

SUMNER WELLES: COMMISSIONER TO THE
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

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DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

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PREFACE

This study examines the role of Sumner Welles in the termination of the United States occupation of the Dominican Republic. The primary objective is to inquire into Welles' involvement with and mission to the Dominican Republic to determine his concept of United States Caribbean policy. In negotiating the termination of the Dominican occupation, Welles led the United States away from a policy of imperialism and toward a policy which stressed friendly cooperation with the Caribbean nations.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE

The resignation of Sumner Welles as Under-Secretary of State on September 30, 1943, ended a diplomatic career that had contributed much to the realization of the goals of international good neighborliness and Western Hemispheric solidarity. During the twenty years Welles was associated with the State Department of the United States, he struggled to remove the notion of imperialism and "dollar diplomacy" from United States relations with other nations. President Franklin D. Roosevelt's statement in his first inaugural address that in the field of foreign affairs the United States would adopt the attitude of a Good Neighbor is primarily attributable to Welles' influence. Roosevelt and Welles had discussed United States foreign policy and, in particular, hemispheric policy, on numerous occasions during the months preceding the inauguration, and some of Welles' ideas were expressed by Roosevelt in his first major address on foreign relations.¹ Over the next ten years the men selected to fill the more important State Department posts sought to follow a Latin American policy based on the Good Neighbor philosophy. Roosevelt's choice for Assistant Secretary of State with responsibility over Latin American affairs was Sumner Welles.

In the only scholarly work devoted to Sumner Welles and his role in the Good Neighbor Policy, the author states, "Sumner Welles, hard-

working career diplomat, worked out and detailed the program of the Good Neighbor for Franklin Roosevelt."² Bryce Wood observes that during the development of the Good Neighbor Policy, "Welles dominated the day-to-day decisions relating to Latin America"³ President Roosevelt was not the only person influenced by ". . . one of the wisest of American diplomats"⁴ T. Harry Williams, Richard N. Current and Frank Freidel conclude in their work, A History of the United States, that former Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes, who tried to establish a new policy of extending American good will toward Latin America, was decidedly influenced by Sumner Welles during his first few months in office.⁵ The New York Times, in praising Welles' appointment as Ambassador to Cuba in 1933, commented that "Secretary Hughes never hesitated to employ Sumner Welles when difficult and responsible work was to be done."⁶ Statements such as these indicate that a complete examination of United States policies toward Latin America during the 1920s and 1930s must take into account the role of Sumner Welles.

Although Welles is acknowledged as having played a major part in the development of the Good Neighbor Policy, few historians have examined his ideas concerning foreign policy or their development. This is especially interesting since autobiographies, biographies, and other studies discuss nearly all of the important men, including some works on men who served in positions farther removed from the center of decision-making than was Welles, who served during the Roosevelt years. Welles did not write an autobiography, and his biography is yet to be written. That historians have paid little attention to Welles is partly attributable to the fact that Welles'

personal papers have not been released for study. In addition, Welles did not attract much public attention as a diplomat or State Department official until after 1933. As a result, he was overshadowed by Roosevelt, Cordell Hull, and the events that erupted into World War II. Historians who have inquired into American diplomatic history for the years between 1920 and 1943 generally give Welles only passing attention, choosing instead to identify presidents and secretaries of state with particular foreign policies and policy decisions. Perhaps this is as it should be, since presidents and secretaries of state do have the responsibility and authority to make policy and render the major practical decisions in line with that policy. This practice, however, does not give credit to the lower level officials for their day-to-day decisions that breathe life into the policy and decisions that others make. In Welles' case, he not only made real and tangible the Latin American policies of Presidents Harding and Roosevelt and Secretaries of State Hughes and Hull, but he convinced these men that these were the policies that they should have followed.

The most readily available and authoritative source of information relating to Welles' role in United States-Latin American relations are the appropriate volumes of The Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States.⁷ In this essentially official record of American foreign relations, the student finds the final versions of signed treaties as well as many of the letters, telegrams, and memoranda that were sent and received by the State Department. The attitudes and ideas of individual diplomats, such as Welles, are evident in many of these documents; in Welles' case, however, these

volumes do not contain the complete record of his involvement. In order to examine fully Welles' influence on Latin American-United States relations, especially his role in terminating the United States occupation of the Dominican Republic, it is also necessary to review the letters and memoranda that were not published in the Foreign Relations volumes. These documents are among the public records preserved in the National Archives. Welles' speeches, delivered during his tenure as Assistant and later Under-Secretary of State, are also available for examination. Although Welles presented these speeches on behalf of the Roosevelt administration, they still reflect his own opinions and ideas. Welles had a reputation for being honest and direct, and in the area of inter-American relations his views closely paralleled those of the administration he served.⁸

Welles was the author of six books. One can find the clearest statement of his philosophy and ideas in these works. Five of the books were written after 1942 and concern the war and post-war era.⁹ These works do not constitute Welles' memoirs; rather, he recalls the diplomatic decisions that were made and the effect of the policies that were adopted. Welles minimizes his own involvement in those decisions in which he played a part, except to respond occasionally to the criticism of others and to clarify his position where disputes occurred. Written as they were at the end of his State Department career, these five books are the end result of Welles' diplomatic experiences. Welles' first book, Naboth's Vineyard: The Dominican Republic 1844-1924, a two-volume history of that Caribbean nation published in 1928, is an early statement of his conception of what a Good Neighbor Policy should entail.¹⁰ Naboth's Vineyard followed

Welles' first major effort to end United States imperialism and reverse the policy of intervention. It also predates Welles' appointment as Ambassador to Cuba in 1933, the first major test of the Good Neighbor Policy.

The concluding chapter of Naboth's Vineyard reveals that Welles had, by 1928, formulated the basic concepts of the Good Neighbor Policy. A diplomatic biography of Welles covering the period between 1933 and 1943 states that Welles ". . . learned by his mistakes that the United States should not presume to dictate internal policies of independent American nations."¹¹ If this was true of Welles during the development of the Good Neighbor Policy, then the conclusions expressed in Naboth's Vineyard reveal what he learned from his experiences in ending the United States occupation of the Dominican Republic. In writing Naboth's Vineyard, Welles did not detail his own important activities which helped restore the Dominican Republic's sovereignty. The most complete and accurate account of Welles' role in ending the occupation of that nation is contained in the third chapter of Dana G. Munro's book, The United States and the Caribbean Republics, 1921-33.¹² However, Munro, who was a contemporary of Welles in the State Department in the early 1920s, did not make Welles the subject of his chapter; rather, he provided an in-depth look at the issues and problems with which Welles had dealt.

The purpose of this study is to test the hypothesis that Welles' involvement with and mission to the Dominican Republic from 1920-25 were important to the development of his ideas on United States-Latin American relations. Welles' official mission to the Dominican Republic provided him an opportunity to accomplish a specific personal

objective and to initiate a new concept in foreign policy. His attitude and methods reflected his concept of what United States foreign policy should be and how it should be carried out. It seems likely that Welles' experience in the Dominican Republic may have altered or at least refined his thinking in regard to the policy he believed the United States should adopt and follow.

Before discussing Welles' role in ending American military intervention in the Dominican Republic, it would be of value to trace briefly his career up to 1922. Sumner Welles, a member of a prominent New York family, was born on October 14, 1892. He was named for his great-uncle, Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts, and he seemed to inherit the distinguished senator's interest in foreign affairs. Like his childhood acquaintance, Franklin Roosevelt, Welles attended Groton School and Harvard University, graduating from the latter in 1914 with a Bachelor of Arts degree. He joined the Department of State in July, 1915, and received a secretarial post in the Tokyo embassy. Franklin Roosevelt, who at that time was Assistant Secretary of the Navy, aided his entry into the State Department.

Welles spent two years in Tokyo; his efficient and precise work favorably impressed his superiors. In August, 1917, his desire for an assignment in Latin America was realized when he assumed the post of second secretary at the embassy in Buenos Aires, Argentina. In this position Welles perfected his fluency in the Spanish language and became acquainted with the Latin American view of political affairs. While in Buenos Aires Welles' ideas concerning international good neighborliness and Western Hemispheric solidarity began to germinate. His work was so outstanding that he was transferred to

Washington in May, 1920, and was named Assistant Chief of the Division of Latin American Affairs. Within three months he became acting chief of the division, and in August, 1921, he was appointed to head the division. For personal reasons Welles resigned from the State Department on March 15, 1922. Four months later, however, an opportunity arose which permitted Welles to resume his diplomatic career and continue, in a more direct way, to advance his ideas on Caribbean policy and diplomacy.¹³

When Charles Evans Hughes became Secretary of State in 1921, he allowed Welles to play a larger role in the development and conduct of United States-Latin American relations. In 1922, Welles was Hughes' trained technician at the Conference on Central American Affairs, which added substance to the principles of arbitration of disputes and non-intervention. In 1923, when a defeated presidential candidate in Honduras resorted to revolution, the United States resolved to abide by these principles. The United States immediately sent warships to the Honduran coasts and landed marines. In addition, Welles was dispatched to mediate the dispute along with delegates of the other four Central American states. As a result of Welles' efforts, a solution was reached which did not impair Honduran independence or sovereignty. No United States military intervention occurred, and no United States financial protectorate was established.

Following these two successes and the withdrawal of United States troops from the Dominican Republic in 1924, Welles replied to one critic of United States Caribbean policy. Samuel Guy Inman had charged in an article which appeared in the Atlantic Monthly that the United States continued to foster a program of economic imperialism

and isolation of Europe from the Caribbean. The results of this policy were, according to Inman, damaged friendships and suspicion.¹⁴

In his reply, Welles stated he was not convinced that more than a small proportion of the inhabitants of any one of the Latin American nations shared this viewpoint and that the day of dollar diplomacy in Central America was past.¹⁵ Welles opined that the record of United States dealings with the Latin America republics

. . . revealed a consistent effort on our part to strengthen the foundations of constitutional government, to develop legitimate commercial relations, and, by demonstration and friendly advice, to further the settlement by peaceful methods of international disputes.¹⁶

From his review of the relations of the United States with several of the Latin American nations, Welles concluded that during the period from 1912 to 1922, the United States had been sincere and unselfish in its desire to promote understanding and remove discord and at all times had used its influence on the side of right and justice.¹⁷ In comparing Inman's and Welles' viewpoints, it is apparent that where Inman saw the United States engaging in imperialism, Welles did not. Welles described the practical task confronting the United States in its dealings with the Latin American nations in these words:

Our relations with all the neighboring republics should be those existing between free and independent nations; yet, until certain of these countries have developed a firm tradition of orderly, constitutional government, the United States must be prepared to step in to protect the lives and property of its citizens should they at any time be in danger; and it must likewise be ready to assume the responsibility of offering its friendly mediation, or, in extreme cases, its friendly intervention, should conditions be such as to threaten . . . the Monroe Doctrine¹⁸

In addition, Welles considered that the United States was justified in tailoring its dealings with various Latin American republics because

of ". . . geographic proximity, treaty relations, and other reasons"19 Welles recognized positive common aspects in United States relations with all of its southern neighbors, but he was also aware that errors and abuses had occurred in its relations with individual nations.²⁰

The error which Welles especially decried was the United States military occupation of the Dominican Republic. He believed that the United States did not have the same right of intervention as he believed existed with regard to Cuba. He opined that President Wilson would not have authorized the occupation had he been cognizant of the events which prompted the decision.²¹ For an appreciation of Welles' viewpoint and in order to set the stage for Welles' role in correcting the error, it is appropriate to examine United States-Caribbean relations in general from 1900 to 1920 and to consider in some detail United States-Dominican relations during the same period.

NOTES

¹Charles C. Griffin, ed., "Welles to Roosevelt: A Memorandum on Inter-American Relations, 1933," Hispanic American Historical Review, XXXIX (May, 1954), p. 190; James B. Reston, "Acting Secretary," New York Times Magazine (August 3, 1941), p. 9.

²Frank Warren Groff, "The Strategy of Involvement: A Diplomatic Biography of Sumner Welles, 1933-43," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1971), from Dissertation Abstracts International: The Humanities and Social Sciences, Vol. 32, No. 7 (Ann Arbor, Michigan: January 1972), p. 3919-A.

³Bryce Wood, The Making of the Good Neighbor Policy (New York: 1967), p. 340.

⁴Hubert Herring, A History of Latin America from the Beginning to the Present (3rd ed., New York: 1968), p. 447.

⁵T. Harry Williams, Richard N. Current, and Frank Freidel, A History of the United States (New York: 1959), p. 426.

⁶Editorial, New York Times, April 24, 1933, p. 14.

⁷U. S. Department of State, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States (Washington, D.C.: Annual, 1920-1925), hereinafter referred to as Foreign Relations.

⁸Reston, p. 9.

⁹Sumner Welles, The World of the Four Freedoms (New York: 1943); The Time for Decision (New York: 1944); Where are We Heading? (New York: 1946); We Need Not Fail (Boston: 1948); Seven Decisions that Shaped History (New York: 1951).

¹⁰Sumner Welles, Naboth's Vineyard: The Dominican Republic 1844-1924, 2 Vols. (New York: 1928).

¹¹Groff, p. 3919-A.

¹²Dana G. Munro, The United States and the Caribbean Republics, 1921-1933 (Princeton, New Jersey: 1974), pp. 44-70.

¹³Sumner Welles, "Is America Imperialistic?", Atlantic Monthly, Vol. 134 (September 1924), pp. 413-415.

¹⁴Samuel Guy Inman, "Imperialistic America," Atlantic Monthly, Vol. 134 (April 1924), pp. 107-116.

¹⁵Sumner Welles, "Is America Imperialistic?". pp. 412-413.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 413.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 422-423.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 413.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid., p. 415.

CHAPTER II

UNITED STATES RELATIONS WITH THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, 1900-1920

American involvement in the Caribbean increased rapidly during the years just prior to the turn of the century, and the United States developed a foreign policy that took into consideration the economic, strategic, and political importance of the area. The foundation of this policy was the Monroe Doctrine; the importance and significance of the Monroe Doctrine became more apparent as American interest in an isthmian interoceanic canal grew because of its economic and strategic value.

The United States wanted to expand its commercial ties with the Caribbean and Latin American Republics. It was due to trade considerations that the United States initially believed it had a vested interest in the construction and operation of a canal. In addition to the economic benefits that were expected from the venture, military leaders such as Admiral Alfred T. Mahan measured the canal's importance in strategic terms. Mahan argued that the defense of the United States required a large, two-ocean navy; for this navy to fight at maximum strength in either ocean, an isthmian canal was necessary.¹ The sound reasoning of Mahan's argument was proven during the course of the Spanish-American War. Immediately following the Spanish-American War the United States, for both strategic and commercial

reasons, focused its attention on securing the right to construct and operate a canal across the isthmus. The signing of the second Hay-Pauncefote treaty in November, 1901, finally removed the diplomatic roadblocks. This treaty gave the United States the right to construct, regulate, and manage an isthmian canal and to fortify it against foreign attack. As a result of the "big stick" diplomacy of President Theodore Roosevelt, the new Republic of Panama became the site for the all important interocean waterway, which was opened to traffic in August, 1914.

The decision to construct and operate an isthmian canal based on economic and strategic considerations also required that the United States provide for its protection. The adequate defense of the Panama Canal necessitated United States control over the Caribbean approaches. Thus, at the same time the United States pursued its canal objectives, it also sought to establish United States hegemony in the Caribbean. The acquisition of Puerto Rico at the end of the Spanish-American War provided the United States its first territorial foothold. In 1903, the United States acquired virtually complete control over the Bay of Guantanamo in Cuba and began construction of a major naval base there. Over a decade later the United States purchased the Virgin Islands to prevent their falling into German hands during World War I. These territorial acquisitions, although vital to the defense of the canal, did not eliminate all the threats to the canal's safety. The possibility of foreign intervention loomed large because of the chronic political instability and financial irresponsibility that existed in most of the Caribbean republics.

One major objective of American foreign policy in the Caribbean

was to provide stability and order. The United States believed that by forcing political stability and economic order upon the Caribbean republics it could eliminate the major threat to the Monroe Doctrine as well as improve its own commercial relations. In pursuit of this objective, the United States intervened on several occasions in the internal affairs of her Caribbean neighbors. On one hand, these interventions produced the desired results by preventing European intervention in the Caribbean republics. On the other hand, American intervention largely failed to establish political stability and financial order. American efforts toward this end merely increased anti-American feelings throughout Latin America.

The United States employed various forms of intervention in its dealings with the Caribbean republics between 1900 and 1920. Prior to 1913 and the presidency of Woodrow Wilson, the United States had routinely extended recognition to de facto governments when they had demonstrated control of the nation and a capability for honoring their international obligations. Wilson introduced a policy of de jure recognition. Under this doctrine of legitimacy the United States made recognition of a government contingent upon the acceptance of certain conditions, often some form of American financial controls. Latin Americans regarded de jure recognition as a form of intervention in the domestic affairs of a nation and protested its use. In 1930, the Mexican Foreign Minister, Genaro Estrada, reiterated Latin American objections to de jure recognition in what is now called the Estrada Doctrine. This Doctrine calls for immediate and unconditional recognition of any government, regardless of how it comes to power, and would abolish recognition as an instrument of policy. Since 1930

the United States has come to accept a less extreme version of the Estrada Doctrine. Before 1930, however, the United States extracted concessions from several Caribbean governments in an effort to help resolve their political and economic problems.²

The United States also employed other means of influencing Caribbean governments. The fate of governments in power or the outcome of revolutionary efforts were effectively controlled through application of arms embargoes. In Cuba, Haiti, Panama, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic, constabularies trained and commanded by Americans replaced the national armies. In Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic the constabularies were converted into instruments for the rise to power of later dictators. Since much of the political instability in the Caribbean nations was due to the prevalence of corrupt election practices, the United States directed the drafting of new electoral codes and in some cases supervised elections.³

Fiscal irresponsibility on the part of the Caribbean governments posed a real threat to the United States goal of hegemony in the area. Starting with Venezuela in 1902, the major European nations initiated strong demands for settlement of outstanding claims. A near perpetual state of civil war in Venezuela had proved ruinous to foreign investors and the unscrupulous and corrupt dictator, Cipriano Castro, showed no inclination to submit the debt claims to arbitration. As a result, and with the tacit approval of the United States, Germany and Great Britain instituted a naval blockade of Venezuela in December, 1902. The blockading nations, which soon included Italy, seized several Venezuelan gunboats and sank two. Castro subsequently agreed to arbitration and the claims were finally settled by the Permanent

Court of Arbitration at the Hague in 1904.⁴

The issue of the collection of debts was of deep concern to the Latin American nations at the turn of the century. In the midst of the Venezuelan crisis, Luis María Drago, Argentine minister of foreign affairs, suggested to Secretary of State John Hay that the use of armed force to collect debts was unjustified. The proposal, to become known as the Drago Doctrine, specifically addressed armed intervention by a European power. The forced collection of debts, reasoned Drago, was virtually synonymous with territorial occupation which was contrary to the principles of the Monroe Doctrine. Therefore, there was no obstacle to bar United States acceptance of the doctrine's principles.⁵

President Theodore Roosevelt recognized that the forced collection of debts by European governments, if left unchecked, posed a threat to the Monroe Doctrine. Although Germany, Great Britain, and Italy were careful not to challenge the Monroe Doctrine directly during the Venezuelan crisis, there was fear that this would eventually happen. In settling the Venezuelan claims, the Hague Court declared that the powers that had attacked that nation had a prior claim on payment of their debts. By 1909 the Dominican Republic had a foreign debt of about \$22,000,000 and was unable to pay its bills. France, Italy, and Germany threatened to intervene to recoup their money.⁶

Faced with the prospect of European intervention in the Caribbean, Roosevelt, in his annual message to Congress of December 6, 1909, outlined what has since become known as the "Roosevelt Corollary" of the Monroe Doctrine. The Roosevelt Corollary reflected the Drago Doctrine's opposition to European armed intervention in Latin America,

but it did not rule out debt-collecting efforts by the United States. Rather, this essentially new policy established the United States as the bill collector in the Caribbean. This action prevented European governments from exercising their right to force payment of outstanding claims and, thereby, kept the integrity of the Monroe Doctrine intact.⁷

Having cast itself in this new role, but reluctant to resort to armed intervention, the United States sought to impose financial controls on the debtor Caribbean nations. In the Dominican Republic in early 1905, and later in other Caribbean countries, the United States established receiverships. The purpose of the receiverships was to insure honesty in the collection of revenues and to prevent diversion of the revenues collected from their proper destinations. In all cases, the United States receiverships assured service on foreign debts. Although customs receiverships eased the threat of European intervention, they did not stabilize the internal political strife that resulted from poor budget planning and internal fiscal administration. Thus, the United States moved to extend its control by appointing financial advisors to oversee budgeting and tax collecting. Finally, the United States sought to limit the indebtedness and expenditures of the Caribbean republics.⁸

In addition to establishing financial controls to achieve political and economic stability in the Caribbean and, thereby, contribute to the defense of the Panama Canal, the United States government supported the extending of loans by American lending institutions to the financially troubled republics. The purpose of this policy was to make additional loans from European sources

unnecessary and to assist the Caribbean republics in strengthening and expanding their economies. The American bank loans also served as a lever which the United States used to force the acceptance of financial controls. The extending of loans, predicated on acceptance of financial controls, appeared to many as a design to protect the investments of American bankers, who would then realize a profit. This led to the charge of American "dollar diplomacy".

