for a public vindication of his position. Pierre Soulé to J. F. H. Claiborne, September 24, 1850, in J. F. H. Claiborne Papers (Mississippi Department of Archives and History). See also the *New Orleans Louisiana Courier*, October 21, 1850; *New Orleans True Delta*, December 1, 1850; *New Orleans Bee*, September 27, 1852.

ence it began not only to condemn the Compromise, but likewise to champion the annexation of Cuba for the express purpose of extending the area of slavery and terminating the minority position of the South. If, concluded the new editor, Cuba was acquired, and the South later seceded, it would prove a valuable cushion.⁴¹

In spite of the fact that the Whig press generally supported the opposition of the Federal government to the filibusters,⁴² it is evident that the Lopez ventures received invaluable aid and comfort from residents of New Orleans. In the Cardenas expedition of 1850, the filibusters were able to obtain arms from the state arsenal apparently with the connivance of public officials.⁴³ Prior to the departure of the *Pampero* venture of 1851, most Federal officials absented themselves from the city while the preparations for the departure were in the final stages.⁴⁴ When the customs authorities were at last forced to act, the expeditionaries were tipped off and thus evaded capture.⁴⁵ The Collector of Customs later claimed that pressure of public opinion prevented his seizure of the vessel.⁴⁶ At least fifty of the 500 men leaving on the *Pampero* were residents of New Orleans, and more were left behind when Captain Jackson's entire company of volunteer rifles was persuaded to leave the vessel because of its overcrowded condition.⁴⁷ Following the

⁴¹ New Orleans *Louisiana Courier*, June 27, July 1, August 19, 1851.

⁴² Because of their support of the Federal prosecution of the filibusters at the Cuba State Trials in New Orleans in 1850, for example, Whig journals were accused by Democrats of seeking party capital from the affair. See James Dunlap to John A. Quitman, July 3, 1850, in Quitman Papers (Mississippi Department of Archives and History).

⁴³ New Orleans *True Delta*, June 18, 1850.

⁴⁴ William Freret, *Correspondence Between the Treasury Department, in Relation to the Cuba Expedition, and William Freret, Late Collector* (New Orleans, 1851), 5. See also the New Orleans *Louisiana Courier*, September 4, 1851; New Orleans *True Delta*, September 3, 1851; New Orleans *Crescent*, September 4, 1851.

⁴⁵ William L. Crittenden was the customs official who gave the warning. Louis L. Schlesinger, "Personal Narrative of Adventures in Cuba and Peuta," *United States Magazine and Democratic Review*, XXXI (1852), 213.

⁴⁶ Freret, *Correspondence*, 14-15.

⁴⁷ This conservative figure was derived after a careful check of New Orleans newspapers, government documents, and other sources too numerous for citation.

departure of the filibusters the Cuban question absorbed the public. Finally, when news arrived of the capture, summary trial, and execution of Colonel Crittenden, native of New Orleans, and his command of about fifty Americans, mob violence was done to considerable Spanish property in the city. For several critical hours the local authorities did little or nothing to prevent the wholesale destruction.⁴⁸ At the height of the local indignation, giant Cuban rallies were held for the purpose of sending reinforcements to Lopez, and these were sponsored by many dignitaries.⁴⁹ The Collector of Customs confessed his fear that it would be virtually impossible to prevent the imminent departure of the filibusters.⁵⁰ It was not until news was received of the capture and execution of General Lopez that the Cuban fervor collapsed.⁵¹

By the time that John A. Quitman began preparations in 1854 for another filibustering expedition to Cuba, a growing spirit of illiberalism was manifest. This was conditioned by a psychology of fear that unless the island was separated quickly from Spain, this power, under heavy pressure from England and France, would abolish slave for free labor in Cuba.⁵² If this tragedy occurred many Southerners felt, not only would there be grave prospects for another bitter racial war between blacks and whites, as had happened in the French island of Haiti during the 1790's, but the confusion and turbulence in Cuba would menace the continuation of slavery in the South. Civilization

⁴⁸ See the author's "New Orleans and the Cuban Question During the Lopez Expeditions of 1849-1851: A Local Study in 'Manifest Destiny,'" *Louisiana Historical Quarterly*, XXII (1939), 57-65.

