

INTERVENTION BY THE UNITED STATES IN TWO
LATIN AMERICAN REPUBLICS, 1895-1903,
BEARING UPON THEIR SOVEREIGNTY

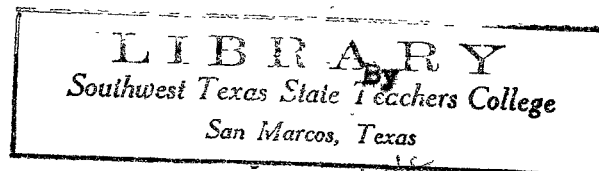
INTERVENTION BY THE UNITED STATES IN TWO
LATIN AMERICAN REPUBLICS, 1895-1903,
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THESIS

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PREFACE

This subject was chosen because of a keen interest in the development of the foreign policy of the United States pertaining to Latin America during that decade. Because of the prominence given by the world today to the affairs of the Latin American countries, the writer desires to gain a better understanding of some of the events which have a bearing upon the direction of present day policies.

The materials selected for this study have been taken from diplomatic and official histories and the correspondence pertaining to the incidents discussed. While few complete quotations are used there has been a consistent effort to interpret correctly the meanings and intentions of those from whom the quotations were taken or whose work was used as an authority. Original sources have been given preference so far as they were available, but secondary sources also have been used freely.

The writer wishes to express appreciation and gratitude for the assistance given her by Dr. Hetta Murphy.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Sovereignty of a state means its supreme control over all affairs pertaining to itself.¹

Intervention is an interference by a state or states in the external affairs of another state without its consent, or in its internal affairs with or without its consent.²

The United States of America, like other young nations, was devoted for a while to the principle of unshared national sovereignty and was opposed to the principle of intervention. George Washington, in retiring from the presidency, admonished the people of the United States to beware of entangling alliances and participation in the policies of foreign nations. For many years this admonition was the basis of the immature and floundering foreign policy of the young nation. The non-intervention policy long practiced by the United States was, however, gradually abandoned. As the nineteenth century neared its end the growth of international relations and the intensive development of international commerce made it necessary, step by step, to abandon the old policy.³ Intervention was more or

¹ Henry G. Hedges, The Doctrine of Intervention, p. 36.

² Henry G. Hedges, The Doctrine of Intervention, p. 1.

³ Henry G. Hedges, The Doctrine of Intervention, p. 124.

less forced, in many instances, upon the United States government in order to uphold and defend the much cherished freedom.

Intervention by the United States usually took either one of two forms. One type was the political intervention resulting especially from disagreements between the sovereign powers as to acts or policies affecting the dignity or the security "of the opposing state or general body of states." The second type was non-political intervention resulting from the obligation of a sovereign state to the protection of its citizens everywhere.⁴ It is a well established international law that one country has no right to interfere in purely domestic affairs of other nations and their citizens, but, at the same time, it is an accepted principle that the person and property of a citizen are a part of the general domain of a nation, even when abroad. A self-respecting government must afford protection to its citizens and their property,⁵ and if the tribunals of a foreign state, "are unwilling or unable to entertain or adjudicate upon the grievance of a foreigner, the ground for interference is fairly laid."⁶

The growth of American foreign investments was a wide de-

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Henry G. Hodges, The Doctrine of Intervention, p. 19.

4-5

J. A. H. Hopkins and Alexander Melinda, Machine-Gun Diplomacy, p. 57. Taken from speech by President Coolidge, April 25, 1927.

6

Henry G. Hodges, The Doctrine of Intervention, p. 66. Hodges quotes from International Law by Sir Robert Phillimore, eminent international lawyer.

departure from the long practiced policy of isolation. At the close of the nineteenth century the largest and most important of these investments were located in Central and South America. Capitalists in the United States did not wish to bear the responsibilities of controlling these regions either in economics or in political affairs. They longed instead for new markets, for new opportunities, and for dividends. The capitalists demanded interest rather than intervention.⁷ As the official government insisted that its nationals engage in legitimate enterprises and operate them legally, it came face to face with the differences between the religion, language, law, government and temperaments of the Latin Americans and those of the North Americans with Anglo-Saxon background.

President Monroe, in his annual message to Congress, December, 1823, stated that "We owe it, therefore, to candor, and to amicable relations existing between the United States and those powers, to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety."⁸ The Monroe Doctrine does not lend itself to exact interpretation and has been subject to shifting interpretation; it is, however, a live doctrine which is flexible. It changes and is affected by circumstances but it has remained a cardinal principle for over

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Lamar T. Beman, Intervention in Latin America, p. 21.

8

John Bassett Moore, A Digest of International Law, Vol. VII, p. 402.

one hundred years. "It is not just a message to Congress but a principle for our safety, a doctrine of self-preservation."⁹ There have been almost one hundred cases of intervention by the government of the United States,¹⁰ and of these, some have been cloaked by the principles involved in the Monroe Doctrine while others had no pretention to the invocation of those principles.

New conditions, commercial and political, which confronted the United States government throughout the nineteenth century brought new applications of the Monroe Doctrine. Although one of the Berlin newspapers remarked that the victory so easily won over Spain in the Spanish-American War puffed up the Americans until they were beginning "earnestly to think of the political and economical annexation of South America," the supervision and intervention of the United States nevertheless had as its object to help the weaker nations to help themselves.¹¹ That government hoped to help the weaker nations in Latin America to preserve their sovereignty and to stabilize their governments, thereby decreasing the cases of intervention or the excuses for it. In attempting to better conditions in the Caribbean region and in South America, the United States government desired to prevent interference in American affairs by rendering it unnecessary

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Charles M. Pepper, "Meaning of the Monroe Doctrine," Annals of American Academy of Political and Social Science, p. 118.

10

Lamar T. Beman, Intervention in Latin America, p. 5. John H. Latane, before House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Jan. 12, 1927.

11

J. Fred Rippy, Latin America in World Politics, p. 145.

in order that the European powers might not feel called upon to act.¹²

Although the first impression of the Monroe Doctrine upon the Latin American countries and their feeling of friendship toward the United States were beginning to disappear, the primacy of the United States averted large scale wars and the partitioning of the South American lands by other powers. No matter what public professions were made nor what highly polished phrases were uttered in behalf of the altruistic attitude or paternalistic feeling of the government of the United States, there was a feeling of distrust toward that government on the part of the Latin American countries because they believed that all actions of the officials of the United States government were for national aggrandizement.¹³ When Richard Olney, Secretary of State under President Cleveland, declared that the United States was "sovereign" in the western hemisphere, the Latin American nations became offended, feeling that their sovereignty had been impugned and that the United States government considered the Latin American governments inferior to its own. This violated the principle of international law whereby each nation, no matter how great or how small, possesses the same rights and the same obligation to carry its own weight in

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Chester L. Jones, Caribbean Interests of the United States, p. 339.

¹³

Henry C. Hodges, The Doctrine of Intervention, p. 168.

world affairs. Legislation of all modern nations recognizes inequalities among their citizens, but little if any of this recognition is carried over into policies adopted in international relationship.¹⁴ While Latin American defense against non-American powers depends upon the United States, it is also true that the effective defense of the United States depends upon the cooperation and friendship of Latin America.¹⁵

Although they did not desire closer political association with the government of the United States, the Latin American nations sometimes found it expedient to recognize that government as their champion. Most of the interventions in the Latin American countries usually were instigated by the officials of the United States. Were this not so, the problems of the weaker American nations might have been much more acute. Perhaps the practice of intervention, far from being a threat to the independence and an impugment of the sovereignty of these nations, may have helped to maintain their independence and sovereignty. In the opinion of the leaders of the United States government, the intervention in the instances of Colombia and Venezuela did not damage their sovereignty, and upheld the sovereignty of at least one of them. The case of Colombia involved a decision as to wherein lay the sovereignty to be respected, in the smaller state of Panama whose earlier citizens had entrusted its

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Chester L. Jones, The Caribbean Since 1900, p. 474.

¹⁵

Chester L. Jones, The Caribbean ..., pp. 465-466.

sovereignty to the union of the United States of Colombia, or in the larger state, Colombia, which had abused the trusteeship and long neglected the province except as a source of income.

Failing for nearly a half century to overcome obstacles in securing a settlement of a boundary dispute with Great Britain pertaining to British Guiana, Venezuela awoke to the fact that its neglect was resulting in steady absorption of the disputed area by the British. Venezuela urged the United States State Department to aid in securing an honorable settlement of the dispute. The United States took an active part and helped Venezuela preserve its dignity and sovereignty by securing a settlement of the boundary by arbitration. The second case which involved the Venezuelan government was the blockade prescribed by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Great Britain, Germany, and Italy in order to collect debts owed to the nationals of these governments. At this time the State Department of the United States prevented the blockading nations from entering the ports and collecting the customs which would have been a very real invasion of the sovereignty of Venezuela. Since the German leaders, with ideas of expanding the imperialistic policy of that government, were determined to test whether or not the people of the United States would uphold the Monroe Doctrine,¹⁶ the United States government induced the German

¹⁶

John H. Latane, The United States and Latin America, pp. 249-251.

government to observe American primacy in the western hemisphere, and preserved as well the faith of the Latin American nations in the belief that the government of the United States would always act in their behalf.

The Roosevelt Administration attempted to obtain by treaty with the United States of Colombia the right to build a canal across Panama, but the treaty was rejected by the Colombian Congress, whereupon the state of Panama revolted. Colombia, accusing the United States government of aiding and abetting the Panamanians in their rebellion, tried to reconquer the recalcitrant province but was prevented from so doing by President Roosevelt and his associates, who refused to listen to the entreaties of the envoys of the Colombian government. The quick recognition of the new republic on the part of the State Department of the United States strained relations between that government and the Colombian government, which claimed that such actions on the part of the officials of the United States was an impugnation of Colombian vested sovereignty.

The people of the United States were beginning to grasp the idea that any policy which their government might adopt for the western hemisphere could be perpetrated upon the public and enforced by its own strength.¹⁷ "Intervention when exercised by a single power, responsible only to itself, is likely to be

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Wilfrid H. Callcott, The Caribbean Policy of the United States, 1890-1920, p. 58.

abused."¹⁸ President Roosevelt, in his first annual message to Congress, tried to dispel such an idea from the minds of the peoples of the Latin American countries when he said that the United States had no ambition to annex territory in South America. "We have not the slightest desire to secure any territory at the expense of any of our neighbors."¹⁹

During the decade from 1895 to 1905, circumstances were such that the United States demonstrated in at least three important cases its own principle or idea of friendly intervention in assistance to another country, thereby causing the Latin American nations to question the value of these interventions by the government of the United States at the cost of the impugnation of the sovereignty of those governments.

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Raymond L. Buell, International Relations, p. 374.

¹⁹

Quoted in Howard C. Hill, Roosevelt and the Caribbean, p. 209.

CHAPTER II

THE VENEZUELA-BRITISH GUIANA BOUNDARY DISPUTE

Developments in the economic and political difficulties of Venezuela toward the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries made it one of the regions of the Caribbean area in which some intervention by the United States would almost certainly occur without long delay. During this time Venezuela played a prominent part in international incidents which contributed in no small degree to the formulation of the international policy of the United States. The intervention on the part of the United States in the settlement by arbitration of the Venezuela-British Guiana boundary dispute aided in wiping the slate clean of a great deal of bickering, sometimes petty, at other times bringing Great Britain and Venezuela to the brink of war, although the outcome probably was not so satisfactory as either government had hoped for originally.

During the colonial period the boundaries of the then Dutch Guiana and Venezuela were uncertain, and after Great Britain acquired that portion of Guiana by treaty in 1814, the uncertainty continued. When Spain recognized the independence of Venezuela in 1845, the territorial boundaries of the republic were described in the treaty rather indefinitely as "the same as those which marked the ancient viceroyalty and Captaincy-General of

New Granada and Venezuela in the year 1810.^{#1}

The original territory in dispute was very small, being a triangle of about 20,000 square miles at the mouths of the Essequibo, Pomaron, and Cuyuny rivers, when the British acquired the western portion of Guiana.² In 1841 the Venezuelan minister in London proposed joint action in fixing a boundary, for by this time the British claims included some 60,000 square miles. The British previously had commissioned Sir Robert Schomburgk, a Prussian engineer, to survey the then "extreme limit" of the British claim in British Guiana. It came to be known in later disputes as the "Schomburgk line" but between the years 1841 and 1890 the original line was altered many times, and each time it was extended so as to enlarge the British claim materially.³

In November, 1876, the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Venezuela wrote to Hamilton Fish, Secretary of State of the United States, calling on "the most powerful and the oldest of the Republics of the new continent" to lend its aid in "having due justice done to Venezuela." Since this was not an exact demand or explicit request, the United States government did

1

Grover Cleveland, Presidential Problems, p. 175.

2

Official History of the Discussion Between Venezuela and Great Britain on Their Guiana Boundaries. This information was taken from a map appended to this publication. Hereafter referred to as Official History...

3

Official History..., pp. 7-8.

not feel that it called for positive action. The case was again called to the attention of the United States State Department in 1881 by the Venezuelan government when British warships made an appearance at the mouth of the Orinoco River near the disputed territory.⁴

The disputed territory grew to 76,000 square miles in 1885 and before the next year was over, to 109,000 square miles. Arguments over these gains resulted in a final diplomatic rupture in 1887, causing Venezuela to recall its diplomats from London. Whenever the occasion arose thereafter for communication between the two governments Venezuela sent special agents to counsel with the London government. In 1887 the United States, upon request from Venezuela, tendered its good offices to Great Britain for arranging arbitration but found the British Foreign Office not favorably disposed toward arbitration. For several years Venezuela was not able financially to support a legation in Washington, but, with the express permission of the United States government, intermittently sent agents to Washington. By 1888, as the Venezuelan complaints renewed and multiplied, the President and the Congress of the United States viewed with increasing concern the implications and recommended to Great Britain and Venezuela that the dispute be referred to friendly arbitration.⁵

⁴
Foreign Relations of the United States, Government Printing Office, Washington, 1895, Vol. I, pp. 545-570.

⁵
Foreign Relations of the United States, 1895, Vol. I, pp. 576-576.

From Caracas, May 14, 1890, the Venezuelan Department of Foreign Affairs addressed a letter to Lucio Pulido, the Venezuelan agent already in London on other business, communicating willingness to have the question of the boundary, in all of its points, submitted to the decision of an arbitrator juris. In courteous but certain terms, this communication promulgated the idea that if Great Britain refused this solution, Venezuela was resigned to the dismemberment of her territory as a result of a war wherein she would be defeated. Never would she submit peaceably to usurpation of her territory.⁶ Pulido thereupon sent a memorandum to the British government to renew diplomatic relations on a "cordial and durable basis," and to say that he was ready to take part in an informal conference as suggested by James G. Blaine, Secretary of State of the United States.⁷

As proof of the sincerity on the part of his government Pulido offered suggestions to be used as a basis for final settlement. The government of Venezuela was to declare formally that the Essequibo, its banks, and the lands covering it belonged to British Guiana, while Great Britain was to declare formally that the Orinoco River, its banks, and the lands covering it belonged exclusively to the United States of

⁶ Official History...., p. 236.

⁷ Official History...., pp. 238-240.

