UNITED STATES AND THE INDEPENDENCE OF PUERTO RICO, 1808 - 1830

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PREFACE

This study concerns the historical and political causes that prevented the independence of Puerto Rico during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. It also entails an examination of the evolutionary aspects of the Puerto Rican independence movement; the history of the political relations between Spain and Puerto Rico during this period; a discussion of the influences exercised by the United States and the European powers in the Caribbean; and provides insight into the factors that shaped present day Puerto Rican politics.

Although this study ends in 1830, the struggle for the political independence of Puerto Rico still continues. While many important changes have been made in the political status of Puerto Rico during the past twenty-five years, many Puerto Ricans are still not satisfied with the present political conditions of the island. These individuals, continuing a tradition that began in the second decade of the nineteenth century, feel that independence is the only available path for the political future of Puerto Rico.

In the preparation of this thesis many sources were used, many of them dating from the first half of the nineteenth century. The author desires to take this opportunity to express his sincerest appreciation to the many individuals in the library of the Oklahoma State University who gave so generously of their time to assist in the location of important documents used in the preparation of this thesis. The writer also wants to acknowledge his indebtedness to the historical works of

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

During recent years, the story of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico has been told in many ways. It has been also the object of several important and interesting studies. Most of the research, however, concerns the political and institutional advantages of the present form of insular government and the obstacles that were overcome to make it a success. These studies have ignored the deep-rooted historical aspects of the Puerto Rican evolutionary political development, especially those of the nineteenth century. They have also ignored the effects of these historical roots in the contemporary Puerto Rican political personality. As a result, some of the conclusions and recommendations of these studies are incorrect or have failed to provide an adequate interpretation of present day Puerto Rican politics.

It also seems that in the general and continuing discussion of the relations between the United States and Puerto Rico, the views of Puerto Ricans themselves is often excluded. In the United States, both practical and academic concerns often assume that the political status of Puerto Rico has been satisfactorily resolved and that there are no, nor have there ever been, active political movements for independence in the island. These assumptions are commonly based on the fact that Puerto Rico is an autonomous commonwealth, associated freely with the United States by the desires of its people. What is not commonly known,

however, is that this commonwealth, for all practical purposes, still remains under the colonial tutelage of the United States and that the association is only temporary in nature. The ultimate political status of Puerto Rico still remains undecided.[1]

The Puerto Rican people are subject to the policies and programs of the United States and to the laws of the Federal Relations Statutes. All United States federal laws, except those of the Internal Revenue Service, are enforced equally in Puerto Rico. The Puerto Ricans, however, cannot vote to elect the President of the United States or participate in any other federal election. As a result, they do not have representatives in Congress, except for a resident commissioner who can discuss but cannot vote. While there is free trade between the United States and Puerto Rico and Puerto Ricans pay no federal taxes, they are required to serve in the armed forces of the United States during national emergencies.

The uncertain status of Puerto Rico has resulted in new demands for political changes, among them, complete independence. While no movement for this type of political solution has actually succeeded, and there has been no revolution in Puerto Rico comparable to the Cuba revolution of the nineteenth century or the wars of national independence in Latin America, there have been, as this study will indicate, several attempts for political insurrections on the island. These movements, however, failed to achieve their political goals as result of many causes, the most significant of which will be discussed in this study.

Perhaps the most important reason for Puerto Rico's continuing dependent status was the intervention of the United States and the European powers in the political affairs of the Caribbean during the first

part of the nineteenth century. The question of slavery in the United States, the danger that England and France posed for this nation's national security, the need for protection of trade and commerce in the Caribbean, and the concern of the United States for Cuba demanded the opposition of this nation to the political independence of the remaining Spanish colonies in America. Cuba's fate played a significant role in this decision as a result of its strategic importance in the Gulf of Mexico. As United States policy regarding the Spanish West Indies included her, as well as Puerto Rico, and the predominance of that island was stressed in the American attitude toward the Caribbean -- indirectly affecting the independence of Puerto Rico -- it is necessary to include Cuba in any discussion concerning American interests in the Spanish Caribbean colonies. It was not in the best interests of the United States to allow either of these colonies to gain their freedom because of the possibility that England or France would seize them after independence.[2] This circumstance, it was believed, would have seriously compromised American security and damaged United States commercial and trade interests in the Caribbean.[3]

United States interests, therefore, required the maintenance of the *status quo* in Cuba and Puerto Rico until the danger of foreign intervention in the Caribbean subsided or the islands were incorporated as territories of the United States.[4] Most of the principal American statesmen and politicians during the first two decades of the nineteenth century desired to take Cuba, however, they were not yet ready to pay the high price of ownership - most probably a war with England or France.[5]

To maintain the Spanish colonies in the Caribbean under continued

control of Spain became then a major goal of United States policy. To achieve this purpose, the United States opposed not only non-Spanish foreign control of these colonies but also their independence as well. This policy prevented Cuba and Puerto Rico from joining the rest of the revolutionary movements for independence that were taking place in other parts of Spanish America. They could not gain their independence when political conditions in the Caribbean were most favorable for accomplishing that goal.

United States objectives were achieved by conducting an international campaign designed to convince Spain that she was losing her control in the Caribbean as a result of the successful movement for independence in Spanish America.[6] England and France joined the United States in these efforts, but for different political reasons.[7] Secretary of State Henry Clay, as well as British Foreign Secretary George Canning, anticipated that the armies of the South American republics would be reorganized to free the Spanish colonies in the Caribbean. They expected this development after the completion of the military campaign in Peru.[8] As a result, the United States intensified her efforts to convince Spain to safeguard her Caribbean colonies by taking necessary measures for their defense.[9]

The beginning of a national policy of expansionism that also anticipated the annexation of Cuba and Puerto Rico and the potential danger to American trade and commerce by foreign domination of the Caribbean were also important concerns for the United States. In addition, many southern leaders believed that the independence of the Spanish colonies would have weakened their control over the black slaves. Puerto Rico and Cuba would have freed their slaves after independence, as the

other Spanish American republics had already done. This precedent could have incited slaves in the United States to a rebellion.[10]

The United States also feared that England or France would seize Cuba and Puerto Rico as a result of the unstable political conditions existing in Spain and the marked inability of that country to protect her overseas possessions. These fears were not completely unfounded. In 1823 France had provided substantial military assistance to Ferdinand VII to help him regain his throne, and the Spanish monarch owed the French government a considerable amount of money. Spain also owed money to many British merchants for commercial injuries suffered during the war. As Spain was unable to meet her economic obligations, it seemed logical to assume that she might transfer Cuba and Puerto Rico, her last remaining colonies in the Western Hemisphere, to either France or England as payment for these debts.[11]

The political and strategic significance of the Caribbean and United States concerns there have been discussed in great detail by such historians as Samuel Flagg Bemis, French Ensor Chadwick, Arthur Preston Whitaker, Dexter Perkins, John H. Latané, and others. They have written, however, from the point of view of the United States-Cuban relations. As professor Arturo F. Santana indicates, "most histories of American relations with the West Indies and the Caribbean during the nineteenth century stress the predominance of Cuba in American attention to policy."[12] Historian Graham Stuart has summarized this fact as follows:

> In the foreign relations of the United States previous to the war with Spain, Porto Rico had generally been regarded as a sort of natural appendage to Cuba. In the public statements made by American statesmen regarding Cuba, mention was sometimes made of Porto Rico; but, even when nothing was said, it

> was generally understood that Porto Rico would follow in the wake of Cuba if that island should ever transfer its allegiance from Spain. Perhaps that is one of the reasons why, in the foreign relations of the United States, Cuba plays such a prominent part, while Porto Rico is virtually unmentioned.[13]

This Cuban policy of the United States, as it has already been indicated, prevented Puerto Rican independence in the nineteenth century.

The United States had observed with satisfaction the efforts of the Spanish American republics to gain their independence. In the Caribbean, however, where the United States sought political and commercial hegemony, the situation had been different.[14] To understand this dual policy and the reasons which compelled the United States, England, France, and the Spanish American republics to intervene in the Caribbean, some historical background is appropriate.

Since 1790, the reign of Charles IV (1788-1808) in Spain had been marked by political instability and inefficiency. The repressive measures that had been taken by the Secretary of State Jose Moñino, Count of Floridablanca, who wanted to stop the flow of French liberal ideas, had contributed considerably to Spain's turmoil. The activities of Manuel de Godoy, the Prime Minister, in favor of Napoleon ruined the nation and parts of her empire. By the Treaty of Basel in July 1795, Spain had ceded its portion of the island of Hispaniola to France; and, by the second Treaty of San Ildefonso, had transferred the valuable Louisiana territory to Napoleon. These losses of territory and the questionable behavior of Manuel de Godoy, the Queen María Luisa de Parma, King Charles IV, the Duchess of Alba and other important members of the Court also had affected the government and weakened the trust of the Spanish people.[15]

In 1796 Charles IV joined France in a war against Great Britain.

In 1801 Napoleon forced Spain to attack Portugal. In spite of the disastrous conditions of Spain, heavy taxation, political dissatisfaction, and lack of funds, Spain was compelled to aid the French war effort by declaring still another war against England in 1804. In October, 1805, when the British destroyed the Franco-Spanish fleet at Cape Trafalgar, Spain lost most of her navy, her ability to protect her overseas colonies, and her naval supremacy in the Caribbean.

In 1808 Napoleon invaded Spain and placed his brother Joseph Bonaparte on the Spanish throne. The Spanish people refused to accept French control and revolted on the glorious Dos de Mayo (May 2, 1808) against the new government under the leadership of several juntas. As a direct result of this action, both conservatives and liberals unified behind the banner of Ferdinand VII for a long peninsular war. The imprisonment of the Spanish king at Bayonne gave Spaniards a rallying point; Spain's national honor was at stake.

The Spanish people, with the help of the British forces, had some initial victories against the French. Napoleon's drive could not be stopped, however, and by March, 1810, the French forces were already near Cádiz, on the southern coast of Spain. These activities resulted in several revolts in the South American colonies. Venezuela set the example by deposing the Captain-General on April 19, 1810, proclaiming her autonomy.[16]

Most of the colonies in other parts of Spanish America also revolted against the French dominated peninsular government. They soon established local self governing juntas, as Caracas had done, to rule in the name of Ferdinand VII. These initial revolts would develop later into full revolutionary movements for independence.

As the rest of the South American continent began to slip from Spanish control, the strategic position of Puerto Rico and its continued loyalty to the Crown became increasingly important for Spain. The colony was separated from the rest of the continent and could be utilized as a staging area for Spanish military operations against the mainland. Spain did not realize, however, that the successes of the wars of independence in other parts of Spanish America and the disturbed political conditions in Spain had also affected the Spanish Caribbean and the loyalty of its people. The Puerto Ricans, influenced by the events in Spanish America, began to demand changes in the colonial relations and in the political system of the island, but the demands failed to receive attention. When Spain increased her authority and colonial controls, the colonists decided to resist the policies of the central government.

The history of Puerto Rico had been, until then, that of a poor colony. As Robert W. Anderson has accurately indicated:

> As a small, underpopulated, resource-poor island whose value to its imperial overseer was purely military, Puerto Rico displayed none of the great institutions that are normally associated with Spain's American Empire. Instead of the great ecclesiastical and civil hierarchies of the vice-royalties of Middle and South America, there was rule by generally pedestrian military governors. The religious orders barely touched Puerto Rico, and the Church itself played no significant role on the island....Neither the city, as a focus of intellectual or aristocratic activity nor the _encomienda_ as the principal form of land ownership and exploitation, was important in Puerto Rico.[17]

Puerto Rico had been utilized primarily as a military outpost protecting the main entrance to the Caribbean, which the ships of the Spanish _flota_ (merchant marine) utilized in their voyages to Panama and Cartagena. As a result of this role in controlling and defending Spanish navigation between the Americas and Spain and its strategic importance

to the southern Caribbean defense system, Puerto Rico had been attacked many times by the major European powers that sought to destroy the Spanish colonial empire.

In 1595 Sir Francis Drake attacked San Juan, the capital of Puerto Rico, but failed to penetrate its major defenses in spite of the fact that the British had twenty-six ships and over 4,000 armed troops in the invading force.[18] Three years later George Clifford, Earl of Cumberland, secured a victory against the Spanish forces defending the island. He captured San Juan and most of the fortifications, and for sixty-seven days tried to make the Spanish colony a British settlement. His plans failed and he had to retreat, after an outbreak of dysentery had caused 400 casualties among his troops.[19]

In 1625 the Dutch, as part of a campaign designed by the Dutch West India Company to harass Spanish colonial trade, attacked and burned San Juan. The Dutch, however, also failed to conquer the defensive military fortifications. The French, English, and Dutch, in addition to the pirates and buccaneers from various nations, attacked the island periodically during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. Their activities had no important consequences.[20]

As a result of the conflict between the European major powers which followed the French revolution, the British General Ralph Abercromby attacked San Juan in 1797, again, as previous attempts, the British forces failed to conquer the island. The Spanish Bourbons had made important changes in the economy and in the administrative functions of government and had liberalized the trade relations between Spain and Puerto Rico. They had also stimulated agricultural production and had made efforts to resolve the existing inequalities that

existed in trade, business, and work opportunities between peninsulares, who were Spaniards born in Spain, and the native born creoles. These temporary changes influenced many Puerto Ricans, who consequently, rallied to defend the island and defeat the British forces.[21]

Despite these foreign attacks, Puerto Rico remained loyal to Spain. The strong peninsular influence present in the Puerto Rican military garrisons had been an important factor in reenforcing this loyalty. The peninsulares despised many of the native born Puerto Ricans, who lived mainly in the interior and on the coastal plains of the island. They directed the political, economic, and religious life of the colony and controlled all other activities related to colonial management.

Because of San Juan's importance as a center of peninsular control and guardian of the southern trade routes of Spain, it had received many important economic and political concessions from Spain. The creoles, however, had received little attention from the Spanish government. As a result, the rural colonists established early trade relations with non-Spanish European and American traders, and, ignoring royal edicts which prohibited such commerce, they had been able to develop profitable smuggling and clandestine operations.[22] In spite of the trade contacts with the enemies of Spain, the Puerto Ricans remained loyal to the Crown and in many cases, as during the attack of the British in 1797, participated in Spain's defensive wars.

The Puerto Ricans asserted "their national consciousness" when the other Spanish American colonies began to gain their independence. The sentiment initially favored reforms in the relationship between Spain and the island. As the political conditions deteriorated in Spain,

widespread dissatisfaction became predominant, especially among the influential creoles. The struggle for independence in Venezuela and Santo Domingo strengthened considerably the spirit of nationalism and the desire for political reforms.

In 1811 the first serious attempt at armed revolt began in San Germán and other towns of the interior.[23] To soften the demands of the Puerto Ricans and to reduce the effects that the Spanish American revolutions were having on the island, in 1812 the Spanish government instituted some important reforms by placing into effect the provisions of the national constitution that had been approved by the <u>Cortes</u> -- the Spanish Parliament -- in Cádiz. Two years later, however, these reforms were annulled when Ferdinand VII returned to the throne and reestablished absolutism in Spain.

Puerto Rican aspirations were partially satisfied by the Cédula de Gracia,[24] a royal decree which the king issued to improve local economic conditions. This decree, however, did not provide for major political concessions. Therefore, the supporters of independence renewed their efforts to liberate Puerto Rico. Between 1812 and 1825 several conspiracies occurred in the island; most, however, were discovered by the government. In spite of the fact that the revolutionaries received help and encouragement from Venezuela, they had to operate virtually isolated from the mainstream of Spanish American revolutionary activities because of Puerto Rico's insular position.

The repressive measures taken locally by the Spanish colonial government and the political exile of some important leaders, such as María Mercedes de Barbudo, also affected the independence forces. Many Puerto Rican revolutionaries emigrated to South America and México as a

result of the despotic military regime on the island. The loss of this leadership and the fact that during this period Puerto Rico never had a charismatic leader such as Simón Bolívar or José Martí who could rally support by the force of his personality, also affected the struggle for national independence.

The split in the emerging political movement between several factions affected considerably the independence movement. The few concessions made by the Crown served to strengthen the hopes of many Puerto Ricans. Not until 1835, when many liberals joined the more radical groups, could a more unified movement for independence be planned. By this time, the revolutionary forces had received inrreparable damage with the death of Simón Bolívar, and with anarchistics conditions prevailing in Spanish America. They could not regroup for a successful independence movement. The Puerto Rican revolutionaries also understood that they were not only fighting against the repressive measures of Spain but also against the interests of the United States in the Caribbean.

The support of the Spanish American republics to the independence of Puerto Rico subsided with the death of Simón Bolívar and the subsequent struggle for power that ensued among his principal generals. In addition, the Spanish American republics, faced with the possibility of a conflict of interest with the United States over the control of the Caribbean, their limited naval strength, and their failure in organizing a unified front after the Panamá Congress, opted not to interfere with the remaining colonial possessions of Spain. This action demoralized the movement for independence in Puerto Rico.

FOOTNOTES

[1]For additional information on the present political status of Puerto Rico see U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Territorial and Insular Affairs, An Act to Establish a Procedure for the Prompt Settlement, in a Democratic Manner, of the Political Status of Puerto Rico, Hearings before a subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Territorial and Insular Affairs on H. R. 5945, 88th Cong., 1st sess., November 7, 1963.

[2]Instructions to Mr. Nelson, newly appointed minister to Spain, April 28, 1823, U.S. Congress, House Document 121, 32 Cong., 1st sess. See also French E. Chadwick, The Relations of the United States and Spain (New York: Russell & Russell, 1968), pp. 186-187, 206-218.

[3]Chadwick, pp. 91-93, 186.

[4]Clay, Secretary of State, to Middleton, Minister to Russia, May 10, 1825, American State Papers, Foreign Relations, Vol. V (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1858), p. 846. See also in the same volume: Count Nesselrode to Middleton, August 20, 1825, p. 850; Clay to Everett, Minister to Spain, April 27, 1825, p. 886. See British and Foreign State Papers, Vol. XIII (London: Ridgeway and Sons, 1850-59), pp. 403, 410, 430.

[5]Charles F. Adams, ed., Memoirs of John Quincy Adams, Vol. VI (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1817), p. 71.

[6]Middleton to Count Nesselrode, January 2, 1825, American State Papers, Vol. V, p. 917; Clay to Middleton, December 26, 1825, p. 850; Clay to Everett, April 27, 1825, p. 866; Everett to Clay, September 25, 1825, p. 867; Clay to Poinsett, minister to México, November 9, 1825, p. 854. See also British and Foreign State Papers, Vol. XIII, pp. 410, 412, 421, 430, 432.

[7]Historian Samuel F. Bemis has stated: "Great Britain, whose sea power was then dominant in the Caribbean as elsewhere,...had friendly relations with Spain and was a colonial power with possessions of its own in the Caribbean. Like France, it had no desire to disturb the Antillean settlement reached in the Treaty of Vienna. It was certainly not prepared to convoy an expedition to Puerto Rico, especially as Puerto Rico was a potential competitor in the weakening sugar market and not a promising outlet for British goods." (Samuel F. Bemis, A Diplomatic History of the United States (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1942), p. 94.

[8]Clay to Everett, April 27, 1825, American State Papers, Vol. V, p. 866; British and Foreign State Papers, Vol. XIII, p. 430.

[9]Ibid.

[10]Middleton, Minister to Russia, to Count Nesselrode, July 2, 1825, American State Papers, Vol. V, p. 917. See also U.S. Congress, Register of Debates in Congress, 19th Cong., 1st sess., Vol. II, part I (1825-26), pp. 330-331; Thomas Hart Benton, Thirty Years' View, Vol. I (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1893), pp. 65-69.

[11]Chadwick, pp. 219-220.

[12]Arturo F. Santana, "The United States and Puerto Rico, 1797-1830" (Ph.D. dissertation, Department of History, University of Chicago, 1954), p. ii.

[13]Graham H. Stuart, Latin America and the United States (New York: The Century Co., 1922), p. 182.

[14]Middleton, Minister to Russia, to Count Nesselrode, July 2, (14,) 1825, American State Papers, Vol. V, p. 917.

[15]Jose Terrero, Historia de España (Barcelona: Editorial Ramón Sopena, S. A., 1971), pp. 350-351.

[16]Vicente Lecuna, Crónica razonada de las guerras de Bolívar, Vol. I (New York: The Colonial Press, Inc., 1950), p. xv.

[17]Anderson, p. 3.

[18]José Luis Vivas, Historia de Puerto Rico (New York: Las Americas Publishing Co., 1960), p. 97.

[19]Ibid., p. 100.

[20]Ibid., pp. 103-104, 109-111.

[21]Cayetano Coll y Toste, Boletín Histórico de Puerto Rico, Vol. I (San Juan: Tip. Cantero, Fernández & Co., 1914), pp. 181-197.

[22]Santana discusses trade and commerce in the Caribbean in the first two chapters of his dissertation, to include smuggling and clandestine operations. See also Arturo Morales Carrión, Puerto Rico and the Non Hispanic Caribbean: A Study in the Decline of Spanish Exclusivism (Río Piedras: University of Puerto Rico, 1974).

[23]This event has been very well discussed by Francisco Morales Padrón in "Primer intento de independencia puertorriqueña," Revista de Indias, Madrid, Spain, año 22, núm. 87-88 (1961), pp. 108-127. See also a similar article published in the Journal of Caribbean Studies, Río Piedras, Puerto Rico, 1:4, (1962), pp. 11-25.

[24]On August 10, 1815, Ferdinand VII promulgated the Cédula de Gracia to foster Puerto Rican economic development. This law allowed for the exemption of certain taxes, free trade with the peninsula, low

duty payment for foreign vessels, and granted permission for foreigners to settle in the island. After five-year residence, these settlers could become Spanish citizens. This act helped the immigration of those individuals who were fleeing the Spanish-American republics. A considerable number of peninsulares from Venezuela settled in Puerto Rico.

CHAPTER II

SPAIN AND PUERTO RICO ON THE EVE OF WARS FOR INDEPENDENCE

The political turmoil that besieged Spain and her Spanish American colonies at the beginning of the nineteenth century as a result of the Napoleonic invasion caused great anxiety and concern among Puerto Ricans. The island underwent a period of uncertainty when constitutional monarchy and the basic principles of the French and American revolutions became part of the aspirations of the Spanish people. The French invasion of Spain and the indecisive actions of the Spanish government also affected the political expectations and the loyalty of Puerto Ricans. In spite of the uncertainty about the political future of Spain, however, "the Puerto Rican politicians," as Robert W. Anderson has written, "showed remarkable patience and flexibility in adjusting their claims and expectations to the vagaries of peninsular politics."[1]

Following the instructions of the Suprema Junta de Sevilla, the first of the Spanish juntas to declare war against Napoleon, on July 24, 1808, Puerto Ricans rejected the French government of Joseph Bonaparte and proclaimed their allegiance to Ferdinand VII, the imprisoned Spanish monarch.[2] In Puerto Rico, however, "the will to think and act independently had already began to curd"[3] and the people no longer wanted to be "just agents of the Central Government or passive subjects of the Crown."[4]

A rising national consciousness or "Puerto Ricanism," influenced by the political events in the peninsula and by the belief of many Spanish Americans in the inevitability of a prolonged struggle for independence, had already begun to manifest early in the century. The peninsular conflict also resulted in the development of a strong sense of individualism, personality, and identity among Puerto Ricans.[5] This sense of nationality became evident soon in the instructions sent to the insular delegate to the Cortes, Ramón Power y Giralt; in the plans for revolutionary activities of Marshall Antonio Valero de Bernabé, a distinguished Puerto Rican military officer who fought beside Bolívar and became a leading figure in the wars for independence; and even in the activities of a Puerto Rican buccaneer, Roberto Cofresí, who proclaimed his eternal hatred for the Spaniards on the open seas.[6]

After 1810 Puerto Ricanism and the struggle for political concessions from Spain to end colonialism acquired three different and important ideologies. Distinct political factions emerged as a result of the changes that were occurring in Spain. A liberal group, consisting mostly of influential upper-class creoles, favored changes in the colonial status and a less authoritarian form of government. These creoles sought improvements in the political, economic, and social institutions of the island rather than complete independence. They distrusted the activities of the revolutionaries because they felt that independence could bring political instability and economic chaos. The liberals did not believe, however, that the independence of Puerto Rico would have resulted in a racial strife between the white and the black population of the island, as it had occurred previously in Haiti. This had been an important consideration in the struggle for Cuban

independence. The Cuban liberals believed that as soon as Spain ended her colonial tutelage in the Caribbean, the blacks in that island would rise in a revolt against their white overlords.[7]

The separatists, the other political faction which consisted mostly of creoles, some well-to-do foreign plantation owners, members of the lower clergy, and several members of the armed forces, believed that Puerto Rico, after a prolonged period of colonial domination, had achieved the necessary development to permit the organization of a sovereign state. The separatists followed a political ideology of total emancipation for Puerto Rico and accepted the abolition of slavery as an important part of their struggle for independence.

A conservative faction, consisting of Spaniards, wealthy Puerto Ricans, members of the government and foreign immigrants, opposing the activities of both the liberals and the separatists, also developed during this time. The conservatives wanted no political changes that could affect their strong influence in the local economy. They defended the colonial status of Puerto Rico and opposed any modification in governmental institutions because, being mostly peninsulares, they saw reforms as dangerous to their political and commercial control of the island.

The Puerto Rican liberals did not realize, however, that their hopes and expectations for a systematic improvement in the relations between Spain and Puerto Rico were unattainable. The Spanish authoritarian institutions were too well established to permit peaceful changes, especially if such changes would affect the authority of the governor or the commercial monopoly of the peninsulares. The colonial policies of Spain had continued to be authoritarian and conservative in spite of the

of the liberal views of some of the members of the Spanish Cortes. The few concessions granted during this time, such as the acceptance of an insular delegate in the Cortes, were only temporary measures occasioned by Spain's need to continue controlling her overseas possessions during the critical period of the Napoleonic invasion.

An analysis of the policies and objectives of the Spanish government created during the absence of Ferdinand VII indicate that there were no plans for changing the previous authoritarian rule exercised in the Spanish colonies. As the nature of the new government was basically conservative, no changes could be expected in the relations between Spain and her colonies. The liberal views held by some members of the Cortes concerned Spain, not her imperial possessions.

During this time, the colonies had token representation in the Cortes; but this concession did not alter the colonial administration of the empire. The mercantilistic system and the vested commercial interests of the merchants of Cádiz, Sevilla, and Cataluña, always took precedence over all other considerations.[8]

After the glorious uprising of the Spanish people on May 2, 1808, juntas had been organized in all Spanish provinces not conquered by the French invading forces. These juntas assumed governmental powers in the name of the absent king Ferdinand VII. Out of these grew the Junta Suprema Central Gubernativa del Reyno, "which though it soon became odious to the Spaniards themselves, offered a nationality sufficient for England to recognize the government and form with it an alliance."[9]

The new Spanish government was officially organized in Aranjuez on September 25, 1808. The Junta's president was the Count of Floridablanca, a well-known conservative and an enemy of republican ideas,

including those of the American revolution. It consisted of military officers, magistrates, members of the clergy, members of the nobility, and some middle class merchants.[10] One of its first acts was to name the Bishop of Orense as Inquisitor General.[11] This conservative representation in government would not have given the Puerto Rican liberals the freedom of action they desired.

By the end of 1808 the war between Spain and France reached a critical period because of the repeated disasters of the Spanish army, the continuing advance of the French forces, and the withdrawal of the British army into Portugal. The Junta Suprema followed the retreating forces from Aranjuez to Sevilla, where it planned to reorganize the war effort and "consider by what means it might hope to secure the fidelity of the colonies."[12] To accomplish this last purpose, it gave political recognition to the ultramarine colonies by raising their status to that of equal provinces of Spain and by permitting them to have a legal representative in the Spanish Cortes.[13]

On January 22, 1809, a royal decree signed by Francisco de Saavedra, the new president of the Junta Suprema, proclaimed the "vast and valuable dominions that Spain has in the Indies are not colonies as those of other nations, but an essential and integral part of the monarchy."[14] The decree further ordered the Spanish American colonies and the Philippines to send representatives to the Junta Suprema. The decision concerning the selection of deputies was not received well in the colonies because it did not provide for equal political representation.[15]

The defeat of the Spanish Army at Ocaña, the occupation of Andalucia by the French, and the loss of the prestige and confidence of the

Spanish people caused the disintegration of the Junta Suprema.[16] A Consejo de Regencia (a regency council) composed of five members, assumed the control of the government. This Consejo, as its predecessor the Junta Suprema, consisted of conservative members of the clergy and the armed forces, including the Bishop of Orense, Pedro Quevedo Quintana, General Francisco Javier Castaños, General Antonio Escaño, General Francisco Saavedra, and General Miguel de Lardizábal. This group, acting as if the king were present, periodically issued despotic decrees, such as the Facultades omnímodas,[17] which gave the governor of Puerto Rico absolute power to suppress all political illegitimate activities, especially those of the liberals and the separatists.