⁴⁹ At a giant Cuba rally the night of the riots, District Attorney M. M. Reynolds, Judge Alexander Walker, and other notables urged that resentment against Spain be expressed in military expeditions to liberate Cuba. A committee of 33 men was appointed and General Felix Houston named director of Cuban relief activities. New Orleans *Daily Delta*, August 24, 1851.

⁵⁰ Freret, *Correspondence*, 12.

⁵¹ Approximately 2000 filibusters in the city were dispersed. New Orleans *Picayune*, September 7, 1851; New Orleans *Bulletin*, September 8, 1851; New Orleans *Daily Delta*, August 26, 1851.

⁵² Such fear was well founded. See Viscount Palmerston to Lord Howden, October 20, 1851, in *British and Foreign State Papers*, XLI (1864), 525-526.

itself was at stake. During the height of the scare the Louisiana legislature condemned the Africanization of Cuba, appealing to the Federal government to prevent it.⁵⁸ The delegates in the Senate from Orleans Parish consistently supported the cause of those who viewed with alarm.⁵⁴ Thus, a new and powerful sectional motive for the hasty acquisition of Cuba was present during the crucial months of 1854-55. This may account for the fact that two of three persons in charge of the fund-raising activities for Quitman were Louisiana sugar planters,⁵⁵ and that other wealthy individuals like Samuel Jarvis Peters, who had opposed Lopez, now co-operated in the handling of money for Quitman.⁵⁶ The growing willingness of moderates in New Orleans to co-operate with the radical Quitman venture was paralleled on the national level by the support of such men as Alexander Stephens of Georgia.⁵⁷

Sectional aspirations dominated the origin and preparation of the Quitman expedition. The General himself was thoroughly devoted to the idea of the White Man's Burden in the Caribbean,⁵⁸ and believed that the imminent freedom of the slaves in Cuba would jeopardize the institution of slavery on the

⁵⁴ See the official reports in the New Orleans *Louisiana Courier*, August 23, 1854 (supplement); *House Misc. Doc.* No. 79, 33 Cong., 1 Sess.

⁵⁵ New Orleans *Louisiana Courier*, July 29, 1854.

⁵⁶ The Louisiana Trust Committee, composed of Duncan F. Kenner, Arnold Harris, and Pierre Sauve, had complete charge of all funds received. See unsigned confidential circular, June 10, 1854, in Quitman Papers (Mississippi Department of Archives and History).

⁵⁷ Peters, president of the Union Bank in New Orleans, saw in the acquisition of Cuba a source of strength for the South when in the future the Federal Union was dissolved. See Samuel R. Walker, *The Diary of a Louisiana Planter* (Tulane University).

⁵⁸ "Indeed I have seen for near twelve months that our people were deceived and *bamboozled* by this administration upon the subject of Cuban acquisition. . . . You are right sir—now is the time to act . . . while England and France have their hands full in the East." Alexander Stephens to John A. Quitman, February 24, 1855, in Quitman Papers (Harvard University).

⁵⁹ John A. Quitman to W. A. Stone, July 19, 1855, in Claiborne, *Quitman*, II, 211.

mainland. He was determined to prevent that at all costs.⁵⁹ An examination of the available correspondence between the General and those interested in participating in the expedition reveals many letters from Southerners cognizant of the advantages which would accrue to their section if they were successful. Not only would the cause of abolitionism in Europe as well as the North be checked,⁶⁰ but the South would derive distinct political and economic advantages from the incorporation of the island, enabling it to recover its position of pre-eminence in the Union.⁶¹ Even if a successful assault was followed by the failure to annex the island because of Northern antipathy, the South would have gained a valuable ally.⁶² Instead of filibustering primarily to bring liberty to the oppressed whites in Cuba, as was the avowed aim of the Lopez ventures, the Quitman expeditionaries were committed to the necessity of a quick descent on Cuba in order to prevent the blacks from gaining their liberty. The idea of Progress was thus equated with the maintenance of the social order in the island which meant white supremacy and black servitude.