Venezuela. Both governments were to appoint a mixed commission, composed of two chief engineers and their respective staffs, to make, without delay and within one year, the chorographical, geographical, and hydrographical maps and charts of the region to the west and northwest of the Essequibo River toward the Orinoco River in order to determine the exact course of the rivers and streams, the precise positions of the mountains and hills, and other valuable details which would afford to both governments a reliable official knowledge of the territory which was actually in dispute. In this manner the natural boundaries could be placed with perfect knowledge of the case. If, after such procedure, the two governments could not agree, then the question should be submitted to two arbiters, one of them selected by each country, and a third agreed on by the two arbiters in case of discord. In the meantime, in order to prevent any chance of international complications, both governments should agree to withdraw or remove all posts or any other indications or signs of presumptive possession of and dominion over the region to be surveyed.⁸

On June 24, 1890, Lord Salisbury, British Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, replied to Lucio Pulido, saying that while professing great interest in a friendly settlement, the Venezuelan government had issued two decrees which belied the sincerity of her agent. One decree established

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Official History..., p. 239.

administration in the district between Point Barima and the Pomaron River. The other decree established authority in the neighborhood of the point where the Cuyuny River empties into the Essequibo River. If the Venezuelan government should attempt to put these decrees into execution, the British government could regard it only as an invasion of the British colony and deal with it accordingly. Great Britain expected Venezuela to withdraw the decrees and to offer a satisfactory explanation. If not, the current negotiations were useless.⁹

Adamant in this difficult attitude, Great Britain, July, 1890, addressed to the Venezuelan agent, Pulido, another statement to the effect that the British government had indicated previously the full territorial claim which it felt entitled to make, having defined the line within which the British title was considered unquestionable. Britain, however, was willing to submit certain portions of the claim beyond the said line to arbitration. If the decision were adverse to Venezuela, that government would be embarrassed and involved in heavy pecuniary claims on account of revenue received there in the past years. Every fresh investigation tended to enforce and enlarge that title and to make it more incumbent on the British government to maintain it, as an act of justice to the rights and interests of the Colony. The British government regretted that its offer was not appreciated and that it met with poor response

on the part of the Venezuelan government.¹⁰

British subjects occupied this territory over vigorous and repeated protests by Venezuela. One of the London court journals commented to this effect: "Her Majesty's subjects are already settled there, and Her Majesty's Government must protect them in their interests." This position was wholly untenable, according to William L. Scruggs, United States Minister to Colombia and Venezuela, who felt that British protection of its subjects and their interests meant that the occupation of these territories by the British would vest the sovereignty over them, after a lapse of less than twenty years, in the British government. Many of these subjects were not bona fide settlers but mere squatters or mining prospectors. Scruggs and many influential persons of the day reasoned, falsely perhaps, that if once admitted in respect to Venezuela, such a principle would apply to the other Latin American republics, and, in turn, to Mexico and Central America, eventually reaching into certain unoccupied territory within the domain of the United States. This principle must not be admitted.¹¹

Ten of the Latin American republics had separately asked Great Britain to settle by arbitration this dispute with Venezuela. Spain had proposed friendly mediation at an earlier

¹⁰

Official History...., p. 244.

¹¹

William L. Scruggs, The Colombian and Venezuelan Republics, pp. 293-294.

stage of the controversy. The United States had offered its good offices several times but had met with cold indifference, its efforts being labeled "unjustifiable impertinence" by Lord Salisbury.¹²

After resigning his position as United States Minister to Colombia and Venezuela, Scruggs became the special agent and legal advisor for the government of Venezuela during the boundary dispute and undertook, in August, 1894, to bring the case to a friendly arbitration. At this time in Great Britain Lord Salisbury was not in office, and since he and his cabinet had been unfavorably disposed toward settlement of this dispute by arbitration, Scruggs probably thought it best to negotiate the settlement while Lord Rosebery and his cabinet were in power. There seemed only one way to do this. Great Britain could be induced to recede from her extreme position, and agree to arbitration, only by pressure of intelligent public opinion. This could be brought about only through the active and determined intervention of the United States in defense of the principles of the Monroe Doctrine.¹³

Scruggs was doubtful whether the government at Washington could be induced to take this step because the people were too deeply engrossed in grave domestic questions to give much attention to a boundary dispute in Latin America, even though the

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William L. Scruggs, The Colombian and Venezuelan Republics, pp. 294-295.

¹³

William L. Scruggs, The Colombian and..., p. 295.

Monroe Doctrine might be involved. President Cleveland had broken with the leaders of his party and there were discordant factions in Congress, which was to convene in December, 1894, and go out of power in March of the new year. It was probable that the new Congress would be still less in accord with the Administration.¹⁴ Since leaders in a democratic country are very careful to keep their ears to the ground concerning what they deem the popular sentiment, this state of affairs called for a "campaign of education," meaning a direct appeal to the people, "the source of all political power."¹⁵

By October, 1894, the first edition of Scruggs' pamphlet, "British Aggressions in Venezuela, or the Monroe Doctrine on Trial," containing a brief outline of the origin and history of the Guiana boundary dispute and the principles involved in the new phase of the controversy, was ready for market. Copies of the pamphlet, with a note by the author, were sent to the editors of the leading newspapers and magazines, in the United States and Europe, to the members of Congress at their respective homes, and to the governors and leading members of the general assemblies of the several states. The libraries and principal clubs in all of the large cities received copies, too. The publishers placed the pamphlet on sale at news-stands and

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William L. Scruggs, The Colombian and..., p. 295.

¹⁵

William L. Scruggs, The Colombian and..., p. 295-296.

book-stalls in the more important literary and political centers. When Congress convened during the first week of December, the fourth edition had been printed, and the "Anglo-American Question" and its relation to the Monroe Doctrine had become a pertinent topic in the newspaper press.¹⁶

In his annual message to Congress, December 2, 1894, President Cleveland communicated his desire to see Great Britain and Venezuela settle the dispute by arbitration.¹⁷ The President's recommendation that both disputants agree to refer their differences to friendly arbitration took the tangible form of a joint resolution of Congress.¹⁸ Colonel L. F. Livingstone, representative in Congress from Georgia, the home state of Scruggs, introduced the resolution which embodied the idea that it would be particularly gratifying to the impartial friends of both parties to see this long-standing and now disquieting boundary dispute in Guiana settled in a "manner just and honorable alike to both." The final paragraph earnestly recommended friendly arbitration to the consideration of both parties.¹⁹

In due course of time the subcommittee to which the resolution had been referred made a favorable report, and two

¹⁶

William L. Scruggs, The Colombian and..., p. 296.

¹⁷

James D. Richardson, A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789-1897, Vol. II, p. 526.

¹⁸

William L. Scruggs, The Colombian and..., pp. 296-297.

¹⁹

Official History..., p. 374.

days later the resolution went before the House where it passed without a dissenting vote. On February 7, 1895, the Senate referred it to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, which reported favorably on it. On February 13, the Senate passed it unanimously and four days later the resolution went to the president, who promptly signed it, directing that copies be sent to Thomas F. Bayard, United States ambassador at London. Later instruction required him to acquaint the British Foreign Office with its contents and to urge Her Majesty's Government to capitulate.²⁰

The United States Secretary of State, Walter Q. Gresham, told the Venezuelan agent in Washington that nothing more could be done until his government sent a minister to London. The agent, Jose Andrade, in a memorandum to Gresham, reviewed a bit of the controversy for him, saying that Venezuela had tried to abide by the Convention of 1850, by which both parties agreed not to occupy the territory in dispute so long as the question remained unsettled, but that Great Britain had disregarded the agreement numerous times, gradually occupying the territory and incorporating it with British Guiana at her own will. Upon the Venezuelan demand for just reparation, Great Britain had refused, whereupon, out of dignity, Venezuela had suspended friendly relations. The British government had used this rupture as a lawful pretext for adopting more violent and

offensive measures. Andrade said that Venezuela would gladly accredit a minister to Great Britain whenever assurances were given that he would be properly received, or that Her Majesty's Government would modify the statement made in 1890, and desist from treating Venezuela as a minor state.²¹

While Gresham urged Bayard "to discreetly exert his influence in favor of some plan of honorable settlement,"²² the President of Venezuela, General Joaquin Crespo, carried on from June, 1894, to March, 1895, a correspondence with the representatives of the Pope, in the hope that Pope Leo XIII could intercede for a "peaceful, just, and decorous end to the grave question yet existing between Great Britain and Venezuela regarding the limits of Guiana." In spite of his concern and desire to aid in the settlement, the Pope could do nothing more than bring to the attention of the British government the fact that he was acquainted with the existing problem and desired a peaceful settlement.²³

Secretary Gresham became ill and unable to fulfill the duties of his office, causing Scruggs to appeal, late in May, 1895, directly to President Cleveland. The President was taking a rest that day and had issued the order that he would see no one, not even a senator; he did, however, give Scruggs an hour,

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Official History..., pp. 343-344.

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Official History..., p. 365.

²³

Official History..., pp. 345-351.

during which time Scruggs explained the position of Venezuela and her probable degradation in the eyes of the world if she were forced to retreat, as surely she would be when pitted against the might British Empire, diplomatically or militarily.²⁴

Probably aided and strengthened by this interview, President Cleveland and Richard Olney, who had succeeded Gresham as Secretary of State, formulated more energetically the views of the Administration, which Olney communicated to Bayard in London, June 20, 1895. Olney stated that Venezuela was moderate and prudent in her claims, but that the claims of both governments were indefinite. He included the original explanation offered by Britain to Venezuela that the "Schomburgk line" was tentative and was not to be used as a boundary but as a matter of convenience.²⁵ He declared that the Monroe Doctrine was applicable to the current boundary dispute between Venezuela and Great Britain because "distance and 3,000 miles of intervening ocean, make any permanent political union between any European and any American State unnatural and inexpedient." He declared that the United States was "practically sovereign on this continent, and its fiat law upon the

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William L. Scruggs, The Colombian and Venezuelan Republics, p. 299.

²⁵

Official History..., pp. 380-385.

subjects to which it confines its interposition."²⁶

After several months, Lord Salisbury replied to what Sir Julian Pauncefote, the British ambassador at Washington, called "that fiery note," claiming that Secretary Olney was interpreting the Monroe Doctrine as he saw fit, and that the current circumstances and the ones with which President Monroe dealt in 1823 had "few features in common." Great Britain was not imposing a "system" upon Venezuela, nor bothering the political institutions under which the Venezuelans preferred to live. Salisbury further stated that it was not a question of colonization by a European power of any portion of America, but simply the determination of the frontier of a British possession which "belonged to the Throne of England long before the Republic of Venezuela came into existence." He accused the United States of ignoring "the actual merits of the dispute." He contended that the claim of a third nation, which was unaffected by the controversy, to impose this particular procedure of forcing arbitration on either of the two other nations could not be reasonably justified, and had no foundation in the law of nations. Although Lord Salisbury agreed that the Monroe

²⁶

Foreign Relations of the United States, 1895, Vol. I,
p. 563.

J. B. Moore, A Digest of International Law, Vol. VI,
p. 563.

J. Fred Rippy, Latin America in World Politics,
pp. 115-116.

Doctrine in itself was sound, he did not express acceptance of it on the part of Her Majesty's Government. He ended his message with the often repeated expression which had little meaning by this time, that Great Britain hoped for a reasonable arrangement of the matter at an early date.²⁷

Bayard, reporting upon Lord Salisbury's answer, said that the British government felt that there was "nothing to arbitrate," and if there were anything, Venezuela had no accredited diplomatic agent in London with whom to treat. Salisbury had further stated in very diplomatic language, that the boundary dispute between Great Britain and Venezuela was "a matter in which the United States had no concern."²⁸

Less than one month after Lord Salisbury's message, President Cleveland and Secretary Olney decided to lay the question before Congress. On December 17, 1895, the President sent a special message to Congress wherein he defended the Monroe Doctrine and upheld the right of the United States to apply it. He did not mince matters as he reiterated previous similar statements that the Monroe Doctrine might not have been included in so many words in the code of international law, but since in international councils every nation was entitled to the rights belonging to it, and since the enforcement of the

²⁷

Official History..., pp. 413-435.
 John Bassett Moore, A Digest of International Law,
 Vol. VI, pp. 559-565.

²⁸

William L. Scruggs, The Colombian and Venezuelan Republics, p. 298.

Monroe Doctrine was something which the United States might justly claim, it had its place in the code of international law "as certainly and securely as if it were specifically mentioned." In order to find out whether Great Britain sought under claim of boundary to extend her possession on this continent without right, or whether she merely sought possession of territory fairly included within her lines of ownership, the United States had proposed to the British government to end the "vexatious boundary dispute." Britain had declined upon grounds far from satisfactory to the President, and he, having labored faithfully for a long time to induce that government to submit to arbitration and having failed, felt that only one course remained. He asked Congress to authorize a committee to investigate the conflicting claims and report its findings concerning the location of the true boundary. He further declared that the dispute had reached such a stage as to make it incumbent upon the United States to take measures to determine the true division line between Venezuela and British Guiana. Upon the completion of this report "It will be the duty of the United States to resist by every means in its power," any effort on the part of the British to appropriate any lands which, by the investigation, would have been proved to belong to Venezuela.²⁹

²⁹

Foreign Relations of the United States, 1895, Vol. I, pp. 542-545.

James D. Richardson, A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789-1897, Vol. IX, pp. 655-658.

This message and the diplomatic correspondence connected with it were given to the press. The fruits of the educational campaign, which had been sown the previous year, were now ready for harvesting. The President's message was greeted by extreme patriotism in nearly all quarters in the United States. Even former critics of Cleveland now supported him, and the churches, excepting a few in the eastern cities where business interests opposed his policy, approved the American position while praying for peace and arbitration.³⁰

The latter part of 1895 also found the British people taking a firm stand behind their government and supporting Lord Salisbury and his policy. The London Times contended that the demands made upon Great Britain could not be submitted to by a self-respecting nation.³¹ Ambassador Bayard in December, 1895, relayed the views of the British press and people to the government at Washington. The London Chronicle printed such statements as "there is no international right without a corresponding duty. Unless the United States formally proclaims a protectorate over all of the South American Republics we are bound to protect our citizens."³²

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J. Fred Rippy, Latin America in World Politics, p. 116.

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J. Fred Rippy, Latin America..., p. 117.

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Robert McNeill McElroy, Grover Cleveland, Vol. II, pp. 190-191.

In Congress Cleveland's message received applause which amounted to a demonstration. The House of Representatives, without a dissenting vote, passed an act embodying the President's suggestions. After a debate of three days, the Senate unanimously concurred with the action of the House.³³ This act appropriated \$100,000 for the expense of a commission, to be appointed by the President to "investigate and report upon the true divisional line between the Republic of Venezuela and the Colony of British Guiana."³⁴

Shortly thereafter, The London Chronicle sent one of its editorial staff, Henry Norman, to Washington to feel the pulse of the American people regarding the Anglo-Venezuelan matter. Some of his reports, which appeared in The New York Times from January 4 to January 6, 1896, described the intention of Cleveland's message to Congress as amicable. He believed that the people who approved the Presidential policy did not understand it to mean war, and that it would be madness for Great Britain to underestimate or disregard the national sentiment attached to the Monroe Doctrine, although the uppermost desire of the people of the United States was for "an immediate amicable settlement." Norman said that Lord Salisbury's policy was too uncompromising and he seemed to place the blame on the British

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J. Fred Rippy, Latin America in World Politics, p. 117.

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Official History..., p. 435.

William L. Scruggs, The Colombian and Venezuelan Republics, p. 300.

Secretary of Foreign Affairs for the unarbitrable situation.³⁵ There had been other Secretaries, however, who had followed the same policy, according to Joseph Chamberlain, British Colonial Secretary, who wrote to Lord Playfair, confidential agent for Lord Salisbury, that "while successive English Governments had uniformly refused an unlimited arbitration, it might be possible to arrange for an arbitration under conditions which might be acceptable to both parties."³⁶

Still another force came to bear upon the matter and to bring about a change of policy on the part of the British in the question of settling the boundary dispute by arbitration. They had their hands full in other quarters of the globe. The German Emperor took an open stand for the defenders of the Transvaal against British raiders, the Turkish massacres in Armenia needed attention, and the Anglo-Russian balance of power in the Far East had been disturbed when Japan defeated China in 1895.³⁷ Ambassador Bayard reported, "The European nations are watching each other like pugilists in a ring." Great Britain could ill afford the risk of unfriendly relations in still another direction, and therefore began to search for means of a pacific settlement.³⁸

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J. Fred Rippy, Latin America in World Politics, p. 118.

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Henry James, Richard Olney and His Public Service, p. 237.

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J. Fred Rippy, Latin America in World Politics, p. 118.

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Robert McMut McElroy, Grover Cleveland, Vol. II, p. 178.

