

THE UNITED STATES, THE EUROPEAN POWERS, AND
THE STATUS QUO IN THE CARIBBEAN,
1810 - 1830

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Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate College
of the Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
July, 1979

Thesis
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DEDICATION

To my wife, my children, and my grandson, especially to Roxanna and Alexander, so that they can understand someday the value that our democratic institutions bestow to the search for historical truth!

PREFACE

This study concerns the historical and political factors that prevented the expansion of the Spanish American movement for independence to the Caribbean during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. It also entails an examination of the evolutionary aspects of the Cuban and Puerto Rican independence movements, a discussion of the influence exercised by the United States and the European powers in the West Indies, and an evaluation of Spain's imperial policies in the Caribbean.

An examination of the historical records of the period reveals that the influence of the United States, Great Britain, and France significantly affected the political processes of Cuba and Puerto Rico during the first three decades of the nineteenth century. During that time, the United States and the European powers struggled for commercial and political supremacy in the Caribbean as a result of the uncertainties created by the Congress of Vienna, the apparent threat to their trading interests, and the fear of imperial restoration in Spain's former colonies. This conflict prevented the independence of Cuba and Puerto Rico when local conditions, created by the instability of the peninsular government and the chaos which resulted during the wars for independence in Spanish America, were most favorable for accomplishing that goal. The struggle between the United States and the European powers for the control of the Caribbean also shaped the relations of the United States with Spanish America and the attitude of Mexico and Colombia toward American foreign policy.

In the preparation of this study numerous 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 work. The writer also wants to acknowledge his indebtedness to the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and Mr. Joe E. Hagy, for the financial aid provided that enabled the research and writing of this study; and to Dr. Norman N. Durham, Dean of the Graduate College, Oklahoma State University, for his assistance in seeking financial aid for the research.

I also wish to thank the following individuals and institutions for their invaluable assistance in locating documents for the study: Lic. Octavio Gordillo y Ortíz, Biblioteca Nacional de Mexico; Dra. Alejandra Moreno Toscano, Sr. José Ricardo Cardell, and Sr. Raymundo Ramírez, Archivo General de la Nación, Mexico; Sr. Roberto Beristain, Archivo de la Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, Mexico; Gerald K. Haines, James Byers, Kathryn M. Murphy, and Archivists Dee Cartwright, Linda Rice-Johnston, Richard Gould and Ronard Swerczek, National Archives and Library of Congress; Don Gibbs, Ann Graham, Maggie Gonzales, and especially Carmen P. Cobas, for her interest in suggesting and locating sources unknown to the writer, Latin American Collection, University of Texas at Austin; René J. Ganucheau, U. S. Federal District Court, New Orleans; and the librarians and administrative staff of the New York Public Library, Dallas Public Library, New Orleans Public Library, Biblioteca Carnegie, San Juan, P. R., and Archivo General de Puerto Rico.

A special debt of gratitude is owed to Professors H. James Henderson,

John A. Sylvester, Alexander M. Ospovat, Douglas D. Hale, and John J. Deveny, Jr., for their professional advice, guidance, and training; and to Professor Michael M. Smith, whose constant encouragement, infinite patience, and skillful direction assured the successful completion of this study. Finally, a special note of gratitude must be given to my son Enrique Ramirez, Jr. and to my wife Lydia. During the completion of this study, Enrique assisted in the location of documents and my wife assumed many of my responsibilities to allow the necessary time for research and writing. Her love and understanding have been the influence that made the difference between failure and ultimate achievement in completing this work.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

During the first three decades of the nineteenth century, the United States, Great Britain, and France struggled for commercial and political supremacy in the Caribbean as a result of the uncertainties created by the Congress of Vienna, the apparent threat to their trading interests, and the fear of imperial restoration in Spain's former colonies. This conflict prevented the independence of Cuba and Puerto Rico when local conditions, created by the instability of the peninsular government and the chaos which resulted during the wars for independence in Spanish America, were most favorable for accomplishing that goal. The struggle between the United States and the European powers for control of the Caribbean also shaped the relations of the United States with Spanish America and the attitude of Mexico and Colombia toward American foreign policy.

Most of the present political, social, and economic problems of Cuba and Puerto Rico can be traced directly to the results of Spanish colonialism. In the sixteenth century these islands became part of the Spanish colonial empire as result of their discovery in 1492 and 1493. Since the colonies had limited resources and small productive populations, Spain did not value them highly except as military outposts protecting the main entrances to the Caribbean. While the colonial government introduced on a limited scale the social and economic institutions

which characterized its administration in the Western Hemisphere, Cuba and Puerto Rico never developed beyond the level of poor colonies.

During the entire colonial regime, the available agricultural land remained divided into large plantations and landownership became limited to a few individuals. This system, supported by the importation of African slaves, dominated the colonial economy, except for a brief period during the nineteenth century when foreign immigration and some foreign trade intensified economic growth. Repressive monopolies, high taxes, and a centralized and autocratic military government restricted the growth of political and economic institutions during most of the colonial period. The strategic positions of the islands, however, guaranteed a continuance of political interest by Spain as well as by other countries. Despite the repressiveness of the government and the backwater conditions of the colonies, the people remained loyal to the Crown during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.¹

In the nineteenth century, however, the political turmoil that besieged Spain and her colonies as a result of the Napoleonic invasion caused great anxiety and concern among the Cubans and Puerto Ricans. The islands underwent a period of uncertainty when a constitutional monarchy and the basic principles of the French revolution 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 loyalty of the colonies. A rising national consciousness began to manifest itself among the Cuban and Puerto Ricans, influenced both by the political events on the peninsula and by their belief in the inevitability of a prolonged struggle for independence in Spanish America.

The failure of the liberal reforms in Spain and the return of absolutism in 1814 resulted in increasing attempts for political and economic emancipation in the islands. The movement for independence in Venezuela and Santo Domingo strengthened the nationalistic spirit of Cuban and Puerto Rican separatists. The progressive views of the Cortes (Spanish parliament) encouraged those who preferred permanent economic and political changes to complete independence. The repressive measures taken by the Spanish colonial officials, the exile of several important radical leaders, and the factional disputes between conservatives, liberals, and separatists considerably affected the struggle for self-government. The isolation of the islands from the mainstream of revolutionary activity and the impact of thousands of Spanish refugees who arrived from other parts of Spanish America also had some effect. But the most important reason why Cuba and Puerto Rico remained colonies of Spain during the first part of the nineteenth century was the intervention of the United States and the European powers in the political affairs of the Caribbean.

The United States intervened in the Caribbean to protect its growing interests in the West Indies. The concern for the nation's security, the need to protect her trade and commerce, and the fear that the Spanish American conflict would eventually spread to her own borders were compelling reasons for the intervention of the United States. The threat to the institution of slavery and the desire of some Southern political leaders for territorial expansion in the Caribbean were also factors of considerable importance.

National interests made necessary the prevention of non-Spanish foreign control of the Caribbean. Neither was it in the best interests

of the United States either to allow Cuba and Puerto Rico gain self-government because of the possibility that Great Britain or France would seize them after independence. This circumstance, it was believed, would seriously compromise United States national security and damage her commercial and trade interests in the area.²

Great Britain and France also opposed the possession or control of Cuba and Puerto Rico by any other power besides Spain. Great Britain had friendly relations with Spain and was a colonial power with possessions of her own in the West Indies. She did not desire to disturb the Antillean settlement reached in the Congress of Vienna by which she had acquired the British Guiana, Tobago, and St. Lucia, major sources of world sugar. In Vienna, Great Britain could have demanded the transfer of all the remaining French colonies in the Caribbean, but her moderate demands had resulted in a satisfactory balance of European interests in the area. Great Britain also believed that the possession of Cuba or Puerto Rico by the United States would jeopardize her West Indian trade and ruin the nation's growing commercial interests in the Western Hemisphere. On November 15, 1822, British Foreign Secretary George Canning wrote that "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 or in the reputation of its Government."³

France, like Great Britain, also had important commercial interests in the Caribbean region. With the loss of Haiti, Tobago, and St. Lucia, her only footholds in the area were the islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique. Since France desired to establish commercial control in the West Indies, 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 perhaps control of the growing trade between Europe and the emerging Spanish American republics.

The United States, Great Britain, and France, therefore, were suspicious of each other's intentions in the Caribbean. It was clear, however, that none of the principal contending powers could take Cuba or Puerto Rico without inflicting serious damage upon the other's interests. Possession of the Spanish colonies in the West Indies would have given a definite advantage to the controlling power. The condition of these islands was of such importance to the United States, Great Britain, and France that their foreign agents in Cuba received instructions to report all political activities regardless of their significance.⁴

In the summer of 1819, it was rumored in Europe that Great Britain might seize Cuba to balance United States hegemony in the Gulf of Mexico, which had been one of the results of that nation's acquisition of Florida. During this time the British press, which had condemned the Florida purchase, demanded that Great Britain seize Cuba to counterbalance United States' influence in the Caribbean and protect British commerce in the area.⁵

Great Britain had provided substantial military assistance to Spain during the peninsular campaign against Napoleon, and that country owed about £ 15,000,000 for supplies and maintenance of the British Army. Spain also owed large sums of money to British merchants who had suffered commercial injuries during the Napoleonic Wars. As Spain was unable to satisfy her financial obligations, it was believed that she would transfer Cuba or Puerto Rico, her last remaining loyal colonies in the

Western Hemisphere, to Great Britain as payment for these debts. There also was some speculation that Spain might cede one of these islands to France, which also had provided military assistance to the Spanish monarch to help him regain his throne.⁶

Between 1822 and 1825, the three contending powers increased their naval forces in the Caribbean. Spain also sent forces to protect the islands against possible invasions by the European powers or the United States. The risk of an actual confrontation became more pronounced at the end of 1822. In December of that year, British sailors temporarily occupied a small section of eastern Cuba. This action considerably disturbed the United States government. Its concern did not ease until Canning informed several governments, including the United States, that the landing had been made to suppress piracy and that Great Britain had no aggressive intentions toward Cuba. Canning suggested during that time, however, that if the United States meant to annex Cuba, Great Britain might "have to annex Puerto Rico to preserve the balance of power in the Caribbean."⁷

On April 29, 1823, as a result of the increasing international tension in the Caribbean and the rumors circulating in the United States concerning the transfer of Cuba to Great Britain, Secretary of State John Quincy Adams instructed his agents on that island to observe the course of events and to inform him of "any apparent popular agitation," especially that which might indicate "the transfer of the island from Spain to any other power."⁸ Joel Roberts Poinsett, an agent of the United States, had visited Puerto Rico six months earlier, apparently with the same purpose.⁹ In addition, all United States naval commanders in the Caribbean received instructions to be on the alert for any hostile

activities of the British or French naval squadrons in the area. "These islands," wrote Adams, "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."¹⁰ Two months earlier, Congressman Henry Clay, expressing a similar concern, had indicated to Stratford Canning, the British Foreign Minister to the United States, that the nation was ready to fight if Great Britain invaded the island.¹¹

Commencing in August, 1823, the British Foreign Secretary approached the United States concerning the balance of power in the Caribbean, the future disposition of the independent Spanish American colonies, and the threat of France in the Western Hemisphere.¹² Since a major concern during this time was that other European nations, besides France, also might intervene to restore Spanish imperial rule, Great Britain discussed with the United States the feasibility of a joint declaration opposing that purpose. The principal result of the conversations was the unilateral declaration of President James Monroe on December 2, 1823, stating that the United States would regard as an unfriendly act any attempt by a foreign nation to interfere in the Western Hemisphere or increase its possessions there. The Monroe Doctrine reflected a fear of Great Britain and France and their attempts to expand commercial controls to the Caribbean. It also was the result of a struggle for supremacy in the West Indies and the competition between British and American traders to gain a large share of the Spanish American markets.¹³

The Monroe Doctrine, however, did not resolve the international problem in the Caribbean. During the summer of 1825, a large French naval squadron visited the West Indies, prompting much speculation about

the French government's intentions. The French action drew strong diplomatic protests from the British Foreign Secretary. The French government replied that the governor of Martinique had been responsible for ordering, without authorization, the warships into the Caribbean. Great Britain insisted on an explanation because she felt that the French activities in the West Indies threatened her interests in the area and were a violation of the Polignac Memorandum by which France pledged to refrain from intervening in the affairs of the Spanish American colonies.¹⁴

As a result of these activities, in August, 1825, Canning again approached the United States with a proposal to ease the tensions between the maritime powers. As the United States and Great Britain previously had reached a mutual understanding concerning the balance of power in the Caribbean and since both nations had disclaimed any aggressive designs against the Spanish colonies, he suggested a tripartite agreement between the United States, France, and Great Britain with respect to Cuba. The United States did not accept the suggested arrangement because it would have reduced the chances of incorporating that colony into the American union; France declined the offer because of her commitment to support the objectives of the Holy Alliance.¹⁵

By 1825 an impasse had developed among the three nations concerning their interests in the Caribbean. The United States could not take Cuba without going to war with the European powers; Great Britain and France were similarly restricted because it would have led to a conflict with the United States or a war between themselves. To preserve the existing balance of power in the Caribbean and neutralize the sudden danger of intervention by Mexico and Colombia in the West Indies,

the United States took the initiative in persuading Great Britain and France to strengthen the status quo which existed in the area.

Cuban and Puerto Rican revolutionaries had asked the Spanish American republics to intervene in the islands to secure their independence, since all previous local attempts to emancipate the people had failed. To the separatists, it was clear that the only way to accomplish the goal was through 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 terminated Spanish rule in the Caribbean. The United States and the European powers, however, could not tolerate the Spanish American intervention because it threatened the already unstable balance of power in the area.

As Mexico and Colombia turned their attention to the liberation of Cuba and Puerto Rico, the United States sought direct intervention by the European powers. Secretary of State Henry Clay asked the ministers of Great Britain, France, and Russia to exercise their influence to convince the Spanish government to terminate the Spanish American conflict by recognizing the independence of the mainland colonies. By securing peace in the Western Hemisphere, the United States could prevent Mexico and Colombia from attacking the West Indies.

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 also was designed to influence Mexico and Colombia, who desired to end the hostilities in the mainland. At the same time, the United States reemphasized to Great Britain and France the

need of maintaining the status quo. Clay believed that if Mexico or Colombia intervened militarily in the Caribbean, Great Britain or France would feel compelled to join the conflict to protect their own interests. According to Samuel F. Bemis, this would have meant "that in the maintenance of the Monroe Doctrine it would have been necessary to defend Spain's possessions and therefore to incur the enmity of the Latin American republics and possibly France or Great Britain."¹⁶

On April 27, 1825, Alexander Everett, the United States Minister to Spain, received instructions to discuss with the Spanish government the security of the Caribbean and the termination of the hostilities in the Western Hemisphere. "The United States," wrote Secretary of State Henry Clay to Everett, "are satisfied with the present condition of those islands in the hands of Spain, This government desires no political change of that condition."¹⁷ Since "political change" must have included self-government, as Clay's subsequent declarations seem to indicate, it may be said that opposition to the independence of Cuba and Puerto Rico was part of the policy of the United States.

Great Britain supported the actions of the United States because she wanted to prevent possible American intervention in the Caribbean which would disrupt the status quo. She also feared that the Spanish American republics, by extending their operations too close to her own colonies, might incite slave revolts such as the one that had occurred in Demerara in 1823.¹⁸ Canning, supporting the American position, ordered Viscount Levenson-Gower Granville, the British Minister to France, to inform the French government that Great Britain had "no desire of interfering in the affairs of Cuba and Puerto Rico" or supporting their independence "by receiving any overture which might be made to it from

any party in those colonies desirous of throwing off the dominion of Spain." Canning also indicated that Great Britain preferred the Spanish colonies to "remain attached to the Mother Country, not only for the sake of Spain herself, but for that of the general peace of the world."¹⁹ The British Foreign Secretary, however, did not wish to oppose openly the Spanish American plans in the Caribbean and thereby offend the new republics. Instead, he recommended the abandonment of their project "on the ground that the United States had already announced that they would interfere, and that their action would be bound to bring Britain also."²⁰ Great Britain, therefore, made the United States responsible for thwarting the invasion plans of Mexico and Colombia.

France, accepting the views of the United States and Great Britain concerning the status quo in the Caribbean, did not approve the plans of Mexico and Colombia. To forestall potential uprisings, the French government had even authorized two years earlier the use of force to aid the Spanish authorities in Cuba and Puerto Rico.²¹ On January 10, 1826, 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."²² The Russian government also accepted the recommendations of the United States. Russia's concern, however, was not the danger involved in an attack from Mexico and Colombia but rather the use of force by the United States to impose a military solution to a political problem.²³

As the plans of the Spanish American republics for the liberation of Cuba and Puerto Rico took a more definite form, the United States requested that Mexico and Colombia suspend such actions "in the interest of peace."²⁴ The United States had stated previously that it would

regard with apprehension any effort of the Spanish American republics to seize or invade the Spanish possessions in the Caribbean.²⁵ Clay also had emphasized that any attempted conquest of Cuba and Puerto Rico by the Spanish American republics would have changed the character of the war against Spain, while Daniel Webster, in a speech before the House of Representatives on April 14, 1826, warned that "such event might justly be regarded as dangerous to ourselves, and on that ground, call for decided and immediate interference by us."²⁶

While the United States diplomatic notes were conciliatory in nature, they were explicit. The Secretary of State stated very clear that "essential interests" would entertain certain considerations and duties which the United States, among other nations, would "be forced to fulfill in the event of the contemplated invasion of those islands." Clay also added that the suspension of the projected expedition would prevent the interposition of other nations in the affairs of the Caribbean and the danger of a conflict of interests between the Spanish American countries and the United States.²⁷

Both Mexico and Colombia coldly received the United States request for a suspension of their planned activities. When the Mexican Congress approved in January, 1826, a resolution condemning United States interference in the Caribbean, Clay dropped the diplomatic language and warned the Mexican government that the United States would intervene to prevent Spain's expulsion from Cuba. These warnings and the fact that the European powers also supported the United States' position concerning the status quo resulted in a delay of the proposed expedition. Colombia and Mexico decided, in view of American opposition, to bring the subject of the colonial status of Cuba and Puerto Rico before the Congress

of Panama during the summer of 1826. When the representatives of the Spanish American republics met in June, renewed attempts by the United States and the European powers to maintain the status quo in the Caribbean further dissuaded the leaders of Mexico and Colombia from intervening in the islands. "The Plenipotentiaries," wrote Poinsett, "were probably deterred from acting upon this important subject, both by the language which has been held by the President with regard to these islands, and by the inability of the Governments of Mexico and Colombia, at this time, to undertake any expensive expedition."²⁹

The United States and the European powers also undertook other actions to prevent Colombia and Mexico from building adequate naval forces to carry out their plans. Although Colombia had borrowed heavily from private financial sources to create a strong navy capable of destroying the Spanish forces that defended the Caribbean, she could not purchase the necessary vessels nor recruit trained sailors for them. When Sweden agreed to sell warships to Colombia, the European powers pressured that country to revoke its decision. As a result, the few vessels Colombia received and the limited number of sailors from foreign countries who accepted serving on them were insufficient to challenge either Spain or the major powers in the Caribbean.³⁰

The leaders of the Cuban and Puerto Rican movements for independence clearly understood that to continue the struggle for political emancipation would be futile without direct assistance from the Spanish American republics. Rebellion in Cuba and Puerto Rico during this time had less chance of success than on the mainland because of the islands geographical isolation and the repressive measures of the Spanish government. Many creoles, who feared that they would not be able to control

the black slaves after independence, opposed a general insurrection. Their reticence greatly inhibited revolutionary activities in Cuba.