At the insistence of the Count of Toreno and of the representatives of Cuenca, Hualde, León, and others, the members of the Consejo de Regencia reconvened the Cortes on September 24, 1810. Before the French invasion, this parliament had been composed of three separate estates, representing the nobility, the Church, and the bourgeoisie. The new Cortes was to be organized into two assemblies or chambers, one comprised of popularly elected deputies, the other of members of the Church and the nobility. Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, who had directed the affairs of the Junta Suprema, became the principal spokesman for the new system. Jovellanos distrusted both the absolute power of the king and the political behavior of the masses. He believed that the new system was properly balanced because one assembly could control the king while the other could control the "popular license."[18] In the end, this idea was rejected, and the Cortes assembled in one chamber.

The Cortes was less conservative than the Consejo de Regencia. Its members were drawn mostly from the middle class. While much has

been written about the "liberal ideas" of this parliament; in effect, the Cortes generally practiced a conservative policy, as Joaquín Lorenzo Villanueva's diary of the secret sessions indicates.[19] Initially, the Cortes consisted of ninety-seven members of the clergy, eight noblemen, forty-six members of the armed forces, sixteen college educators, sixty lawyers, fifty-five public officials, fifteen landowners, five merchants, four writers, and two physicians,[20] a good measure of conservatism with middle class objectives and values.

This Cortes soon lost the confidence of the people. When Ferdinand VII, released by the overthrow of Napoleon, returned to Spain in 1814 and refused to accept the liberal Constitution of 1812, which had organized a constitutional monarchy, provided electoral franchise, and had provided other important concessions to the Spanish people, there was no Dos de Mayo to support the actions of the Cortes. The people had been so dissappointed with the work of the Cortes that they urged the king to reestablish absolutism in Spain.[21]

Spanish liberalism had been represented by a political faction which was barely beginning to emerge from the chaos of peninsular politics.[22] This faction, which disappeared with the return of Ferdinand VII, would reappear during the Riego revolt in 1820. Puerto Rican liberals, however, placed their hopes and aspirations for a better colonial administration in this powerless group.

The colonies too had been dissatisfied with the work of the Cortes and with the inequality of their representation. While the peninsulares had been authorized one representative for every 50,000 people, the Spanish American colonies, which had been declared to be an integral part of the Spanish kingdom, could only elect one representative for each

province. The peninsular provinces had 208 members in the Cortes, besides a deputy for each provincial junta and city which had sent representatives to the Cortes of 1789. This unequal representation clearly indicates "how great was the departure from a theory of equality which had been thrice enunciated in a few months."[23]

The Consejo de Regencia could not have permitted the creoles to be represented in the same proportion as the inhabitants of the peninsula. The larger population of Spanish America would have given that region a majority in the Cortes, much to the disadvantage of the peninsulares.[24] To resolve this problem, a decree was issued on June 28, 1810, limiting the number of colonial representatives to twenty-eight, without designating how many should pertain to each province. The consequence of this decision was that in many colonies no elections were held, while in others the elected representatives declined going to Spain.[25]

Puerto Rico, however, accepted the decision of the Consejo de Regencia because the liberals wanted many commercial and trade reforms and economic concessions. Ramón Power y Giralt became the insular representative to the Cortes. As the other Spanish American colonies had to be represented initially by substitute natives who were residing in Spain, until the legitimate representatives arrived, Power became the only elected deputy present when the Cortes convened in Cádiz. As a result, he became the Vice President of the Cortes, to the satisfaction of the Puerto Rican liberals.[26] They viewed the selection of Power as an indication of the Spanish interest in resolving the existing colonial injustices and as "a golden opportunity for the criollo group to air its grievances before the Crown."[27]

In 1810 the colonial administration of Puerto Rico was based on the

Novísima Recopilación de Leyes de Indias and the Recopilación de Leyes de Castilla, which dated from the seventeenth century. Under this system, mercantilism predominated in all areas of trade and commerce under the strict supervision of representatives of the Crown, normally peninsular officers. All power resided in the hands of a governor, who was the chief executive in Puerto Rico. The governor also exercised the responsibilities of captain-general, a military administrative position. The governor, therefore, ruled under a code of military law, which he enforced by the promulgation of decrees.

Puerto Ricans did not have representation in the insular government and could not change any law promulgated by Spain. As Puerto Rico was a very poor colony, it depended upon an annual subsidy from the Mexican treasury. It could trade only with Spain. In 1811 the local treasury contained only 37,719 pesos, an amount insufficient to fund the necessary expenses.[28] These conditions were expected to change with the appointment of Power to the Cortes; it was expected that he would inform the Crown of the many problems affecting the colony.

However, the instructions Power received from the ayuntamientos (municipal governments) of San Juan, Coamo, Aguada, and San Germán did not reflect a concern for the conditions of the masses but rather the interests of the emerging bourgeoisie, which consisted of rich merchants and landowners. Except for the instructions received from the Ayuntamiento of San Germán, which clearly indicated political dissatisfaction,[29] Power's instructions concerned the reduction of trade barriers, elimination of commercial restrictions, promotion of agriculture, diminution of taxes, and equality of opportunity for private economic interests.[30] All these concerns merely reflect the economic self-

interests of the Liberals. According to historian Loida Figueroa, Power was successful in advancing some of the recommendations given to him by the liberals.

> Power supported by the orders received by the City Councils, proposed a number of measures under one law, which bears his name. Among these measures is the repealing of the tax known as the forced supply of meat to the capital, the repealing of the State monopoly over the importation of flour, the exportation of cattle subject only to a minimum tax, and the recommendation of setting up minor ports in distant points of the Island.[31]

The Puerto Rican representative and vice-president of the Cortes, in spite of his influence, made no proposals for major political changes or concessions, the abolition of slavery, or the autonomy of Puerto Rico.

Power was able to separate the Intendency[32] from the Captaincy-General, an action that permitted the separation of powers in the insular government and great improvements in the economic system of the island. He was also able to repeal the powers that had been given to Governor Meléndez by the Consejo de Regencia, which the latter had used to suppress political dissention in Puerto Rico.[32] The Puerto Rican representative to the Cortes, however, could not remove Governor Meléndez from his position of power, in spite of the fact that he ruled despotically. In a secret session of the Cortes, Power had requested the appointment of a commission to investigate Governor Meléndez's conduct.[33] The commission, however, referred the investigation to the Consejo de Regencia, which resolved that the case did not have sufficient merit to warrant a suspension of Governor Meléndez from his command in Puerto Rico.[34]

The governor, nevertheless, utilized all available means to obstruct Power's work in Spain. He accused him of being a member of the

separatist movement and a leader of a plot to oust the royal government. He refused to provide Power with some needed documents for his work at the Cortes and even solicited the Consejo de Regencia to restrict Power's actions in Spain. When these measures failed to curtail Power, the governor began to intercept his official correspondence to the ayuntamientos. Finally, Governor Meléndez circulated an indictment of Power among several members of the Cortes under the title Primeros sucesos desagradables en la Isla de Puerto Rico consecuentes a la formación de la Junta Soberana de Caracas.[35] This attack required Power to defend himself in the Cortes.

Power's work in the Cortes received substantial benefits in 1812 when the Cortes proclaimed a constitution which temporarily ended absolutism in Spain. Under this document the Spanish government became a constitutional monarchy in which, according to historian Figueroa, "the king had fewer powers than his English counterpart, the English being the most advanced nation in Parliamentary procedures."[36] The Constitution of 1812 provided for popular franchise, however, it did not provide for equality, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly, or the right of association. This constitution was written at a time when the movement of independence was growing in Spanish America and when Napoleonic forces were threatening to eliminate all resistence in Spain. The new constitution provided for a large measure of representation for the Spanish American colonies, but excluded all persons of African origin -- those even distantly related to them. The constitution, therefore, deprived a great proportion of Puerto Ricans of the rights of citizenship.

In other ways the Constitution of 1812 represented a considerable improvement over the authoritarianism of the military regime. In

addition to providing for insular representation at the Cortes, the constitution gave the Puerto Ricans the Spanish citizenship; the freedom of speech, thought, petition, work, and suffrage; and many other trade and commercial advantages.[37] It recognized in part the political liberties of Puerto Ricans, but at the same time it further centralized the administrative mechanism of the colony.[38]

One of Power's principal successes under the constitution was the separation of the Intendency from the Captaincy-General. The post of Intendent had been created in 1784 to deal with treasury, fiscal, and economic matters, but its duties had been carried out by the governor. The liberals had always wanted the separation of these two functions, because in this way they could prevent the governor from interfering in economic matters. Power's action resulted in the appointment of Alejandro Ramírez as Intendent on February 12, 1813, to deal with the insular economy. A brilliant economist, Ramírez realized that the only way that the Puerto Rican economy could be made self-sufficient was by effective utilization of native resources rather than depending upon financial assistance from Spain or México.[39]

As a result, Ramírez initiated a series of economic reforms, to the delight of the liberals and the displeasure of Governor Meléndez. He eliminated import taxes on farm machinery and agricultural tools and rehabilitated the ports of Aguadilla, Mayaguéz, Cabo Rojo, Ponce, and Fajardo to encourage foreign commerce. The Intendent distributed better seeds to improve agriculture, organized a lottery to add income to the treasury, founded the first non-governmental newspaper, and facilitated the immigration of white settlers to Puerto Rico. Finally, he reorganized the monetary system by introducing the moneda macuquina (a type

of silver coin from Venezuela) to replace the paper currency which nobody wanted.[40]

Like other liberal reforms made under an authoritarian system, however, the separation of the Intendency from the Captaincy-General was of a short duration. Governor Meléndez continually obstructed Ramírez's activities. He also hindered the actions of Jose María Ramírez de Arellano, Ramírez's successor in the Intendency. Finally, in 1819, Governor Meléndez took over the intendent's responsibilities, thereby reestablishing authoritarian control over the country's economic affairs.

In 1814 Ferdinand VII, released from prison at Bayonne by the overthrow of Napoleon, returned to Spain. He refused to accept the constitutional monarchy that had been devised by the Spanish Cortes and the Constitution of 1812. Reverting to absolutism, "as it was understood by the most absolute of his predecessors," he brought back the monastic orders such as the Jesuits, reinstated the inquisitional authority of the Church, restored all the lost privileges to the nobility, and filled the prisons with political prisoners and dissenters. The members of the Cortes had to escape to either England or France because Ferdinand VII decreed the death penalty to any one "who dare even to speak in favor of the constitution."[41]

In Puerto Rico, Governor Meléndez did not even wait for official instructions from the Crown. He immediately reinstated absolutism, abolished all liberal reforms, and curtailed the freedom of the press and all other concessions that the Cortes had granted. As a result of these events, Puerto Rico reverted to its former colonial status and the Puerto Ricans lost their Spanish citizenship and the civil and economic rights that Power had struggled for.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Robert W. Anderson, Party Politics in Puerto Rico (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1965), p. 4.

[2]Cayetano Coll y Toste, Boletín Histórico de Puerto Rico, Vol. X (San Juan: Tip. Cantero, Fernández, & Co., 1923), p. 96.

[3]Tomás Blanco, Prontuario Histórico de Puerto Rico (San Juan: Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña, 1973), p. 49.

[4]Ibid.

[5]One of the best monographs written about the nascent Puerto Rican personality during this particular period is Insularismo, written in 1934 by the noted scholar Antonio S. Pedreira. See Antonio S. Pedreira Insularismo (Río Piedras: Editorial Edil, 1973).

[6]Juan A. Corretjer, La Lucha por la independencia de Puerto Rico (Guaynabo, Puerto Rico, 1974), p. 13. The author claims that Cofresí sailed under the colors of the republic of Puerto Rico, proclaiming "the republic of Puerto Rico on the open sea!" The evidence for this statement has not been found. It is known, however, that Cofresí used many flags on his ships to confuse the Spaniards. He had preference for the Colombian and Venezuelan colors.

[7]An analysis of the effects of the black insurrection in Saint Dominque (Haiti) on the Cuban creole mentality can be found in Philip S. Foner, A History of Cuba and Its Relations with the United States, Chapters 5 and 6 (New York: International Publishers, 1963). See also Lester D. Langley, The Cuban Policy of the United States, Chapter 1 (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1968).

[8]During this time the Cádiz merchants had a trade monopoly with the Spanish-American colonies. The sole right to trade had been transferred from Sevilla. These merchants provided most of the financial support needed by the government to fight the French, therefore, their views prevailed in all government decisions. At one time the government passed a decree which permitted the colonies "to trade with foreign nations in their own productions in cases where there was no market for them in Spain....This decree...did not suit the merchants of Cádiz, on whom the regency were in a great measure dependent for the means of continuing their feeble and slippery government. This decree was, therefore, revoked on the 17th of June (1810)." (See French E. Chadwick, The Relations of the United States and Spain (New York: Russell and Russell, 1968), p. 109.

[9]Chadwick, p. 108.

[10]For the names, occupations, titles and other information about the members of the Junta Suprema see Jose F. Blanco, ed., Documentos para la historia de la vida pública del Libertador de Colombia, Peru, y Bolivia, publicados por disposición del general Guzmán Blanco, Vol. 2 (Caracas: Imprenta de la Opinión Nacional, 1876), doc. 356, p. 174.

[11]Miguel Artola, ed., Memorias de tiempos de Fernando VII, Vol. 2 (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, 1957), p. viii.

[12]Hubert H. Bancroft, Works, Vol. 12 (San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft & Co., Publishers, 1885), p. 85.

[13]One of the principal reasons for this action was the continuing need for money for the war efforts. In the year 1809, 284 million reales were donated by the colonies (See Conde de Toreno, Historia del levantamiento, guerra y revolución de España (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Espanoles, 1953, p. 174). The total donations of the Spanish colonies to the Crown cannot be determined. Professor Cruz Monclova, quoting Rico Amat, claims that "a total of 384 million reales were given to Spain." Chadwick claims that the total contribution was ninety million dollars (fifty-five from Mexico). These amounts appear to be incorrect, when compared with the fact that 284 million reales were sent to Spain in one year alone (1809)! (See Lidio Cruz Monclova, Historia de Puerto Rico, Vol. I (Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico: Editorial Universitaria, 1970), p. 6n and Chadwick, p. 109n. The contribution of Puerto Rico was more than 112,500 pesos (Cruz Monclova, p. 6n).

[14]J. F. Blanco, Vol. 2, doc. 368, p. 230; Conde de Toreno, pp. 174-175; Cruz Monclova, Vol. I, pp. 6-8.

[15]The decision made by the Junta provided that Vice Royalties, Captaincy-Generals, and Provinces send one representative each to Spain. This was unequal representation, as the smaller provinces of Spain had two representatives in the Junta. The thirty-six members of these provinces could easily overrule the actions of the twelve delegates from the colonies in any decision affecting their interests. This argument later became academic because the elected representatives of the colonies never joined the Junta.

[16]José Francisco Heredia, Memorias sobre las revoluciones de Venezuela (Paris: Libreria de Garnier Hermanos, 1895), p. 2.

[17]The Facultades omnímodas was an edict of the Consejo de Regencia which authorized the Spanish Governor to take any action that he deemed necessary against the revolutionary elements. This edict gave the governor power of life and death to be applied at his discretion.

[18]Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, Memoria en defensa de la Junta Central (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Espanoles, 1957), p. 466.

[19]See Joaquin Lorenzo Villanueva, "Mi viaje a las Cortes," in

Artola's Memorias, Vol. 2. This is a diary of the secret sessions of the Cortes from December 17, 1810, to September 16, 1813.

[20]Artola, Vol. 2, p. xxv.

[21]Chadwick, p. 121.

[22]Will and Ariel Durant, The Age of Napoleon (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1975), pp. 539-540. See also Loida Figueroa, History of Puerto Rico (New York: Anaya Book Co., Inc., 1974), p. 137n. Professor Loida Figueroa added: "The term 'liberal' was used for the first time in Spain,....It was applied in a pejorative sense by the defenders of the old regime of their opposers, who were loudly proclaiming liberties. The 'liberals' in turn, called them 'servile,' a truly unjust term."

[23]Chadwick, pp. 108-109.

[24]Bancroft, Vol. 12, pp. 87-88.

[25]Idem.

[26]Figueroa, p. 135.

[27]Arturo Morales-Carrión, Puerto Rico and the Non Hispanic Caribbean: A Study in the Decline of Spanish Exclusivism (Río Piedras, Puerto Rico: University of Puerto Rico, 1974), p. 135.

[28]Pedro Tomás de Córdova, Memorias geográficas, históricas, económicas y estadísticas de la isla de Puerto Rico, Vol. III (San Juan: Editorial Coquí, 1968), p. 175. This is a facsimile edition of an original work published in 1832.

[29]See "Instrucciones del Ayuntamiento de San German al diputado de Cortes" in Cruz Monclova, Vol. I (Appendix I), pp. 517-520. Part of these instructions read: "First, this villa must acknowledge that it would accept the Junta Central, if and when it rule in the name of... Ferdinand VII; but, if as a result of Provindence...Spain is lost...we want this Island to be independent and free to choose its own destiny."

[30]Jesus Cambre Mariño, "Puerto Rico bajo el reformismo ilustrado," Revista de Historia de América, México D. F., México, núm. 73-74 (1972), pp. 72-73.

[31]Figueroa, pp. 139-140.

[32]The Intendency had been created in 1784 to deal with the treasury. It was responsible for all fiscal and economic matters. The duties were carried out by the governor until 1811, to the detriment of economic development in the Island. See Córdova, Vol. III, pp. 181-182.

[33]Artola, Vol. 2, pp. 194-195.

[34]Monclova, Vol. I, p. 55.

[35]Alejandro Tapia y Rivera, Noticia histórica de don Ramón Power, primer diputado de Puerto Rico (Barcelona: Ediciones Rumbos, 1967), Appendices 1-4.

[36]Figueroa, p. 142.

[37]Coll y Toste, Vol. XIII, pp. 308-315; Monclova, Vol. I, p. 49.

[38]Monclova, Vol. I, p. 51.

[39]Pedro Tomás de Córdova, Primera memoria sobre la isla de Puerto Rico que presentó a S. M. Don Pedro Tomás de Córdova, secretario del gobierno de la Isla, Ano, 1818, in Coll y Toste, Vol. IV, pp. 164-184. See also José Luis Vivas, Historia de Puerto Rico (New York: Las Americas Publishing Co., 1960), p. 137; Salvador Brau, Historia de Puerto Rico (Rio Piedras: Editorial Edil, 1974), p. 198.

[40]Idem.

[41]Chadwick, p. 121.

CHAPTER III

THE STRUGGLE FOR PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE

1810 - 1820

The failure of the liberal reform movement and the return of absolutism in 1814 resulted in increasing attempts for Puerto Rican independence. The movement for political emancipation in Venezuela and Santo Domingo also strengthened the nationalistic spirit of Puerto Rico creole separatists and their desire for independence. The revolutionaries, who came mostly from the middle class and were well-educated, influential, and patriotic, believed that Puerto Rico, after a formative period of three centuries, was ready to become a sovereign political unity, with its own geographical, social, economic and cultural boundaries.[1]

These separatists furnished the directing force of the movement for Puerto Rican independence. They found, initially, great difficulty in achieving their goals because of the opposition of the creole upper class and the peninsulares, and the passivity of the rural lower classes. These rural Puerto Ricans were poor peasants, free blacks, and slaves of exceedingly docile character. Uneducated, living in poverty, unaware of the basic issues of the revolutionary struggle that was developing in Spanish America, and restricted in their actions by an absolutist government, they had shown little interest in the political process and little revolutionary motivation. The political

apathy of the masses had also been intensified by years of absolutism and military oppression. Therefore, while Spain was being swept by demands for political reforms and Spanish America was contemplating a long struggle for independence, the majority of the people in Puerto Rico remained loyal to the Crown.

Most Spaniards who resided in Puerto Rico opposed the separatists' goals. They were employed in government service or were engaged in commercial and financial pursuits. Liberal creoles did not accept the separatists' plans either. As members of the upper class, they preferred an autonomous system of government which they could control and which they could acquire through peninsular concessions under an established political order.

The activities of the separatists began in 1810 in Puerto Rico and nearby islands. Seditious proclamations inviting the Puerto Ricans to rise up in open rebellion and join the cause of liberty appeared periodically in St. Thomas between 1810 to 1811.[2] In the United States, the Spanish Minister warned the Governor of Puerto Rico that Venezuelan agents were arriving in Puerto Rico to support independence.[3] Many of these agents reached the island; Spanish authorities, however, captured others, who were imprisoned in the Morro Castle.

In 1810 the ayuntamientos of Caracas, Cartagena, and Coro in Venezuela, in support of the independence movement, urged the members of the Ayuntamiento of San Juan to revolt against Spanish domination and join Venezuela and the rest of South America in their struggle for political emancipation.[4] On May 25, 1810, however, the Ayuntamiento of San Juan rejected the first of these invitations. The members of the Ayuntamiento reaffirmed their loyalty to Ferdinand VII and the Consejo de Regencia

because they could not agree with the actions taken by the Spanish American revolutionaries.[5] On December 11, 1810, the Ayuntamiento sent a similar rejection to Cartagena,[6] and later criticized the activities of Coro.[7] The Spanish government praised this loyalty to Ferdinand VII. Both the Consejo de Regencia and the Cortes sent their congratulations to the liberals on the island for "their fidelity, love, and noble undertaking."[8]

The activities of the Puerto Rican patriots did not end with the opposition of the local ayuntamientos to the independence. With the help of Venezuelan revolutionary agents, they increased their activities during 1810. One of the principal Venezuelan subversive agents was Miguel José Sanz, the Secretary of State and Foreign Relations of the new revolutionary government. Sanz had many friends in Puerto Rico, including Bishop Juan Alejo Arizméndi and other members of the clergy. Sanz's activities for the independence of the Spanish colonies caused his arrest on one occasion. He was imprisoned in Puerto Rico but later escaped, perhaps with the help of the separatists. Upon his return to Venezuela, Sanz campaigned actively for the independence of Puerto Rico. He corresponded periodically with the separatists and sent them copies of the Gaceta de Caracas, a revolutionary newspaper, and other seditious literature.[9]

Sanz's letters to Puerto Rican separatists reflect the extent of the support for the independence on the island. It appears that the movement had important supporters among the clergy and the armed forces. As the clergy was closer to the people and understood better than anyone else the hopeless conditions of Puerto Ricans, it is not unusual that they became partisans of independence as other priests had done in

Spanish America. During the early stages of the wars for independence the activities of the revolutionaries had been supported by a large part of the lower clergy.

> This was true especially in Brazil, whose revolution of 1817 has been called a 'revolution of the priests.' In Argentina, sixteen of the twenty-nine members forming the Congress of Tucuman in 1816, which proclaimed the independence of the country, were priests. In Mexico, where such names as Hidalgo and Morelos fill the pages of revolutionary history, the priests were leaders in the independence movements.[10]

Sanz wrote to Juan Fen, a parish priest from Ponce; to the archdeacon of San Juan, José Gutiérrez del Arroyo; and to the Bishop of San Juan, Juan Alejo Arizméndi.[11] Many of these letters, however, were intercepted by the agents of Governor Meléndez when they were being carried to their destination and the governor was aware of the extent of creole implication in the revolutionary movement.[12] Therefore, when the separatist activities increased Governor Meléndez began to arrest and exile many of the revolutionaries and sympathizers of the struggle for independence.[13]

Governor Meléndez believed that sedition existed in all sectors of creole society. As a result, he sent a long indictment to Spain accusing, among others, Bishop Arizméndi and the Puerto Rican representative to the Cortes Ramón Power y Giralt of subversive activities.[14] This indictment to the Spanish government may have been justified, however, as many of the individuals accused were in fact separatists who had been planning an uprising in San Germán.[15] Two of the individuals accused by Governor Melendez, Bishop Juan Alejo Arizméndi and the Puerto Rican representative to the Cortes Ramón Power y Giralt require special mention because of their high positions.

Many historians who have written about Arizméndi describe him as a

liberal who accepted impassively the existing colonial regime in Puerto Rico. Professor Lidio Cruz Monclova, one of Puerto Rico's leading historians, describes Arizméndi as a supporter of the Spanish system and as an individual who believed in the need to maintain ties with Spain, especially during the critical years when the Consejo de Regencia directed the affairs of the nation.[16] The Puerto Rican scholar Cayetano Coll y Toste viewed Arizméndi as a "benevolent, charitable, religious man of liberal inclinations."[17] Arizméndi's political activities indicate, however, that while he did not conspire openly against the government, perhaps due to his religious and moral responsibilities, he did support separatism.[18]

When France had invaded Spain in 1808 and chaos prevailed in the peninsula, Arizméndi proposed to the Governor of Puerto Rico the creation of a junta similar to those that had been organized in Spain and which later led to the independence movements in Spanish America.[19] The governor did not oppose the plan but indicated that he believed a junta was unnecessary in Puerto Rico because the island was not at war. Arizméndi became, therefore, the only supporter of such a radical plan. He did not, however, press the proposal. Puerto Rico, according to Professor Loida Figueroa, therefore, "lost the opportunity of being the first colony to use this resource."[20]

Arizméndi's recommendation for a junta was not an isolated case of his "Puerto Ricanism." He often clashed with government policy. On August 16, 1808, during a public ceremony in San Juan to celebrate the election of Ramón Power y Giralt as Puerto Rico's representative to the Junta Suprema, Arizméndi gave his episcopal ring to Power as a symbol of brotherhood and patriotic trust. He also offered these words:

> Everything that you have promised was awaited by the people and the Island from (you), a good son whose Catholic devotion, patriotism, and charity we all recognize....This (ring) will insure that you remember yout commitment of protecting and defending the rights of your compatriots.[21]

Arizméndi's action was especially significant because his pronouncement took place during an official government ceremony and in the presence of the Spanish military governor and many peninsular civil and military functionaries. His remarks were considered subversive and highly irregular by the Spanish authorities.[22]

On July 20, 1810, Arizméndi again disobeyed the authority of Governor Meléndez. Six seminarians had arrived from Venezuela to be ordained. As Caracas was in a state of rebellion, Governor Meléndez planned to arrest the clergymen. Arizméndi, however, gave them ecclesiastical protection, ordained them as priests, and secured their safe return to Venezuela in spite of the Governor's opposition.

Arizméndi maintained regular correspondence with the Venezuelan revolutionary leader Miguel José Sanz. Some of these letters indicate the prelate's separatist inclinations. In a few of them he even discussed the problems of the clergy and government attempts to suppress their activities.[23]

Ramón Power y Giralt, the Puerto Rican representative to the Cortes, was not a separatist; he was a liberal who represented the interests of the upper class creoles. José Alvarez de Toledo, a Cuban rebel and adventurer who represented Santo Domingo at the Cortes, claimed in 1811 that he possessed a document which authorized him to organize an army in Spanish America and establish a revolutionary government in northern Mexico. According to Toledo, Power had been one of the Spanish American delegates who had signed the document. No evidence

has been found, however, to authenticate Alvarez's claim or to prove Power's support of rebellion in Spanish America.[24]

While Powers accepted the instructions given to him by the ayuntamientos of San Juan, Coamo, Arecibo, and Aguada after his election as a representative of Puerto Rico to the Cortes, he did not recognize those of San Germán because he considered them to be contrary to the purposes of his mission. These were the only instructions at that time which contained recommendations for the political future of the island.[25] It is probable, however, that Power refused them because they had been directed to the Junta Suprema, not to the Spanish Cortes. Their legality, therefore, was questionable.[26]

Among those accused of sedition by Governor Meléndez were many members of the Church who supported separatism. As it has been already indicated, the movement for independence had many supporters among the clergy.[27] Besides the feelings of Arizméndi for independence, the activities of other church officials, such as Archdeacon José Gutiérrez del Arroyo and of the priests Juan Crisóstomo Rodriguez and Juan Fen, uphold the view that the clergy supported the separatist movement. Further evidence could be found in the <u>conjura</u> of 1810 (a conspiracy), which began at the monastery of Santo Domingo in San Juan.