By this time public opinion in Great Britain and the United States had become calmer. Parliament decided that it was not an insult for the United States to appoint a commission to investigate the boundary question and that the British government would aid in the proposed investigation. This governmental body went so far as to find excuses for the acceptance of the Monroe Doctrine, saying that it was not unusual or obnoxious, but merely the limited assertion of the principle that any state might intervene when its interests were menaced. "What other states claim to exercise everywhere the Monroe Doctrine has limited to the American continent."³⁹ Even Lord Salisbury now felt that intervention on the part of the United States would be an advantage because "the United States would be likely to force Venezuela to abide by any peaceful settlement which might be reached."⁴⁰

On January 12, 1896, the British Foreign Office sent Lord Playfair on a confidential mission to the residence of Ambassador Bayard in London, with the authority to make two important proposals. The first proposal was that the United States should call a conference of all of the European powers which then had colonies in America, namely, Great Britain, France, Spain, and the Netherlands, for the purpose of inducing them to proclaim

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J. Fred Rippy, Latin America in World Politics, p. 120.

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J. Fred Rippy, Latin America in ..., p. 120.

their acceptance of the Monroe Doctrine. Great Britain agreed to accept it and presumably to persuade the others to do so, thus giving the doctrine the force of international law and removing all danger of extension of European influence and interference in the western hemisphere. The second proposal was that Great Britain would agree to submit to arbitration the entire dispute, provided only that areas already occupied should be adjudged to the government whose nationals were in undisputed possession.⁴¹ Bayard telegraphed these proposals to Washington with enthusiasm. Although neither Cleveland nor Olney wanted the European powers to pass upon the Monroe Doctrine, they approved the proposal of a settlement between Venezuela and Great Britain upon the basis proposed by Lord Playfair.⁴²

By the early part of June, the United States commission authorized by Congress was duly appointed and organized, being composed of three eminent jurists and two other men of "ripe scholarship and varied attainments" with the reputation of being rigidly impartial.⁴³ This was an ex parte tribunal with no international authority or character. It was merely to report to the President of the United States, and through him

⁴¹ Robert McHatt McKelroy, Grover Cleveland, Vol. II, pp. 198-199.

Henry James, Richard Olney and His Public Service, p. 124.

⁴² J. Fred Rippy, Latin America in World Politics, p. 121.

Henry James, Richard Olney and His Public Service, p. 125.

⁴³ William L. Scruggs, The Colombian and..., p. 301.

to Congress, the result of the investigation. Neither Great Britain nor Venezuela was a party to it, and neither could be bound by its decisions further than by subsequent agreement to that end. Both governments were invited to appear before the commission by agent or counsel, and to submit such evidence of title as they might care to produce. Venezuela promptly sent Scruggs as agent and counsel to present her case,⁴⁴ and Jose Andrade wrote to Secretary Olney offering all documentary evidence, historical narratives, and unpublished archives of the Venezuelan government.⁴⁵ After much hesitation Great Britain submitted her case indirectly, together with evidence in its support, through the British ambassador, Sir Julian Pauncefote.⁴⁶

With ample means at its disposal, the commission spared no expense in order to make its investigations thorough and complete. Everything having the remotest relevancy to the early discovery and settlement of Guiana was carefully collected, arranged in chronological order, translated, and critically examined. Under this impartial and searching investigation, the British claim to the northwest coast region, and to the greater interior basin of the Ouyuny-Mazaruni, was found to be

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William L. Scruggs, The Colombian and Venezuelan Republics, p. 301.

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Foreign Relations of the United States, 1895, Vol. II, p. 1489.

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William L. Scruggs, The Colombian..., p. 302.

practically without foundation; and the Venezuelan claim to the Essequibo region was little or no better supported.⁴⁷

The British claim to the two tracts rested upon alleged previous continuous political control by the Dutch. There was not a particle of evidence that the Dutch had ever attempted to establish a settlement west of the Moroco, but there was abundant evidence that the whole Orinoco delta region, as far east as the Moroco, had been until Venezuela became independent, under the exclusive political control of Spain. In 1757 the Dutch had attempted to establish a kidnapping and slave-trading station within the interior basin of the Cuyuny; the Spanish drove them out, under assertion of sovereignty, in 1758-1759, and they never returned.⁴⁸

The Venezuelan claim to the Essequibo region was based upon prior Spanish discovery and occupation, or upon continuous political control by the Spanish. Although the Spanish had been the first to discover and occupy that river, and possibly the triangular strip between it and the Moroco, they had abandoned it before the middle of the seventeenth century. Nor had they made a successful effort to reclaim any territory east of the Moroco. It appeared, however, that the Dutch and English had continuously occupied or had exercised exclusive

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William L. Scruggs, The Colombian and Venezuelan Republics, p. 302.

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William L. Scruggs, The Colombian and, p. 302.

political control over this tract for more than two hundred years.⁴⁹

In August, 1896, when the findings of the commission were noised abroad, the British Foreign Office again intimated a desire to modify its hitherto adamant position and to submit its claim to arbitration without any reservation regarding the so-called "Schomburgk line," but insisted upon the reservation of all "settled districts," and any unoccupied adjacent territory over which Great Britain then exercised "political control." Because this occupancy and control, west of the Moroco River, was of recent date, and violent in origin, the United States rejected this British proposal.⁵⁰

Sir Julian Pauncefote, the British Ambassador in Washington, and Secretary Olney, after much discussion, tentatively decided, in August, 1896, to submit the question as a whole to arbitration, covering all of the territory between the Essequibo and the Orinoco Rivers. They had an understanding that exclusive and continuous occupation during a period of fifty years next preceding the date of the agreement should give good and perfect title, and that exclusive "political control" over any occupied territory during the same period might be deemed by the arbitrators as sufficient to give a good title.⁵¹

⁴⁹ William L. Scruggs, The Colombian and Venezuelan Republics, pp. 303-304.

⁵⁰ William L. Scruggs, The Colombian and ..., p. 303.

⁵¹ William L. Scruggs, The Colombian and ..., pp. 303.

This arbitration tribunal was to be composed of five jurists. Both Great Britain and Venezuela were to choose two of the members, the two for Venezuela being the Chief Justice and an associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. The fifth member, the president of the tribunal, was to be selected by these four and if they failed to agree, the King of Sweden was to make the selection.⁵² This tribunal was to investigate and ascertain the extent of the territory that might have been claimed lawfully "by the United Netherlands or by the King of Spain, respectively, at the time of the acquisition by Great Britain of the Colony of British Guiana" and to determine the boundary line between British Guiana and Venezuela.⁵³ The tribunal was to ascertain all of the facts and to be governed by "such principle of international law" as it deemed applicable to the case.

It was some time, according to Scruggs, before Venezuela could be induced to accept fully the proposed terms. Because the government at Caracas and the accredited agent at Washington had not been consulted closely, the Venezuelan government

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William L. Scruggs, The Colombian and Venezuelan Republics, pp. 306-307.

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J. B. Moore, A Digest of International Law, Vol. VI, pp. 580-581.

Foreign Relations of the United States, 1896, p. 254.

test that it had been ignored and thought that the matter might be settled more to its liking after the announcement of the findings of the commission authorized by the Congress of the United States. Upon Secretary Olney's statement, semi-officially announced, that the commission was to be dissolved, the Venezuelan government realized that it could hope for no better terms.⁵⁴ On February 2, 1897, these agreements were embodied in the Treaty of Arbitration between Great Britain and Venezuela, ratifications of which were duly exchanged at Washington in the following June.⁵⁵

The members of the tribunal of arbitration met later that year in Paris and agreed upon these additional rules: namely, that adverse holding or prescription during a period of fifty years should make a good title, that the arbitrators might recognize and give effect to rights and claims resting on any other ground whatever as long as they were not in contravention of the foregoing rule, and that equities and ethics of the case were to be considered if the territory of one party was found occupied by subjects or citizens of the other party.⁵⁶ The arbitrators made their award on October 3, 1899, after a final

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William L. Scruggs, The Colombian and Venezuelan Republics, pp. 304-305.

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John H. Latane, The United States and Latin America, p. 249.

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William L. Scruggs, The Colombian and ..., p. 304.

session in Paris. The entire evidence compiled by the contestants constituted sixteen printed volumes, besides a great number of topographical and historical maps. In regard to the boundary, the decision was unanimous. It was a pure and simple compromise;⁵⁷ the decision, however, appeared to be equally satisfactory to both parties.⁵⁸

The actual award was of secondary importance. Great Britain benefited materially, receiving a large part of the disputed area. At the same time the British government realized that it would not have to force the opposing party to abide by the award of the arbitration tribunal.⁵⁹ The United States had demanded arbitration on behalf of a weaker neighbor, and the United States therefore would have to accept the moral obligation of seeing that Venezuela peaceably accepted and fulfilled the award. A strong nation could not assert a right unless it was willing to assume the responsibility which accompanied that right. The Venezuelan government was gratified to have the long and acrimonious controversy peaceably settled. "The President, the Congress, the Corporations, the People and the State" hastened to manifest, in an extraordinary manner, their gratitude of the position assumed by the high powers of

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William L. Scruggs, The Colombian and Venezuelan Republics, pp. 306-307.

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Foreign Relations of the United States, 1899, President McKinley's annual message, December 6.

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John Bassett Moore, A Digest of International Law, Vol. VI, p. 583.

"the Great American Nation" in demanding justice for Venezuela in the matter upon which depended "her welfare, her progress, and her existence."⁶⁰ It was only natural, however, for the Venezuelan government to resent having been relegated to the background while two other nations settled its affairs, and for that government to wonder whether the political and financial tutelage of the "imperial democracy" were not rather expensive.

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The Case of Venezuela, p. 223, Compiled by a special commission of the government of Venezuela with the English translation of the brief by P. Ezequiel Rojas.

CHAPTER III

THE VENEZUELAN BLOCKADE

In less than a decade after the settlement of the Venezuelan-British Guiana boundary dispute by arbitration through the intervention of the United States, Venezuelan affairs again came to the attention of the United States government through the attempt on the part of European powers to collect debts on behalf of the nationals of the interested governments. For several decades previous to the close of the nineteenth century, civil wars prevailed in Venezuela, causing the people and their resources to be in a distressed and bankrupt condition. The resources were exploited by the national politicians who granted concessions to foreigners, thereby tending to introduce an international element into the domestic disorders of the country.¹

Conditions grew steadily worse from 1899 to 1902 as Cipriano Castro, a cattle baron from the western section of the country, carried on a bloody civil war in order to secure control of the government and to consolidate his power. He used the constitution merely as a convenience, "remorselessly and regularly ignoring" it whenever it stood in his way. Shortly after gaining power he arrested a majority of the members of the supreme court, imprisoned them, and finally

¹ J. Fred Rippy, Latin America in World Politics, p. 182.

removed them from office for "intimating" that they would not decide a case to his liking.² Foreigners, suffering along with the natives, would not appeal to Castro for redress of their grievances but turned to their own governments.³ Castro refused, on various pretexts, to pay or approach a reasonable settlement of many foreign claims, which had grown to the amount of \$12,000,000.⁴ He instructed the puppet lawmaking body to enact a law saying that any claimant who exaggerated the amount of damage claims due him would forfeit all rights and be subject to fine and imprisonment.⁵

By the end of 1902, Great Britain and Germany were ready to take joint action in order to obtain satisfaction for losses and injuries suffered by their subjects in Venezuela. The most important of the German demands related to the interest, seven years in arrears, on Venezuelan bonds, the dividends guaranteed by Venezuela on a German-built railroad, and indemnity for damages, injuries, forced loans, and inconveniences suffered by Germans during the civil war perpetrated by Dictator Castro upon his country. The British claims were of the same general nature, with only the details

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J. Fred Rippy, Latin America in World Politics, p. 182.

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Senate Document No. 413, (Sixtieth Congress, First Session) p. 332.

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J. Fred Rippy, Latin America...., p. 183.

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Henry G. Hodges, The Doctrine of Intervention, p. 160.

differing. Later similar claims were brought forth by nationals of the United States, France, Italy, Belgium, Mexico, Spain, Sweden, Norway, and the Netherlands.⁶

The German government expressed to the Venezuelan government as early as July, 1901, in friendly terms, the desire to submit the claims of German nations to an examination by joint arbitrators. If this should not prove satisfactory, then Germany would be willing to submit the claims to the decision of the Tribunal of the Permanent Court of Arbitration at the Hague.⁷ In the early part of December of the same year, Theodore von Holleben, the German ambassador at Washington, presented a memorandum to John Hay, Secretary of State, outlining the position of the German government and specifically disclaiming any intention of acquisition or of permanent occupation of Venezuelan territory.⁸ Hay thanked the German government for its voluntary and frank declaration, but did not consider it necessary to discuss the claims in question, saying that the Monroe Doctrine had nothing to do with the commercial relations of any American power except to insure each country of the freedom to form its own commercial policy. He further cited from President Theodore

⁶ J. Fred Hippy, Latin America..., p. 183.
Senate Document No. 119 (Fifty-eighth Congress, Third Session), VII, p. 181.

⁷ Howard C. Hill, Roosevelt and the Caribbean, p. 110.

⁸ Wilfrid M. Callcott, The Caribbean Policy of the United States, 1890-1920, p. 125. Hereafter referred as The Caribbean Policy...

Roosevelt's message to Congress, December 3, 1901, that the United States did not guarantee any state against punishment for its misconduct provided that the punishment did not take the form of acquisition of territory by a non-American power.⁹ After calling upon President Roosevelt and Secretary Hay, Hollehan decided that coercive action against the egregious Castro would not disturb the diplomatic circles of Washington.¹⁰ Bernhard von Bulow, Chancellor of Germany, William II, preferred to court the favor of the United States, since that nation seemed to be developing a suspicion of the German government. The Kaiser contemplated sending his brother, Prince Henry, on a good will tour with the idea of cultivating the New World power. Prince Henry's mission was to assuage possible fears of the United States government on the subject of German plans to gain a foothold in the western hemisphere, by pointing out the peacefulness of the German policy and the many urgent tasks which demanded German attention elsewhere in the world.¹¹

The first suggestion of Anglo-German action in the settlement of these claims came to Berlin from Lord Lansdowne, the British Foreign Secretary, in January, 1902. Von Bulow

⁹ John H. Latane, The United States and Latin America, p. 251.

¹⁰ Dexter Perkins, Hands Off, p. 217.

¹¹ J. Fred Pippy, Latin America in World Politics, p. 184.
 Wilfrid H. Cailcott, The Caribbean Policy..., pp. 126-127.

looked with favor upon the project, but the Kaiser became suspicious of the motives of the British and turned it down, saying that the suggestion was too vague. He feared that the British government meant to discredit Prince Henry's mission. Although Great Britain and Germany both wanted to remain on friendly terms with the United States, neither wanted the other to gain any advantage.¹² Prince Henry's visit to the United States was a failure since people of the United States did not receive him with enthusiasm, nor did President Roosevelt believe any of his protestations concerning the new imperialistic policy of the German government.

Six months later, July 23, 1902, Count Metternich, German ambassador in London, cautiously approached Lord Lansdowne concerning joint action to secure immediate settlement of the claims of the two governments against Venezuela. Perhaps this change of attitude on the part of the German government was affected because the German leaders decided to act in conjunction with Great Britain in order to hinder an alliance between that government and France. Possibly they also believed that the success of the enterprise and the payment of the claims seemed more certain if Great Britain were an associate.¹³ After deciding upon joint action the two governments agreed to present to Venezuela an ultimatum

¹² J. Fred Bippy, Latin America in World Politics, pp. 183-184.

¹³ Howard C. Hill, Roosevelt and the Caribbean, pp. 113-116.

at the same time, requiring an answer within twenty-four hours. If the reply of the Venezuelan Foreign Office should be unfavorable, German and British naval forces were to seize the gunboats of that country, and if further action should be necessary, to place the ports of Venezuela under a pacific blockade. There was to be "full and firm" cooperation between Germany and Great Britain, and neither power was to withdraw without the consent of the other. On December 7, 1902, the British and German representatives delivered the ultimatum to the Venezuela government.¹⁴

Meanwhile, the Italian government, not wanting to be left out, notified the United States that Italy might find it necessary to use coercion to secure satisfaction of the claims of its subjects, but hastened to reassure the United States that this was as far as that government intended to go. It expressed the desire to join the coercive action with Great Britain and Germany, offering two cruisers to be used in the blockade. Germany was eager to have a third nation participate in the blockade, hoping that the British and the Italians would take the lead, thereby diverting from Germany any hostility on the part of the United States. The part that Italy played, however, was of minor consequence.¹⁵

The United States government had taken little part or

¹⁴ J. Fred Rippy, Latin America in World Politics, pp. 184-185.