As stated previously, Sumner Welles devoted his career to reversing the legacy of ill will that American intervention in the Caribbean had produced. Welles' first opportunity to affect the changes he desired in American foreign policy came when he was appointed Commissioner to the Dominican Republic in 1922. Welles' actions during this assignment were to some extent shaped by the course of events that had transpired there during the previous two decades. In order to understand Welles' role in the termination of the United States occupation of the Dominican Republic, it is important to be familiar with the problems besetting the Republic between 1900 and 1920 and the record of American intervention there.

With his election as President of the Dominican Republic on October 20, 1900, Juan Isidro Jiménez fell heir to the unpaid debts of his dictatorial predecessor, Ulises Heureaux. The French government quickly demanded that Jiménez make immediate payment on French claims; it was expected that other foreign governments and investors would make similar requests. Despite instructions to the contrary, the American minister successfully secured prompt payment of a disputed American claim.

The American minister's actions increased the anti-American feel-

ing that had developed during the last years of the Heureaux government, and there developed new pressures to have the Dominican government cancel the concessions of the Santo Domingo Improvement Company, an American financial concern.⁹ In 1892, the Improvement Company had purchased the interests of Westendorp and Company, a Dutch firm, which previously had obtained limited control over the Dominican custom houses as security for loans to the Heureaux government. The terms of the purchase agreement transferred control over the Dominican custom houses to the Improvement Company. Once the Improvement Company established its claim to Dominican customs revenues, it made two new loans totalling \$11, 000,000 to the Jiménez government.¹⁰

President Jiménez joined in the criticism of the Improvement Company and claimed that the Improvement Company, because it had failed to render payments on the French debt as required, was responsible for the recent difficulties with the French government. The Dominican government tried to negotiate an end to the Improvement Company's involvement in Dominican financial affairs, but the final agreement, approved by the Dominican Congress on April 18, 1900, actually prolonged the life of the Improvement Company. Under the terms of the new pact the Improvement Company received almost complete control over the collection of customs revenues. It would apply forty-three per cent of the customs receipts to the retirement of foreign held bonds, provided the foreign bondholders agreed to accept payments made by the Improvement Company. The Improvement Company proceeded to collect the customs revenues, but the foreign bondholders, particularly the Belgians, repudiated the arrangement and refused to accept payments made by the Improvement Company. Jiménez's attempt to secure payment

of his nation's debts through the Improvement Company failed; indeed, he was strongly criticized for having approved the terms of the agreement in the first place. The foreign bondholders looked to their respective governments for assistance, and the Dominican government once again faced the problem of dealing with the European bondholders separately.¹¹

Following a public announcement that the Dominican government was bankrupt, on January 10, 1901, Jiménez cancelled the Improvement Company's authority to collect public revenues. The Improvement Company, which by its actions had earned the hatred of the Dominican people, appealed to the United States government for assistance. The State Department, however, refused to intervene officially. Unofficially, the State Department urged the Improvement Company to negotiate the sale of its interests to the Dominican government. Discussions between the officials of the Improvement Company and the Jiménez government did result in a proposal whereby the Dominican government would purchase the Improvement Company's interests, but there was widespread public and congressional opposition to the offer. Sporadic revolts against the Jiménez government erupted but were suppressed by Vice-President Horacio Vásquez. Vásquez, though privately opposed to his government's purchase of the disputed interests, chose initially to back the administration since he expected Jiménez to support him for the presidency in the next election.¹²

By the time the proposed agreement calling for the purchase of the Improvement Company's interests was submitted for ratification in September, 1901, relations between Jiménez and Vásquez had become

seriously strained. Vásquez's supporters, the horacistas, dominated the congress and refused to ratify the proposal. Dominican congressional action began the final round of events that ultimately led to an open break between Jiménez and Vásquez in April, 1902. Following the rejection of the purchase proposal, on March 17, 1902, the Dominican Congress censured Jiménez for exceeding his constitutional authority and creating a large treasury deficit.¹³ This action forced Vice-President Vásquez to clarify his position. Vásquez was caught between his desire to save the government he had helped establish, and of which he was a member, and his desire for the presidency. Vásquez initially encouraged Jiménez to alter his policies. Jiménez not only refused to follow Vásquez's counsel but also determined to eliminate his chief opponent by armed force. On April 26, 1902, Vásquez proclaimed a revolution, routed the government army within six days, and secured the President's resignation.¹⁴

Assuming the post of Provisional President, Vásquez launched a reform program that included a new effort to terminate the involvement of the Improvement Company in Dominican affairs. Vásquez quickly reached an agreement with company officials that set the value of the Improvement Company's interests at \$4,500,000. The negotiations, however, floundered on the questions concerning the number and amount of installment payments and the nature of the security that would be offered the Improvement Company for the payments due. The meetings were reopened with the assistance of the United States, which had recognized Vásquez's government in July, 1902. Finally, after a six month stalemate, both sides agreed to submit the remaining questions to an arbitration commission and to abide by the arbitral award. The

Dominican government and the Improvement Company signed an accord on January 31, 1903,¹⁵ but the arbitral commission did not meet until December of that year.

Even before Vásquez agreed to arbitrate the details of the purchase of the Improvement Company, opponents of his government had initiated armed revolts. The suppression of these insurrections was an added burden on the already seriously depleted Dominican National Treasury. The uprisings became so serious that Vásquez took personal command of his troops in the field, and his frequent absences from the capital permitted his opposition there to conspire more freely. In April, 1903, the supporters of former President Heureaux, led by General Alejandro Woss y Gil, seized control and forced Vásquez to flee to Cuba.¹⁶

Foreign creditors immediately pressured the new government, headed by General Woss y Gil, for payment of outstanding claims. The threat of armed intervention by a European nation became real when Germany forced an upward revision of its claim by dispatching a warship to Santo Domingo.¹⁶ Official recognition of the claims of Germany, France, Italy, Spain, and the United States was all Woss y Gil could do to forestall intervention, since all sources of national revenue had already been pledged, and the National Treasury was empty. These financial difficulties, coupled with the administration's weak political position, precipitated another revolution, which ousted Woss y Gil from the presidency in November, 1903.

General Carlos Morales, the recognized leader of the latest revolution, had a tenuous hold on the government at first, but he gradually secured the support of the horacistas and some disenchanted

followers of Jiménez. In order to strengthen his political position and to prevent the seizure of Dominican custom houses by European powers, a situation that seemed inevitable, Morales moved to curry favor with the United States. In December, 1903, the arbitral commission met to decide the remaining issues regarding the purchase of the Improvement Company's interests. The particulars of the settlement, signed on January 31, 1904, reflected in tone the stated intention of Morales to negotiate a treaty with the United States that would make the Dominican Republic a protectorate and permit the United States to administer Dominican fiscal affairs.¹⁷ Commencing in September, 1904, the Dominican Republic would make monthly payments to the Improvement Company. Should a payment fall in arrears, an American appointed financial agent would take control of the customs houses at Puerta Plata and, should the revenues from this action prove insufficient, assume control of the custom houses at Montecristy, Sanana, and Sanchez. The Dominican government defaulted on the first payment due the Improvement Company, and, with the blessing of Morales, an American financial agent took control of the custom houses at Puerta Plata.¹⁸

The favoritism given American claims to Dominican customs revenues distressed the European governments, which informed the Dominican government that they would not long permit their claims to customs revenues to be ignored. At this juncture, on December 6, 1909, President Roosevelt announced his corollary to the Monroe Doctrine.¹⁹

Welles, in his work Naboth's Vineyard, emphasizes that Roosevelt's pronouncement was merely a response to Morales' desire relative to the establishment of a protectorate.²⁰ It appears that Welles did not

conceive the corollary as an extension of any right of intervention. Rather, the settlement signed in January, 1904, provided for the eventual establishment of an American receivership. Welles was not the only student of United States-Dominican relations who stressed the significance of the arrangements providing for the purchase of the Improvement Company. Melvin M. Knight, in his book published in 1928, offers the opinion that the United States, in the terms of the agreement signed in January, 1904, ". . . deliberately paved the way to a . . . receivership . . ." ²¹ In Knight's view, United States intentions were obvious before Roosevelt cast the nation in the role of an international policeman. Regardless of whether the terms providing for the sale of the Improvement Company, or the Roosevelt corollary, paved the way for the establishment of an American receivership, there is little doubt that the prospect of European intervention was the major concern of both the United States and the Dominican Republic.

Perceiving the serious threat of intervention by a European nation, particularly Germany, President Theodore Roosevelt indicated to Morales that he would respond favorably to a formal suggestion that the United States take charge of collecting all Dominican customs revenues and apply a percentage of the receipts to the retirement of foreign claims against the Dominican government. ²² Morales suggested such an arrangement, and a protocol to this effect was ratified on January 31, 1905. A slightly revised version of the protocol was subsequently submitted to a special session of the United States Senate on February 15 for ratification. ²³ Owing to the reluctance of the Senate to take immediate action on the measure,

Presidents Roosevelt and Morales were forced to employ temporary arrangements that would accomplish the objectives of the protocol but which would not require senatorial approval.²⁴ By means of an executive agreement, customs collections were placed under the charge of an American receiver, who would deliver forty-five per cent of the total receipts to the Dominican government and hold the remainder on deposit pending the ratification of the protocol by the United States Senate.²⁵

This semi-official receivership remained in effect for two years and was generally approved by the parties concerned. It eliminated the danger of European intervention, an obvious threat to the Monroe Doctrine as interpreted by President Roosevelt, since the receivership assured Dominican creditors that their claims would be paid. Not only did the Dominican government receive a guaranteed percentage of the customs revenues collected, but the customs houses ceased to be a lucrative target for revolutionary groups. Dominican leaders so accepted the receivership that it was not even a major cause of the political turmoil that saw General Ramón Cáceres replace Morales as President in 1908.²⁶

Not everyone, however, was happy with the receivership, and in 1907 there were efforts to prevent its being made official. Critics in the United States Senate questioned the legality of President Roosevelt's actions in establishing a receivership. In the Dominican Republic, the general opposition of the followers of former President Juan Isidro Jiménez, known as the jimenistas, was in accord with their anti-American position. Dominican creditors with claims against the government protested certain provisions of the convention estab-

lishing an official receivership. These Dominican creditors specifically opposed the reduction of their claims.²⁷ Nevertheless, the recognized success of the semi-official receivership coupled with the strong support of Presidents Roosevelt and Cáceres resulted in ratification by both nations of the Convention of 1907, which placed Dominican customs under official United States receivership.

Amicable relations between the two nations continued through the presidential terms of Roosevelt and Cáceres. American business profited as a result of the receivership,²⁸ and the Dominican Republic received more revenue from its share of the customs receipts than it had realized prior to the establishment of the receivership.²⁹ It appeared that the improved financial situation and the elimination of the threat of European intervention had stabilized the political situation in the Dominican Republic. A settled political atmosphere did prevail for nearly four years, but the assassination of Cáceres in November, 1911, shattered the political harmony. Cáceres' murder showed that while the receivership had eased the Dominican Republic's financial woes, it had not cured its political ills. Describing the Dominican scene subsequent to the assassination, Sumner Welles wrote, "The entire country relapsed with incredible rapidity into a state of complete anarchy."³⁰ In a futile attempt to restore order, Cáceres' incompetent successor, Eladio Victoria, reversed the gains made toward financial solvency, and in violation of the 1907 convention, increased the public debt by \$1,500,000.³¹ Coincidental with the altered Dominican situation was a changed attitude toward Latin America on the part of the United States under President William Howard Taft and Secretary of State Philander Knox. Commenting on the shift as it

affected the Dominican Republic, Welles said:

In place of the courteous, helpful, considerate spirit manifested . . . in accordance, . . . with the true interests of the Dominican people and without undertaking to intervene in their internal affairs, there is now assumed by the State Department an attitude of omniscience in all that concerned the solution of the domestic problems of the Republic. A policy to still internal discord in the Dominican Republic was formulated, based solely upon the recommendations of the agents of the United States government, This solution, once determined, was dictated.³²

The anarchic situation in the Dominican Republic, which disrupted the efficient collection of customs revenues and threatened the substantial American business investments made during the relative tranquil years of Cáceres, provoked strong action by President Taft and Secretary Knox. On the recommendation of the American minister to the Dominican Republic, William W. Russell, that ". . . only complete control by our Government would permanently insure order and justice,"³³ in September, 1912, President Taft dispatched two commissioners and a force of marines to the Dominican Republic to restore order and protect American interests. Threatening to suspend payment of the Dominican share of the customs revenues, the commissioners forced President Victoria to grant a number of concessions and finally to submit his resignation. This latter step was considered necessary to prevent the usurpation of authority by revolutionists opposed to the United States. The American government favored Archbishop Adolfo Alejandro Nouel as the most acceptable successor to President Victoria, and in December, 1912, he was elected to the presidency.

The recent American actions, considered by many Dominicans as violations of their national sovereignty, prompted a reappraisal of the supposedly friendly relationship of the recent past. Because of

the increased anti-American feeling which followed the actions of the American commissioners, Archbishop Nouel wisely resisted American dictates. Any other course of action would probably have plunged the Dominican Republic into armed revolt against the United States presence. The Archbishop, however, was unable to overcome the difficulties of being a compromise president. Pressured to agree to the demands of first the horacistas and then the jimenistas, the Archbishop satisfied neither party. In March, 1913, he resigned from office.

President Woodrow Wilson and Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan inherited the anarchic situation that Taft and Knox had helped to create but had failed to end. Wilson, observed Sumner Welles, pursued a Latin American policy similar in attitude to that pursued by President Theodore Roosevelt's Secretary of State, Elihu Root, but he failed to realize his goals because of his preoccupation with a troubled Europe.³⁴ Bryan, who became the chief formulator of solutions to the Dominican problem, was " . . . incapable of understanding the abstract intellectual idealism of [his] chief -- or of carrying it into practice."³⁵

In his first important decision pertaining to the Dominican Republic, Secretary Bryan erred. He chose to support fully the new Provisional President, Jose Bordas Valdez. Bordas was not well liked in his native country, and there was evidence that he was attempting to guarantee his own election as constitutional president. To fill the post of American minister to the Dominican Republic, Bryan selected James Mark Sullivan, "a deserving Democrat,"³⁶ at a time when, remarked Welles:

With the exception of Mexico, there was no post in Latin America where there was more urgently needed . . . an American Diplomatic Representative capacitated by experience, ability, knowledge of local conditions, and a just appreciation of the manner in which the true interests of the Dominican people might be identified with the interests of the American people, than in the Dominican Republic.³⁷

Sullivan met none of these criteria. He was a lawyer-politician who desired the appointment because the salary would allow him to pay his personal debts. His financial dealings later led to an investigation and, subsequently, his dismissal from the State Department.

Sullivan initially attempted to mediate the dispute between the Bordas government and its critics. Unsuccessful in this, he proposed to Secretary Bryan that the United States supervise the upcoming congressional elections to guarantee their fairness and validity.³⁸ Secretary Bryan accepted the proposal, though it lacked legal sanction, and dispatched American observers despite the strong protests of President Bordas, who was in a position to control the election. The American presence and the outcome of the elections combined to confuse the Dominican political picture. The elections, approved by the American minister, produced a congress hostile to President Bordas, who continued to receive American support. The Dominican opponents of Bordas, interpreting the American supervision of the elections as an indication of American lack of confidence in Bordas, increased the level of armed insurrection against him. Sullivan's interference in Dominican judicial, financial, and political affairs increased that nation's resentment of the United States.³⁹ President Bordas, mindful that he needed American support, permitted these encroachments to occur. The net result of Sullivan's meddling in Dominican affairs was a revolution that ravaged the island and toppled the constitutional

government.

By August, 1914, President Wilson had become cognizant of the bungling efforts of Bryan and Sullivan and realized that the perpetuation of disorder in the Dominican Republic would impair his efforts to prevent war in Europe. Thus, Wilson decided to act to solve the Dominican problem. Wilson appointed two commissioners to present his own plan for settlement to the contending factions in the Dominican Republic.

The plan called for the resignation of President Bordas, the selection of a provisional president agreeable to all potential presidential candidates, and new presidential and congressional elections under American supervision.⁴⁰ The significance of the proposal lay not so much in these features, but in the provisions that expressed a continuation of the interventionist policy begun by Secretary Bryan. The United States reserved the right to appoint a provisional president of its own choosing and to prevent any change in the government by other than constitutional means.⁴¹ In effect, the United States would not tolerate any more revolutions in the Dominican Republic. Finally, Bryan advised the commissioners that the plan itself was not a subject for negotiation.⁴²

On August 27, 1914, Dr. Ramón Baez was installed as provisional president. Revolutionary activity subsided, and Baez and the American commissioners quickly agreed to hold national elections under American supervision. The primary candidates in the ensuing elections were former presidents Horacio Vásquez and Juan Isidro Jiménez. During the campaign, Jiménez secured the support of General Desiderio Arias and Federico Velásquez, who both possessed a significant follow-

ing, by promising them positions in his cabinet. Jiménez won the election and was inaugurated on December 5, 1914.