In August, 1810, several members of the clergy, among them Archdeacon José Gutiérrez del Arroyo and Father José Crisóstomo Rodríguez, participated in a dinner held in honor of the patron saint of Santo Domingo. Among those who were present at the affair were Colonel Lorenzo Ortíz de Zárate and the Commander of the Third Battalion, Federico Sanjurt. Other important members of the government and the armed forces were also present. During the celebration, Archdeacon Gutiérrez

del Arroyo, perhaps influenced by the recent events in Venezuela or by his separatist views, had a serious argument with Colonel Zárate concerning a political manifesto that had been issued by the Venezuelan revolutionaries. The Archdeacon supported the patriots because he believed that the government did not have the authority to make changes in the government without the consent of the ayuntamientos. Ortíz de Zárate, on the contrary, observed that it was illegal to revolt against the authority of the king because that was equivalent to rising against God. The discussion finally terminated when one of the guests at the dinner proposed a toast to terminate the dispute. The discussion at the dinner, however, did not end at that point. Exchanges and accusations between some of the participants continued for some time afterwards. Both Governor Meléndez and Bishop Arizméndi intervened later in the argument, Arizméndi telling the governor to stop meddling with Church affairs.[28] Governor Meléndez, therefore, accused Bishop Arizméndi, Archdeacon Gutiérrez del Arroyo and Father Jose Crisóstomo Rodríguez of being the leaders of a plot to oust the Spanish government in Puerto Rico. Father Francisco Fajardo, Father Juan Antonio Mambrúm, and Father Angel de la Concepción, were arrested and exiled for being separatists.

In October, 1810, the Consejo de Regencia sent to Puerto Rico Antonio Ignacio de Cortabarría as a royal magistrate, with full powers to resolve the Spanish American problem. The Crown's representative, an old, feeble, gentleman with little knowledge of the circumstances that caused the conflict, arrived in Puerto Rico on October 24, 1810, with "every intention of directing the pacifying operations from there, and hoping to obtain aid from the Island militia if it were necessary."[29]

One of his first decisions, perhaps as a sign of goodwill toward the junta in Caracas, was to free Vicente Tejera, Diego Jugo, and Andrés Moreno, three Venezuelan agents whom Governor Meléndez had confined in San Juan.

Soon thereafter, Cortabarría began peace negotiations with the Venezuelan insurgents but failed to convince them to remain loyal to Spain. He even appealed to the "faithful and loyal people of color" in Venezuela to help achieve a prompt and lasting cessation of hostilities.[30] Discouraged, he then decided to press the issue by sending a military force from Puerto Rico, hoping to win on the battlefield what he had not been able to gain at the conference table. The separatists, realizing the significance of this decision, gave Cortabarría a warning. They affixed to his door a note which declared "this country, so docile in obeying the official authorities, will never permit sending away one single American from this island to fight against its brothers, the Caraqueños."[31] The royal magistrate changed his plans concerning the proposed expedition against Venezuela as a result of the influence exercised by the Puerto Rican separatists. Governor Meléndez, however, ordered several separatists who had been detained to go to Venezuela to fight in the Spanish army,[32] together with some suspected Spanish peninsular officers who were living in Puerto Rico, including Colonel Manuel Fierro. Fierro was one of the Spanish officers who had been corresponding with the Venezuelan revolutionary Miguel José Zanz.[33]

To counteract the influence exercised by the South American revolutionary agents and to curtail the movement for independence, on September 4, 1810, the Consejo de Regencia granted dictatorial powers to the insular governor. These powers -- the Facultades omnímodas[34] --

were directed primarily against the revolutionary elements on the island. The governor received the authority to assume emergency controls over life and property and to act as he deemed necessary to suppress all political activities. He was empowered to prevent the infiltration of Venezuelan revolutionaries and to suppress Puerto Rican demands for home rule.

This reactionary move created great dissatisfaction among the liberals and the separatists. The Puerto Ricans considered this action as a new measure of colonial despotism. This decree forced the separatists to continue their activities underground, "with tactics commensurate with the dangers that they faced."[35] At times, however, they resumed openly their activities to let Governor Melendez know that their hostility toward the colonial system and their solidarity with the rest of the Spanish American revolutionary cause had not been suppressed.

The first important attempt at Puerto Rican independence occurred in San German the following year. Three of the principal creole families of that town -- the Quiñones, the Ramírez de Arellano, and the Irizarry -- conspired with some lesser known individuals. These revolutionaries included Francisco Antonio Ramírez de Arellano; José de Quiñones, his cousin; Felipe de Quiñones, Ensign of the Ayuntamiento; Mauricio de Quiñones, Captain of the Militia; Ramón Ramírez de Arellano, the Town Constable; Vicente González (alias "Chence"), leader of the mulattoes; José María Guadalupe; Pedro de Silva, Captain of the Militias; José Ursino; Buenaventura Barriento, a priest and brother of Bonifacio Barriento, a well-known revolutionary and Venezuelan sympathizer; Bernardo Pavón Davila; Juan Eloy Tirado, a notary public; Tomás Cardoso, a mulatto who had been exiled in Caracas; Carlos Plumer;

and other members of the Quiñones and Ramirez de Arellano families. Political and economic interests were equally important to this group of creoles.[36]

These separatists met periodically in the residence of Francisco Antonio Ramírez in the coastal town of Guánica. His home also served as a place to meet clandestinely with Venezuelan agents who arrived in the southern part of Puerto Rico. The separatists had also some support from several of the revolutionaries of San Juan, among them, the Archdeacon Gutiérrez del Arroyo and Doctor Francisco Marcos Santaella. Other men from interior towns who sympathized with the creoles of San German included Bernardo Rivera; Jose de Balbis; Juan, "the Dutchman;" a captain Mandeli; Ildefonso del Toro; Domingo Barrios; and many others.[37]

Local dissatisfaction with the Spanish colonial regime reached such a high point during this time that many of the creoles were already considering independence an accomplished fact. These individuals planned to retaliate against the Spaniards by ending the payment of taxes and expelling the peninsulares from the country. They also planned to "cut off the heads of the Catalans,"[38] seize their property to pay for the expenses of the revolution, and remove those who survive from any position of responsibility.[39]

The major factors that caused the creoles' desire for independence were the high taxes enforced by the Spaniards and the unequal treatment they had received from the peninsulares who resided in San Juan. For decades, these individuals had ignored the communities of the interior and had scorned the Puerto Ricans constantly. Although San Germán had a larger population than the capital, most of its inhabitants lived in

poverty and were denied the political and economic advantages that San Juan enjoyed.[40]

A system known as the abasto forzoso (forced supply) had been instituted in the rural communities for many years. Under this system, the municipalities of the interior were regularly forced to supply all the beef that San Juan consumed. Every farmer had to give one head of cattle for every six that he owned. He also had to ensure the safe arrival of this cattle to the capital, regardless of the problems encountered during its transportation. Any cattle that was lost or died during the journey had to be replaced at the expense of the farmer. The law provided for no exceptions, as its purpose was to ensure an ample supply of beef to the peninsulares of San Juan at the lowest price possible.[41] This injustice lasted for many years and was strictly enforced by the Spanish authorities.

When the news of the Venezuelan insurrection had reached San Germán in 1810 the Ayuntamiento, which was composed principally of the Quiñones family, had acted immediately to plan some kind of similar revolutionary action; the influence of members of the armed forces, however, prevented the success of any plan.[42] The revolutionary spirit, however, had continued to grow among the creoles who only awaited for a more convenient time to act. By 1811 the plans for a general insurrection to coincide with the Christmas season were well developed. The direction of the armed movement had been given to Domingo Postigó, a militia officer, and to Bernardo Pabón, a creole from San Germán.

It was impossible, however, to keep the proposed revolt a secret. Members of the revolutionary movement began to express openly their ideas and plans for independence and their dissatisfaction with the

colonial regime. One of them, Jose González, mentioned that "he was not going to continue the payment of taxes" because of the forthcoming revolt. A Lieutenant Agarra declared that he would "not pay anything else because very soon we are going to be independent." Another man, Antonio Cordero, commented to José Varea, a Spanish citizen, that "very soon all taxes will be ended because we are going to have here the Caracas law."[43] The indiscretion of these people led to the disclosure of the plans for the uprising. José Varea informed the Spanish authorities of the involvement of the Ramírez de Arellano and Quiñones families in the attempted creole uprising. Governor Meléndez, therefore, arrested the principal members of the conspiracy and ordered their prosecution, when they appeared before him to protest their faithfulness and deny the accusations of Varea. The arrival of Spanish troops in Aguadilla on December 23, 1811, and the disclosure of the uprising before it could be completely organized "imposed moderation and fear, and, apart from this, it now would have been impossible to take the authorities by surprise."[44]

The activities of the Separatists caused a continuous alarm in Puerto Rico, principally, among the peninsulares and the government officials. As the defense of the island had been entrusted to both the peninsular troops and the local militia, Governor Meléndez became quite concerned with the revolutionary potential of the popular military force, composed mostly of native Puerto Ricans. This militia, which by 1810 totaled 17,019 men had given valuable services to Spain in the defense of Puerto Rico against various foreign invasions.[45] Many of its members, however, sympathized with the separatists and with the Spanish American struggle for independence, and posed a threat to the colonial control of Spain.

To prevent the utilization of these individuals in a local uprising, the governor attempted to dissolve the militia, but the Consejo de Regencia opposed his plans. To curtail the militia's effectiveness, Governor Meléndez reduced its activities from defense to minor tasks, such as repairing roads and constructing military fortifications. The governor also disarmed the militia, except for its regular cutlasses.

The creoles protested to Spain the misuse of the militia forces. As a result the Consejo de Regencia overruled the governor's decision, thereby reinstating the militia to its former responsibilities. To counteract this decision in 1813 Governor Meléndez organized an elite military unit composed entirely of Spanish citizens. He named this armed force the Cuerpo de Voluntarios Distinguidos and issued its members the same weapons and uniforms used by the regular armed forces.[46]

Governor Meléndez took additional precautionary measures to prevent an armed uprising in the island. He reorganized the military forces, augmented military patrols, and armed privateers to defend the coastal waters against incursions from Venezuela. He organized an important espionage cell to operate in Venezuela and Puerto Rico to gather information and spy on the separatists. The cell consisted of Bartolomé Mascareñas, Jose Lopés, Mateo Ocampo, and several other residents of Cumaná, Coro and Curacao.[47] Their efforts allowed Governor Meléndez to intercept Sanz's letters and to arrest several messengers who had arrived from Venezuela.[48] The governor also censured the newspapers and the mail, and exiled many separatist leaders and sympathizers, including Juan Crisóstomo Rodriguez Carrera.[49]

In spite of these measures, revolutionary activities continued to grow on the island. These activities, however, diminished considerably

as a result of a series of defeats which Venezuelan revolutionaries suffered in South America. Puerto Rican extremists had depended upon Venezuela for help to continue their attempts for independence because of their insular position. One of their principal problems was access to information concerning the progress of the revolution on the mainland to counteract government claims and propaganda. The governor had obstructed the distribution of printed material arriving from Venezuela[50] and, in some cases, had confiscated the personal mail that came from Caracas and La Guayra.[51] Governor Meléndez also secured the cooperation of the Captain-General of Venezuela, who informed him of all departures of suspected revolutionaries, their mission, and final destination.[52]

The arrival of new troops and the continuing utilization of Puerto Rico as a base of military operations against Venezuela reduced further the revolutionary activities.[53] Military forces reached the island en route to Venezuela or México,[54] temporarily increasing the garrison in Puerto Rico. To inform Spain of the movement of these troops, conditions on the island, and the progress of the conflict, the governor frequently sent reports to the peninsular government.[55]

The early defeats of the Venezuelan rebels, as it has already been indicated, and the uncertainty of success in the independence movements in other Spanish American colonies also discouraged the separatists. Two other events served to lessen creole activism during the years 1812 and 1813. On Holy Thursday, March 26, 1812, at 4:07 in the afternoon, one of the severest earthquakes ever recorded in South America struck Caracas and surrounding areas.[56] In Caracas alone, more than 20,000[57] people died. For many people, religious implications of this disaster, both in Venezuela and Puerto Rico, were very profound. The revolution

also had begun in Venezuela during a Holy Week two years before. To many people the coincidence of these two events was terrifying and resulted in the belief that God was punishing them for the transgression of beginning a revolution during a Holy Week.[58]

The ecclessiastical authorities, who supported Spain and the Crown, quickly reinforced this belief by telling the people that the earthquake had been a chastisement of Heaven for abandoning the cause of Ferdinand VII. The superstitious idea spread considerably in Venezuela, with the result that the royalist forces were able to win an easy victory in Coro and penetrated as far as Valencia, where they were joined by a considerable portion of the inhabitants of the interior.[59]

The other event that lessen creole activism was the arrest of many separatists on October 15, 1813. On that day, Governor Meléndez ordered the mass arrest of all known separatists and sympathizers of the revolution.[60] During this time--related a witness--San Juan displayed the appearance of a fortress sieged by a large enemy force, its inhabitants terrorized, not knowing the intentions of the Governor nor the purpose of the measures taken.[61]

The demands of the Puerto Ricans for a better system of government, however, continued during the next two years. To soften these demands, on August 10, 1815, Spain promulgated the Cédula de Gracia, which would help foster the economic development of the island. This law provided for the exemption from several taxes for fifteen years and expanded trade with Spain and foreign countries. The cédula also permitted foreigners to settle in Puerto Rico and enjoy the same rights as Spaniards after a five year residence. This act stimulated the growth of population and the investment of capital.[62]

As a result of the concessions granted by the Cédula de Gracia, many immigrants -- royalists fleeing mostly from Venezuela, Santo Domingo, Louisiana, and Florida--settled in Puerto Rico. The flow of immigrants was so great that Spain had to provide financial assistance for them. These exiles increased the number of peninsulares on the island, as over one thousand families arrived during this time.[63] The refugees strengthened the pro-Spanish conservative forces by opposing the political activities of the liberals and separatists. The situation was similar to the exodus of Loyalists from the thirteen British American colonies to parts of Canada after the Revolutionary War. In Puerto Rico, as in Canada, the loyalists "long exerted political influence"[64] in the affairs of the country.

The repressive local measures, the exile of the influential revolutionary leaders, the impact of the refugees upon the political system, and the return of absolutism to the island forced the separatists to take a different approach to the emancipation of Puerto Rico. When Simón Bolívar returned to Venezuela to resume the revolutionary struggle against the Spaniards in 1816, Puerto Rican revolucionaries decided to seek his help in their struggle for the independence. The internationalization of their movement added a new dimension to Puerto Rican politics. The goals of the separatists paralleled the interests of the Spanish American republics.

In June, 1815, representatives of the Puerto Rican separatist movement met in México City with other revolutionaries from Cuba, Mexico, and Santo Domingo. There, they planned an expedition for the liberation of the Spanish Caribbean. This group issued a declaration which outlined their goals and objectives and gave José Alvarez de Toledo, a

Cuba rebel and adventurer, the authority to organize an army for the purpose of liberating Cuba, Santo Domingo and Puerto Rico.[65]

Alvarez de Toledo, whom Luis de Onís, the Spanish Minister to the United States, labeled one of the principal anti-Spanish leaders in the Caribbean, had been a substitute representative for the island of Santo Domingo to the Cortes. In Cádiz, he had joined the radical liberal element. Accused of treason, he fled to the United States, where he arrived in September, 1811. While in the United States, he informed Secretary of State James Monroe that Great Britain, with the approval of the Cortes, planned to take possession of Cuba, Santo Domingo, and Puerto Rico. He sought Monroe's aid in a plan for unifying these colonies into an independent confederation after their liberation.[66] Toledo's plans for an expedition to liberate Cuba, Santo Domingo, and Puerto Rico, and his proposal for an Antillean Confederation, were not taken into consideration.[67] Monroe, however, gave Toledo funds to return to Cuba and initiate an uprising.[68] Toledo did not go to Cuba immediately because he believed the time was not proper for a revolution. He did, however, continue his revolutionary activities for the independence of Cuba and Puerto Rico in the United States.

In the summer of 1815 Toledo went to New Orleans to organize an expedition. Louisiana was being utilized by the Mexican and South American insurgents as a staging area for their operations against Spain. It was a place where conspirators could easily conduct public enlistments, purchases of weapons, and other warlike activities. He contacted some insurgents and several of the survivors of his previous, ill-fated, military expedition against San Antonio de Bejar.[69] Among the men he contacted was an able American officer named Colonel Perry.[70]

The two made plans to organize and arm a military force. The enterprise was condemned by Luis de Onís, the Minister of Spain to the United States. He urged the government to act, however, "before the correspondence of Onis with the State Department began, measures had been taken to frustrate the designs of the plotters."[71]

United States policy of neutralism and the self-interests of the nation prevented the success of the expedition. The United States did not want to give Spain justification for preventing future negotiations concerning the American acquisition of Florida. As a result, the United States Attorney for the District of Louisiana requested that a naval force from Commodore Patterson's squadron be sent to Belleisle, at the mouth of the Bayou Teche, the suspected insurgent rendezvous point. Patterson received orders to search for and, if necessary, use force to disperse the insurgents, thereby frustrating their illegal intentions.[72] No one was captured, and no arrests were made. The naval force did, however, seize a large quantity of arms intended for the revolutionaries.[73]

While there is no absolute evidence that the Perry-Toledo expedition intended to liberate the Caribbean, its timing (summer of 1815) and the instructions which Toledo received in Mexico in June, 1815, seem to indicate that the liberation of Cuba, Santo Domingo and Puerto Rico were its primary goal. These plans, however, could not be carried out because Toledo and several of his principal associates were indicted in the United States District Court of Louisiana for violating, or attempting to violate, the neutrality laws of the United States.[74] The rest of the expedition embarked for some place on the coast of Mexico where the insurgents dispersed; their plans totally defeated.[75]

This incident and Toledo's other suspicious activities resulted in many complaints by the Spanish Minister in the United States.[76] To satisfy the Spanish government, the American authorities intensified controls in New Orleans, Baltimore, and Philadelphia. On March 3, 1817, the United States strengthened its neutrality laws. The United States would impose fines of up to $10,000, seize vessels, and imprison any one engaged in fitting our privateers in the United States for raiding Spanish commerce or the trade of any other power which was at peace with the nation. This policy gravely affected the Caribbean revolutionaries because it prevented temporarily the departure of armed expeditions from New Orleans and other ports of the mainland.

With the failure of the expedition that had been planned in Mexico, the separatists turned their attention to Venezuela. Three months after the meeting in México City, Simón Bolívar added the independence of Cuba and Puerto Rico to his revolutionary goals for Spanish America. On September 15, 1815, Bolívar, in his famous letter, An Answer of a Southern American to a Gentleman of Jamaica, he expressed his concern for the political future of Puerto Rico and Cuba:

> The islands of Puerto Rico and Cuba, with a combined population of perhaps 700,000 to 800,000 souls, are the most tranquil possessions of the Spaniards, because they are not within range of contact with the Independents. But are not the people of these islands Americans? Are they not maltreated? Do they not desire a better life?[77]

This declaration by the principal Spanish American revolutionary leader raised considerably the morale and the expectations of the separatists. After this date, Bolívar emerged as a firm supporter of the independence of Cuba and Puerto, an ambition that he pursued until his death in 1830.

By the end of 1815, the separatists had renewed their efforts for

the independence of Puerto Rico, inspired by Bolívar's declaration and the beginning of a new struggle in South America. Several new patriotic groups were organized during this time, including Freemasonic lodges such as the Yaguez in Mayaguéz.[78] Like their counterparts in México and Cuba, Puerto Rican masons labored for independence. The activities of the separatists were well-known in Venezuela, as Bartolome Mascareñas, one of Governor Meléndez's best spies indicated:

> In spite of the fact that he ignored the bases for the allegations, in the place where he resided (Venezuela) it was common knowledge that in Puerto Rico there are juntas that conspired against the Government and that the Island would not delay much in becoming independent. 'I will continue to inquire until I can find the meaning of this. I can assure you, that there are plenty of blazing (groups) in and outside of the island.'[79]

In 1816 the visits of secret emissaries from Jean Jacques Dessalines and other Haitian revolutionary leaders became frequent in Puerto Rico. The separatists, however, did not expect much help from Haiti because of that nation's great difficulties in achieving political stability after the years of disorder and frightful excesses that followed its separation from France. The Haitian emissaries also sought to foster slave revolts in Puerto Rico, which even the separatists believed detrimental to their interests.

As the struggle for independence progressed in the Spanish American colonies, a large number of privateers took advantage of the existing political turbulence in the Caribbean. Most of them were foreigners, but many others were Venezuelan and Colombians who served under Pedro Luis Brión, a Dutch sailor and merchant who had become Bolívar's naval commander. The main objects of these privateers, as part of Bolívar's strategy to isolate the Spanish forces who were fighting in South America, were raiding the Spanish ships and purchasing weapons for the

revolution.

Argentinian and Uruguayan privateers also joined the struggle. The purpose of their activities was to injure the enemy while enriching themselves. They equipped their own vessels and gathered their followers from the United States, the Caribbean, and the British colonies. There is no doubt that the activities of these privateers did considerable damage to Spanish commerce and helped the independence movements in Spanish America during the years when Bolívar was striving to organize an army capable of winning decisive victories on the battlefield. According to Samuel Flagg Bemis, the clearing of Spanish ships from the Caribbean "by scores of privateers fitted out in the United States had been an important factor in keeping the revolts alive."[80] In spite of the statutes of March 3, 1817, American neutrality also made it possible for Spanish American revolutionaries to purchase military weapons and contraband of war in the United States. The sympathy of the American citizens with the revolutionary struggle allowed the privateers to fit their vessels in North American ports and to gather American crews in the United States, "all contrary to the laws of neutrality whether domestic or international."[81]

The Spanish navy, since the battle of Trafalgar and a result of Spain's fatal alliance with France, was unable to protect the Caribbean. In her last stages of decay, the navy could not subdue the insurgents and privateers that infested the waters off Venezuela, Cuba, and Puerto Rico. Spain's peninsular defeats and the subsequent events of the Spanish American colonies almost annihilated her maritime power.[82]

On the renewal of hostilities between Spain and her rebelling

colonies in 1816, Venezuelan and Colombian privateers blockaded the northern coast of South America and the Spanish possessions in the Caribbean. They prevented the arrival of reinforcements for the royalist forces and destroyed the Spanish merchant marine. As a result of the blockade, the Spanish, English, and American commerce suffered considerably. While the privateers concerned themselves with raiding Spanish commerce, American public opinion tolerated them and even helped their activities by acquitting them when brought to court by an overzealous navy captain for violation of law. But "when their irresponsible captains began piratically to plunder neutral vessels, and even the shipping of the United States, their popularity declined."[83]

Most historians of this period have labeled all privateering in the Caribbean as "piracy." According to Walter Adolphe Roberts, however, there was a notable difference between privateers, buccaneers, and pirates. It is true that for the affected country, in this case Spain, England, and even the United States, all illegal acts at sea were piratical. There was a marked distinction, however, between privateers and buccaneers who had varying conceptions of nationalism and pirates who were "robbers pure and simple."[84]

Privateers served as the principal link between the Puerto Rican separatists and the revolutionaries in the rest of Spanish America, and their activities near Puerto Rico became increasingly important for the separatists. On January 25, 1817, Thomas Taylor, an American privateer who commanded _El Patriota_, raided the town of Fajardo, on the eastern coast of Puerto Rico. Taylor was operating under a license granted by the government of the United Provinces of the Rio de la Plata.[85] A former merchant and sailor, in 1810 he had settled in Buenos Aires.

Later entering the government naval service, he styled himself "Commodore Taylor of the Buenos Aires Navy."[86] Taylor had a large privateering squadron of thirteen to seventeen vessels. Although he disrupted Spanish commerce and blockaded Cuba and Puerto Rico, he never raided American or British ships, which he allowed to continue on their voyages once they had proved their nationality.[87] Following the standard law of nations, he even informed foreign nations of his intentions when imposing naval blockades.[88]

Taylor landed a large force in Fajardo and tried to capture a schooner that had taken refuge in the port. The local militia, under the command of Antonio Planells y Bardaxi valiantly resisted the privateer's attack. Taylor lost thirty of his men and a great quantity of arms and ammunition during the battle that ensued after his landing. The purpose of the attack on Fajardo, according to Governor Meléndez, was to plunder the town, obtain foodstuffs, arms, and gunpowder.[89] Historians Lidio Cruz Monclova and Loida Figueroa, on the other hand, believe that the attack on Fajardo was part of a raid to support the separatists. According to Monclova, it failed when "the separatists of the island, perhaps because of poor organization or the suddenness of the attack, could not provide adequate help."[90] This second view seems more accurate because Taylor did not stop his activities after his defeat at Fajardo.

On February 12, 1817, Taylor and the Governor of Puerto Rico exchanged prisoners. Taylor declared the island of Puerto Rico under a total blockade and positioned seventeen vessels to enforce it.[91] He contemplated another landing in Puerto Rico but apparently changed his plans and decided to raid Spain's home waters off the Iberian peninsula.[92]

Between 1817 and 1819, insurgent privateers held Puerto Rico in a state of semi-blockade, much to the satisfaction of the separatists, who believed that the measure would weaken Spanish domination of the island. During this time, the Spanish authorities constantly feared an insurgent attack. Expeditions, real or imaginary, occupied the attention of the governor. While visiting the town of Caguas, he received information that an expedition, which revolutionaries had organized in London, was going to land in the island. He immediately returned to the capital, called a council of war, declared a national emergency, and reinforced the armed forces in the coast with the Second Battalion of the Granada Regiment.[93]

In 1818 Governor Meléndez received information from Juan Manuel Cajigal, Captain-General of Cuba, that privateer Brown, with three ships and 10,000 rifles, was preparing an invasion of the island.[94] Rumors of an expedition from Barbados to overthrow the Spanish regime also spread during this time. The Governor immediately alerted his forces and added seven small vessels to the defense of Suan Juan.[95]

In the middle of 1818 the Governor of Puerto Rico received information from the Spanish Minister in the United States that an expedition under the command of the privateer Louis Aury had been organized in Charleston to invade the island.[96] Another expedition, organized in Haiti and under the command of the privateer MacGregor, apparently had similar objectives.[97] Later during the year, a group of privateers established themselves in the south at Key Caja de Muertos, off the coast of Ponce. From here, they conducted occasional raids onto the Puerto Rican mainland.[98]

In 1819 several Venezuelan vessels, among them the brigantine

Brion, unsuccessfully attacked near Boca Chica in the southern part of the island. Other attacks occurred at Guayama and Humacao in the southwest.[99] In April, 1819, the military commander at Aguadilla informed the Governor that well-armed Venezuelan insurgent vessels were cruising not far from the coast. These vessels, under the command of Captain Charles Barnard, who used the port of Norfolk as his base of operations, captured a small Spanish fleet near Aguadilla.[100]

The hopes of the separatists subsided with the failures of the privateers. The large number of Spanish troops on the island, the defensive measures taken by the Governor, the constant state of alert of the peninsular forces and the militia made the task of liberating Puerto Rico a difficult one for the separatists, the Venezuelan revolutionaries, and the privateers. As a result, according to Monclova, "the sadness of seing their high expectations faint into nothingness depressed the feelings of the separatist sector; its impetus declining once again, even if the hope still remained high."[101]

FOOTNOTES

[1]Monclova, Vol. I, p. 36.

[2]Córdova, Memorias, Vol. III, p. 169.

[3]Ibid., p. 175.

[4]Ibid. See also Córdova, Primera Memoria, in Coll y Toste, Vol. IV, p. 164.

[5]Monclova, Vol. I, p. 34; Córdova, Memorias, Vol. III, p. 176.

[6]Monclova, Vol. I, pp. 521-523.

[7]Ibid., p. 34; Córdova, Memorias, Vol. III, p. 176.

[8]Ibid.

[9]Statements of Gregorio Sandoval, secretary of the government, dated November 16, 1810, and Salvador Meléndez, Governor of Puerto Rico, dated November 16, 1810, in Francisco Morales Padrón, "Primer intento de independencia puertorriqueña," Revista de Indias, Madrid, Spain, año 22, núm. 87-88 (1961), pp. 108-127. See also Journal of Caribbean Studies, Río Piedras, Puerto Rico, Vol. I, no. 4 (1962), pp. 11-25.

[10]Philip S. Foner, A History of Cuba and Its Relations with the United States, Vol. I (New York: International Publishers, 1963), p. 83.

[11]Sanz corresponded also with Diego de Lugo; José Ramón Monzon; José Xavier de Arazamendi; Captain Francisco Antonio Rodríguez; Manuel Saviñon; Joaquín de Castro; and Father Juan Crisóstomo Rodriguez Carrera, who later was exiled from Puerto Rico for his separatist tendencies. See note 9, above; also Monclova, Vol. I, pp. 39-41, 524-526.

[12]A "Mr. Robertson," a resident of Curacao, and a French citizen, also from that colony, normally carried Sanz's letters to the Puerto Rican separatists. See note 9, above.

[13]The first casualties were the priests Juan Crisóstomo Rodríguez Carrera; Francisco Fajardo; Juan Antonio Mambrúm; Diego Cova and Angel de la Concepción Vazquez. Others, such as the prists of Aguada and Aguadilla, Pedro José de Mediedo and Andrés Ricardo Martínez were accused of subversive activities. Others accused of being revolutionaries or sympathizers were the Archdeacon of San Juan José Gutiérrez

del Arroyo; the Prosecutor Jose Iganacio Valldejuli; Ramón Ramírez de Arellano; Barnardo Pabón Dávila; José Cardoso; José María Quiñones; Mateo Belvis; Faustino del Toro; Domingo Postigó; Manuel Díaz; Pedro de Silva; José Monserrate Jusino; Antonio Quiñones; José Pacheco; and Nicolás Quiñones Ramírez (See Monclova, Vol. I, pp. 39, 45, 46).