The actions of the United States created distrust of American intentions in Spanish America and strained hemispheric relations. The National Congress of Cuban Historians which met in 1947 in Havana declared, for example, that the opposition of the United States was the principal reason which prevented the Spanish American republics from agreeing on the Caribbean problem in 1826. This belief still predominate in many parts of Spanish America.³¹

The status quo supported by the United States and the European powers in the Caribbean prevented the liberation and independence of the last Spanish colonies in the Western Hemisphere during the first part of the nineteenth century. As a result of this political restraint which assured Spain control of her dependencies in the West Indies, Cuba and Puerto Rico were unable to gain their independence when local conditions were most favorable for accomplishing that goal. The continuing colonial condition of these countries retarded their economic, political, and social development. The technological change and economic development, aided by capital, technicians, and labor from abroad, which considerably improved the conditions of Latin America during the second half of the nineteenth century barely touched Cuba and Puerto Rico.

FOOTNOTES

¹U. S., Department of State, Office of Research for American Republics, Interests and Attitudes of Foreign Countries, OIR Report No. 4154 (Conf), October 15, 1947, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C., p. iv.

²French E. Chadwick, The Relations of the United States and Spain (New York, 1968), pp. 91-92, 186.

³George Canning to the Cabinet, November 15, 1822, in Charles K. Webster, ed., Britain and the Independence of Latin America, 1812-1830, Vol. 2 (New York, 1970), pp. 393-395.

⁴Webster, p. 35.

⁵U. S. Congress, House, Cuba and Anglo-American Relations by James Morton Callahan, 55th Cong., 2d Sess., American Historical Association Annual Report, 1897 (Washington D. C., 1898), pp. 195-196.

⁶U. S. Congress, House, The Diplomacy of the United States in Regard to Cuba by John H. Latané, 55th Cong., 2d Sess., American Historical Association Annual Report, 1897 (Washington, D. C., 1898), pp. 220-221.

⁷Harold W. Temperley, The Foreign Policy of Canning, 1822-1827 (Hamden, 1966), p. 169.

⁸John Quincy Adams to Thomas Randall, Agent for Commerce and Seamen for the Islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico, April 29, 1823, Department of State, Despatches to Consuls, Vol. 2, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C., p. 283.

⁹See Joel R. 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 (Philadelphia, 1824), pp. 1-8. Poinsett reported several slave insurrections and the arrest of sixty blacks on September 26, 1822.

¹⁰Worthington C. Ford, ed., Writings of John Quincy Adams, Vol. 7 (New York, 1917), pp. 371-372.

¹¹U. S. Congress, House, A Digest of International Law by John Bassett Moore, Vol. 6, 56th Cong., 2 Sess. (Washington, D. C., 1906), p. 380.

¹²Temperley, p. 171.

¹³Thomas H. Reynolds, Economic Aspects of the Monroe Doctrine (Nashville, 1938), p. 17.

¹⁴The Polignac Memorandum was an agreement between France and Great Britain signed on October 9, 1823, by which France disclaimed any part or desire to act against the colonies of Spain by force of arms.

¹⁵The Holy Alliance was an understanding between Emperor Alexander of Russia, Emperor Francis I of Austria, and King Frederick William III of Prussia to promote peace and restore "legitimate" rulers in Europe. Later, most other European nation joined this agreement. Since it was organized at a time when Spain was at war with the Spanish American republics, it was believed that the plans included the use of force in the Western Hemisphere to support Spain's efforts there.

¹⁶Samuel F. Bemis, A Diplomatic History of the United States (New York, 1942), p. 94.

¹⁷Clay to Everett, April 27, 1825, Department of State, Diplomatic Instructions, Vol. 10, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C., p. 303.

¹⁸Demerara was a British colony in present-day Guyana. In 1823 a slave revolt threatened Great Britain's control of that colony. It took considerable effort by the British government to suppress the insurrection because there were over 100,000 slaves in the area at the time of the revolt.

¹⁹Canning to Granville, July 12, 1825, F. O. 27/328 (No. 50), in Webster, Vol. 2, pp. 184-185.

²⁰Webster, Vol. 1, p. 39.

²¹See Harold W. Temperley, "Instructions to Donzelot, Governor of Martinique, December 17, 1823," English Historical Review, 41 (1926), pp. 583-587.

²²James Brown, United States Minister to France, to Clay, January 10, 1826, Department of State, Diplomatic Despatches from France, Vol. 23, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

²³See "Correspondence of the Russian Ministers in Washington, 1818-1825," American Historical Review, 18 (January and April 1913), p. 562.

²⁴Clay to José María Salazar, Colombian Minister to the United States, December 20, 1825, Department of State, Notes to Foreign Legations, Vol. 3, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C., pp. 245-246. A similar note was sent to Pablo Obregón, Mexican Minister to the United States, on the same day.

²⁵Clay to Everett, April 27, 1825, Department of State, Diplomatic Instructions, Vol. 10, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C., p. 304

²⁶Quoted in Stanislaus M. Hamilton, ed., The Writings of James Monroe, Vol. 6 (New York, 1902), p. 444.

²⁷Clay to Salazar, December 20, 1825. See note 24.

²⁸Philip S. Foner, A History of Cuba and Its Relations with the United States, Vol. 1 (New York, 1963), p. 159.

²⁹Joel Roberts Poinsett, United States Minister to Mexico, to Clay, September 23, 1826, Department of State, Diplomatic Despatches from Mexico, Vol. 2, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

³⁰See Gustave, Count de Wetterstedt, Foreign Minister of Sweden, to Félix Ramón Alvarado, Spanish Minister to Sweden, July 7, 1825, in Christopher Hughes, United States Minister to Sweden and Norway, to Clay, Vol. 4; Alvarado to the Swedish government, July 1, 1825, in Henry Middleton, United States Minister to Russia, to Clay, September 30, 1825, Vol. 10, in Diplomatic Despatches from Sweden and Norway and Diplomatic Despatches from Russia respectively, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C. See also Hughes to Clay, December 1, 1825, in Henry Clay's Manuscript Collection, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C. Part of Hughes' letter to Clay reads: "This extract applies to the last sale made by the King of Sweden of two frigates and a 74, to the Goldsmidts of London, for the Mexican government [vessels were for Colombia]. The Emperor of Russia interposed, and asked as a mark of personal friendship from the King of Sweden, as well as a proof of H. M.s continuance in 'good principles' that the King cancel this bargain [underlines are those of Hughes/."

³¹Foner, Vol. 1, p. 156.

CHAPTER II

SPAIN'S IMPERIAL INTERESTS IN THE CARIBBEAN

The Caribbean Sea has always played a significant role in the history of the Western Hemisphere. A partially enclosed suboceanic basin, it was for many years the scene of naval confrontations and considerable commercial rivalries. Its geographical position between North and South America made its control highly desirable to Great Britain, Spain, France, Holland, and later the United States. For over two hundred years, the Caribbean Sea was the principal trading route for the Spanish galleons which brought European goods to the New World and took back to Spain the gold, silver, and raw materials of the Empire. It also was the gateway to Spain's colonial settlements and the first line of defense against the European powers which sought to destroy Spanish trade, commerce, and political hegemony in the Western Hemisphere. Cuba, Santo Domingo, and Puerto Rico, the principal Spanish possessions in the Caribbean, became bulwarks against foreign enemies and served as strategic military outposts of the Spanish continental defense system.

Christopher Columbus discovered the Caribbean Sea during his second voyage to the New World. The Spanish found on the Lesser Antilles a fierce warring Indian tribe, which the natives of the other islands called Caribs, and named the unexplored sea Mar Caribe, or the Caribbean, to characterize it as the region of these indigenous inhabitants. Soon after their discovery and exploration, Cuba, Santo Domingo, and Puerto Rico became colonies of Spain and that country established there her

medieval social, political, cultural, and economic institutions.

As a result of the early exhaustion of their mineral resources and the migration of many of their colonists to the mainland, where wealth could be more easily acquired, the settlements failed to develop into important commercial centers and instead became poor agricultural dependencies. Landownership became the prerogative of few individuals who divided the land into large plantations and commercial ranches. This system of land distribution, supported by the importation of many African slaves, dominated the colonial economy during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries.

During that time the Caribbean Sea remained precariously under Spanish control. Attracted by the rich cargoes of gold and silver which the Spaniards plundered or mined in Central and South America, English, French, and Dutch pirates and freebooters periodically attacked the Spanish settlements and fortifications in the West Indies and captured or sank many treasure-laden ships. During Spain's colonial wars with Great Britain, France, and Holland, foreign privateers also raided Cuba, Santo Domingo, and Puerto Rico, destroying many small towns or holding them for ransom.

In 1538 French corsairs raided Havana, which afterwards became the capital of Cuba, and burned most of the nearby settlements. In 1554 the French privateer Francois Le Clerc attacked and seized Santiago de Cuba and held the town for ransom. The following year Jacques de Sores, one of Le Clerc's lieutenants, looted and burned Havana.¹ In 1586 a large English armada under the command of Sir Francis Drake cruised for several days near Havana but did not attack the port. The Viceroy of Mexico had reinforced the island's defenses with 352 soldiers and several

warships from a squadron which had recently arrived from Spain; the protective measures deterred the English attack.² In 1603, however, a pirate named Gilberto Girón sacked Santiago de Cuba, but failed to seize Bayamo because of the island's strong defenses. In 1629 the Dutch admiral Pieter Pieterszoon Heyn, sponsored by the Dutch West India Company, outmaneuvered a Spanish treasure fleet near Matanzas and captured most of the vessels.³

Several long-lasting blockades of Havana and frequent raids by pirates and buccaneers to other Cuban ports kept this Spanish possession in a constant state of fear during most of the second part of the seventeenth century. After 1655 the threat to Cuba increased substantially with the British seizure of Jamaica. Slave traders and robbers from that island systematically raided Cuban towns and coastal settlements in search of African slaves and loot. In 1662 they attacked and burned Santiago de Cuba. With French allies, they returned in 1665, sacked Remedios, and attempted to take Sancti Spiritus.

Operating from bases in Jamaica, other privateers, notably Henry Morgan, periodically attacked the Spanish possessions in the Caribbean. Cuba's misfortunes culminated in May, 1762, when the English captured and looted Havana during the Seven Years' War. Using 187 warships and transports and over 14,000 men, the Duke of Albermarle, who was then the governor of Jamaica, seized Havana after a bitter siege. Since the British victory isolated Florida and threatened Spain's control of the Caribbean, the Spanish government quickly sought to negotiate the return of Havana. Great Britain demanded the Floridas and Puerto Rico as the price for restoring Havana. In the end, the city returned to Spanish control in exchanges for the Floridas. To compensate for the Spanish losses

during the war, on November 3, 1762, France transferred the Louisiana territory to Spain.⁴

For over two hundred years, Cuba served as the principal American port in Spain's commercial system. According to a well-regulated plan which began about 1549 and, which with some interruptions, continued in effect until the second half of the eighteenth century, each year two fleets, ranging in size from eight to sixty merchantmen and several warships, sailed to the New World to exchange European goods for American gold, silver, and raw materials.⁵ One of the fleets, known collectively as the Flota (Fleet), sailed in the spring for New Spain; it included vessels bound for Cuba, Santo Domingo, and Puerto Rico. Entering the Caribbean through the Dominica Passage in the Lesser Antilles, the fleet sailed toward the northwest near the southern coast of Santo Domingo and Puerto Rico. After a short delay at the Bay of Ocoa, the fleet continued its voyage toward the Jamaican strait and the Cuban southern coastline. Crossing the Yucatán Channel, the fleet sailed for the port of Veracruz.⁶

The second fleet known as the Galeones (Galleons) departed Spain during August for the Isthmus of Panama; it convoyed vessels bound for Cartagena and other ports of the mainland. Entering the Caribbean through the Martinique Passage, the Galeones sailed 150 nautical miles toward the Southwest before turning for the coast of South America. After reaching Cartagena and detaching a few ships for that port, the fleet sailed for Porto Bello in Panama, where the Spanish traders would remain for more than a month. During that time, an annual fair transformed the normally quiet village into a commercial center of considerable importance. Here, merchants exchanged manufactured goods for enormous quantities

of gold and silver bullion mined in Peru and Potosí in Northern Bolivia. The following March, the two fleets met at Havana and began the homeward journey utilizing the Gulf Stream for a fast voyage to Spain.⁷

The loss of Jamaica and the Lesser Antilles forced Spain to change her commercial routes in the Caribbean. Instead of sailing through the Lesser Antilles, the fleets entered the area through the strait which separates Trinidad from Grenada at the lower end of the Caribbean. From that point, the vessels sailed toward their destinations protected by Spanish warships and the armadillas (cruiser squadrons) which protected the trade routes all the year around. To protect further her commercial interests and defend the colonies from foreign aggression, in 1645 Spain stationed the Flota de Barlovento (the Windward Defense Fleet) in San Juan, Puerto Rico.⁸

Havana served for many years as the principal port of the Flota system and as the location for repair, resupply, and control of outgoing vessels. The harbor fortifications protected the fleet, and crews and passengers comfortably remain in the city while the ships underwent necessary repairs. An agricultural economy developed to provide the ships with necessary food supplies. This system of limited agriculture continued for many years, but with the decline of the provisioning system during the latter part of the seventeenth century, cattle ranges and tobacco plantations emerged on the island and soon thereafter became important economic activities for the Spanish settlers.

Because of their strategic location and role in protecting the commercial fleets, Santo Domingo and Puerto Rico also became important imperial concerns. Santo Domingo began as the principal Spanish settlement in the New World; during the colonization phase, it became the base from

which expeditions explored the other West Indian islands and the adjacent mainland. In 1511 the Crown created the Audiencia de Santo Domingo (an administrative and judicial court) to administer the colonies. After 1527 the institution lost many of its jurisdictional powers to other audiencias created in New Spain, Peru, and Guatemala. The Audiencia de Santo Domingo, however, continued to exercise judicial authority in the Caribbean until its transfer to Puerto Príncipe in Cuba at the end of the eighteenth century.

Spain also created the Archbishopric of Santo Domingo to direct the ecclesiastical affairs of the Spanish colonies in the Caribbean. In 1538 the Crown established the University of Santo Tomás, but there is no evidence that it operated beyond the level of a theological seminary. Despite the prestige of the colony as the first major Spanish settlement in the New World, Santo Domingo did not prosper during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Although plantations of sugar, tobacco, cotton, and cacao occupied scattered parts of the island, Santo Domingo enjoyed little economic prosperity because the colony never had a large population.

During the middle of the sixteenth century, Santo Domingo became an economic and a strategic liability for Spain. The Spanish governors could not maintain adequate control over the colony's innumerable harbors nor could they improve agriculture or trade because there were not enough people on the island. By 1605 the Spanish abandoned all efforts to colonize the western side of the colony and ordered the few inhabitants there to move to the eastern half of Santo Domingo. As a result of that decision, the area became a haven for pirates, buccaneers, and other outlaws who preyed on the Spanish commerce, raided settlements, and

engaged in contraband trade with the colonies. Attempts by the government to suppress these outlaws failed, and piratical depredations continued throughout the Caribbean for many years.

In 1586 Sir Francis Drake attacked Santo Domingo and seized the capital. The English burned one-third of the town and ransomed the rest for 25,000 ducats or about \$30,000. In April, 1655, an English expedition under the command of Admiral William Penn and General Robert Venable returned to the same area and attacked Santo Domingo with an army of 9,000 men. Penn's forces, however, failed to capture the Spanish strongholds and retreated after encountering strong resistance from the defenders.⁹

During the second half of the seventeenth century, the colony suffered many attacks from pirates and buccaneers. By that time, Santo Domingo was so poor that the activities of the freebooters had a negligible effect on the well-being of the island. When Spain changed the route of her commercial fleets in the eighteenth century, the colony lost its strategic importance. To improve its economic conditions, the government sent thousands of migrants to the island, expanded agriculture, and fostered commerce by opening the colony ports to foreign trade. Other economic reforms improved manufacturing and ameliorated the misery which had prevailed on the island for more than two hundred years.¹⁰

In 1751, however, an earthquake destroyed large sections of the capital and devastated the countryside. In 1755 the Ozama River, swelled by the tidal wave of the earthquake which destroyed Lisbon, flooded the southern region of the country, destroying many agricultural areas, and damaging the walls which protected the capital city.¹¹ These natural disasters inhibited the growth of the island's economy and the

progress of its inhabitants. In spite of subsequent government efforts to revitalize the economy and the island's increased population, the colony did not prosper during the second half of the eighteenth century.

Although the Spanish Crown claimed the entire island during the seventeenth century, the Spaniards were unable to prevent French occupation of the western end. In 1664 the French Company of the West Indies began colonization of that part of the colony. The boundary claims caused friction, and in 1697 Spain formally ceded the area to France in the treaty of Ryswick. French St. Domingue (Haiti) soon developed into a sugar-producing area of such importance that it was considered to be the richest of all the European colonies in the New World. On the other hand, the appalling conditions of the eastern side and the continuing border disputes ultimately compelled the Spanish government to relinquish its control of that area. By the Treaty of Basel of 1795, Spain ceded eastern Santo Domingo to France, but the European conflicts which followed the French Revolution prevented the immediate execution of the agreement. Between 1792 and 1801, about 40,000 white Spanish colonists also left Santo Domingo.¹²

In 1791 the white French settlers demanded greater autonomy in Haiti. Inspired by the French Revolution, they sought to rule the colony themselves and to assume control of the sugar economy. The white supremacists known as the grand blancs, who dominated the political and economic affairs of the colony, did not consider any reforms for the black slaves and free mulattoes who constituted the majority of the population. Spurred by the propaganda of a French group known as the Amis des Noirs (Friends of the Blacks), the slaves and mulattoes rose against their white masters in the first full scale insurrection of this nature in the

Western Hemisphere. In two years, blood-letting slaves massacred thousands of white settlers, government officials, women, and children. In retaliation, the white population committed atrocities of their own. Yellow fever, malaria, and dysentery also killed many of the French, Spanish, and British soldiers who were sent to the island to suppress the black rebellion.¹³

In 1801, Toussaint l'Ouverture, the black revolutionary leader who had seized power in Haiti, invaded the eastern half of the island, but failed to get hold of it. Between 1808 and 1809 a Spanish creole Juan Sánchez Ramírez, with the aid of a British naval squadron and Spanish forces from Puerto Rico, reestablished Spanish control on eastern Santo Domingo. In 1821, however, the Spanish creoles revolted and attempted to unite the colony to Colombia. Soon thereafter, a Haitian army invaded the country for a second time and expelled the rebel government of José Núñez de Cáceres. The Haitian chieftains ruled Santo Domingo until the middle of the nineteenth century.

Puerto Rico, however, continued to be of considerable importance to Spain because of the island's strategic position on the eastern Caribbean. Since Puerto Rico served as a military stronghold against the enemies of Spain which controlled the Lesser Antilles, in 1569 the Spanish government authorized the Viceroy of New Spain to subsidize the military defenses of the island. This annual subsidy became known as the Situado and for many years provided an artificial stimulus to the economy of Puerto Rico. The subsidy primarily benefited the peninsulares who lived in San Juan, but it did not help the small farmers and peasants. The rural settlers prospered in a modest way, however, by clandestinely selling hides, sugar, tobacco, and cattle to Spain's enemies. They

ignored the royal edicts which prohibited such trade and developed a profitable smuggling operation with the non-Spanish European and American traders.¹⁴

To protect the colony against enemy attack, Spain undertook the construction of several important fortifications at the entrance of San Juan harbor. The capital city, in effect, became a military outpost. A stone wall measuring twenty-five feet high and eighteen feet wide rendered the city virtually impregnable. A large contingent of soldiers later arrived in Puerto Rico, and armed vessels periodically cruised near the principal settlements to protect them against piratical depredations. In spite of these defensive measures, French, English, and Dutch freebooters continued to plunder the coastal settlements and towns, carrying off food and slaves and destroying valuable property.

