

Why was America Interested in the Caribbean?

- January 1, 1804, Haiti declared itself independent of France. The Black Republic was then made an outcast by the international community.
- Cuba's sugar industry was still in its establishment stage. They had fertile and virgin lands which presented ripe opportunities for investment.
- Since the Cuban industry was relatively young the quality of their sugar was better.
- Cuba was in closer proximity to the U.S. after she purchased Louisiana (1803) and acquired Florida (1819).
- She was tired of the all the 'ups and downs' with Britain and her colonies. The trade was too restricted for America who believed in freedom. By 1810 she was trading about one third of what she would normally trade with the British West Indies. Besides from 1812 to 1814 Britain blockaded American ports because she had supported the French during the Napoleonic Wars.
- In 1822 Britain passed the West Indian and American Trade Act. This meant that some of the restrictions were lifted. Direct trade in lumber, livestock and provisions was again allowed between the U.S. and her West Indian colonies. However the trade was subjected to a 10% value added tax.