[14] Monclova, Vol. I, p. 46.

[15] Morales Padrón, "Primer intento de independencia puertorriqueña," pp. 108-127.

[16] Monclova, Vol. I, p. 40.

[17] Coll y Toste, Vol. 6, p. 297.

[18] This is the assumption of the author. No documentary evidence could be found in the United States to support this statement. Governor Meléndez, however, had similar views, and so reported them to the Consejo de Regencia. It is interesting to note that Bishop Arizméndi was the only Puerto Rican clergyman ever appointed Bishop of San Juan during the entire period of Spanish domination of Puerto Rico (400 years).

[19] Loida Figueroa, Tres puntos claves: Lares, Idioma, Soberanía (San Juan: Editorial Edil, 1972), p. 6.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Monclova, Vol. I, p. 20; Justo Zaragoza, Das insurrecciones de Cuba, Vol. I (Madrid, 1892), p. 712.

[22] Monclova, Vol. I, p. 21.

[23] See note 9, above.

[24] Santana, pp. 117-121.

[25] Monclova, Vol. I, pp. 517-520. See also note 29, Chapter II, this thesis.

[26] Cambre Mariño, p. 68.

[27] Morales Padrón suggests clergy support for independence in "Primer intento de independencia puertorriqueña," but he does not provide evidence. He makes reference to a research work of one of his students, María del Carmen Díaz Marcos from the University of Sevilla (1961), for an answer to the question of clergy participation in the separatist movement. This work has not been located by the writer. Morales Padrón utilizes Legajo 450, Sección 10, Ultramar, Archivo General de las Indias as documentary evidence for his article. This document is not available in the United States, including the Library of Congress. Another document, utilized by Professor Monclova, is Legajo 2.523, Seccion 5ta, Santo Domingo, Archivo General de las Indias. This

document is not available in the United States but the Expediente Oficial of it is in the personal archives of D. Ramón Lopez Prado, in San Juan. These documents are, perhaps, the most important sources in the investigation of early Puerto Rican nationalism. A. G. I., Ultramar 450, also contains the Sumario of the conspiracy of San Germán and of the activities of the clergy. As professor Padrón indicates, neither Monclova nor historian Aurelio Tió, in his book Fundación de San Germán y su significación en el desarrolo político, social y cultural de Puerto Rico (Mexico D. F., Biblioteca de Autores Puertorriqueños, 1956), mention this fact.

[28]Morales Padrón, pp. 108-127.

[29]Figueroa, History of Puerto Rico, p. 141.

[30]José Francisco Heredia, Memorias sobre las revoluciones de Venezuela (Paris: Libreria de Garnier Hermanos, 1895), p. 23.

[31]Monclova, Vol. I, pp. 37-38.

[32]Ibid., p. 39. The extent of the conservatives hatred of independence can be judged by the fact that "a rich merchant named Pedro Lamata" paid, from his personal funds, all the expenses required for the transfer of these separatists to the battlefield of Venezuela (Monclova, Vol. I, p. 39n).

[33]Morales Padrón, pp. 108-127.

[34]See note 17, Chapter II, this thesis.

[35]Monclova, Vol. I, p. 37.

[36]Morales Padrón, pp. 108-127. See also Figueroa, History of Puerto Rico, p. 161.

[37]Ibid.

[38]Ibid.

[39]Ibid.

[40]Córdova, Memorias, Vol. III, p. 13.

[41]Monclova, Vol. I, p. 15n.

[42]Morales Padrón, p. 16n in Journal of Caribbean Studies, Vol. I, No. 4 (1962).

[43]Ibid., p. 17.

[44]Figueroa, History of Puerto Rico, p. 161.

[45]María Cadilla de Martínez, Rememorando el pasado heroico (Arecibo, Puerto Rico, 1946), p. 281.

[46] Ibid., pp. 282-283.

[47] Monclova, Vol. I, pp. 38-39.

[48] Letter of Governor Salvador Meléndez to the Consejo de Regencia, dated May 23, 1810, in José F. Blanco Documentos para la vida pública del Libertador, Vol. 2, Doc. 433, p. 438.

[49] Monclova, Vol. I, p. 38.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Córdova, Memorias, Vol. III, p. 176.

[53] According to Professor Santana this is the thesis of Cuba historian José L. Franco. See José L. Franco, Politica continental de España en Cuba, 1812-1830 (La Habana, 1947); Santana, p. 114n.

[54] As an example, on May 31, 1811, the warship Diana and the vessels Dido, Ermida and Carlota arrived to the port of Aguadilla with 1,100 men and fifty-four officers of the Spanish Army, en route to Veracruz (Cordova, Memorias, Vol. III, p. 180).

[55] See Salvador Melendez to the Viceroy of México, May 19, 1810 (Doc. 427, pp. 427-428); Meléndez to Consejo de Regencia, May 23, 1810 (Doc. 433, pp. 438-439); Meléndez to Consejo de Regencia, May 23, 1810 (Doc. 434, p. 439); Meléndez to Consejo de Regencia, June 3, 1810 (Doc. 459, pp. 484-485); Meléndez to Consejo de Regencia, June 6, 1810 (Doc. 460, p. 485) in José F. Blanco Documentos para la vida publica del Libertador, Vol. 2.

[56] Heredia, p. 45.

[57] Chadwick, p. 149.

[58] Salvador de Madáriaga, Bolívar, Vol. 1 (Mexico: D. F.: Editorial Hermes, 1951), pp. 329-330.

[59] Lowry, American commercial agent in Venezuela to Monroe, Secretary of State, June 5, 1812, in William R. Manning, Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States Concerning the Independence of the Latin-American Nations, Vol. 2 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1925), p. 1158. On May 8, 1812, the United States Congress allocated $50,000 to aid the citizens of Venezuela and chose Alexander Scott to head a relief mission to that country. The mission reached Venezuela at the end of May, but most of the supplies, over 3,000 barrels of flour, fell into the hands of the royalists. Five thousand people died of hunger in Cartagena. See Lowry to Secretary of State, November 11, 1816, in Manning, Diplomatic Correspondence, Vol. 2, p. 1170; Chadwick, p. 149n.

[60] The governor of Puerto Rico, not satisfied with the previous

steps taken to suppress any potential revolution in the island, ordered several members of the government to spread rumors that an insurrection planned in San Juan would take place on October 15, 1813, the day of Saint Theresa. Meanwhile, he alerted the armed forces and the members of the police to be ready for mass arrests. At 9:30 in the evening, gun shots fired by the Spanish soldiers themselves, sounded in many places in San Juan. Governor Meléndez used the occasion to order the mass arrest of many people whom he accused of being revolutionaries. This incident is known in Puerto Rican history as "the night of Saint Theresa." See Córdova, Memorias, Vol. III, p. 189; Monclova, Vol. I, pp. 56-57; Coll y Toste, Vol. 13, p. 314.

[61] Monclova, Vol. I, pp. 56-57.

[62] Brau, p. 199; Coll y Toste, Vol. I, pp. 297-307.

[63] Córdova, Primera Memoria, in Coll y Toste, Vol. IV, p. 168.

[64] Chadwick, p. 94.

[65] Pedro Torres Lanzas, Independencia de America; Fuentes para su estudio, serie segunda, Vol. III (Sevilla: Spain, 1924), p. 64.

[66] Santana, pp. 117-119; Joseph B. Lockey, Pan Americanism, Its Beginnings (New York: McMillan Co., 1926), pp. 148-149.

[67] Carlos M. Trelles y Govín, Estudio de la bibliografía cubana sobre la doctrina de Monroe (La Habana, 1922), p. 7; Santana, p. 124.

[68] Santana, p. 127.

[69] In August 1812, about 450 Mexican refugees and American adventurers, under the command of Toledo, Gutiérrez de Lara and Colonel Augustus W. Magee invaded Texas, where they raided San Antonio de Bejar, establishing a revolutionary government there. The following year a superior Spanish force attacked them, defeating the invaders in a bloody battle. Toledo, and few of the survivors escaped to Louisiana. See Elizabeth Howard West "The Diary of José Bernardo Gutiérrez de Lara," American Historical Review, XXXIV, pp. 55-77 and 281-294.

[70] Letter from John Dick, Attorney of the United States for the District of Louisiana to Secretary of State, March 1, 1816, American State Papers, Foreign Relations, Vol. IV, p. 431.

[71] Lockey, p. 150.

[72] John Dick to Secretary of State, March 1, 1816.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Ibid.

[76] Luis de Onís to Monroe, December 30, 1815; Monroe to Onís, January 19, 1816; Onís to Monroe, February 22, 1816, American State Papers, Foreign Relations, Vol. IV, pp. 124, 156, 431.

[77] Vicente Lecuna, Cartas del Libertador, Vol. I (New York: The Colonial Press, Inc., 1948), p. 186; José F. Blanco, Documentos para la vida pública del Libertador, Vol. V, p. 333; Vicente Lecuna and Harold A. Bierck, Jr., Selected Writings of Bolívar, Vol. I (New York: The Colonial Press, 1951), p. 107.

[78] Monclova, Vol. I, p. 85. According to Coll y Toste, freemasonry began in Puerto Rico as early as 1805, the principal lodge having been founded in San Juan with M.I.F.C. Honis as Grandmaster. Toste comments that "freemasonry gave good services to Puerto Rico in 1824" but he does not make specific remarks concerning the type of "services." As lodges were illegal under Spanish administration, it could be assumed that the services were political in nature. It is also known that the Spanish authorities were deeply concerned with the activities of the lodges as a result of their experience with them in Mexico, Cuba, and Spain. The impact of freemasonry and their assistance to the independence movement in Puerto Rico has never been studied. See Coll y Toste, Vol. X, p. 52.

[79] Monclova, Vol. I, p. 85.

[80] Samuel Flagg Bemis, John Quincy Adams and the Foundations of American Foreign Policy (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1949), p. 355.

[81] Ibid., p. 305.

[82] Joel R. Poinsett, United States Minister to México to Henry Clay, Secretary of State, September 23, 1826, American State Papers, Foreign Relations, Vol. VI, p. 362.

[83] Bemis, p. 355.

[84] Walter Adolphe Roberts, The Caribbean: The Story of Our Sea of Destiny (Bobbs-Merrill Co., New York, 1940), p. 134.

[85] Santana, p. 147.

[86] Niles' Weekly Register, April 26, 1817.

[87] Franco, p. 149; Santana, p. 150.

[88] Niles' Weekly Register, April 5, 1817.

[89] Córdova, Memorias, Vol. III, pp. 311-312.

[90] Monclova, Vol. I, pp. 85-86.

[91] Franco, p. 155; Santana, p. 150.

[92] Franco, p. 157.

[93] Córdova, Memorias, Vol. III, p. 322.

[94] Ibid., p. 323.

[95] Ibid., p. 192.

[96] Santana, p. 170.

[97] Córdova, Memorias, Vol. III, p. 327.

[98] Ibid. For a description of these attacks see Report of Captain D. Francisco Vasallo, military commander of Ponce, to the Captain-General, December 13, 1819; Report of Lieutenant Colonel Antonio Manuel Pacheco, military commander of the district of Humacao to the Captain-General, December 13, 1819; Report of Lieutenant José de Torres, military commander of the district of Fajardo to the Captain-General, December 13, 1819; Report of military commander Julian Alonso, December 20, 1819, in Córdova, Memorias, Vol. III, pp. 308-404.

[99] Córdova, Memorias, Vol. III, p. 326.

[100] Santana, p. 153.

[101] Monclova, Vol. I, p. 86.

CHAPTER IV

THE INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT BETWEEN 1820 AND 1825

After 1821 the Spanish American prospects for the success of their revolutions increased considerably; the victory at Carabobo, Venezuela, and other decisive rebel successes placed Spain in the defensive again. These events raised the separatists' hopes in Puerto Rico because they expected Simón Bolívar to turn his attention to the Caribbean after the victorious completion of his wars for independence on the mainland.

The year before, General Rafael de Riego and General Antonio Quiroga had led a military revolt in Spain to reestablish the Constitution of 1812. Ferdinand VII was forced to abolish absolutism in Spain and the Spanish American colonies which still remained loyal to Spain. Under the new constitution, Puerto Rico received for a second time a status equal to that of the Spanish provinces. Once again Puerto Ricans were allowed one elected deputy in the Spanish Cortes. The new concessions revived liberal activism on the island. The liberals founded a society which they called the Liberales amantes de la patria (Liberals for the Motherland), and a newspaper entitled El Investigador, which was used primarily for local political propaganda.[1] During this time, one of the separatist leaders, Nicolás Quiñones Ramírez, a lawyer from the separatist stronghold of San Germán, transferred his allegiance to the liberal movement and became one of its principal spokesmen.[2]

On August 7, 1820, a new governor, Gonzalo Arostegui, arrived in Puerto Rico to institute the new political reforms of the constitutional regime. The separatists, however, did not accept the changes and continued their insurrectional activities. At the same time, abolitionist forces emerged and received support from Jean Pierre Boyer, the president of Haiti. This faction planned a revolt of 1500 slaves on the plantations of Bayamón, Río Piedras, Guaynabo, Toa Alta and Toa Baja. The rebellion, however, failed to take place because the government discovered the plan.[3]

After Bolívar's victory at Carabobo on June 24, 1821, both Venezuelans and Puerto Rican separatists planned new activities to gain the independence of Puerto Rico. Bolívar sent new revolutionary agents to the island.[4] About this time, an English schooner, the Imógenes, loaded with guns, ammunition, and many rebels was captured at the port of Patillas on the southern coast.[5] In San Germán and Mayaguez, agents from Venezuela were captured;[6] and in the rural town of Yauco ten individuals were arrested after assaulting the residence of the mayor.[7] To suppress these activities and eliminate further attempts against government officials, the governor instituted the death penalty, alerted the local militia, and increased the military personnel of the Granada Regiment to one thousand men.[8] He also established permanent guards in all rural and coastal towns.[9]

Meanwhile in Santo Domingo, Jose Nuñez de Cáceres began a revolution against Spain on December 1, 1821. The Dominican revolutionary leader later sent agents to Puerto Rico to incite the people to a similar revolt and to help the separatists. He invited Governor Gonzalo Arostegui to join him in a common struggle against Spain by proclaiming

the independence of Puerto Rico.[10] The Governor, who had been born in Cuba, refused the offer and condemned Nuñez de Cáceres for his action in Santo Domingo.[11] The republic established in Santo Domingo did not last long. Jean Pierre Boyer, the Haitian chieftain, led his army to the eastern part of the island and forced Nuñez de Cáceres to accept a union with Haiti instead of an annexation to Colombia, which the Dominicans desired.[12] During this time, the separatists had most of the disadvantages in the struggle for independence. They had to struggle against the opposition of the liberals and the conservatives, the apathy of the masses, and the hostility and aggressiveness of the government. Also they had to contest the increasing influence of the exiles, who escaping from the war of emancipation in Venezuela, had sought refuge in Puerto Rico.[13]

Realizing the difficulty of obtaining independence through an internal revolution, the separatists decided to seek help from outside sources to achieve their goals. In the winter of 1821, agents of the Puerto Rican separatists[14] invited General H. L. V. Ducoudray Holstein to take command of an invading force, which was being planned for an attack on Puerto Rico in conjunction with an uprising scheduled to take place during the following year.[15] General Ducoudray Holstein was a native of Switzerland[16] and had served in France during the French Revolution as a member of the Staff of Napoleon and in Venezuela as Chief of Staff of Bolívar.[17] While in the service of Bolívar, he had received the command of the fort of Boca Chica with the high rank of _Jefe de Brigade_ (Brigade Commander).[18] Displeased with Bolívar, on June 23, 1816, he left the service at his own request.[19] Ducoudray Holstein then went to Aux Cayes in Haiti, where he taught languages and music

and waited to an opportunity to join the wars of independence that were being fought in Spanish America.[20] It seems that at one time he had planned to organize a foreign legion, composed of European expatriates, "attracted by the cause of liberty and the sacred cause of the Spanish Americans," to help the revolutions.[21]

Among the separatists involved with Ducoudray Holstein in the planned invasion and uprising were Carlos Rigotti; Andrés Level de Goda, a refugee from Cumaná who was living in Puerto Rico; an individual named Moloni; a Dominican by the name of Castro, whose residence was in St. Thomas;[22] Pedro Dubois, a mulatto and one of the principal leaders of the revolt;[23] and a Dutchman named Carlos Romano, a resident of the coastal town of Guayama. Ducoudray Holstein later stated in his Memoirs his relations with the separatists:

> I received one night, at Curacao, a visit from some rich foreigners who were settled in the Island of Porto Rico. They urged me strongly to place myself at the head of a numerous party of wealthy inhabitants of that island, for the purpose of expelling the Spaniards from it, and rendering the island free and independent. I had declined various proposals made to me to join the patriots in Mexico and Buenos Ayres, and I now declined this urgent one of the inhabitants of Porto Rico, notwithstanding that they assured me they placed entire confidence in me, and in me alone; and that they would have nothing to do with any other military chieftain. About a month later, a larger number of them came to me, and gave me such proofs of their spirit and ability to accomplish their purpose that I consented to their proposal. This happened at the end of the year 1821.[24]

After accepting the command of the invading forces, Ducoudray Holstein moved to St. Thomas, where he left his family. He went to the United States in the spring of 1822 to organize the planned expedition.[25] Ducoudray Holstein was not a soldier of fortune but rather a capable officer with a good military background. Juan Bautista Arismendi, one of the principal Venezuelan revolutionary leaders who knew Ducoudray

Holstein very well, believed that the Swiss general was "much better instructed in military matters than Bolívar himself."[26] But Ducoudray Holstein was a man difficult to get along with and very temperamental.[27] While in the service of Bolívar, he developed an antagonism toward General Carlos Soublette, one of the Liberator's principal friends. It is possible that this enmity precipitated Ducoudray Holstein's departure from Venezuela.[28]

In the United States, he met Baptist Irvine, an Irish immigrant, a leading journalist, and a political agitator. Irvine had worked for William John Duane, the editor of the Philadelphia Aurora, as a journeyman, and had become a successful editor of newspapers in New York and Baltimore, including The Baltimore Whig, The New York Columbian, and the City Gazette of Washington.[29] On the recommendation of New York Governor De Witt Clinton, Congressman Samuel Smith, and "many other habitual recommenders"[30] including, perhaps, Henry Clay, on January 21, 1818, Irvine had obtained an appointment as Special Agent to Venezuela.[31] In spite of being a "constant advocate of Latin American independence,"[32] Irvine, however, did not promote in Venezuela the cause of the Spanish American republics, but rather sought restitution of two American vessels, the Tiger and the Liberty, that had been captured by the revolutionaries while carrying weapons for the Spanish garrison at Angostura.[33] During this time Irvine also had worked as a secret agent for the Department of State. In spite of the fact that Secretary of State John Quincy Adams did not like Irvine, he entrusted him with the mission of collecting and transmitting to the State Department information concerning the state of the Spanish American revolt, the situation of the patriot and royalist forces, the effects and probable consequences of

the emancipation of the slaves, and any other information "the knowledge of which it may be interesting to us to possess."[34]

Irvine had many friends in Washington, Baltimore and Philadelphia, including Manuel Torres, the Colombian Minister to the United States, and the Chilean diplomat José Miguel Carrera.[35] He also was a personal acquaintance of the Secretary of State Henry Clay and had attended various social functions given in Clay's honor. Through his Spanish American friends, Irvine met Ducoudray Holstein in Philadelphia.[36] Ducoudray Holstein needed a propaganda chief for the enterprise, and Irvine seemed to possess the necessary qualifications for the position. Irvine, who at that time was experiencing [illegible] serious personal financial difficulties, readily accepted the offer.[37] In the United States, Ducoudray Holstein also met Charles Traugott Vogel, who became the agent responsible for raising men and officers for the expedition and for obtaining arms and munitions of war.[38] While in Philadelphia, Ducoudray Holstein received about $18,000 from Puerto Rican separatists for the proposed invasion.[39]

In Philadelphia and New York he organized the basic elements of an expedition.[40] He recruited forty men to serve as officers of the invading army.[41] Later, he chartered the brigantine Mary from Thomas Watson for $20,000.[42] The amount was to be paid "within five days after arrival in Puerto Rico, one half in produce of the Island" if the separatists could not provide "Spanish milled dollars."[43] It was possible that Ducoudray Holstein's expedition had the sanction of the Colombian Minister to the United States, a friend of Irvine, but there is no evidence to support this assumption.[44] Robert Tillotson, the Collector of the Port of New York, however, wrote to John Quincy Adams

on January 23, 1823, that the expedition

> ...had the sanction, through her agent in Philadelphia (D. Manuel de Torres), of the Colombian republic, under whose flag, and in conjunction with those forces it was to be carried into effect; General Ducoudray in particular asserting, as we were informed, that Commodore Daniels, with his squadron, would cooperate in the attack.[45]

Later, after the operation had been discovered, the government of Haiti was also implicated in the affair by the editor of Niles' Weekly Register. The accusation was unfounded, however, because the members of the expedition had no immediate plans for the emancipation of the slaves, a necessary prerequisitive for any Haitian assistance.[46]

The men recruited in the United States to serve as officers of the liberating army included European adventurers and former soldiers, Bonapartist exiles, and thirteen Americans. Among the recruits were a Lieutenant Grecourt; a Lieutenant Janet; a Lieutenant Colencourt, an ex-member of the French Parliament and ex-governor of Guadalupe; H. C. Birchau; Pedro Bignet; Jose Alberti; Issac Reid; and Captains Aaron Burns and William Gould.[47]

On August 13, 1824, the expedition left the United States with a quantity of muskets, sabres, pistols, cartridges, gunpowder, and other munitions of war in the schooners Andrew Jackson and Selina and the brigantine Mary.[48] This expedition was "one of the earliest attempts to effect the independence of Puerto Rico and establish there a liberal republican regime"[49] similar to that of the United States. According to plans, on September 8, 1822, it arrived in the Swedish colony of St. Bartholomeu in the eastern part of Puerto Rico, where Ducoudray Holstein expected to receive additional funds from the separatists to purchase more weapons and recruit the necessary men for the invasion.

During this period, St. Bartholomeu was a meeting place for

smugglers, privateers, revolutionaries, exiles, and refugees. In its principal port of Batavia ships of all nations, principally from the United States, stopped for refitting and repairs and for selling the merchandise seized by privateers.[50] The Swedish authorities seldom enforced the laws, and, as Ducoudray Holstein needed military equipment and men for the invasion of Puerto Rico, St. Bartholomeu seemed to be the best place to secure them.[51]

In St. Bartholomeu, Ducoudray Holstein purchased another ship, the brigantine Econdracht,[52] and recruited many people, among them several blacks. He remained in Batavia about eleven days awaiting the funds, munitions, and men that the separatists were going to provide him. Failing to receive the additional men and supplies, he proceeded to St. Thomas after the Governor ordered him to leave the island of St. Bartholomeu.[53] The Swedish authorities also detained the Andrew Jackson and prevented it from sailing with the rest of Ducoudray Holstein's squadron.[54] In spite of these difficulties, the revolutionaries proceeded with the plans for the invasion of Puerto Rico.

The officers of the expedition planned to recruit 100 men in St. Thomas for the invasion and another 100 in St. Croix, which was, like St. Bartholomeu, a meeting place for smugglers and privateers.[55] Departing from St. Bartholomeu, the vessels sailed for Five Islands, a place about ten miles distant. According to Irvine, it seemed that there was some doubt about the success of the expedition because the separatists had failed to provide the necessary money and supplies to Ducoudray Holstein. Also the officers had been recruited with the condition that they could change their minds about continuing with the expedition any time before arriving at St. Thomas.[56] Being mercenaries

and not true patriots, these officers disputed constantly with the principal leaders of the expedition during the time that they were at the Five Islands,[57] and some of them even refused to continue serving Ducoudray Holstein.

The expedition proceeded to Crabb Island, east of Puerto Rico, where Ducoudray Holstein expected to receive additional support from the separatists. But, after being at sea for several hours, Irvine and some of the officers changed their minds and decided to proceed to La Guayra in Venezuela, instead of Crabb Island. Irvine staged a short revolt among the officers and accused Ducoudray Holstein of deceit and ignorance of the events, and, at the point of a gun, forced the expedition to change its course.[58] It is strange, indeed, that Baptist Irvine changed his mind so unexpectedly and so close to the final objective, unless, as this writer believes, he was an agent of the United States government charged with disrupting the expedition. Nevertheless, Irvine's actions resulted in the cancellation of the plans for the invasion of Puerto Rico.

The expedition, however, ended in Curacao, not La Guayra. On September 16, 1822, Ducoudray Holstein encountered a heavy storm at sea and was forced to put into the port of Curacao with the _Encondracht_ and the _Mary_.[59] According to Irvine, "by the artifice of Captain D's mate who commanded the _Endracht_, there happened a deviation from the prudent resolution and we entered Curacao under assurances which he violated with infamous perfidy."[60]

The Captain of the _Encondracht_ had thrown overboard all the guns in his vessel and, under the pretense that the ship was seriously damaged and leaky, he changed the course for Curacao, after giving assurances

that everything would turn out all right.[61] But in Curacao the Dutch officials embargoed the vessels and arrested the leaders of the conspiracy on request of the Spanish authorities, who were aware of the revolutionary plans of the separatists and the purposes of the invasion. Ducoudray Holstein, Irvine and Vogel were condemned to thirty years imprisonment after being found guilty of conspiracy.[62] The thirteen Americans were set free and returned to the United States by the American consul.[63] The leaders of the expedition, after serving eighteen months in prison, were pardoned by the king of the Netherlands as a result of international political pressure.[64]

The separatists could not help Ducoudray Holstein because their conspiracy had been discovered due to the indiscrete activities of Pedro Dubois, a leader of the uprising. While organizing the revolt Dubois, in an effort to recruit new members from the foreign settlers of the island who could help finance Ducoudray Holstein's expedition, had contacted M. De St. Maurice, a French planter from Fajardo. St. Maurice, who did not support independence for Puerto Rico, encouraged Dubois to discuss with him the details of the conspiracy. Dubois, believing perhaps, that St. Maurice, as other French citizens residing in Puerto Rico had done, would join the separatists, detailed to him the plans for the uprising.[65]

Dubois told St. Maurice that his brother-in-law Pedro Bignet, had arrived in the town of Naguabo with instructions to promote an insurrection on the island.[66] Bignet had given Dubois directions and proclamations written in French for that purpose. According to the information that Dubois gave St. Maurice, the expedition consisted of twenty-seven vessels, 600 men, and 10,000 muskets and was under the command of General

Janet, General Grecourt, and General Colencourt. To determine the status of the insurgency, Bignet made several inquiries in Naguabo and instructed Dubois to contact a rebel leader named Carlos Romano, who resided in Guayama, for additional information. Bignet indicated to Dubois that he would return soon to Añasco, a port on the western coast of Puerto Rico.[67]

St. Maurice then gave this information to some friends, who, not wanting to get involved with suspected revolutionaries, informed the mayor of Fajardo of the activities of Dubois. These individuals tried afterwards to surprise and arrest Dubois, but unable to do so, they forwarded the information to the government authorities.[68] Governor Francisco González de Linares had already received information concerning Ducoudray Holstein's expedition from the United States. On August 10, 1822, a Frenchman named Wischaur had told the Spanish vice consul in Philadelphia that he had received information concerning an invasion of Puerto Rico by Ducoudray Holstein and that the planned expedition had sent advanced agents to the island to incite the black slaves to proclaim the Republica Boricua (the Republic of Boricua). On the same day, the vice consul sent this information to the Governor of Puerto Rico, allowing Governor González de Linares to alert the military forces immediately.[69]

Miguel de la Torre, who had become Captain-General of Puerto Rico, under a temporary separation of powers, instituted defensive measures. De la Torre arrested Dubois and Romano and deployed military units near Añasco to prevent any landing by Bignet.[70] The Captain-General went to Guayama with many troops to quell a slave rebellion incited by the separatists. He arrested the leaders of the movement, then shot two of

them in the public square as an example of "Spanish justice."[71] Many foreigners and black residents of Guayama were exiled or imprisoned, while the armed forces, including the militia, were alerted to maintain law and order. Dubois was tried by a military court and found guilty of conspiring to overthrow the government. He was shot on October 12, 1822.[72]

Joel Robert Poinsett, on his way to México, where he had been sent as a special agent of the United States, arrived in San Juan during this time. On September 27, 1822, he had written in his journal that:

> The authorities of the island have received information that an expedition was about to sail from New York for the purpose of revolutionizing the island, and are prepared to defeat the project, whatever it may be.[73]

The failure of the separatists resulted in a campaign of propaganda "mounted to discourage the independence sentiment of the Puerto Ricans."[74] This defeat, however, did not discourage the separatists. They began immediately to organize another rebellion -- this time centered in San Juan. Colonel Manuel Suárez del Solar was selected to command the new uprising. He was aided by separatists from Venezuela and Puerto Rico, including Colonel Matias Escuté, a Puerto Rican officer who was a member of the Spanish garrison in San Juan and who had participated in the revolutionary campaigns in Venezuela.[75] The efficient espionage system of the government, however, was able to discover and frustrate the insurrection.