In spite of the Situado, Puerto Rico continued to be a poor colony during most of the Spanish colonial period. Puerto Rico had no adequate schools prior to 1770, and education was limited to the wealthy creoles and peninsulares. The island contained no factories or large, income-producing plantations. Trade and commerce was restricted to a few ports, and tobacco production, which had begun in 1636, failed to provide an adequate source of income. Roads were non-existent in the rural areas, and medical services were limited to the inhabitants of the capital. 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 viceroyalties 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. 15

As was the case in Cuba, Puerto Rico served at times as a point of departure for expeditions to the mainland during the exploration phase of Spain's activities in the New World. Juan Ponce de León departed from Añasco Bay on the western side of the island in 1513 to explore the coast of Florida and to discover Mexico and the Gulf Stream. Francisco Pizarro received men, supplies, and horses from the island during the conquest of Peru.¹⁶

Early in its history, Puerto Rico became an objective of the European sea powers disputing the Spanish hegemony in the West Indies. During the first half of the sixteenth century, French raiders burned and sacked San Germán, the second largest community on the island. In 1595 Sir Francis Drake attacked San Juan but failed to penetrate its defenses in spite of the fact that the English had twenty-five ships and over 4,000 armed troops in the invading force.¹⁷ Three years later George Clifford, Earl of Cumberland, secured a victory against the Spanish forces defending the island. He captured San Juan and some of its fortifications and for eighty-three days attempted to convert the Spanish colony into an English settlement. His plans failed, and he had to retreat after an outbreak of dysentery caused many casualties among his forces.¹⁸

In 1625 the Dutch, as part of their campaign to harass Spanish colonial trade in the Caribbean, attacked and burned San Juan. The Dutch, however, could not overcome the Spanish defensive positions and retreated without achieving their objective. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the colony suffered frequent attacks from pirates and buccaneers, but, as in Santo Domingo, their activities had no important

consequences. The last English attack occurred in 1797. In that year, as a result of the conflict between Spain and Great Britain which followed the French Revolution, General Ralph Abercromby unsuccessfully tried to seize San Juan.¹⁹

The Spaniards, preoccupied with the larger islands to the west and discouraged by Carib hostility and lack of mineral resources, had made no attempts to settle the Lesser Antilles. As a result of this indifference, France, Holland, and Great Britain competed for their possession during the first half of the seventeenth century. Barbados, St. Christopher, Guadeloupe, Martinique, and the Virgin Islands became the objects of international concern, especially among the enemies of Spain who challenged that country's hegemony in the Caribbean. Thereafter, the islands developed as centers of illegal trade and as focal points of French, Dutch, and English activities in the West Indies.

The British seizure of Jamaica in 1655 extended the illicit smuggling operations to Cuba. English traders sold provisions, manufactures, and slaves in Cuba and purchased sugar, molasses, and other tropical products. The trade enriched Great Britain and provided the North American colonies with most of their gold and silver. By the middle of the eighteenth century, the Lesser Antilles also had achieved considerable importance as sugar producers and as centers for the African slave traffic. As a result, British colonies in the Caribbean became more valuable to Great Britain than those of temperate North America.²⁰

The illegal trade between the Spanish colonists in the Caribbean and the European interlopers increased during the eighteenth century. The islanders exchanged local products for finished manufactured goods, sometimes with the connivance of colonial officials. In Cuba, the town

of Bayamo became a center for smuggling operations; in other localities, Cubans enjoyed years of uninterrupted trading with the pirates and enemies of Spain. Puerto Rico's proximity to the Lesser Antilles encouraged clandestine activities which benefited the rural inhabitants, the plantation owners, and the local authorities.²¹

During the first part of the eighteenth century, Spain ordered the Spanish authorities in Puerto Rico to raid the neighboring islands and dislodge the pirates, buccaneers, and privateers who used them to attack the Spanish possessions or conduct illegal trade. The success of these preventive measures encouraged further action by other Spanish officials, and as a result a system known as the guardacostas (coast guard) emerged to challenge not only the pirates but the European powers as well. The guardacostas, manned by ruffians, privateers, and often pirates, carried commissions from the local Spanish governors and were allowed to resupply in Spanish ports. They sailed along the regular trading routes to protect Spanish commerce; they also stopped foreign vessels in search of "contraband." The guardacostas brought captured merchant ships to Spanish ports where the cargoes were sold. They shared the profits from the sales with the colonial officials. The guardacostas went so far as to seize ships that were anchored in the harbors of colonial ports, and many peaceful traders suffered unjust seizure and condemnation.²²

Spanish retaliatory action brought many complaints from British merchants and government officials. In 1730 the British government threatened to take reprisals if the Puerto Rican authorities did not suspend the activities of the guardacostas.²³ In spite of the threat, the armed enterprises of Spain continued to increase, especially during the "War of Jenkins' Ear," the first major European conflict fought expressly

for West Indian colonial supremacy.²⁴ During that time, San Juan served as a base of operations against the British settlements in the Lesser Antilles. Puerto Rico's geographical position near the center of international conflict also served to contain the aggressive intentions of the European powers during the Seven Years' War.²⁵

The British colonial governors in the Lesser Antilles often considered the feasibility of an armed attack against Puerto Rico. During the War of the Spanish Succession, the Governor of the Leeward Islands suggested an invasion of Puerto Rico. The British Secretary of State rejected the suggestion, however, because the military action would have led to a depopulation of the strategically important Leeward Islands.²⁶ In 1729 John Hart, a colonial official, proposed to the British government the seizure of Puerto Rico since the island could be used for intercepting the Spanish trade. During that time, England was negotiating an alliance with Spain and was ready to sign the Treaty of Sevilla (1729). As a result, the government did not consider the suggestion.²⁷

The constant threat of foreign intervention in the Spanish colonies and the activities of the pirates and buccaneers in the Caribbean hardened Spain's determination to secure Cuba and Puerto Rico. The Crown appointed captains-general with civil and military powers to rule the colonies and direct the Spanish defenses in the Caribbean. These officials became very powerful and had virtually the same powers as the viceroys who governed other parts of the empire.²⁸

With few exceptions, these captains-general ruled under strict codes of military law which they enforced by the promulgation of decrees. They exercised their authority with the assistance of peninsular officers. Until the introduction of the Intendency system at the end of the

eighteenth century, they also controlled the fiscal affairs of the colonies and even influenced the social and religious activities of the inhabitants. Spain enacted these authoritarian measures because she considered the Caribbean to be a region where foreign enemies presented unusual problems of defense.

Colonial administration in the West Indies was based on the Novísima recopilación de leyes de Indias (Compendium of the Laws of the Indies), which contained approximately 6,400 different laws and decrees, some dating from the early part of the sixteenth century. Promulgated in 1681, these laws prohibited all non-Spanish trade in the colonies and decreed that the island's commerce had to be carried on Spanish ships. Mercantilistic policies controlled all areas of trade between Spain and her colonies. Since the colonies existed, in theory, for the benefit of the Mother Country, they could not produce any goods which competed with those already being manufactured in Spain.²⁹

During the eighteenth century, French Bourbon princes ascended to the throne of Spain replacing the decadent Habsburg monarchy. This change brought many reforms in the colonial government. In 1748 Spain abolished the fleet system and allowed individual commercial vessels to sail directly to the New World, a decision that improved trade between the colonies and the peninsula. The Crown also improved colonial administration by appointing governors who ruled with competence, integrity, efficiency, and zeal.

Beginning in 1764, Cuba made notable economic progress. Hundreds of families migrated to the island from Santo Domingo after France took possession of that colony. Many other settlers established themselves in Oriente Province. By 1774 there were 96,440 white settlers, 44,333

slaves, and 30,847 free blacks and mulattoes on the island. This total represented a substantial increase over the seventeenth century population. During the same period, coffee, sugar, and tobacco production increased as a result of better farming methods introduced from Santo Domingo. In 1778 Spain opened the Cuban ports to American trade, considerably stimulating the local economy. Havana traded regularly with the rebellious North American colonies during their war for independence and carried on an extensive commerce with the French possessions in the Caribbean.³⁰

The Spanish government also made several important changes in the colonial administration of Puerto Rico. In 1756 Spain created the Compañía Barcelonesa (Barcelona Trading Company) to provide capital for inter-colonial commerce and the Real Factoría Mercantil (Royal Mercantile Agency) for fostering foreign trade. The Crown also made changes in the distribution of farmland and coffee production and sponsored the foundation of many new towns and villages.³¹

The results of these economic improvements were immediately felt in the colonies. Trade, commerce, and agricultural production increased, smuggling activities ceased to be a major problem, and the inhabitants improved their living conditions. But all hopes for permanent political and economic improvements were soon dispelled. At the end of the American Revolution, Spain reverted to her previous colonial policies by terminating the legal trade between Cuba and the United States. The government reestablished its commercial monopolies and imposed new restrictions on foreign migration. Crown representatives, except for some enlightened officials who identified themselves with progress, liberalism, and better government, brought back the strict codes of military law and

the authoritarian rule of their predecessors. The reimposition of imperial controls resulted in much dissatisfaction among the creoles, who had benefited during the liberal interlude.

Spain's commercial monopoly also was a major source of agitation in Cuba and Puerto Rico. Earlier in the eighteenth century, the government established a tobacco monopoly to regulate prices and prevent sales to private merchants. The royal edict which created the monopoly caused serious opposition from many tobacco growers, who resented government interference in their private business activities. They rebelled against the local authorities and threatened the government agents who enforced the law. In Cuba, the insurrection extended to many rural areas and forced the resignation of the captain-general.³² General Gregorio Guazo, the new governor, suppressed the rebellion by raiding the planters strongholds and capturing many of the dissidents. This action crushed the veguero movement, as the tobacco growers called it, but the governor made some changes in the monopoly to prevent further problems. In spite of these concessions, the Estanco de Tabaco (tobacco purchasing agency) continued to be a source of irritation to the planters. Three decades later, they revolted again but suffered the same consequences.³³

The Spanish commercial monopolies extended to other parts of the Cuban economy as well. In 1740 the government created the Real Compañía de Comercio (Royal Company of Commerce) to regulate business. This company also monopolized the import and export trade, manufacturing, and agricultural production. Its operating capital came mostly from businessmen of Cádiz and from the King's own assets. For twenty years the Real Compañía de Comercio directed the economic affairs of Cuba under strict laws that forced the farmers and merchants to sell their products at

low prices and purchase Spanish manufactured goods at high import rates.³⁴

In Puerto Rico, one of the principal source of discontent was the abasto forzoso (forced supply). 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 the animal to the capital, regardless of the problems encountered during their transportation. Any animal 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 below fair market prices. This injustice lasted for many years, and the Spanish authorities strictly enforced it.³⁵

Social, economic, and political discrimination also resulted in creole dissatisfaction. Spanish Crown officials and the peninsular aristocracy in the islands distrusted and feared the creoles, considered them inferior, and believed that they lack the proper cultural and social graces. Cuban and Puerto Ricans, except on few occasions, did not attain positions of responsibility or authority in the local government because the peninsulares normally monopolized the lucrative bureaucratic posts. The Spaniards also controlled the business and commercial monopolies and the military forces that defended the islands. Furthermore, the creoles did not have representation in the political affairs of Cuba and Puerto Rico and could not change any law promulgated by Spain. The peninsulares believed the creoles were incapable of self-government and unable to direct the political affairs of the colonies.

With the reimposition of imperial controls after the American Revolution, an incipient national consciousness began to manifest itself

among the Cubans and Puerto Ricans. Influenced by the political events in the peninsula during the ferment of the 1790s and the desire for a continuation of the liberal concessions that had been made earlier, the creoles began to demand a greater participation in the insular economy. Fearing the possible loss of control over the colonies, Spain again modified the trading regulations and allowed them to trade with North America.

Commerce with the United States increased slowly during the 1790s. Restrictions initially prevented the importation of large quantities of foreign goods into the colonies. As a result, in 1790 trade between the United States and the Spanish possessions in the Caribbean amounted to only \$147,807.³⁶ The interruption of Spanish imports, however, resulted in a shortage of foodstuffs in Cuba and Puerto Rico. The resultant scarcity of supplies increased trade with the United States. Despite objections from the peninsular merchants, on November 18, 1797, Spain issued a decree permitting American commercial ships to enter, with only limited restrictions, the colonial ports of the Caribbean. This change brought a considerable increase in trade by the end of the eighteenth century. In 1798 the Spanish colonies imported \$5,080,543³⁷ in American goods and exported over 41,000,000 pounds of sugar, 1,109,558 pounds of coffee, and 1,910,150 gallons of molasses to the United States.³⁸

Cuban and Puerto Rican sugar production became increasingly important after the black population revolted and destroyed the plantations in Haiti. The war in Europe also contributed to a sharp increase in the price of sugar, coffee, tobacco, and other tropical products. Trade with the United States and the large numbers of refugees who arrived in Cuba from Haiti, Louisiana, and Santo Domingo also added to the prosperity

of that island. On a lesser scale, Puerto Rico also experienced some economic improvement in spite of the fact that the Situado had been reduced by the government.³⁹

An event which served to promote creole leadership in Cuba was the establishment in 1792 of the Sociedad Económica Amigos del País (Economic Society of Friends of the Country). This organization became a focus of economic liberalism for the creole professionals, businessmen, and planters in Cuba. Its members advanced programs of social and economic reforms in spite of peninsular opposition. Their efforts resulted in the Consulado de Agricultura y Comercio (Agricultural and Commercial Agency) to promote economic well-being in the colony. A creole, Francisco Arango y Parreño, served as its representative in Spain and for a long time successfully defended Cuban interests in Madrid.⁴⁰

During this time, political instability and government inefficiency marked the reign of the Spanish Bourbon rulers. In 1795 Spain ceded her portion of Santo Domingo to France, and in 1800 transferred the valuable Louisiana territory to Napoleon. These losses of territory, the political activities of Manuel de Godoy in favor of Napoleon, and the questionable behavior of the Queen María de Parma, King Charles IV, the Duchess of Alba, and other important members of the court affected the national government and weakened Spanish imperial position overseas.⁴¹

In 1796 Charles IV (1788-1808) joined France in a war against Great Britain, and in 1801 Napoleon forced Spain to attack Portugal. In spite of the disastrous conditions of the country, heavy taxation, political dissatisfaction, and lack of funds, Spain was compelled to aid the French war effort by declaring still another war against Great Britain in 1804.

In October, 1805, when the British navy destroyed the Franco-Spanish fleet at Cape Trafalgar, Spain lost most of her naval power and the ability to protect her overseas possessions 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, the Cuban and Puerto Rican creoles unified behind the banner of Ferdinand VII to assist in the war against France. The colonies contributed substantial amounts of money to the peninsular effort; the contributions of Puerto Rico alone amounted to more than 112,000 pesos.

Despite the initial military defeats of Spain and the uncertain political conditions which prevailed in the peninsula, Cuba and Puerto Rico remained loyal to the Crown. The strong peninsular influence present in the islands and the restraint imposed by the military garrisons were important factors in reinforcing that loyalty. The enlightened rule of some colonial officials, such as Luis de las Casas in Cuba, and the recent improvements made in the economy also contributed to the political stability of the islands.

The liberal outlook of these colonial rulers, the improvement of the economy, and the efforts made to resolve the existing inequalities that existed between creoles and peninsulares, however, could not stifle the strong sense of nationality and pride in creole leadership which had arisen among the Cubans and Puerto Ricans. Spain's erratic colonial administration, which under the influence of the peninsular merchants closed the Caribbean ports to foreign commerce in 1801 only to have them

reopened again in 1803, further increased creole nationalism. The insular planters and merchants, having profited greatly by the freedom of trade of the preceding decades, realized that additional reforms were necessary if they were to maintain a viable commercial system. Since the desired concessions appeared to be unattainable without substantial changes in the political system, Cuban creoles began to favor local autonomy, annexation by the United States, or outright independence. In Puerto Rico, many creoles demanded complete assimilation into the political system or separation from Spain as the only solution for resolving the colonial problem.

FOOTNOTES

¹John H. Parry, A Short History of the West Indies (London, 1956), p. 32,

²"Carta al Rey D. Felipe II, del Virrey de la Nueva España, Marqués de Villamanrique, dando cuenta del arribo del corsario inglés Francisco Drake [sic], al puerto de la Habana, de la oposición que el general D. Juan de Guzmán hizo a la salida de la fragata que había de socorrer dicho puerto, y de otros asuntos, marzo 23, 1586," in Spain, Ministerio de Fomento, Division General de Instrucción Pública, Cartas de Indias, Vol. 45, Carta no. 45 (Madrid, 1877).

³The amount of treasure taken was 15,000,000 guilders. In that year, the Dutch West Indian Company paid a fifty percent dividend to its share-holders, the most productive return in the history of that company. See W. Adolph Roberts, The Caribbean, The Story of Our Sea of Destiny (New York, 1940), p. 133.

⁴Captain Thomas Southey, Chronological History of the West Indies, Vol. 2 (London, 1968), pp. 352-366. This is a reprint of the original 1827 edition. Southey includes in his work a list of all the vessels that participated in the siege, as well as a day-by-day description of the military operations taken from the memoirs of Captain James Alms, one of the participants. For the cession of Puerto Rico and Florida as the price for restoring Havana see John Stuart, 3rd Earl of Bute to John Russell, First Lord of the Admiralty, October 14, 1762 in The Correspondence of John Russell, Fourth Duke of Bedford, Vol. 3 (London, 1879), p. 137.

⁵Recent investigations made by the Spanish economist José Larraz indicate that the volume of trade carried by the fleet system was less than what has been commonly believed. According to Larraz, trade with the Spanish colonies declined considerably between 1575 and 1675. Using data from a French mémoire of 1691 and published by Henry Sée in 1927, Larraz concludes that most of the merchandise received from the Indies was consigned to European merchants. The Spanish economist provides the following statistics concerning the volume of trade between Spain and the New World (annual averages):

Year	<u>Shipping for the Indies</u>		<u>Shipping from the Indies</u>	
	(No. of commercial vessels and tonnage)			
1600 - 1604	55	- 19,800	56	- 21,600
1640 - 1650	25	- 8,500	29	- 9,850
1670 - 1680	17	- 4,650	19	- 5,600
1701 - 1710	8	- 1,640	7	- 2,310

Statistics are for all commercial cargo to and from the Indies. This represents, according to the author, a drop of seventy-five percent between 1575 and 1675.

The French *mémoire* utilized by Larraz indicates that by the middle of the seventeenth century only two and a half million pounds of the merchandise received annually at Cádiz were for the Spanish merchants, while fifty-one million pounds were for the northern European traders. The following figures are given for the distribution of the cargoes received from the Indies.

Cargo for French merchants - 14 million pounds; Genoese share - 11 million; Dutch share - 10 million; English share - 6 million; Flemish share - 6 million; German share - 4 million; Spanish share - 2 1/2 million.