¹⁵ Howard C. Hill, Roosevelt and the Caribbean, p. 116.
J. Fred Rippy, Latin America in World Politics, p. 185.

interest in the affair before this time; the blockading powers, however, had informed Washington of their portended actions in order to prove that they had nothing in view other than to help their nationals who had suffered damages at the hands of Castro and his politicians. Upon receiving notice of the procedure of Germany and Great Britain, Secretary Hay replied that although the United States regretted that the European powers should use force against Central and Latin American countries, this government could not object to their taking steps to obtain redress for injuries suffered by their nationals, "providing that no acquisition of territory is contemplated."¹⁶ By this time Lord Lansdowne had given assurances that the British had no intention of landing an expeditionary force or of occupying territory. The United States did object, however, to a pacific blockade, saying that it was unlawful. The maritime lawyers of both Great Britain and the United States upheld this objection, causing Germany to agree to a war blockade.¹⁷

Upon having the ultimatum read to him, the Venezuelan Minister of Foreign Affairs calmly remarked that the leaders of that government were "used to these communications."¹⁸

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J. Fred Rippy, Latin America...., p. 185.
Dexter Perkins, Hands Off, p. 218.

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John Bassett Moore, A Digest.... Vol. VII, p. 140.
Wilfrid H. Calcott, The Caribbean Policy...., p. 129.

¹⁸

Chester L. Jones, The Caribbean Since 1900, This statement quoted on p. 225.

and Castro's rather desultory response to the ultimatum was not acceptable to either Germany or to Great Britain, thereby precipitating the crisis on December 7, 1902. The next day the legations of both governments withdrew from Caracas, leaving their affairs in charge of the American minister, Herbert W. Bowen.¹⁹ On December 9, 1902, British and German warships seized four Venezuelan gunboats in the harbor of La Guaira. The German ships sank three of the gunboats when they resisted, causing a great deal of resentment on the part of the American public; the German government, however, claimed that these ships "had absolutely no value whatever."²⁰ The blockade was extended to five Venezuelan ports and to the mouths of the Orinoco River. Four days later German and British cruisers bombarded two forts at Puerto Cabello in retaliation for the seizure of a British steamer in the harbor and an alleged insult to the British flag in the town proper. Dictator Castro retaliated by arresting all citizens of Germany and Great Britain whom he could apprehend, and the United States government secured their release only after considerable effort on the part of Herbert W. Bowen.²¹ Acting upon his instructions from Washington, Bowen succeeded in persuad-

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Wilfrid H. Callcott, The Caribbean Policy..., p. 129.

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Chester L. Jones, The Caribbean Since 1900. This statement quoted in footnote on p. 226.

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John Bassett Moore, A Digest..., Vol. VII, p. 140.

Wilfrid H. Callcott, The Caribbean Policy..., p. 129

ing Castro to recognize the need for arbitration, whereupon Castro allowed Bowen to relay, on December 12, 1902, a message to the government at Washington, which, in turn, relayed it to the European powers "without comment."²² Castro never made clear exactly what he meant to submit to arbitration. From the beginning the Venezuelan government had maintained that the settlement of the claims of aliens was an internal affair, subject to the Venezuelan laws and the decisions of the Venezuelan courts. In no sense was the settlement of claims a proper issue for diplomatic arrangements. The European governments denied this contention, chiefly on the ground that justice could not be obtained under Venezuelan legislation and jurisprudence. Bowen believed, however, that Castro meant to submit to arbitration all differences with the blockading powers. Most historians agree that a strict interpretation of the Venezuelan proposals indicates that Castro intended to submit only the question of claims for injuries sustained during the civil war, excluding the others which Germany and Great Britain considered even more important. Some writers argue that Castro's proposal included only the arbitration of the question of whether the claims should be settled by diplomatic negotiations as the European governments insisted, or by judicial decision in accordance

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J. H. Halston, and W. T. S. Doyle, Venezuelan Arbitration of 1902, p. 1029.

John Russell Moore, A Digest..., Vol. VI, p. 590.

with Venezuelan law as that government maintained.²³

Castro based his previous refusal to submit to arbitration upon the Calvo Doctrine as set forth earlier by Carlos Calvo, an Argentine statesman in the nineteenth century. The other Latin American countries also endorsed the doctrine wherein Calvo had contended that a state had no right to resort to armed intervention for the purpose of collecting the private claims of its citizens against another state.²⁴ Luis Drago, Minister of Foreign Relations of Argentina, addressed a memorandum, dated December 29, 1902, to the Argentine minister in Washington which the latter was instructed to bring to the notice of the United States government, wherein he attempted to defend the position of Venezuela. He incorporated his own ideas into the Calvo Doctrine and his restatement of these later became known as the Calvo-Draco Doctrine. He said that the use of coercion for collection of claims constituted a violation of the principles of the Monroe Doctrine. Although his doctrine prohibited force, it recognized that the public debt should be acknowledged and that the debtor country should feel the definite obligation of paying it. In concluding the main part of his argument, Drago declared that the principle which the Argentine Republic

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Howard O. Hill, Roosevelt and the Caribbean, pp.120-121

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John H. Latane, The United States and Latin America, p. 258.

Chester L. Jones, The Caribbean Since 1900, p. 265.

wished to see recognized "is that public debt can not give ground for armed intervention, much less to actual occupation of the soil of the American nations by an European power."²⁵

By this time it became evident that American and British public opinion would have to be taken into consideration. The resentment on the part of the people of the United States was in a large measure genuine and sincere, a manifestation of the self-confident nationalism of the day.²⁶ Lord Lansdowne and his associates began to eye their militaristically inclined "bedfellow" with disfavor, becoming hesitant and uncertain about keeping the agreement with Germany. Secretary Hay and President Roosevelt were firmly resolved not to interfere, since they had full trust in the German government. The excited and nervous state of Congress and the public nevertheless made a speedy solution of the problem most desirable. A storm of opposition was approaching, against which the Administration seemed powerless to proceed. Holleben reported to Germany that the press which had been quiet and "not unfriendly" suddenly had taken on a sharper tone.²⁷ Latin American merchants expressed the opinion that

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A. S. Hershey, "The Calvo and Drago Doctrines," American Journal of International Law, Vol. I, p. 26-45.

John H. Latane, The United States and Latin America, p. 257.

Henry Steele Commager, ed., Documents of American History, Vol. II, p. 204.

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Dexter Perkins, Hands Off, p. 226.

²⁷

J. Fred Rippy, Latin America in World Politics, pp. 186-188.

German trade would suffer to a far greater extent than would be the compensation realized from the collection of claims. Count Metternich felt that since Germany had shown the world her ability and determination to support her just claims, it would be wise and it would create a good impression in all America if the German government would accept the principle of arbitration, following the lead of Great Britain.²⁸ Lord Lansdowne informed the American ambassador that the Cabinet had decided at its last meeting on December 16, 1902, "to accept in principle the idea of settling the Venezuelan dispute by arbitration." The following day, December 17, 1903, Germany made known her willingness to arbitrate.²⁹

Historians mostly agree that this was the logical procedure, but ex-President Roosevelt, in 1916, wrote a letter to W. F. Thayer, author of Life and Letters of John Hay, and in 1917, made a speech in Chicago which the Daily News, reported, explaining that his actions and ultimatum had forced the hand of Germany in the Venezuelan affair. The details in these two versions differ somewhat, but according to this letter and this particular speech Roosevelt had felt that the temporary occupation on which Germany insisted might mean anything, and he had told Hay that he would see Holleben and bring the matter to an early conclusion. Admiral George

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J. Fred Rippy, Latin American in World Politics, p. 187.

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Howard C. Hill, Roosevelt and the Caribbean, p. 122.

Dewey, under Roosevelt's orders, was holding the entire battle fleet, which was in the west Indian waters, "ready to sail at an hour's notice." Holleben told the President that the Kaiser would not submit to arbitration, whereupon Roosevelt gave Holleben ten days wherein to secure the capitulation of the German government, or he would send the United States fleet to the coast of Venezuela to see that German forces did not take possession of any territory. Holleben replied that His Imperial Majesty could not change his mind, and expressed grave concern that this might lead to serious consequences, whereupon Roosevelt told him that he had counted the cost of such a step. Roosevelt asked Holleben to look at a map and tried to make him comprehend the fact that if trouble ensued Germany definitely would be at a disadvantage in the Caribbean Sea. Three days before the stipulated time was up, Holleben called upon President Roosevelt about some trivial matter and as he was leaving, the President asked him further about the Kaiser's decision. Holleben reiterated that The Kaiser could not change his mind. Thereupon Roosevelt said that it was useless to wait longer and that he would order Admiral Dewey to sail twenty-four hours in advance of the time originally set. Evidently Holleben thought that Roosevelt had been bluffing, but upon consulting the German consul at New York, City, a man who knew the American people better than any other living German and who was a close friend of Roosevelt's, Holleben had his erroneous impression corrected. Perhaps he had been afraid

to convey the original ultimatum to the Kaiser; now, however, he hastily informed his government that he had been misled. In less than thirty-six hours he returned to tell Roosevelt that "His Imperial Majesty had changed His Imperial Mind."³⁰ Although the German government denied the reason, Holleben was immediately recalled, and dismissed from the diplomatic service for misguaging the feelings of the President and the people of the United States.³¹

Some historians refuse to recognize Roosevelt's letter to Thayer as an authentic version of the events which had actually occurred, saying that the lapse of time and the irrational feelings brought on by the first World War caused the former President to write and speak with a vague memory. His presidential appointment book does not show a record of the purported second visit of Holleben,³² and other records do show that the German ambassador was out of town during that particular time.³³ Official documents of the governments involved record that Venezuela offered, December 13, 1902, to submit the dispute to arbitration and that Great

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Joseph B. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt and His Time, Vol. I, pp. 221-226.

Howard C. Hill, Roosevelt and the Caribbean, The Chicago speech is recorded in footnotes on pp. 122-124.

J. Fred Rippy, Latin American in World Politics, p. 194.

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Dexter Perkins, Hands Off, p. 222.

32

Howard C. Hill, Roosevelt and... This statement is recorded in a footnote on p. 136.

33

Dexter Perkins, Hands Off, pp. 214-220.

Britain and Germany accepted this offer on December 16 and December 17, respectively. In this case, Roosevelt could not have allowed a period of ten days for the Kaiser to think over his proposal for arbitration. There is nothing in the official dispatches which shows that the German government was aware of any pressure, threats, or ultimatum from the President of the United States.³⁴

Whatever the means, the German government agreed to limited arbitration, but Secretary Hay at the same time instructed the American ambassadors at London and Berlin to repeat the Venezuelan proposal of arbitration with "strong commendation." A few days later the blockading powers asked Roosevelt to serve as arbitrator, hoping to allay the suspicion of the American public, which was mounting daily. Roosevelt refused to serve as arbitrator since the United States government also had claims, but he suggested that a preliminary diplomatic conference be held in Washington for arranging the details of arbitration. Germany refused the suggestion and Great Britain declared in favor of separate negotiations of the details with the representatives of the blockading powers, keeping one another informed of developments.³⁵

The Venezuelan government asked Herbert W. Bowen to

³⁴ Howard C. Hill, Roosevelt and the Caribbean, pp. 135-136.

Chester L. Jones, The Caribbean Since 1900, p. 214.

³⁵ Chester L. Jones, The Caribbean Since 1900, pp. 228-229.

represent Venezuela in the negotiations. Bowen's appointment was not welcomed by Germany and Great Britain, and as time went on their feeling toward Bowen became increasingly unfriendly.³⁶ The delay of six weeks in settling the controversy was caused in large measure by a sharp disagreement between Bowen and the representatives of Germany and Great Britain, over the securities to be given by Venezuela to guarantee the payment of the "first rank" claims, and over the question of priority of payment. The "first rank" claims included the German claims originating in the Venezuelan civil war and British claims based upon the seizure of British subjects. These were excluded absolutely from arbitration, and in all such instances the blockading powers demanded and secured cash payments or adequate guaranties. All other claims set forth in the ultimatum of December, 1902, were to be submitted to arbitration only on condition that the Venezuelan government first admit in principle its responsibility.³⁷ Bowen's attitude was that the blockading powers should have asked for preferential treatment in the beginning instead of waiting until the agreements were nearly complete. He also felt that if their use of force was to grant them greater concessions in the matter of payment, then all of

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Chester L. Jones, The Caribbean Since 1900, p. 228.

Howard C. Hill, Roosevelt and the Caribbean, p. 141.

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Howard C. Hill, Roosevelt and the Caribbean, p. 138.

the other interested nations should also use force.³⁸

While these negotiations were being carried out separately, the British government became tired of the forceful attitude of Germany and began to lean backwards in a policy of conciliation. On January 23, 1903, Britain promised to return the captured gunboats to Venezuela, and Germany felt compelled, by public opinion everywhere, to follow suit and return the merchant vessels which the German Navy was holding.³⁹ The German bombardment of San Carlos at this time stirred the feelings of the public to a fever pitch and Secretary Hay expressed himself "quite bitterly" to the German ambassador and to the press. At no time during the Venezuelan entanglement had feeling against Germany been so heated as at that instant. Count Metternich called the attention of his government to the press criticism, in Great Britain and in the United States, and suggested the advisability of publishing a statement in justification of the act.⁴⁰ Great Britain, regarding the Germans as "mischief makers," was at the end of her tether and feared that the affair might get completely out of hand. On January 27, 1903, an agent of the

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Chester L. Jones, The Caribbean Since 1900, pp. 142-143.

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J. Fred Rippy, Latin America in World Politics, p. 189

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Howard C. Hill, Roosevelt and the Caribbean, p. 143.

British Foreign Office went to the German ambassador in London to plead for the lowering of the demands for the "first rank" claims. In order to hurry the negotiations, Great Britain had agreed to take about one tenth of the sum originally asked and urged Germany to do likewise. Count Speck von Sternberg, temporarily appointed to fill Kelleben's post in Washington, suggested that Germany accept Bowen's offer of thirty per cent of the customs receipts of the two largest ports, La Guaira and Puerto Cabello, for three months in lieu of preferential treatment.⁴¹ As a way out of the difficulty Great Britain proposed that the question of preferential payment be left to the decision of President Roosevelt. Count Metternich and Bowen objected to this suggestion but the British ambassador submitted the proposal to Secretary Hay on February 6, 1903. Roosevelt again declined to serve as arbitrator and suggested that the question of preferential payment be referred to the Hague Tribunal. The principal objection of the blockading powers against this procedure was the expense and the slowness with which the Hague Tribunal would act.⁴²

Conditions between Germany and Great Britain, however,

⁴¹ J. Fred Rippy, Latin America in World Politics, pp. 189-191.

⁴² Chester L. Jones, The Caribbean Since 1900, p. 228.

were becoming more strained with the passing of each day, each government fearing that the other meant to withdraw from the agreement. The Kaiser complained to the British monarch about the treatment which the German received at the hands of the British and American press, and blamed Great Britain for leading Germany into this precarious situation.⁴³ He directed von Sternberg to explain to President Roosevelt that Germany could not withdraw now from Venezuela without avenging the mistreatment of her nationals, for fear of ridicule in the eyes of the world and the loss of influence in Central and South America.⁴⁴ Great Britain, ever with the idea of remaining on the friendliest terms with the United States, brought urgent pressure to bear upon Germany to submit the matter to arbitration in its entirety. The German government, fearing that the United States might advance from the position of an intermediary to a more active diplomatic role, capitulated, and the protocols, signed on February 13, 1903, specifying the methods to be used in terminating the Venezuelan difficulties, were received with a feeling of relief on both sides of the Atlantic.⁴⁵ One protocol was signed by Venezuela and the blockading powers, Germany, Great Britain, and Italy. Other protocols were signed by Venezuela and the

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J. Fred Rippy, Latin America in World Politics, p. 190.