Although Spanish blundering in the *Black Warrior* affair temporarily gave the pro-expansionist Pierce administration a *casus belli*, the latter feared to exploit this opportunity because by this time the Kansas-Nebraska bill had unfortunately rekindled sectional animosities temporarily abated following the Compromise of 1850. Northern politicians in Washington re-

⁵⁹ See draft of letter addressed "To General Franklin Pierce President of the United States," and an endorsement in Quitman's hand appended to a letter received from F. R. Witter, March 17, 1854, in Quitman Papers (Mississippi Department of Archives and History).

⁶⁰ J. Quitman Moore to John A. Quitman, December 28, 1854; R. A. Love to John A. Quitman, May 24, 1854, in Quitman Papers (Mississippi Department of Archives and History).

⁶¹ J. W. Donald to John A. Quitman, March 10, 1854, in Quitman Papers (Mississippi Department of Archives and History).

⁶² "The acquisition of Cuba I regard as the only hope of the South. Whether it comes into the Union or not, will matter little, so far as the South is concerned. With the aid of Cuba, she can make her own terms either in or out of the Union." William S. Langley to John A. Quitman, January 13, 1855, in Quitman Papers (Harvard University).

fused to provoke war, either of a public or private nature, over "slave" Cuba. Abandoning this tactic, the administration sent Pierre Soulé to Madrid in an attempt to induce Spain to sell the "Gem of the Antilles" at its price. It was shortly confronted with demands that the Quitman venture be suppressed, and yielded because it was overly optimistic concerning purchase schemes.⁶³ Subsequent prosecution of Quitman and his principal associates at New Orleans proved a deterrent to the enterprise, both from the standpoint of recruiting and financial support.⁶⁴ Soulé's frustrations at Madrid eventually led to the bellicose Ostend Manifesto,⁶⁵ which was repudiated by the Pierce cabinet, probably because it arrived in Washington just after the elections of 1854 had resulted in a general disaster for "Young America" and the Democratic party.⁶⁶ By January, 1855, it was obvious that the cabinet would have to yield to the wishes of a Know-Nothing and Whig Congress by quashing the venture of General Quitman, who had secretly continued his preparations for departure.⁶⁷ After Quitman made an unofficial visit to Washington in March to confer with President Pierce,⁶⁸ the filibuster resigned from his command and the enterprise collapsed.⁶⁹ Southern expansionists inter-

⁶³ William A. Marcy to James Buchanan, June 27, 1854, in William A. Marcy Papers (Library of Congress).

⁶⁴ Thomas P. Farrar to John S. Thrasher, July 5, 1854, in Quitman Papers (Mississippi Department of Archives and History).

⁶⁵ Meeting at Ostend, Belgium, at the suggestion of Secretary of State William Marcy, Soulé and the United States ambassadors to England and France agreed that the United States should offer Spain \$120,000,000 for Cuba. If this offer was declined and it later appeared that Spain's continued possession of Cuba endangered the internal peace of the United States, the Manifesto continued, then "we shall be justified in wresting it [Cuba] from Spain." See *House Exec. Doc. No. 93, 33 Cong., 2 Sess., 127-132.*

⁶⁶ Edward Everett to Mrs. Charles Eames, November 13, 16, 1854, in Edward Everett Papers (Massachusetts Historical Society).

⁶⁷ Edward Everett to Mrs. Charles Eames, January 27, 1855, in Everett Papers.

⁶⁸ Sidney Webster to John A. Quitman, March 9, 1855, in Quitman Papers (Mississippi Department of Archives and History).

⁶⁹ John S. Thrasher to C. S. B. Lamar, May 29, 1855, in Quitman Papers (Mississippi Department of Archives and History).

preted this as a surrender of the administration to the pressure of the antislavery faction.⁷⁰

By this time it was a sectional impossibility to acquire Cuba at any price, or for any reason, until the issue of slavery within the Union had been settled. Although the complexities of the affair were handled by our leading politicians in such a way as to produce a kind of unconscious comic opera effect, the episode added to the increasing sense of Southern frustration. Moderates now accepted the old charge of the radicals that the South was being discriminated against as a minority section and that the only remedy lay in more aggressive behavior.