The first problem Jiménez encountered involved the American financial receivership. In March, 1914, President Bordas and Secretary Bryan had reached agreement on the appointment of an American "financial expert" to oversee the collection and disbursement of the revenues of the Dominican Republic.⁴³ The following June, Bordas, acting without the consent of his congress, appointed Charles M. Johnson to the post. Jiménez, prior to his election, secretly agreed to continue the appointment of the financial expert and to obtain the approval of Johnson's appointment as "Comptroller of the Finances of the Dominican Republic", but the new congress refused to sanction the appointment. The new congress opposed any expansion of American control of the nation's financial affairs. Dominicans considered the American demand that the appointment be sanctioned an illegal intervention in their domestic affairs. The United States reacted by refusing to make any financial concessions.⁴⁴ Caught between the demands of the United States and Dominican congressional opposition to them, Jiménez moved to satisfy his congress.

Perhaps swayed by Dominican congressional sentiment favoring the impeachment of President Jiménez should he yield to American demands, the United States responded affirmatively when Jiménez requested the withdrawal of the financial expert. In a few months time the vague wording of the agreement granting Jiménez's request created a controversy over whether the United States, in removing the financial expert, agreed with the Dominican claim that the position lacked legal standing.⁴⁵

In addition to the problem of an appointed comptroller to oversee his nation's fiscal affairs, Jiménez came to be faced with other United States demands during 1915. In June, 1915, Robert Lansing replaced Bryan as Secretary of State. Armed insurrections against Jiménez during the spring and summer of 1915 produced a warning from Lansing that, if necessary, the United States would send troops to enforce order. Subsequent to this, the United States admonished the Dominican government for increasing the public debt to \$7,000,000 without the consent of the United States as required by the 1907 convention.⁴⁶ On November 19, 1915, as a result of the growth of the public debt, a formal note to the Dominican government repeated a request for the appointment of an American financial advisor. In addition, a new series of armed revolts caused the United States to demand the formation of a constabulary. This constabulary, commanded by American appointees, would have control over all arms, ammunition, military supplies, and traffic.⁴⁷ By this time, however, anti-American feeling in the Dominican Republic had intensified as a result of American actions in Haiti.

Between 1908 and 1915, Haiti suffered political and economic woes similar to those in the Dominican Republic, but to a greater degree. In July, 1915, after months of tension, American marines landed and began a nineteen year period of occupation. As a protest against the United States armed intervention in Haiti, the Dominicans opted to maintain their own sovereignty, whatever the consequences. The Dominicans flatly rejected the new United States ultimatums.

The Dominican's refusal of the United States requirements placed Jiménez in a grave situation. The action eliminated any hope of

securing the funds necessary to combat the spread of armed revolt. At the same time, any move by Jiménez toward compromise with the United States without the consent of his congress was an invitation to open revolution.⁴⁸

Jiménez's primary antagonist was Minister of War, General Desiderio Arias, who aspired to the presidency. Astutely rejecting an American offer of troops to restore order, Jiménez set upon General Arias by arresting the Chief of the National Guard and the commander of the capital fortress. Arias promptly seized control of the capital fortress, from where he commanded the loyalty of the majority of the armed forces. On May 1, 1916, the Dominican Congress impeached Jiménez for violating the constitution and Arias assumed control of the government. Secretary Lansing, however, announced that the United States fully supported Jiménez. On May 4, American troops landed in Santo Domingo, ostensibly to protect American lives. The United States was also prepared to assist Jiménez in recapturing the capital had he requested aid. Ultimately refusing the offer of American troops, Jiménez resigned on May 7.⁴⁹

William W. Russell, earlier named by Lansing to replace Sullivan as the American minister, received full authority to take whatever action was necessary in the wake of Jiménez's resignation. Russell, in collaboration with the commander of the American forces, demanded the surrender of General Arias. Two days later American troops occupied Santo Domingo after General Arias and his army had abandoned the capital. With American control of the city established, Russell undertook to prevent the Dominican Congress from electing a partisan of General Arias as provisional president. Russell successfully blocked

the election of an Arias supporter, and by June the horacistas and Arias supporters in congress were deadlocked. Meanwhile, continued American occupation of the Dominican Republic induced the surrender of General Arias and an end to armed revolt. The United States announced its troops would remain in the Dominican Republic " . . . until all revolutionary movements have been stamped out and until such reforms as deemed necessary to insure the future welfare of the country have been initiated and are in effective operation."⁵⁰

Russell believed that the deadlocked congress and the presence of American troops offered a favorable opportunity for the United States to repeat its demand for the appointment of a financial advisor and the creation of a constabulary. With these intentions in mind, he worked to secure the appointment of a provisional president who was amenable to the demands of the United States. He declared that a provisional president who did not agree to appoint a financial advisor and create a constabulary could not expect the support of the United States.

On July 26, the Dominican Congress disregarded Russell's demand that he approve the selection of a provisional president and elected Dr. Francisco Henriquez y Carbajal to the post. Henriquez y Carbajal, at the time of his election, was residing in Cuba, and Russell had no opportunity to extract any promises from him regarding American demands. Furthermore, Henriquez y Carbajal had not been involved in Dominican politics for some twelve years, and Russell could not be completely certain of the new president's position in the dispute. The United States refused to recognize the new provisional president until such time as he and the Dominican Congress accepted the proposals

of the United States. Henriquez y Carbajal refused the demands, and the United States responded by suspending payment of the funds due the Dominican government under the Convention of 1907.⁵¹

In light of the suspension of payments, Henriquez y Carbajal, with the support of his cabinet, was disposed to accept those American demands that the Dominican constitution would permit and which did not infringe on Dominican sovereignty. Minister Russell and the State Department, on the other hand, rejected any compromise. The Dominican public's dislike for the United States was by now so intense that a rebellion, spurred by an increasing number of incidents provoked by American troops, was a real danger.

Citing the imminent threat of revolution and economic collapse, the failure of the provisional government to agree to the establishment of American financial control, and the refusal to create an American controlled constabulary, Secretary Lansing asked President Wilson for permission to place the Dominican Republic under American military rule.⁵² On November 20, 1916, the United States issued a proclamation instituting American military occupation of the Dominican Republic.⁵³ Sumner Welles described the initial days following the proclamation in these words:

The extraordinary anomaly was thus presented in a brief ten days of the creation of a Government of the Dominican Republic, headed by an officer of the American Navy, with a cabinet composed of officers of the United States Navy or Marine Corps, none of whom had any knowledge or experience of Dominican affairs or problems, and the great majority of whom could not even speak the language of the country.⁵⁴

Captain Harry S. Knapp, appointed as military governor, largely accomplished his initial objectives of pacification and disarmament in all but two of the more rebellious Dominican provinces. In his

pursuit of these and other objectives, Knapp had a relatively free hand. The fact that he possessed a conciliatory nature and simply carried out orders rather than formulate policy made his task somewhat easier. Knapp organized the controversial constabulary, though he experienced some difficulty in recruiting Dominican officers. He initiated studies to improve education and agriculture and began new public works projects. A Dominican claims commission, whose membership included some Dominicans, undertook the adjudication of claims against the Dominican government and reduced the outstanding debt by some \$9,500,000. A new land court gave much needed clarification to disputed land titles. Welles recognized the accomplishments of the military government and concluded that:

. . . there existed on the whole a spirit of tolerance towards the officials of the Military Government and an evidence of a desire for cooperation on the part of many prominent Dominicans in bettering the material conditions of the Republic.⁵⁵

This state of affairs changed when Rear-Admiral Thomas Snowden replaced Knapp in early 1918.

Admiral Snowden did not seek Dominican counsel but relied instead on the advice of his own uninformed subordinates. Because of the war in Europe, the military government escaped the close scrutiny of either the State Department or the Department of the Navy. The Military Governor possessed nearly complete authority in all matters. He imposed rigid censorship and at one point suggested that the occupation continue "for ten or twenty years".⁵⁶

Improprieties such as these and the end of World War I focused increasing attention on the occupation. Latin American governments, writers, and organizations protested the continued American control.

In the United States, such men as Samuel Gompers of the American Federation of Labor demanded the withdrawal of American troops.⁵⁷ For these and other reasons a new chapter in the Dominican problem began to unfold when Bainbridge Colby replaced Lansing as Secretary of State on March 23, 1920, and when Sumner Welles was appointed Assistant Chief, Latin American Affairs Division, on June 3, 1920. The withdrawal of the United States from the Dominican Republic would occupy the majority of Welles' time and effort for the next four years.

NOTES

¹Alfred Thayer Mahan, The Interest of America in Sea Power, Present and Future (Boston: 1918), pp. 59-109.

²J. Lloyd Mechem, The United States and Inter-American Security, 1889-1960 (Austin: 1961), pp. 116-117; M. Margaret Ball, The OAS in Transition (Durham, N.C.: 1969), pp. 498-502.

³J. Lloyd Mechem, A Survey of United States-Latin American Relations (Boston: 1965), pp. 258-261.

⁴Mechem, The United States and Inter-American Security, pp. 65-66; Thomas A. Bailey, A Diplomatic History of the American People 8th edition (New York: 1969), pp. 501-509.

⁵Mechem, The United States and Inter-American Security, pp. 65-66.

⁶T. Harry Williams, Richard N. Current, and Frank Freidel, A History of the United States Since 1865 (New York: 1961), pp. 348-351.

⁷U. S. Congress, House, Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1904 (Washington: 1905), Vol. I, pp. XLI-XLII. Hereinafter referred to as Foreign Relations.

⁸Mechem, A Survey of United States-Latin American Relations, pp. 261-263.

⁹Summer Welles, Naboth's Vineyard: The Dominican Republic 1844-1924, II (Mamaroneck, New York: 1966), pp. 556-559.

¹⁰Melvin M. Knight, The Americans in Santo Domingo (New York: 1928), pp. 17-18; Seldon Rodman, Quisqueya: A History of the Dominican Republic (Seattle: 1964), p. 101.

¹¹Welles, pp. 559-563.

¹²Ibid., p. 569.

¹³Ibid., p. 574.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 574-583.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 585-586; Foreign Relations, pp. 270-273.

¹⁶Rayford W. Logan states that General Woss y Gil was dissatisfied with the agreement with the Improvement Company in Haiti and the Dominican Republic (New York: 1968), p. 53. Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, and Rodman, Quisqueya, do not suggest this.

¹⁷Welles, p. 603.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 611-612.

¹⁹Foreign Relations, 1904, pp. 274-279.

²⁰Welles, p. 619.

²¹Knight, p. 22.

²²Welles, pp. 611-612, 624; Foreign Relations, 1905, p. 298.

²³Foreign Relations, 1905, pp. 307, 334.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 360-363.

²⁵Ibid., p. 365.

²⁶Welles, pp. 631-636.

²⁷Ibid., p. 649; The text of the Convention is in Foreign Relations, 1907, Pt. I, pp. 307-310.

²⁸Knight, pp. 43-48.

²⁹Welles, pp. 660-661.

³⁰Ibid., p. 681.

³¹Rodman, pp. 117-118.

³²Welles, p. 693.

³³Foreign Relations, 1912, p. 366.

³⁴Welles, p. 714.

³⁵Rodman, p. 119.

³⁶On August 20, 1913, Bryan asked the General Receiver of the Dominican Republic if he had any positions "with which to reward deserving Democrats?" The full text of the letter was printed in the New York Times, (January 15, 1915), p. 6.

³⁷Welles, p. 718.

³⁸Foreign Relations, 1913, pp. 435-436.

- ³⁹Welles, pp. 728-729.
- ⁴⁰Foreign Relations, 1914, Vol. I, pp. 247-248.
- ⁴¹Ibid.
- ⁴²Ibid., p. 247.
- ⁴³Foreign Relations, 1914, Vol. I, pp. 233-234.
- ⁴⁴Ibid., p. 256; Welles, p. 764; Knight, pp. 61-62.
- ⁴⁵Foreign Relations, 1915, Vol. I, pp. 310-313; Knight, p. 63.
- ⁴⁶Foreign Relations, 1915, Vol. I, pp. 288, 321-325.
- ⁴⁷Ibid., pp. 333-337.
- ⁴⁸Welles, pp. 764-770.
- ⁴⁹Foreign Relations, 1916, Vol. I, pp. 226-227.
- ⁵⁰Ibid., p. 232.
- ⁵¹Welles, pp. 777-781; Foreign Relations, 1916, Vol. I, pp. 235, 252-253.
- ⁵²Foreign Relations, 1916, Vol. I, pp. 240-241.
- ⁵³Ibid., p. 243
- ⁵⁴Welles, pp. 797-798.
- ⁵⁵Ibid., p. 818; See also Rodman, pp. 123-215.
- ⁵⁶Foreign Relations, 1919, Vol. II, p. 144.
- ⁵⁷Rodman, p. 125; Welles, pp. 823-824; Joseph Robert Juarez, "United States Withdrawal from Santo Domingo," Hispanic American Historical Review, XLII, No. 2 (May 1962), pp. 152-190.

CHAPTER III

THE SEARCH FOR A PLAN OF WITHDRAWAL

It was both fortunate and unfortunate that it took the United States and the Dominican Republic four years to negotiate and carry out a mutually acceptable plan of withdrawal. It was fortunate in the sense that the Dominican governmental system and the Dominican people were afforded time to adjust to and become responsible for a more politically stable and developed republic. It was also fortunate in the sense that for the first time the United States achieved the objectives of its Caribbean policy. It was unfortunate in the sense that Dominican pride prevented the United States from restoring Dominican sovereignty more quickly. The long occupation perpetuated and strengthened the legacy of ill will felt by the Dominicans toward the United States. Both nations worked toward a common goal during the four years -- the rapid withdrawal of the American military occupation forces and the termination of the American military government. Why, then, since the two nations shared a common goal, did they not reach an agreement more rapidly? Could the unfortunate results of the four years of negotiations have been avoided? The answers to these questions, contained in the record of negotiations, must take into account each nation's respective interpretation of the common goal.

The Dominicans, in general, applied a strict interpretation to the goal. They wanted the restoration of their national sovereignty along with their personal freedom and liberty. The Dominican attitude toward withdrawal is expressed in the popular slogan of the time - "Evacuation, pure and simple." Dominican nationalism and Dominican bitterness toward the military government and occupation forces demanded immediate and unconditional withdrawal. The prospect of political turmoil and financial desperation like that which existed prior to the occupation was either ignored or was considered more acceptable than continuation of American occupation for any length of time. Most influential Dominican leaders recognized that for practical reasons the restoration of Dominican sovereignty would require certain preparations and concessions; however, they, too, inclined toward a strict interpretation of the goal. They would only make those preparations and concessions which were absolutely essential if the desired end was to be reached at all.

The United States took a more liberal interpretation of the goal. To the occupying nation the phrase "rapid withdrawal" meant evacuation of the occupation forces and termination of the military government as soon as the objectives of American foreign policy were achieved. These objectives included: a responsible Dominican government capable of maintaining stability and order; a professional, non-political constabulary to protect lives and property and to defend the government against rebellions; an effective electoral system to facilitate the peaceful transfer of authority from one government to another; and finally, a sound financial system. In summary, the United States did not intend to withdraw until conditions in the Dominican Republic

assured the security of the United States.

The different interpretations of the common goal made it difficult for the two nations to compromise readily. The Dominicans insisted upon restoring and protecting their sovereignty, and the United States insisted upon meeting its foreign policy objectives. This was the major theme which existed throughout the four years of negotiations.

The appointment of Sumner Welles as Commissioner to the Dominican Republic on July 1, 1922, divides the four-year period of negotiations into nearly equal halves. The two years preceding Welles' appointment are characterized by his efforts to orchestrate the negotiations from his State Department post in Washington through the military governor in the Dominican Republic. Welles' direct involvement in the negotiations as the Commissioner to the Dominican Republic distinguishes the years 1922 to 1924. Welles was both qualified and prepared to endeavor to end the occupation first from Washington, and subsequently, through negotiations in the Dominican Republic.

Welles had arrived in the State Department in Washington from a position as Second Secretary of the United States Embassy in Argentina. His performance at the embassy earned Welles good marks from the United States Ambassador and, upon his departure, this comment in La Nación, the largest Argentine newspaper:

Mr. Welles has distinguished himself in carrying out his mission, for the tact and intelligence displayed in all his actions He had the faculty of uniting with decorum and poise in the fulfillment of the important affairs in which he intervened, diplomatic qualities of the kind which appear to belong to the chanceries of the older European nations¹

Working from his office in Washington, Welles did not have the opportunity to develop a relationship with the Dominican people as he had with the Argentinians. Welles, however, immediately became involved in the quest to end the occupation. It was more than mere coincidence that he was appointed Assistant Chief of the Latin American Affairs Division just a few months before the United States announced on December 23, 1920, its intention to withdraw from the Dominican Republic. While documentary evidence of Welles' contributions toward settlement of the Dominican problem during the early months of his tenure in Washington is meager, the structure and organization of the State Department at that time provides some indication of his influence.

In 1920, under Secretary of State Bainbridge Colby, the State Department was divided into separate divisions. Each division was responsible for a specific geographical portion of the world from which it derived its title, e.g., the Latin American Affairs Division. These geographical divisions formulated policy and drafted memoranda supporting that policy for the Secretary of State's consideration. Furthermore, the geographical divisions made the decisions as to what would be done within the outline of general policy. As Assistant Chief, Latin American Affairs Division, Welles was available to handle problems that demanded special attention. It appears significant that Secretary Colby did not decide that the United States should withdraw from the Dominican Republic until after Welles arrived in Washington. Also, as will be detailed later, a flurry of activity focusing on the Dominican occupation began on June 3, 1920, the date of Welles' appointment to the Latin American

Affairs Division.²

In addition to Welles' apparent natural ability to relate to the people of Latin America and the State Department's structure and organization, there are two other factors which help explain Welles' intimate involvement with the Dominican Republic. The first factor concerns the role the Department of the Navy had come to play in United States foreign affairs. By 1920, the Department of the Navy was responsible for supervising American military governments in Haiti, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic. In the Dominican Republic, as in other nations where American military governments were established, the American military governor was the primary United States minister to that nation's government, of which he was also the chief executive. Welles, in Naboth's Vineyard, describes the State Department's relationship with the military government in the Dominican Republic in these words:

The State Department . . . had to all intents relinquished supervision of the policy of the Military Government between the years of 1917 and 1920, and had refrained from providing the public with any information regarding the course of developments in that country.³

Welles' presence in the State Department coincided with that department's efforts to reassert its dominance and authority over Caribbean affairs, and, concomitantly, reduce the role of the Department of the Navy. During the first two years of negotiations, it proved impossible to coerce the military governor to support fully the State Department's position and policy. In order for the State Department to relegate the military governor to a lesser position, it was ultimately necessary to give a State Department official presidential authority to negotiate and conclude a plan of withdrawal. Welles

received the assignment and authority and he was instrumental in re-asserting State Department control over foreign affairs.