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J. Fred Rippy, Latin America..., p. 197.

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Chester L. Jones, The Caribbean Since 1900, p. 228.

"neutral powers," Belgium, France, Mexico, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Norway, and the United States of America.⁴⁶ The "first rank" claims were to be settled by the Hague Tribunal, whereas the examination of the claims of the various powers against Venezuela, subject to the reservations made by the British and German governments, was committed to mixed commissions at Caracas.⁴⁷

The blockading powers believed that the sums fixed by the mixed commissions to be due them should be paid in full before anything was paid upon the claims of the "neutral powers." Venezuela insisted that her creditors be treated alike. The Kaiser, now ready to rectify the impression that Germany had been stubborn, suggested that this question be referred to President Roosevelt as arbitrator; but Secretary Hay objected because the United States was an interested party.⁴⁸ Although Roosevelt was tempted to act as arbitrator in order to occupy a position which would enable him to remove all possibility of a decision in conflict with the Monroe Doctrine,⁴⁹ he recognized the value of such an excellent opportunity to show the sincerity of the United States in

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Charles G. Fenwick, Cases on International Law, p. 663.

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Howard C. Hill, Roosevelt and the Caribbean, pp. 146-147.

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John H. Latane, The United States and Latin America, p. 225.

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William R. Thayer, Life and Letters of John May, Vol. II, p. 288. (Quoted from a letter from Roosevelt to Dr. Albert Shaw)

support of the Hague Tribunal by insisting upon referring the case to that court.⁵⁰ Later, May 7, 1903, under protocols signed in Washington, only the question of the admissibility of the demands of the blockading powers for the preferential payment of all of their claims was to be submitted to the Tribunal at the Hague.⁵¹

On February 22, 1904, the Tribunal of the Permanent Court of Arbitration rendered an award which entitled Great Britain, Germany and Italy to preferential treatment. These powers had a right to preference in payment of their claims because the "neutral powers" had not protested when the blockading powers first mentioned preferential treatment, either at the cessation of hostilities against Venezuela or after the protocols of February 13, 1903. The "neutral powers" had profited by the actions of the blockading powers and their rights remained for the future absolutely intact. The Court further pronounced that each government was to bear its own costs of instituting the suits and an equal share of the costs of the tribunal. The Court charged the government of the United States with seeing "to the execution of this latter clause within a term of three months."⁵²

Although this award, emanating from a peace court and apparently endorsing the principle of armed coercion, received

⁵⁰ John H. Latane, The United States and Latin America, p. 225.

⁵¹ Charles G. Fenwick, Cases on International Law, p. 664.

⁵² Charles G. Fenwick, Cases on International Law, p. 666.

a great deal of criticism among the Latin American countries and from the general public in the United States, who by this time had come to favor Venezuela strongly. Roosevelt and Hay felt that this case had added to the practical importance of the Hague Court. They desired to see the peaceful settlement of disputes between nations become a practice or habit. In this instance the foremost active nations and the other asserting countries had appeared before the Court; therefore the smaller nations could not feel that it would impair their dignity to appear before the Hague Tribunal in the future.⁵³

The entire dispute and its settlement by arbitration were definitely not a victory for Venezuela. When Great Britain, Germany, and Italy consented to the principle of arbitration they excluded therefrom their "first rank" claims, demanding and securing from Venezuela cash payments or adequate guaranties for these. Before those governments would submit the other claims to arbitration Venezuela was made to admit in principle its responsibility for the origin of the claims. Venezuela had insisted that these claims were not a diplomatic problem and had demanded that they be settled in Venezuelan courts in accordance with Venezuelan law, but the blockading powers obtained their original objectives by submitting the controversy to arbitration.⁵⁴ Although Roosevelt,

⁵³ John H. Latane, The United States and Latin America, p. 256.

⁵⁴ Howard C. Hill, Roosevelt and the Caribbean, pp. 138-139.

Hay, and eventually Bowen, grew tired of Dictator Castro and his capriciousness, they did not, at first, concern themselves too much with the difficulties of their weaker neighbor until there was much talk concerning the fact that probably Germany had ulterior motives in prescribing "temporary occupation" close to the territory wherein the United States contemplated building a canal. As early as 1901 rumors had reached the State Department of the United States that the German government, in view of its acute and serious rivalry of Great Britain, was about to acquire Margarita Island, which is located a few miles off of the coast of Caracas, by taking it over after a private German-owned company had leased it from Venezuela. The matter was dropped upon the expressed disapproval of Secretary Hay, who wrote the United States ambassador at Berlin that in view of the "well known and long established policy" of the United States he should intimate to the German Foreign Office with discretion and informality but "with distinctness" that any such urge on the part of Germany would concern the United States and strain the cordial and frank relations between nations.⁵⁵ At that time Roosevelt, who was about to become President, had begun urging a stronger army and navy for the United States because of the danger from Germany.⁵⁶

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Dexter Perkins, Hands Off, p. 213.

Wilfrid H. Callcott, The Caribbean Policy.... p. 125.

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Wilfrid H. Callcott, The Caribbean Policy.... p. 126.

The Venezuelan affairs were forecasts of a new but rapidly developing national policy of the United States arising from the need to strengthen the national position, politically and economically. There was definite opposition on the part of the general public and the leaders of the United States to complicating the Caribbean and Latin American affairs by countenancing European territorial control, permanent or temporary. Throughout the Venezuelan debt incident, President Roosevelt's attitude had been, more or less, one of "watchful vigilance," but as he became convinced of the dangers of a mediatory policy, he embarked upon a course of positive action.⁵⁷

The immediate cause of such a change in policy was the condition of affairs in the Dominican Republic. Like Venezuela, the Dominican Republic had long been a prey to its ambitious and unscrupulous politicians, and suffered from protracted civil wars and from the exploitation of its natural resources by foreign interests. Roosevelt wanted to have nothing to do with the chaotic state of affairs in that republic, but if it became absolutely necessary to do something, he wanted to do as little as possible.⁵⁸ In a message to the Senate on March 6, 1905, Roosevelt stated that "under no circumstances do we intend to acquire territory in or

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Howard C. Hill, Roosevelt and the Caribbean, p. 148.

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Joseph B. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt and His Times, p. 431. Roosevelt wrote these words in a letter to Bishop who was his confidant during Roosevelt's career of public service, and who wrote his book under the guidance of Roosevelt.

possession of either Haiti or Santo Domingo.⁵⁹ His reluctance was overcome by the attitude of some European creditor states. One of these states wanted to establish, in conjunction with the United States, a joint fiscal control over the Dominican Republic.⁶⁰ Roosevelt, fearing that non-intervention by the United States would bring a repetition of the Venezuelan crisis, knew that the time for action had arrived. The American minister in Santo Domingo, by the direction of Secretary Ray, suggested that the Dominican government ask the United States to take charge of the collection of its revenues. Upon receiving this request, President Roosevelt sent a special commission to the island to help President Morales and his cabinet make the necessary arrangements.⁶¹

This new policy which Roosevelt was beginning to establish was already stated in his annual message to Congress on December 6, 1904. He said that the supervision of the United States had as its object to help the weaker nations to help themselves well, kept order within their own boundaries, and paid their obligations. He said that chronic wrongdoing by a weaker nation anywhere would require intervention by some larger civilized nation, and in the western hemisphere, the Monroe Doctrine, which the United States had

⁵⁹ J. D. Richardson, A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, Vol. I, p. 859.

⁶⁰ Joseph B. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt and His Times, p. 430.

⁶¹ Chester L. Jones, The Caribbean Since 1900, p. 108.

no intention of abandoning, would force the United States, however reluctantly, "in flagrant cases of such wrongdoing or impotence, to the exercise of an international police power."⁶²

Embittered because his government had not been too closely consulted during the settlement of the Venezuelan affair, Dictator Castro's policy toward foreigners became so harsh after the arbitration of 1904 that Bowen, as early as July, 1904, urged strong action on the part of the United States officials. Bowen said that Castro had reached the point where he would yield only to force, and the American minister urged the United States to send warships and seize the ports to stop the attacks of the Venezuelan government on foreign interests. Whenever the United States State Department suggested arbitration of the claims of its nationals, Castro would fall back upon the Calvo-Brago Doctrine and refuse to arbitrate, insisting that all claims be tried in the Venezuelan courts since they were not diplomatic issues. The United States took a view equally as uncompromising in saying that no other nation had the right to pass on that government's exercise of the discretionary right of diplomatic intervention. Later the United States State Department announced that, if Venezuela refused to arbitrate, diplomacy might be abandoned for "harsher means."⁶³

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Howard D. Hill, Roosevelt and the Caribbean, p. 149.

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Chester L. Jones, The Caribbean Since 1900, pp. 264-265.

Secretary Root reproached the Venezuelan government by reminding Castro that the government of the United States had intervened upon repeated occasions as a friend "whose aid had been invoked" to rescue Venezuela from disagreeable and dangerous complications with other foreign powers, yet within the past few years that government had practically confiscated or destroyed all of the substantial property interests of the United States in Venezuela. Sometimes it had been done otherwise. Only upon Castro's retirement and the advent of a new president was the United States State Department able to terminate satisfactorily many claims of long standing.⁶⁴ President Roosevelt declared that the United States did not go to war with Venezuela over the matter "merely because our people declined to be irritated by the actions of a weak opponent," and that the government of the United States showed, in this case, forbearance which probably went "beyond the limits of wisdom." He further said that the actions of the Venezuelan officials would not have been tolerated by the Roosevelt Administration on the part of officials of a stronger nation.⁶⁵

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Chester L. Jones, The Caribbean Since 1900, pp. 265-266.

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Theodore Roosevelt, an Autobiography, pp. 506-507.

CHAPTER IV

THE PANAMANIAN REVOLUTION

While the difficulties of Venezuela as a debtor to the foremost nations of Europe were in the process of adjustment, a sudden occasion arose for another instance of watchfulness and intervention by the United States in Latin American affairs. Throughout the Venezuelan incident President Roosevelt's attitude was one of "watchful vigilance," but as he came to believe this policy to be in error, he embarked upon a more positive and direct course. Although negotiations for an interoceanic canal had been going on for more than a half century, President Roosevelt's assertive words and actions aided in the immediate securing of a canal site upon which the United States built the Panama canal as a commercial necessity and as a defense measure for the entire western hemisphere.

The Panama Canal has been called the greatest liberty man has ever taken with nature. It is an engineering feat accomplished under tremendous difficulty, but the legal and diplomatic difficulties which stood in the way of its construction were almost equally as great.¹ The three men who, on the part of the government of the United States, instigated, guided, and

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John Mabry Mathews, American Foreign Relations, p. 119.

developed the diplomatic procedures of this gigantic undertaking had the right to feel gratified with the outcome of their labors. Theodore Roosevelt once remarked that "by far the most important action I took in foreign affairs during the time I was President related to the Panama Canal."² Roosevelt, bombastic and enthusiastic toward his expansion program, was by instinct a policeman, but the blows of his "big stick" were softened by the two men who served him in turn as Secretary of State. John Hay was a thoroughly trained diplomat, and Elihu Root possessed a splendidly trained legal mind, but he also had a deeper feeling of fellowship toward the Latin Americans.³

During the first half of the nineteenth century, the consensus of opinion in the United States was that the future interoceanic waterway should be a joint British and American enterprise. The Clayton-Bulwer Treaty, which was signed on April 19, 1850, was the culmination of opinions and activities of both nations, and limited the conditions under which any such canal might be built, both governments guaranteeing the security, and agreeing "that either...will never obtain...for itself any exclusive control over" any canal that might be constructed. The treaty also pledged each of the two governments to refrain from colonizing or controlling any part of

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Theodore Roosevelt, an Autobiography, p. 512.

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Wilfrid M. Galleott, The Caribbean Policy of the United States, p. 116.

Central America. Since the Nicaraguan route was thought to be the most feasible route for a ship canal, both governments felt that each of them had checked, by this treaty, the ambitions of the other.⁴

After 1850 there was growing in the United States not only the need for an interoceanic canal but also the demand for an "American canal under American control." American statesmen were beginning to endeavor to this particular end.⁵ Gradually the interests of the United States and Great Britain widely digressed and the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty became of little real value. As the twentieth century approached, the United States government decided that the time to act in promoting a canal had arrived. Privately owned French enterprises had failed and foreign governments were unable or refusing to put any more money and effort into such a plan.⁶ Further stressing the need of a canal were the acquisition of Puerto Rico and the establishment of a virtual protectorate over Cuba by the United States as outcomes of the Spanish-American War. There were American commercial and military interests also in the

⁴ William M. Malloy, ed., Treaties, Conventions, International Acts, Protocols and Agreements Between the United States of America and Other Powers, 1776-1909, Vol. I, pp. 659-663. Hereafter referred to as Treaties...

⁵ William W. Sullivan, A Study in the Relations Between Colombia and the United States, 1900-1934, pp. 3-5.

⁶ William W. Sullivan, A Study..., p. 7.

newly acquired territory of Hawaii. The growth of the inter-coastal trade of the continental United States forced upon the government the realization of the necessity for a canal.⁷

The discussions between Great Britain and the United States eventually resulted in the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty, negotiated by the United States Secretary of State and the British ambassador in Washington. The original draft of this treaty, in 1900, which abrogated the Clayton-Bulwer Treaty with a great deal of pride on the part of the United States and with considerable reluctance on the part of the British,⁸ gave the United States the right to build a canal at its own cost, or under any other plan it saw fit to employ. The United States was to "enjoy" exclusive rights of providing for regulation and management of the canal, but it was to be open to all vessels of all nations on equal basis or without discrimination. It was not to be forfeited and all nations using it were to be invited to join in guaranteeing its neutrality.⁹

At this time Theodore Roosevelt, Governor of New York, was interesting himself increasingly in national affairs, and he entered an emphatic protest against some features of the treaty.

⁷ John H. Latane and David W. Wainhouse, A History of American Foreign Policy, p. 544.

⁸ Wilfrid H. Callcott, The Caribbean Policy of the United States, 1890-1920, p. 117.

⁹ William M. Malloy, ed., Treaties..., Vol. I, pp. 782-784.

The protest was in the form of a friendly letter to Secretary Hay and pointed out what Roosevelt termed very serious defects in the treaty. He objected to the use of the canal by enemy warships since this would be an added burden upon the United States in time of war. He wanted the United States to be entitled to fortify the canal because if fortified it would double the strength of the Navy of the United States. Roosevelt further objected to a joint guarantee of the neutrality of the canal with any nation or group of nations. "We should consistently refuse to all European powers the right to control, in any shape, any territory in the Western Hemisphere which they do not already hold."¹⁰

The Senate of the United States refused to ratify the submitted form and added amendments which did away with the neutrality provision and specifically authorized the fortification of the canal.¹¹ Great Britain refused to accept the new provisions, causing the treaty to fail.

In November, 1901, the resumption of negotiations resulted in the final draft of the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty, which was ratified by the Senate of the United States on December 26, 1901, and proclaimed to the public by the President on February 23, 1902. This treaty provided that the canal was to be constructed

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Joseph B. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt and His Time, Vol. I, pp. 270-271.

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William M. Malloy, ed., Treaties..., Vol. I, pp. 782-784.

under the auspices of the government of the United States, being financed in any manner which that government saw fit. The United States was to enjoy all rights incident to such construction and to provide for regulation and management of the canal which was to be "free and open" to all vessels of all nations without discrimination. The United States was to maintain such military police along the canal as might be necessary to protect it against lawlessness and disorder. There was to be no change of territorial sovereignty or of international relations of the country traversed by the canal.¹²

Meanwhile Roosevelt became Vice-President of the United States early in 1901 and, upon the assassination of President McKinley later in that year, became President. In his first annual message to Congress, December 3, 1901, Roosevelt announced that the new treaty "specifically provides that the United States alone shall do the work of building" and that the United States should assume the responsibility of safeguarding the canal and should regulate its neutral use by all nations on terms of "equality without the guaranty or interference of any outside nation from any quarter."¹³

The attention of the Administration became centered upon

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John Bassett Moore, A Digest of International Law, Vol. VI, p. 211.

