

## **Document A: *New York Journal* (ORIGINAL)**

**DESTRUCTION OF THE WAR SHIP MAINE WAS THE WORK OF AN ENEMY  
Assistant Secretary Roosevelt Convinced the Explosion of the War Ship  
Was Not an Accident.**

**The Journal Offers \$50,000 Reward for the Conviction of the Criminals Who  
Sent 258 American Sailors to Their Death. Naval Officers Unanimous That  
the Ship Was Destroyed on Purpose.**

**NAVAL OFFICERS THINK THE MAINE WAS DESTROYED BY A SPANISH  
MINE.**

George Eugene Bryson, the Journal's special correspondent at Havana, cables that it is the secret opinion of many Spaniards in the Cuban capital, that the Maine was destroyed and 258 men killed by means of marine mine or fixed torpeda. This is the opinion of several American naval authorities. The Spaniards, it is believed, arranged to have the Maine anchored over one of the harbor mines. Wires connected the mines with a... magazine, and it is thought the explosion was caused by sending an electric current through the wire. If this can be proven, the brutal nature of the Spaniards will be shown by the fact that they waited to spring the mine after all the men had retired for the night. The Maltese cross in the picture shows where the mine may have been fired.

Mine or a Sunken Torpedo Believed to Have Been the Weapon Used Against the American Man-Of-War---Officer and Men tell Thrilling Stories of Being Blown into the Air Amid a Mass of Shattered Steel and Exploding Shells—Survivors Brought to Key West Scou[t] the Idea of Accident—Spanish Officials Protest Too Much--- Our Cabinet orders a Searching Inquiry—Journal Sends Divers to Havana to Report Upon the Condition of the Wreck. Was the Vessel Anchored Over a Mine?

Assistant Secretary of the Navy Theodore Roosevelt says he is convinced that the destruction of the Maine in Havana Harbor was not an accident. The Journal offers a reward of \$50,000 for exclusive evidence that will convict the person, persons or government criminally responsible for the [destruction] of the American battleship and the death of 258 of its crew.

The suspicion that the Maine was deliberately blown up grows stronger every hour. Not a single fact to the contrary has been produced....

**Source:** *Excerpt from New York Journal and Advertiser, February 17, 1898. Purchased by William Randolph Hearst in 1895, the Journal published investigative and human interest stories that used a highly emotional writing style and included banner headlines and graphic images.*

## **Document B: *New York Times* (ORIGINAL)**

### **MAINE'S HULL WILL DECIDE**

**Divers to Find Whether the Force of the Explosion Was from the Exterior or Interior.**

### **SHE WAS AFLOAT FOR AN HOUR**

**Spontaneous Combustion in Coal Bunkers a Frequent Peril to the Magazines of Warships – Hard to Blow Up the Magazine.**

WASHINGTON, Feb. 16 – After a day of intense excitement at the Navy Department and elsewhere, growing out of the destruction of the battleship Maine in Havana Harbor last night, the situation at sundown, after the exchange of a number of cablegrams between Washington and Havana, can be summed up in the words of Secretary Long, who when asked as he was about to depart for the day whether he had reason to suspect that the disaster was the work of the enemy, replied: "I do not. In that I am influenced by the fact that Capt. Sigsbee has not yet reported to the Navy Department on the cause. He is evidently waiting to write a full report. So long as he does not express himself, I certainly cannot. I should think from the indications, however, that there was an accident – that the magazine exploded. How that came about I do not know. For the present, at least, no other warship will be sent to Havana."

Capt. Schuley, who has had experience with such large and complicated machines of war as the New York, did not entertain the idea that the ship had been destroyed by design. He had found that with frequent and very careful inspection fire would sometimes be generated in the coal bunkers, and he told of such a fire on board of the New York close to the magazine, and so hot that the heat had blistered the steel partition between the fire and the ammunition before the bunkers and magazine were flooded. He was not prepared to believe that the Spanish or Cubans in Havana were supplied with either the information or the appliances necessary to enable them to make so complete a work of demolition, while the Maine was under guard...

**Source:** *New York Times*, February 17, 1898. Established in 1851, the *New York Times* provided investigative coverage of local New York issues and events, as well as national and international news.