By the time of the first William Walker filibustering expedition in 1856, aimed at the reduction of Nicaragua, sectional intemperance seemed to grip New Orleans. There was a general condemnation of Black Republicanism in the national election of that year for making no pretense of being anything other than a Northern party, and for its inveterate hostility to the expansion of slavery.⁷¹ It was alleged that Whigs and Know-Nothings in the city were either forced to join the more sectionally-minded Democrats or abstain from party politics.⁷²

The bitter controversy over the fate of Kansas at this time affords a good insight into the thinking of Southerners regarding the possibilities for the direction of the expansion of slavery.⁷³ Intensified Northern opposition to slavery in Kansas embittered even previously moderate journals. Admitting that natural forces precluded the existence of slavery in Kansas, they

⁷⁰ *New Orleans Bee*, January 17, July 21, 1855; *New Orleans Orleansian*, January 19, 1855.

⁷¹ *New Orleans Picayune*, October 7, 10, 1856; *New Orleans Orleansian*, December 4, 1857.

⁷² *New Orleans Bee*, August 18, 1858.

⁷³ One modern authority concludes that by 1854 natural forces precluded the expansion of slavery north and west of the Rio Grande. At the same time there "was no reasonable ground for expectation that new lands could be acquired south of the United States into which slaves might be taken. There was, in brief, no further place for it to go." Charles W. Ramsdell, "The Natural Limits of Slavery Expansion," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XVI (1930), 153-162, 166-167.

nevertheless declared themselves for the principle of non-Congressional interference with slavery in the territories and for the principle of Popular Sovereignty.⁷⁴ If this principle found acceptance in Kansas, then it could be applied in Central America in order to afford a political counterpoise to the future free states of the Great Northwest.⁷⁵ Southern moderates in Washington accepted the postulate that slavery would not be economically feasible in Kansas, and urged their colleagues to support the Pierce administration lest their common enemies undermine them both.⁷⁶ The radical Quitman, then in Washington as a member of the House of Representatives, was urged to let geographical and climatic forces determine the fate of Kansas and concentrate on Southern expansion in the Caribbean, where these same elements afforded natural advantages for the slave economy.⁷⁷

From the Mosquito coast in Central America, the filibuster H. L. Kinney made a blunt appeal to Quitman late in 1855 for assistance in order to spread Southern institutions.⁷⁸ Quitman himself was determined to procure both Kansas and Central America in defiance of the antislavery faction and its tool, the Pierce cabinet.⁷⁹ This intransigent position, however, was almost certainly that of a small minority, if the relatively indifferent treatment afforded General Buford's battalion, while they were in New Orleans on their way to "save" Kansas for the

⁷⁴ *New Orleans Bee*, February 18, August 14, 1858; *New Orleans Picayune*, January 21, 1858.

⁷⁵ Albert Fabre in the *New Orleans Bee*, December 15, 1856; *New Orleans True Delta*, April 19, 1856; *New Orleans Louisiana Courier*, February 15, 1857; *New Orleans Daily Delta*, April 14, 1856.

⁷⁶ Sam C. Reid to John A. Quitman, July 15, 1857, in *Quitman Papers* (Harvard University).

⁷⁷ C. G. Forshey to John A. Quitman, May 20, 1857, in *Quitman Papers* (Harvard University).

⁷⁸ H. L. Kinney to John A. Quitman, November 3, 1855, in *Quitman Papers* (Harvard University).

⁷⁹ Sketch of a letter by Quitman to Reuben H. Davis, October 21, 1857; John A. Quitman to G. Simms, B. H. Beauchamp, H. F. Carpenter and others, October 21, 1856, in *Quitman Papers* (Harvard University).