At the end of July, 1823, the Conservatives informed Marshall de la Torre, the Captain-General, of rumors spreading in San Juan concerning revolutionary activities. These rumors were confirmed by the Spanish agents operating in Venezuela. On August 30, 1823, one of these agents reported to the governor:

> Yesterday I was called by an individual who esteems you very much to inform me that A... and A... are secret agents of this country (Venezuela) in the Island, and that they are planning to bring the Island under their control soon. For their purposes they depend on many refugees from here and with a large contingency of troops from there.[76]

A subsequent message from the same agent read:

> It is indispensable that you inform the authorities immediately, as A... and A... are beginning their revolution soon. They have everything ready and the uprising is scheduled for the end of the month.[77]

As in previous occasions, the governor mobilized his forces to prevent an insurrection. He ordered a strict vigilance of all ports and bays of the island and of all vessels arriving in Puerto Rico. These measures were successful. Colonel Suárez del Solar was arrested when he arrived to direct the insurrection. In his baggage the authorities found the names of many separatists and letters that compromised many creoles. These documents were used as evidence for the arrest of the principal leaders of the revolt, including Colonel Escuté, who was transferred to Spain for imprisonment.[78]

Creole dissatisfaction with the colonial government continued to grow in Puerto Rico as a result of the dictatorial measures established by Governor De la Torre and the reimposition of absolutism in Spain. Ferdinand VII, who had been kept virtually a prisoner of the Spanish Cortes after the Riego Revolt, appealed for help to the Holy Alliance to regain his throne and reestablish absolutism in Spain. Europe at this time was still under the political control of Alexander I of Russia, Prince Metternich of Austria, and Lord Castlereagh of England.[79] Constitutionalism, as it had been institutionalized by the liberal Cortes in Spain, was contrary to the monarchical principals of the Holy Alliance. Therefore, when Ferdinand VII appealed to the alliance, the

representatives from the monarchical systems of Europe, after considerable debate, decided in 1822 to invade Spain and reinstate the Bourbon dynasty. England protested vigorously, but the Allied Powers had decided upon their courses of action. On April 7, 1823, Louis Antoine de Bourbon, duc d'Angouleme, marched into Spain with 100,000 troops and successfully reestablished Ferdinand VII to the throne. Absolutism returned to Spain and, therefore, to Puerto Rico.[80]

In Puerto Rico Governor De la Torre, consolidated the Captaincy-General and the Governorship, reinstated absolutism and took measures to suppress separatism, liberalism, and any other form of creole dissent. He dissolved all political and masonic societies and prohibited any criticism of the government. He published the Bando de Policia y Buen Gobierno (a law enforcement decree) which condemned dissidents, restricted civil liberties, and established military rule on the island. This decree also prohibited evening reunions of citizens in stores, warehouses and public places; established a curfew after ten o'clock in the evening; and eliminated freedom of the press. Puerto Ricans were again declared colonials by the Crown, subject to the whims and actions of the King.[81]

The renewed dictatorial measures of the government increased separatist activities. Bolívar's successful campaigns in South America gave new impetus and hope to the Puerto Ricans for a successful struggle. During this time, a Caracas newspaper, El Venezolano, published articles in favor of the independence of Puerto Rico.[82] The separatists, in jest, even asked the Captain-General to declare the independence of Puerto Rico.[83]

In October, 1824, government authorities began to arrest

independence sympathizers in Mayaguez and other towns of the interior.[84] The separatist leader, Jose Ignacio Grau, was arrested and confined to the prison in San Cristóbal Castle.[85] On October 23, 1824, a conspiracy was discovered in San Juan, resulting in the arrest of the first Puerto Rican woman-patriot, Maria Mercedes Barbudo, in whose house the separatists had met to plan insurrectional activities.

> Doña María de las Mercedes' activities were uncovered through a letter intercepted in St. Thomas, which accompanied by an incendiary proclamation and two other letters from the religious Friar Jose Antonio Bonilla ....Upon being prosecuted, three letters were found in her house from a certain J. M. de Rojas, written from Venezuela and stating that newspapers from that country had been sent with them. Through these letters it was verified that Doctor Pérez, a priest resident in Puerto Rico who had managed to leave the Island by requesting permission to go to Cuba, was recommended to Rojas by Dona María....The Barbudo wished to defend herself, but the proofs were too clear. La Torre did not concede the forty day prolongation she requested, jailing her at once in the San Cristóbal Castle.[86]

Doña Mercedes Barbudo was deported to Cuba on the recommendation of Prosecutor Francisco Marcos de Santaella, who had once been accused of being a member of the separatist movement. According to historian Figueroa, "the latter destiny of D. María has been lost to history."[87] Some of the members of the Barbudo family, including the Actuary of Añasco, José Barbudo, were also exiled as a result of their separatist sentiments.

The separists renewed their efforts for independence the following year. In March, 1825, Venezuelan vessels raided the coastal town of Aguadilla and landed a token force of revolutionaries who promptly took the Spanish fortification of Punta Borínquen. The invaders, however, could not repel a counterattack made by the more numerous Spanish forces and had to retreat to their ships. Again, as in 1817, the lack of

proper coordination, perhaps caused by the destruction of the Barbudos' revolutionary cell, contributed to the victory of the peninsular forces.[88]

These revolutionary activities resulted in increased government controls. The Crown promulgated again the Facultades omnímodas[89] of 1810, which had given the Governor absolute powers over life and death; the authority to establish a military dictatorship; and to enforce colonial laws as he deemed necessary. The separatists disregarded the dangers, continued a large-scale propaganda campaign in the interior, and even threatened the life of the governor. The situation had become so critical during this time that Governor De la Torre decided to stay in Puerto Rico for his office swearing ceremony than to go to Puerto Principe as he had been directed to do.[90]

Governor De la Torre received new military forces from Spain and Cuba and augmented his espionage elements, adding to them the ex-governor Gonzáles de Linares, Hirault de Ligny, Mariano Rodríguez, José María Pando, Geraldo Patrullo and José Aluche.[91] He continued his program of exiling the separatist leaders such as Juan Antonio Quirós, who was banished after being accused of espionage.[92]

A number of factors frustrated Puerto Rican efforts for independence between 1820 and 1825. The dictatorial actions of the government and the exile of the principal revolutionary leaders affected considerably the struggle for independence. The geographical position of Puerto Rico prevented the spread of the national liberation movement from Spanish America. As a result, the Puerto Rican separatists remained isolated from the maintstream of revolutionary activity, could not purchase weapons or receive economic help in the amount needed for

a successful revolution.[93] Racial peculiarities, regionalism, apathy, and ignorance would have prevented a successful insular insurrection. Clearly, Puerto Rico needed the help of the Spanish American republics to attain independence.

The rapacity of the military governor, the suppression of individual liberties and the reestablishment of absolutism did not discourage their efforts. The government's strong military measures, however, made an internal revolution virtually impossible. The separatists recognized this fact. After years of continuous defeats, improper preparation, and poor coordination, they resolved at the beginning of 1825 to place their hopes in Simón Bolívar, the proposed Panamá Congress, and the victorious armies of the Spanish American republics. These hopes would be crushed, however, not by Spain, but rather by the emerging power of the United States in the Caribbean.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Monclova, Vol. I, p. 106.

[2]Ibid., p. 109.

[3]Córdova, Memorias, Vol. III, p. 434; Monclova, Vol. I, p. 120.

[4]Córdova, Memorias, Vol. III, p. 437.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Ibid., p. 434.

[7]Ibid., pp. 435-436.

[8]Ibid., p. 436.

[9]Ibid.

[10]Coll y Toste, Vol. II, p. 138; Monclova, Vol. I, pp. 120-121.

[11]Ibid. A copy of the reply of Governor Arostegui to José Nuñez de Cáceres can be found in Córdova, Memorias, Vol. III, pp. 457-460. For the "Constitutive Act of the Provisional Government of the Independent State of the Spanish Part of Haiti" see British and Foreign State Papers, Vol. III, pp. 557-570.

[12]Joseph B. Lockey, Pan Americanism, Its Beginnings (New York: McMillan Co., 1926), p. 38.

[13]Monclova, Vol. III, p. 121.

[14]Baptist Irvine to a member of Congress, January 12, 1823. Letter published in Niles' Weekly Register, March 22, 1823.

[15]Ibid.

[16]John Quincy Adams believed that Ducoudray Holstein was a German officer. See Charles F. Adams, Memoirs of John Quincy Adams, Vol. V (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1875), p. 57.

[17]H. L. V. Ducoudray Holstein, Memoirs of Simón Bolívar, President Liberator of the Republic of Colombia and of His Principal Generals, Vol. I (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1830), Preface, pp. 1-7.

[18]Ibid.

[19]José F. Blanco, Documentos para la vida pública del Libertador, Vol. 5, p. 450; Madáriaga, Bolívar, Vol. I, p. 22.

[20]Santana, p. 224; Ducoudray Holstein, Vol. II, p. 192; Madáriaga, Vol. I, p. 22; Córdova, Memorias, Vol. III, p. 480.

[21]Ducoudray Holstein, Vol. I, pp. 2-7; Santana, p. 222.

[22]Monclova, Vol. I, p. 122.

[23]Coll y Toste, "Carta del Dr. Coll y Toste al Consul de Venezuela a una consulta sobre el governador don Miguel de la Torre," Boletín histórico de Puerto Rico, Vol. V, pp. 131-134.

[24]Ducoudray Holstein, Vol. II, pp. 192-193.

[25]Ibid., p. 193.

[26]Salvador de Madáriaga, Bolívar (New York: Pellegrine and Cudahy, 1952), p. 279. This is an English translation of his two volume work. It contains changes not found in the original.

[27]Santana, p. 223.

[28]Madáriaga, Vol. I, p. 616.

[29]Lewis Hanke, "Baptist Irvine's Reports on Simón Bolívar," Hispanic American Historical Review, XVI (1936), p. 360; Adams, Memoirs, Vol. V, p. 57; Santana, pp. 223-224.

[30]Clarence Brigham, "Bibliography of American Newspapers, 1690-1820," American Antiquarian Society Proceedings, XXVII (1917), p. 387; Adams, Memoirs, Vol. V, p. 57.

[31]Adams, Memoirs, Vol. V, p. 57.

[32]Santana, p. 224.

[33]Madáriaga, Vol. I, p. 615.

[34]John Quincy Adams, Secretary of State, to Baptist Irvine, Special Agent for the United States to Venezuela, January 31, 1818, in Manning, Diplomatic Correspondence, Vol. I, pp. 55-56.

[35]Arthur Preston Whitaker, The United States and the Independence of Latin America, 1800-1830 (New York: Russell and Russell, Inc., 1962), pp. 159-160.

[36]R. W. Meade, Agent for the Government of Colombia in the United States, to John Quincy Adams, December 17, 1822, Annals of Congress, 17th Cong., 2d Sess., Vol. 40, pp. 1269-1271.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Robert Tillotson, Collector of the Port of New York to John Quincy Adams, January 23, 1823, Annals of Congress, 17th Cong., 2d Sess., Vol. 40, pp. 1255-1258.

[39] R. W. Meade to John Quincy Adams, p. 1271. Historian Loida Figueroa mentions that Ducoudray Holstein received twenty-four thousand pesos (Figueroa, p. 163).

[40] Santana, p. 233; Robert M. Harrison, U. S. Consul in St. Bartholomeu, to Secretary of State, Annals of Congress, 17th Cong., 2d Sess., Vol. 40, pp. 1258-1259.

[41] Irvine in Niles' Weekly Register, March 22, 1823.

[42] C. J. Ingerson, Collector of the Port of Philadelphia, to Secretary of State, January 8, 1823, Annals of Congress, 17th Cong., 2d Sess., Vol. 40, p. 1246.

[43] Memorandum of agreement entered into between Thomas Wattson of the city of Philadelphia (merchant) and Ducoudray Holstein, now of said city, viz., Annals of Congress, 17th Cong., 2d Sess., Vol. 40, p. 1247.

[44] See Tillotson to Secretary of State, Annals of Congress, p. 1255; R. W. Meade to Secretary of State, ibid., p. 1269.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Niles' Weekly Register, November 23, 1822.

[47] Monclova, Vol. I, p. 122.

[48] Harrison to Secretary of State, September 16, 1822, Annals of Congress, p. 1258-1259.

[49] Santana, p. 219.

[50] Vicente Lecuna, Crónica razonada de las guerras de Bolívar, Vol. I (New York: Colonial Press, Inc., 1950), p. 439.

[51] Santana, p. 238.

[52] Aaron Burns to Thomas Wattson, September 26, 1822, Annals of Congress, p. 1251.

[53] Several local inhabitants complained to Governor Noderling of the recruitment and fitting of the expedition in St. Bartholomeu. The American Consul also complained. As a result, the Governor ordered the expedition out of the Swedish colony.

[54] The Andrew Jackson was detained by order of the authorities. This vessel's military stores were transferred to the Endracht, together

with thirty of the members of the expedition, before the rest of the squadron departed for St. Thomas.

[55] Córdova, Memorias, Vol. III, p. 480.

[56] Irvine in Niles' Weekly Register, March 22, 1823.

[57] Aaron Burns to Thomas Wattson, September 26, 1822, Annals of Congress, p. 1252.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Ducoudray Holstein, Vol. II, pp. 193-199.

[60] Irvine, Traits of Colonial Jurisprudence, p. 7.

[61] Santana, p. 244.

[62] Niles' Weekly Register, November 9, 1822; November 23, 1822; December 7, 1822; and December 14, 1822.

[63] Santana, p. 243.

[64] Ducoudray Holstein, Vol. II, pp. 193-199. The best description of the planned operation of Ducoudray Holstein for the liberation of Puerto Rico can be found in Chapter VI of Professor Santana's work. This chapter includes the principal details of the expedition. Professor Santana believes that the expedition "was significant because it was an effort by a group of American and European adventurers to establish in Puerto Rico an independent republic based on the institutions and ideas then prevalent in the United States. He utilizes, to a great extent, a small book by Baptist Irvine entitled Traits of Colonial Jurisprudence or a Peep at the Trading Inquisition of Curacao (Baltimore, 1824), and written two years after the expedition, for some of his most important arguments. While this book, as well as the Memoirs of Ducoudray Holstein are important sources for the study of this period, they must be used with utmost care, as they contain a one-sided view of the affair. Professor Santana writes that Baptist Irvine's interests were mostly literary, as he was writing during this time a book on Spanish America and wanted information possessed by Ducoudray Holstein. Irvine, however, wrote soon after he had been arrested in Curacao that "the part I had agreed to act would be merely military." This information does not appear in Professor Santana's study. There is the possibility that Irvine, being a newspaper man, went with the expedition to acquire firsthand information of the invasion for a newspaper story, as he had with him pre-prepared "battle reports" addressed to the editor of the Philadelphia Aurora. His bulletins described in detail "the success of the attack and the landing in Puerto Rico." In his correspondence with Clay, Irvine accused Ducoudray of inefficiency and irresponsibility, and in his letter to the Niles' Weekly Register he paints him "as destitute of leadership qualities." There is the possibility that Irvine was an agent of the United States, responsible for disrupting the expedition. While in St. Bartholomeu, he informed

frequently the American Consul of the status of the expedition. This consul, Robert M. Harrison, transmitted the information to the Secretary of State. Governor Norlerling of St. Bartholomeu, who had initially sympathized with Ducoudray's plans for personal benefit, informed the Swiss general to be careful with the American Consul, as he was a spy of the United States. Ducoudray was able to purchase military supplies and recruit personnel initially without interference from the Swedish authorities; but, perhaps, due to the pressure exercised by the American consul, he ordered the expedition out of St. Bartholomeu, suggesting instead the Five Islands as a rallying point.

After the departure from the Five Islands, en route to Puerto Rico, Irvine disrupted the operation to the degree that he threatened to use force against those who wanted to continue the enterprise. This information does not appear in Professor Santana's work.

During the time that the expedition was in St. Bartholomeu, Captain Robert T. Spence of the United States Navy, with the warship Cyane maintained a constant patrol in San Juan and between Puerto Rico and St. Bartholomeu, coming at one time very close to the invasion fleet. Captain Spence must have followed the expedition to Curacao because, after the arrest of Irvine, he entered the port with the Cyane and demanded from the Dutch Governor Irvine's immediate release.

As the Vice-Consul of Spain in Philadelphia knew about the purposes of the expedition, he must have informed the United States Government of it. Irvine, who had already been an agent of the Department of State and was unemployed, seemed to be the perfect choice to disrupt the invasion plans. It is significant that he appealed to Secretary of State Henry Clay on several occasions to intercede in his favor while imprisoned in Curacao. There are no published documents that prove American interference with the liberating attempt of Ducoudray; but subsequent events, as described in the following chapters of this thesis, justify this assumption, as it was not in the best interests of the United States to see the Spanish colonies in the Caribbean attain their independence. (See Santana, pp. 219-253; Irvine in Niles' Weekly Register, March 22, 1823; Ducoudray Holstein, Memoirs, Vol. II, pp. 192-199; Adams, Memoirs, Vol. VI, pp. 430-431; Irvine to Clay, in Hopkins, Papers of Henry Clay, Vol. III, pp. 594-596, 600, 618-619; Cadilla de Martinez, p. 302; Captain Spence to the Secretary of the Navy, transmitting correspondence with the Governor of Porto Rico, Annals of Congress, 17th Cong., 2d Sess., Vol. 40, pp. 1228-1243. Message of President James Monroe to the House of Representatives, February 4, 1823, concerning "Expedition Against the Island of Porto Rico," Annals of Congress, 17th Cong., 2d Sess., Vol. 40, pp. 1245-1274.

[65] Córdova, Memorias, Vol. III, pp. 473-479, Vol. IV, pp. 12-22; Brau, pp. 207-208; Cadilla de Martinez, pp. 302-303; Monclova, Vol. I, pp. 122-12 3, 141-142.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Ibid.

[69]Cadilla de Martínez, pp. 302-303.

[70]Córdova, Memorias, Vol. III, pp. 473-479.

[71]Ibid.

[72]Coll y Toste, Vol. II, p. 138; Monclova, Vol. I, p. 142.

[73]Joel Roberts Poinsett, Notes on Mexico Made in the Autumn of 1822, Accompanied by an Historical Sketch of the Revolution and Translations of Official Reports on the Present State of that Country, By a Citizen of the U. S. (Philadelphia: H. C. Carey and I. Lea, 1824). Facsimile reprint, New York: Praeger Publishers, 1969), pp. 3-8.

[74]Figueroa, p. 164. Proclamations of the government can be found in Córdova, Memorias, Vol. III, pp. 457-460.

[75]Córdova, Memorias, Vol. IV, p. 63.

[76]Ibid.

[77]Ibid.

[78]Ibid., p. 65; Monclova, Vol. I, p. 155.

[79]Harold Temperley, The Foreign Policy of Canning (Hamden: Archon Books, 1966), p. 3.

[80]For a brief analysis of the results of the return of Ferdinand VII to the Spanish throne see Terrero, Historia de España, p. 428.

[81]Monclova, Vol. I, pp. 175-176; Coll y Toste, Vol. II, p. 25.

[82]Córdova, Memorias, Vol. IV, p. 60.

[83]Ibid., pp. 139-143.

[84]Ibid., p. 236.

[85]Monclova, Vol. I, p. 180.

[86]Figueroa, History of Puerto Rico, p. 165.

[87]Ibid.

[88]Monclova, Vol. I, p. 240.

[89]See note 17, Chapter II.

[90]Monclova, Vol. I, p. 184.

[91]Coll y Toste, Vol. IX, p. 349.

[92]Monclova, Vol. I, pp. 184-185.

[93] England did not allow the purchasing of weapons in her colonies nor in the colonies of Holland, France, Denmark and Sweden that were located in the Caribbean and which were under her control during the European war (Lecuna, Crónica razonada, Vol. I, p. 90). Prior to the return of Ferdinand VII, the Junta Suprema purchased all available rifles in the United States market with $300,000 that the government sent to the Spanish Minister. At this time there was a weapon shortage in the United States as a result of an Army order for 80,000 rifles and the purchases made by the Spanish American republics (Francisco José Urrutia, Los Estados Unidos de America y las republicas hispanoamericanas - páginas de historia diplomática (Madrid: Editorial America, 1918), p. 24.

CHAPTER V

THE CARIBBEAN POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES

United States interests in the Caribbean began early in the seventeenth century, when New England shipping enterprises and merchants recognized the excellent trading opportunities there despite the barriers imposed by Spain's mercantilistic policies. Trade contacts between North America and the Spanish colonies were limited mostly to clandestine operations prior to the American Revolution. With the termination of British control over the American colonies, however, these commercial contacts increased, and by 1800 a well-organized and profitable trade flourished between the United States and the Spanish colonies in the Caribbean.[1]

The political turmoil in Spain during the Napoleonic invasion resulted in the breakdown of mercantilism in the Caribbean. To preserve her colonies from economic ruin and starvation, Spain allowed neutral ships to enter the colonial ports with

> ...foodstuffs, lumber, naval stores, manufactured goods, and slaves; and to take off the produce of the colonies, such as sugar, coffee, tobacco, indigo, cacao, and hides. These neutral ships also took large amounts of specie from the Spanish colonial ports.[2]

United States commerce in the Caribbean, which had been expanding steadily during the last quarter of the eighteenth century,[3] "increased rapidly during the course of the next decade."[4] This was the result of a Spanish royal order promulgated on November 18, 1797, which opened

most of the ports of the Antilles to neutral shipping.[5] The Spanish colonies augmented their trade with the United States, not only as a result of this decree but also because of the proximity of American ports and the trading facilities offered to the Spanish by the American merchants. Thus, "it was only in the Caribbean and on the Atlantic coast of South America that the Spanish toleration of neutral trade with its colonies was directly beneficial to the United States."[6]

During the first decade of the nineteenth century most American commerce with the Spanish colonies was concentrated in Cuba and Puerto Rico.[7] In 1798 United States exports to the Spanish Caribbean colonies rose to $5,080,543. In 1799 the amount reached a total value of $8,993,401. In the next two years it fluctuated between $8,993,401 and $8,437,659, then decreased slightly to $7,690,888 by 1805.[8] During this period, Puerto Rico imported about 20 per cent of her goods from the United States and exported to that nation between 15 and 50 per cent of her tobacco, sugar, and coffee.[9] In 1803, Puerto Rico exported to the United States 263,000 pounds of sugar, at $0.06 a pound, for a total export value of $15,792. This trade increased to 3,796,900 pounds with a market value of $227,814 in 1810; and to 19,788,600 pounds valued at $791,544 in 1828. The export of sugar during this last year represented 73 per cent of the total Puerto Rican sugar production. This same year, Puerto Rico exported to the United States 2,245,044 pounds of raw molasses, valued at $44,900.[10]

The Jeffersonian embargo of December, 1807, reduced American trade considerably in the Spanish Caribbean. During a Congressional debate on the embargo in November, 1808, Timothy Pitkin of Connecticut, James Lloyd of Massachusetts, and other members of the Congress stated that

the Jeffersonian commercial policies had ruined the American trade in Spanish America. Large supplies of American beef, flour, meal, and cotton failed to reach the Spanish markets in the West Indies. These individuals, who represented New England trading interests, also believed that the continuation of such a policy would damage permanently American trade in the Caribbean because the Spanish colonies, as a result of the embargo, were seeking new markets in France and England.[11] During this period American exports to the Spanish colonies dropped from $13,025,579 to $6,685,617 in 1809; sugar imports were reduced from 87,763,464 pounds to 34,657,330 pounds.[12]

During the Madison and Monroe administrations, the volume of trade between Puerto Rico and the United States amounted to $269,008 in 1813, $1,082,299 in 1816, and $2,103,498, in 1818.[13] This increased trade was the result of the many concessions granted by the <u>Cédula de Gracia</u> to foreign countries.[14] Trade with Cuba also increased. The United States had sent commercial agents to the island since 1781, and "the American consuls in Cuba were actively promoting trade and commercial contacts"[15] with the Spanish authorities.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, political and strategic considerations, in addition to trade and commercial interests, also became part of the United States concern in the Caribbean. The United States feared that Great Britain or France would seize the Spanish colonies in the Caribbean as a result of the unstable political conditions existing in Spain and the marked inability of that country to protect her overseas possessions.

These fears were not completely unfounded. In the summer of 1819, it was rumored in Europe that England might seize Cuba to balance

United States hegemony in the Gulf of México, which had been one of the results of the American acquisition of Florida. British newspapers reported during this time that the Duke of San Carlos had indicated that Spain would prefer British control of Cuba.[16] The London Times described Havana as the best commercial port in the world and "a station from which the British navy would have complete command over the whole line of the southern and eastern coasts of the United States."[17]

During this time the British press, which had condemned the Florida treaty in strong terms, demanded that England seize Cuba because of the dangers to which "British trade in the Gulf of Mexico would be exposed in case of a future war with the United States."[18] England had provided substantial military assistance to Spain during the peninsular campaign, and that country owed about $15,000,000[19] for military supplies and maintenance of the British army. She also owed money to many British merchants who had suffered commercial injuries during the war. As Spain was unable to satisfy her financial obligations, it was possible that she would transfer Cuba and Puerto Rico, her last remaining colonies in the Western Hemisphere, to England as payment for these debts. There was some speculation that Spain might cede the islands to France, which had provided substantial military assistance to Ferdinand VII to help him regain his Spanish throne.[20]

In April, 1823, many rumors circulated in Washington concerning the possible transfer of Cuba and Puerto Rico to England or France. Either possibility seemed dangerous to Secretary of State John Quincy Adams. In a letter to Hugh Nelson, the American foreign minister to Spain, Adams discussed the effects of such an event:

> Whatever may be the issue of this war,...it may be taken for granted that the dominion of Spain upon the American continent...is irrecoverably gone. But the islands of Cuba and Porto Rico still remain nominally and so far really dependent upon her (Spain). These islands, from their local position, are natural appendages to the North American continent and one of them, Cuba,...has become an object of transcendent importance to the political and commercial interests of our Union.[21]

Adams also believed that the French invasion of Spain to reestablish absolutism under Ferdinand VII might cause "the Spanish constitutionalists to cede Cuba and perhaps Porto Rico to England as the price of a new Anglo-Spanish alliance in another Peninsular War."[22] The anxiety concerning the possible disposition of the Spanish colonies in the Caribbean was expressed by Secretary Adams to John Forsyth, the United States Minister to Spain, on December 17, 1822:

> It is even asserted from sources to which some credit is due that they have been for more than two years in secret negotiation...for the cession of the Island; and it is added that Spain, though disinclined to such an arrangement, might resist it with more firmness, if for a limited period of time she could obtain the joint guarantee of the United States and France in securing the Island to herself.[23]

Believing that both France and England had agents "observing the course of events," Secretary Adams stated that the President wanted the United States minister to

> ...obtain correct information whether such a negotiation as has been above suggested is on foot between Spain and Great Britain, and if so, to communicate to the Spanish Government in a manner adapted to the delicacy of the case, the sentiments of this Government in relation to this subject.[24]

Henry Clay, expressing a similar concern, told George Canning, the British Foreign Secretary, in February, 1823, that the United States "would fight for it (Cuba) should they (the British) attempt its possession."[25]

Many other American political leaders and statesmen, including John C. Calhoun, Thomas Jefferson, James Monroe, and James Madison, also believed that the control of the Spanish colonies in the Caribbean was, as John Quincy Adams had indicated, "an object of transcendent importance to the political and commercial interests of our Union."[26] During his administration, President Madison had indicated that

> ...the position of Cuba gives the United States so deep an interest in the destiny of that island, that although they might be inactive, they could not be a satisfied spectator at its falling under any European government, which might make a fulcrum of that position against the commerce and security of the United States.[27]

Thomas Jefferson had told Calhoun in 1820 that the United States ought to take Cuba "at the first possible opportunity"[28] even "at the cost of a war with England."[29] This was not inconsistent with United States policy at that time. In the opinion of John Quincy Adams, there were two reasons which could involve the United States in a war with Europe: "a maritime war resulting in the impressment of American seamen, or a war threatening the transfer of neighboring Spanish territory, like Cuba or Porto Rico."[30]

This possibility led Secretary of State Adams to apply the No-Transfer Principle of 1811 to the Spanish colonies in the Caribbean in the summer of 1823.[31] The decision took into consideration the position of Spain and her colonies in the Caribbean and the peculiar circumstances of the existing crisis. As in 1811, when the No-Transfer resolution had been passed by the Congress to protect American interests in Florida, its application to the Spanish colonies in the Caribbean became a matter of necessity for the United States as part of the nation's foreign policy. The resolution emphasized the fact that the

United States could not witness without serious concern

> ...any part of the said territory pass into the hands of any foreign power; and that a due regard to their own safety compels them (the United States) to provide under certain contingencies, <u>for the temporary occupation of the said territory</u>.[32]

This resolution had concerned Florida, but its application in the Caribbean meant that United States armed forces might occupy "temporarily" Cuba or Puerto Rico for the strategic defense of the nation.