French merchants shipped twelve million pounds of goods to the Spanish and French colonies in the Western Hemisphere aboard the Spanish fleets. Their profits were generally between 40 and 50 percent. C. H. Haring writes that "in 1608 the Council of Indies informed the king that foreign interests in the fleets sent to the Indies amounted to two-thirds of the gold and silver which the royal armadas brought back to Spain," and that "a century later, foreign countries were supplying nine-tenths of the American trade." Several conclusions can be reached from this data: (1) the so-called "Spanish commercial monopoly" in the Western Hemisphere was extremely limited or non-existent and could not have affected the colonies to the degree which is normally assumed, (2) trade restrictions could not have been an important cause for the Spanish American revolutions, (3) a policy of "salutary neglect" must have existed in the Spanish colonies; and (4) the reason for the apparent safety of the Spanish fleet system was the result of the influence exercised by foreign merchants on their governments to restrict piratical depredations involving their own nationals. See Henri Sée, Documents sur le commerce de Cadix (Paris, 1927), p. 21 ff., "Esbozo de la historia del comercio francés en Cádiz y en la América española en el siglo XVIII," Boletín del Instituto de investigaciones históricas, Buenos Aires, año 6, no. 34, pp. 193-212; Irene A. Wright, "Rescates, with Special Reference to Cuba, 1599-1610," Hispanic American Historical Review, 3 (1917), p. 338n; C. H. Haring, The Spanish Empire in America (New York, 1947), pp. 315-329; Antonio Ubieta, et. al. Introducción a la historia de España (Barcelona, 1974), p. 389; José Larraz, La época del mercantilismo en Castilla, 1500-1700 (Madrid, 1964).

⁶This voyage was called the "carrera de las Indias." See Juan López Velasco, Geografía y descripción universal de las Indias (Madrid, 1971), pp. 34-40 and Padre Antonio Vázquez de Espinosa, Compendio y descripción de las Indias Occidentales (Madrid, 1969), pp. 9-10. López Velasco was a Piloto Mayor (Chief Pilot) in the fleet system and wrote his work in 1574. Father Vázquez wrote his Compendio in 1623. Both works were published by the Biblioteca de Autores Españoles from the original manuscripts.

⁷Ibid.

⁸The strait is ninety-four fathoms (about 564 feet) deep and could easily accomodate the fleets. The armadillas were well-armed ships, normally based in Santo Domingo or Puerto Rico. They were commissioned in 1582, but their effectiveness was seriously impaired by lack of adequate funds. For many years, the New Spain fleet had only two warships for its defense, a capitana and an almiranta, and depended on the armadillas for protection while sailing across the Caribbean.

⁹There is an amusing account of the manner in which the defeat of the English was brought about. It appears that landcrabs found in Santo Domingo at the time "were of an immense size, burrow in the sands, and at night issue out in great numbers. On the above occasion [Penn's invasion], the English landed an ambushade to surprise the Spanish camp, which being unprepared, and consisting of irregulars, had it been pushed, must have certainly fallen. The advanced line from the first boats had already formed, and was proceeding to take post behind a copse, when they heard the loud and quick clatter of horses' feet, and, as they supposed, of the Spanish lancemen, who were dexterous, and whose galling onset they had experienced the day before. Thus believing themselves discovered, and dreading an attack before their comrades had joined, they embarked precipitately, and abandoned their enterprise; but the alarm proved to be these large landcrabs, which, at the sound of footsteps, receded to their holes, the noise being made by their clattering over the dry leaves, which the English soldiers mistook for the sound of cavalry. In honor of this "miracle" a feast was instituted, and celebrated each year, under the name of the Feast of the Crabs, on which occasion a solid gold landcrab was carried about in procession." The story is officially recorded in the annals of the British Navy. See William Walton, Present State of the Spanish Colonies, including a particular account of Hispaniola, Vol. 1 (London, 1819), p. 106; Samuel Hazard, Santo Domingo, Past and Present; with a Glance at Haity (New York, 1873), pp. 66-67; Southey, vol. 2, p. 4; Pierre Du Tertre, Histoire des Antilles, vol. 1 (Paris, 1667), pp. 472-479.

¹⁰Hazard, pp. 99-101.

¹¹The earthquake occurred at 9:40 in the morning of November 1, 1755, killing an estimated 60,000 people. The tidal wave that it produced rose to sixty feet at Cádiz and to forty feet at Lisbon. The tidal wave travelled on to the Caribbean, a distance of 3,740 miles, in ten hours. When it arrived at Martinique it rose to a height of twelve feet. See Thomas D. Kendrick, The Lisbon Earthquake (Philadelphia, 1957).

¹²The danger of a racial war must have been a factor in the decision to abandon Santo Domingo. The Census of 1785 shows that the colony had 152,640 individuals, eighty-eight percent of them being either slaves or freemen. The large number of blacks and mulattoes was a serious concern for the Spaniards after the black insurrection in Haiti. This concern appears in a Royal Decree issued on May 31, 1789,

which provided for a better treatment for the slaves and even severe punishment for those who abused them. The defection of Toussaint l'Ouverture from the Spanish service disorganized the Spanish forces in Santo Domingo. Fearing a black insurrection under the command of the defected black leader the Spanish decided to abandon the colony to France. A translation of the Royal Decree in the English language appears in Volume 3 of Southey's Chronological History, pp. 24-29. See also Hazard, pp. 102-104 and Parry, pp. 165-166.

¹³As a result of the slave rebellion, more than 10,000 refugees arrived in the United States. Their horrifying stories of the racial war influenced American opinion considerably, especially in the South. The experience influenced American foreign policy during the period 1820-1825 when Cuba struggled for political independence. The specter of a slave insurrection in that island similar to the one in Haiti influenced American policy decision concerning free Cuba. The insurrection also affected the views of Mexico and Colombia concerning Caribbean independence. The fall of Haiti gave considerable impulse to the Cuban sugar industry.

¹⁴The clandestine trade in Puerto Rico is discussed in considerable detail by Arturo Morales Carrión in his book Puerto Rico and the Non-Hispanic Caribbean: A study in the Decline of Spanish Exclusivism (Rio Piedras, 1974), pp. 35-45.

¹⁵Robert W. Anderson, Party Politics in Puerto Rico (Stanford, 1965), p. 3.

¹⁶Spain, Sevilla, Archivo General de Indias, Patronato, Legajo 80, no. 6, folio 1 (old designation), "Probanza hecha a petición de D. Perafán de Rivera, biznieto de D. Juan Ponce de León y trata de su viaje a Yucatán, Año 1606," in Aurelio Tió, Nuevas fuentes para la historia de Puerto Rico (San Germán, 1961), pp. 330-334. See also from the same author "Historia del descubrimiento de la Florida y Beimeni o Yucatán," Boletín de la Academia Puertorriqueña de la Historia, 2, No. 8 (1972).

¹⁷Alejandro Tapia y Rivera, Biblioteca histórica de Puerto Rico que contiene varios documentos de los siglos XV, XVI, XVII y XVIII (Puerto Rico, 1854), pp. 400-405.

¹⁸"The Voyage to Saint John de Porto Rico, by the Right Honourable George. Earle of Cumberland, written by himselfe," in Purchas His Pilgrimes (Glasgow, 1906), 16, pp. 29-44. The narrative contains a list of the eighteen ships used by Cumberland.

¹⁹"Relación de la entrada y cerco del enemigo Boudoyno Henrico, general de la Armada del Príncipe de Orange en la ciudad de Puerto-Rico de las Indias; por el Licenciado Diego de Larrasa, teniente Auditor general que fué de ella," in Tapia y Rivera, pp. 416-433. For

the English attack of 1797 see Sir Ralph Albercombry's Dispatch to Henry Dundas, Secretary of State, May 2, 1797, in the Annual Register, A View of the History, Politics, and Literature for the Year 1797 (London, 1797), p. 97.

²⁰To use Jamaica as an illustration, William J. Gardiner writes: "in 1739 there were 429 estates, yielding 33,000 hogsheads of sugar and 13,200 puncheons of rum. In a little more than twenty years after, the estates had increased to 640, and the production was close to 45,000 hogsheads of sugar and 22,400 puncheons of rum." William J. Gardiner, A History of Jamaica, from its Discovery by Christopher Columbus to the year 1872 (London, 1909), p. 117; Eric Williams writes: "the trade with the Spanish colonies had increased to the point where it employed annually four thousand tons of British shipping, disposed of British goods to the value of a million and a half pounds sterling, and remedied the chronic shortage of specie in the British West Indies by introducing, particularly into Jamaica and Barbados, large quantities of bullion, estimated at 150,000 pounds annually." Eric Williams, From Columbus to Castro: The History of the Caribbean, 1492 - 1969 (New York, 1970), p. 169. The importance of the West Indian colonies to England can be evaluated by the number of servants shipped from Bristol between 1654-1686. During that time forty-three percent of all servants were sent to the Caribbean while the mainland colonies (Virginia and New England) received fifty-seven percent. Richard S. Dunn, "Sugar and Slaves, The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713 (Chapel Hill, 1972), p. 56.

²¹Morales Carrión, p. 43.

²²John Parry and P. M. Sherlock, A Short History of the West Indies (London, 1956), pp. 104-105.

²³Ibid.

²⁴See "Real orden para desalojar de la Ysla de Santa Cruz a los daneses, San Ildefonso, 18 de julio de 1735, in Cayetano Coll y Toste, Boletín histórico de Puerto Rico, Vol. 3 (San Juan, 1914), pp. 9-10; "Reales órdenes para el desalojo de extranjeros de las islas de San Thomas y Cayos de San Juan, Madrid, 30 de noviembre de 1728," in *ibid.*, pp. 6-8; "Real orden disponiendo el desalojode los ingleses de la Isla de Virques, Buen Retiro, 11 de marzo de 1755," in *ibid.*, Vol. 4, pp. 244-246.

²⁵Historian Tomás Blanco describes the importance of Puerto Rico as bastion of the Spanish defense system as follows: "In the collection of Muñoz' documents [Spanish chronicler Juan Baustista Muñoz, sixteenth century] in the Academy of History in Madrid there are many indications of the importance given to Puerto Rico by Spain. For example: 'that island is the door to the navigation of the area' (Doc. Muñoz, vol. 76, folio 224, 1520); 'being that island the key to the Indies, it must be secured' (Letter from Gama, Vargas, Castro, and García Troche to the Emperor, 1529); 'that island is the entrance to the Indies, we are the first one to collide with the French and English corsairs' (Governor F. M. Lando to the Emperor); 'this island is the Rhodes of Christianity,

no ship can navigate those waters if the local authorities decide to prevent it' (Molina in 1542)." Tomás Blanco, Prontuario histórico de Puerto Rico (San Juan, 1973), pp. 36-37.

²⁶ Charles Spencer, Third Earl of Sunderland, Secretary of State, to Daniel Parke, Governor of the Leeward Islands, n.d., in Great Britain, Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and West Indies, 1574-1733 (London, 1862-1939), Year 1706-1708, doc. no. 591.

²⁷ John Hart to Lord Charles Townshend, Second Viscount and Secretary of State, May 8, 1729, in Great Britain, British Museum Library, Additional Manuscripts, No. 32694, pp. 37-38.

²⁸ For the authority and prerogatives granted to the captains-general see Juan de Solorzano y Pereyra, Política Indiana, lib. 5, cap. 18, num. 5-17, Vol. 4 (Madrid, 1972), pp. 284-289; and lib. 5, cap. 2, num. 1-40, in *ibid.*, pp. 23-24. This work is a compendium of the Leyes de Indias de 1609 (Laws of Indies) and was originally published in 1639.

²⁹ The laws can be found in Recopilación de Leyes de los Reynos de las Indias, mandadas imprimir y publicar por la majestad Católica del Rey Don Carlos II, Nuestro Señor (Madrid, 1791), reprinted by the Consejo de Hispanidad, Madrid, 1943. See also C. H. Haring, The Spanish Empire in America (New York, 1947), pp. 109-115.

³⁰ Herminio Portell Vilá, Historia de Cuba en sus relaciones con los Estados Unidos y España, Vol. 1 (La Habana, 1938), pp. 77-78; John Edwin Fagg, Cuba, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic (Englewood Cliffs, 1965), p. 25.

³¹ "Real Orden dando franquicias a la Real Compañía de Barcelona, en 1767, Madrid, 24 de febrero de 1767," in Coll y Toste, Vol. 11, p. 162; Jesús Cambre Mariño, "Puerto Rico bajo el reformismo ilustrado," Revista de Historia de América, Mexico, D. F., núm. 73-74 (1972), pp. 58-60.

³² Jacobo de la Pezuela, Diccionario geográfico, estadístico e histórico de la Isla de Cuba, Vol. 2 (Madrid, 1863), pp. 55-60.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Foner, pp. 38-39.

³⁵ Fray Iñigo Abbad y Lasierra, Historia geográfica, civil y política de la Isla de S. Juan Bautista de Puerto Rico dala á luz D. Antonio Valladares de Sotomayor (Madrid, 1788), p. 168; Lidio Cruz Monclova, Historia de Puerto Rico, Siglo XIX, Vol. 1 (Rio Piedras, 1970), p. 15n.

³⁶ This amount represents two percent of the total Caribbean trade. Commerce with other European possessions in the same area was: British West Indies, \$2,077,757; French West Indies, \$3,284,656; Dutch West Indies, \$649,395; Danish West Indies, \$209,443; Swedish West Indies, \$4259.

The United States exports to the Caribbean were thirty-one percent of all the American foreign trade for the year 1790. U. S. Congress, American State Papers, Documents, Legislative and Executive of the United States, Commerce and Navigation, Vol. 1 (Washington, D. C.; 1832), p. 33.

³⁷Ibid., p. 417. This amount represents twenty-six percent of the Caribbean trade, a gain of twenty-four percent in eight years.

³⁸Ibid., pp. 433-435, 441.

³⁹The Situado varied between 150,000 and 225,000 pesos during the years 1772-1783. In 1784 it was reduced to 100,000 pesos annually, however, the amount of money received did not equal the authorization.

⁴⁰For the organization of the Consulado see "Real Cédula de erección del Consulado de la Habana espedita en Aranjuez a 4 de abril de 1794," in Spain, Archivo General de Indias, Papeles de la Isla de Cuba, Sección 11 (new designation), Legajo 7,404. For Arango y Parreño see Breve rasgo de los méritos y servicios del Sr. D. Francisco Arango y Parreño, impreso por acuerdo del Excelentísimo Ayuntamiento de la Habana (La Habana, 1814) and Douglas D. Wallace, "Francisco de Arango y Parreño," Hispanic American Historical Review, 16 (1936), pp. 454-465.

⁴¹One factor that is seldom considered in explaining Spanish decline at the end of the eighteenth century is the growth of the bourgeoisie. The censuses of the period indicate the growth as follows:

Census Year	No. of nobles	No. of ecclesiastics	Bourgeoise	Farmers
1768	722,794			226,187
1787	480,589	1,871,768	310,739	191,101
1797	402,059	1,677,172	533,769	172,231

An analysis of these figures will indicate the rise of a middle class to more than one-half million in the short span of twenty-nine years and the related decline of the aristocratic ruling elite by forty-five percent during the same period. The factor for the bourgeoisie in the census of 1797 represents five percent of the total population for that year while the one for the nobles is 3.8 percent. The emergence of a powerful middle class accelerated the decline of the empire. Since this group promoted commercial and trade interests, they insisted in strong colonial controls to protect their investments. This resulted in creole dissatisfaction since most of them abhorred bourgeois values. The success of the Spanish American revolutions triggered by the actions of a conservative middle class government dismembered the Spanish empire and resulted in Spain becoming the "specter of Europe." The demographic structure is discussed in Antonio Ubieta, et. al., Introducción a la historia de España (Barcelona, 1974), pp. 411-452. See also José Terrero, Historia de España (Barcelona, 1971), pp. 350-351.

CHAPTER III

THE ERA OF COLONIAL REFORMS

The rapid period of free trade and economic concessions which Spain bestowed during the preceding century diminished the creoles narrow colonial provincialism and brought to their attention the importance of world events. As a result of that awareness, the Napoleonic invasion of Spain, and the imprisonment of Ferdinand VII, Cuban and Puerto Rican creoles experienced great anxiety at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The indecisive actions of the provisional government and the unstable political conditions of the peninsula also contributed to the colonial concern. The creoles underwent a further period of intensive uncertainty when constitutional monarchy, the ideas of the Enlightenment, and the basic principles of the French revolution became part of the aspirations of the Spanish people.

In spite of the instability of the government, the creoles remained loyal to the Crown during the Napoleonic Wars. The Bourbon reforms of Charles III and the efforts of the colonial governors to improve the relations between peninsulares and creoles influenced their decision. The vigorous and conciliatory rule of the Crown's representatives and the control exercised by the armed forces played an important role in securing that loyalty. The fear of a possible slave insurrection in Cuba and the vital economic interests of the upper classes also contributed to colonial fidelity.

In Cuba, Salvador del Muro, Marqués de Someruelos, maintained creole allegiance by partially agreeing to their demands for open trade, economic reform, and increased African migration, even when Spain ordered otherwise.¹ Since the Cuban merchants desired to maintain the favorable commercial advantages gained as a result of the European conflict, he also provided for the security of their trade.² Many Puerto Rican creoles, influenced by the recent improvements in trade relations with Spain, also remained loyal to the Crown in spite of the fact that the peninsulares despised them.³

In 1808 Cuba and Puerto Rico rejected the rule of Joseph Bonaparte and proclaimed their allegiance to Ferdinand VII and to the Junta Suprema (Supreme Council) that had assumed the direction of the government after the Napoleonic invasion. During that time, the majority of the creoles showed remarkable patience and adapted themselves to the chaotic conditions of the provisional government.⁴ With the increasing political instability in Spain, however, they too began to act and think independently since they no longer wanted to remain just agents of the Central Government or passive subjects of the Crown.⁵

A rising national consciousness influenced by the political events in the peninsula and by a belief in the inevitability of a prolonged European struggle emerged among the liberal-minded creoles. A strong sense of individualism, personality, and identity became evident in their demands for increased social equality and decreased political control. During that time, the creoles identified themselves with colonial goals rather than with national objectives. Since they desired to extend the commercial advantages that Spain had already granted, the creoles continued to demand further economic concessions. But unlike

the Spanish Americans of the mainland, who had a long-established tradition of independent determination, the Caribbean colonials were fearful of challenging the government directly and did not stress their desires.

After 1808 a liberal group, consisting mostly of influential upper-class creoles with investments in sugar, coffee, and tobacco production, favored complete assimilation into the peninsular political system. These creoles rejected colonial government and sought political and economic reforms beneficial to their particular interests. They opposed independence because they felt that political emancipation would bring instability, economic chaos and, in the case of Cuba, a racial strife between the whites and blacks.⁶ In Cuba, the principal leader of this faction was Francisco Arango y Parreño, who represented the plantation owners' interests in Spain. The liberal creoles articulated their demands by means of local activities in the Sociedad Económica, the Consulado de Agricultura and the Ayuntamiento de la Habana (the capital's municipal government).