South, affords a reliable index.⁸⁰ Majority opinion concluded that forces of nature, i.e., climate, topography, and soil, "conspired" with free soilers and abolitionists to prevent the further expansion of slavery north and west of the Rio Grande. Prospects for the profitable expansion of slavery in Kansas were dim indeed as compared with those in Nicaragua.⁸¹

Since there was little local opposition to the principle that decay inevitably follows the stoppage of growth of a social organism,⁸² it was natural that the initial successes of Walker in Nicaragua captured the public imagination in New Orleans, reviving sectional aspirations for territorial expansion. There were, of course, difficulties in the way of such a scheme, but they were not insurmountable. Central America, the argument ran, was similar to Cuba in its climate and the sort of staples which could profitably be raised there. Its population was about as dense. Geographically, both were close to Southern shores. However, the greatest difference between the two economies was that, that of Cuba rested on slaves while Central America had free labor. Here the concept of Progress was invoked in order to demonstrate that the productivity and prosperity of Cuba was due to the institution of slavery, while the economic and social retrogression of Central America was caused by the mistaken emancipation of blacks and persons of color. The answer was clear. In the name of Progress the mongrel races of Central America must be made to accept some sort of forced labor at the dictates of the Southern planter. This was the only element lacking, without which Central America could never enjoy genuine productivity, prosperity, culture and Christianity. The radical *Louisiana Courier* lucidly expressed

⁸⁰ In the *New Orleans Louisiana Courier*, July 22, 1857, J. F. H. Claiborne protested: "not a dollar—not a man did Mississippi or Louisiana contribute to vindicate Southern rights in Kansas."

⁸¹ *New Orleans Bee*, August 14, 1858; *New Orleans Louisiana Courier*, February 5, September 13, 1857; "The South Demands More Negro Labor. To the People of Louisiana," *DeBow's Review*, XXV (1858), 502-504.

⁸² *New Orleans Daily Delta*, May 15, July 15, 1856; *New Orleans Louisiana Courier*, October 29, 1854; April 26, 1856; *New Orleans Picayune*, August 27, 1857.

the predominant sentiment when in 1857 it anticipated much of the logic of Rudyard Kipling's "The White Man's Burden":

The true way, the sole way, to civilize barbarians is to set them at some profitable work. A civilized people may exterminate their inferiors and reduce a once savage region to order, but a barbarous people can never become civilized without the salutary apprenticeship which slavery secures. The savage is never on the high road to enlightenment until he becomes the bondsman of one already enlightened. It is the duty and decreed prerogative of the wise to guide and govern the ignorant. The discipline imposed by the superior raises the inferior towards his own standard. It is the duty of civilized nations to furnish masters to savages. The exodus from bestial barbarism to enlightenment is through slavery, and the sooner civilized men learn their duty and their right the sooner will the real progress of civilization be rescued.⁸³

The ideological differences between the master-slave imperialism to be employed in the event of the annexation of Nicaragua, and that of Cuba, under the tenet of Jeffersonian imperialism are not difficult to detect. Under the newer imperialism the proponents no longer talk of annexation with the consent of the inhabitants as was the case during the Cuban fervor of 1850. One does not ask the consent of indolent barbarians. Their stubborn refusal is to be expected and swept aside as of no consequence. But they cannot expect to sit astride a virginal soil capable of yielding rich crops which civilized man needs to build a better world. Not only will the land be seized in the name of Progress, but its inhabitants may no longer exercise their freedom to work, or, more properly, their freedom not to work. They will be forced to labor under the superior guidance of the whites. As a consequence, they will produce bountiful staples which the soil was always capable of yielding had it not been tilled by an inferior breed of free men. In addition the colored servant might receive innumerable cultural advantages from disciplined tutelage by his white master.

⁸³ New Orleans *Louisiana Courier*, November 12, 1857. The New Orleans press also advocated the re-establishment of forced labor in the West Indies to achieve the same end. New Orleans *Crescent*, July 8, 1857, December 3, 1859; New Orleans *Orleanian*, April 13, 1858; New Orleans *Daily Delta*, March 18, 1858.

Contrast this philosophy of superior-inferior with the readiness of Southerners to give assurances to the Cubans that none of the inhabitants would lose any of their customary rights and privileges, and one has the essence of the divergence between the two imperialisms. Behind this one perceives the implications of racism. In 1850 the expansionists declared that the ruling classes of Cuba were of a pure Castilian blood and accepted them as social equals. But when the filibustering scene shifts to Nicaragua six years later, they have nothing but contempt for the Indians, Negroes, and their bastard breed.