The reasons for United States concern in the Caribbean were many. The war of 1812 had shown the military weaknesses of the nation and her inability to protect her southern flank and the recently acquired Louisiana territory.[33] Florida, purchased from Spain in 1819 and acquired several years later, could not be properly defended from aggression of a foreign power which controlled the Caribbean. British or French domination of Cuba or Puerto Rico could also cut off communications between New Orleans and the Atlantic ports in the event of a conflict with either of these nations.

Just as the security of New Orleans, Florida, and the southern flank of the United States became a strategic necessity, United States commerce in the Caribbean demanded that Cuba and Puerto Rico remain free of foreign interference. American commerce "required that neither Britain nor France should establish herself in Havana harbor, virtually impragnable if properly fortified, and so situated that from it a first-class sea power could command the commerce of the entire Caribbean region."[34]

As both Cuba and Puerto Rico had a large black population, their political independence could have affected the control of the slave population of the southern states and probably the stability of the

nation itself. The Missouri Compromise of 1819 had almost set the nation afire. Representatives of the southern states had fought for their rights to expand slavery beyond the Mississippi, while the representatives of the free states wanted gradual emancipation of the slaves and a reduction of the institution of slavery. If Cuba and Puerto Rico had become independent during that critical time they would have freed the slaves, as their sister republics in South America had already done. The prospects of such a situation, so close to the United States, could have upset the precarious balance that had been achieved by the Missouri Compromise. In addition, southern states would have lost their principal sources for slaves with whom they could extend the plantation economy. The slavery issue was so critical that President Monroe refused to annex Texas because he feared that the acquisition of that great territory would only intensify sectional controversy over slavery.[35]

The slave issue became of considerable importance during the Congressional debates held in 1826 concerning the nomination of American representatives to the Congress of Panama. As this congress was supporting the independence of Cuba and Puerto Rico, the issue of slavery in the Caribbean became a matter of major concern for Southern legislators. During the debates, one of the principal defenders of the Southern point of view was Senator Thomas H. Benton of Missouri. Representing the pro-slavery interests of the Southern members of the Congress, Benton justified their position by saying that the South could not "allow the principle of universal emancipation to be called into activity in a situation where its contagion would be dangerous to our quiet and safety."[36]

John Randolph, the senator from Virginia, supported the same position, fearing "that the emancipation proclamations coming from the new republics would arouse and inflame the passions of the Southern slaves and eventually lead to slave revolts in the United States."[37] Other congressional representatives also opposed the independence of Cuba and Puerto Rico because of the danger involved in the emancipation of the Caribbean's black slaves. As Senator Benton indicated:

> When we look to the situation of those islands, to the command position they occupy with reference to the commerce of the West Indies, we cannot be indifferent to a change in their condition. But when we reflect that they are in justaposition to a portion of the Union where slavery exists; that the proposed change is to be effected by a people whose fundamental maxim it is that he who would tolerate slavery is unworthy to be free; that the principle of universal emancipation must march in the van of the invading force;...they are swallowed up in the magnitude of the dangers with which we are menaced...with a due regard to the safety of the Southern states, can you suffer these islands to pass into the hands of buccaneers drunk with their new-born freedom? Cuba and Puerto Rico must remain as they are.[38]

The Southern members of the Congress also viewed the independence of Cuba and Puerto Rico as a threat to the institution of slavery and as a danger to the peace and security of the South. These individuals considered that the large black population in the Caribbean would create black republics similar to the one previously established in Haiti. These new republics, therefore, would be entitled to send black or mulatto ambassadors and consuls to the United States to "parade through our country and establish themselves in our cities."[39] This situation would have given the black slaves in the United States an example of the rights which awaited them, if they did likewise and revolted against their masters. This circumstance was intolerable to the citizens of the South.

An independent Cuba would also have terminated the illegal African slave traffic, gravely reducing the necessary manpower for the South. Cuba had served as a staging area for the slave traffic of the South, but with independence and emancipation the trade would have ended entirely.

The American policy of expansionism which anticipated the annexation of Cuba intensified the United States determination to prevent the independence of the Spanish colonies in the Caribbean. Many American statesmen had expressed the desirability of taking Cuba; the island was indispensable to United States security, trade, and commerce. Puerto Rico probably would have followed in the wake of Cuba if that island had been seized by the United States.

As early as 1808, President Thomas Jefferson had expressed his desire to take Cuba. In a letter to his successor, he foresaw no problem in acquiring Florida and Cuba, because Napoleon would "consent to our receiving Cuba into our Union to prevent our aid to Mexico and the other provinces."[40] Although Jefferson continued to discuss the possibility of acquiring Cuba and "even welcomed the idea of a war with Spain," since, as he informed Madison, "Cuba could be seized without much difficulty," the United States took no steps to acquire Cuba or Puerto Rico before 1808.[41] In the spring of that year, however, Jefferson sent General James Wilkinson to Cuba to convince the Captain-General to transfer Cuba to the United States. With the French invasion of the peninsula, there were no guarantees that Cuba could remain under Spanish tutelage. Wilkinson's mission was a failure because the Spanish Captain-General refused to change his allegiance to the United States.[42]

United States intentions toward the Caribbean had been a matter of

great concern to Spain since 1789. In that year, the Conde de Aranda informed Charles III that he believed the United States would someday become a giant on the North American continent. Forgetting the help which European nations had provided her, the United States would seize Florida, the Caribbean, and even attempt to control the rest of the Spanish American empire. Spain could not have been able to prevent this because of her internal weaknesses and the proximity of the United States to the Caribbean.[43] Concerning the same subject, Pedro de Quevedo, Bishop of Orense, declared in 1806 "that the United States would create serious problems for Spain."[44] Therefore,

> When James Wilkinson was sent on a special mission to Havana to foster sentiments in favor of annexation towards the American republic, the Spanish charge d'affairs, Valentin de Foronda, promptly informed the Minister of State that Wilkinson was under instructions to negotiate, 'a reunion of the Kingdom of Mexico, and the Islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico under these United States.'[45]

President James Madison continued Jefferson's policy toward the Spanish Caribbean. As early as 1810, he had indicated that the United States "could not be a satisfied spectator"[46] to the transfer of Cuba to any European government because she could be made a fulcrum "against the commerce and security of the United States."[47] In 1947 a National Congress of Cuban historians held in La Habana declared that Madison's policy toward Cuba became the official position of the United States government thereafter: "From then on, and continually, Yankee policy in respect to Cuba was support for the continuation of Spanish sovereignty while it could not be convenient for the island to be part of the North American Union."[48]

In 1810, Madison appointed William Shaler as consul to Cuba to advance the government's policy of annexation through the organization of

a conspiracy among creole planters.[49] Shaler, one of the earliest American advocates of expansionism, informed the Cubans that the United States would favor the annexation of the Spanish colony if they revolted against Spain. While some Cuban creoles sympathized with this plan, nothing came of the conspiracy. As a result of his activities in Cuba Shaler was arrested in November, 1811, by the Spanish authorities, and ordered to leave Cuba.

> Before departing, Shaler notified Someruelos that the United States was satisfied with a continuation of the existing status of Cuba, that is, as a possession of Spain; that it would never allow the island to pass into the hands of another power, and that the Spanish officials should appeal to the government of the United States for aid and protection whenever such a danger approached.[50]

Shaler's declaration illustrates United States policy toward the Spanish Caribbean during this time. While Shaler did not mention Puerto Rico, it can be assumed that the policy also applied to this island because the foreign relations of the United States concerned American hegemony in all of the Caribbean. As J. Fred Rippy has written,

> The policy of the United States with respect to the region of the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea can be defined with greater precision than its policy with reference to any other region. This is possible because of the Gulf-Caribbean Area which is the most vital zone in the defense strategy of the United States....The maxim is the domination of the area at least to the extent deemed necessary to prevent its domination by any other first rate power ....No statesmen have ever baldly formulated the maxim. Perhaps that would have been undiplomatic. But one may assert with confidence that the policy which the maxim describes began to take form before 1800. At first it embraced the lands bordering on the Gulf, but gradually it was extended to the whole of the Gulf-Caribbean Area.[51]

During James Monroe's administration, the Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, whose intentions concerning Cuba were well-known, pursued the same course of action which Jefferson and Madison had taken.

According to Samuel F. Bemis, the focus of attention had now shifted from the Great Lakes and the Northwest to the Caribbean.[52] As a result of the acquisition of Florida, the Spanish possessions became as essential to the protection of Florida as previously Florida had been to the safety of Louisiana.[53] The United States defense system in the southeast, the integrity of both Florida and Louisiana, and the security of the westward-advancing Continental Republic now depended on the control of the Spanish Caribbean.[54] "There is nothing I so much desire," said Governor Clairborne of Louisiana on December 10, 1810,

> ...as to see the flag of my Country reared on the Moro (sic) castle. Cuba is the real mouth of the Mississippi, and the nation possessing it, can at any time command the trade of the Western States. Give us Cuba and the American Union is placed beyond the reach of change.[55]

John Quincy Adams expressed similar views about Cuba on April 28, 1823, in a letter to the United States minister in Spain:

> Cuba, almost in sight of our shores, from a multitude of considerations, has become an object of transcendent importance to the commercial and political interests of our Union. Its commanding position, with reference to the Gulf of Mexico and the West India seas; the character of its population; its situation midway between our southern coast and the island of St. Domingo; its safe and capacious harbor of the Havana, fronting a long line of our shores destitute of the same advantage; the nature of its productions and of its wants, furnishing the supplies and needing the returns of a commerce immensely profitable and mutually beneficial,--give it an importance in the sum of our national interests with which that of no other foreign territory can be compared, and little inferior to that which binds the different members of the Union together. Such, indeed, are between the interests of that island and of this country, the geographical commercial, moral, and political relations, formed by nature, gathering, in the process of time, and even now verging to maturity, that, in looking forward to the probable course of events, for the short period of a half a century, it is scarcely possible to resist the conviction that the annexation of Cuba to our federal republic will be indispensable to the continuance and integrity of the Union itself. It is obvious, however, that for this event we are not yet

> prepared....There are laws of political, as well as of physical gravitation;--Secretary Adams continue--and if an apple, severed by the tempest from its native tree, cannot choose but to fall to the ground, Cuba, forcibly disjointed from its own unnatural connection with Spain, and incapable of self-support, can gravitate only towards the North American Union, which, by the same law of nature, cannot cast off its bosom.[56]

While the United States had desired Cuba, she was not yet ready to pay the high price of ownership--most probably a war with England or France. On September 27, 1822, after a cabinet meeting during which Secretary of War John C. Calhoun had expressed "an ardent desire that the island of Cuba should become a part of the United States," Secretary Adams wrote in his diary that the United States was not prepared for war at that time. As a result, the "nation's object must be to gain time." Adams also commented that

> ...as to taking Cuba at the cost of a war with Great Britain, it would be well to enquire, before undertaking such war, how it would be likely to terminate....I held it for certain that a war with Great Britain for Cuba would result in her possession of that island....In the present relative situation of our maritime forces, we could not maintain a war against Great Britain for Cuba.[57]

Adams' concern for Cuba and the Spanish Caribbean was the result of an early demonstration of "Manifest Destiny." On November 16, 1819, Adams had told his colleagues in the cabinet that the rumors about American expansionism which had been circulating in Europe were true. He continued that:

> ...nothing that we can say or do would remove this impression until the world shall be familiarized with the idea of considering our proper dominion to be the continent of North America...Spain has possessions upon our southern and Great Britain upon our northern borders. It is impossible that centuries shall elapse without finding them annexed to the United States; not that any spirit of encroachment or ambition on our part renders it necessary....[58]

With the Spanish colonies of Cuba and Puerto in mind, Adams went on to say that:

> ...it is a physical, moral, and political absurdity that such fragments of territory, with sovereigns at fifteen hundred miles beyond the sea, worthless and burdensome to their owners, should exist permanently contiguous to a great powerful and rapidly growing nation. Most of the Spanish territory which had been in our neighborhood has already become our own....This renders it still more unavoidable that the remainder of the continent should ultimately be ours. But it is very lately that we have distinctly seen this ourselves; very lately that we have avowed the pretention of extending to the South Sea; and until Europe shall find it a settle geographical element that the United States and North America are identical, any effort on our part to reason the world out of a belief that we are ambitious will have no other effect than to convince them that we add to our ambition hypocrisy.[59]

As Adams indicated, this was an explicit policy of expansionism directed toward the annexation of Cuba and Puerto Rico. The only things that prevented this nascent imperialism from accomplishing its goals were the military weaknesses of the United States and the threat of war with either England or France for the possession and control of the Caribbean.

While the United States was interested in maintaining a sphere of influence in the Caribbean because of national defense needs, protection of trade, and the continuation of slavery, England and France had other objectives. The British government did not want to see the Spanish colonies in the Caribbean transferred to France or the United States any more than the United States cared to have them transferred to Great Britain or France.[60] England believed that American possession of Cuba would jeopardize the Jamaica trade and ruin Britain's position and interests in the whole Caribbean.[61] George Canning, the British Foreign Secretary, was very specific about the policy of his government on this matter. On November 15, 1822, he wrote:

> It may be questioned whether any blow that could be struck by any foreign power in any part of the world would have a more sensible effect on the interests of this country and on the reputation of its government.[62]

Canning had feared that the United States wanted to extend her control in the Caribbean, and so informed his cousin, the English ambassador in Washington, in October, 1822.[63]

France, like England, also had important interests in the Caribbean region. With the loss of Haiti, her only footholds in the area were the islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique. Since France wanted to reestablish part of her once glorious empire, she looked with great interest upon the fate of Cuba and Puerto Rico. The acquisition of these islands would have given France a strong position in the Caribbean and control of the commerce between Europe and the emerging Spanish American republics.

The United States, England, and France, therefore, were suspicious of each other's intentions in the Caribbean. It was clear, however, that none of them could take possession of the Spanish American colonies without inflicting serious damage upon the other's interests. Possession of these islands would have given a definite advantage in the Caribbean to the controlling power, because of their proximity to the routes across the Isthmus of Panama. The conditions of these islands were of such importance to the contending powers that "their subordinates were constantly reporting to each of them the supposed designs of the others."[64] During this occasion, Niles' Weekly Register, quoting the London Courier, declared:

> Cuba is the Turkey of transatlantic politics, totering to its fall, and kept from falling only by the struggles of those who contend for the right of catching her in her descent.[65]

During the years between 1822 and 1825, the three powers increased their naval forces in the Caribbean. Spain sent troops to protect the islands against possible invasions by the European powers or the United States. The risk of an actual confrontation became more pronounced in 1823 and 1824. On April 29, 1823, as a result of the international tension in the Caribbean, Secretary Adams instructed the United States agent in Cuba to observe the course of events in that island and to inform the government of "any apparent popular agitation; particularly of such as may have reference either to a transfer of the Island from Spain to any other power."[66] Joel Roberts Poinsett, an agent of the United States, had visited Puerto Rico six months before, apparently with the same purpose.[67] All American naval commanders in the Caribbean were instructed to be on the alert for any activities of the English or French naval squadrons in the area. On February 17, 1823, Charles J. Ingersoll, the United States District Attorney for Pennsylvania, stated that

> Clay says that Canning told him the day before yesterday, as I also heard Mr. Adams state publicly, that England had no views on Cuba. Clay told him distinctly that we would fight for it should they attempt the possession, which sentiment I find more general than I supposed. Mr. Baylies, of Massachusetts, a Federalist, is for it as he said this afternoon. The idea given out is that any British force going there is to protect it from the French who might try to take it.[68]

In December, 1822, British sailors landed in Cuba temporarily. This action created a flurry of activity in Washington. These activities did not stop until Canning informed several governments, including the United States, that the landing had been made to suppress piracy and that England had no aggressive designs. Canning suggested, however, that "if the United States meant to annex Cuba,...we might have to annex Porto Rico to preserve the balance of power in the Caribbean."[69]

Commencing in August, 1823, Canning approached the United States concerning the possible future disposition of the independent Spanish American colonies, the balance of power in the Caribbean, and the threat of the Holy Alliance in Europe. Since a major American concern during this time was that other European nations might intervene in this hemisphere to restore Spanish colonial rule, the United States began discussions with England concerning the feasibility of a joint declaration against that purpose. The major result of this discussion was the proclamation of the Monroe Doctrine in December, 1823. Noncolonization and noninterference became the two major objectives of the declaration. The Monroe Doctrine reflects a fear of the Holy Alliance and its despotism. More importantly, however, it was a result of the struggle for supremacy in the Caribbean and "an attempt on the part of British and American traders to gain a large share of the economic advantages to be gained from the independence of Latin America."[70]

According to Thomas H. Reynolds, subsequent events have proven that the Monroe Doctrine was promulgated to serve specifically the pecular interests of the United States in the Caribbean and those interests of

> Hispanic America <u>when the latter do not contradict the peculiar inclinations of North America</u>. But, from the moment in which appear any incompatibility between the interests of South America (as a general principle) and those of North America (as political entity), the second takes precedence over the first.[71]

The Monroe Doctrine, however, did not resolve the international problem in the Caribbean. In 1825 the United States again became alarmed by France's designs toward the Spanish colonies. In August, 1825, Canning approached the United States with a new proposal to ease the tensions between the three maritime powers. As the United States and England had reached an understanding concerning the balance of power in the

Caribbean and both nations had disclaimed any intentions of aggressive designs against Cuba and Puerto Rico, he suggested a Tripartite Agreement with respect to Cuba.

> This arrangement however was coldly regarded by the United States, not because they desired annexation, but because it would again have negatived all chances of incorporating Cuba in the Union.[72]

France also declined the offer because she had important commitments to the Holy Alliance in Europe.

In 1825 an impasse developed concerning the Caribbean. The United States could not take Cuba without going to war with the European powers; England and France were similarly restrained because it would have led to a conflict with the United States or a war among themselves. To resolve the existing situation to the satisfaction of all interested parties, England and France accepted the United States recommendations for the maintance of the status quo in the Caribbean. To maintain Cuba and Puerto Rico under the continued control of Spain, then, became the major goal of American policy in the Caribbean. To achieve this purpose, United States opposed not only non-Spanish foreign control of Cuba and Puerto Rico but also the independence of these Spanish colonies as well. As a result of this policy, the Spanish colonies in the Caribbean could not proclaim their independence in the second decade of the nineteenth century when local conditions, created by the instability of the peninsular government and the chaos which resulted during the wars of independence in Spanish America, were most favorable for accomplishing that goal.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Arturo Morales-Carrión, Puerto Rico and the Non-Hispanic Caribbean - A Study in the Decline of Spanish Exclusivism (Río Piedras, Puerto Rico: University of Puerto Rico Press, 1974), pp. 118-132.

[2]Whitaker, p. 8.

[3]For a detailed analysis of American trade during this period see Santana, pp. 1-110.

[4]Whitaker, p. 2.

[5]Ibid., p. 8.

[6]Ibid., p. 14.

[7]Ibid., p. 16.

[8]American State Papers, Commerce and Navigation, Vol. I, pp. 417, 431, 432, 439, 453, 462, 469, 477, 519, 671, 675, and 681.

[9]Thomas G. Mathews, "Puerto Rico," Encyclopedia Britannica (1972), Vol. XVIII, p. 851.

[10]William Dinwiddie, Puerto Rico: Its Conditions and Possibilities (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1899), p. 101. Dinwiddie wrote this book about a year after the occupation of Puerto Rico by the United States with the object of informing the American industrialists and manufacturers of "the possibilities" that existed in the Island for trade and commercial exploitation.

[11]Annals of Congress, 10th Cong., 2d Sess., pp. 21-33; 134-135; 184-185, 1217-1219; Whitaker, p. 50.

[12]American State Papers, Commerce and Navigation, Vol. I, pp. 815-816; 851-857. See also Santana, pp. 65-67.

[13]Morales-Carrión, p. 142.

[14]See pp. 48-49, this thesis.

[15]Morales-Carrión, p. 122; Bemis, Diplomatic History, p. 196. See also Roy F. Nichols, "Trade Relations and the Establishment of the United States Consulates in Spanish-America, 1779-1809," The Hispanic American Historical Review, XIII (August, 1933), pp. 289-313.

[16]James Morton Callahan, "Cuba and Anglo-American Relations," American Historical Association Annual Report, 1897; U. S. Congress, House, 55th Cong., 2d Sess., Doc. 577, 1898.

[17]As quoted in Niles' Weekly Register, December 6, 1819.

[18]Callahan, p. 196.

[19]John H. Latané, "The Diplomacy of the United States in Regard to Cuba," American Historical Association Annual Report, 1897; U. S. Congress, House, 55th Cong., 2d Sess., Doc. 577, 1898.

[20]Chadwick, pp. 219-220.

[21]Worthington C. Ford, ed., Writings of John Quincy Adams, Vol. VII (New York: McMillan & Co., 1917), pp. 371-372.

[22]Bemis, Diplomatic History, p. 372.

[23]MS., Department of State, Instructions to United States Ministers, Vol. IX, p. 158, quoted in Reuben J. Clark, Memorandum on the Monroe Doctrine (Washington: Publication No. 37, Department of State, U.S. Printing Office, 1928), p. 83.

[24]Ibid.

[25]John Bassett Moore, A Digest of International Law, Vol. VI, U.S. Congress, House, 56th Cong., 2d Sess., Doc. 551, 1906.

[26]See note 21, above.

[27]John H. Latané, The Diplomatic Relations of the United States and Spanish America (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1900), p. 91.

[28]Adams, Memoirs, p. 71.

[29]Ibid.

[30]Bemis, p. 372.

[31]Ibid.

[32]John A. Logan, Jr., No Transfer: An American Security Principle (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961), p. 119.

[33]During the War of 1812 the superior sea power of Great Britain controlled the access to the Gulf of México and blockaded New Orleans for more than two years. It was not until the Treaty of Ghent had been signed that General Jackson's frontiersmen were able to repulse Pakenham's regulars from New Orleans.

[34]Logan, p. 140.

[35] James Monroe to Thomas Jefferson, May, 1820, S. M. Hamilton, ed., The Writings of James Monroe (New York: 1898-1903), Vol. VI, p. 119.

[36] U. S. Congress, Register of Debates in Congress, 19th Cong., 1st Sess., Vol. II, part I (1825-1826), pp. 289-292. See also pp. 152-234 (Pan American Congress Debates).

[37] Gene Mitchell Kelly, "United States Congressional Opposition to the Panama Congress of 1826" (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Department of History, Oklahoma State University, 1975), p. 44.

[38] Register of Debates, pp. 289-292.

[39] Thomas Hart Benton, Thirty Years' View, 1820-1850, Vol. I (New York: Appleton and Co., 1893), p. 69.

[40] Chadwick, p. 216.

[41] Foner, Vol. I, p. 125.

[42] Issac J. Cox, "The Pan American Policy of Jefferson and Wilkinson," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, Vol. I (1914), pp. 222-223.

[43] Charles Edward Chapman, Colonial Hispanic America (New York: 1933), pp. 20-21.

[44] Monclova, p. 171.

[45] Morales-Carrión, pp. 122-123.

[46] James Madison to William Pinckey, October 30, 1810, Gaillard Hunt, ed., The Writings of James Madison (New York: 1900), Vol. VIII, p. 122.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Reprinted in Antonio Nuñez Jiménez, La liberación de las Islas (La Habana, 1959), p. 458, and in Foner, Vol. I, p. 127.

[49] Roy F. Nichols, "William Shaler, New England Apostle of Liberty," New England Quarterly, Vol. IX (1933), pp. 76-77.

[50] Foner, Vol. I, p. 128.

[51] See introduction to Ludwell Lee Montague, Haiti and the United States, 1714-1938 (Durham: Duke University Press, 1940), p. 1.

[52] Bemis, Diplomatic History, p. 372.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Ibid.

[55]Luis Mariño Pérez, "Relations with Cuba," Southern History Association Publications, Vol. X (1906), pp. 203-214.

[56]U. S. Congress, House, 32nd Cong., 1st Sess., Doc. 121, pp. 6-7, 1851-1852.

[57]Adams, Memoirs, Vol. VI, p. 71.

[58]Ibid.

[59]Ibid., Vol. IV, pp. 438-439.

[60]C. K. Webster, ed., Britain and the Independence of Latin America, 1812-1830 (New York: Octagon Books, 1970), Vol. II, pp. 393-394; Bemis, p. 373.

[61]Ibid.

[62]Canning Memorandum for the Cabinet, November 15, 1822, Doc. 540 (F.O. 72/266), in Webster, Vol. II, pp. 393-394.

[63]Harold W. V. Temperley, "The Later Latin-American Policy of George Canning," American Historical Review, Vol. XI (1906), p. 789.

[64]Webster, Vol. II, p. 35.

[65]Niles' Weekly Register, August 6, 1825.

[66]Clark, Memorandum on the Monroe Doctrine, p. 84.

[67]See Poinsett, Notes on Mexico, pp. 3-9.

[68]From the Diary of Mr. Charles Jared Ingersoll, Monday night, February 17, 1823, quoted in Moore, p. 380.

[69]Harold W. V. Temperley, The Foreign Policy of Canning, 1822-27 (Hamden: Archon Books, 1966), p. 169.

[70]Thomas H. Reynolds, Economic Aspects of the Monroe Doctrine (Nashville: George Peabody College for Teachers, 1938), p. 17.

[71]Ibid.

[72]Temperley, Foreign Policy, p. 171.

CHAPTER VI

UNITED STATES, THE EUROPEAN POWERS, AND THE STATUS QUO IN THE CARIBBEAN

To accomplish her principal foreign policy objectives in the Caribbean and her national interests, the United States resolved to enforce the *status quo* in Cuba and Puerto Rico. The United States could not permit non-Spanish domination of the Caribbean or the independence of Cuba and Puerto Rico to threaten the security and commercial advantages of her people. The maintenance of the *status quo*, therefore, became a satisfactory answer to the Caribbean problem until measures could be taken to prevent the transfer of the Spanish colonies to another European power or until acceptable ways were found for their incorporation as territories of the United States.

These plans were threatened, however, by the sudden intervention of Mexico and Colombia in the political affairs of the Caribbean. Since 1824, Cuban and Puerto Rican revolutionaries had asked Simón Bolívar and the Mexican revolutionaries to intervene in the islands to secure their independence, as they could not do it themselves as a result of their isolation and the military measures of the insular Spanish governors. For the separatists, it was clear that the only way to accomplish their goals was an invasion of Cuba and Puerto Rico by the combined forces of Mexico and Colombia, assisted by the revolutionary forces on the islands. Clearly, a military operation of this magnitude would have ended

Spanish rule in the Caribbean. At the same time Colombia and México would have emancipated the slaves, because both nations and the separatists favored the end of slavery after independence. The United States would not tolerate this situation because it was contrary to her objectives in the Caribbean.