Since the prosperity of the Cuban liberals depended on slavery and the plantation system, they demanded the continuation of the slave trade, unrestricted white migration, and labor control. They also advocated free trade with all foreign countries and popular education. In Arango's view, the Cuban liberals wanted political and economic concessions and the defense of their rights within the framework of a Spanish union.⁷

Puerto Rican liberals had similar objectives, except that they did not fear a slave insurrection. A census taken in Puerto Rico in 1827 indicated that there were only 28,418 slaves out of a total population of 287,673.⁸ In Puerto Rico, slavery was a unique institution, and

free labor predominated during the Spanish regime. The whites always outnumbered the blacks, and slaves constituted an infinitesimal part of the total population.⁹ The principal concerns of the Puerto Rican liberals, therefore, were the reduction of trade barriers, the elimination of commercial restrictions, the promotion of agriculture, reduction of taxes, and equality of opportunity for private economic interests. They, too, desired assimilation into the peninsular political system and opposed outright independence from Spain.¹⁰

On the other hand, Cuban and Puerto Rican separatists wanted complete independence for the islands and deemed the abolition of slavery as an important part of their struggle for political emancipation. This faction consisted of radical creoles, some well-to-do foreign plantation owners who opposed the Spanish regime, members of the lower clergy, some members of the armed forces, freeholders, and rural inhabitants. Many of them traded periodically with smugglers and privateers and did not depend so much upon Spanish commerce for their prosperity. Since a substantial number of them lived in the interior and on the coastal plains, for many years they had developed profitable trade relations with non-Spanish Europeans and other enemies of Spain. Foreign contacts had exposed them to the revolutionary doctrines of the French philosophers, freemasonry ethic, and the ideology of the Spanish American movement for independence. They believed that Cuba and Puerto Rico, after a formative period of three centuries, were finally ready to become sovereign states with their own geographical, social, economic, and cultural boundaries.¹¹

A conservative faction, consisting of Spaniards, wealthy creoles, members of the government, and immigrants from Louisiana, Florida, Santo

Domingo, and war-torn South and Central America, opposed the activities of both the liberals and the separatists. The conservatives wanted no political changes which could affect their strong influence in the government or the economy. They defended colonial status and opposed modifications in the structure of government or its economic institutions because they viewed reforms as dangerous to their own political and commercial interests. The peninsular aristocracy also distrusted and feared the creoles, considered them inferiors, and despised their social behavior. Since many young women married Spaniards instead of creoles to improve their social and economic prestige, at times personal relations between the two groups were extremely unpleasant.¹²

A fourth group, consisting mostly of merchants, traders, and small businessmen, sought the incorporation of Cuba as a territory or a state of the United States. Some wealthy planters who admired the social and aristocratic values of the American South preferred annexation to losing their property and life style through changes in the colonial system.¹³ Members of this group even proposed the annexation of Cuba to either Mexico or Colombia if the American government did not accept their overtures.¹⁴

By the end of 1808, the war between Spain and France had reached a dangerous level. Initially, the Spanish people, with the help of the British army and money from the Empire, had some initial victories against the French. Napoleon's drive could not be stopped, however, and by the end of that year the enemy had overrun most of the peninsula. The Junta Suprema followed the retreating forces from Aranjuez to Sevilla, where it planned to reorganize the war effort and consider means for a more active participation of the overseas colonies. To accomplish this last

purpose, the Junta extended political recognition to the ultramarine colonies, including Cuba and Puerto Rico, by raising their political status to that of equals with Spanish provinces and by permitting them to have a legal representative in the Spanish government. These political concessions were direct results of Spain's concern for control of her overseas possessions during the critical period of the Napoleonic invasion.¹⁶

On January 22, 1809, a royal decree signed by Francisco Saavedra, the president of the Junta Suprema, proclaimed the "vast and valuable dominions that Spain has in the Indies" were not colonies but "an essential and integral part of the monarchy."¹⁷ The decree ordered the Spanish American colonies and the Philippines to send representatives to the Junta Suprema. While the decision was well received in Cuba and Puerto Rico, it did not satisfy the other Spanish American colonies because it failed to provide for equal political representation.¹⁸

The defeat of the Spanish army at Ocaña, the occupation of Andalusia, and the loss of prestige and confidence of the Spanish people ultimately caused the disintegration of the Junta Suprema. A Consejo de Regencia (Regency Council) consisting of five members, including one American, assumed control. Fearful of liberalism, this conservative body suspended the plans for colonial representation and the reconvening of the Spanish parliament. These measures, as well as the ascension of Joseph Bonaparte to the Spanish throne, resulted in several revolts in the Spanish American colonies. Venezuela set the example by deposing the captain-general and proclaiming her autonomy on April 19, 1810. The rebellious colonies soon established self-governing juntas to rule in the name of Ferdinand VII. These initial revolts would later develop

into full revolutionary movements for independence.

On September 24, 1810, the Regency authorized the opening of the Spanish Cortes as a result of the Spanish American rebellions and the demands of influential citizens, such as José María Queipo del Llano, Conde de Toreno. 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; one assembly would restrain the king while the other would regulate the "popular license." In the end, this idea was rejected, and the Cortes assembled in one chamber.¹⁹

While the newly created parliament was less conservative than the Regency, its members, drawn mostly from the middle class, the clergy, and the aristocracy, still represented the conservative and commercial interests of the merchants of Cádiz, Sevilla, and Cataluña. In nearly all matters, the Cortes accepted the leadership of the middle class. While the liberals rejected the despotic form of government that traditionally had ruled Spain, their progressive views concerned the peninsula, not the imperial possessions in Spanish America. Commercial and trade interests took precedence during their discussions concerning the Empire.²⁰

As the new government was basically conservative, no substantial

changes could be expected in the relations between Spain and her colonies. The advocates of colonial reform and assimilation into the existing system did not realize that their hopes and expectations for a systematic improvement in the political relations between Spain and her colonies were unfeasible. The Spanish authoritarian system and royal institutions were too well established to permit adequate reforms, especially since the changes desired by the creoles affected the authority of the captain-general and the commercial monopolies of the peninsulares. The Cortes spurred national aims designed to preserve intact the Spanish colonial empire. As a result, they would not permit colonial demands for political reform that threatened Spain's control of her overseas dominions.²¹

The liberal faction that could have provided permanent political and economic reforms to the colonies divided itself into moderados and exaltados (moderates and radicals) after the opening of the Cortes. The political confrontations and disputes between the two groups considerably damaged the effectiveness of constitutional government and discredited the work of the parliament. Their differences made possible the increase of conservative and royalist adherents who undermined the reform program of the parliament. Cuban and Puerto Rican reformers, however, placed their hopes and aspirations for a better colonial government on this ineffective and divided liberal faction.²²

While the Cuban and Puerto Rican creoles accepted partial economic reforms from the parliament, the rest of the Spanish American colonials refused to compromise their political demands, especially equality of representation. On February 14, 1810, the Regency authorized the colonies one deputy from each American province to represent colonial interests

in the Cortes. At the same time it authorized the residents of Spain to send a deputy for each 50,000 inhabitants in addition to deputies from the cities which had been represented in the Cortes of 1789. As a result, there were seventy-five peninsular deputies present during the opening of the Cortes, with many other scheduled to arrive later, but only thirty representatives of the Spanish American colonies. These colonial delegates, with the exception of the representative from Puerto Rico, had been chosen from among the many native clergymen, academicians, and members of the armed forces who resided in Cádiz since many colonies did not hold elections to select official deputies.²³ As the official decree did not specify how many deputies should be elected from each overseas province, many of those chosen declined to go to Spain.²⁴ "The unequal representation that resulted," writes French Ensor Chadwick, "clearly indicates how great was the departure from a theory of equality which had been thrice enunciated in a few months."²⁵

In spite of changes made in the colonial trade monopolies, the merchants of Cádiz still maintained a strong control over Spanish American commerce. Since they were providing most of the financial support needed to fight the French, their views prevailed in most government decisions. Decrees which benefited the colonies but did not suit the Cádiz merchants were revoked, regardless of colonial objections. This influence further alienated the Spanish Americans, who found the prerogatives of the peninsular traders offensive to their economic and political interests.²⁶

The Spanish American colonists realized that their expectations for a better system of government could not be realized since the overwhelming majority of the peninsular deputies would legislate to their own

advantages. The Venezuelan revolutionaries considered this problem, and on May 3, 1810, refused to recognize the authority of the Consejo de Regencia or the decisions of the Spanish parliament.²⁷ By declaring their independence on July 5, 1811, they further demonstrated this objection to the Spaniards efforts to dictate how Spanish Americans should conduct their internal affairs. In Buenos Aires, the newspapers Martir-o Libre and El Grito del Sur discussed during that time the inequality of colonial representation, Spanish discrimination, and colonial loyalty. Their arguments in favor of local autonomy further spurred the cause of Spanish American independence.²⁸

Neither the Cubans nor the Puerto Ricans refused to accept the limited concessions granted by the Spanish government. In Cuba, Bernardo de O'Gavan and Andrés de Jáuregui were elected by the advocates of reform to represent their interests in the Cortes. Since one of the principal objectives of the Cuban liberals was the preservation of slavery, their representatives received instructions to oppose the abolition of the slave trade. On March 26, 1811, the deputy for New Spain, Miguel Guridi Alcocer, proposed the suspension of the traffic of African laborers, the emancipation of slave children, and the improvement of the living conditions of those who were in bondage. This action was significant because for the first time the Spanish parliament considered seriously the abolition of the slave trade. One week later, the well-known Spanish politician Agustín Argüelles further recommended the elimination of the trade by supporting the proposal of the Mexican delegate. Since these measures threatened the Cuban interests, Jáuregui opposed them and even tried to persuade the Cortes to suspend public hearing on the subject.²⁹

In Cuba, the Ayuntamiento de la Habana, the Consulado, the Sociedad Económica, and the captain-general supported Jattregui's action. The Marqués de Someruelos suggested to the Cortes that the issue of slavery should be treated "with great moderation in order not to lose this important island," and the creole organizations argued that since the fortunes of Spanish Cuba inevitably depended on the plantation economy, slavery must be allowed to continue unchanged.³⁰ Arango y Parreño protested that the Cortes had no jurisdiction to deal with the problem and that the colonials needed time to consider the situation and to adjust to the new conditions before suspending the trade. He appealed for gradual emancipation and suggested the promotion of white immigration to compensate for labor losses. His brilliant defense of Cuban slave interests resulted in a moratorium on the abolition of the slave traffic.³¹

The Puerto Rican delegate to the Cortes, Ramón Power y Giraldo, did not oppose the abolition of the slave trade. Puerto Rican creole interests lay in the reduction of trade barriers, elimination of commercial restrictions, the promotion of agriculture, and the equality of opportunity for private economic interests. As a result, Power's concern was primarily the defense of the economic interests of the emerging Puerto Rican bourgeoisie.³²

Since the other Spanish American colonies were initially represented by substitute delegates who resided in Spain, Power became the only elected deputy present when the Cortes convened in Cádiz. As the Spanish government desired to stress colonial participation and equality of representation, they elected Power to the vice presidency of the Cortes, an action which greatly satisfied the Puerto Rican liberals. Not

realizing the real motive of Power's election, they viewed the event as a true indication of the Spanish interest in resolving the existing colonial injustices and as a golden opportunity for the creoles to bring their grievances before the parliament. Power was successful in advancing the interests of liberal creoles. Among the concessions that he successfully advanced were the elimination of the abasto forzoso, the repeal of commercial monopolies, the reduction of export duties, and the opening of new ports to foreign trade.³³

Perhaps the most important reform granted to Puerto Rico as result of Power's demands was the separation of the Intendant from the captaincy-general. The post of Intendant had been created in 1784 to deal with treasury, fiscal, and economic matters, but its duties had been assumed by the governor. The liberals 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 Mexico.³⁴

To the delight of the liberals and the displeasure of the governor, Ramírez initiated a series of economic reforms which promised substantial improvements in foreign trade and agriculture. In order to encourage foreign commerce, he eliminated import taxes on farm machinery and agricultural tools and rehabilitated the ports of Aguadilla, Mayaguez, Cabo Rojo, Ponce, and Fajardo. The Intendant 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 valuable silver coin) from Venezuela to replace the paper currency which nobody wanted.³⁵

Power sought to reduce the captain-general's discretionary powers, which he used to suppress political activities in the island.³⁶ The Puerto Rican representative, however, could not remove the governor from his position of authority in spite of the fact that he ruled despotically. In a secret session of the Cortes, Power requested the appointment of a commission to investigate the governor's political conduct.³⁷ The commission referred the investigation to the Consejo de Regencia, which, following the traditional conservative view toward the colonies, resolved that the case did not have sufficient merit to warrant the governor's suspension.³⁸

The Cuban and Puerto Rican delegates received substantial encouragement in 1812 when the Cortes proclaimed a constitution which temporarily ended absolutism in Spain. Under this document, the Spanish government became a constitutional monarchy by which, according to historian Loida Figueroa, "the king had fewer powers than his English counterpart, the English being the most advanced nation in parliamentary procedures."³⁹ The Constitution of 1812 provided for popular franchise but it did not provide for equality, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly, or the right of association. It permitted colonial representation in the Cortes, but excluded persons of African origin — those even distantly related — from receiving Spanish citizenship. The Constitution of 1812, therefore, deprived a great proportion of Cubans and Puerto Ricans of that

right.

In other ways the Constitution of 1812 represented a considerable improvement over the authoritarian rule that had existed in the Caribbean for more than three hundred years. In addition to providing insular representation in the Cortes, the document gave Cubans and Puerto Ricans the same rights granted to the peninsulares, including freedom of speech, thought, petition, work, and suffrage as well as important trade and commercial advantages. It recognized in part the political liberties of the creoles, but like over previous reforms, it further centralized the administrative mechanisms of the empire, the authority of the royal governors, and the collection of taxes.⁴⁰

In 1814 Ferdinand VII, the imprisoned Spanish monarch, returned to Spain. He refused to accept the constitutional monarchy that had been devised by the Spanish Cortes during his absence. 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 inquisitorial authority of the Church, restored all the lost privileges to the nobility, and imprisoned many politicians, including deputies of the parliament. The members of the Cortes had to escape to either Great Britain or France because Ferdinand VII decreed the death penalty for any one who dared even to speak in favor of the Constitution. Sixty-nine deputies were forced to sign the Manifiesto de los Persas (Persian Manifesto), a document which promised complete allegiance to the Spanish monarchy.⁴¹

Ferdinand VII then launched a campaign of terror to intimidate the Spanish American revolutionaries. He abolished all decrees and acts which had been promulgated by the Cortes and appointed a board of officers to

investigate the armed uprisings in America. The board recommended that the King despatch a military force under the command of Pablo Morillo to suppress revolutionary activities. To pay the expenses of the pacification campaign, the government established a semi-annual tax of one hundred reales on retail sales establishments.⁴²

The effects of the change of government and the return of absolutism were felt less in Cuba and Puerto Rico than expected. While the governors reinstated authoritarianism, abolished the liberal reforms that had been granted by the Cortes, and curtailed political activities, the creoles continued to enjoy some measure of economic freedom. Spain made some additional concessions to Cuba and Puerto Rico to prevent the insular creoles from joining in the struggle for Spanish American independence.⁴³ The government also intended to utilize the Caribbean possessions as military bases for the defense of its territories. Cuba was to be used in the defense of New Spain and Florida in the event of a conflict with the United States or a dangerous uprising in Mexico. Puerto Rico was projected as the military bastion for operations against New Granada. Cuba and Puerto Rico also were to serve as refugee areas for the peninsulares escaping from war-torn Spanish America, as well as centers for the Spanish agents who operated in the United States and South America.⁴⁴

Since these military plans required satisfactory relations with the creoles, especially in Cuba, where the government intended to use local funds to pay for the naval activities in the Caribbean, Spain permitted the plantation owners and merchants to retain many of the trade concessions which had been previously granted by the Cortes. In 1816 Cuban interests received further support with the selection of Arango y Parreño as Consejero de Indias (Counselor of the Indies) to the Spanish Crown.

The following year, the government abolished the Royal monopoly on tobacco, which had been the source of considerable dissatisfaction, and fostered white immigration to the island. In 1818 Spain granted Cubans permission to trade with foreign countries and authorized the private ownership of the tierras mercedadas (land grants) which still remained under government control.⁴⁵

At the insistence of the British government, the Crown abolished the slave trade, but the measure did not seriously affect the slaveowners since they continued to import African workers illegally with the acquiesce of the local authorities. Prior to the suspension of the trade, the plantation owners rushed to purchase slaves. Between 1817 and 1820, 67,059 Africans entered the port of Havana. After the deadline of October 30, 1820, slave ships continued to arrive without great difficulty. From October 31, 1820 to September, 1821, twenty-six slave ships with 6,415 additional slaves entered Havana.⁴⁶

Puerto Rican creoles also received important concessions from Spain. On August 20, 1815, the Crown promulgated the Cédula de Gracias (Decree of Concessions) to satisfy some of the local demands and foster the development of population, commerce, and agriculture. The decree provided for a fifteen-year exemption from such taxes as the diezmos (tithes) and alcabalas (sales taxes), expanded trade with Spanish ports and foreign countries, and allowed foreigners to settle in Puerto Rico. The *cédula* greatly stimulated the growth of population and the investment of Spanish capital.⁴⁷

As a result of the concessions granted by Spain, many immigrants — royalists fleeing from Santo Domingo, Louisiana, Florida, Venezuela, and Mexico — settled on the islands. The flow of refugees and immigrants

was so great that Spain had to provide them financial assistance.

These exiles increased the number of peninsulares in Cuba and Puerto Rico and strengthened the reactionary control of the government, since they opposed the political activities of 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 Cuba and Puerto Rico, as in Canada, the refugees exerted considerable political influence for many years.⁴⁸

Spanish concessions in the Caribbean during the second decade of the nineteenth century were mostly economic in nature and primarily benefited the wealthy creoles and the middle class merchants. The reforms awakened many members of the creole bourgeoisie to the realization of the advantages of world trade. They did not, however, improve the political condition of the colonies or the economic status of the poor peasants, free blacks, and slaves who lived in poverty, had no education, and were unaware of the fundamental needs of social change.

Despite the many economic concessions granted to the islands to isolate them from the revolutionary ideology, the failure of the liberal reform movement in Spain and the return of absolutism in 1814 resulted in increased creole dissatisfaction. The discretionary way by which the governors and the local officials adopted or changed the reforms authorized by the Crown also contributed to colonial resentment.⁴⁹ As historian Charles E. Chapman has summarized it, "undue trade restrictions, arbitrary and unscientific methods of taxation, and the virtual exclusion of Cubans [and Puerto Ricans] from government are the three most frequently mentioned causes of discontent in the nineteenth century."⁵⁰

The political apathy of the masses, intensified by years of oppression

and military control, began to change after 1810 as result of the colonial demands for political and economic improvements. Under the leadership of the separatists, many Cubans and Puerto Ricans began to reconsider the extent of their loyalty to the Crown. The movement of political emancipation in Venezuela and Santo Domingo also strengthened the nationalistic spirit of many Cubans and Puerto Ricans. The revolutionary leaders that emerged to direct the independence effort came mostly from the middle class; they were well-educated, influential, and patriotic. These separatists began to furnish the directing force of the movement for Cuban and Puerto Rican independence in spite of the opposition of the peninsulares and the passivity of the rural lower classes. The era of colonial reforms, therefore, could not prevent the yearning for political emancipation.

FOOTNOTES

¹The interruption of peninsular trade, the scarcity of foodstuffs, and the demands of the creoles forced the Marqués de Someruelos to disregard the Royal Decree of April 18, 1799, closing the Cuban ports to neutral trade. Using his emergency military powers, he continued to admit American vessels to Cuban ports despite the objections of the peninsulares and the instructions of the government. See David Humphreys, Minister Resident to Spain to Timothy Pickering, Secretary of State, November 16, 1799, Department of State, Diplomatic Despatches from Spain, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C., and Jacobo Pezuela, Historia de la isla de Cuba, Vol. 3 (Madrid, 1868), pp. 320-321.

²Spain, Sevilla, Archivo General de Indias, Audiencia de Santo Domingo, Papeles de Estado, 1801-1802, Legajo 3 (Comercio de La Habana) and Legajo 28 (Real Compañía de La Habana), The University of Texas Library, Latin American Collection (Cunningham Transcripts), Austin, Texas. During that time, private commercial organizations doing commerce with Spain received special considerations if their vessels carried guns and ammunition as part of their cargo.