The second important factor that served to place Welles in the forefront of ending the unfortunate occupation was that he agreed with President Warren G. Harding's and Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes' criticism of the manner in which President Woodrow Wilson's administration had dealt with the Caribbean republics. Harding and Hughes intended to follow a new and different policy, and Welles was a faithful ally. Welles' strongest indictment of Wilson for the Dominican incursion was written in 1944, when he stated that it was ". . . most tragic that Wilson . . . should have authorized the military occupation of . . . the Dominican Republic" and termed the intervention "unjustifiable."⁴ He echoed Harding who had criticized Wilson in 1920 for ". . . repeated acts of unwarranted interference in the domestic affairs of the little Republics of the Western Hemisphere. . . ."⁵ Harding's goal in United States-Latin American relations was to establish a policy of cooperation. Commenting on this aim Welles wrote:

Such cooperation did not imply continuous meddling in the internal affairs of the nearer Latin American Republics, it did not envisage dictation as to the form and constitution of their governments, not the attempt to control their legislature; nor could it ever have entailed, save as a temporary measure owing to the need of protecting foreign life and property, armed intervention, and, much less, military occupation.⁶

Welles, like Hughes, agreed with Harding's goal of cooperation. Welles also was in accord with Hughes' interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine as a policy of self-defense. Hughes believed that under the limited principles of the Monroe Doctrine the United States could act to remove any threat posed by the presence of a non-American power in

the Caribbean, to relieve any threat to the Panama Canal, to protect insular possessions, to guarantee the rights of United States citizens and to carry out obligations assumed under treaties. A few months before the withdrawal of American forces from the Dominican Republic was complete, Hughes explained his Latin American policy in these words:

We are aiming not to exploit, but to aid; not to subvert, but to help in laying the foundations for sound, stable, and independent government. Our interest does not lie in controlling foreign peoples; that would be a policy of mischief and disaster. Our interest is in having prosperous, peaceful, and law-abiding neighbors, with whom we can cooperate to mutual advantage.⁷

This was a re-statement of the goals of previous administrations, and it shows that Hughes, at that time, thought intervention acceptable. Five years later, however, Hughes wrote that the "policy of the United States is non-intervention."⁸ Welles, at least through the 1920s, also believed intervention might be necessary but, like Hughes, he viewed it as a defensive act under the principles of the Monroe Doctrine. In 1924, Welles expressed his view of United States-Latin American relations in these words:

. . . our relations with all the neighboring republics should be those existing between free and independent nations; yet, until certain of these countries have developed a firm tradition of orderly, constitutional government, the United States must be prepared to step in to protect the lives and property of its citizens should they at any time be in danger; and it must likewise be ready to assume the responsibility of offering its friendly mediation, or, in extreme cases, its friendly intervention, should conditions be such as to threaten a national or international conflagration which would give rise to a situation wherein the policy of self-protection of the United States, known as the Monroe Doctrine, might be endangered.⁹

It is apparent from the above that Welles was the right man to bring

to fruition Harding's desire for military disengagement from the Dominican Republic. Welles possessed the diplomatic skills, and he agreed with the administration's Caribbean policy. He was also, as we shall see in the following paragraphs, responsible for raising the prospects for a settlement on which the Harding administration could capitalize.

Prior to Welles' appointment as Assistant Chief, Latin American Affairs Division, little serious activity was underway in the State Department to end the American occupation of the Dominican Republic. This situation quickly changed. On June 3, 1920, the same day of Welles' appointment, the State Department ordered the American legation in the Dominican Republic to hold a conference with the military governor regarding the formation of a commission composed of Dominican leaders to study laws pertaining to elections, education, and sanitation and to submit recommendations to the State Department.¹⁰ While waiting for a reply, the Division of Latin American Affairs drafted an outline of a plan for the withdrawal of American forces. The provisions of this plan were as follows:

1. Appointment of a Commission of Dominicans to study fundamental changes in Dominican laws, starting with the electoral law.
2. Promulgation of the new laws by the Military Governor.
3. Convening of a Constitutional Convention to enact constitutional changes, to include the "Platt Amendment."
4. Formation of a Dominican government.
5. Negotiation of a Dominican-United States treaty regarding the collection and control of customs revenues.¹¹

This proposed plan bears Welles' imprint in its emphasis on constitutional procedures. The historian, Dana J. Munro, who worked with Welles in the Division of Latin American Affairs, starting in 1921, observed that Welles was ". . . inclined to . . . insist on constitutional procedures. . . ."¹² Looking forward to the formation of a government as provided for in the proposed plan, Welles requested that the solicitor for the State Department provide an opinion regarding the constitutional standing of the military government upon the election of a Dominican congress. The solicitor's rather obvious opinion was that the military government would be ". . . no less constitutional since the . . . military government can scarcely be regarded as a constitutional executive of the Dominican Republic."¹³

In the ensuing six months the Latin American Affairs Division accomplished little toward completing the details of the plan. There were cogent reasons for this lack of activity. The State Department was unsure as to how best to proceed with the withdrawal and spent this time searching for ideas. The State Department also was just beginning its efforts to replace the Department of the Navy as the focal point of United States-Dominican relations. The Department of the Navy, particularly the military government, although cognizant that the occupation eventually must end, believed that its mission would require at least ten years to complete and reported that island conditions and Dominican sentiment favored gradual withdrawal.¹⁴

On the part of the Dominicans, one knowledgeable student of the occupation concluded that "Dominican opinion was not ready for action."¹⁵ Inasmuch as the occupation was a political issue in the American

elections of 1920, many Dominicans considered it advantageous to delay definitive action pending inauguration of the new administration. Also influential was the Dominican political situation. Dominican politics remained largely the politics of personalismo (allegiance to the party leader) and no leader or party dared to get too involved until the political future was more defined. The only politician who was willing at this time to assume responsibility for forming a Dominican government was Dr. Francisco Henriquez y Carbajal, Provisional President de jure, and ardent leader of the nationalist henriquez party. Henriquez y Carbajal and his American agent, Horace B. Knowles, insisted that he be restored as president. The State Department, however, spurned such suggestions. The American minister to the Dominican Republic, William W. Russell, wrote to the State Department in September, 1920, that "the greatest calamity that could befall this republic would be to deliver it into the hands of Henriquez's party."¹⁶ The State Department, at the urging of Welles, followed this advice.

In summary, the last half of 1920 was a time during which Welles and the State Department became aware of the problems associated with withdrawal and to some degree, aware of the attitudes of the involved parties. Enveloping the withdrawal question was the problem of insuring a firm foundation for political stability and fiscal responsibility. The State Department and many Dominicans believed that the benefits gained during the occupation would be lost if they did not carefully engineer the end of the American occupation.

By December, 1920, the State Department apparently realized that it could not unilaterally prepare a detailed plan of evacuation.

Further progress depended upon establishment of a dialogue with Dominican leaders. In unofficial contacts, some Dominican leaders suggested a Dominican commission be formed to lay the constitutional and legal groundwork for the building of a national Dominican government. In order that the task proceed officially and in response to public criticism of the occupation, the State Department asked the military governor to issue a proclamation ". . . to inaugurate the simple process . . . of rapid withdrawal."¹⁷ The Military Governor, Rear-Admiral Thomas Snowden, made the pronouncement on December 23, 1920, and it embodied what became known as the "Wilson Plan." The provisions of this plan were:

1. The appointment of a Dominican commission and an American technical advisor to formulate constitutional amendments and undertake a general revision of the laws of the country, to include drafting an election law.
2. Approval of the commission recommendations by the American military government.
3. Submission of the approved amendments and laws to a constitutional convention and the National Congress.¹⁸

A comparison of the Wilson Plan with the outline of the plan offered by the Division of Latin American Affairs reveals little significant difference. If anything the Wilson Plan was less detailed than that originally suggested. It was not so much a plan of withdrawal as it was an announcement that the United States would withdraw its forces once there existed a legal code and an electoral system which would provide for the political and economic stability of the island. The United States hoped that by working with and through an official commission of Dominican leaders, it could avoid charges of dictating a plan of withdrawal which did not reflect Dominican

desires. The United States also anticipated that the Dominican people would pressure the commission appointees to perform their assigned tasks quickly and that there would be popular support for the commissioner's efforts. Achievement of United States Caribbean policy objectives in the Dominican Republic depended upon Dominican cooperation. Eighteen months would pass before such cooperation would support a chain of events leading to termination of the American occupation.

In general, critics conclude that the Wilson Plan was a failure. These conclusions rest on the assumption that the single purpose and objective of the plan was the restoration of a Dominican government and the withdrawal of American military forces. Certainly, this was the final objective of the United States. However, the wording and provisions of the Wilson Plan viewed in light of the realities of the times in which it was pronounced, suggest that the State Department had a more limited objective and more immediate purposes in mind. The Wilson Plan marked the official beginning of American efforts to withdraw from the Dominican Republic. The plan contained no specific timetable, an obvious recognition of the fact that "because of the occupation, feeling against the United States in Santo Domingo [had] been exceedingly bitter."¹⁹ It would take time to overcome the bitterness and condition the Dominican people to a cooperative attitude. One aspect of this cooperative attitude would be important to the United States objective of ending the political turmoil which was partly responsible for the American intervention in the Dominican Republic.

Throughout its national life to 1916, the Dominican Republic had

had nineteen constitutions and thirteen presidents. Only three presidents completed their terms in office; the remainder either resigned or were killed or deposed. There were thirteen presidents between 1899 and 1916, seven between 1911 and 1916. There was apprehension that too rapid a withdrawal would cause a restored Dominican government to succumb to personal ambition, political corruption, and a weak electoral system.²⁰ Carl Kelsey, after visiting the island from July to October, 1921, to study the intervention, concluded that the ". . . Wilson Plan . . . produced no other result than to start into activity the local politicians."²¹ In retrospect, this was one of the purposes the State Department hoped the Wilson Plan would serve. Prior to the proclamation of December 23, 1920, Dominican leaders had refrained from any significant involvement in national politics. The Wilson Plan rejuvenated Dominican politics, albeit under the control of the Military Governor, Admiral Snowden.

The extent to which the Wilson Plan was successful depends upon one's understanding of the objective of the proposal. In notifying the American minister of the contents of the Wilson Plan, the State Department said its publication stemmed from the decision that "the time has come to take certain steps preliminary to a change in our present position vis-a-vis the Dominican Republic."²² In terms of this limited objective the Wilson Plan was a success.

Dominicans unanimously rejected the provisions contained in the Wilson Plan. Bitterness and resentment toward the occupation was immediately manifested in the nationalistic fervor which labelled as traitors any Dominican who agreed to serve on the commission which was to draft laws and constitutional amendments for the military

governor's consideration. The State Department had prepared a list of possible appointees to the commission in advance of the proclamation. The persons listed, each a potential candidate for public office or an influential political spokesman, were reluctant to commit themselves. They feared public opinion and they expected the United States to attach yet unmentioned conditions to the eventual withdrawal.

Commission membership posed a serious dilemma. The political party that could convey the image of having ended the occupation on Dominican terms would gain a great political advantage in subsequent elections. There was no way of judging whether political advantages would befall those leaders who served on the commission or to those who did not. No politician was prepared to yield any advantage to his adversaries and no party dominated in numbers or power. The commission was formed, but only with great difficulty and only after the initial public clamor had receded and the politics of the situation suggested that participation was advisable.

In retrospect, it was unlikely that the commission would prove effective because of the factionalized nature of Dominican politics and the emerging struggle between the military governor and the State Department. In formulating the Wilson Plan, the State Department did not consult with Admiral Snowden, the military governor, except in regard to the appointees to the commission. Under the proposal, Snowden would appoint the commission members and would subsequently evaluate the commission's work. It was only logical that Snowden, who had his own ideas about the best course of action, would seek to appoint a commission which would produce acceptable

recommendations. Snowden suggested changes in the list of possible appointees and, acting on his own, made overtures to persons he considered desirable. In response, the State Department asked the Secretary of the Navy to direct the military governor to refrain from making any changes in the list of possible appointees and to follow the instructions of the Department of the Navy. At the same time, William W. Russell, the American minister, was directed to confer with the military governor and, in essence, inform him that the State Department would determine the commission appointees. The Secretary of the Navy did instruct Snowden to follow directions, but he also reminded the Secretary of State that the military governor, in the eyes of the Dominicans, was the senior representative of the United States to the Dominican Republic. He should not, therefore, appear to receive instructions from the American minister. The result of this conflict was State Department acquiescence, at least for a time, to the authority of the military governor and compromise with regard to commission appointments.²³

Finally, the attitude of Russell and Snowden toward the commission was pessimistic. Russell doubted that the commission would accomplish anything effective because of the political squabbling that the pronouncement evoked. Snowden, a year earlier, had appointed a consulting board of four prominent Dominicans to make recommendations regarding the future welfare of the Dominican people. The consulting board accomplished nothing because Snowden would not compromise or show consideration for Dominican aspirations. Thus, the two United States representatives most directly responsible for presenting and selling the Wilson Plan were not totally committed to insuring its

success.²⁴

The dialogue opened by the Wilson Plan produced some clarification of the major areas of disagreement between the United States and the Dominican Republic and a clearer picture of the views of the interested parties. The Harding administration benefitted from this and upon assuming the reins of government undertook to review the situation. In early April, 1921, Welles submitted to Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes a background statement in which he concluded that the occupation created a harmful impression. Welles also pointed out, however, that financial investors wanted United States control to continue indefinitely and that the military government wanted twenty to thirty years to complete its mission, which included education of the people for self-government. He further indicated that "educated Dominicans" preferred a gradual restoration of a Dominican government, recognized the need for a new election law and a revised constitution, desired United States control over financial matters, and, at least for a while, wanted an American controlled constabulary.²⁵

It is doubtful that Welles' "educated Dominicans" would have agreed publicly with his conclusion regarding the constabulary. The Dominicans persisted in their unalterable opposition to American troops remaining after formation of a Dominican government. Welles' conclusions show that he supported application of the formula followed since 1906 by the United States for the establishment of stability in the Caribbean nations. This formula provided for the restoration of financial order and the organization of a responsible, non-partisan constabulary that would preserve internal order and safeguard constitu-

tional political processes.²⁶ By raising the issue of an American controlled constabulary, Welles acknowledged that American troops could not be used to insure stability under a Dominican government and acknowledged that the constabulary was not yet prepared to perform this function.

Now more cognizant of the issues complicating the process of withdrawal that he was in December, 1920, Welles, on April 6, 1921, presented a new plan for Hughes' consideration. Welles was optimistic that this revised proposal would prove workable not only because of its content but also because President Harding and Secretary Hughes were publicly committed to withdrawal and because of the appointment of Rear-Admiral Samuel S. Robinson as military governor. According to Welles, "It was hoped he would cooperate more effectively with the Department of State in matters precedent to evacuation of United States forces."²⁷ Welles' detailed plan took the following form:

1. The appointed commission would draft an election law and revisions to the constitution and submit them to the military governor for approval.
2. Following promulgation of the election law, an election of electors who thereafter would chose members to a senate and chamber of deputies.
3. Convening of the Congress to propose constitutional amendments and convocation of a constitutional convention to ratify the amendments.
4. Necessary law making pursuant to the new constitution.
5. Organization of a provisional government to oversee the reorganization of local governments.
6. Presidential elections and transfer of executive power to the elected president.
7. Negotiation and ratification of revisions to the

Treaty of 1907 to provide for the payment of outstanding obligations and inclusion of United States authority to assure the maintenance of a government adequate for protection of life, liberty, and property.

8. Maintenance of United States troops in the republic to insure life, liberty, and property pending completed training of the constabulary.²⁸

Welles' suggestions were not totally new; they outlined the same sequence of events Welles gave to William W. Russell, the American minister, on January 8, 1921, for his use in persuading selected Dominicans to serve on the commission.²⁹ Evidently, Welles believed that by holding to this explanation of the Wilson Plan, Dominican leaders would eventually recognize the folly of insisting on a "pure and simple" evacuation and accept the proposal.

During the next two months, both Admiral Robinson and Henriquez y Carbajal submitted ideas for consideration by the State Department. Welles rejected outright Robinson's proposal because it contained no provision for a revised constitution and code of laws, no assurance for financial responsibility, and no means for the maintenance of law and order after termination of the military government. The only advantage it did offer, according to Welles, was "rapid withdrawal."³⁰ Henriquez y Carbajal, who's reign as the last elected provisional president was cut short by the American occupation, magnanimously offered to resign in favor of an executive commission. Welles' continued distrust of Henriquez y Carbajal and the fact that the provisional president's term of office had already expired, prompted quick disposal of the offer.³¹

Despite the fact that Welles was disinclined to deal with the former provisional president, he recognized that Henriquez y Carbajal

wielded considerable influence over the more nationalistic political groups. These nationalistas encouraged Dominican non-cooperation and for this reason Welles and Hughes discussed the most recent proposals with Henriquez y Carbajal to secure his support. Henriquez y Carbajal, realizing the United States was not going to restore his provisional presidency, indicated that the plan was acceptable.³² His support was short-lived, however, because subsequent events made it impossible for him to use the plan to return himself to the presidency.

By early June, 1921, Welles had obtained President Harding's and Secretary of State Hughes' approval to have the new plan announced to the Dominican people. Welles coordinated the necessary instructions with the Department of the Navy, and on June 14, 1921, the military governor issued a proclamation containing the revised plan of withdrawal. This new offer, known as the "Harding Plan", officially replaced the Wilson Plan. The Harding Plan seemed reasonable. Deleted from Welles' April proposal were provisions for United States intervention to protect life, liberty, and property and for American control of Dominican expenditures. Added to the plan was a provision that the Dominican Congress ratify a treaty of evacuation calling for:

1. Ratification of all acts of the military government.
2. Validation of a final loan to finance the completion of necessary public works projects.
3. Extension of the duties of the General Receiver of Dominican Customs to apply the above loan and assure service of the republic's foreign debt from internal revenues.
4. A United States military mission to complete the training of a constabulary; said constabulary to be under authority of the executive of the Dominican Republic.³³

The treaty provision requiring the ratification of all acts of the military government eliminated the need for the commission to complete a reform of the basic laws prior to the elections; hence, the commission was dissolved. The military governor, as the chief executive of the republic, was empowered to set the election machinery into motion. The State Department anticipated completion of the entire process within eight months; however, several factors combined to make this an overly optimistic projection.

Welles either expected the Dominican people to recognize the true intent of the Harding Plan or was prepared to rely on Robinson and Russell to explain the plan and its intent to the Dominicans. The State Department erred on both counts. Welles explained the intent of the steps contained in the plan as follows:

It is the desire of the Government of the United States to assure itself before its withdrawal is accomplished that the independence and territorial integrity of the Dominican Republic, the maintenance of public order, and the security of life and property, will be adequately safeguarded³⁴

This was a clear enough statement from a State Department viewpoint, but not from a Dominican viewpoint. Welles would blame the plan's ultimate demise partly on the Dominicans' inability to see its real intent because of their inclination "to believe that some hidden danger, some threat to their independence, . . . lurk[ed] in every phrase of the plan" ³⁵ Welles had tried to allay these fears through publication in leading Dominican newspapers of the terms of the plan and official explanation of their true intent. He sent explicit instructions to help Robinson and Russell clarify United States intentions during direct negotiations with Dominican leaders.