To prevent such action, the United States informed México and Colombia that their plans contradicted United States' policy and would upset the _status quo_ and the peace and security of the Caribbean. The United States also attempted to convince Spain that, unless she ended the Spanish American conflict and recognized the independence of the new republics, she was in danger of losing her possessions in the Caribbean. This move would also influence México and Colombia because these nations desired to end the hostilities on the mainland. United States foreign policy, therefore, employed the strategy of attempting "to convince Spain that only by making peace with its revolted colonies and recognizing their independence could she keep Cuba and Puerto Rico."[1] By securing peace in the Western Hemisphere, the United States could prevent the republics from attacking the Caribbean colonies, an event which would have disturbed the _status quo_ in that area. Clay, recognizing this problem very early, stated that

> ...in respect to Cuba and Puerto Rico, there can be little doubt, if the war were once ended, that they would be safe in the possession of Spain. They would, at least, be secured from foreign attacks and all ideas of Independence which the inhabitants may entertain, would cease with the cessation of the state of war which had excited them.[2]

On April 27, 1825, Alexander Everett, the United States Minister to Spain, was instructed to approach the government of Ferdinand VII in the most conciliatory manner on this matter and express at the same time the views of the United States concerning the hostilities between Spain

and the Spanish American republics. The Secretary of State wrote to the American minister that

> ...the war upon the continent is, in fact, at an end. Not a solitary foot of land from the western limit of the United States to Cape Horn owns her sway....It should be borne in mind, however, that the armies of the new States, flushed with victory, have no longer employment on the continent....To what object, then, will the new republics direct their powerful and victorious armies?...From the proximity and great value of Cuba and Porto Rico, is it not anticipated that they will aim, and aim a successful blow too, at those Spanish islands? It is not, then, for the new Republics that the President wishes you to urge upon Spain the expediency of concluding the war....And, as the views and policy of the United States in regard to those islands may possibly have some influence, you are authorized frankly and fully to disclose them. The United States are satisfied with the present conditions of those islands, in the hands of Spain, and with the ports open to our commerce, as they are now open. This government desires no political change of that condition.[3]

Since "political change" included independence, it be said that opposition to the independence of Cuba and Puerto Rico was part of the policy of the United States. The evidence to support this assertion appears in the many statements of official policy made during this time. To Everett, the Secretary of State wrote on April 27, 1825: "This Government desires no political changes (in Cuba and Puerto Rico). The population itself of the islands is incompetent at present, from its composition and its amount, to maintain self-government." To Henry Middleton, United States Minister to Russia, Clay stated on May 10, 1825, that the United States "desired for themselves no political change in them,"[5] adding subsequently, "if Cuba were to declare itself independent, the amount and the character of its population render it improbable that it could maintain its independence."[6] Middleton informed the Russian Government on July 2, 1825, that while the

> United States have seen with satisfaction the efforts of the nations of the American continent to withdraw themselves from the yoke of Spanish domination, it was not so with regard to the islands of Cuba and Porto Rico. The character of the population of these islands render extremely problematical their capacity to maintain independence. A premature declaration would probably result only in the afflicting repetition of the disastrous scenes of St. Domingo.[7]

These opinions were not merely limited to the Secretary of State or to the ministers of the United States. Statesmen, private citizens, naval officers, and even the President of the United States held similar views. Cuban scholars have long contended that United States opposition frustrated the independence of Cuba and Puerto Rico.[8] The National Congress of Cuban Historians which met in 1947 in Havana declared that "this Yankee opposition was the primary reason for which there was not reached in the Congress of Panama a clear agreement on the independence of Cuba and Puerto Rico."[9]

A continuation of Spanish rule in the Caribbean fit perfectly the policy of the United States toward Cuba and Puerto Rico. The United States constant apprehension concerning the transfer of these colonies to a government less friendly than Spain could have been lessened if they remained dependent upon the Mother Country. Spain, however, did not believe that the United States intended to protect Spanish interests in the Caribbean but rather planned to annex Cuba and Puerto Rico at a later date. For Spain, the United States desire to keep the Caribbean colonies in the hands of the Mother Country was the result of the conflict with France and England over trade and commercial privileges in the area. Spain, therefore, tried to improve her situation by strengthening herself in Spanish America.

As a result, she refused to accept the recommendations of the

United States minister. The reply of Francisco de Zea Bermúdez, the Spanish First Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, was categorical:

> His Majesty at no time thought of ceding to any power the islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico, and, so far from such a purpose, is firmly determined to keep them under the dominion and authority of his legitimate sovereignty.[10]

The Spanish Secretary added that

> His Majesty deeply appreciated the feelings expressed by the American Minister, but if the United States was truly concerned over Cuba remaining under Spain, it should guarantee its ownership by the Madrid Government.[11]

On September 25, and again on October 20, 1825, the Spanish government reemphasized this view. Everett informed the Secretary of State that Zea Bermúdes had explicitly told him that

> ...the Government of the United States placed him (Zea) under the necessity of declaring, in the most positive manner, the King's unalterable resolution never to abandon his rights, and to reject all offers of mediation, or of amicable intervention which should contemplate on acknowledgment of the independence of the new States.[12]

Spain wanted the United States to guarantee her ownership of Cuba and Puerto Rico. The United States refused to provide any guarantees because she had not abandoned her own plans of annexation; she had only postponed them temporarily. The result was Spain's refusal to acknowledge the independence of the Spanish American republics, an important factor in United States plans for maintaining the *status quo* in the Caribbean.

To convince Spain of the necessity of terminating the conflict in America, the United States appealed to Russia, France and England. "True wisdom," wrote Clay to his foreign emissaries,

> ...dictates that Spain, without indulging in unavailing regrets on account of what she had irretrievably lost, should employ the means of retaining what she may yet preserve from the wreck of her former possessions.[13]

The Secretary of State sent letters to the ministers of Russia, France, and England, asking them to exercise their influence to convince the Spanish government to recognize the Spanish American republics and terminate the conflict. These letters emphasized that Spain would benefit by a recognition of her defeat, since continued attempts to regain her empire would only result in the additional losses of Cuba and Puerto Rico. At the same time, the United States reemphasized to France and England the need of maintaining the status quo in the Caribbean. Clay believed that if México or Colombia intervened in the affairs of the Caribbean, England or France would join the conflict to protect their interests. This would have meant "that in the maintenance of the Monroe Doctrine it would have been necessary to defend Spain's possession of those islands and therefore to incur the enmity of the Latin American republics" and possibly France or England.[14] On May 13, 1825, Clay wrote to the United States Minister in France asking him to "open the matter to the French government, in the hope that they [would] cooperate in the great object."[15]

Even Prince Metternich was concerned with the international problem in the Caribbean. To the Spanish Foreign Minister he recommended that Ferdinand VII endeavor "by the adoption of a mild and conciliatory system, and even, if necessary, by concessions and sacrifices," to prevent the extension of the Caribbean problem by inducing the insurgents of Mexico and Colombia to desist in their intentions."[16]

England supported the United States recommendations because she wanted to continue her friendship with the United States and feared

that the Spanish American republics might extend their operations to the British possessions in the West Indies after invading Cuba and Puerto Rico.[17] As a result of this belief, and to ease the tensions in the Caribbean, she also accepted the status quo for Cuba and Puerto Rico. Canning, supporting the American position, informed Viscount Leveson-Gower Granville, the French Foreign Minister, that England had no interest in Cuba and Puerto Rico. He also indicated that England would not support the independence of these islands "by receiving any overture which might be made from any party in those colonies desirous of throwing off the dominion of Spain."[18] Canning, however, indicated further that he supported the continuing attachment of those islands to the Mother Country for the sake of Spain herself and the general peace of the world.

France also accepted the views of the United States concerning the status quo in the Caribbean. On January 10, 1825, James Brown, the United States Minister to France, informed the Secretary of State that the French government "appeared to concur entirely in the view which I took of the subject."[19] France, however, was more concerned with the British view than with the United States position. During the summer of 1825, a large French fleet had visited the Caribbean prompting much speculation about the French government's intentions. The United States protested immediately to France, insisting that the United States already had an American squadron for the suppression of piracy and other beneficial service for all nations in the Caribbean; another fleet was not needed.[20] On October 25, 1825, the United States also informed the French government that "we could not consent to the occupation of those islands by any other European power than Spain under any

contingency whatever."[21]

All three powers were jealous or suspicious of one another. England distrusted France perhaps more than she distrusted the United States. The French squadron's visit to the West Indies had considerably excited the British government and drawn protests from Canning. He became very angry and at once demanded an explanation from the French government. The Baron de Damas, the French Foreign Minister, replied that the Governor of Martinique had been the official responsible. He had ordered the French squadron to convoy Spanish troop transports to the Caribbean.[22]

The Governor of Martinique had been authorized, should the occasion arise, to intervene with French military forces in Cuba and Puerto Rico to protect the interests of Spain against the separatists of these islands.[23] England believed that the French intentions in the Caribbean were a direct violation of the Polignac Memorandum[24] and Chateaubriand's pledge in November, 1823, that France would not interfere with any revolution in the Spanish American colonies.

The concern of the United States as to the designs of France were as equally emphatic as those of England. According to Harold W. V. Temperley, Adams "was not the man patiently to suffer this, and he prepared vigorously to resist, in case of a French attack on Cuba."[25] The United States and England began negotiations on the subject of French interference in the Caribbean. The result of these discussions was the recommendation of a Tripartite Agreement.[26] The United States also invoked the aid of Russia, assuming that the Tzar, as leader of the Holy Alliance, would exercise a strong influence in the affair.

Russia also accepted the United States policy concerning the <u>status</u>

quo in the Caribbean. On May 10, 1825, Henry Clay instructed the United States minister in Russia to influence the Tsar Alexander I to induce Spain to end the hostilities in Spanish America and recognize the independence of her colonies. The Russian monarch accepted the suggestion and instructed his envoy in Madrid "to direct the attention of the government of Spain to the fact that a significant change had taken place in Spanish America;[27] one which required an accommodation by the government of Ferdinand VII.

Russia's concern was not the danger involved in an attack from México and Colombia but rather the use of force by the United States to impose a military solution to a political problem. As a result, Count Nesselrode wrote to the Russian Minister in the United States that "Mr. Adams had declared--that if the islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico were endangered to the extreme of affecting American power, the United States would be forced to establish her authority there."[28]

By involving Russia in the political affairs of the Caribbean, however, the United States had committed a serious blunder. Canning called this action "a desperate move."[29] Russia, according to Canning, was inalterable in her views concerning republicanism; as a result, she could not have given serious consideration to the plight of the United States. "The United States," wrote Canning, "are grievously mistaken if they imagine that the Emperor of Russia is upon this, so far as to be induced to use the influence which he possesses."[30]

Russia could not have taken any steps without a previous understanding with her allies. For that reason she did not approach Spain with the vigor that the United States expected. "All that the Emperor desires, as a friend of the King of Spain," informed the Russian

government, "is that this issue should be discussed in his councils with the care and the impartiality that it deserves."[31]

The involvement of Russia hardened the Spanish determination to continue the struggle in Spanish America. This action was contrary to the original purpose of the United States. The Spanish government, which was seeking a respite to relieve the pressure of England, France, and the United States, saw in the Russian intervention a way to avoid making a decision. Frederick Lamb, the British Minister in Spain, informed Canning on February 25, 1826, that the Spanish Foreign Minister

> ...has constantly stated that, the Government of the United States, being better acquainted with American affairs than any other, and having applied to Russia for her intervention rather than to any other Power, it is impossible for Spain to act without consulting her in the question.[32]

The failure of American diplomacy in Europe was not entirely detrimental to United States interests. On August 20, 1825, Count Nesselrode submitted a note to the United States government expressing his appreciation for the generous solicitude of that nation for the rights of Spain in her islands in the West Indies. In that note, Nesselrode also commented that Russia wanted the United States "to use their influence to disconcert every enterprise against the islands of Cuba and Porto Rico."[33] The United States hastened to comply with the wishes of the Russian government. As a consequence, Secretary of State Clay, by the expressed order of the President, addressed to the ministers of Colombia and México residing in Washington, official letters recommending a suspension of every hostile action against Cuba and Puerto Rico.[34]

For the United States, then, either Cuba or Puerto Rico must continue under the colonial control of Spain or, in the event of the termination of Spanish sovereignty, under the control of the United States.

In his instructions to Joel R. Poinsett, United States Minister to Mexico, Secretary of State Clay expressed these views very clearly:

> Although the United States has no desire to acquire Cuba yet, if that island must be attached to any American state, the law of its position demands that it be attached to us. Any effort of México or Colombia to seize it would be regarded with apprehension, and attempts at domination by European powers would be a just cause of alarm.[35]

This policy resulted from the vital importance of Cuba and Puerto Rico to the security of the United States and to the protection of the commercial hegemony in the Caribbean. It had begun to take shape since 1810 and, in accordance with historian Ludwell Lee Montague, it "accords with a maxim almost as unchanging as a law of mathematics or physics. That maxim is the domination of the area at least to the extent deemed necessary to prevent its domination by any other first rate power."[36]

It is interesting to note that the United States government, "which had rejected the idea of European interference in New World affairs in Monroe's famous utterance,"[37] now appealed to England, Russia, and France, Old World powers, "to employ their moral and diplomatic efforts to maintain the status quo"[38] in the Caribbean. By inviting the interference of the European Powers in the political affairs of the Caribbean, the United States had violated its own "noninterference" principle enunciated in the Monroe Doctrine. Despite this doctrine, the United States wanted the European powers "to become involved in a movement to prevent the independence of an American area. The Adams-Clay policy was nothing less than a call for European aid to keep México and Colombia from aiding Cuba and Puerto Rico to achieve independence."[39]

FOOTNOTES

[1]Foner, Vol. I, p. 156.

[2]Clay to Everett, April 13, 1826, in Manning, Diplomatic Correspondence, Vol. I, pp. 271-272.

[3]Clay to Everett, April 27, 1825, American State Papers, Foreign Relations, Vol. V, pp. 866-867; British and Foreign State Papers, 1822-1823, Vol. XIII (London: Ridway and Sons, 1850-59), p. 430.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Clay to Middleton, May 10, 1825, American State Papers, Foreign Relations, Vol. V, p. 848; British and Foreign State Papers, Vol. XIII, p. 403.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Middleton to Count Nesselrode, Russian Foreign Minister, July 2, 1825, in ibid., p. 917.

[8]Foner, Vol. I, p. 166.

[9]See Núñez Jimenez, p. 461. Also see Foner, Vol. I, p. 166; Emilio Roig de Leuchsenring, "The American State Has Always Been an Enemy to Cuban Independence," Colección Histórica Cubana (1956), Habana, p. 56; Emilio Roig de Leuchsenring, Bolívar, el Congreso Interamericano de Panamá, en 1826, y la independencia de Puerto Rico (Habana: Oficina del Historiador de la Ciudad, 1956), pp. 33-50; Luis Araquistain, La agonía antillana: el imperialismo yanqui en el mar Caribe (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1928), pp. 39-103; Archivo Histórico Diplomático Mexicano, Un esfuerzo de México por la independencia de Cuba (Mexico, D. F.: Publicaciones de la Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores, 1930), pp. 115-175. It is interesting to note that Puerto Rican scholars have not studied the impact of United States policy in the Puerto Rican independence movement during this time. Except for Professors Monclova and Figueroa, most of these scholars treat this period from a very conservative viewpoint. They normally underrate all revolutionary attempts that occurred during 1810-1830 and assert that autonomy was the real goal of the Puerto Ricans. This writer disagrees with that position.

[10]Francisco de Zea Bermúdez to Hugh Nelson, United States Minister to Spain, July 13, 1825, U. S. Congress, Senate, 32d Cong., 1st Sess., Executive Document No. 12, pp. 14-16.

[11]Foner, Vol. I, p. 157.

[12]Everett to Secretary of State, October 20, 1825, American State Papers, Foreign Relations, Vol. V, p. 796.

[13]Clay to Everett, April 27, 1825, American State Papers, Foreign Relations, Vol. V, p. 917.

[14]Bemis, p. 135.

[15]Clay to James Brown, United States Minister to France, May 13, 1825, in James F. Hopkins, ed., The Papers of Henry Clay, Vol. IV, p. 372.

[16]Sir Henry Wellesley to George Canning, December 20, 1823, in Webster, Vol. II, doc. F. O. 7/179, p. 19.

[17]Lockey, p. 356.

[18]Canning to Viscount Granville, British Minister to France, July 12, 1825, doc. F. O. 27/328, No. 411, in Webster, Vol. II, pp. 184-185). For a detailed analysis of British foreign policy concerning the Caribbean see H. W. V. Temperley's "The Later American Policy of George Canning," American Historical Review, Vol. XI (1906), pp. 779-797.

[19]James Brown, United States Minister to France to Clay, January 10, 1826, American State Papers, Foreign Relations, Vol. V, p. 881.

[20]Clay to Brown, October 25, 1825, in ibid., p. 855.

[21]Ibid., p. 856.

[22]H. W. V. Temperley, The Foreign Policy of Canning, 1822-27 (Hamden: Archon Books), p. 170.

[23]Ibid. See also H. W. V. Temperley, "Instructions to Donzelot, Governor of Martinique, 17 December 1823," English Historical Review, Vol. XLI (1926), pp. 583-587. This instructions, according to Temperley, had been approved by the representatives of the Holy Alliance.

[24]The Polignac Memorandum was an agreement between France and England in which France disclaimed any part or desire to act against the colonies of Spain by force of arms. This agreement had been signed two months before the Monroe declaration of December, 1823.

[25]Temperley, Foreign Policy of Canning, p. 170; "Later American Policy of George Canning," American Historical Review, p. 791.

[26]See pp. 108-109.

[27]William S. Robertson, "Russia and the Emancipation of Spanish America, 1816-1826," Hispanic American Historical Review, Vol. XXI (1941), p. 220.

[28]"Correspondence of the Russian Ministers in Washington, 1818-

1825," American Historical Review, Vol. XVIII, Nos. 2 and 3, January and April, 1913), p. 562.

[29]Rufus King, United States Minister to England, to Clay, August 9, 1825, American State Papers, Foreign Relations, Vol. VI, p. 246.

[30]George Canning to Rufus King (Confidential), August 7, 1825, Doc. F. O. 115/45, No. 605, in Webster, Vol. II, p. 320.

[31]Robertson, "Russia and the Emancipation of Spanish America," p. 219.

[32]Frederick Lamb, British Minister to Spain (Confidential), February 2, 1826, Doc. F. O. 72/314, No. 571, in Webster, Vol. II, p. 460.

[33]Count Nesselrode to Middleton, August 20, 1825, American State Papers, Foreign Relations, Vol. V, p. 850; Middleton to Count Nesselrode, February 27/Mar 11, 1826, MS., Dispatches from Russia, Vol. X, in Manning, Diplomatic Correspondence, Vol. III, p. 1879.

[34]Clay to Jose María Salazar, Colombian Minister to the United States, December 20, 1825, American State Papers, Foreign Relations, Vol. V, p. 851. A similar letter was addressed to the Mexican Minister to the United States on the same day.

[35]Clay to Poinsett, March 26, 1825, Manning, Diplomatic Correspondence, Vol. I, Doc. 135, pp. 229-233.

[36]Ludwell Lee Montague, Haiti and the United States, 1714-1938 (Durham: Duke University Press, 1940), p. iv.

[37]Lester D. Langley, The Cuban Policy of the United States (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1968), p. 16.

[38]Ibid.

[39]Foner, Vol. I, p. 158. The status quo served the interests of Spain and helped that nation maintain colonialism in the Caribbean until the last decade of the nineteenth century. While the "declaration of President Monroe, enforced by the well-known attitude of England, dealt the death-blow to Spanish hopes of recovering the Southern continent," the islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico, "which had remained loyal to the King, were clung to with all the greater tenacity as the sole remains of the imperial possessions." (Latané, Diplomatic Relations, p. 89).

CHAPTER VII

BOLIVAR AND THE INDEPENDENCE OF CUBA AND PUERTO RICO

In December, 1824, the revolutionary forces of Marshall Antonio José de Sucre decisively defeated the Royalists at the battle of Ayacucho, ending for all practical purposes over three hundred years of Spanish imperialism in America.[1] In 1822 the United States had officially recognized the independence of Chile, Argentina, Peru, Colombia, and México.[2] In 1825 Great Britain also recognized the new nations. The independence of Spanish America became an accomplished fact; only Cuba and Puerto Rico remained under Spanish control.

As we have seen, revolutionary forces had been active in the Caribbean since the beginning of the Spanish American wars for independence. Because their geographical isolation, the repressive measures taken by the Spanish colonial officials, the exile of the rebel leaders, and the conflicts between liberals and separatists, they have not been able to achieve their independence as had their brothers on the mainland.

Simón Bolívar, under whose glorious leadership South America became independent, had been unable to devote much attention to the struggle for liberty in the Caribbean because the wars of independence on the mainland consumed all of his available resources. Even after the battle of Ayacucho, México and Colombia were not yet able to provide the necessary military assistance for the independence movements in Cuba and

Puerto Rico. When a mission of Cuban separatists had arrived in Colombia in 1823 to seek help for the liberation of their country, the Colombian leaders "expressed great sympathy for the Cuban cause"[3] but made clear to them that the liberation of Peru took precedence over the Caribbean.[4]

Although Bolívar had not been able to assist the Caribbean revolutionary movements with direct military aid, in 1824 he had threatened an invasion of Cuba and Puerto Rico to force Spanish recognition of the Spanish American republics. On December 20, 1824, Bolívar wrote to General Santander about this threat. "I think is advisable," Bolívar wrote, "that the Colombian government make Spain understand that if she does not...make peace, the same troops will go straight to Havana and Puerto Rico."[5]

By 1825 the military situation had improved considerably in Spanish America. As a result, Bolívar now turn his attention to the Caribbean, where the separatists in Cuba and Puerto Rico had renewed their efforts for independence after the return of Ferdinand VII to the Spanish throne. For the Spanish American republics, the liberation of these islands was a strategic necessity and a moral responsibility. Cuba and Puerto Rico had served as military bastions of the Royalist forces during the wars for independence and had been used as staging areas for Spanish military operations against the mainland. The stability and security of the new republics depended, in part, on the removal of Spain from the Caribbean.[6] If the war continued, Cuba and Puerto Rico would remain launching points for the Spanish armies or for those of the Holy Alliance, if the European nations came to aid Spain. Cuba and Puerto Rico had also become a heaven and refuge of loyal creoles and peninsulars who had escaped from

Spanish America after the arrival of the liberating armies.[7] These people posed an extremely dangerous threat to Bolívar; their potential for subversion increased with the arrival of new Spanish troops in the Caribbean.[8]

In the spring of 1822, following United States recognition of the new republics, General Francisco Morales, commander-in-chief of the Spanish forces, had established a blockade of the Venezuelan coast with the help of Spanish privateers from Puerto Rico.[9] The vessels raided all neutral ships going to Venezuela and Colombia; they also attacked towns and villages along the north coast of South America. Their activities so shocked the United States that the American newspapers urged the government to use force against them. These privateers and the blockade imposed by General Morales had caused considerable problems to Bolívar, delaying for many months the end of the struggle in South America.

When a French squadron visited the Caribbean in 1825 to convoy Spanish reinforcements to Cuba and Puerto Rico, Bolívar believed that it was a part of an expedition dispatched by the Holy Alliance to reestablish Spanish dominance in the Western Hemisphere.[10] On October 13, 1825, he wrote to General Santander from Potosí:

> I had news from General Carreño at the Isthmus. He informs me that a British frigate which arrived at Chagres reported that 7,000 Spaniards had reached Havana, convoyed by two French vessels carrying a cargo of arms which had been unloaded in Havana. This incident reveals that the French government is in _Buonaparte_ with the Spaniards in their usual treacherous fashion....General Carreño is accordingly asking General Castillo for troops and, because of this threat, I have this very day ordered General Salom to send to the Isthmus 1,300 infantrymen and 100 cavalrymen from the troops besieging Callao, who are now accustomed to a warm climate. General Carreño has already received, or soon will receive, the _Junín_ battalion and the squadron of grenadiers.[11]

Fearing an attack on Cartagena by either the French or the Spanish, Bolívar moved his troops to the north. When the attack failed to materialize, however, he chose these troops to lead an invasion of Cuba and Puerto Rico. The uncertainty of French or Spanish designs in the Caribbean convinced Bolívar that the Spaniards had to be expelled from Cuba and Puerto Rico.

México held similar views. The Spanish forces, still holding the Mexican stronghold at San Juan de Ulúa, were being supported by the Captain-General of Cuba. They were causing considerable damage to Veracruz and nearby Mexican towns. They also obstructed local and international trade through the port of Veracruz and threatened the stability of eastern México.[12] For México also the expulsion of the Spaniards from the Caribbean became a strategic necessity.

The arrival of the French naval squadron in Cuba during the summer of 1825 caused considerable alarm in México; her concern was not unfounded. Spain's plans for the reconquest of her lost empire gave precedence to México because of her rich silver mines, her large peninsular population, and the proximity to Cuba.[13] Since the beginning of the year, México had received reports that Spain and France were organizing a large expedition to protect the Caribbean and attack the Mexican coast.[14] When the French squadron arrived, the President of México requested that England and the United States intervene to defend the Mexican territory by invoking the provisions of the Monroe Doctrine, perhaps, the first instance of application of this principle to the Caribbean. The United States, however, rejected the request because the Mexican note implied "that the declaration of Monroe gave México the right to demand that the United States interfere on behalf

of the new state."[15] This action would have clearly violated American neutrality. England, however, as indicated previously, intervened in the affair by condemning France for her action.[16]

These considerations, therefore, demanded the intervention of the Spanish American republics in the political affairs of the Caribbean. Aware of the separatist movements in Cuba and Puerto Rico, the new nations promised to help the revolutionary cause in the Caribbean.[17] In addition to their strategic and military interests, moral considerations also influenced their decision. Bolívar realized that the independence of Spanish America would not be secure while Cuba and Puerto Rico remained under the yoke of colonialism.[18] The concept of freedom from colonialism was, for Bolívar, an ideal encompassing all matters and all people of the Western Hemisphere. He had expressed those views as early as 1816.[19]

To liberate the Spanish Caribbean colonies both México and Colombia would rely principally on creole officers from the Caribbean who were serving in their armies. These officers who had fought for the freedom of México, Venezuela, and Colombia longed for the independence of their own countries. Many were already serving as liaisons between the separatists and the governments of the mainland. Bolívar and Francisco de Paula Santander, the Vice President of Colombia, selected Marshall Antonio Valero de Bernabé, a Puerto Rican, to command part of the proposed invasion of Cuba and Puerto Rico.[20] Valero de Bernabé had become the principal spokesman for the Puerto Rican revolutionary movement in South America.[21] Aniceto Iznaga, José Agustín Arango, and General De las Heras represented the Cuban independence movement. Other separatist groups were actively working for the same purpose in New York,

Philadelphia, Baltimore, México City, Guayaquil, and other locations.[22] All these revolutionaries coordinated their activities with the separatists in Cuba and Puerto Rico for the proposed invasion.[23]

Valero had planned for an invasion of Puerto Rico as early as 1823. His project called for an expedition from Caracas and La Guayra under the command of General Carlos Soublette, one of Bolivar's best lieutenants. The military force would consist of two infantry battalions totalling 1,500 men, one cavalry unit of 500 men, and sufficient war material to arm 4,000 men from the separatist forces operating in Puerto Rico. The invading army would be escorted by a war sloop and a brigantine which, after reaching the island, would blockade the landing site.[24] The plan called for an initial attack upon the northern coast of Puerto Rico, followed by an assault on San Juan by 2,000 men. Valero did not expect the Spanish force to surrender immediately. To prevent the reinforcement of the city, he planned to obstruct all communications between the capital and the rural zones. Another force of 300 men was to be delayed in the interior of the island, where Valero expected to receive help from the separatists.[25]

Valero's plans for the liberation of Puerto Rico, however, had to wait until the revolutionaries defeated the Spanish forces on the mainland. When the Spanish forces were finally defeated, Bolívar preferred to launch a large scale invasion of Cuba and Puerto Rico in cooperation with México. He therefore rejected Valero's suggestion of an independent operation.[26]

By the end of 1824, the emancipation of Spanish America was nearly complete. Confident of a victory over the remaining Royalist strongholds, Bolívar began to move contingents of troops to Panamá and

Venezuela for the proposed invasion of Cuba and Puerto Rico, the defense of the northern coast of South America, and the maintenance of political stability in the new northern republics.

By 1825 the Spanish American leaders were busy planning the liberation of Cuba and Puerto Rico. On April 9, 1825, General Antonio José de Sucre informed General Soublette that he was organizing an army of 7,000 men for the expedition.[27] Bolívar informed General Francisco Rodriguez del Toro on September 25, 1825, that he had transferred 1,600 men from the Junín and the Ayacucho battalions to Panamá.[28] He expected to dispatch another contingent of troops from the Callao battalion within two months.[29] On October, 1825, Bolívar also ordered General Salom in Peru to send 1,400 men to Panamá, including the Callao battalion under the command of Marshall Valero and a company of cavalry.[30] These particular units had been selected because they were accustomed to the tropical conditions of the Caribbean. The health of these soldiers was one of Bolívar's principal concerns. As a result he ordered many of these troops to Turbaco, Ocaña, Valencia, and Caracas, in order to accustom themselves to the warm climate.[31]

Undoubtedly, the Venezuelan and New Granadan armies were the best fighting units in America at that time, and they could have easily defeated the Spanish forces defending the Caribbean islands. The Spanish American navies were poor, however, and depended primarily on privateers for naval operations. To resolve this problem, both Colombia and México purchased several war vessels from Sweden to form a naval squadron sufficiently strong to convoy the invading troops.