Such transition in political sentiment appears as a conscious rationale to solve the dilemma of the South, which felt it imperative to expand in the Caribbean, but which knew it could not do so until the potential areas contained sufficient servile labor which could immediately be put to work for the white planters. Granted this condition, the emigrant planter would not need to siphon from the South its precious supply of black slaves, and thus cause a further rise in price of this scarce commodity.⁸⁴ Whereas Cuba in 1850 afforded an adequate slave labor market by virtue of the illicit traffic,⁸⁵ this was precisely the crucial factor which Central America lacked.

The common denominator between the old and new imperialism was rooted in the idea of Progress, and the justification it afforded the in-group to take both land and sovereignty away from those who did not properly employ them to the greater advantage of civilization. In the case of Cuba, the once master race of Castilians had eventually become decadent and, through impotency and reaction, Spain had lost its moral right to rule as a colonial power. This justified, many felt, the seizure of the island by the expansionists.⁸⁶ In Central America there had been attempted the impractical experiment of allowing the mongrel races self-rule with predictable disastrous consequences

⁸⁴ New Orleans *Bulletin*, March 21, October 18, 1854; New Orleans *Bee*, October 10, 1856; New Orleans *True Delta*, June 7, 23, 1854.

⁸⁵ Herminio Portell-Vila, *Historia de Cuba en sus Relaciones con los Estados Unidos y Espana* (3 vols., Havana, 1938), I, 476.

⁸⁶ New Orleans *Orleanian*, June 14, 1857.

of a political, economic, and social nature. The march of Progress, both desirable and inevitable, could only be resumed, it was held, when the philosophy of the Southern planter dominated in such countries as Nicaragua.

Private citizens in New Orleans were intimately associated with Walker's venture immediately following the original conquest, and the adoption of a new liberal land policy of November, 1855, instituted to promote emigration from the United States.⁸⁷ In late February, 1856, about 300 emigrants left New Orleans bound for Nicaragua on the steamer *Prometheus*. A very large portion of these were young men, "many of them long residents of New Orleans, or natives of Louisiana."⁸⁸ In April, 1856, Pierre Soulé arranged a large mass meeting at the St. Louis Hotel which was endorsed by a great number of the former supporters of General Lopez.⁸⁹ At this session Soulé eulogized Walker as a missionary of Progress.⁹⁰ Subsequently, a number of prominent citizens served on the Committee on Immigration to Nicaragua.⁹¹ John P. Heiss, purchaser of L. J. Sigur's interest in the New Orleans *Daily Delta* when the latter sold to finance Lopez's expedition of 1851, acted for a time as chargé d'affaires for the Nicaraguan legation in Washington.⁹² In August, 1856, Soulé arrived in Granada and successfully negotiated a loan for Walker which was financed by New Orleans capitalists. In return Walker revoked the edict of 1824

⁸⁷ A free grant of 250 acres was offered to any single male settling on the land and making improvements. Emigrants with families were to receive 350 acres. Register Book, New Orleans Agency of the Nicaraguan Emigration Company, in Fayssoux-Walker Papers.

⁸⁸ New Orleans *Bee*, February 29, 1856; New Orleans *Louisiana Courier*, February 14, 1856; New Orleans *Crescent*, February 28, 1856.

⁸⁹ Among these were men like L. J. Sigur, M. M. Reynolds, William Christy, Cuthbert Bullitt, W. C. Auld, Sam Henderson, Cyprien Dufour, and others. New Orleans *Daily Delta*, April 16, 1856; New Orleans *Crescent*, April 28, 1856.

⁹⁰ New Orleans *Louisiana Courier*, April 29, 1856; New Orleans *Daily Delta*, April 29, 1856.

⁹¹ See the New Orleans *Daily Delta*, April 26, 1856, for a full list of the committee.