William M. Malloy, ed., Treaties..., Vol. I, pp. 782-784.

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Joseph B. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt and His Time, Vol. I, pp. 270-271.

feasible routes of the future canal, and a commission, authorized by Congress and appointed by the President, soon after the ratification of the treaty in December, 1901, began investigation of practicable routes. The commission suggested the Nicaraguan route at first, although the construction of a Panamanian canal would be less costly but for the added cost of purchasing French interests in Panama. The old but newly organized Panama Canal Company, chartered by France and nominally operating in Panama by concession from Colombia, wanted \$109,141,500 for its rights, property, and franchises in Panama. The commission estimated the same to be worth \$40,000,000. In less than a month afterwards the Panama Canal Company cabled to the commission that it would sell for that price, whereupon the commission, in view of changed conditions, suggested that the most feasible route for a canal was by way of Panama.¹⁴

While a bill favoring the Nicaraguan route was meeting with opposition in the Senate, the supplementary report of the commission arrived and sealed its doom. Senator Spooner offered an amendment and converted the bill into practically a new measure, which provided that the Panamanian route was to be considered first. The amended act authorized the President to consider plans and to enter into negotiations necessary to the

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Joseph B. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt and His Time, Vol. I, pp. 272-273.

construction of a canal across Nicaragua if an agreement with Colombia and the Panama Canal Company about the title to the land in Panama and the buildings thereon could not be reached.¹⁵

As a result of this enactment, Secretary Hay entered into negotiations with Tomas Herran, the charge d'affaires of the Colombian government in Washington. Herran, upon authority from his government, signed the Hay-Herran convention after he became convinced that the terms offered were practically an ultimatum which must be accepted unless Colombia was willing to abandon all hope that the interoceanic canal would be opened through her territory.¹⁶ The convention, which was ratified by the United States Senate on March 17, 1903, authorized the Panama Canal Company "to sell and transfer to the United States all its rights, privileges, properties, and concessions." Colombia was to cede to the United States, for the purpose of canal construction, a strip of land five miles wide on each side of the canal; the sovereignty was to remain vested in Colombia, whereas the United States was to have administrative control for purposes of policing and sanitation. Upon ratification of the convention by Colombia, the United States was to pay that government \$10,000,000 in gold, and, beginning nine years after the date of ratification, an additional \$250,000 in

¹⁵Chester L. Jones, The Caribbean Since 1900, pp. 293-294.¹⁶Chester L. Jones, The Caribbean Since 1900, pp. 293-294.

gold annually.¹⁷

The Colombian Congress met in extra session, June 20, 1903, since President Jose Manuel Marroquin did not dare act on the treaty alone in direct violation of the Colombian constitution. Ratification was extremely doubtful, however, since a large majority of the members of the Congress, feeling that the compensation was insufficient, opposed the treaty. For nearly two months the Colombian Congress debated the treaty, being concerned mostly with technical terms as to whether it was a treaty or a convention, and with the absence of the signature of the Vice-President which was required by their law. The Colombians wanted more favorable terms and went so far as to suggest that the Panama Canal Company give them \$10,000,000 for the "right" to transfer the previously mentioned properties to the United States government, intimating that this payment would assure ratification.¹⁸ General Rafael Reyes, the spokesman in Washington for the Colombian government, suggested that two amendments be added before ratification could become a reality. One amendment would be the requirement of the extra sum from the Panama Canal Company, and the second would be the increase of the price paid by the United States from \$10,000,000 to \$15,000,000. Secretary Hay did not feel that the United

¹⁷

Chester L. Jones, The Caribbean Since 1900, p. 294.

Joseph G. Freehoff, America and the Canal Title, p. 45.

¹⁸

Joseph B. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt and His Time, Vol. I, pp. 274-275.

States or Colombia had the right to impose new financial obligations upon the company. The American minister in Bogota sent to the Colombian Minister of Foreign Affairs a memorandum from Secretary Hay, which advised Colombia to ratify the treaty in the unamended form without any modification whatever if she really desired to maintain the then friendly relations and secure for herself the advantages which the construction of a canal in her territory would bring. Even though the failure to ratify the treaty might cause ill feeling, it was clearly the right of Colombia to exercise that prerogative. On August 12, 1903, one week after the arrival of Hay's memorandum, the Colombian Senate voted unanimously against the Hay-Herran Treaty.¹⁹

Possibly there were two interesting ideas in the minds of the Colombian leaders. In the first place these leaders did not intend for the negotiations or discussions to end with the negative vote given the Hay-Herran Treaty, but expected further opportunities. The second idea concerned the concession for a canal granted by the Colombian government in May, 1878, to Lucien Napoleon Bonaparte Wyse, a surveyor and engineer, who later transferred his holdings to the French Panama Canal Company, headed by Ferdinand de Lesseps, the famous French engineer who had built the Suez Canal. De Lesseps began his

¹⁹

Joseph B. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt and His Time, Vol. I, p. 275.

Chester L. Jones, The Caribbean Since 1900, pp. 299-300.

work at the isthmus in 1882 and continued it until 1889 when bad fortune forced his enterprise into bankruptcy. In 1894 the newly organized Panama Canal Company resumed operations in order to keep the concession alive, in the hope that the rights and properties acquired might later be sold. To this company the Colombian government granted in 1894 a ten year extension, at the end of which time, if the canal were not complete, the properties would revert to the Colombian government.²⁰ To the Colombian leaders this idea appeared to be remunerative, and to this end they tried to persuade the United States to delay all negotiations for a year.

The aim of the United States in negotiating the treaty was to secure a de facto sovereignty over the canal zone, and its equivalent over the canal littoral; Colombia, however, desired that the United States should become, as far as concerned the canal, a corporation solely for the purpose of constructing and operating it under Colombian sovereignty. This was a natural and vital conflict of interests. The President of the United States and Secretary Hay had been keeping a close watch upon the proceedings of the Colombian government, and they thought that the delay of one year, presumably giving the Colombian leaders more time to debate, would not do the project any good and would allow the Colombian government time

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Phillippe Bunau-Varilla, Panama, the Creation, Destruction, and Resurrection, pp. 24-25. Hereafter referred to as Panama...

to carry out its scheme. In their vexed frame of mind, Secretary Hay and the President felt that this delay would be practically theft on the part of the Colombian government. Roosevelt even thought that France might be drawn into the complications.²¹

Given up entirely to the internal factions, the Colombian leaders killed the Hay-Herran Treaty partly through fear that the President of Colombia, Jose Manuel Marroquin, might through it secure moral credit and support. Marroquin had become President upon the death of the former president whom he had imprisoned for more than a year. The Colombians were alarmed by the reports that soldiers of the United States were pouring into the canal area, and had he desired to do so, Marroquin was not strong enough in personality or in armed strength to force upon his senators a treaty which they instinctively disliked. Phillippe Bunau-Varilla, who later became Envoy and Minister Plenipotentiary of Panama to the United States, described the Colombians, in a letter to John Bassett Moore, an eminent international lawyer and friend of President Roosevelt, as having a Don Quixote side which at times became stronger than the Sancho Panza side. Nothing would stop them, and "the strong arm of the windmill is the only thing that can bring them to reason." Bunau-Varilla

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Joseph C. Freehoff, America and the Canal Title, p. 196.
 Theodore Roosevelt, an Autobiography, p. 523.
 Wilfrid H. Galloway, The Caribbean Policy of the United States, 1890-1920, p. 147.

asked for "boldness in action," explaining that "there will be room for a 'Roosevelt Doctrine,' in international law, perfecting and completing the Monroe Doctrine." He further said that the right of protecting Latin American interests against European interference, as proclaimed by President Monroe, would have to be counterbalanced by the proclamation of the right of protecting European and North American interests against South American interference. Such interests required an interoceanic canal. He cited the savage tribes of South Africa who still maintained the old feudal right of extorting money from caravans passing through their territory. "America cannot allow one of the nations she protects to treat the whole world in the same way."²²

The close watch which the President of the United States kept upon the affairs of Colombia and his "information" led him to believe that there would be a revolution if the Colombian Congress did adjourn without ratifying the Hay-Herran Treaty, since the people of Panama were of the opinion that the immediate building of the canal was of vital concern to them. Early in July when the members of Congress from Panama arrived in Bogota for the special session, they declared that the state would revolt if the treaty were not ratified. Because there was the possibility that Panama might remain quiet,

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Phillippe Bunau-Varilla, Panama..., pp. 308-310.

even if Colombia did reject the treaty, Roosevelt recommended to Congress that the United States should at once occupy the isthmus anyhow and proceed to dig the canal.²³ Congress did not concur in this opinion, feeling that the Spooner Law bound the United States to turn to the Nicaraguan route.

During the preceding twenty years the people of Panama had sought definitely three times to establish their independence by revolution or secession, and Colombia had asked the United States to land troops to protect Colombian interests and maintain order on the isthmus. The United States had complied by sending soldiers and marines to protect the transit and to put down at least seven minor insurrections.²⁴ There had been fifty-three outbreaks²⁵ in as many years and only the active interference of the United States had enabled Colombia to preserve even a semblance of sovereignty in Panama.²⁶

Elihu Root, in an address before the Union League Club of Chicago, February 22, 1904, gave an excellent review of the treatment which Panama had received at the hands of the government at Bogota. He said that under the constitution of the

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Theodore Roosevelt, an Autobiography, p. 525.

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Howard C. Hill, Roosevelt and the Caribbean, p. 45.

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Theodore Roosevelt, an Autobiography, pp. 514-516. Roosevelt lists here the fifty-three outbreaks, from May, 1850 to July, 1902.

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Theodore Roosevelt, an Autobiography, pp. 516-517.

United States of Colombia, adopted in 1863, the state of Panama had been vested with "absolute and unqualified sovereignty." That state never legally lost this sovereignty but had been deprived of it by force in 1886 by Rafael Munez, President of Colombia, who declared that the constitution of 1863 no longer existed. Munez put Panama under martial law, not during the civil war, but after its close, and appointed a governor of the state, who, in turn, appointed all state administrative officers. After Munez appointed governors for the other states, they, in turn, appointed delegates to frame a new constitution for the nation. Both of the delegates representing Panama were residents of Bogota, far south of Panama, and one of them had never even visited the state. This new constitution robbed the people of Panama of every vestige of self-government. The former states of Colombia kept their legislatures, but the new constitution deprived Panama of its legislature and subjected the state directly, in all things, to the legislative authority of the Congress at Bogota. "It took away the property, the powers, the corporate existence, the civil organization of the state, and placed the property and the lives of its people absolutely under the authority and power of a single dictator in a distant capital with which there was no communication by land." This pretended constitution was never submitted to the people of Panama for their approval or rejection, and they never

consented to it.²⁷

The outbreak of the Panamanian revolution occurred on November 3, 1903, only three days after the adjournment of the Colombian Congress. The United States government understood from the reports of its minister in Bogota that the rejection of the Hay-Herran Treaty would be the signal for a rebellion in Panama. Roosevelt, in his own words, "simply ceased to stamp out the different revolutionary fuses that were already burning,"²⁸ and ordered the Navy Department to hold its warships within striking distance of the isthmus on both the Atlantic and Pacific coasts.²⁹

Most historians seem to agree that the two most active promoters of the rebellion, among the foreign element concerned were William Nelson Cromwell, counsel for the Panama Company, and Phillippe Bunau-Varilla, engineer for the same company. Cromwell claimed to have been active in Washington circles in the early agreements with the Panamanian conspirators and in stimulating the American press, but he withdrew later when Herran warned him that aid given to the revolutionists might be made reason for forfeiting the rights and properties of the

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Joseph B. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt and His Time, Vol. I, p. 301.

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Theodore Roosevelt, an Autobiography, p. 525.

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William F. Sullivan, A Study in the Relations Between Colombia and the United States, 1900-1924, p. 10.

Panama Canal Company. Bunau-Varilla lived in Paris when the operations of the company were reduced to a low level. From 1900 on he sought by his writings and by speeches in the United States to turn American preference to the Panamanian route. It was through his influence that the Panama Canal Company had been induced to make its offer to sell its properties to the United States government for \$40,000,000.³⁰

Upon his arrival in Washington, in September, 1903, Bunau-Varilla could not make contact with the government officials, but when he finally secured an audience with the President and Secretary Hay, who were noncommittal, he came away from it feeling that he was "finally in possession of all the elements necessary for action."³¹ He probably expressed as a certainty what he felt as a hope. Manuel Amador, one of the leading revolutionists and later the first president of the Republic of Panama, and his associates in the rebellious state believed that they must obtain from the United States in advance the assurance of military support and the loan of six million dollars with which to equip an army. Bunau-Varilla deemed the idea of such aids preposterous because he realized the handicap of never being able to mention the subject directly to the only person, the President of the United States, who could secure these two enormous advantages. Bunau-Varilla addressed several

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Chester L. Jones, The Caribbean Since 1900, p. 305.

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Chester L. Jones, The Caribbean Since 1900, p. 307.

letters to John Bassett Moore in the hope that in his conversations with the President, Moore would give him a clear cut picture of the state of affairs in Panama and Colombia. Bunau-Varilla felt that the revolution should be a small one and should be confined to the proposed canal zone and the two cities of Colon and Panama,³² since the large landowners and cattlemen of the western part of the state needed protection from the chaos which the impending revolution portended.³³ If necessary he would furnish, out of his own pocket, the sum of \$100,000 which should finance the revolution; he would not advance the funds, however, until the revolution occurred.³⁴ Amador, under protest, assented to the plan and returned to Panama from Washington on October 20, 1903, with the declaration of independence and other documents and instructions prepared by Bunau-Varilla, who remained in Washington. One of these documents was his own appointment as the diplomatic agent of the republic yet to be created, authorizing him to serve as its minister plenipotentiary to the United States. He assured Amador, as early as October 17, that the United States would police the new republic within forty-eight hours after its creation.³⁵

³² Chester L. Jones, The Caribbean Since 1900, pp. 307-308. Phillipps Bunau-Varilla, Panama..., p. 304.

³³ Gordon Ireland, ed., Boundaries, Possessions, and Conflicts in Central and North America, and the Caribbean, p. 238.

³⁴ Chester L. Jones, The Caribbean Since 1900, pp. 307-308.

³⁵ Joseph C. Freehoff, America and the Canal Title, p. 140.

Upon his arrival at Colon, Amador and his leading associate secessionists, about eight in number, held a final meeting. Their courage ebbed somewhat, for they had expected concrete help from the United States and not mere assurances of personal aid from Bunau-Varilla, who, after all, was a foreigner.³⁶ They realized that the Panamanian fire department, composed of 441 men, although well trained, loyal, and available for military use, would not be an adequate fighting force when pitted against a more or less trained Colombian army of 10,000 men. The secessionists were staking their lives, property, and the welfare of their families upon the success of the venture. Amador felt that the means to which they were resorting, although painful, were indispensable. They would prefer to win independence by their own efforts, but in order to win it at all they must accept foreign aid. Many historians, believing that actions speak louder than words, agree that the secessionists had foreknowledge of the intentions of the Roosevelt Administration.³⁷

The secessionists learned on October 29, 1903, that a Colombian force would arrive in Panama on November 3, 1903, and they were not prepared to deal with 200 Colombian soldiers.³⁸

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Obester L. Jones, The Caribbean Since 1900, p. 308.

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Joseph Freehoff, America and the Canal Title, pp. 146, 160, 197-212.

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Gordon Ireland, ed., Boundaries, Possessions..., p. 239.