México had promised to assist the Cuban revolutionary exiles in achieving their independence. José A. Torrens, the Mexican

representative in Washington, discussed with his government the proposed expedition of Colombia. He believed that "if Mexico would join Colombia they could together undertake the enterprise which perhaps would result in the liberty of the islands and dislodge the Spaniards from their last stronghold."[32] On these recommendations, Mexican President Guadelupe Victoria dispatched General Anastasio Bustamante to Colombia with a proposal for an unified invasion of Cuba.[33]

Before taking any action in the Caribbean, however, Bolívar wanted to know what the response of England and France would be to an extension of the Spanish American war to the Caribbean. He was well familiar with the interests of the European powers in this area, especially those of England. "The Spaniards are no longer a danger to us," he wrote to General Santander on May 20, 1825, "but the English are very much so, as they, being omnipotent, are therefore to be feared."[34]

Colombia had previously begun conversations with France to determine that nation's position. José M. Lanz, the Colombian representative in Paris, approached the government

> ...to obtain explanations...on two matters of policy. If Colombia and her American allies should undertake to liberate Cuba and Puerto Rico from Spanish rule, would France take any active part against them? If French soldiers should take possession of certain Spanish colonies to preserve them from anarchy, would those soldiers join the Royalist forces against the liberating armies of the Spanish American republics?[35]

These inquiries indicate the concern of Bolívar and other Spanish American leaders for the attitude of the European powers toward the liberation of Cuba and Puerto Rico.

General Santander, the Vice President of Colombia, was less concerned with the international implications of the proposed invasion. He contracted a loan with England, "mostly with the purpose of

descending on the islands," to purchase ships and armaments in Europe.[36] By the end of 1825, he had gathered "a considerable expeditionary force in Cartagena" which was ready to sail at any given moment.[37] This expedition could have liberated Cuba and Puerto Rico during the spring of 1826.

Colombian and Mexican plans for the expedition against Cuba and Puerto Rico could not be kept secret. The National Gazette of Philadelphia published a letter from a member of the Colombian Navy asserting that "10,000 men and a strong squadron were ready to liberate Cuba."[38] Niles' Weekly Register predicted that "the expedition will be easily accomplished since the people of this island are prepared to give a favorable reception to the invading forces which may soon be expected from México and Colombia."[39] But the newspaper, strongly opposing the operation, continued that

> ...there is every reason to believe that México and Colombia are preparing a very formidable expedition to divest Spain on the possessions of the island of Cuba, which we suppose, will be easily accomplished. But if the expedition shall be resisted, and the island become a theatre for military operations, we may make a fearful calculation of the result, from the excess of the colored population, always ready to take any advantage for their own liberation. The scenes that were acted in Haiti will be reacted in Cuba, sooner or later, and the present contemplated expedition may only hasten events that must happen.[40]

The United States government did not welcome the news of the proposed invasion. The expedition threatened the policy of status quo. While the United States had been aware as early as 1823 of the intentions of the Spanish American republics and had conducted extensive diplomatic talks to prevent the fulfillment of Bolívar's plans, it was clear that the problem had reached a critical point. The combined revolutionary forces of México and Colombia, assisted by the

separatists, were ready to end Spanish rule in Cuba and Puerto Rico. The slaves also would be emancipated. The possibility that either France or England were poised to take advantage of the situation appeared dangerously certain. The United States, therefore, requested México and Colombia, in "the interest of peace," to suspend the expedition.[41]

On December 20, 1825, Secretary of State Henry Clay sent identical notes to the ministers of México and Colombia in the United States requesting that

> ...under the circumstances, the President believes that a suspension, for a limited time, of the sailing of the expedition against Cuba and Porto Rico, which is understood to be fitting out in Carthagena, or of any other expedition which may be contemplated against either of those islands, by Colombia or México, would be salutatory influence on the great work of peace.[42]

While the note was conciliatory in nature, it added that such a suspension would prevent the intervention of other nations in the affairs of the Caribbean and the danger of a conflict of interests between the United States and the Spanish American republics. Clay's note stated very clear that "essential interests" would entertain certain considerations and duties which the nation will be forced to fulfill in the event of "the contemplated invasion of those islands."[43]

Such a suspension, according to Secretary Clay, would have afforded sufficient time for the United States to ascertain Spain's intent in regard to the conflict in Spanish America, and would have provided the Emperor of Russia with the necessary support to convince Spain to end the war.[44] The Mexican and Colombian governments, unaware of the extent of the Russian participation in the peace negotiations, accepted the United States declaration "that there was reason to believe the Emperor

of Russia was exerting his friendly influence to end the war."[45] Russian interest, however, was limited to protecting the Caribbean islands for Spain.[47]

The United States government was certain that a liberating invasion of Cuba and Puerto Rico by the armies of the Spanish American republics, supported by the separatists, would be successful. Such a result would not be in the best interests of the United States.[48] Secretary Clay had expressed these views to Henry Middleton seven months before. Clay had indicated that

> ...the success of the enterprise is, by no means, improbable. Their [Colombia and Mexico] proximity to the islands, and their armies being perfectly acclimated will give to the united efforts of the [two] republics great advantages. And, if with these be taken into the estimate, the important and well known fact that a large portion of the inhabitants of these Islands [the separatists] is predisposed to a separation from Spain, and would form a powerful auxiliary of the Republican armies, <u>their success becomes almost certain</u>.[47]

Even the Spanish colonial government in Cuba had recognized that the proposed invasion could not be prevented. Two days before Clay's communication to Middleton, Pablo Obregón, the Mexican Minister to the United States, had informed the Mexican Foreign Relations Secretary that

> ...the Ayuntamiento of Havana sent a representation to Madrid to ask for help in retaining the island. Lately, due to the fear [of invasion], the same group have recommended the immediate recognition of the Spanish American republics as the only way available for saving the island.[48]

During this time the situation in Cuba and Puerto Rico was critical for Spain. Americans, Europeans, and creoles residing there "look forward, some with joy, and others with fear, to an invasion of the islands."[49] In Puerto Rico, Governor De La Torre declared an emergency, intensified defense efforts, alerted all the military forces on the island, and even retained 1,300 men from a military contingent which was

going to Cuba under the command of Marshall Jose Miranda Cabezón for defense of the island.[50]

On the other hand, the United States had begun to consider military action in the Caribbean to prevent the invasion of Cuba and Puerto Rico if diplomatic efforts failed to achieve the desired results. Commodore David R. Porter, the commander of the naval squadron in the Caribbean, received authorization to intensify precautionary activities near Puerto Rico and to report any suspected movements of foreign vessels in the area. In spite of the fact that the South American navies had become better organized and the distinction between legitimate privateering and piracy was now clearer, Commodore Porter was also authorized to land in unpopulated areas of Puerto Rico, to pursue pirates if necessary.[51] Even President Monroe had previously considered blockading Cuba and Puerto Rico to protect American interests and had requested congressional power "to be exercised according to his discretion, and as circumstances may imperiously require."[53]

On February 11, 1826, the American Minister to Russia made it clear to Count Nesselrode, the Russian Foreign Secretary, that the United States was considering intervention in the Caribbean. Henry Middleton informed the Russian government that

> ...in case of the invasion of these islands by México or Colombia, and of the troublesome contingencies that may result from it, other Governments [meaning the United States] may perhaps see themselves compelled by their interests and their duty to interfere.[54]

He based his position on the fact that six days after the diplomatic exchange with the ministers of Colombia and México, Secretary Clay had informed him that

> ...if the war against the islands should be conducted by those Republics in a desolating manner; if contrary to all expectations they should put arms into the hands of one race of the inhabitants to destroy the lives of another; if, in short, they should countenance and encourage excesses and examples, the contagion of which, from our neighborhood, would be dangerous to our quiet and safety, the Government of the United States might feel itself called upon to interpose its power.[55]

On December 30, 1825, Secretary Clay instructed Richard C. Anderson, the United States Minister to Colombia, to inform the Colombian government that the United States opposed any military action in the Caribbean. Clay also instructed Anderson to bring a suspension of any expedition being prepared against Cuba and Puerto Rico and to convince the Colombian government, by direct and friendly explanations, of the danger involved in such course of action.[56] A similar letter, adapted for the Mexican government, was sent to Joel R. Poinsett, the United States Minister to México.[57]

On March 1, 1826, Anderson, in spite of his objections to American policy in the Caribbean, informed the Colombian government of his instructions. In his diary, he later wrote:

> Went to see [James] Henderson, [British] Consul Genl. & [Jose Rafael] Revenga. Had a long conversation with him concerning the attempt of this Govt. & México to make Cuba and P. Rico independent. I am instructed to dissuade this Govt. from the attempt on account of the fear that those islands cannot maintain their independence & a fear that the slaves will get possession. I do not like much my business. I think that every belligerent has a right to annoy & distress its enemy in every practicable way.[58]

Both México and Colombia received coldly the United States request for a suspension of the planned attack upon Cuba and Puerto Rico. When the Mexican Congress approved in January, 1826, a resolution condemning United States interference in the Caribbean, "Clay dropped the diplomatic language and instructed Poinsett to warn the Mexican

government that the United States would not permit Spain's expulsion from Cuba."[59] These warnings resulted in the postponement of the planned expedition which would have certainly liberated Cuba and Puerto Rico during the third decade of the nineteenth century.

México and Colombia did not want an armed conflict with the United States immediately after years of savage fighting for the independence. Their insistence on liberating Cuba and Puerto Rico would have upset the status quo in the Caribbean. This situation would have been detrimental to American strategic and economic interests; and, undoubtedly, would have resulted in a war with the United States.

FOOTNOTES

[1]The battle occurred on December 9, 1824, on the plains of Ayacucho, south of Lima, Peru. The battle was won by Sucre while Bolívar was away seeking reinforcements. This was the last great battle for South American independence, although the last of the Spanish troops were not driven from Callao until January, 1826. In México, the Royalist forces were driven from their last stronghold, the castle on San Juan de Ulua, at the entrance of Veracruz, in September, 1825.

[2]The Republic of Haiti was not recognized, in spite of the fact that she had been the first republic established in Latin America. The United States wanted no black republics in the Caribbean Sea. The Monroe Doctrine did not embrace Haiti either.

[3]Foner, Vol. I, p. 152.

[4]Evelio Rodríguez Lendian, "El Congreso de Panama y la independencia de Cuba," Revista de la Facultad de Letras y Ciencias, Universidad de La Habana, Habana (1911), Vol. XII, pp. 15-16.

[5]Bolivar to Santander, December 20, 1824, quoted in Madáriaga, Bolívar (English translation), p. 534.

[6]Emeterio Santovenia, Bolívar y las antillas hispanas (Madrid: Editorial Espasa-Calpe, 1935), pp. 108-113.

[7]Madáriaga, pp. 542-543.

[8]Ibid.

[9]Spain immitated the activities of the Spanish American republics by issuing "diplomas" to privateers to raid the commerce and trade of these republics. The authority came directly from the Spanish Foreign Ministry, leaving blank the name of the captain and the vessel, which were filled by the Governor of Puerto Rico (American State Papers, Naval Affairs, Vol. II, pp. 278-279. The activities of these privateers caused considerable problems to the United States, to the extent that the Congress approved legislation to suppress their activities. Most of the correspondence of the United States concerning the activities of the "Caribbean pirates" refer to these privateers.

[10]Santovenia, p. 111.

[11]Bolívar to Santander, October 13, 1825, in Vicente Lecuna and Harold A. Bierck, eds., Selected Writings of Bolivar, Vol. II (New York: The Colonial Press, 1951), p. 537.

[12]Luis Chávez Orozco, Un esfuerzo de México por la independencia de Cuba (Mexico: D. F., Archivo Historico Diplomatico Mexicano, Publicaciones de la Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores, 1930), p. xx.

[13]Spain launched a feeble invasion from Cuba several years afterwards, under the command of General Isidro Barradas, to attempt the reconquest of the country. This invasion was defeated by General Antonio López de Santa Anna, who thereby gained great prestige with the Mexican people.

[14]For a detailed description of these reports, see William R. Manning, Early Diplomatic Relations Between the United States and México (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1916), p. 117n.

[15]Ibid., pp. 120-121.

[16]See pp. 137-138, this thesis.

[17]President Victoria of México had authorized the formation of the Junta Promotora de la Liberatad de Cuba, composed of Cuban exiles and Mexican volunteers. Shortly after its formation, this group was expanded to include "the principal officers of the Mexican army and navy and the most distinguished members of both houses of Congress." (Poinsett to Clay, September 13, 1825, quoted in Foner, Vol. I, pp. 153-154.) Similar groups were organized in Colombia and Venezuela by Cuban and Puerto Rican Separatists. (See "Documentos de José Aniceto Iznaga y de A. de las Heras y José Agustin Arango referentes al proyecto de conquistar la independencia de las islas de Cuba y Puerto Rico mediante la cooperación del Libertador Simón Bolívar," in Emilio Roig de Leuchsenring, Bolivar, el congreso interamericano de Panama, en 1826, y la independencia de Cuba y Puerto Rico (La Habana: Municipio de la Habana, Oficina del Historiador de la ciudad, 1956), pp. 139-162. Also, Mariano Abril, Un heroe de la independencia de España y America: Antonio Valero (San Juan: Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña, 1971), pp. 141-152.

[18]Ibid.

[19]This letter, in its entirety, can be found in Roig de Leuschsenring, pp. 82-99. The reader is cautioned about this letter. Many versions exist, both in English and Spanish. Most of these versions, however, are only extracts or are incomplete. Lecuna and Roig de Leuchsenring offer the most complete versions.

[20]Antonio Valero de Bernabé was born in Fajardo, Puerto Rico, on October 26, 1790. During the war against Napoleon, he fought in Spain being codecorated with the Cruz Laureada de San Fernando, the highest military honor of Spain and the Cinta y Cruz de Zaragoza. He was named Benemérito de la Patria en Grado Heróico y Eminente and was promoted to Colonel at the age of nineteen. In 1821 he returned to America as a member of the staff of Viceroy Juan O'Donojú. While in México, he became one of the principal agents of the Spanish viceroy in his discussions with Agustin de Iturbide, which resulted in the Treaty of Córdova and the independence of Mexico. He served in México as a Colonel in the

Mexican army, but being dissatisfied with Iturbide's ascension to the throne, he emigrated to South America to serve under Bolívar. There he was promoted to Field Marshall, participating in many engagements against the Spaniards, including the siege of Callao (Abril, Antonio Valero: Un heroe de la independencia de España y America.)

[21]José Aniceto Iznaga, "Peregrinación Patriótica a Colombia," in Roig de Leuchsenring, pp. 139-151.

[22]Ibid., pp. 139-141.

[23]Monclova, Vol. I, pp. 152, 178, 181, 186, and 187.

[24]Jorge Quintana, "El plan para la independencia de Puerto Rico del General Antonio Valero de Bernabé," Revista del Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña, San Juan (1963), núm. 18, pp. 7-11.

[25]Ibid., p. 11. The original of this plan is located in the Venezuelan National Archives, Caracas, under Revolución y Gran Colombia, Proceres y Servidores (Ilustres Proceres, 1810-1824), Vol. XCVI, folio 161. Until it was found by Quintana in 1963, its whereabouts were unknown by Puerto Rican historians. Valero plans do not appear in any history of Puerto Rico.

[26]The plans for this expedition were kept secret by Bolívar. Only a few individuals knew of their existence, among them, Sucre, Santander, and Páez. In his autobiography, Páez cites Bolívar's early correspondence with him concerning the proposed expedition. According to Páez, the Junín, the best and proudest battalion of Colombia, was going to spreadhead the invasion of Cuba and Puerto Rico. This correspondence can be found in Blanco, Documentos para la historia de la vida publica del Libertador, Documents 2639 and 2665, Vol. 11, pp. 79, 125.

[27]Roig de Leuchsenring, p. 60.

[28]Bolívar to General Francisco Rodríguez del Toro, September 25, 1825, in Vicente Lecuna, Cartas del Libertador, Vol. XI (New York: The Colonial Press, 1948), p. 285.

[29]Ibid.

[30]Bolívar to General Bartolomé Salom, October, 1825, Blanco, Documentos para la historia de la vida pública del Libertador, Vol. X, p. 141. Valero was the commander of the Callao.

[31]Bolívar to Santander, May 20, 1825, in Lecuna, Selected Writings, Vol. 2, p. 499.

[32]Manning, Early Diplomatic Relations, p. 99.

[33]Ibid., p. 101.

[34]Lecuna and Bierck, Selected Writings, p. 499.

[35]William S. Robertson, France and Latin American Independence (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1939), p. 349.

[36]Madariaga, p. 535.

[37]Ibid.

[38]National Gazette, Dec. 16, 1825, quoted in Foner, Vol. I, p. 154.

[39]Niles' Weekly Register, December 24, 1825.

[40]Ibid.

[41]Clay to José María Salazar, December 20, 1825, American State Papers, Foreign Relations, Vol. V, p. 851. A similar note was sent to the Mexican Minister in the United States.

[42]Clay to José María Salazar, Colombian Minister to the United States, December 20, 1825, American State Papers, Foreign Relations, Vol. V, p. 851.

[43]Ibid.

[44]Ibid.

[45]Ibid.

[46]Foner, Vol. 1, p. 155.

[47]Adams, Memoirs, Vol. VII, p. 88.

[48]Clay to Middleton, May 10, 1825, American State Papers, Foreign Relations, Vol. V, p. 848.

[49]Thomas B. Robertson, United States Agent in Cuba, to Clay, April 20, 1825, Hopkins, The Papers of Henry Clay, Vol. 4, p. 272.

[50]Monclova, Vol. I, p. 184.

[51]Lockey, Pan Americanism, p. 177.

[52]Adams, Memoirs, Vol. VI, p. 434.

[53]Ibid., p. 230. See also "Message from the President of the United States Transmitting Information Relative to Piratical Depredations," January 13, 1825, U. S. Congress, Senate, 18th Cong., 2d Sess., Doc. 15, p. 3.

[54]Middleton to Count Nesselrode, February 27, 1826, in Manning, Diplomatic Correspondence, Vol. III, p. 1879.

[55] Clay to Middleton, December 26, 1825, American State Papers, Foreign Relations, Vol. V, p. 850; British and Foreign State Papers, 1822-1823, Vol. XIII, p. 412. As it has been said, it is interesting to note that this declaration of official policy of the United States government was made only six days after Clay had requested the cancellation of plans for the invasion of Cuba and Puerto Rico. On March 21, 1826, as a result of a congressional debate concerning the confirmation of the American delegates to the Congress of Panamá, the President of the United States had to remove the injunction of secrecy from all the messages and documents concerning United States foreign policy in the Caribbean. The President submitted, however, only extracts of this correspondence to the Congress, as required by the congressional resolution ordering its submission to the Senate and the House of Representatives. The extracts submitted were carefully selected to prevent damaging the foreign relations of the United States with France, Great Britain, and Russia, and the political sensitivities of the Spanish American Republics. In spite of this effort, the publication of these documents caused a sensation in México, irritating President Victoria considerably. General Victoria, among other very strong expressions, said that it was treason to the cause of America on the part of an American state to bring forward a proposal for guaranteeing to Spain the islands of the Caribbean. He believed that the United States action had been ill-judged, unsolicited, and unauthorized, without even consulting any of the powers whose interests were to be so cruelly sacrificed. The United States, by insisting on a status quo in the Caribbean, had guaranteed Spain continued control of Cuba and Puerto Rico. (See H. G. Ward to Canning (Secret), May 29, 1926, Doc. 50/21, in Webster, Vol. I, pp. 508-509.

[56] Hopkins, The Papers of Henry Clay, Vol. 4, p. 958.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Alfred Tischendorf and E. Taylor Parks, eds., The Diary and Journal of Richard Clough Anderson, Jr., 1814-26 (Durham: Duke University Press, 1964), p. 245.

[59] Foner, Vol. I, p. 159.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSIONS

United States intervention in the political affairs of the Caribbean during the first three decades of the nineteenth century had serious implications for the revolutionary movements in Cuba and Puerto Rico and prevented the liberation efforts of the Spanish American republics. The maintenance of slavery in the United States, the concern for national security, the need to protect trade and commerce in the Caribbean, and Southern political leaders' desires for future territorial expansion demanded American opposition to the independence of these colonies. In addition, it was not in the best interests of the United States to allow Cuba and Puerto Rico to gain their freedom because of the possibility that either Great Britain or France would seize the islands after independence. These circumstances, it was believed, would have seriously compromised national security and damaged commercial and trade interests in the Caribbean.

When Colombia and México turned their attention to the liberation of Cuba and Puerto Rico, the United States immediately opposed their plans because they would threaten the status quo in the Caribbean. The United States expressed the views that "any effort of México or Colombia to seize or invade the Spanish possessions in the Caribbean would be regarded with apprehension."[1] Clay emphasized that any attempted conquest of Cuba and Puerto Rico by the American republics would "change the

whole character of the war against Spain."[2] Daniel Webster, in a speech delivered in the House of Representatives on April 14, 1826, warned that "such an event might justly be regarded as dangerous to ourselves, and, on that ground, call for decided and immediate interference by us."[3]

United States action prevented México and Colombia from providing the necessary assistance that the Cuban and Puerto Rican separatists needed to achieve the independence of their countries. When England, France, and Russia supported the American measures and political disturbances erupted in México and Colombia, the plans for the united Spanish American effort to liberate Cuba and Puerto Rico were canceled.

When news arrived in Caracas that the invasion had been canceled, the Cuba and Puerto Rican separatists immediately sought Bolívar's personal opinion. Bolívar informed them that the opposition of the United States and England had been the decisive factor in the suspension of the proposed invasion.[4] Bolívar feared an armed conflict between the Spanish American republics and the United States.[5] This concern influenced his decision of not interfering in the Caribbean in the spring of 1826.

The United States maintained a powerful naval squadron in the Caribbean to enforce American policies there. Several times, United States warships had assisted the Spanish authorities in capturing gunrunners and "pirates" who served the cause of independence. Even when American seamen made mistakes, such as Commodore Porter's unprovoked attack in 1825 against the eastern side of Puerto Rico,[6] the United States sided with the Spanish authorities and accepted their version of the incidents to the extent that commanders were court-martialed to satisfy Spain.[7]

The United States did not believe that either Cuba or Puerto Rico

could maintain their independence. The American government anticipated that a change in the political status of these islands would only result in racial strife between their white and the black populations. According to current opinion, the characteristics of the Cuban and Puerto Rican populations made "extremely problematic their capacity to maintain independence."[8] A declaration of independence there "would probably [have resulted] only in the afflicting repetition of the disastrous scenes of St. Domingo,"[9] where the black slaves massacred the white population after proclaiming their independence.

A similar situation, however, could not have occurred in Puerto Rico because in this island the white population outnumbered the slaves. A census taken in Puerto Rico in 1827 indicated that there were only 34,240 slaves out of a total population of 323,838.[10] These slaves could not have revolted after independence against white creoles as the United States political leaders thought. In Puerto Rico slavery was unique and there was no reason for concern with a slave insurrection. Eric Williams, describing slavery in Puerto Rico, has stated that

> ...in Puerto Rico...not only did the white population outnumber the people of colour, but the slaves constituted an infinitesimal part of the total population and free labour predominated during the regime of slavery.[11]

Secretary of State Henry Clay, President John Quincy Adams, and other members of the government strongly believed that "the population itself of these islands (Cuba and Puerto Rico) was incompetent...from its composition and its amount, to maintain self-government,"[12] therefore, they followed a policy of intervention in the affairs of the Caribbean to prevent Cuban and Puerto Rican independence, which would have disturbed the *status quo* in a zone where American interests were at stake. The American leaders, however, did not realize that the political situation

in Puerto Rico was different from that of Cuba, where the slave problem had been intensified by years of oppression. Therefore, by applying a single policy and one course of action for both islands, the United States prevented the independence of Puerto Rico.

On June 22, 1826, a Pan-American Congress convened in Panamá to outline the basis of a pact of union, association, and confederation between the republics of Spanish America. The Congress was attended by representatives of Colombia, México, Peru, and Central America. Colombia at that time consisted of the present-day republics of Ecuador, Panamá and Venezuela, as well as Colombia, and Central America included the five modern republics of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua, so that eleven of the present-day Latin American republics were represented. The United States was invited, and after an extended debate in Congress, the invitation was accepted, but the delegates failed to arrive before the meeting adjourned.

Among the purposes of the Congress was "the expediency of combining the forces of the republics, to free the islands of Puerto Rico and Cuba from the yoke of Spain, and in such case what contingent each ought to contribute for this end."[13] United States opposition, however, prevented the Congress of Panamá from reaching any agreement concerning the independence of Cuba and Puerto Rico. "The Planipotentiaries," wrote Joel Roberts Poinsett, the United States minister to México,

> ...were probably deterred from acting upon this important subject, both by the language which had been held by the president with regard to these islands, and by the inability of the Governments of México and Colombia, at this time, to undertake any expensive expedition.[14]

The opposition of the United States to the independence of Cuba and Puerto Rico or to any change in the political situation of the

Caribbean provided that nation with a strong inducement for not participating in the Congress of Panamá. The delay of the American representatives in arriving at the Congress of Panamá may have been a tactical ploy to avoid taking an official position against the plans of the Spanish American republics for the liberation of Cuba and Puerto Rico. Such a position would have offended the sensitivities and pride of the Spanish Americans. Simón Bolívar, Santander, and the Spanish American delegates were already aware of the United States position on the issue; the United States did not have to discuss or justify it.

The Puerto Rican independence leaders clearly understood that a continuation of the struggle for liberty without the help of the Spanish American republics was futile. Rebellion on the island had far less chance of success than on the mainland. The repressive measures of the Spanish colonial officials, the exile of most of the revolutionary leaders, and the factional disputes between conservatives, liberals, and separatists also affected the struggle for independence. Contrary to current beliefs, neither México nor Colombia wanted to annex Cuba or Puerto Rico after their liberation by the Spanish American republics. They only desired to assist these countries in their struggle for independence.

United States policy in the Caribbean was the result of its concern for national security, the volatile question of slavery, and the desire for territorial expansion. Most of all, however, it was a policy based upon inadequate information concerning Cuba and Puerto Rico as well as ignorance of the real intentions of France and Great Britain. As Samuel F. Bemis has so clearly stated,

> Great Britain, whose sea power was then dominant in the Caribbean as elsewhere,...had friendly relations with Spain and was a colonial power with possessions of its own in the Caribbean. Like France, it had no desire to disturb the Antillean settlement reached in the Treaty of Vienna. It was certainly not prepared to convoy an expedition to Puerto Rico, especially as Puerto Rico was a potential competitor in the weakening sugar market and not a promising outlet for British goods.[15]

As for Cuba, the British government, not the United States, acted as the real deterrent to French ambitions. The United States feared that Great Britain or France would seize Cuba and Puerto Rico after they gained independence. More importantly, the United States also sought the termination of hostilities between Spain and the Spanish American countries because of the fear that the conflict would eventually spread to its own borders. México's political instability provided a vacuum in the American Southwest, and the United States was unable to prevent attacks into the newly gained territories of Louisiana and Florida. New Orleans, a port of extreme strategic and commercial significance, was within easy reach of Havana. Peace and the status quo in the Caribbean, therefore, became a matter of great importance for the United States foreign policy in the first part of the nineteenth century.

FOOTNOTES

[1]There is a considerable amount of information on these views in the correspondence between Henry Clay and the ministers of México and Colombia between October 10, 1825, and November 2, 1825, in American State Papers, Foreign Relations, Vol. V, pp. 799-836. See also Bemis, The American Secretaries of State and their Diplomacy, Vol. IV (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1928), pp. 135-152.

[2]Bemis, American Secretaries of State and their Diplomacy, Vol. IV, p. 152.

[3]Stanislaus M. Hamilton, ed., The Writings of James Monroe, Vol. VI (New York: G. P. Putnam, 1902), p. 444.

[4]Pedro J. Guiteras, Historia de la Isla de Cuba, Vol. 2 (La Habana: Cultural, S. A., 1928), p. 92.

[5]James J. Wright, the American Consul in Santiago de Cuba wrote to Secretary Clay on July 31, 1825, that "if rummors of impending attack on this colony by Colombia be true, United States naval vessels should be ordered to protect American citizens and property," Hopkins (Papers of Henry Clay, Vol. IV, p. 563).

[6]American State Papers, Naval Affairs, Vol. III, pp. 101-103, 336-353.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Middleton, Minister to Russia, to Count Nesselrode, July 2, 1825, American State Papers, Foreign Relations, Vol. V, p. 917.

[9]Ibid.

[10]Eric Williams, From Columbus to Castro: The History of the Caribbean, 1492-1969 (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), p. 291.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Clay to Middleton, May 10, 1825, American State Papers, Foreign Relations, Vol. V, p. 916.

[13]Bemis, The American Secretaries of State and their Diplomacy, Vol. IV, p. 143. Information appeared originally in La Gaceta Oficial, a Colombian newspapers.

[14]Poinsett, Minister to México, to Clay, September 26, 1826, British and Foreign State Papers, Vol. XIII, p. 990.

[15]Samuel F. Bemis, A Diplomatic History of the United States (New York: Nery Holt and Co., 1942), p. 94.

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