Russell, however, was limited in his effectiveness because of his subserviant position to the military governor and because of his connection with events since 1916. Robinson, whom Welles characterized as "unfitted . . . by any previous training"³⁶ for the task of diplomatic negotiation, proved inflexible in his conversation with Dominican leaders. Robinson's "diplomacy" reinforced Welles' opinion that competent, professional diplomats were vital to carrying out foreign policy.³⁷

Political realities also contributed to the Harding Plan's misfortune. Political parties and potential candidates in the Dominican Republic continued to jockey for a favorable position in the inevitable elections. There was some fear that Henriquez y Carbajal could ride a nationalista wave to the presidency if the plan was accepted and if he could assume responsibility for the United States withdrawal. The remaining candidates were undoubtedly aware that United States support would be important to the elected president, but the appearance of cooperating with the United States to obtain election could have evoked charges of treason and political ruin at the hands of the unsuccessful parties. Personalismo was still a powerful force in Dominican party politics, and no one was willing to form any type of formal coalition.

Dominican attitudes and politics and American diplomatic ineptitude were the underlying reasons for Dominican repudiation of the Harding Plan. Overtly, the Dominicans attacked the plan's provisions as a continued infringement on the sovereignty of their small island nation. The political leaders refused to participate in elections conducted by the military government, and there were

objections to the proposed treaty provisions calling for ratification of all acts of the military government, extension of the powers of the General-Receiver of Dominican Customs to include internal revenues, and the requirement for an American military mission to train and partly command the constabulary.

According to Welles, ratification of the acts of the military government was essential to avoid creating a "chaotic situation."³⁸ Undoubtedly, Welles had in the back of his mind the State Department solicitor's opinion that the military government had no legal standing. However, the military government, acting for the republic, had issued decrees amounting to law, entered into contracts, obtained loans, and paid claims. As a result, many individuals and businesses, Dominican and foreign, had acquired rights to funds and property. Failure to recognize these rights would produce conditions worse than those which had existed in 1916. Unfortunately, the plan called for "ratification of all acts of the Military Government."³⁹ There was no clarification in the plan of what the phrase "all acts" meant.

The Dominicans interpreted this provision as a requirement that they assent to all past acts of the military government, good or bad, and agree to continue existing dictates which they considered infringements of their personal liberty and rights. By mid-1921, the military government had instituted strict gun control and press censorship, and had tried Dominicans in American military courts for purely political offenses. In addition, the proposed extension of the authority of the General-Receiver to internal revenues was considered a device to guarantee foreign interests at the expense of Dominican prosperity.

Welles, by means of official proclamations to the Dominican people and instructions to Military Governor Robinson and Minister Russell, attempted to clarify these two provisions. Welles explained that while all the acts of the military government should be initially ratified, and thus, made law, a Dominican government, once formed, could repeal or revise any of the laws, except laws relating to financial obligations. The extension of the authority of the general-receiver to internal revenues Welles described as essential to protecting the rights of individuals and businesses which had entered into contracts and extended loans. Further, internal revenues would only be attached if depressed customs revenues posed a threat to the satisfaction of debts. Along with his explanation of these two provisions, Welles emphasized that the actual terms of the treaty, which a Dominican government would be asked to ratify, were proper subjects for negotiation.⁴⁰

Admiral Robinson, after meeting with Dominican political leaders twice to detail the proposals, believed that the explanations had produced the desired effect and that the election process would soon begin. He was overly optimistic, however. The Dominican political leaders, in the face of public pressure and the partisan political activities of Henriquez y Carbajal, declined to participate in the elections. In addition, the Dominican political leaders were reluctant to decide their political destiny on the basis of explanations which inferred reliance on the good faith of the United States.

The most intense opposition focused on the proposed treaty provision which would permit an American military mission to train and supplement command of a national constabulary. Few Dominicans could

accept the provision as anything other than a trick to continue the military occupation. The plan contained no definite statement as to the duration of the military mission or the authority of American military officers. Also, the question of who would hold American officers accountable for their actions was raised. There were no specific replies that Welles could make regarding the duration of the mission and authority of its members. The answers lay in the question of how much time was needed to find and train Dominican officers for the constabulary. The training and organization of an efficient, apolitical constabulary was one of the main objectives of the military occupation. Dominican attitude toward the American controlled constabulary, the drain on American military manpower incurred by World War I, the decline in revenues, and the neglect of officer training, however, produced a constabulary that was ill-prepared to protect a new Dominican government. The most pressing need was for officers, but few qualified Dominicans applied. The American military government founded the Haina Military Academy in August, 1921, but more than a year elapsed before its products contributed to resolving the shortage of trained officers. As to the holding of American military officers accountable for their transgressions, Admiral Robinson suggested the American military justice system as a viable means of punishing offenders.⁴¹

The refusal of the Dominicans to cooperate in the Harding Plan did not persuade the State Department to withdraw the proposal. Rather, Admiral Robinson was instructed to issue a proclamation stating that since all aspects of the plan had been fully and carefully considered, there was no reason to make any changes. Therefore, the

elections provided for in the Harding Plan were postponed. The wording of the proclamation, which was announced on July 27, 1921, placed responsibility for the postponement squarely on the Dominican refusal to participate in the elections.⁴²

There was some hope that this latest proclamation would shock Dominicans into cooperating. Horace Knowles, an agent of Henriquez y Carbajal, provides evidence of this intent in a letter dated July 25, 1921, to Under-Secretary of State Henry P. Fletcher. In the letter, Knowles attributes to Welles words to the effect that ". . . if the Dominican Congress did not accept the plan proposed by the State Department, measures would be taken to compel it to do so. . . ." ⁴³ In addition, on July 30, 1921, Welles advised Secretary Hughes that it was ". . . not too soon to consider what form of assistance and guidance we should endeavor to give the Dominicans. . . ." ⁴⁴ In this message to Secretary Hughes, Welles may have planted the seed which resulted in his appointment as Special Commissioner to the Dominican Republic. In urging appointment of a financial advisor, Welles described Dominicans as follows:

The Dominicans, while strongly nationalistic and possessed of a different attitude toward government than in general in the United States, are susceptible of persuasion by persons of strong personality and great intelligence, especially foreigners, assuming that they know the Dominicans. ⁴⁵

Such an American, however, was not present in the Dominican Republic in 1921 and Dominican politicians were not shocked into cooperating.

The stalemate lasted for several months. In Santo Domingo, Robinson made a weak attempt to persuade Dominican leaders to accept the plan. He urged on the State Department, and adopted himself, a policy of patient adherence to the Harding Plan as the surest means

of reaching an agreement. There was some merit in this approach; the military government subsequently reported that the main political parties had begun organizing their forces for eventual elections and believed that the United States sincerely intended to withdraw.⁴⁶ In Washington Welles at various times conferred with Henriquez y Carbajal. Little, if anything, resulted from these conversations, but they did keep Welles and the State Department informed of the status of nationalista thought. Welles was careful not to give the former provisional president any encouragement to consider himself the spokesman for all Dominican political parties.⁴⁷

Welles, by now Chief of the Division of Latin American Affairs, was fully informed of all developments relating to disoccupation. In a letter dated October, 1921, the Latin American Affairs Division outlined its assessment of the situation to Secretary Hughes. It concluded that time and an explanation of the proposals had secured understanding of, and agreement with, all provisions of the plan except the military mission. The deadlocked situation was attributable to Dominican political leaders' maneuvering for a favorable position and their related unwillingness ". . . to assume responsibility of agreeing to proposals of this government."⁴⁸ Also included in the letter were policy suggestions which took into consideration the unlikely resolution of the problem through conferences between the military government and Dominican political leaders and the probable conclusions of a Senate Select Committee investigation of the occupations of both the Dominican Republic and Haiti. The Latin American Affairs Division suggested that the American minister or some other government official reaffirm to Dominican political leaders the

intention of the United States, to withdraw in accordance with the Harding Plan and reemphasize that withdrawal could not occur unless an elected Dominican government was established. The Dominican political leaders' refusal to participate in the elections would leave two courses open to the United States: (1) proceed with the elections and hope the Dominican people would overrule the objections of their political leaders, and (2) announce continuation of the occupation because of a lack of cooperation by the Dominican people. The effect of these policy suggestions and the replacement of the military governor as the primary United States negotiating official eventually produced a plan of withdrawal acceptable to both nations.⁴⁹

Welles asked Senator Medill McCormick, Chairman of the Senate Select Committee, to deliver the reaffirmation message to the Dominican political leaders. Senator McCormick was a wise choice, inasmuch as the Dominicans perceived that the committee might agree with their demand for immediate, unconditional withdrawal. The committee, however, was inclined to support the State Department's policy of adherence to the Harding Plan. To avoid giving support to the nationalista cause and endangering the negotiations for withdrawal, the committee opted to withhold any recommendations on the Dominican occupation pending the outcome of the State Department's policy. Senator McCormick's conveying of the State Department's message was both an overt statement of committee support for the policy being followed and a statement of nonsupport for the nationalista cause.⁵⁰

In December, 1921, Senator McCormick reiterated in a letter to Secretary Hughes, the conclusions which Welles had reached the previous October. He offered the opinion that no political leader was

willing to assume responsibility for governing the Dominican Republic during the existing economic depression and suggested that efforts be made to relieve the financial problems.⁵¹

By the end of 1921, the post-war economic depression was effecting the finances of the American military government. The public works program, important to improving the economic and educational levels of the Dominican people, was funded on the basis of available monetary reserves and anticipated income. Prior to 1920, both of these revenue sources had grown steadily. In 1921, however, the military government, faced with declining revenues, reduced the government payroll and suspended work on all but the most important public works projects. The training of the constabulary also suffered from reduced funding. By the end of 1921, the military government desperately needed financial aid, but several factors made the State Department reluctant to consent to a new loan. In 1918 and in 1921, the military government had obtained loans through the sale of bonds, secured by customs revenues, at interest rates up to 18.9 per cent. Retirement of these bonds was scheduled to coincide with the retirement of the bonds issued under the Treaty of 1907 and the termination of the customs receivership established under that treaty. Both of these loans placed a heavy burden on the dwindling customs revenues. The Dominican leaders opposed any new loans; the State Department agreed because it would extend the life of the customs receivership. Resolving the financial woes of the island thus became linked to the policy of patient adherence to the Harding Plan and the course of action the State Department had adopted the previous October.⁵²

In January, 1922, Welles reiterated to Secretary Hughes the

suggestions of October, 1921, which had been designed to force the Dominican political leaders into participating in elections conducted by the military government or bear the responsibility for continuation of the occupation. Welles also commented on the pressing need for financial relief for the military government. He accepted the Military Governor's opinion that ". . . with a good working balance in the treasury, strong sentiment against retention . . . of a military mission might possibly be overcome,"⁵³ and recommended provision for a new loan. Hughes and Harding approved the suggestions and on February 19, 1922, Admiral Robinson and Minister Russell arrived in Washington to receive their instructions.⁵⁴

The recall of Robinson and Russell for consultations was part of the course of action adopted earlier. Their instructions amounted to a strong restatement of Senator McCormick's message reaffirming the Harding Plan. They were ordered to inform the leaders of the various political parties and other influential Dominicans that the United States was unwilling to allow the deadlock to continue and that the Harding Plan would be withdrawn unless they immediately agreed to call for elections and urge their followers to participate. If this ultimatum was rejected, the occupation would continue until the most urgent public works were completed and an adequate Dominican constabulary was functioning. Robinson and Russell were to tell the Dominicans that the supervisors of the elections ". . . might well be Dominican citizens recommended for such position by the Dominican political leaders" and not necessarily officials of the military government or of the American occupation forces. In addition, as a "final concession", the United States would omit the requirement for

a military mission with the understanding that a legation guard of American marines would be maintained until both governments agreed that the Dominican constabulary was capable of maintaining public order. Finally, to alleviate the financial difficulties, the military government would be authorized to obtain a new \$10 million loan secured by Dominican customs receipts. Although this loan would extend the life of the customs receivership, this was unavoidable since it was unlikely a Dominican government could obtain a loan without such an extension.⁵⁵

Robinson and Russell delivered their instructions at a meeting in the Archbishop's palace on February 23, 1922. In his report of the meeting to Secretary Hughes, Russell stated, "It would seem that all of those attending the conference came with their minds made up to accept nothing."⁵⁶ Robinson reported that the conferees refused to cooperate unless the United States dropped the military legation as a condition.⁵⁷ On the afternoon of February 23, 1922, despite being asked to consider the matter for a few days, the Dominican conferees flatly rejected the latest proposal in writing.⁵⁸ Subsequently, on March 6, 1922, Admiral Robinson issued a proclamation prepared by Welles the previous January, formally withdrawing the Harding Plan. The proclamation announced the negotiation of a loan allowing for the continuation of the occupation pending completion of the program of public works and public education and the organization and training of the constabulary. Upon completion of these projects the United States would consider withdrawal following the election of a properly constituted Dominican government and ratification of the extension of the duties of the General Receiver.⁵⁹

This latest plan of action stirred a few Dominican leaders into action. In December, 1921, the State Department had received "strong indications" that at least two Dominican political parties, the Partido Progresista, or the velasquistas, as the followers of Federico Velásquez were called, and the Partido Nacional, led by General Horacio Vásquez and commonly referred to as the horacistas, would join forces.⁶⁰ In late March, 1922, Russell reported that Velásquez had stated that when Dominican finances were in order and the constabulary was of sufficient strength, he and General Vásquez would submit a proposal for holding elections.⁶¹ Robinson also reported increased cooperation among the various political parties and suggested waiting for an offer of settlement from a combination of responsible Dominican leaders.⁶² In addition, Dr. Francisco J. Peynado, formerly the Dominican Minister to the United States and an eminent lawyer who had remained politically non-aligned, arrived in Washington in mid-March to attempt to arrange for a program of withdrawal. Peynado had been a participant in nearly all of the conferences between the military governors and Dominican leaders since 1919 and had conferred with Welles in Washington prior to pronouncement of the Wilson Plan in December, 1920. In their later writings, Welles and Dana G. Munro, who replaced Welles as Chief of the Latin American Affairs Division, both agreed that Peynado believed it was useless to try to reach a settlement through negotiations with the military governor.⁶³

The policy and course of action which Welles outlined in October, 1921, and which he instituted the following February with the approval of Hughes and Harding, set the stage for the closing chapter on the

Dominican occupation. The Wilson Plan and the Harding Plan, though rejected, opened the channels of communication between the United States and the Dominican Republic. The resultant dialogue served to clarify the issues in dispute. The parochial interests of the State Department, the American military government, and the Dominican leaders, were not clearly recognizable, as were the impediments to a negotiated settlement.

Welles' success in these endeavors and the subsequent role he played in ending the American occupation suggest that unrelated personal problems caused his abrupt resignation from the State Department on March 15, 1922. Neither Welles' letter of resignation, dated March 14, 1922, nor other consulted source materials contain a clue as to the reason for his departure. Welles left Washington almost immediately for his home in Massachusetts, where he apparently spent the next few weeks. Hughes and Munro remained in Washington to make the most of the opportunity Welles had created.⁶⁴

NOTES

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²¹Kelsey, p. 192.

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²³Sumner Welles, 21 December 1920, to Secretary of the Navy, 839.00/2369a; Secretary of Navy, 27 January 1921, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2308, Department of State, National Archives.

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CHAPTER IV

SUMNER WELLES: COMMISSIONER TO THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

The arrival of Dr. Francisco J. Peynado in Washington marked a turning point in United States efforts to reach an agreement with Dominican leaders on the terms of a plan of withdrawal. This purely individual effort on Peynado's part, coupled with the reports that two other prominent Dominican political party leaders, Federico Velásquez and General Horacio Vásquez, would soon send the State Department a joint recommendation for holding elections, was a sign of an emerging Dominican willingness to cooperate with the United States. Prior to March, 1922, the Dominicans had been content to allow the United States to make the withdrawal proposals. Now, however, the Dominicans were preparing to present their own proposals relative to ending the occupation.

Peynado first met with Secretary of State Hughes on the morning of March 18, 1922. In this and in subsequent meetings with Hughes and Dana G. Munro, the new head of the Latin American Affairs Division, Peynado presented his view of the situation. He related that the Dominicans were disposed to ratify only the acts of the military government which conferred rights and obligations and that there was no obstacle to extending the customs receivership. Peynado protested the new loan but recognized there was no viable alternative. He

reiterated the strong Dominican opposition to a legation guard or military mission and voiced the opinion that life and property would not be endangered if the maintenance of order were left to a Dominican government. Peynado's views were basically acceptable to the United States but, doubt still remained about the possible danger to life and property. According to Munro, however, ". . . Hughes was disposed to make concessions on this point in order to reach an agreement."¹ Hughes informed Peynado and, subsequently, President Harding, that the objective of the United States was to withdraw at the earliest moment after a Dominican government capable of maintaining order could be established. The implication was that some American troops would remain in the Dominican Republic as long as this was considered necessary.²

By the end of May, 1922, the situation seemed ripe for another attempt at an agreement. Munro, with the assistance of Peynado, drafted a new plan of withdrawal which contained the following provisions:

1. Installation of a provisional government agreeable to both nations and formation of a Dominican commission to advise the provisional president.
2. The provisional president would promulgate new election laws and oversee the reorganization of government.
3. A restricted American military government would co-exist with the provisional government.
4. The conduct of new elections under the existing constitution for the Senate and Chamber of Deputies.
5. The new congress would convoke a constitutional convention to amend the existing constitution.
6. The election of a new president by electoral colleges; cessation of the provisional government.

7. The elected president to appoint representatives to negotiate a convention of evacuation for the withdrawal of United States military forces.
8. The withdrawal of American military forces upon satisfaction of the convention terms.