⁹² "Walker-Heiss Papers, Some Diplomatic Correspondence of the Walker Regime in Nicaragua," *Tennessee Historical Magazine*, I (1915), 331-332.

forbidding slavery, and instituted vagrancy and contract labor laws designed to procure forced labor from the natives and reduce them to virtual peonage.⁹³

The re-establishment of slavery in Nicaragua was enthusiastically received in New Orleans.⁹⁴ In late November, 1856, following an introduction by Pierre Soulé, Colonel E. J. C. Kewen of the Nicaraguan army addressed a large crowd at the local Lyceum Hall and, although there was considerable applause throughout, "at no time was the cheering more hearty than when he spoke of Southern institutions being planted in Nicaragua."⁹⁵ Soulé himself had long argued that if Nicaraguan annexation could be effected Northern predominance in the Union could be effaced with this single blow.⁹⁶ In late December, 1856, over 300 male emigrants, a great many of whom were residents of New Orleans, left on the steamer *Texas*, bound for Nicaragua,⁹⁷ and still others clamored for an immediate departure rather than wait another month for the next scheduled steamer.⁹⁸ In January, 1857, mass meetings were held to promote the emigration of whites to Nicaragua, and several of the town's most prominent citizens served as officers.⁹⁹

When confidential information was released showing Walker's intent to build an independent empire, local enthusiasm declined but did not disappear.¹⁰⁰ Following the filibuster's failure because of the combined opposition of Commodore

⁹³ William O. Scroggs, *Filibusters and Financiers; the Story of William Walker and His Associates* (New York, 1916), 209-211.

⁹⁴ New Orleans *Crescent*, October 29, 1856.

⁹⁵ New Orleans *Louisiana Courier*, November 25, 1856.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, April 29, 1856.

⁹⁷ Register Book, New Orleans Agency of the Nicaraguan Emigration Company, in Fayssoux-Walker Papers.

⁹⁸ New Orleans *Crescent*, December 31, 1856.

⁹⁹ Joined with such leaders as James H. Caldwell and William Christy were S. O. Nelson, wealthy sugar planter; C. M. Waterman, ex-mayor of New Orleans; W. R. Adams, wealthy merchant; and I. G. Seymour, editor of the New Orleans *Bulletin* since 1849 and spearhead of the opposition to the Lopez expeditions. New Orleans *Crescent*, January 21, 1857.

¹⁰⁰ New Orleans *Picayune*, December 14, 1856.

Vanderbilt and Costa Rica,¹⁰¹ Walker returned to New Orleans, both for the purpose of defending his intent and organizing a new expedition. Introduced by an ex-mayor of the city at a large and enthusiastic reception, Walker defended his pro-slavery position, claiming his intent was to Americanize the country.¹⁰² While the cause of filibustering had unquestionably been undermined by the long series of failures in New Orleans since 1849, ardent exponents of Progress would not allow the issue of the regeneration of Nicaragua to die.¹⁰³ When Walker launched his unfortunate enterprise of 1860, it was lauded by die-hards as another attempt to spread Southern institutions.¹⁰⁴ But from the fact of almost universal silence by the press in the Crescent City concerning Nicaragua during the crucial election of 1860, one may infer that the Caribbean expansion theme was forgotten, at least until the status of the South *vis-à-vis* the Union had been clarified.

To summarize, there is considerable evidence that, during the critical decade of the 1850's in the important sector of New Orleans, Southerners felt frustrated within the Federal Union. Not only did they accept the postulate of continual growth for a healthy social organism, but they were forced to witness the successful application of this principle in the North, while increasingly coming to the reluctant conclusion that the vast territory north and west of the Rio Grande offered no profitable outlets for the expansion of slavery. The failure to carve any slave states out of the Mexican Cession or the Kansas-Nebraska territory underlined this gloomy generalization.

It is understandable that in such a situation the South would attempt expansion in the Caribbean in order to prevent a hopeless drift into a minority status where it could only exist at the sufferance of the North. Equally feasible was the appli-

¹⁰¹ Graham H. Stuart, *Latin America and the United States* (New York, 1938), 328.

¹⁰² *New Orleans True Delta*, May 31, 1857.

¹⁰³ *New Orleans Picayune*, June 18, 1857; *New Orleans Daily Delta*, May 30, 1857.