Amador telegraphed to Bunau-Varilla for aid, whereupon the latter hurried to Washington from Baltimore. Possibly as a result of this hurried trip, the U S S Nashville arrived at Colon one day before the Colombian troops. Bunau-Varilla afterwards related that everyone in Colon interpreted the arrival of the Nashville as a determined intervention on the part of the United States, and it carried to a high pitch the enthusiasm of the Panamanians.³⁹

President Roosevelt's telegrams of November 3, 1903, to the commanders of the warships were without precedent in American diplomatic history. To the commander on the west coast, he telegraphed, "Prevent landing of Colombian forces if this landing would precipitate a conflict," and to the commander of the east coast fleet, he said, "Prevent landing of any armed force with hostile intent, either government or insurgent."⁴⁰ Commander Hubbard of the U S S Nashville had not yet received his message from the President when the Colombian troops arrived, and therefore did not prevent their disembarkation when told that their destination was Panama City. The commanding officers of the troops, accompanied by members of their staffs, left by train for Panama City. Later in the day when the Colombian officers ordered their troops at Colon to follow them, Commander Hubbard, having received the Presi-

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Phillippe Bunau-Varilla, Panama..., p. 312.

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Joseph C. Freehoff, America and the Canal Title, p. 173.

dent's message, refused to allow troops to be transported in either direction between Colon and Panama City.⁴¹ When the officer in charge of the Colombian troops threatened the lives and property of the American citizens, Commander Hubbard landed a few score sailors and marines to protect them. "By a mixture of firmness and tact," he not only prevented any assault on the citizens of the United States, but even persuaded the Colombian officer to reembark his troops and return to Cartagena.⁴²

Upon their arrival in Panama City the Colombian generals were arrested as prisoners of war, along with the general commanding the local barracks, by a fellow officer, General Esteban Huertas, who had joined the revolutionists. As a matter of form, the Governor of Panama, Jose Chaldia, who was in sympathy with the revolution, was arrested also but was released immediately. Two of the three Colombian gunboats in the harbor of Panama City ran up the flag of the new republic, but the officer commanding the third ship, the Bogota, sent a message to the chief of police requesting that he release the arrested officers within two hours or prepare for a bombardment of the town. At the end of the stipulated time the commander ordered several shells fired in the direction of the barracks. The fire was returned toward the ship, where-

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Howard C. Hill, Roosevelt and the Caribbean, pp. 60-63.

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Theodore Roosevelt, an Autobiography, p. 522.

upon the Bogota sailed away never to return. The only casualties were a Chinese and a dog killed near the barracks, thus causing the revolution to be termed a "bloodless" one.⁴³

The achievement of the independence of Panama required less than a week. The secessionists proclaimed, November 3, 1903, the independence of Panama as expressed in the document which Amador had brought two weeks earlier from Washington. As early as August of the same year, a council of six men had been named by advocates of separation in Panama to take the leadership in making plans for securing independence. The revolution had been scheduled first for September 22, 1903, the date set for the adjournment of the Colombian Congress. As the adjournment was delayed until the last day of October, the revolution was next planned for November 3, 1903.⁴⁴ In his negotiations with Amador, Bunau-Varilla had specified that it must occur not later than November 3. The United States formally recognized the new and independent Republic of Panama on November 6, 1903. As soon as the news reached Bogota, the Council of Ministers convened to consider a declaration of war on the United States for its alleged complicity in the revolution. The diplomatic corps presented itself in a body to

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Joseph B. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt and His Time, Vol. I, pp. 285-287.

Chester L. Jones, The Caribbean Since 1900, pp. 310-312.

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P. James Eder, Colombia, p. 50.

Joseph B. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt and His Time, Vol. I, p. 285.

counsel against such action, and the offended government decided instead to rely on diplomacy.⁴⁵

The Colombian government asked through the American minister in Bogota to be informed whether it could be allowed to land troops at Colon and Panama City to fight the revolutionists along the line of the railway. This message was received in Washington three days later, November 10, and on November 11, 1903, Secretary Hay replied that it "is not thought desirable to permit landing of Colombian troops on Isthmus, as such a course would precipitate civil war and disturb for an indefinite period the free transit we are pledged to protect."⁴⁶ The Treaty of 1846 between the United States and New Granada, as Colombia was then named, gave the United States the right and imposed upon it the duty of turning any belligerents away from the line of transit. The United States was obligated to prohibit fighting within the zone of the railroad, and the Administration readily construed this to mean that it could automatically prevent Colombia from thereby maintaining her sovereignty over the area needed for canal purposes. The earlier interpretation of the treaty by the statesmen of the United States had been that the United States government was obligated not to interfere with the

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Chester L. Jones, The Caribbean Since 1900, p. 312.
P. James Eder, Colombia, p. 50.

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Joseph B. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt and His Time, Vol. I, p. 287.

efforts of Colombia to maintain order on the isthmus.⁴⁷

Bunau-Varilla notified the Secretary of State in Washington, on November 7, 1903, of his appointment as minister from the Republic of Panama, and presented his credentials to the President six days later. On November 18, 1903, Bunau-Varilla signed with Secretary Hay the treaty between the United States and Panama, in which the United States guaranteed the independence of Panama and Panama gave the United States the right to build the canal.⁴⁸

After signing the treaty, Bunau-Varilla telegraphed the president of the Panama Railroad, an intimate friend of Cromwell, to delay the sailing of the Yucatan for as long a time as it should take the Panamanian government to examine, discuss and ratify the treaty. Having been led to believe that the officials of this company would do everything within their power to aid the cause of independence, Bunau-Varilla thought their delay and refusal to grant the "most simple of requests" most incredible and he made it the subject of an official letter to the State Department of the United States. As long as the notice of ratification of the treaty remained in the possession of the Provisional Government of Panama, Bunau-Varilla feared that the government in Washington might

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William M. Malloy, ed., Treaties..., Vol. I, pp. 302-314.
Joseph C. Freehoff, America and the Canal Title, p. 151.

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William M. Malloy, ed., Treaties..., Vol. II, pp. 1346-1347.

consider that it was being held by Panama for the purpose of reconsideration. Since he felt that he could not depend upon the Panama Railroad for safe transportation, and since he wanted to put the document of ratification in the hands of the American Consul at Panama as soon as possible, Bunau-Varilla's agent used for that purpose the dispatch bag of the American State Department.⁴⁹

President Roosevelt sent the Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty to the Senate of the United States on December 7, 1903, whereupon the leading Republican senators were invited to a consultation at the White House with the President and Secretary Hay. The Senators were in a hostile frame of mind upon arrival, but after "several hours of earnest discussion," they were won over to the views of Roosevelt and Hay, and promised to support the treaty. An eminent senator from a western state probably expressed the opinion of the group, when, as they were leaving, he said in a low tone to Secretary Hay, "Do it, but be as gentle as you can with Colombia."⁵⁰ The Senate of the United States ratified the treaty on February 23, 1904, casting seventy-five votes for it and seventeen against. Two days later President Roosevelt approved it and proclaimed it on the following day.⁵¹

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Phillippe Bunau-Varilla, Panama..., pp. 402-403.

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Phillippe Bunau-Varilla, Panama..., p. 427.

Joseph B. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt and His Time, Vol. I, p. 305.

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Phillippe Bunau-Varilla, Panama..., p. 427.

The Colombian leaders, upon finding the wealthiest of the Colombian provinces no longer a part of that union, confessed to hasty judgment of the Hay-Herran Treaty and attempted to work out a new diplomatic policy. General Reyes made another visit to Washington to assure the government there that Colombia was ready to reopen the interrupted negotiations. As early as December 8, 1903, and several times thereafter, General Reyes raised questions as to the attitude of the United States in case Colombian troops attempted the reconquest of Panama, and the responses of the United States State Department were always unsatisfactory to him and his government. The United States had made a treaty with the new state of Panama to maintain its independence. An invasion would cause bloodshed and disorder, and, in the opinion of President Roosevelt, the time had come to close the chapter of civil war in Panama.⁵²

The consensus of opinion in other nations of the world regarding President Roosevelt's attitude was summed up in the words of the Paris correspondent of The New York Tribune when he said that the announcement of Roosevelt's reception of Phillippe Bunsu-Varilla as minister of the Republic of Panama "is accepted here as the final settlement of the international phase of the Panamanian question." The opinions expressed on all sides in Paris were that "narrow-minded Colombia" got what

she deserved, and that the building of the Panama Canal as an American undertaking was firmly and emphatically approved by all of the French papers.⁵³

General Reyes, still Colombian representative in Washington, presented to the State Department, on December 23, 1903, a list of the grievances of the Colombian government. The first charge was that the premature recognition of the independence of Panama was a violation of international law, and that it was a grave offense and formal attack on Colombian wealth, since the subsequent treaty between the United States and Panama agreed to the opening of a canal through the independent state. The second charge stated that the Treaty of 1846 had been violated by the action of the United States. The United States had not remained neutral, and she had violated the rights of sovereignty which Colombia had and possesses over said territory.⁵⁴ General Reyes further said that Panama was a republic only because "the United States desired it so." Roosevelt's reply to this last statement was that "this country so far from wronging Colombia, made every possible effort to persuade Colombia to allow herself to be benefited."⁵⁵

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Phillippe Bunau-Varilla, Panama..., p. 395.

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William W. Sullivan, A Study in the Relations, pp. 10-12.

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Joseph B. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt and His Time, Vol. I, pp. 309-310.

Once more Reyes offered to have the Hay-Herran Treaty ratified by the Colombian Congress, if the United States would uphold Colombia in declaring martial law and suppressing the Panamanian revolution. Roosevelt said that he would pass by the question of whether or not the Colombian government would keep such a pledge for, "of course, I will not for one moment discuss the possibilities of the United States committing an act of such baseness as to abandon the new Republic of Panama."⁵⁶

Secretary Hay, in his formal reply to General Reyes, justified the actions of the United States as carried out for the best interests of national welfare and the needs of collective civilization. Seventeen nations had recognized the independence of Panama by this time, leaving no doubt as to the public opinion of the world as to the propriety of those actions. The United States had recognized the independence of the Republic of Panama, "and upon its judgment and action in the emergency the Powers of the world have set the seal of their approval."⁵⁷

General Reyes developed a warlike attitude which made a deep impression on many people in the United States. Secretary Hay asked Bunau-Varilla to call upon him and to give him some advice, for many of these persons were influential in commercial

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Joseph B. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt and His Time, Vol. I, p. 292.

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Joseph B. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt and His Time, Vol. I, p. 292.

and governmental circles and they felt that a war with Colombia was eminent, since there were reports that the Colombian government was sending troops by land to Panama. Reyes intimated that this situation could be avoided upon the payment of an indemnity to Colombia. These same persons suggested that Panama pay the indemnity to Colombia with the understanding that finally the Treasury of the United States would reimburse Panama. Bunau-Varilla answered that an invasion of the isthmus by forces coming on foot from Colombia was a "mere bugaboo." "It can only frighten birds, or men with bird's brains." He called it a dishonorable action to purchase tranquility by submitting to blackmail, and that he would resign if the United States government entered into any such negotiation with Reyes. Soon thereafter the reports that Colombian land troops were attempting an invasion of Panama were verified, but it was a doomed undertaking. The troops entered the dense jungles and, from the beginning, became ill so quickly and died so rapidly that the entire force was soon dissipated. The Colombian government soon had to call a retreat.⁵⁸

In a letter to General Reyes, dated January 13, 1904, Secretary Hay said that the United States desired to lend its good offices for the establishment of friendly relations between Colombia and Panama if the former would agree to recog-

nize two stipulations. The first of these would be to submit to a plebiscite the question whether the people of the isthmus preferred allegiance to the Republic of Panama or the United States of Colombia. The second point would be to submit to a special court of arbitration the settlement of the material claims which either Colombia or Panama, by mutual consent, might reasonably bring forward against the other, as a consequence of facts preceding or following the declaration of independence by Panama. Feeling that the United States was ignoring the real issue and knowing that the Colombian acceptance of such stipulations was an impossibility, General Reyes immediately left Washington, with his demands in behalf of the Colombian government definitely unsatisfied.⁵⁹

With such matters and questions settled, at least for the time being, official attention in the United States turned to the building of the canal itself. At first the construction was placed in charge of a commission, by an act of Congress, but there was unavoidable corruption and inefficiency in this method, and, in 1907, Roosevelt transferred the management into the hands of the army engineers, with Colonel Goethals at the head with supreme power. Goethals proved to be a master executive and quelled all labor uprisings and brought about the completion of the gigantic task in 1914. This success would have been impossible without the services of Colonel

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Phillippe Bunau-Varilla, Panama..., p. 419.

Gorgas, the chief sanitary officer, who wiped out the contagion of malaria and yellow fever, so prevalent on the isthmus of Panama, and made the canal zone a safe and healthful region.⁶⁰

For more than a decade after the revolt of Panama, accusations of conspiracy between the Roosevelt Administration and the secessionists of Panama arose among the politicians and people of the United States, being incited many times by articles which periodically appeared in print. Usually Roosevelt ignored them, but occasionally, as in his message to Congress on January 4, 1904, he mentioned and refuted these accusations for fear that unthinking persons might take the silence of mere self-respect for acquiescence. He said that these injurious insinuations were as destitute of foundation as of propriety. He thought it proper to say that no one connected with the government of the United States had any part "in preparing, inciting, or encouraging the late revolution" on the isthmus of Panama, and "save from the reports of our military and naval officers...no one connected with this government had any previous knowledge of the revolution" except such as was accessible to any person of ordinary intelligence who read the newspapers and kept up an acquaintance with current public affairs.⁶¹ Usually the criticism was the subject of

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Abram R. Brabacher, ad. ed., The Volume Library, p. 225.

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Joseph B. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt and His Time, Vol. I, pp. 292-293.

birth to him and his official advisers, for the Cabinet was a unit in support of his policy.

President Roosevelt frequently expressed the idea that the great enterprise of building the interoceanic canal should not be held up in order to gratify the whim of an incapable government, and that when the state of Panama, by unanimous action of its people, declared itself an independent republic, he had felt that the time for hesitation on the part of the United States had passed.⁶² In a letter to the Reverend Dr. David D. Thompson, Editor of the Northwestern Christian Advocate, dated December 22, 1903, Roosevelt presented a rather elaborate justification of his actions. "A revolutionary movement can only be justified by showing that it has ample cause, and that good will follow from its success." Panama had suffered oppression for years under the misgovernment and misrule of the Colombian government and the people rose "literally as one man" upon Colombia's rejection of the Hay-Herran Treaty. When once this uprising had occurred, "the United States was bound by every consideration of honor and humanity, and of national and international interest," to take exactly the steps that it had taken.⁶³

Bunau-Varilla, in defending his own part and in denying the slander of conspiracy, said that "The collusion of the

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Theodore Roosevelt, an Autobiography, pp. 522-523.

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Joseph B. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt and His Time, Vol. I, pp. 293-294.

Washington Government with the insurgents could not be demonstrated, for the very simple but very powerful reason, that such collusion had never existed either directly or indirectly.⁶⁴ Roosevelt remarked that he did not know what Bunau-Varilla had advised the revolutionists, but that he would have been "a dull fellow indeed," if he could not have made an accurate guess as to what the United States government would do and advise his people accordingly.⁶⁵

Secretary Hay was in hearty accord with every step taken by the President and joined him in resenting and refuting the charge of "conspiracy." Hay wrote a letter, December 8, 1903, to James Ford Rhodes, an American historian, wherein he explained that his and the President's decision was made on the instant and that they had decided not to sit back and let "those gentlemen cut each other's throats" for an indefinite time, destroying at the same time whatever remnant of property and interest the United States had in Panama. "I had no hesitation as to the proper course to take, and have had no doubt of the propriety of it since."⁶⁶

While making an address at Jackson, Michigan, on July 4, 1904, to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Republican Party, Secretary Hay attacked the slanderous

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Phillippe Bunau-Varilla, Panama..., p. 410.

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Joseph B. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt and His Time, Vol. I, p. 308.