This arrangement was satisfactory to Secretary Hughes, who was opposed to turning over total administration of the Dominican Republic to anyone except an elected government. It also satisfied Dominican objections to the conduct of elections under control of the military government. In submitting the draft to Secretary Hughes, Munro opined that the final plan ought to include the views of other Dominican leaders, two of whom were coming to Washington with additional proposals. Munro further suggested that the final plan be worked out in the Dominican Republic after a study of local sentiments and conditions. To this end, he suggested sending a special representative of President Harding to the island to work out the details. This special representative would function as an intermediary between the State Department, the military government, and the Dominicans.³

Word of Peynado's informal talks reached Santo Domingo and accelerated the activities of the party leaders there. Since Peynado represented no single party, there was no reason to believe that his activities were self-serving or a threat to the interests of one party over another. Nevertheless, political benefits would accrue to the party or parties which could claim to have had an influential hand in restoring Dominican sovereignty. Unaware of the substance of the program for withdrawal which Peynado was seeking to arrange, the party leaders acted quickly to protect their own interests and, if necessary, to counteract whatever Peynado achieved. During April and May, 1922, leaders of the Partido Nacional and Partido Progresista

had expressed their views on withdrawal to Admiral Robinson, the military governor, and William W. Russell, the American minister, and made clear their intention of going to Washington to make their own presentations. In recognition of the need for unanimous agreement for a plan of withdrawal, the leaders of the two remaining political parties, the Partido Liberal and Partido Unionista, were also invited to send representatives to take part in the talks.⁴

The convergence of some of the key Dominican political figures on Washington presented a problem. Neither Hughes nor Munro possessed a sufficient depth of knowledge of the factors bearing on the question of withdrawal to take full advantage of this opportunity to achieve a quick agreement. It was certain that regardless of who was to represent the United States in the upcoming talks with the Dominican visitors, he had to possess the requisite diplomatic skill, have an intimate knowledge of the factors involved, and be a man of integrity. In April, 1922, Senator Medill McCormick had intimated that he could successfully carry on negotiations with the Dominicans if he were appointed High Commissioner to Santo Domingo.⁵ Whether or not the Senator was seriously considered for this post is unknown. Munro suggested to Hughes that Welles be asked to carry on the negotiations with the Dominicans, and the Secretary approved. In his letter of May 31, 1922, inviting Welles to return to Washington from Manchester, Massachusetts, Munro states:

I believe that the prospects for early withdrawal are more favorable than they have hitherto been, and that the right man could give us a definite and workable program which would command the support of the native leaders.⁶

Munro also informed Welles in his letter that he had ". . . suggested

that a representative of the president be appointed to be sent to Santo Domingo to work out the plan"7 Welles immediately reported to the Latin American Affairs Division and in a letter dated June 7, 1922, informed Hughes that he would be ". . . very much inclined to undertake a trip to Santo Domingo if offered the opportunity."⁸

By mid-June, 1922, the men who would participate in these critical negotiations were either on their way to Washington or were already there. Significantly absent from the talks would be the American military governor of the Dominican Republic, Rear-Admiral Samuel S. Robinson. The series of events during the first few months of 1922 provided the vehicle by which the State Department reasserted its control over United States-Dominican affairs. Robinson had been excluded from the discussions between Peynado, Hughes, and Munro, and had apparently not been fully informed of their results. To cement Robinson's exclusion and in recognition of the obstacle he posed to withdrawal, the State Department opted to negotiate directly with the Dominicans until the plan was finalized.

Welles entered the conference enthusiastically; doubtless a compromising attitude on the part of the Dominican leaders proved helpful. After acquainting himself with the efforts of Peynado and Munro, Welles met with Vásquez and Velásquez. He found that in this and in other conferences with the Dominicans, "no fundamental differences occurred as to what the United States felt were necessary steps or as to the nature of those steps."⁹ On the same day as his meeting with Vásquez and Velásquez, Welles submitted for Secretary Hughes' approval a draft of a plan of evacuation which incorporated

many of the features of the proposal suggested by Peynado and Munro, and his own recommendations for satisfying his two objections to the plan. Welles doubted, despite their claims to the contrary, that Vázquez and Velásquez controlled a majority of the Dominican electorate. Under the Munro-Peynado proposal, the Dominican leaders would select a provisional president. It was Welles' belief that the politicians who selected the provisional president should in fact represent the majority of the Dominican people. He recommended that before the United States agree to the proposed method of selecting the provisional president ". . . a satisfactory investigation . . . be made by a duly authorized representative . . ." ¹⁰ of the United States. Welles' second objection concerned his belief that before the United States could safely withdraw the new Dominican government must ratify a convention of evacuation negotiated by the two nations. Welles changed the wording of the plan's provisions relating to the convention of evacuation to insure its ratification. ¹¹ Hughes approved both of Welles' suggestions. The proposed plan was next submitted to Vázquez, Velásquez, and Peynado, who all agreed to a few minor changes. On June 30, 1922, a final memorandum of the details of the plan was prepared; the Dominican conferees signed this version on July 3, 1922. ¹²

Coincident with the agreement on the tentative plan of evacuation, President Harding appointed Welles "Commissioner with the rank of Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary." Welles was:

To represent the President of the United States in the Dominican Republic for the purpose of investigating and reporting upon political conditions in the Dominican Republic, and for the purpose of ascertaining the views of the Dominican people with respect to an appropriate

agreement with the United States, as a result of which the military forces of the United States may be withdrawn from the Dominican Republic.¹³

The Dominicans asked that Welles' appointment not be made public immediately.¹⁴ This delay would enable them to inform their constituents of the plan and to prepare the public for Welles' arrival.

There was an initial understanding, at the urging of Welles, that the details of the plan should be held confidential until Welles arrived in Santo Domingo or until he agreed to make it public. According to Welles, confidentiality was important for two reasons. First, the United States had not yet determined the composition of the commission which would select and advise the provisional president; announcement that a commission would be formed for this purpose would likely produce a demand by all political factions for representation on the commission. Second, the specific acts of the military government which would need to be ratified remained unidentified.¹⁵ A third reason for keeping the details of the plan confidential was revealed by Francis White, who replaced Munro as Chief of the Latin American Affairs Division. White related to Welles that he had received an "interesting, albeit anonymous" letter which confirmed his "distrust" of Peynado and that

. . . no loopholes [should] be open for an anti-American campaign for internal political motives . . . that no opportunity should be granted any one of them to pose as having exacted concessions which could be used in such a campaign.¹⁶

Apparently, Dr. Peynado, the most apolitical of the Dominican leaders, had considered starting a political career. For all these reasons Welles insisted upon keeping the plan confidential.

The tentative plan of evacuation provided for a provisional

president and a cabinet elected by a majority vote of a commission composed of Vázquez, Velásquez, Peynado, and Elias Brache representing the Partido Liberal. By mutual agreement of these four men, Monsignor Adolfo Nouel, the Archbishop of Santo Domingo, was also named to the commission. The commission would determine the provisional government's limits of authority and would fill all vacancies occurring in the provisional government. The provisional government, upon inauguration, would immediately take over all executive departments and would be assisted by the respective officials of the military government. Expenditures above budgetary limits could be made only with the approval of the Military Governor. The Military Governor would delegate the necessary power to the provisional government to carry out the plan. He would retain authority over the military occupation forces and concentrate them in not more than three places as determined by him. The Dominican constabulary would maintain peace and order; the occupation forces would provide support in the case of serious disturbances. The Provisional President would provide for enabling legislation and constitutional amendments relative to the holding of elections and the reorganization of provincial and town governments. An elected congress would pass a law ratifying the acts of the military government listed in a convention of evacuation negotiated by the provisional government with the United States and ratified by the Dominican congress.

In the convention of evacuation, the Dominican government would recognize the validity of legal contracts and all executive and departmental orders of the military government which levied taxes, authorized expenditures, or established rights on behalf of third

persons. The contracts and orders, which were to be listed separately in the convention, would be recognized as law from the date of issue until lawfully abolished or annulled; no authority could take any action revoking the rights acquired under them. The convention would recognize the validity of the bond issues of 1918 and 1922 and the extension of the customs receivership to insure amortization of these bond issues.¹⁷

A summary of the plan and announcement of Welles' appointment was published in American and Dominican newspapers in mid-July, 1922. William W. Russell, the American minister, reported the news prompted public excitement and immediate "rabid talk" from the proponents of "pure and simple evacuation".¹⁸ Welles termed initial opposition to the plan "intense" as a result of efforts of nationalista groups which wanted Henriquez y Carbajal reinstalled as provisional president. Many Dominicans hurled charges of treason and betrayal against the men who had helped form the plan, but these men, according to Welles, earned the support of "saner" elements of the people in their campaign to explain the plan.¹⁹ Newspaper accounts of the Dominican conferees' explanation of the plan show that each described it properly and fairly and urged that it be accepted. The plan was generally presented as a proposal offered by Dominicans to the United States, and one which posed the best possibility of withdrawal. The respective conferees claimed credit for certain features of the plan, but no one gained any immediate political advantage.²⁰

Welles and his party of four arrived in Santo Domingo at noon on July 29, 1922, having been transported to Santo Domingo aboard a Navy torpedo boat dispatched for this purpose.²¹ He immediately issued a

statement to the press which he believed created a favorable impression and influenced some nacionalistas to support the plan. Comments in his press release were as follows:

The United States . . . has never had, and has not now, any secret purposes to conceal or any selfish motives to further . . . , has no desire and no intention of assuming the right of intervention in, or control over Dominican affairs.²²

On July 30 Welles held a press conference during which he announced that the plan would be published when the acts requiring ratification were identified and the members of the commission had been named. He also stated that the United States wanted a guarantee of a responsible government capable of maintaining peace and order, independence, and territorial integrity.²³ The two daily newspapers in Santo Domingo published the contents of Welles' interview and the next day printed editorials supporting the plan. Welles regarded this as a favorable sign because these newspapers had opposed all earlier proposals.²⁴

In addition to his appeal to the nacionalistas through the press, Welles sought Henriquez y Carbajal's support of the plan. As primary spokesman for the leader of the nacionalistas, Henriquez y Carbajal's backing would virtually guarantee the plan's acceptance and allow the entire process of withdrawal to proceed smoothly. The nacionalistas had not been represented in the negotiations up to this point, and, unless Henriquez y Carbajal came out in support of the plan, they would not be represented on the commission. Welles' contacts with Henriquez y Carbajal failed to garner his support of the plan, but as time passed many nacionalistas abandoned Henriquez y Carbajal and joined other parties.²⁵

During the first week of August, 1922, Welles visited the major

population centers of the Dominican Republic to gauge the strength of the key political parties and to explain the proposed convention and the steps leading to evacuation. He had already received reports of general acceptance of the plan from the Dominican conferees, but he needed to be certain. In each town he visited, Welles listened to the personal opinions of the leading citizens. The sentiment of the public, which greeted him in crowds of "from 2,000 to a few hundreds,"²⁶ convinced him that an "overwhelming majority" were in favor of the plan. He also concluded that Vásquez, Velásquez, and Brache, the three Dominican political party leaders who had signed the plan the previous July in Washington, represented eighty per cent of the electorate. The remaining twenty per cent of the voters were politically non-aligned and followers of the fourth signatory, Peynado.

Having determined the political conditions and the views of the people toward the plan, Welles recommended that the four signatories of the plan and Archbishop Nouel serve as members of the commission to select the provisional government. He also requested authority to publish officially the proposed plan at a time he deemed appropriate. In order to counter the suspicion that could arise from a long delay in announcing the agreement, Welles wanted the freedom to publish the plan without a complete list of the orders and contracts to be ratified. The State Department approved both suggestions.²⁷

If the nacionalistas were an overt threat to the plan, Rear-Admiral Robinson, the military governor, was a covert opponent and much more dangerous. Before Welles arrived in the Dominican Republic, the State Department had to intervene in an incident which could have undermined the negotiations. The State Department received information

in early July, 1922, that a provost court had convicted six or seven young Dominicans for what the State Department termed ". . . purely political offenses." Robinson received immediate instructions to suspend the imposed fine of \$3,000 or five years imprisonment and to refrain in the future from prosecuting such offenders.²⁸ Other difficulties soon followed.

After having been in the Dominican Republic for a few days, Welles informed Robinson that the plan was a "definite agreement" and was "tentative" only in that its publication would be delayed. Welles went on to assert that only he should submit amendments to the plan for the appointed commission's consideration.²⁹ Robinson apparently took this latter statement as an invitation from Welles to propose amendments to the plan, and he urged the Department of the Navy to insist on several changes. The most significant of these proposals would have delayed the provisional president's assumption of command over the national constabulary, permitted Dominican military officers to supplement the officer ranks of the constabulary until February 23, 1923, and established a deadline of March 1, 1924, for the inauguration of an elected Dominican government. If such requirements were not met, the United States government would again assume control of the Dominican Republic. Robinson also desired protection for the military government and occupation forces from insults from the press, but he could not find the "proper wording" for this.³⁰ It seems that Robinson's intentions were, to be sure, honorable. He thought it would be very difficult for the military government and the provisional government to co-exist and share authority to govern the nation. He stated that the constabulary, especially the officers, needed more

training if peace and order were to be maintained. He believed a serious miscalculation of the ability of the constabulary had been made. He told Welles that President Harding had been "led to believe" that the constabulary was sufficiently trained and organized but that this was not so.³¹ Welles may have agreed with Robinson on this point, but he was compelled to honor the commitments that had been made.

Welles' general opposition to modifying the plan was based on the fact the Dominican leaders who signed the proposal had been officially and definitely informed that the United States reserved only the right to alter the plan in order to protect the rights of persons, businesses, and governments which had acquired property or entered into contracts under the occupation. He believed that the nature of the amendments which the Military Governor offered would be regarded as a breach of faith and would lead to the termination of the negotiations. Welles offered to discuss some of the points raised by Robinson with the commission members, but he adamantly refused to discuss with the Dominicans any ". . . new guise of the military mission . . . , which was unanimously rejected by the Dominican people."³² William W. Russell, the American minister, supported Welles. The State Department fully approved Welles' position and prevailed upon the Department of the Navy to instruct Robinson that he shall suggest no changes in the plan except in conjunction with Welles. Robinson also was informed that "absolute cooperation" with Welles was essential.³³ This instruction firmly established Welles' authority in the negotiations for a final plan and made him the arbiter between the commission and Robinson concerning the training of the constabulary and all other

matters.

Because the training of the officers to lead the constabulary was by August, 1922, progressing slowly, Welles was forced to relent and discuss the matter with the commission. At the initial meeting, Robinson specifically requested that the military government continue to train the constabulary under the provisional government. According to a report of the meeting, Welles considered the United States so committed to placing the constabulary under the command of the provisional government that he suggested no change be made in the plan.³⁴ Instead, Welles secured a compromise to the effect that prior to election of a provisional president, a Dominican commandant would be appointed to head the constabulary. The commandant would then appoint Dominicans with military training and good records to replace the American officers, who would withdraw from the force when the provisional government took office. The training of recruits and officers would be the responsibility of the military government during the life of the provisional presidency. General Buenaventura Cabral, a provincial governor who was not affiliated with a political party, was appointed to the commandant post.³⁵

During August and September, 1922, Welles met with the commission almost daily to prepare the final plan of withdrawal. In Welles' view the "commission afforded a common meeting ground of diverse party views and thus provided assurance that all factions could voice their desires and views."³⁶ These meetings also provided a forum wherein Welles could mediate the numerous, and in many cases, grave disputes between the military government and the commission. The commission succeeded in drafting a new election law and a law

reorganizing the provincial and town governments. Perhaps the most important and the most time consuming project was the listing of the military government's orders and contracts that were to be ratified in the convention of evacuation. Welles criticized the military government for taking so long to compile the list.³⁷ The only new provision added to the actual plan of withdrawal permitted the Dominican courts to settle controversies arising from the rights acquired under the military government and to submit to arbitration any such controversies involving United States interests. A final potential problem was resolved when the State Department authorized Welles to state that if the Dominicans met the terms of the agreement, the United States would withdraw its forces even though the United States Senate might not ratify the convention of evacuation. The plan of withdrawal, in its final form, was approved and signed on September 18, 1922, and was published throughout the Dominican Republic five days later.³⁸

Welles was mindful that the internal cooperation of the members of the commission had produced an acceptable plan of withdrawal, and he hoped this cooperative attitude would persist. He also was aware that when the time arrived to select a provisional president, the commission members would succumb to party politics. In August, 1922, Welles believed that after installation of the provisional government, Vázquez and Velásquez, representing the Partido Nacional and the Partido Progresistas, respectively, would join forces. Together these two would oppose Elias Brache, the leader of the Partido Liberal. Peynado continued to represent the independent vote, but he reportedly favored joining the Partido Liberal. This would place Archbishop

Nouel, the fifth member of the commission, in the position of casting the deciding vote, but he, too, was believed to favor the Partido Liberal. A month later, it appeared more certain that Peynado had joined with the Partido Liberal and would perhaps be that party's presidential candidate. This situation threatened the political balance of the commission, which had not completed work on the election laws or selected a provisional president. Pressure was brought to bear on Peynado to maintain his independent status. He agreed to do so, at least for a while, and stated in writing to the commission that he had no political ambitions or ties to any party. He promised to resign from the commission if he decided to become a candidate.³⁹

The political balance temporarily restored, the commission chose Juan Bautista Vicini Burgos as provisional president. Vicini Burgos had never participated in Dominican politics and he was not a member of any political party. He was a wealthy businessman with real estate and sugar interests in the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. He was considered to be a man of honesty and integrity with feelings of friendship toward the United States. The Provisional President picked his cabinet from lists submitted by party leaders and selected two ministers from each party. The installation of the provisional government was delayed until October 21, 1922, to afford time for Dominican officers to replace American officers in the constabulary.⁴⁰

At the same time that the commission was selecting the provisional president, it began finalizing arrangements for the election of a government. In this regard, the commission asked that Robinson restrict American troops to designated points of concentration and that he prohibit them from visiting nearby towns and cities on election day.

The commission believed that this action was necessary to avoid the impression the military government was observing the conduct of the elections. The commission also thought it wise to minimize contact between American troops and the Dominican people during this period of unusual excitement. Robinson strenuously objected to the requests and took offense at the implication that American troops, by their mere presence in the towns and cities, would be guilty of wrongdoing. Robinson did offer to order his troops to stay away from the polling places, but he declined to restrict them otherwise unless it was absolutely necessary. Welles, who believed the commission's view correct, asked the State Department to resolve the problem through the Department of the Navy. Subsequently, Robinson received instructions from the Department of the Navy to comply with the commission's request and a reminder to cooperate with Welles. Robinson protested his instructions, but to no avail. This disagreement, coupled with Robinson's efforts to have American naval officers assigned to conduct a financial audit of a 1908 bond issue, precipitated a request that he leave the island upon installation of the provisional government on October 21, 1922. The admiral's departure on October 23, 1922, was a statement of confidence in the provisional government and served to decrease the level of friction between the military government and the commission.⁴¹

With the installation of the provisional government, Welles considered that his mission in the Dominican Republic was finished. The obligations of the provisional government were, according to Welles, clearly defined and understood, and he foresaw no real problem in obtaining final approval and enactment of the important election law.

