Texassa Essay, Research Paper

The Annexation of Texas – Manifest Destiny Mexico WarThe rise of manifest destiny in the United States had a powerful impact onall Americans and eventually led to war with Mexico. The term +manifestdestiny+, as used in the 1840+s, described the inevitability of the continuedwestward expansion of the United States (Berkin 356). The annexation of Texaswhich followed the American victory over Mexico was controversial but wasjustified because the people occupying the land needed a civil government. After the Mexican revolution against Spain in 1821 it was a given thatpresent day Texas, New Mexican, Arizona, and California belonged to Mexico.However it was readily apparent that Mexico was having difficulty controllingthis vast region of land with a very diverse population. The capital of Mexico,Mexico City, was nowhere near the region of land it was supposed to be governing. The government in Mexico was constantly undergoing changes and wasn+t evencapable of governing Mexico itself. The fact that the government had no lawspreventing Americans from settling in the region of land that would later becomepart of the United States caused an influx of pioneers. These pioneers chose toignore Mexican customs and religion only to cause extreme tension between theTexians, the Non-Hispanic settlers in Texas, and the Tejanos, the Mexicansettlers in Texas. Also in present day Texas and New Mexico several Indiancivilizations such as the Comanches were not going to let anyone govern them thateasily. The Texas Revolution that broke out on September 29, 1835 showed that theinhabitants of Texas, mainly American migrants, didn+t think the Mexicangovernment and constitution they were supposed to abide by was adequate. Whenthey did achieve independence the constitution that was written up was basedlargely on the constitution of the United States. One man responsible for thisconstitution was Lorenzo de Zavala, a liberal politician, who felt that theMexican government was unsuitable for the ideals the people of Texas had and thatrevolution and eventual statehood would be best for their way of life. Thisaction was very important when talks of annexation to the United States were

brought up as a campaign issue in the presidential election of 1844. The winnerof the election, James K. Polk, was hardly known and one of the reasons he wonwas because of his position on expansion and manifest destiny. He felt that theregions of Oregon and Texas rightfully belonged to the United States. Inconclusion, Americans needed to expand and the southwest was very promising forwould be farmers. There are several convincing arguments as to why the United States was notjustified in annexing Texas, one of them being it only was able to do so byforce. Also there were those in the region that preferred to remain independent,including the Indian groups mentioned above. The war broke out not because of adispute over the border of Texas but because Mexico saw that Polk, the presidentof the United States in 1845, was trying to steal the entire Southwest fromMexico. Another reason the annexation of Texas wasn+t justified was that many peoplein the North and West were strongly opposed to it. They felt this way because ofthe issue of slavery. It was almost certain that Texas would be annexed as aslave state because of its location in the south and its agricultural way oflife. Sectionalism between the North and the South was rising and theabolitionist movement was also gaining popularity. The addition of another slavestate would give the South more votes in congress causing an imbalance the Northwouldn+t allow. Most people weren+t opposed to slavery at this point in time butthey were opposed to the expansion of it. However the southerner+s believed thatmanifest destiny meant that the South was to expand to where cotton would growand slavery would be most profitable (Berkin 363). The annexation of Texas isone of the events leading up to the Civil War, showing how strongly some peoplefelt about it. Congress started the war with Mexico by establishing the borderof Texas on the Rio Grande going against their word in the joint resolution.This resolution stated that Texas would accept any boundaries that might benegotiated between the two countries. This is indicative of how the UnitedStates acted towards Mexico by making claims on territory that they hadabsolutely no legal right to.