¹⁰⁴ See an article apparently written by da Ponte in the *New Orleans Daily Delta* (clipping, item No. 165, in Fayssoux-Walker Papers).

cation in 1850-51 of the principles of a benevolent Jeffersonian imperialism with regard to the island of Cuba, for this was both a traditional and popular doctrine. The potential ruling class in the event of emancipation would be the creoles, who enjoyed a culture similar to that of the Southern planter. Whatever General Lopez's real plans were for the political destiny of an emancipated Cuba, it is clear that his American colleagues were convinced that its independence would inevitably be followed by annexation. Although the expansionists emphasized sectional arguments for the acquisition of Cuba, it is significant that at this time their most ardent exponents were the Democrats. By and large, the Whigs were skeptical of filibustering and refused to undertake any course of action which might jeopardize the Union.

The fear of the emancipation of slaves in Cuba, and the belief that such revolutionary labor tactics in the nearby island would jeopardize the institution of slavery in the mainland, alarmed even many of the moderates of the Southwest. This, no doubt, accounts for the general increased willingness of the local populace to support the filibustering venture of General Quitman, whose primary purpose was to prevent the Africanization of Cuba, and then, if possible, bring it into the Federal Union. The fact that the antislavery faction in the North was allowed to block the detachment of the island from Spain both by the administration and the filibusters was interpreted in New Orleans as fresh evidence that the South was being discriminated against. The fast disappearing Whig party tended to be absorbed by the Democrats, who in turn were dominated by the "Young America" faction. It was the last named group which was determined that the South must expand at any price.

There was nothing new in the application of the ideas of Progress and Manifest Destiny as a moral justification for the territorial seizures of such filibusters as Kinney and Walker in Central America, because these arguments had previously been employed against the decadent and reactionary rule of Spain

in Cuba. The only fresh ingredient was a basic change in the concept of how to treat the newly acquired populations.

Under the new agrarian imperialism the masses were to lose their basic freedoms and revert to the status of forced labor for the white planter class emigrating from the Southern states. By pushing the ideology of Progress to its extreme limits, one could rationalize that the loss of political and economic freedom on the part of the natives was both necessary and proper. Any tinkering with the fundamental law that the white race was meant to be the master and colored races its servants was, in the eyes of the harassed Southerner, fated to be disastrous to the civilized world. This philosophy can be likened to the convictions of the nineteenth century capitalist with regard to government interference with the free market in behalf of the working man.

As long as Southerners maintained the illusion that General Walker intended to press for annexation following the restoration of slavery in Nicaragua, he enjoyed unprecedented popularity in New Orleans. The preoccupation of the nine daily newspapers with the annexation of Nicaragua during the Bloody Kansas era inclines one to the belief that for a time the theme of Caribbean expansion appeared to offer the possibility of peace with honor within the Union. The minimal demand in the city was the right to employ the Popular Sovereignty principle of Kansas to new slave territories in Central America without prejudice to them as potential slave states. The ultimate failure of this effort marked the last of a long series of attempts by the South to break out of the strait jacket imposed on it, partly by nature and partly by the antislavery faction in the North, and still remain within the Federal Union. The next great effort of the South was to break out of the confines of the Federal Union itself.

In emphasizing the utility, even the necessity, of the employment by the expansionists of ideological factors as an ethical justification for agrarian imperialism of both the Jeffersonian and the master-slave variety, it has certainly not been the intent

of the author to discount the importance of mundane political and economic considerations of the South *vis-à-vis* the Caribbean. It can be argued that these were the chief motivational factors. But it is safe to say that it would have been suicidal for the expansionists to couch their appeal solely in such terms. Not only would they have failed to attract more idealistic persons with such logic, but, more important, they could not have posed at the same time as ideal prototypes of Southern manhood. Had the filibusters boldly proclaimed the sufficiency of pure self-interest, they could scarcely have avoided the label of international pirates which Spain sought to impose upon them, and which many conservatives in the United States tended to accept. Although it could be debated whether the leading filibusters themselves really subscribed to the notions of Progress and Manifest Destiny, it is the author's belief that such radicals as John A. Quitman sincerely believed in the righteousness of their cause, and that such a conviction rested on these ideological premises.