Brigadier General Harry Lee, the acting military governor, had created a favorable impression and was getting on well with the new provisional government. The developments over the past few months had improved the image of William Russell, the American minister, who seemed capable of mediating any disputes between the military and provisional governments. Although Welles was optimistic about the future, he indicated his willingness to return to the island if disturbances did arise. The State Department approved Welles' departure, despite requests from Vicini Burgos, the provisional president, and the commissioners that his mission be continued until the inauguration of an elected president. In the light of subsequent events leading to the election of a president, the requests that Welles' mission be continued may have been a veiled statement that steady progress on the plan of withdrawal required the moderating influence of Welles' presence.⁴²

Almost immediately after Welles' departure from the island on October 27, 1922, partisan politics and corruption began to effect the efficient operation of both the provisional government and the advisory commission. The minister of health and the minister of finance were removed for mis-handling funds to the benefit of their respective political parties. The minister of the interior, who like Burgos, was politically non-aligned, resigned after a disagreement with the provisional president. The commission members turned their attention to the upcoming elections, and there were fewer and fewer commission meetings and decreased contact between the commission and the provisional government. Russell, the American minister, was unable to keep the commission busy at the task of finalizing the election law and other legislation. Perhaps out of embarrassment over the way

things were progressing, Russell delayed informing Welles and the State Department. On November 28, 1922, Welles, who was in Washington preparing for the Washington Conference of 1922-1923 on Central American Affairs, asked Russell if the election law had been promulgated, and, if not, when it would be. In his reply dated the next day, Russell stated that the law would be published within ten days but it would not be presented to the provisional president for promulgation until "the people" had had an opportunity to suggest changes. The election law, which Welles considered unnecessarily delayed by the commission's lack of initiative, was finally promulgated on March 9, 1923.⁴³

In an effort to insure that the elections would take place so that it would not be necessary to extend the life of the provisional and military governments, Welles returned to the Dominican Republic in April, 1923. He was greeted by a new Dominican political alignment which threatened the entire withdrawal effort. It had been generally recognized in early 1922 that if Peynado had remained neutral, he would have received the support of the major parties and would have been elected president. However, the Partido Liberal lacked a strong potential candidate and courted Peynado. In January, 1923, Peynado accepted the nomination of the Partido Liberal, which later entered into a coalition with other followers of former President Juan Isidro Jiménez. This coalition called itself the Partido de la Coalicion Nacional Patriotica and as a body backed Peynado for the presidency. Peynado, to his credit, honored his earlier promise and resigned from the commission. Peynado's candidacy moved the velasquestas and the horacistas closer to a union since the two

parties together could expect to command a majority vote in a general election.⁴⁴

Upon his arrival, Welles met with the commission and explained that unless that body completed its work, elections could not be held and the occupation would, of course, continue. At a meeting on April 4, 1923, the commission agreed to constitute the election boards and, subsequently, announce a ninety day period for voter registration. Under the schedule adopted, the election would take place on approximately October 1, 1923. Since the provisional presidency was due to expire on August 16, 1923, the commission agreed to extend its life until December 31. The central election board positions were filled on April 10 and the local election boards, with some difficulty, were formed during the following weeks. Assured by the commissioners that voter registration would proceed without delay and after determining that the constabulary was maintaining peace and order and that relations between the military and provisional governments was satisfactory, Welles returned to Washington on May 17.⁴⁵

The State Department and Welles had made a concerted effort to stay outside the partisan political activities of the various parties. Welles took great care to recommend solutions to problems so that no one party gained an advantage or appeared to have the support of the United States. During his most recent visit to the Dominican Republic, Welles detected an effort by the velasquestas and horacistas to convince the public that the United States and American-owned sugar interests favored the election of Peynado. Allegations such as these, according to Welles, would only encourage voters to choose on the basis of their attitude toward the United States rather than vote for

responsible government for their nation. Also, if the United States was portrayed as having influenced the election, it would be difficult for the United States to assist the victor, regardless of who it was, in solving the problems that lay ahead. Welles appealed to the candidates, all members of the commission, to respect American impartiality in the election campaign.⁴⁶

As time for the elections drew near, the commission ceased to function because its members were busy campaigning. By August, 1923, Vázquez and Velásquez had formed an alliance whereby the latter would run for vice-president and the former would seek the presidency. Cabinet members and government employees who owed their allegiance to Vázquez and Velásquez now formed a majority in the provisional cabinet in particular and in the provisional government in general.

The future of the alliance seemed assured, but it had not calculated on the partiality of the Central Election Board. It was suspected that the Central Election Board favored the election of Peynado. In September, 1923, the Central Election Board, which was responsible for insuring compliance with the election law, refused to accept as valid the alliance nominees, Vázquez and Velásquez. The decision was based on the fact that the alliance representatives in the large province of La Vega had violated the election law. It seems that an original and certified copy of the alliance nominations had been submitted, instead of the required original and duplicate original. This decision infuriated the alliance parties. If the decision were allowed to stand, then Paynado would win the election. In response, representatives of Vázquez and Velásquez began impeachment proceedings against two members of the Central Election Board.

The alliance's action seriously endangered elections scheduled for early October.⁴⁷

Welles tried to resolve this latest crisis through cabled instructions to Russell, the American minister. He lauded the impartiality and strict enforcement of the law by the election board, but he recognized that a more flexible interpretation of the election law was necessary if the "election experiment" was to be successful. He suggested that Burgos, the provisional president, approach the Central Election Board with a plan to withhold confirmation of the nominations until the missing duplicate original was received. This appeared to be a simple and reasonable solution. However, Burgos balked at the suggestion because it would make him appear partial. In addition, impeachment proceedings brought the Central Election Board's work to a complete stop. The entire controversy forced another postponement of the elections.⁴⁸

Welles returned to Santo Domingo on November 3, 1923, and over a period of several days met with the commission and the two presidential candidates, Vázquez and Peynado. He told them that the policy of obstruction the two opposing groups were following would cause cancellation of the elections, and, if this happened, the United States would ". . . reserve entire liberty to determine its course of action."⁴⁹ From his examination of the situation, Welles determined that both the alliance candidate, Vázquez, and the coalition candidate, Peynado, had secured technical advantages, and he appealed to the candidates to give them up. He suggested the parties return to an equal status. He proposed the elections be postponed, the election law amended, and new election boards be established. In addition,

Peynado's coalition would obtain additional posts in the provisional government to offset the majority position of the rival alliance parties. The Dominican leaders accepted the offer and the election was postponed until the necessary revised legislation was promulgated by Burgos.⁵⁰

While the commission rewrote the election laws and related legislation, Welles sought public pledges from the candidates to keep the constabulary apolitical. He also sought to have Vásquez and Peynado agree on the one most qualified person for each elective office and present him as their joint nominee for office. He asked each to abide by the civil service law and make promotions on the basis of merit. Finally, he urged that they ignore party affiliations in the selection of cabinet appointees. The candidates professed support for all these suggestions, but neither was in a position to accomplish the ideals they embodied. Welles was not being naive in making the suggestions. The Dominicans had been favorably responsive to nearly all of his ideas, and it was undoubtedly worth the effort if it would result in capable people serving in the government.⁵¹

The campaign under the new law began on January 15, 1924, and the election machinery worked well up through the actual balloting on March 15. Welles chose to stay in the Dominican Republic until after the elections. Recalling the problems of the recent past, his presence no doubt contributed to the success of the elections by curbing political excesses on the part of the candidates and their parties. During the campaign, both the alliance and coalition groups again tried to capitalize on anti-American sentiment by alleging that the United States supported the opposing candidate. Welles, in a public

statement, reasserted United States neutrality by stating that both candidates were acceptable to his government, and that the sole interest of the United States was to give the Dominican people freedom of choice.⁵²

By early February it became apparent that Vázquez, the alliance candidate, would win the election. Welles reported to the State Department that Peynado was considering withdrawing from the race because he had expended all of his personal funds and because the financial contributions of his supporters, who were certain of defeat, had declined markedly. Peynado offered to reach an agreement with Vázquez which would guarantee Peynado's coalition representation in the congress and provincial offices. In return, Peynado and the coalition would support Vázquez's candidacy. Peynado also suggested that both he and Vázquez withdraw from the race and subsequently support Velásquez or some other compromise candidate. Writing in 1928, Welles stated that the coalition was willing to make almost any sacrifice to prevent the election of Vázquez and even attempted to convince him to withdraw from the race on the basis that his election would cause widespread dissatisfaction. Vázquez apparently recognized the absurdity of these suggestions and rejected the proposal. Welles, although aware of the coalition's efforts to arrange a deal, was careful not to interfere in this purely political problem. He informed the State Department in early February that he favored an agreement which would have given the coalition parties representation in the congress and provincial offices in return for coalition support of certain alliance candidates. Such an agreement would put the ablest man in office, which is what he urged the candidates to agree

to do earlier. However, there is no evidence that Welles ever took any action to force an agreement.⁵³

The Dominican press, in the midst of the campaign, continued its support of the plan of withdrawal and expressed serious concern that partisan politics would deprive the Dominican Republic of its sovereignty and the Dominican people of their liberty. One Dominican newspaper described the situation as follows:

The occasion is so fraught with danger and we are so near losing the little gain made in two years, owing to the madness of partisan conflict, that even the optimistic among us view the future with deep concern.⁵⁴

Welles' battle against the effects of partisan politics did not go unnoticed in the press, and he was praised for his ". . . impartial and just attitude."⁵⁵ Perhaps the most important contribution of the press was its interpretation of what Welles meant when he said that a postponement of the election would create "a very grave situation."⁵⁶ According to the Dominican newspaper El Listin Diario it meant that:

. . . military intervention would continue indefinitely, that our fondest hope of independence would be forever ruined, that we would lose all the benefits of self-government by the waste of all our efforts toward liberty. . . .⁵⁷

While this interpretation was an overstatement of what the United States would have done, it was a clear reminder that under the plan of withdrawal the military government and American troops were not to be removed until a constitutional government had negotiated and ratified a convention of evacuation.

The election did take place as scheduled on March 15, 1924. Vásquez was elected president by a near two-to-one margin over Peynado and the alliance parties acquired large majorities in both houses of

Congress. Following the election, Peynado established a precedent by congratulating Vásquez and promising to support him. The convention of evacuation was signed without incident on June 12, 1924. Welles had left the Dominican Republic four weeks earlier to help reestablish constitutional government in Honduras. By Vásquez's inauguration day on July 12, American troops had already begun to leave the Dominican Republic. On September 18 the American minister cabled that all provisions of the plan of withdrawal were complete and that all of the forces of occupation had left the country.⁵⁸

Before leaving the Dominican Republic for Honduras, Welles had arranged for President-elect Vásquez to confer with State Department officials in Washington concerning ways the United States could help his government. The visit, with Welles present, took place in June, 1924. It appeared that Vásquez would now accept the assistance previously offered as a condition of termination of the occupation. However, an anti-American attitude on the part of the Dominican people would not permit any form of cooperation that suggested American control or limited Dominican authority. Until his resignation from the State Department in July, 1925, Welles urged Vásquez to continue the spirit of cooperation which ended the occupation. His efforts were not very successful. A short-term loan was arranged as part of the new convention that replaced the Treaty of 1907; however, without the threat of continued occupation, Vásquez was free to exercise his authority and Dominican sovereignty as far as was practical. The United States was willing to let him do so, as long as the island's obligations were met. Dana G. Munro is probably correct in his conclusions that nationalistic opposition, Vásquez's necessary use of

political patronage and access to government funds, and general opposition to any foreign interference in the use of government funds would have made it impossible for Welles to revive Dominican cooperation during a planned visit to the Dominican Republic in mid-1925.⁵⁹

Welles did not have another opportunity to go to the Dominican Republic in an official capacity. President Coolidge's opposition to Welles' marriage to the former wife of one of his senator friends is generally accepted as the reason for Welles' abrupt resignation from the State Department on July 13, 1925. President Coolidge, in a note dated July 9, 1925, to the acting Secretary of State, Joseph G. Grew, said, "If Welles is now in the Government Service, he should be dismissed from the service."⁶⁰ As already noted, Welles did resign, but he did not cease offering friendly advice to President Vásquez. Welles became known as Vásquez's "unofficial advisor" and helped him obtain the services of an American agricultural expert. When financial difficulties arose in 1929, Welles helped persuade former Vice-President of the United States, Charles G. Dawes, to lead an American commission to advise the Dominican government on fiscal legislation, taxation, and budget. The Dawes commission was greeted with suspicion, but Welles, who went with Dawes, helped to calm Dominican fear that their financial sovereignty was about to suffer added encroachments. Thus, in these ways and through personal contacts with his Dominican friends, Welles tried to keep alive the policy of friendly cooperation.⁶¹

NOTES

¹Dana G. Munro, The United States and the Caribbean Republics, 1921-1933 (Princeton, N.J.: 1974), p. 54.

²Memoranda, Division of Latin American Affairs, 18 and 20 March 1922, 839.00/2651; Secretary of State, 30 March 1922, to President Harding, 839.00/2503, Department of State, National Archives.

³Dana G. Munro, 25 May 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2674; Dana G. Munro, 11 April 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2678; Minister W. W. Russell, 25 April 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2511; Munro, 54; Sumner Welles, Naboth's Vineyard: The Dominican Republic 1844-1924 (New York: 1928), p. 855.

⁴Senator Medill McCormick, 27 April 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2521; Secretary of State, 4 May 1922, to Senator Medill McCormick, 839.00/2521a; Division of Latin American Affairs, 7 June 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2652; Rear-Admiral S. S. Robinson, Quarterly Report of the Military Governor of Santo Domingo, 1 January-31 March 1922, 839.00/2528; Minister W. W. Russell, 17 June 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2533; Minister W. W. Russell, 12 June 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2537; Department of State, National Archives; Rear-Admiral S. S. Robinson, 6 June 1922, to Secretary of the Navy, Folder WA-7, File Box 646, Record Group 45, Navy Department, National Archives.

⁵Assistant Secretary of State, 17 April 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2634, Department of State, National Archives.

⁶Dana G. Munro, 31 May 1922, to Sumner Welles, 839.00/2680a, Department of State, National Archives.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Division of Latin American Affairs, 7 June 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2652, Department of State, National Archives.

⁹Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, p. 856.

¹⁰Sumner Welles, 20 June 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2653, Department of State, National Archives.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Sumner Welles, 22 June 1922, to Dr. Peynado, 839.00/2680b; Francis White, 30 June 1922, to the Dominican Republic Representatives, 839.00/2681a; Francis White, 3 July 1922, to the Dominican Republic Representatives, 839.00/2684, Department of State, National Archives.

¹³Francis White, 6 July 1922, to Commissioner Welles, 839.00/2682c, Department of State, National Archives.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Commissioner Welles, 10 July 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2546, Department of State, National Archives.

¹⁶Francis White, 6 July 1922, to Commissioner Welles, 839.00/2682c, Department of State, National Archives.

¹⁷U. S. Department of State, Memorandum of the Plan of June 30, 1922, for the Withdrawal of the Military Government, Signed at Washington, July 3, 1922 (Translation), 839.00/2682, National Archives.

¹⁸Minister W. W. Russell, 21 July 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2563, Department of State, National Archives; New York Times, 12 July 1922, p. 17.

¹⁹Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, pp. 859-860.

²⁰Minister W. W. Russell, 27 July 1922, to Secretary of State, enclosing articles from Listin Diario, 20, 22, and 26 July 1922, 839.00/2563, Department of State, National Archives.

²¹Welles and his private secretary, two stenographers, and man servant would have been delayed in San Juan, Puerto Rico. See Secretary of State, 19 July 1922, to Secretary of the Navy, 123W451/36b; Secretary of State, 27 July 1922, to American Legation (Santo Domingo), 123W451/37, Department of State, National Archives.

²²Commissioner Welles, 8 August 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2571, Department of State, National Archives.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid.; Commissioner Welles, 1 August 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2552, Department of State, National Archives.

²⁵Commissioner Welles, 1 August 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2553, Department of State, National Archives; Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, p. 863.

²⁶Commissioner Welles, 31 July 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2551; Commissioner Welles, 7 August 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2561; Commissioner Welles, 8 August 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2571; Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, pp. 860-861.

- ²⁷Commissioner Welles, 7 August 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2561; Secretary of State, 9 August 1922, to Minister W. W. Russell (for Welles), 839.00/2561, Department of State, National Archives.
- ²⁸Secretary of State, 12 July 1922, to Acting Secretary of the Navy, 839.00/2541; Acting Secretary of the Navy, 13 July 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2540, Department of State, National Archives.
- ²⁹Commissioner Welles, 1 August 1922, to Rear-Admiral Robinson, 839.00/2572, Department of State, National Archives.
- ³⁰Commissioner Welles, 11 August 1922, to Secretary of State, enclosing copies of correspondence between Welles and the Military Governor, 839.00/2572; Commissioner Welles, 9 August 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2564, Department of State, National Archives; Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, p. 863.
- ³¹Rear-Admiral S. S. Robinson, 11 August 1922, to Commissioner Welles, Folder No. 2, Box 1, Record Group 38, Navy Department, National Archives.
- ³²Commissioner Welles, 9 August 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2565; Secretary of State, 11 August 1922, to Commissioner Welles, 839.00/2564; Assistant Secretary of the Navy, 12 August 1922, to Secretary of State, 123W451/39, Department of State, National Archives.
- ³³Commissioner Welles, 9 August 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2564, Department of State, National Archives.
- ³⁴Rear-Admiral S. S. Robinson, 19 August 1922, to Chief of Naval Operations, Folder No. 2, Box 1, Record Group 38, Navy Department, National Archives.
- ³⁵Commissioner Welles, 31 August 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2583, Department of State, National Archives.
- ³⁶Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, p. 862.
- ³⁷Commissioner Welles, 5 September 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2596, Department of State, National Archives.
- ³⁸Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, pp. 862-865; Commissioner Welles, 21 August 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2583; Commissioner Welles, 12 September 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2593; Commissioner Welles, 21 September 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2600; Commissioner Welles, 19 September 1922, to Acting Secretary of State, 839.00/2597, Department of State, National Archives.

³⁹Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, pp. 872-873; Munro, p. 58; Commissioner Welles, 21 August 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2583; Commissioner Welles, 3 October 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2623, Department of State, National Archives.

⁴⁰Commissioner Welles, 3 October 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2624; Commissioner Welles, 11 October 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2621, Department of State, National Archives; Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, p. 875.

⁴¹Rear-Admiral S. S. Robinson, 30 September 1922, to Commissioner Welles, Folder No. 2, Box 1, Record Group 38, Navy Department, National Archives; Commissioner Welles, 2 October 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2610; Secretary of State, 30 September 1922, to Rear-Admiral S. S. Robinson, 839.00/2607; Commissioner Welles, 2 October 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2609, Department of State, National Archives.

⁴²Commissioner Welles, 19 October 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2631; Commissioner Welles, 23 October 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2656; Provisional President Burgos, 30 October 1922, to President Harding, 839.00/2648; Dominican Commissioners, 30 October 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2647, Department of State, National Archives.

⁴³Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, pp. 879-884; Commissioner Welles, 28 November 1922, to Minister W. W. Russell, 839.00/2659a; Minister W. W. Russell, 29 November 1922, to Commissioner Welles, 839.00/2660; Commissioner Welles, 5 April 1923, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2692, Department of State, National Archives.

⁴⁴Commissioner Welles, 5 April 1923, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2693; Commissioner Welles, 23 October 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2656, Department of State, National Archives; Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, pp. 882-885.

⁴⁵Commissioner Welles, 5 April 1923, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2693; Commissioner Welles, 12 May 1923, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2706; Commissioner Welles, 10 April 1923, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2698; Commissioner Welles, 17 May 1923, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2712; Commissioner Welles, 5 April 1923, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2692, Department of State, National Archives.

⁴⁶Commissioner Welles, 30 April 1923, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2709, Department of State, National Archives.

⁴⁷Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, p. 885; Minister W. W. Russell, 10 October 1923, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2744; Minister W. W. Russell, 20 October 1923, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2756, Department of State, National Archives.