³As a result of the conflict in Europe, the British General Ralph Abercromby attacked San Juan in 1797. The Puerto Ricans, despite their disagreements with the peninsulares, rallied to defend the island and defeat the British forces. The official account of the British attack does not distinguish between creoles and peninsulares, however, it is known that many of the militia officers were native sons. British official reports also indicate that there were more troops defending San Juan than had been anticipated. For the British sources on the attack see Sir Ralph Abercromby's Dispatch to Henry Dundas, Secretary of State, May 2, 1797, in the Annual Register, A View of the History, Politics, and Literature for the Year 1797 (London, 1797), p. 97; London Gazette, June 6, 1797; and James Lord Dunfermline, Lieutenant-General Sir Ralph Abercromby K. B., 1793-1801, A Memoir by his Son (Edinburgh, 1861), pp. 57-60. Spanish sources are contained in Alejandro Tapia y Rivera, Biblioteca histórica de Puerto Rico que contiene varios documentos de los siglos XV, XVI, XVII, y XVIII (Puerto Rico, 1854), pp. 550-585; Cayetano Coll y Toste, "Copia de documentos ilegibles del año 1797, respecto al sitio de los ingleses puesto a esta capital," Boletín Histórico de Puerto Rico, Vol. 1 (San Juan, 1914), pp. 181-197. For a modern interpretation see Arturo Morales Carrión, Puerto Rico and the Non Hispanic Caribbean (Rio Piedras, 1974), pp. 112-177.

⁴Robert W. Anderson, Party Politics in Puerto Rico (Stanford, 1965), p. 4.

⁵Tomás Blanco, Prontuario histórico de Puerto Rico (San Juan, 1973), p. 49.

⁶The Census of 1817 shows a population of 291,021 whites, 224,268 slaves, and 115,691 free blacks. The combined black population was, therefore, 339,959 or 54 percent, while the white population was 45.9 percent. See Ulpiano Vega Cobiellas, Nuestra América y la evolución de Cuba (La Habana, 1944), pp. 74-75. The Census of 1827 shows 311,051 whites, 286,942 slaves, and 106,494 free blacks. The combined black population was 393,436, or 55.8 percent of the total for that year. This trend continued during most of the nineteenth century. See Maturin B. Ballou, History of Cuba or Notes of a Traveller in the Tropics (Boston, 1854), pp. 202-203.

⁷Douglas D. Wallace, "Francisco de Arango y Parreño," Hispanic American Historical Review, 16 (1936), p. 454. Arango y Parreño's views appeared for the first time on a document entitled "Al público imparcial de esta Isla" which was printed as a pamphlet by the Oficina de Arazoza y Soler, La Habana, 1821.

⁸The 1827 Census for Puerto Rico shows that there were 15,529 free blacks, 28,418 slaves, and 162,888 whites on the island. The combined black population was therefore 15 percent of the total number, not strong enough to cause a serious concern among peninsulares and creoles. Since 33.3 percent (95,806) of the total population were children below the age of ten, it is interesting to note that applying the same norm to the black will further reduce the number capable of supporting a slave insurrection to a merely ten percent. The small number of slaves can be attributed to the fact that Puerto Rican agriculture was essentially based on the cultivation of minor crops.

⁹Eric Williams, From Columbus to Castro: The History of the Caribbean, 1492-1969 (New York, 1970), p. 291.

¹⁰Jesús Cambre Mariño, "Puerto Rico bajo el reformismo ilustrado," Revista de Historia de América, Mexico, D. F., núm. 73-74 (1972), pp. 70-73.

¹¹Lidio Cruz Monclova, Historia de Puerto Rico, Siglo XIX, Vol. 1 (Rio Piedras, 1970), p. 36; Charles E. Chapman, A History of the Cuban Republic (New York, 1927), pp. 30-32; Pedro José Guiteras, Historia de la Isla de Cuba, Vol. 3 (La Habana, 1928), pp. 77-80.

¹²Chapman, p. 26.

¹³José Antonio Saco, Contra la Anexión, Vol. 1 (La Habana, 1928), pp. 20-29; Charles F. Adams, Memoirs of John Quincy Adams, Vol. 6 (Philadelphia, 1875), pp. 69-75; Carlos M. Trelles y Govín, "Estudio de la bibliografía cubana sobre la Doctrina de Monroe," Hispanic American Historical Review, 5 (1922), p. 103. For a detailed analysis of the political ideology of this group see Luis Estévez y Romero, Separatismo, Anexionismo y Autonomismo (New York, 1898).

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Hubert H. Bancroft, Works, Vol. 12 (San Francisco, 1885), p. 85.

¹⁶James F. King, "The Colored Castes and American Representation in the Cortes of Cádiz," Hispanic American Historical Review, 33(1953).

¹⁷José 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, 1876), doc. 368, p. 230; Conde de Toreno, Historia del levantamiento, guerra y revolución de España (Madrid, 1953), pp. 174-175.

¹⁸The decision made by the Junta Suprema provided that viceroalties, captaincies-general, and provinces send one representative each to Spain. This was unequal representation, since 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.

¹⁹Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, Memoria en defensa de la Junta Central (Madrid, 1957), p. 466.

²⁰Joaquín Lorenzo Villanueva, "Mi viaje a las Cortes," in Miguel Artola, ed., Memorias de tiempos de Fernando VII, Vol. 2. This is a diary of the secret sessions of the Cortes from December 17, 1810 to September 16, 1813.

²¹Arthur F. Corwin, Spain and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba, 1817-1886 (Austin, 1967), p. 22.

²²Charles W. Fehrenback, "Moderados and Exaltados: The Liberal Opposition to Ferdinand VII, 1814-1823," Hispanic American Historical Review, 51 (1971), p. 53.

²³Spain, Diario de las discusiones y actas de las Cortes, Vol. 1 (Cádiz, 1811-1813), Session of September 18, 1810; Lucas Alamán, "Lista de los diputados suplentes por la América española é islas Filipinas," in Historia de Méjico desde los primeros movimientos que prepararon su independencia en el año 1808, hasta la época presente, Vol. 3 (Mexico, 1850-1852), Appendix 3-5; Lucas Alamán, "Instalación de las Cortes y entrega del gobierno supremo, Isla de León, Septiembre 24, 1810," in Archivo de Don Lucas Alamán, doc. 118, The University of Texas Library, Latin American Collection, Austin, Texas; Conde de Toreno, pp. 289-290; King, pp. 34-37; Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, "Proyecto de decreto para la eleccion de diputados de cortes por representacion de las Américas," in Memoria en defensa de la Junta Central, Appendix 14, p. 600.

²⁴The population of Spain was 10,534,985 in 1797. According to the estimates of Alexander von Humboldt, the population of America was between fifteen and sixteen million. See Spain, Instrucción que deberá observarse para la elección de diputados de Cortes (Sevilla, 1810); Spain, Diario de las discusiones Vols. 3, p. 94, vol. 8, p. 201; Bancroft, Vol. 12, pp. 87-88.

²⁵French Ensor Chadwick, The Relations of United States and Spain (New York, 1963), pp. 108-109.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Rafael Altamira y Crevea, Resumen histórico de la independencia de América Española (Buenos Aires, 1910), p. 42; Vicente Lecuna, Crónica razonada de las guerras de Bolívar, Vol. 1 (New York, 1950), p. xv.

²⁸Enrique del Valle Iberlucea, Los diputados de Buenos Aires en las Cortes de Cádiz y nuevo sistema de gobierno económico de América (Buenos Aires, 1912), pp. 58-65.

²⁹Spain, Documentos de que hasta ahora se compone el expediente que principiaron las Cortes Extraordinarias sobre el tráfico y esclavitud de los Negros (Madrid, 1814), pp. 87-89; Luis Díaz Soler, Historia de la esclavitud negra en Puerto Rico, 1493-1890 (San Juan, 1965), pp. 126-128; Spain, Diario de sesiones de las Cortes generales y extraordinarias, 1810-1898, Vol. 2 (Madrid, 1810-1898), Session of April 2, 1811.

³⁰"Oficio del Marqués de Someruelos, La Habana, May 27, 1811," in José Antonio Saco, Historia de la esclavitud de la raza africana en el Nuevo Mundo y en especial en los países Americo-Hispanos (La Habana, 1938), Vol. 3, p. 90; Corwin, p. 24.

³¹Corwin, p. 24; Francisco Arango y Parreño, "Representación de la Comisión de la Habana a las Cortes," July 20, 1811, in Manuel Villanova, ed., Obras del Excmo. Señor D. Francisco de Arango y Parreño, Vol. 2 (La Habana, 1888), pp. 145-187.

³²Rafael E. Ramírez, ed., Instrucciones al Diputado Ramón Power, (Rio Piedras, 1936), pp. 30-46.

³³Loida Figueroa, Breve historia de Puerto Rico (Rio Piedras, 1976), pp. 145-146; "Exposición y peticiones del Sr. Diputado, D. Ramón Power y Giralt," in Rafael W. Ramirez, Lecturas de Historia de Puerto Rico, (Universidad de Puerto Rico, 1946), pp. 86-88

³⁴Luis E. González Vales, Alejandro Ramirez: La vida de un Intendente Liberal (Rio Piedras, 1969), pp. 16-51

³⁵Pedro 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, Año 1818 in Coll y Toste, Boletín histórico Vol. 4, pp. 164-184.

³⁶The governor had been granted absolute powers by the Facultades omnimodas, a Royal Decree which gave him the power of life and death over the local citizens to be applied as he deemed necessary. He used this authority to persecute revolutionaries and political dissidents.

³⁷Artola, Vol. 2, pp. 194-195.

³⁸Monclova, Vol. 1, p. 55.

³⁹Figueroa, p. 148.

⁴⁰Monclova, Vol. 1, p. 51.

⁴¹Perhaps the most unfortunate loss was Isidoro de Antillón Marzo, a geographer, magistrate, and educator. In 1802 he struggled for the emancipation of the black slaves and, as a member of the Cortes, supported the measures proposed for the abolition of the slave traffic. In 1813 the conservatives attempted to assassinate him but failed. The following year, however, he was condemned by the government for his liberal ideas. He died under unusual circumstances while on his way to prison. In 1823 the Royalists disinterred his body, burned it, and spread the ashes over the countryside. See Angel Ossorio, Diccionario político español (Buenos Aires, 1945), p. 58.

⁴²Alfred F. Zimmerman, "Spain and Its Colonies, 1808-1820," Hispanic American Historical Review, 11 (1931), p. 456; José L. Franco, Político continental americana de España en Cuba, 1812-1830 (La Habana, 1947), p. 50.

⁴³Isabel Gutiérrez del Arroyo, El reformismo ilustrado en Puerto Rico (Mexico, D. F.; 1953), p. 16.

⁴⁴Ramiro Guerra y Sánchez, Manual de historia de Cuba (La Habana, 1938), p. 250; Philip S. Foner, A History of Cuba and Its Relations with the United States, Vol. 1 (New York, 1962), p. 94; Franco, pp. 329-330; Gutiérrez del Arroyo, pp. 16-17n.

⁴⁵Hubert H. S. Aimes, History of Slavery in Cuba, 1511-1868 (New York, 1907), p. 91; Guiteras, Vol. 3, pp. 44-48; Guerra y Sánchez, p. 239.

⁴⁶Report of Ralph F. Jameson, British Commissioner in Havana, to the Parliament, 1821, in Aimes, p. 97. See also Ralph F. Jameson, Letters from the Havana during the year 1820 (London, 1821).

⁴⁷Spain, Sevilla, Archivo General de Indias, Audiencia de Santo Domingo, Sección 5, Legajo 2.330 (new designation), The University of California at Berkeley (Hubert H. Bancroft Library), Berkeley, California; Coll y Toste, Vol. 1, pp. 297-307; Pedro Tomás de Córdova, Memorias geográficas, históricas, económicas y estadísticas de la Isla de Puerto Rico, Vol. 3 (Oficina del Gobierno, 1832), pp. 44-45.

⁴⁸Chadwick, p. 94.

⁴⁹Many of the reforms authorized by the Crown were changed, amended, or not placed in effect by the local officials. See Cambre-Mariño, p. 55.

⁵⁰Chapman, p. 27

CHAPTER IV

THE CUBAN AND PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENTS

The Napoleonic invasion of Spain and the placement of Joseph Bonaparte on the Spanish throne resulted in the formation of revolutionary juntas in Spain to direct the Spanish resistance against the invader. The Spanish people, with the help of the British forces, had some initial successes against the French, but they could not stop Napoleon's drive across the peninsula. By March, 1810, the enemy forces were already in Cádiz, on the southern coast of Spain. The French victory and the coronation of Napoleon's brother resulted in several revolts in Spanish America; Venezuela set the example on April 19, 1810, by deposing the captain-general and proclaiming self-government.¹

Most of the South American colonies also revolted against the French-dominated peninsular government. They soon established local self-governing juntas, as Venezuela had done, to rule in the name of Ferdinand VII, whom they considered the legitimate Spanish ruler. As the rest of the Spanish American colonies began to slip from peninsular control, the strategic position of Cuba and Puerto Rico and their continued loyalty to the Crown became increasingly important for Spain. That nation did not realize, however, that the initial revolts in the empire and the disturbed political conditions in the Mother Country had also affected the Spanish Caribbean and the loyalty of its people. Cuban and Puerto Rican creoles had also begun to demand meaningful changes in the structure of

the colonial government and additional participation in the political process. When their political expectations did not materialize and Spain strengthened her military controls, the creoles decided to change the system.

On July 26, 1808, Francisco de Arango y Parreño, with the support of the Marqués de Someruelos and the approval of seventy-two influential citizens from Havana, recommended to the Ayuntamiento the formation of a junta superior de gobierno (central ruling junta) to direct the political affairs of the island. Since Spain did not have a legitimate government as a result of the Napoleonic invasion, many Cubans found it necessary to create a system of local government which could guarantee their special privileges and their interests. Such an assembly, however, could also have led to greater autonomy and perhaps to independence, as had happened in other parts of Spanish America. Therefore, the creoles who opposed self-government joined the reactionary peninsulares to defeat Arango's proposal. Local authorities consequently took no action on the recommendation. They proclaimed their adherence to the principles of the Junta Suprema de Sevilla and declared war against France.² The government also placed all the military forces on alert status and ordered the organization of sixteen militia companies to defend the capital. While the motives of Arango y Parreño may have been purely economic, his recommendation was, nevertheless, the first instance of overt Cuban dissatisfaction with the prevailing political system.³

The first attempt for Cuban independence occurred in 1809, when Román de la Luz Sánchez Silveira, a wealthy Freemason, together with Joaquín Infante, a lawyer from Bayamo, and Luis F. Basabe, a military officer, organized a revolutionary conspiracy in Havana with the

assistance of many blacks and mulattoes. To win the support of the liberal slaveowners, Infante proposed a republican constitution which would guarantee the continuation of slavery and the predominance of the creoles in the political affairs of the new republic. The wife of Román de la Luz unintentionally informed a local priest of the planned insurrection during confession and soon thereafter the authorities secretly arrested the leaders of the revolt.⁴

Infante escaped to the United States, but Román de la Luz and Luis F. Basabe were imprisoned in Ceuta and sentenced to permanent exile from Cuba. The leaders of the insurrection later received a royal pardon, but they were prohibited from returning to their country. Román de la Luz died in Spain several years later.⁵ William Shaler, an American special agent in Cuba, wrote to the State Department that the majority of the revolutionaries were "colored men, free Negroes, slaves and vagabonds, and since "the proceedings against them are secret, the public knows nothing more of it than what the government chooses to tell." Shaler concluded his report by indicating that there were strong fears of additional slave revolts throughout the island.⁶

In 1811 a Cuban revolutionary and adventurer, José Alvarez de Toledo fostered a revolution in his homeland with the assistance of the United States government. Toledo, labeled by the Spanish Minister in the United States as the greatest enemy of Spain in that country, had been an officer in the Spanish navy and an alternate representative for the island of Santo Domingo to the Spanish parliament. While in Spain, he had joined the radical element who opposed the return of Ferdinand VII to the throne. Accused of treason, he fled to the United States in September, 1811, with the aid of Richard Meade, the American Consul at Cádiz.⁷

In the United States, Toledo claimed to possess a document signed

by most of the Spanish American representatives in Spain which granted him the power to raise an army to revolutionize the internal provinces of Mexico.⁸ While in Philadelphia, he informed Secretary of State James Monroe that Great Britain, with the approval of the Spanish Cortes, planned to take possession of the West Indies in order to monopolize trade in the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean. At that time, he sought Monroe's help to liberate Cuba and Puerto Rico and organize these territories as an independent confederation friendly to the United States.⁹

Monroe became interested in Toledo's plans and employed Alexander J. Dallas, who was then the United States District Attorney for eastern Pennsylvania, as an intermediary with Toledo. On November 23, 1811, Monroe authorized his representative to provide Toledo with funds for a trip to the nation's capital to discuss his plans.¹⁰ Two weeks later, Toledo sent Monroe copies of a printed manifesto which he had published to justify Cuban independence. At that time, Monroe authorized additional funds for Toledo's personal expenses and suggested that the revolutionary agent visit him in Washington. There is no official record of the subsequent conversations between Monroe and Toledo, but it is known that in December, 1811, he visited the Secretary of State. Cuban historian Carlos Trelles y Gobín believes that he presented a plan for the independence of Cuba; Issac J. Cox has written that Toledo gave Monroe information concerning British designs in the Caribbean. Joseph B. Lockey maintains, however, that the independence of the Spanish West Indies was never the goal of Toledo and that his purpose in seeking help from the United States was to revolutionize the northeastern borderlands of Mexico.¹¹

In January, 1812, Toledo returned to Philadelphia and, with other individuals and the approval of the United States government, began to

organize a military expedition against Cuba. On January 14, he sent a letter to the Secretary of State concerning the preparations underway in accordance "with the agreement of your Excellency." Toledo also informed John Graham in the Department of State that he had received the funds promised for the expedition and was ready to proceed with the plans unless the government of the United States found them to be unsatisfactory. In that event, Toledo said in his letter, he was ready to change any portion of them as required because he was determined to succeed "for the welfare of my fatherland and of these United States."¹²

There are no documents in the Department of State concerning the cancellation of the planned expedition. Since the United States had serious difficulties with Great Britain during that time, it is possible that Monroe abandoned the plans for the liberation of Cuba in order to dedicate his attention to the European problem. Trelles y Gobin maintains that Toledo abandoned the plans for Cuban independence after realizing that the colony was not ready for it.¹³ Historian Arturo Santana, who has extensively analyzed Toledo's activities in the Caribbean, believes the Spanish islands in the West Indies "figured prominently in his plans during the first months in the United States."¹⁴ Toledo later went to New Orleans to join the Mexican insurgents who were trying to revolutionize northern Mexico and apparently abandoned his plans for the independence of Cuba.¹⁵

A more significant attempt for Cuban independence, involving free blacks and slaves, occurred in 1812 under the leadership of José Antonio Aponte, a mulatto carpenter from Havana. While there is no consensus among Cuban historians concerning the origins of Aponte's revolutionary ideology, it is known that he was aware of the struggle for independence

in Spanish America and probably was inspired by it. A black Haitian chieftain named Jean Francois promised Aponte to support the insurrection and some creole separatists joined the movement. The plans of Aponte involved a general uprising of slaves in the principal agricultural centers of the country, the destruction of the sugar and coffee plantations, and the transformation of the plantation system into an agrarian society which would not had to depend on slave labor for its economic prosperity.¹⁶

Aponte organized a junta revolucionaria (a revolutionary junta) in Havana to direct the insurrection. The rebel leaders also organized insurgent groups in many parts of the country, and the planned revolt acquired national scope. Hundreds of blacks and mulattoes, including members of the militia, joined the movement. They expected to succeed because most of the peninsular troops that defended the island had been transferred to South and Central America to fight the revolts on the continent. Aponte scheduled the uprising to begin on March 17, 1812, in Havana, where he had between three and four hundred men ready for the insurrection. He also expected to receive about 5,000 men from Haiti to join the rebel forces.¹⁷

Since the plans could not be kept secret and the insurrection appeared to have racial overtones, upper class creoles, the plantation owners, and many white citizens joined the peninsulares in their efforts to suppress the rebellion. They provided funds and even organized militia units to fight the revolutionaries. One month prior to the scheduled date for the attack on the capital, government agents arrested Aponte and eight of the principal leaders, who were promptly executed; the authorities carried the punishment with extreme brutality. Part of the dismembered body of Aponte was displayed throughout the capital as a warning

to his followers. The other captured leaders met a similar fate, since the Spanish wanted to impress the black slaves who believed in ghosts and spiritualism. Despite the setback, violent uprisings took place in many localities, especially in those which had been organized by Aponte's followers. The insurrection, however, was of a short duration since the rebels lacked adequate leadership to sustain a prolonged revolt. The government finally suppressed the rebellion with extreme cruelty.¹⁸

In spite of the failure of the Aponte rebellion, slave insurrections continued throughout the second decade of the nineteenth century. During that time the black runaway slave and the mulatto rural worker became the vanguard of the Cuban revolutionary movement. Their rebellious character was a constant threat to the Spanish authorities and to the creole slaveowner. Many of the runaway slaves, called cimarrones, escaped to the mountains of Oriente Province, where they formed palenques (outlaws' dens) from which they raided the nearby towns and rural plantations in search of food, weapons, horses, money, and supplies. By 1814 the palenques of Toa, Mayari, Baracoa, and Frijol had become so dangerous to the residents of the area that the government sent punitive expeditions to suppress them. These attempts uniformly met failure. Armed guerrilla bands from these palenques continued to harass the government forces for many years and later served as the spearhead of the revolutionary movement.¹⁹

Beginning in 1814, Masonic lodges also played a significant role in the Cuban struggle for independence. The early defeats of the Venezuelan and Mexican insurgents, the uncertain success of an armed uprising, the opposition of the liberal creoles, and the return of absolutism in 1814 had discouraged the separatists. The arrival of new troops from the

peninsula and the continuing utilization of Cuba as a base of military operations against the mainland had further diminished the revolutionary fervor. As a result, the separatists took sanctuary in the Masonic lodges and in the secret societies which had begun to operate in Cuba.