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Joseph B. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt..., Vol. I, p. 308.

stories about Theodore Roosevelt:

He acted wisely and beneficently, and all some people can find to criticize in his action is that he was too brisk about it. If a thing is right and proper to do, it does not make it criminal to do it promptly. No, gentlemen! That was a time when the hour and the man arrived together. He struck while the iron was white hot on the anvil of opportunity, and forged as perfect a bit of honest statecraft as this generation has seen.⁶⁷

Roosevelt in later years as ex-President did some damage, in his speeches and correspondence, to his own claim of innocence as President. While speaking at the University of California, on March 23, 1911, Roosevelt definitely stated that "I took the Canal Zone and let Congress debate and while the debate goes on the canal does too."⁶⁸ The phrase "I took" possibly was a poor choice of words because it was pronounced upon and construed by his critics as an admission that he had used arbitrary and unjustifiable methods. This criticism irritated him very little, as he showed in his address before the National Press Club in Washington, on January 24, 1918:

Panama declared itself independent and wanted to complete the Panama Canal, and opened negotiations with us. I had two courses open. I might have taken the matter under advisement and put it before the Senate, in which case should have had a number of most able speeches on the subject. We would have had a number of very profound arguments, and they would have been going on now, and the Panama Canal would be in the dim future yet. We would have had a half century of discussion, and perhaps

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Joseph B. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt and His Time, Vol. I, pp. 300-301.

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Joseph B. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt..., Vol. I, p. 308. Theodore Roosevelt, an Autobiography, p. 537.

the Panama Canal. I preferred we should have the Panama Canal first and the half century of discussion afterward. And now instead of discussing the canal before it was built, which would have been harmful, they merely discuss me--a discussion which I regard with benign interest.⁶⁹

Even after William H. Taft became President these rumors and charges persisted, disturbing the new Administration by putting an unfavorable light upon its policies and keeping alive unpleasant public sentiment. The New York World seemed to be the most persistent in publishing articles concerning the part of the Roosevelt Administration played in the Panamanian revolution. President Taft at last came to realize that the Roosevelt Administration would have to be vindicated in order to keep the vexatious matter from reappearing periodically. Under President Taft's direction, Henry L. Stimson, United States District Attorney for the Southern District of New York, filed on May 4, 1909, charges in that Federal Court against The New York World for its unsubstantiated charges against the Roosevelt Administration. A great deal of testimony was taken but the suit came to naught as the indictment was dropped in February of the following year on the grounds that the Federal Court did not have jurisdiction over the case. That paper, in preparing its case, sent a commission to Panama, accompanied by its own lawyers, to try to discover evidence that the Roosevelt Administration had been guilty of complicity

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Joseph B. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt and His Time, Vol. I, p. 307.

in setting up the revolution in Panama. This commission failed utterly, since no such evidence could be found. Not a word of testimony was introduced to show that any act by the United States Navy or Army could be deemed interference, or anything "more than the carrying out of the policy which the Government has pursued of keeping transit across the Isthmus free from disorder."⁷⁰

The Panamanian episode not only created strained relations with Colombia but also made a very bad impression throughout Latin America, causing the United States to be eyed with a suspicion which long persisted.⁷¹ Roosevelt, in his message to Congress on December 3, 1906, said that in many parts of the southern continent there had been much misunderstanding of the attitude and purposes of the United States toward the other American republics. They had the impression that the assertion of the Monroe Doctrine by the United States implied an assumption of superiority, and of the right to exercise some kind of protectorate over the countries to whose territory that doctrine applied, thereby jeopardizing their sovereignty. This was not true, yet that impression continued to be a serious barrier "to good understanding, to friendly intercourse, and to the introduction of American capital and the

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Joseph B. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt and His Time, Vol. I, p. 307.

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John H. Latane, The United States and Latin America, p. 192.

extension of American trade." This impression was so widespread that apparently it could not be disintegrated by any ordinary means.⁷²

Elihu Root attended the Inter-American Conference of 1906 at Rio de Janeiro in order to dispel this impression and to reassure the Latin American countries. Upon the announcement of his intention to attend the Conference, most of the republics in South America extended to him invitations to visit them. Colombia, still smarting under the loss of Panama and believing that Root had voted against holding the conference at Bogota, did not extend such an invitation nor permit her diplomats to attend the functions given particularly in his honor. As this extended tour progressed, the Latin Americans recognized in their visitor a statesman at once "diplomático and simpático."⁷³ Even Colombia capitulated and he went to Cartagena whereupon diplomatic relations between that government and the United States were carried thereafter in an easier manner and the groundwork was laid for an ultimate settlement of the question of the Panamanian affair. The Inter-American Conference, to which he made the opening address, hailed Elihu Root as "the pride of the hemisphere" and the President of Argentina called him "a liberator of the human intellect."

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Speeches Incident to the Visit of Secretary Root to South America, preface, pp. ix-xiv.

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Harper's Weekly, Vol. I, August 25, 1906, p. 1192.
September 12, 1906, pp. 1272-1274.

The New Orleans Times-Democrat said that Root achieved wonders in the course of his brief visit by dispelling that distrust of Washington policy which had been prevalent in the South American capitals.⁷⁴ Roosevelt said that he carried with him a message of peace and friendship, and of strong desire for good understanding and mutual helpfulness. "He was everywhere received in the spirit of his message."⁷⁵

There was a serious and far reaching consequence from which the United States actually suffered following the recognition of the Republic of Panama. The long continued difference with Colombia was detrimental to the business interests of the United States located there. The United States gradually came around to the point of admitting officially that technically Colombia had suffered a wrong at the hands of the government of the United States. Successive efforts were made by the Taft and Wilson Administrations to secure the adoption of a treaty which would placate Colombia, but each time one of the governments disapproved the provisions or failed to ratify the proposed treaty. Colombia proposed arbitration several times, but the United States would not countenance such a proposal.⁷⁶ During Woodrow Wilson's Administration, the Thompson-Urrutia Treaty was negotiated, in April, 1914, whereby

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Current Literature, Vol. XII, July 1906, pp. 252-254.

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Speeches Incident to the Visit of Secretary Root to South America, preface, p. ix.

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John Mabry Mathews, American Foreign Relations, p. 126.

the United States agreed to pay \$25,000,000 in gold to Colombia and "to express regret" at her part in the Panamanian affair. The Colombian Congress ratified that treaty, but the Senate of the United States refused to do so.⁷⁷

Early in Warren G. Harding's term as President of the United States, the Thompson-Urrutia Treaty was revived and after a few changes, it was ratified by both governments, becoming effective in 1922. By the terms of the treaty the United States agreed to pay Colombia \$25,000,000 to be divided into five annual installments. Furthermore, the treaty agreed, without regret or an apology on the part of the United States, that both parties desired "to remove all misunderstanding growing out of the political events in Panama in November, 1903."⁷⁸

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William W. Sullivan, A Study in the Relations Between Colombia and the United States, 1900-1924, p. 13.

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John Mabry Mathews, American Foreign Relations, p. 137.

CHAPTER V

SIGNIFICANCES

It was a great triumph for American diplomacy when President Cleveland, in 1895, reaffirmed the soundness of the Monroe Doctrine and its application to the instance of the Venezuela-British Guiana boundary dispute, claiming for that principle of American diplomacy a place in the code of international law.¹ The beginning of disintegration of the policy of isolation as long practiced by the United States was at hand. This particular incident helped to usher in a new era for American politics and foreign policy by way of further diplomatic intervention. President Cleveland and Secretary Olney, although they were accused of using language which was too harsh, did much more than dispose of a discussion over a bit of tropical wilderness.² They gave the United States a new standing in the eyes of the nations of the world, and the United States, having set the pace by dealing firmly with Great Britain, found it easier to deal with Germany later in the Venezuelan blockade.

Although recognition of the Monroe Doctrine, in action if not in words, was practically forced upon Great Britain

¹ John H. Latane, The United States and Latin America, p. 249.

² Henry James, Richard Olney and His Public Service, pp. 141-142.

by American intervention and its attending circumstances, British statesmen nevertheless realized that by acquiescing in this matter they were strengthening the none too secure foundation of friendly relations between the two English speaking countries. The acquiescence definitely aided the fraternal feelings of both Great Britain and the United States. These two nations were beginning to realize that they must convert their relationship from one of competition to one of co-operation. While Great Britain was unctiously recognizing the Monroe Doctrine in exchange for a friendly feeling between the Anglo-Saxon nations, which later resulted in an entente, Germany and the other nations of Europe were being left out in the cold as a result of their short sighted diplomatic actions.³ At the turn of the century the United States government felt that no policy which it might adopt and carry out in the Caribbean area would cause any of the European nations to protest too greatly, since there were many cross-currents of European politics and interests.⁴

As for the Latin American nations, they could only applaud the actual settlement of the Venezuelan difficulties, although the leaders of these governments had serious misgivings as to the method employed. Some of the phrases used by Secretary Olney in his dispatches during the Venezuela-

³ Wilfrid H. Callcott, The Caribbean Policy of the United States, 1890-1920, p. 95.

⁴ Wilfrid H. Callcott, The Caribbean Policy...., p. 106.

British Guiana boundary dispute stirred up an angry clamor in and piqued the national susceptibilities of the Latin American peoples and governments. These peoples showed that they attended more to words and remembered more expressions longer than the Anglo-Saxons.⁵ Olney said that the United States was practically "sovereign on this continent." The lesser nations became filled with doubts as to their positions in the political scale of the nations of the world. Officials of the State Department of the United States repeated that its policy did not forbid European nations to collect debts actually due them, but that it was intended only to secure territorial integrity in the western hemisphere. This statement could mean not only that the Latin American nations had to pay their debts to European nations but also that they were menaced by what the United States called its sovereign right to speak and act for them whenever it saw fit. They felt that the least they could do was to request or demand the right of jointly endorsing the Monroe Doctrine so that they would automatically have a voice in its application.⁶

President Cleveland and his Administration, although willing for disputes to be settled by arbitration as long as they were settled peaceably, would not permit the use of force by an "outsider" in any part of the western hemi-

⁵ Henry James, Richard Olney and His Public Service, pp. 136-137.

⁶ Wilfrid H. Callcott, The Caribbean Policy of the United States, 1890-1920, p. 95.

sphere. The President had reached the conclusion, and he believed that the people of the United States were willing to support that conclusion, that the western hemisphere was the "backyard" of the United States and that the United States government intended to be responsible for international activities therein.⁷ The Latin American nations were delighted at the idea of protection from threatened invasion on the part of European powers, but in the minds of many of their leaders there was a question as to whether the cure was not worse than the disease. Francisco G. Calderon, Peruvian diplomat, said that to many Latin Americans "The tutelage of the United States seems...more dangerous than the German invasion."⁸

Venezuela was not a little embittered by the fact that the boundary settlement of 1895 was actually negotiated by the representatives of the United States and Great Britain while Venezuela, as the party most concerned, had been given the privilege merely of looking on while its interests were determined.⁹ The agreement settling the Venezuelan blockade by Germany, Great Britain, and Italy was more or less of the

⁷ Wilfrid H. Galleott, The Caribbean Policy of the United States, 1890-1920, p. 96.

⁸ Francisco G. Calderon, Latin America: Its Rise and Progress, p. 297.

⁹ The Venezuelan Arbitration before the Hague Tribunal, 1903, p. 1125.

same nature and gave many Latin Americans the idea that the conduct of the United States was purely selfish in both purpose and intent. What was done, however, as distinguished from what was said during the course of the controversies, was the important matter and was something which the Latin Americans welcomed. Their weakness could not but cause them to be gratified when the United States gave proof of willingness to come to their support, disclaiming any intention of interfering in the internal affairs of the Latin American countries.¹⁰

It became Secretary Root's burden, as an aftermath of the Colombian episode, to quell the suspicions of the leaders of the Latin American governments and induce them to realize that the United States did not want to intervene unnecessarily in the affairs of these governments. Popular feeling in Colombia against the leaders and the people of the United States because of their alleged complicity in the Panamanian incident did not abate one iota. As time went on, in fact, this bitter feeling grew and disseminated throughout all of the Latin American countries, causing these peoples to look askance at the protectiveness of the State Department of the United States. The President of Ecuador expressed the general feeling of the Latin American nations toward the United States when he addressed his Congress on August 10, 1904. He said

¹⁰ Henry James, Richard Olney and His Public Service, pp. 136-137.

that all Latin American nations should profit by the "awful lesson" learned by Colombia through the intervention of President Roosevelt who had shown a lack of complete disregard for the interests of the countries of Latin America, no matter what his reason for sanctioning the Panamanian revolution. The Ecuadorian President hastened to express to the Colombian President that "we citizens of Ecuador all feel a profound regret at an occurrence so unfortunate for that Republic and for Latin America in general."¹¹

Conditions remained bitter throughout the Latin American countries for many years; in 1905 and 1906, however, relations between the United States and these nations improved slightly when the United States used its good offices to bring about a settlement of the boundary disputes between Venezuela and Colombia. Colombia even indicated its willingness for the United States to act as arbitrator, but as would be expected there remained a gnawing fear in the minds of the Colombian leaders that the United States was using this opportunity as a means to influence other Colombian provinces to join Panama in order to profit from the protection of the United States. John Barrett, United States Minister to Colombia, gave full assurances to that government that the United States in no way would abet such a movement, but only time could allay

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Wilfrid H. Calcott, The Caribbean Policy of the United States, 1890-1920, pp. 240-241.

the fears based upon previous experience.¹²

The United States as a rising creditor nation had to be careful to protect its own investments abroad, and had to be particularly careful of the manner in which this was accomplished. When Luis Drago, in 1902, wanted the western hemisphere to accept his doctrine as a replacement for the Monroe Doctrine, Secretary Hay, in a diplomatic and non-committal response, cited from President Roosevelt's message to Congress, December 2, 1902, that "No independent nation in America need have the slightest fear of aggression from the United States if each maintained order within its own boundaries, and discharged its obligations to foreigners. "They can rest assured that they have nothing to dread from outside interference."¹³ There was a sequel to this interchange of correspondence which was of lasting importance. At the Second Hague Conference, in 1907, the nations of the world agreed in what is known as the Porter Convention to renounce the right of collection of debts by force unless the debtor had at first refused arbitration by a reasonable and fair international tribunal. President Roosevelt and Secretary Hay wanted the referring of disputes to the Hague Court to become a practice among the nations of the world,

¹²
Wilfrid H. Callcott, The Caribbean Policy of the United States, 1890-1920, pp. 240-241.

¹³
Quoted in Wilfrid H. Callcott, The Caribbean Policy..., p. 137.

and particularly among the countries of Latin America.¹⁴

The United States is responsible beyond its own borders. Every nation is. Although many of the Latin American governments thought that President Roosevelt considered their countries to be "the property of the United States,"¹⁵ he nevertheless stressed his idea that "we are neighbors," in order that all nations might have a growing joint concern for the western hemisphere.¹⁶ The foremost nations of the world had given recognition, as in the case in which Germany, Great Britain, and Italy told the United States State Department of their portended actions toward Venezuela before the beginning the blockade in 1902, to the "Primacy of the United States" in American affairs. The most recent tendency is, however, toward "a concert of the Americas," in which the United States shall be only one member, although undoubtedly the guiding factor for many years to come.¹⁷

President Roosevelt's policy was one of opportunism, rather than one of approach towards a fixed goal, and he apparently was unaware of the terminal of his course when he "took Panama," and intervened for Venezuela and in the

¹⁴ Wilfrid H. Callcott, The Caribbean Policy of the United States, 1890-1920, pp. 137-138.

¹⁵ Wilfrid H. Callcott, The Caribbean Policy..., p. 237.

¹⁶ Chester L. Jones, The Caribbean Since 1900, p. 477.

¹⁷ Henry G. Hodges, The Doctrine of Intervention, p. 14.

Dominican Republic, but these actions on his part necessitated a broadening of the Monroe Doctrine and an assumption of obligations by the American people at the turn of the century, which had been undreamed of by the generation which gave birth to the idea of the Monroe Doctrine.¹⁸ The intervention of the United States in the affairs of the Latin American countries forced a new policy into existence to face the new needs of the new century.¹⁹

¹⁸ Howard C. Hill, Roosevelt and the Caribbean, pp. 212-215.

¹⁹ Wilfrid H. Cullen, The Caribbean Policy of the United States, 1890-1920, p. 210.

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