**Document K: John L. O'Sullivan on *Manifest Destiny*, 1839**

The American people having derived their origin from many other nations, and the Declaration of National Independence being entirely based on the great principle of human equality, these facts demonstrate at once our disconnected position as regards any other nation; that we have, in reality, but little connection with the past history of any of them, and still less with all antiquity, its glories, or its crimes. On the contrary, our national birth was the beginning of a new history, the formation and progress of an untried political system, which separates us from the past and connects us with the future only; and so far as regards the entire development of the natural rights of man, in moral, political, and national life, we may confidently assume that our country is destined to be the great nation of futurity.

Who, then, can doubt that our country is destined to be *the great nation*of futurity?

**Document L: Treaty with Spain (Acquisition of Florida)**

**(1819)**

Article II

  His Catholic Majesty cedes to the United States, in full property and sovereignty, all the territories which belong to him, situated to the eastward of the Mississippi, known by the name of East and West Florida. The adjacent islands dependent on said provinces, all public lots and squares, vacant lands, public edifices, fortifications, barracks, and other buildings, which are not private property, archives and documents, which relate directly to the property and sovereignty of said provinces, are included in this article. The said archives and documents shall be left in possession of the commissaries or officers of the United States, duly authorized to receive them.

**Document M: War of 1812**

*The Battle of New Orleans was fought two weeks after the treaty ending the War of 1812 was signed. In the battle, General Andrew Jackson led American forces to victory over the British, enhancing his national reputation and paving the way for his presidency.*

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The War of 1812 between the United States and Great Britain was a conflict fought over the right of neutral countries to participate in foreign trade without the interference of other nations and the desire of many in the United States to end British occupation of Canada. The war, which lasted from 1812 to 1815, proved inconclusive, with both countries agreeing to revert to their prewar status as much as possible.

The U.S. declaration of war against Great Britain that President [James Madison](http://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/James+Madison) signed on June 18, 1812, culminated nearly a decade of antagonism between the nations. The British, who from 1802 to 1815 were involved in the Napoleonic Wars with France, sought to prevent the United States, a neutral, from trading with France. Britain imposed a blockade on France and required that U.S. ships stop at British ports and pay duties on goods bound for France. In addition, outrage grew in the United States over the British practice of boarding U.S. ships on the high seas and impressing seamen (seizing them and forcing them to serve Great Britain) who the British claimed had deserted the Royal Navy. More than ten thousand U.S. seamen were impressed between 1802 and 1812.

In 1807 President [Thomas Jefferson](http://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/Thomas+Jefferson) succeeded in convincing Congress to pass the [Embargo Act](http://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/Embargo+Act), which prevented virtually all U.S. ships from sailing overseas. The economic consequences of this law were disastrous to the U.S. economy, forcing the act's repeal in 1809. In its place, Congress enacted the Non-Intercourse Act, which forbade trade only with Great Britain and France. A third law, passed in 1810, allowed trade with both nations but stipulated the revival of nonintercourse against whichever nation did not remove its trade restrictions. When France announced an end to its trade decrees, the United States banned trade with Great Britain.

Anger against Britain was also fueled by a group of expansionist congressmen, nicknamed the War Hawks, who wanted more land for settlement and military action against the British in Canada. British support of the American Indians on the frontier had led to Indian wars against U.S. settlers.

The war itself provided limited success for the United States. Though a U.S. naval squadron under the command of Oliver Hazard Perry captured the British fleet on Lake Erie in 1813, battles in northern New York and Ontario, Canada, proved inconclusive. After U.S. forces burned the city of York (now Toronto), Ontario, the British attacked Washington, D.C., on September 13 and 14, 1814. The British burned the U.S. Capitol and the White House.Both sides realized the futility of the struggle and began treaty negotiations in 1813. Because of the military stalemate, neither side could extract concessions from the other. The United States and Great Britain agreed, in the Treaty of Ghent, to return to the prewar status quo. The treaty, which was signed on December 24, 1814, in Ghent, Belgium, was ratified by the U.S. Senate on February 16, 1815. However, the Battle of New Orleans was fought on January 8, 1815, before news of the treaty reached the two armies. General [Andrew Jackson](http://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/Andrew+Jackson) led his troops to a decisive victory over the British forces, providing the U.S. public with the illusion that the United States had won the war. The battle also enhanced Jackson's national reputation and helped pave the way for his presidency.

The frictions that had precipitated the war disappeared. The end of the Napoleonic Wars ended both the need for a British naval blockade and the impressing of U.S. seamen. Although the United States did not acquire Canada, American Indian opposition to expansion was weakened, and U.S. nationalism increased.

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