"The Freemasons' lodges," writes Roque E. Garrigó, "were the schools of the secret revolutionaries during that adverse period of Cuban history."²⁰ These societies, under such names as Comuneros, Carbonarios, Soles de Bolívar, Caballeros Racionales, Yorkinos, and Cadena Triangular, actively conspired for the independence of Cuba. Their political conspiracy increased throughout the years, and by 1820 the lodges had organized a strong revolutionary element in the country. Since many of their members were military officers, government functionaries, educators, and businessmen, their underground activities extended to many sectors of the community. The principal centers of political dissention were Havana, Matanzas, Camaguey, and Villaclara.²¹

Since many separatists were foreigners, the Spanish government took measures to restrict their activities. Many foreigners were either agents of the revolutionaries or emissaries from the insurgent governments of Spanish America and had come to Cuba to stir political dissention or to help the separatists achieve their goals. Since their activities threatened the stability of the country, the government intensified its efforts locate them. On October 21, 1817, a royal decree divided all foreigners into three categories: transients who were merely visitors in Cuba, domiciled foreigners, and naturalized citizens. Transients had to register with the local authorities, comply with existing regulations, and justify their reasons for being in Cuba. Domiciled foreigners had to declare their intentions of settling on the island, profess the Roman

Catholic religion, and swear allegiance to Spain. Naturalized citizens were required to serve in the militia, pay taxes, and practice Catholicism, in addition to being loyal subjects of the Crown. Other immigrants — mostly royalists fleeing from Venezuela, Santo Domingo, Mexico, and Louisiana — also settled in Cuba. These exiles received financial assistance and land grants from the government. They strengthened the pro-Spanish conservative forces and opposed the political activities of both liberals and separatists.²²

As the struggle for independence progressed in the Spanish American colonies, a large number of privateers took advantage of the existing political turbulence. Most of the privateers were American, British, and French, but many others were Venezuelans and Colombians who served under Pedro Luis Brión, a Dutch sailor and merchant who had become Simón Bolívar's naval commander. The main object of these privateers, as part of Bolívar's strategy to isolate the Spanish forces, was to raid Spain's commercial vessels in the Caribbean, destroy coastal settlements under enemy control, and provide weapons and supplies for the revolution.

Argentinian and Uruguayan privateers also joined the struggle, and their activities contributed to the general instability of the area. They equipped their vessels and gathered followers in the United States, the Caribbean, and the British West Indian colonies. There is no doubt that these privateers did considerable damage to Spanish commerce in the Caribbean and helped the independence movement in South America during the years when Bolívar was striving to organize an army capable of winning decisive victories on the battlefield. According to Samuel Flaggs 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." The Spanish navy could not subdue the insurgents because most of the maritime power had been annihilated at the battle of Trafalgar.²³

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, Spanish, English, and American commerce suffered considerably. While the privateers concerned themselves with raiding Spanish commerce, the United States government did not interfere with their activities. The sympathy of the American citizens with the revolutionary struggle also allowed the privateers to fit their vessels in North American ports and to gather American crews in the United States. But when they extended their operations to neutral shipping, their popularity declined and the American government restrained their actions.²⁴

On September 1, 1815, the United States issued a proclamation prohibiting American citizens from helping the privateers. The directive included rendering assistance to the Mexican insurgents that operated in the Gulf of Mexico. It prohibited the sale of weapons and military supplies to the revolutionaries, departure of armed expeditions from American ports, and the fitting of privateers in the United States. Two years later, as negotiations for the acquisition of Florida progressed, the United States prohibited still further American participation in the Spanish American revolutions.

In spite of the restraints imposed by the United States, the privateers continued to raid the Spanish commerce. They also became the principal link between the revolutionaries of Cuba and Puerto Rico and those

of the mainland. Their activities became increasingly important to the separatists by the end of the decade. Between 1817 and 1819 insurgent privateers held Cuba and Puerto Rico in a state of semi-blockade, much to the satisfaction of the separatists who believed that the measure would weaken Spanish domination in the Caribbean. During that time, the Spanish authorities constantly feared an insurgent attack on Cuba and Puerto Rico, and expeditions real or imaginary occupied the attention of the authorities.²⁵

In 1820 two Spanish military officers, Rafael de Riego and Antonio Quiroga, led a successful liberal revolt in Spain to abolish absolutism and reestablish the Constitution of 1812. The rebellious army officers forced Ferdinand VII to reopen the parliament and grant representation to the Spanish colonies. For the second time in a decade, the Spanish government granted political equality to Cuba and Puerto Rico by allowing insular delegates to represent the colonies in the Cortes. The new liberal measures revived hopes for a better colonial government.

In Cuba, however, the captain-general refused to accept the restoration of the new liberal regime. As a result, the people of Havana threatened to revolt unless the government instituted the same liberal measures that had been adopted in Spain. The people also demanded the liberation of the political prisoners and the adoption of a progressive government in Cuba. During the election of the deputies to represent Cuba, additional disturbances between creoles and peninsulares occurred in Havana and Puerto Príncipe. On that occasion, cries of "long live a free Cuba" and "death to the peninsulares" were heard among the people, especially in the province of Matanzas.²⁶

The newly gained victory lasted for a very short time. Ferdinand

VII, who had been kept a virtual prisoner of the Spanish Cortes after the Riego revolt, appealed for help from the Holy Alliance and Alexander I of Russia to regain his throne and reestablish absolutism. At that time, Europe was under the political direction of the Russian monarch and Prince Metternich of Austria, who considered constitutionalism too revolutionary. Therefore, when Ferdinand VII appealed for help, the leaders of the Quadruple Alliance authorized a French invasion of Spain. In 1823, Louis Antoine de Bourbon, duc d'Angouleme, marched into Spain with 100,000 soldiers and successfully reestablished Ferdinand VII as the legitimate ruler. Authoritarianism returned both to Spain and the Spanish Caribbean.

The return of absolutism intensified military control in Cuba. Captain-General Dionisio Vives suppressed political activities, imposed additional taxation, and curtailed creole dissent. He prohibited criticism of the government and attempted to dissolve the masonic lodges and secret societies that conspired against the government. The liberal creoles and the plantation owners also became victims of the government reprisals, and the slaveowners discovered to their dismay that their influence in Spain was not what it had been before the liberals gained control in 1820. Dissatisfied with the return of absolutism and angered by the government retribution, many joined the secret societies.²⁷

During the brief liberal interlude, the Cuban revolutionaries reorganized the secret masonic organizations. In 1821 the Cadena Eléctrica, also known as the Cadena Triangular de Bolívar, became one of the most important rebel societies in Puerto Príncipe. Other masonic groups, among them the Escoceses and the Anilleros, also joined the independence movement. The Cuban patriot Nicolás Manuel de Escobedo unified their

activities and inspired new revolutionary fervor in those Cubans who had lost interest in independence.²⁸

In 1821 José Francisco Lemus, a military officer in the Colombian army and Cuban patriot, organized the Soles y Rayos de Bolívar (the Suns and Rays of Bolívar), the most active of the rebel societies. This organization established cells throughout the country to work for Cuban independence. Lemus convinced many individuals from military units, city governments, schools, and the business community to join his organization. In the rural areas, slaveowners, farmers, free mulattoes, and slaves also became members of the rebel movement.²⁹

The Soles y Rayos de Bolívar became a true revolutionary organization with thousands of followers from all sectors of society. Lemus convinced wealthy landowners and black slaves that independence was the only course open to Cuba and urged them to unify behind the revolutionary cause. An effective propaganda campaign also convinced many Cubans of the value of Lemus' philosophy; his emissaries carried the revolutionary ideology to all the interior provinces. Lemus believed that the vast distance between the Metropolis and the colony prevented effective government and provided opportunities for mismanagement and corruption. He also told the people that slavery was inefficient while free labor was more productive. "In this respect," writes Philip S. Foner, "Lemus' program was in advance of nearly all of the independence movements in the former Spanish colonies."³⁰

To accomplish his objectives, Lemus instructed chosen members of the organization to join the militia units and procure weapons for the revolution. Arms also were to be obtained from Mexico and Colombia. As the date that had been selected for the armed insurrection approached,

the leaders intensified their activities by distributing weapons and publishing throughout the country proclamations bearing the slogan "Independencia o Muerte (Independence or Death!)." ³¹ The province of Matanzas became one of the principal areas of revolutionary activity. José María Heredia, considered as one of the first romantic poets of Spanish America and a member of the society Caballeros Racionales, led the revolt in Matanzas. Together with José Teurbe Tolón, Antonio María Betancourt, Melitón Lamar, Manuel de Portillo, and Juan Guillermo de Aranguren, the Cuban poet planned a local uprising to coincide with the insurrection of the Soles y Rayos de Bolívar. His activities in favor of Cuban independence and subsequent permanent exile inspired Cuban revolutionaries throughout the nineteenth century. ³²

In August, 1823, two members of the organization, José Dimás Valdez and Alejandro Campos, denounced the conspiracy to the authorities. The captain-general ordered the arrest of Lemus and the principal rebel leaders. Within a week, authorities seized 602 individuals, including 174 from Matanzas. To prosecute the revolutionaries, the government organized a Real Sala del Crimen (Criminal Court of Law), which dealt severe penalties to those arrested. This high court exiled Lemus to Spain after he served a prison term. Many of the rebels, including José María Heredia, escaped to the United States and Mexico. ³³

To prevent further disturbances, on March 4, 1825, the Crown authorized the captain-general to organize the Comisión Militar Ejecutiva Permanente (Permanent Executive and Military Commission) to prosecute crimes which were beyond the jurisdiction of the civilian court system. This organization subsequently assumed extensive judicial administrative powers and forced the Cuban people to live virtually under martial law

for more than fifty years.³⁴ Two months later, on May 28, 1825, the government reinstated the Facultades omnimodas which gave the Captain-General absolute power over life and death and authorized him to establish a military dictatorship to enforce the colonial laws.

Spain further authorized the captain-general "full and unlimited authority" to exile any individual whom he considered a threat to national security. The government also gave him the prerogatives normally given to a commander of a besieged Spanish province and jurisdiction to declare martial law, confiscate goods, or establish censorship. To strengthen the island's defenses, Spain transferred to Cuba a considerable number of troops and warships. By 1826 the Cuban garrison had 11,526 infantrymen, a lancer regiment of 300 men, seven artillery companies, and a naval force of twelve ships.³⁵

The rapacity of the Captain-General, the suppression of individual liberties, and the establishment of absolutism, however, did not discourage independence. The military garrison and the government protective measures, however, made an internal revolt virtually impossible. Thus, after years of continuous defeats, improper preparation, and poor coordination, the separatists decided to take a different approach to accomplish their objectives. In 1824 they resolved to place their hopes for a successful rebellion in Simón Bolívar, Mexico, and the victorious armies of the Spanish American republics.

While Cuba and the rest of the Spanish American colonies were contemplating a long struggle for independence, the majority of the people in Puerto Rico remained loyal to the Crown. Since slavery did not have the importance that it attained in Cuba and slaveowners supported gradual emancipation of the slaves, few uprisings occurred on the island. The

rural Puerto Ricans were mostly peasants, free blacks, and slaves of exceedingly docile character. Uneducated, living in poverty, and restricted in their actions by an absolute government, they had shown little interest in politics or in revolutionary activities prior to 1812. But the failure of the liberal reform movement in Spain and the return of absolutism in 1814 changed the political apathy of many Puerto Ricans. The movement for political emancipation in Venezuela and Santo Domingo also strengthened their nationalistic views and their desires for change in the colonial system.

Most Spaniards who resided in Puerto Rico opposed independence. They were employed in government service or were engaged in commercial and financial pursuits and did not desire a change in the political system. Many creoles did not accept the separatists plans for an independent republic either. As members of the upper class, they preferred assimilation into the political structure rather than self-government.

In 1810 the Puerto Rican separatists began their struggle for independence. Between 1810 and 1811, seditious proclamations inviting the Puerto Ricans to rise up in open rebellion and join the cause of liberty appeared periodically in St. Thomas.³⁶ Luis de Onís, the Spanish Minister in the United States, frequently warned local authorities that Venezuelan agents were arriving in Puerto Rico to support the independence movement. Many of these agents, in fact, reached the island; the Spanish authorities, however, captured others and imprisoned them in the Morro Castle.

In 1810 the ayuntamientos of Caracas and Cartagena urged the members of the Ayuntamiento de San Juan to revolt against the Spanish dominated government and join the rest of South America in the struggle

for independence.³⁸ On May 25, 1810, the creoles of San Juan rejected these invitations and reaffirmed their loyalty to Ferdinand VII because they could not condone the actions of the Spanish American revolutionaries.³⁹ On December 11, 1810, the creoles sent a similar rejection to Cartagena and criticized the activities of the insurgents.⁴⁰ Praising the loyalty to Ferdinand VII, both the Consejo de Regencia and the Spanish Cortes sent their congratulations to the liberal creoles of San Juan for "their fidelity, love, and noble undertaking."⁴¹

The activities of the Puerto Rican patriots did not end with the opposition of the local ayuntamientos. With the help of Venezuelan revolutionary agents, they increased their political activism in the island. During that time, Miguel José Sanz, the Secretary of State and Foreign Relations of the revolutionary government of Venezuela, campaigned actively for the independence of Puerto Rico because he had many friends in the colony, including Bishop Juan Alejo Arisméñdi and other members of the clergy. Sanz's activities caused his arrest and imprisonment while he was visiting Puerto Rico; he later escaped with the help of the separatists. Upon his return to Venezuela, he corresponded periodically with the separatists and sent them copies of seditious literature, including the Gaceta de Caracas, a revolutionary newspaper. Sanz's letters indicate that the independence of Puerto Rico had supporters among the lower clergy and the members of 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, like other priests in Spanish America, became partisans of independence.⁴²

The increase of the insurgent activities resulted in many arrests and the exile of important leaders and sympathizers. The Governor of

Puerto Rico, Salvador Meléndez, believed that sedition existed in all sectors of the creole society. He sent a long indictment to Spain accusing the Puerto Rican Bishop Juan Alejo Arizmendi and the representative to the Córtes, Ramón Power y Giralt, of subversive activities.⁴³ This indictment may have been justified because many of the individuals accused of conspiracy were in fact separatists who had been planning an uprising in the town of San Germán.⁴⁴

Many historians have described Arizmendi 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 him as a supporter of the Spanish system and as an individual who believed in the need to maintain ties with Spain.⁴⁵ The Puerto Rican scholar Cayetano Coll y Toste viewed Bishop Arizmendi as a "benevolent, charitable, religious man of liberal inclinations."⁴⁶ Arizmendi's political activities indicate, however, that while he did not conspire against the government, perhaps as result of his religious and moral responsibilities, he did support changes in the political system.

At the time when France invaded Spain, Arizmendi proposed the creation of a junta to govern the island. The governor objected to the suggestion because the island was not at war.⁴⁷ Puerto Rico, according to Loida Figueroa, therefore, "lost the opportunity of being the first colony to use this recourse."⁴⁸ Arizmendi's recommendation was not an isolated case of his "Puerto Ricanism." He often opposed government policy as well. 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, the Puerto Rican bishop gave his episcopal ring to Power as a symbol of brotherhood and patriotic trust.