⁴⁸Acting Secretary of State, 10 October 1923, to Minister W. W. Russell, 839.00/2744; Secretary of State, 17 October 1923, to Minister W. W. Russell, 839.00/2754a; Secretary of State, 22 October 1923, to Minister W. W. Russell, 839.00/2755, Department of State, National Archives.

⁴⁹Commissioner Welles, 9 November 1923, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2760, Department of State, National Archives.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*; Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, p. 887.

⁵¹Commissioner Welles, 5 January 1924, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2782; Commissioner Welles, 7 December 1923, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2775; Commissioner Welles, 26 January 1924, to Francis White, 839.00/2991, Department of State, National Archives.

⁵²Commissioner Welles, 5 January 1924, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2782, Department of State, National Archives.

⁵³Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, pp. 892-894; Commissioner Welles, 4 February 1924, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2793; Commissioner Welles, 13 February 1924, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2797, Department of State, National Archives.

⁵⁴Translated and quoted from La Opinion in "Santo Domingo's Test", Literary Digest, Vol. 80, No. 11 (March 15, 1924), p. 19.

⁵⁵Translated and quoted from El Listin Diario, in "Santo Domingo's Test", Literary Digest, Vol. 80, No. 11 (March 15, 1924), p. 20.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*

⁵⁷*Ibid.*

⁵⁸Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, pp. 888-894; Munro, p. 64; Secretary of State, 8 April 1924, to Commissioner Welles, 839.00/2822; Minister W. W. Russell, 18 September 1924, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2861, Department of State, National Archives.

⁵⁹Munro, pp. 64-69; Commissioner Welles, 27 March 1924, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2823; Commissioner Welles, 13 July 1925, to Secretary of State, 123W451/79, Department of State, National Archives.

⁶⁰President Coolidge, 9 July 1925, to Acting Secretary of State, 123W451/77, Department of State, National Archives.

⁶¹James B. Reston, "Acting Secretary", New York Times Magazine, August 3, 1941, p. 9; Roy Veatch, "Mr. Dawes in Santo Domingo", The Nation, Vol. 129 (July 31, 1929), pp. 110-112.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The eminent scholar Samuel Flagg Bemis defined imperialism in his book, A Short History of American Foreign Policy and Diplomacy, as "the exercise of dominion or control over alien peoples against their will".¹ Applying this definition to the Latin American policy of the United States in the Caribbean during the first twenty years of the twentieth century reveals that the United States was, indeed, an imperialistic power. The primary reason for United States imperialism was strategic; the Isthmian canal and its approaches had to be protected from European encroachments which threatened United States security. The Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine and the Platt Amendment were not only intended as statements of self-defense on the part of the United States, but were also intended to "legalize" interventions undertaken in direct pursuit of the ultimate goal of United States security. The United States military occupation of the Dominican Republic in 1916 was an expression of the United States policy. Unfortunately, the occupation took place despite the fact that no immediate threat of European intervention existed and despite the lack of any agreement, written or oral, between the two nations "legalizing" the occupation. In short, the occupation was United States imperialism at its worst.

The record of Sumner Welles' involvement with the Dominican

occupation reveals that he was not opposed to the goal of the United States Caribbean policy or to the objectives of that policy. Writing in 1924, Welles commented that the policy of the United States toward Cuba was also applicable to other Caribbean nations. He saw in the United States policy toward Cuba a concern for the welfare of the Cuban people as well as a concern for the security of the United States. These two interests were compatible, and United States actions under this policy, including military interventions, were supportive of the relationship. Proof of this, as Welles saw it, lay in the fact that as soon as order was restored in Cuba, the occupation forces were withdrawn. Thus, United States policy toward Cuba was not imperialistic and was not a threat to Cuban sovereignty.²

According to Welles, an additional factor militated against any charge of imperialism insofar as intervention in Cuba was concerned. It has already been pointed out that Welles was apprehensive over the "legality" of United States actions in the application of its foreign policy. This concern with legality was present in his interpretation of United States-Caribbean policy from 1900 to 1920, and, as will be illustrated subsequently, in his role in the termination of the Dominican occupation. With regard to Cuba, it was Welles' belief that the Platt Amendment was the legal basis for United States intervention. The Platt Amendment provisions, included as they were in the Cuban constitution and in a treaty between the United States and Cuba, meant that United States interventions were undertaken with Cuban consent. Welles considered that Cuban consent, coupled with the fact that interventions occurring under the Platt Amendment were always for the purpose agreed upon and were always temporary measures, rendered

allegations of imperialism meaningless and lacking in credibility.

The chronic instability in the Dominican Republic posed a threat similar in many ways to the menace posed by conditions in Cuba. Since the Platt Amendment was a bilateral agreement only between Cuba and the United States, it could not be used to justify American intervention to settle Dominican instability. Instead, the Roosevelt corollary to the Monroe Doctrine was offered as a way of achieving the objectives of United States-Caribbean policy. Welles looked upon the Roosevelt corollary in much the same way that he viewed the Platt Amendment -- as a non-imperialistic instrument which did not threaten the sovereignty of the Caribbean nations. According to Welles, had President Theodore Roosevelt intended the corollary as a basis for imperialism, he would not have taken limited action in the Dominican Republic in 1904, but would have yielded to suggestions for annexation or a protectorate.³ Instead, through friendly assistance and mutual cooperation, a treaty setting up a customs receivership was established. Welles' view of the treaty was stated thus:

The powers granted the United States . . . did not constitute a greater infringement of the sovereignty of the Dominican Republic than that which had already existed since the time when President Heureaux had alienated the control of Dominican customs from the Dominican government itself.⁴

Roosevelt's willingness to cooperate on terms of friendly equality forms the core of Welles' ideas concerning United States-Latin American relations. The Taft and Wilson administrations, in Welles' opinion, made little or no effort toward ". . . cooperating with the Latin American Republics on terms of friendly equality" ⁵ The bitterness and resentment that resulted from this lack of effort convinced Welles of the wisdom of a policy which respected the sover-

eighty of a nation.

The termination of the United States occupation of the Dominican Republic was an opportunity for Welles to test and develop his ideas on hemispheric policy. Welles did not test a new policy; rather, he formulated and developed ways and means of achieving the objectives of an already existent policy. These ways and means, as Welles envisioned them, would respect the sovereignty of the Dominican Republic and would be considerate of the desires and aspirations of the Dominican people. He anticipated that the results obtained would be of long lasting benefit to both nations and that the process of withdrawal would exemplify the friendly cooperation of the United States.

Welles' respect for Dominican sovereignty was a basis for his seeking to end the occupation. He believed that the United States had no contractual right to intervene militarily in the Dominican Republic. He considered the charge that the Dominican government had violated the terms of the Treaty of 1907 a weak excuse for the complete takeover that occurred. Although other more valid purposes were served by the occupation, there was a high probability, in Welles' opinion, that the difficulties posed by conditions in the Dominican Republic could have been eased by the expansion of trade through lower tariffs and financial support for the Dominican government.⁶ Thus, the landing of American troops in the Dominican Republic and the establishment of a military government were contrary to the true interest of the Roosevelt corollary, if not an outright perversion of it. The Dominican Republic, in 1916, was suffering from internal political and economic problems aggravated by an

unfriendly and uncooperative United States government. All that was really needed to resolve the problems was a little friendly American economic assistance and protection from European debt collecting efforts. The occupation was an over-reaction which the Roosevelt corollary did not support.

Welles' inability to reconcile the occupation with any contractual arrangement or with the Roosevelt corollary did not account for all of his objections to it. As a means of quieting internal political rebellion, banditry, and opposition to the occupation forces, the American Military Governor promulgated several laws which encroached upon individual freedom and liberty. The most onerous of these laws provided for strict gun control, press censorship, and American military tribunals for political offenses. These laws were not only aggressively applied but also were contrary to the democratic foundations which the military government sought to lay. The excessive force and control exercised by the military government was largely responsible for the Dominican's anti-American attitude and the poor relations between the military government and the Dominican people. This situation, in turn, doomed the Military Governor's efforts to negotiate a plan of withdrawal.

The military government derived its authority to govern from the simple fact that it existed. Unable to justify the occupation on the basis of any bilateral agreement with the Dominican Republic or through his interpretation of the Roosevelt corollary, Welles questioned the legality of the military government's existence. Welles learned from the State Department's solicitor that the military government had no constitutional authority to govern. The logical extension

of this opinion meant that unless the laws, contracts, and other acts promulgated by the military government could be sanctioned under the Dominican constitution, chaos would result if the United States were to withdraw unconditionally. The answer to the dilemma was partly contained in the provision of the Wilson Plan which provided for necessary constitutional changes and law-making. The Harding Plan, offered in June, 1921, confronted the dilemma directly by calling for ratification of all the acts of the military government as a condition for withdrawal. To the Dominicans, such a condition was unacceptable. The Dominican interpretation of this condition was that they were being asked to say "thank you" for the abuses inflicted by the military government. Welles recognized that Dominican dignity and honor would not permit their agreeing to such a proposal. He therefore explained and clarified the provision in such a way as to remove the implication to which the Dominicans objected. Welles was careful not to indicate that the military government's acts had no legal foundation. At the same time, the State Department pressured the military government to liberalize the terms and applications of the censorship laws. Finally, the specific acts to be ratified were identified through bilateral negotiations. In this way, Dominican dignity and honor was upheld and the beneficial acts of the military government were preserved in Dominican law and treaty.

Although United States policy objectives, if achieved, would render future intervention in the Dominican Republic unnecessary, the Cuban experience had shown that the possibility of this eventuality could not be ignored. Certainly Welles would have agreed that Dominican approval of a treaty permitting American intervention upon

request would legalize any such action and render it more defensible in the court of world opinion. Interestingly, the records consulted in this study revealed little that could be interpreted as United States insistence on inclusion of such an arrangement in the plan of withdrawal or in the Dominican constitution. By June, 1922, the idea of providing for the right of intervention in the plan of withdrawal was eliminated completely. This did not mean that the United States gave up the use of military intervention as a means of achieving its policy objectives. Welles, on several occasions, reminded the Dominicans that political and economic stability and respect for the rights of third parties were essential to the withdrawal plan. The implication was that the occupation would continue or would be re-established if these conditions were not satisfied.

Welles expressed his position on intervention to the Dominican people just prior to the inauguration of the provisional government on October 21, 1922. He stated that the United States did not believe that it could exercise the same right of intervention in the Dominican Republic that it exercised in Cuba since the right of intervention was not contained in any bilateral treaty or in the Dominican constitution. He continued that the United States had not ". . . now or ever considered it had a contractual right to intervene in Dominican affairs."⁷ In his explanation of this statement to Secretary Hughes, Welles assured him that intervention had been discussed with the Dominican commission. He said that this body:

. . . realized that while the United States does not claim, and has not claimed, any contractual right to intervene, the government of the United States may intervene in the Dominican Republic if the Dominican government is unwilling or unable to comply with its treaty obligations with the

United States; or if action were taken by the Dominican government which would threaten a violation of the Monroe Doctrine or jeopardize the peace of this continent.⁸

This understanding on the part of the Dominican commission, coupled with the probability that the Dominican people would oppose granting a contractual right of intervention to the United States, made inclusion of a Platt Amendment arrangement in the final plan of withdrawal unnecessary and perilous. The emphasis of Welles' diplomacy was on friendly cooperation and peaceful settlement of disputes. Intervention was relegated to an instrument of last resort; diplomacy and arbitration moved into the forefront. Although the emerging commitment of the United States to peaceful and cooperative methods of settling disputes advanced further in the several treaties produced during the Washington Conference on Central American Affairs from 1922 to 1923, Welles offered some friendly advice on the occasion of the inauguration of the provisional president. He stated in his speech that "My government does not desire to intervene in Dominican affairs."⁹ The friendly advice implicit in this statement was: the Dominican Republic should conduct its political and economic affairs in such a way that United States intervention would not be necessary.

Each of the three proposed plans of withdrawal, the Wilson Plan, the Harding Plan, and the approved plan, called for the establishment of a commission of Dominican leaders to negotiate a final agreement with the United States. It was in the negotiations with the commission that Welles hoped to display a new cooperative attitude of the United States. The purpose of the commission was to allow

representatives of the Dominican people to express their desires and aspirations relative to withdrawal and to draft legislation reflecting Dominican ideals. Unfortunately, Dominican nationalism, political jealousy, and a deep mistrust of the United States, especially of the military government, combined to make the commission's deliberations unnecessarily lengthy and cast Welles in the role of chief arbiter and prime motivator for the commission.

Events through 1921 show that Welles and the State Department miscalculated the ability of the Military Governor to cooperate with the commission in formulating a plan of withdrawal. For legal and practical reasons, the commission's work and ideas were subject to the Military Governor's approval. The Military Governor, although he lacked the constitutional authority, was the de facto chief executive and promulgator of laws. In carrying out his mission, he considered himself responsible for insuring the attainment of United States policy objectives. Because of this, he placed more emphasis on Dominican acquiescence to what the United States considered necessary than on United States cooperation with the Dominicans. The distinction is significant because it explains Robinson's approach to his dealings with the commission. Robinson believed that the Dominican Republic was not yet ready for withdrawal of American forces. Faced with the reality of what he viewed as a premature withdrawal, Robinson attempted to form a commission which would have agreed with what he considered necessary to the Republic's stability and future welfare. Welles objected to Robinson's efforts and resolved to form a commission of his own design. When it became evident that Robinson was incapable of cooperating with this commission or of permitting

the commission to perform the role envisioned for it, Welles supplanted him. With this change the negotiations entered a new phase.

Under Welles' tutelage and prodding, the commission performed its role well.¹⁰ Welles did not dictate to the commission. He made clear the objectives of United States policy and convinced the commission members that the objectives were compatible with the interests of the Dominican Republic. Within this framework, the commission was able to formulate a plan of withdrawal and write legislation which they believed provided for Dominican sovereignty and independence. The best example of Welles' cooperative attitude is the solution to the constabulary problem. Welles and the commission agreed on the need for a professional, apolitical constabulary. The problem was that officer training had been neglected, and it would take time to correct this deficiency. Welles was aware that the commission could not agree to American control over the constabulary, and he did not press for this. Instead, he quietly convinced the military government to accelerate the training program while he and the commission attended to other matters. When it came time for the constabulary to assume responsibility for law and order, the settled condition of the island permitted Welles to agree to Dominican suggestions for the constabulary's control and organization.

Welles' concept of friendly cooperation was also illustrated in other ways. At no time did Welles involve himself, or allow himself to be involved, in internal Dominican politics. The commission members represented the full range of Dominican politics, except for the nacionalistas, who declined to participate. The practical task which confronted Welles was to maintain the political balance of the

commission, and eventually of the provisional government. Welles' success in maintaining the political balance was accomplished without secret maneuverings or arrangements. He dealt with each of the potential candidates openly and fairly, suspending judgement and maintaining his objectivity.¹¹ In so doing, he forced the Dominicans to recognize that they would have to learn to settle their own political differences rather than look to the United States.

The members of the commission recognized that Welles was not attempting to manipulate them, and this earned him their respect.¹² This respect was strengthened by the ways in which Welles displayed his willingness to cooperate with the commission to accomplish the necessary tasks. There is no doubt that the commission members were as equally committed as Welles to ending the occupation, even if they did allow partisan politics to divert their attention from this goal. When these diversions occurred, Welles reacted calmly and with patient understanding. He reminded the commission members of their responsibilities and commitments and of the risks inherent in their actions. The commission reacted by returning to their tasks with a minimum of discord.

The kind of diplomacy Sumner Welles carried out in the Dominican Republic is most correctly characterized as personal diplomacy. His presence in the Dominican Republic and his deep involvement in the work of the commission was vital to the success of the withdrawal plan. Support for this contention is illustrated by the lack of progress toward an acceptable agreement between 1920 and 1922, and by the stagnation that occurred when Welles left the island for short periods between 1922 and 1924. Later observations about Welles

reflect upon his "cold" relations with his staff and his stilted way of life. Nevertheless, he possessed a strong personality that struck a responsive chord with the members of the commission. A genuine friendliness which transcended official requirements developed between Welles and the Dominican leaders. This personal friendship extended into the eight years that Welles was absent from the State Department.

Welles' idea of a foreign policy based upon friendly cooperation, however, did not require the development of strong personal attachments. An effective policy toward the Latin American nations, according to Welles, would consist of practical agreements designed to attack the causes of instability. The only agreement of this nature provided for in the plan of withdrawal was continuation of the customs receivership. The receivership produced ample revenues for the Dominican Republic and a few years of relative prosperity.

Before Welles left the State Department, Secretary of State Frank B. Kellogg approved suggestions which would have offered the Dominicans agricultural assistance and aid in reorganizing their treasury. These proposals were intended to improve the Dominican Republic's commercial development. Welles considered commercial development and trade relations as key elements in friendly hemispheric relations. He dismissed any idea of a United States trade monopoly or selfish exploitation, believing such actions counter to friendly cooperation. Instead, he sought removal of tariff barriers and expansion of trade relations between all nations of the hemisphere. In 1924, Welles wrote:

It is most axiomatic that development of commercial relations between countries brings about a better understanding and a clearer perception of their

advantages and common needs.¹³

Four years later, Welles summed up his view on what the United States policy toward Latin America should be in these words:

It is in the stimulation of commercial ties, in the facilitation of educational advantages to students from the southern Republics, in the limitation of financing to productive purposes, in the proffer of technical and expert assistance when it may be needed, that the United States will obtain the results desired, and not through military occupation, military intervention, or armed supervision of elections.¹⁴

For Sumner Welles and the United States, the Dominican Republic was a start in the correct direction.

NOTES

¹Samuel Flagg Bemis, A Short History of American Foreign Policy and Diplomacy (New York: 1959), p. 298.

²Sumner Welles, "Is America Imperialistic?" Atlantic Monthly, Vol. 134 (September 1924), p. 414.

³Ibid.; Sumner Welles, Naboth's Vineyard: The Dominican Republic 1844-1924 (Mamaroneck, New York: 1966), p. 918.

⁴Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, pp. 918-919; Henry F. Pringle, Theodore Roosevelt: A Biography (New York: 1931), pp. 206-208.

⁵Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, p. 918.

⁶Commissioner Welles, 7 October 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2572, Department of State, National Archives.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Samuel Flagg Bemis, The Latin American Policy of the United States: An Historical Interpretation (New York: 1943), pp. 205-208.

⁹Commissioner Welles, 21 October 1922, to Secretary of State, 839.00/2654, Department of State, National Archives.

¹⁰Dana G. Munro, The United States and the Caribbean Republics 1921-1933 (New Jersey: 1974), p. 58.

¹¹James B. Reston, "Acting Secretary," New York Times Magazine, August 3, 1941, p. 9.

¹²Provisional President Burgos, 30 October 1922, to President Harding, 839.00/2648; Adolpho Nouel, Horacio Vásquez, Federico Velásquez, E. Brache, Francisco Peynado, 30 October 1922, to Secretary of State Hughes, 839.00/2647, Department of State, National Archives.

¹³Sumner Welles, "Is America Imperialistic?", p. 421.

¹⁴Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, p. 931.

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