Arisméñdi's action was especially significant because during the ceremony he told Power that "the ring will insure that you remember your comitment of protecting and defending the rights of your compatriots" in the presence of the Spanish governor and many peninsular civil and military functionaries. The Spanish authorities considered Arismendi's remarks subversive and highly irregular.⁴⁹

On July 20, 1810, Arizméñdi again disobeyed Governor Meléndez. Six seminarians had arrived from Venezuela to be ordained. As Caracas was in a state of rebellion, the local authorities planned to arrest the clergymen when they arrived in Puerto Rico. The Bishop, however, gave them ecclesiastical protection, ordained them as priests, and secured their safe return to Venezuela in spite of the Governor's opposition. Arizméñdi also maintained regular correspondence with the Venezuelan revolutionary Miguel José Sanz. Some of these letters could be interpreted as an indication of his separatist inclinations, but this suggestion may require further documentary evidence before it can be accepted without discussion.⁵⁰

Ramón Power y Giralt, the Puerto Rican representative to the Cortes, was not a separatist. After his election to the Spanish Parliament Power refused to accept the instructions from the Ayuntamiento de San Germán, a center of revolutionary activity. Power probably rejected them because they had been directed to the Junta Suprema and not to the Spanish Cortes, but his attitude seemed to indicate that his principal concern was the economic interests of the emerging Puerto Rican bourgeoisie, not the political changes recommended by the Ayuntamiento de San Germán. José Alvarez de Toledo claimed that Power had been one of the Spanish American delegates who had signed the document that authorized him to

organize an army for the liberation of northern Mexico, but there is no evidence to support that claim or to prove that Power supported the Spanish American revolutions.⁵¹

Among the Puerto Ricans whom Governor Meléndez accused of sedition were several members of the clergy. Archdeacon José Gutiérrez del Arroyo and Father José Crisóstomo Rodríguez were suspected of subversive activities. In August, 1810, these clergymen attended a dinner held in honor of the patron saint of Santo Domingo. Among those present at the social affair were Colonel Lorenzo Ortiz de Zárate, a high-ranking military officer, and Federico Sanjurt, the commander of the Third Battalion that protected San Juan. Other members of the government, the business community, and the armed forces were also present. During the celebration, Archdeacon Gutiérrez del Arroyo and Father Crisóstomo Rodríguez, perhaps influenced by the events in Venezuela or by their separatist beliefs, discussed the views of the revolutionaries, the Spanish American conflict, and the authority of the Crown. The military officers observed that it was illegal, in their opinion, to revolt against the authority of the king because such action was tantamount to rising against God. Exchanges and accusations between the participants continued for several days after the banquet. The governor terminated the affair by exiling several of the clergymen and some creoles accused of being revolutionaries.⁵²

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. Soon thereafter, Cortabarría began peace negotiations with the Venezuelan insurgents but failed to convince them to remain loyal to Spain.⁵³ 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 Puerto Rican separatists, realizing the significance of this decision, gave Cortabarría a warning. They affixed to the door of his home a note which declared that "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." The government reacted by sending several Puerto Ricans prisoners to fight in the Spanish Army in South America.⁵⁴

To counteract the influence of the South American agents and curtail the activities of the revolutionaries, on September 4, 1810, the Consejo de Regencia granted dictatorial powers to the insular governor. These powers -- the Facultades omnímodas -- authorized the Governor to assume emergency controls to suppress political activism on the island. The separatists, considering the royal decree a threat to their plans, moved their activities underground and continued them "with tactics commensurate with the dangers that they faced." At times, however, they openly resumed their activities to let Governor Meléndez know that their hostility toward the colonial system and their solidarity with the rest of Spanish American revolutionary cause had not been suppressed.⁵⁵

The first important attempt to gain Puerto Rican independence occurred the following year in San Germán. Three of the principal creole families of that town -- the Quiñones, the Ramírez de Arellano, and the Irizarry -- conspired with some lesser known individuals to end Spanish domination in Puerto Rico. These separatists periodically met in the residence of Francisco Antonio Ramírez in the coastal town of Guánica. Ramírez's home became the meeting place for separatists and Venezuelan

agents who arrived in the southern part of Puerto Rico. These rebels also had the support of many separatists from the rural areas, the capital, the armed forces, and the nearby towns. During that time, local dissatisfaction with the Spanish colonial regime had reached such a high point that many Puerto Ricans considered independence an accomplished fact.

These revolutionaries contemplated retaliating against the government by refusing to pay taxes and expelling the peninsulares from the country. Many insurgents even considered "cutting off the heads of the Catalans," seizing their property to pay for the expenses of the insurrection and removing those who survived from positions of responsibility.⁵⁶ For decades, the creoles of San Germán had been ignored by the government and scorned by the peninsulares. Although San Germán had a larger population than the capital, most of the inhabitants lived in poverty and did not have the political and economic advantages enjoyed by the residents of San Juan. This unequal treatment, high taxes, and political dissatisfaction increased their desires for independence.⁵⁷

When the news of the Venezuelan uprising reached San Germán, the members of the Ayuntamiento, mostly relatives of the Quiñones family, decided to join the struggle for independence. The large number of armed forces present in the region, however, prevented the development of an adequate plan. The revolutionary spirit continued while the creoles awaited a more convenient time to act. By 1811 their plans for a general insurrection to coincide with the Christmas season were well developed. Command of the uprising was given to Domingo Postilló, a militia officer of separatist tendencies, and to Bernardo Pabón, a creole from San Germán.⁵⁸

It was not possible to keep the proposed revolt a secret because many members of the movement openly expressed contempt for the Spaniards, dissatisfaction with the colonial regime, and support for independence. Their indiscretion led to the disclosure of the impending revolt. The alerted authorities arrested the leaders of the conspiracy and ordered their immediate prosecution. The arrival of Spanish troops in Aguadilla on December 23, 1811, and the fear of reprisals "imposed moderation and fear in the creoles and, apart from this, they realized that it would have been impossible to take the authorities by surprise." As a result, the leaders of the insurrection who had survived the mass arrests cancelled the plans for the uprising.⁵⁹

The activities of the Puerto Rican separatists caused continuous alarm among the peninsulares, government officials, wealthy creoles, and other conservatives. Since the defense of the island had been entrusted in part to the local militia, composed mostly of Puerto Ricans, Governor Meléndez became concerned with the revolutionary potential of that force. The militia, which had been armed and trained by the Spaniards, had given valuable service to Spain in the defense of Puerto Rico against foreign invasions. Many of its members sympathized with the separatists and with the Spanish American struggle for independence. To prevent the utilization of the militia in a local uprising, the governor disarmed it and assigned its members housekeeping tasks instead of regular defense duties. Governor Meléndez even attempted to dissolve the force entirely, but the Consejo de Regencia opposed the captain-general's plans.⁶⁰

The creoles protested to Spain the misuse of the militia forces, the disarmament of its members, and the activities of the governor. The

Consejo de Regencia, therefore, overruled the governor's decision and restored the militia's 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 (Unit of Distinguished Volunteers) and issued its members the same armament and uniforms used by the regular armed forces. This organization received instructions to be prepared for an armed uprising and to protect the lives and property of the peninsulares. It became the personal guard of the Spanish citizens and an important addition to the local defenses.⁶¹

Governor Meléndez took additional precautions to prevent an armed uprising in the island. He reorganized the military forces, augmented the 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, José López, Mateo Ocampo, and several other residents of Cumaná, Coro, and Curacao. Their efforts allowed the governor to intercept Sanz's letters and to arrest several messengers who had arrived from Venezuela. The governor also censored the mail and exiled many separatist leaders and sympathizers, including Juan Crisóstomo Rodríguez Carrera.⁶²

The precautionary measures taken by the authorities, the constant arrival of new troops en route to Venezuela and Mexico, and the early defeats of the Venezuelan rebels, diminished revolutionary activities in Puerto Rico. Two other events served to lessen creole activism between 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.⁶³ In Caracas alone, more than 20,000 people died. The 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 earlier. To many people the coincidence of these two events was terrifying; they believed that God was punishing them for the transgression of beginning a revolution during Holy Week.⁶⁴

The ecclesiastical 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 from Venezuela to Cuba and Puerto Rico, diminishing peasant support for local uprisings. In Venezuela, the psychological setback helped the Royalists win easy victories at Coro and Valencia, where they were joined by a considerable portion of the inhabitants of the interior.⁶⁵

The other event that decreased creole activism was the seizure of many revolutionaries on October 15, 1813. On that day, the governor ordered the mass arrest of known separatists and sympathizers of the revolution. During that time, a witness related that San Juan displayed the appearance of a fortress besieged by a large enemy force, its inhabitants were terrorized, not knowing the intentions of the local authorities nor the purpose of the measures taken. While psychological warfare is a modern concept, it is interesting to note that the Spanish military forces used that approach quite effectively in suppressing local insurrections. The experience gained during the preceding three hundred years paid high dividends in the nineteenth century.⁶⁶

By the end of 1815, the separatists, inspired by the beginning of a

new struggle in South America renewed their efforts for the independence of Puerto Rico. As in Cuba, patriotic groups, including Masonic lodges such as the Logia Yagüez in Mayagüez, began to labor for self-government. The activities of the separatists were well-known in Venezuela, as Bartolomé Mascareñas, one of Governor Meléndez's spies indicated:

In this place [Venezuela] it is common knowledge that there are juntas in Puerto Rico that conspire against the government and that the Island would not delay much in becoming independent I can assure you that there are plenty of blazing groups in an outside the Island. 67

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 years of disorder and the frightful excesses that followed her separation from France. The Haitian emissaries also sought to foster slave revolts in Puerto Rico, which even the separatists believed detrimental to their interests.

Privateers, as already indicated, became an important part of the struggle for local independence. 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 Río de la Plata. A former merchant and sailor, in 1810 he had settle in Buenos Aires. Later entering the government naval service, he styled himself "Commodore Taylor of the Buenos Aires Navy." Taylor had a large privateering squadron of thirteen to seventeen vessels.

Taylor landed a large force near the town and proceed to capture a schooner that had taken refuge near the port. The local militia, under

the command of Antonio Planell y Bardaxi successfully resisted the attack and killed thirty of Taylor's men. The privateers also lost a great quantity of arms and ammunition during the engagement. The purpose of the attack, according to Governor Meléndez, was to plunder the town and obtain foodstuffs, arms, and gunpower.⁶⁸ 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."⁶⁹ Since the official government report specifies that many weapons were captured -- probably arms for the insurgents -- the view that Taylor raided the town to obtain gunpower may not be correct. Monclova's assessment seems more accurate because Taylor did not stop his activities after his defeat at Fajardo.⁷⁰

The threat of the privateers increased considerably between 1817 and 1819. In the summer of 1817, the government received information that an expedition which had been organized in London was going to land in the island. The governor declared a national emergency and reinforced the coast with the Second Battalion of the elite Granada regiment.⁷¹ In 1818 Governor Meléndez received information from Juan Manuel Cajigal, the Captain-General of Cuba, that several ships had departed from a mainland port to invade the island.⁷² Rumors of an expedition from Barbados to overthrow the Spanish regime also spread during that time.⁷³ Luis de Onís, the Spanish Minister in the United States, also informed the Governor of Puerto Rico that an expedition under the command of Louis Aury had been organized in Charleston to invade the island.⁷⁴ Another expedition, organized in Haiti and under the command of the privateer

Gregor MacGregor, apparently had similar objectives.⁷⁵ Later during the year, a group of privateers established themselves in the south at Key Caja de Muertos, off the coast of Ponce. From there, they conducted occasional raids against the Puerto Rican mainland.⁷⁶

On August 7, 1820, a new governor, Gonzalo de Aróstegui, came to Puerto Rico to institute the constitutional reforms of the regime established in Spain by the revolt of Rafael Riego. The new Spanish 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) to express their political views. The separatists, however, did not accept the changes proposed by the new governor 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 failed to take place, however, because the government discovered the plan.⁷⁸

After Simón Bolívar's victory at Carabobo on June 24, 1821, both the Venezuelan and Puerto Rican separatists made new plans to gain the independence of Puerto Rico. During that time, however, the separatists had serious disadvantages in their struggle for Puerto Rican 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.⁷⁹

Realizing the difficulty of obtaining independence through an internal

revolution, the separatists decided to seek help from outside sources. In the winter of 1821, agents of the Puerto Rican rebels invited General H. L. V. Ducoudray Holstein to take command of an invading force, which was being readied for an attack on Puerto Rico in conjunction with an uprising scheduled to take place during the following year. 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; Pedro Dubois, a mulatto and one of the principal leaders of the revolt; and a Dutchman named Carlos Romano, a resident of the coastal town of Guayama. In his Memoirs, Ducoudray Holstein also stated that many rich foreigners who resided on the island and a numerous group of wealthy inhabitants supported the insurrection.⁸⁰

After accepting the command of the invading force, Ducoudray Holstein went to the United States to organize an expedition. In the United States, he met Baptist Irvine, a leading journalist and a political agitator, and Charles Traugott Vogel, who became the agent responsible for raising men and supplies for the expedition and for obtaining arms and ammunition. While in Philadelphia, Ducoudray Holstein received about \$18,000 from Puerto Rican separatists for the proposed invasion.⁸¹

In Philadelphia and New York, Ducoudray Holstein organized the basic elements of an expedition. He recruited forty men to serve as officers and chartered the brigantine Mary from Thomas Watson for \$20,000, an amount which 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." It appear that the expedition had the

sanction of the Colombian government. Later, after the operation had been discovered, the editor of Niles' Weekly Register also implicated the Government of Haiti, but the accusation was unfounded because the members of the expedition had no immediate plans for the emancipation of the slaves. 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 Guadeloupe, H. C. Birchau, Pedro Bignet, Jose Alberti, Issac Reid, and Captains Aacron Burns and William Gould.⁸²

On August 13, 1822, the expedition left the United States in the schooners Andrew Jackson, Selina, and Mary. A month later they arrived in the Swedish colony of St. Bartholomeu, where Ducoudray Holstein expected to receive additional funds from the separatists to purchase more weapons and recruit the necessary men for the invasion. In St. Bartholomeu, Ducoudray Holstein purchased the brigantine Econdracht and recruited many people, among them several blacks. He remained there for about eleven days awaiting the funds that the separatists were going to provide him. Failing to receive adequate supplies, he proceeded to St. Thomas after the local authorities ordered him to leave the island. The expedition went from St. Thomas to Crabb Island on the eastern coast of Puerto Rico. According to Irvine, by that time there were doubts about its success since the separatists had failed to provide the necessary money and supplies. The officers disputed constantly with the principal leaders and several of them refused to continue serving Ducoudray Holstein. After being at sea for several hours, Irvine and few other men

changed their minds and decided to change course. Irvine staged a short revolt among the officers, and, at the point of a gun, forced the expedition to change its destination. This action resulted in the cancellation of the plans for the invasion of Puerto Rico.⁸³

The separatists could not help Ducoudray Holstein because their conspiracy had been discovered as a result of the indiscretion of Pedro Dubois, a leader of the uprising. In an effort to recruit additional members, he had contacted M. De St. Maurice, a French planter from Fajardo. St. Maurice, who did not support Puerto Rican independence, encouraged Dubois to discuss with him the details of the conspiracy. The information was sent to the authorities, who arrested the leaders of the revolt and shot several insurgents in the public square as an example of "Spanish justice." Soon thereafter the government exiled or imprisoned many foreigners and black residents of the island. Dubois was shot on October 12, 1822. Joel Roberts Poinsett, on his way to Mexico as a special agent of the United States, arrived in San Juan during that time. On September 27, 1822, he wrote 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. They are prepared to defeat the project, whatever it may be."⁸⁴

The failure of the separatists resulted in a campaign of propaganda "mounted to discourage the independence sentiment of the Puerto Ricans."⁸⁵ The defeat, however, did not discourage the separatists. They immediately began 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 Matías 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.⁸⁶ The efficient espionage system of the government, however, was able to discover and frustrate the insurrection.⁸⁷

Bolívar's successful campaigns in South America gave new impetus and hope to the Puerto Ricans for a final victory. The Caracas newspaper El Venezolano published articles in favor of Puerto Rican independence, and the separatists, in jest, even asked the Captain-General to declare the independence of Puerto Rico.⁸⁸ The government, however, intensified its terrorist activities by arresting separatist leaders José Ignacio Grau and María Mercedes Barbudo, the first Puerto Rican woman-patriot. Barbudo was deported to Cuba on the recommendation of the Prosecutor Francisco Morales de Santaella. According to Loida Figueroa, "the latter destiny of D. María has been lost to history."⁸⁹

The separatists 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 Borinquen. 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.⁹⁰

As in Cuba, the revolutionary activities resulted in increased government controls. In 1824, the Governor published the Bando de policía y buen gobierno (a law enforcement decree). Its sixty-six articles restrained civil liberties, regulated behavior, restricted the use of weapons, commerce, and travel, and severely punished dissidents. The decree also prohibited evening reunions of citizens in stores, warehouses,

and public places, established a ten o'clock curfew, and eliminated freedom of the press.⁹¹ The separatists, disregarding 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 that time that Governor Miguel de la Torre decided to stay in Puerto Rico for his swearing ceremony rather than go to Cuba as he had been directed to do.⁹²

In spite of all their efforts, Cubans and Puerto Ricans could not achieve their political goals. The dictatorial measures of the government and the exile of many important leaders significantly affected the struggle for independence in both countries. The geographical position of Cuba and Puerto Rico prevented the spread of the national liberation movements from Spanish America. As a result, the Cuban and Puerto Rican separatists remained isolated from the mainstream of military activity. They could not purchase weapons or receive economic help from the mainland. Racial peculiarities, regionalism, apathy, and ignorance would have made a local insurrection difficult without military help from the Spanish American republics. Clearly, the Caribbean possessions needed a military intervention from Colombia or Mexico for a successful revolution.

The intervention of Colombia and Mexico in the political affairs of the Caribbean would add a new dimension to the independence movement of Cuba and Puerto Rico. While the goals of the separatists paralleled the interests of the Spanish American republics, they were diametrically opposed to those of the United States and the European powers. When Colombia and Mexico turned their attention to the liberation of Cuba and Puerto Rico, the United States, Great Britain, and France opposed their plans

because they would threaten the status quo. As a result, not the military power of Spain but the concerted effort of the United States and the European powers prevented the success of the Caribbean movement for independence during the first part of the nineteenth century.

FOOTNOTES

¹ Vicente Lecuna, Crónica razonada de las guerras de Bolívar Vol. 1 (New York, 1950), p. xv.

² "El Marqués de Someruelos informa á la Suprema Junta de Sevilla sobre la conducta que observó al saberse en la Habana los notables acontecimientos de la Península provocados por la invasión de tropas francesas," 1^o de noviembre de 1808, in Manuel Villanova, ed., Obras del Excmo. Señor D. Francisco de Arango y Parreño, Vol. 2 (La Habana, 1888), p. 411.

³ Some Cuban historians, among them Vidal Morales y Morales, have suggested that the recommendation of Arango y Parreño "probably would have resulted in the independence of Cuba." While this action was quite possible in 1808, since the initial revolts that developed in Spanish America began with the establishment of self-governing juntas, Arango y Parreño would have opposed such a move. There is no evidence that he entertained designs for Cuban independence. On the contrary, since he represented the liberal creoles' interests, political emancipation would have been contrary to his political plans. In 1823 Arango y Parreño published a pamphlet entitled Reflexiones de un habanero sobre la independencia de esta Isla (La Habana, 1823), in which he argued against independence. Two years before, he justified the suggestion for the creation of a Junta Superior in another pamphlet entitled Al público imparcial de esta Isla (La Habana, 1821), but independence was not mentioned. In spite of the fact that he was the most influential creole leader, Arango y Parreño was a Royalist and a slave owner. Vidal Morales y Morales, Contribución a la independencia de Cuba: Iniciadores y primeros mártires de la revolución cubana, Vol. 1 (La Habana, 1901), pp. 33-36; Douglas D. Wallace, "Francisco de Arango y Parreño," Hispanic American Historical Review, 16 (1936), pp. 460-463; Jacobo de la Pezuela y Cobo, Diccionario geográfico, estadístico, histórico de la Isla de Cuba, Vol. 1 (Madrid, 1863), pp. 32-34; Antonio L. Valverde, "Francisco de Arango y Parreño," Revista Bimestre Cubana, 28 (1929), pp. 235-239; Manuel Villanova, pp. 383-464.

⁴ Juan Clemente Zenea, La revolución en Cuba (Mexico, D. F.; 1868), pp. 32-41; Morales y Morales, Vol. 1, pp. 30-32. For the activities of the Freemason's Lodges in Cuba during that time see "Trabajo leído en el sexagésimo séptimo aniversario de la fundación de la Gran Logia de la Isla de Cuba por H: Bernardo Meruelo, en la sesión especial que celebró la Respetable Logia "Fernandina de Jagua," December 5, 1926, in Rogue E. Garrigó, Historia documentada de la conspiración de los Soles y Rayos de Bolívar, Vol. 2 (La Habana, 1929), pp. 108-115.

⁵ There is no general consensus among Cuban historians about the impact of Román de la Luz attempt for independence. Modern historian

Sergio Aguirre, writing in modern revolutionary Cuba, believes that Román de la Luz was one of the forerunners of the Cuban independence movement while Carlos M. Trelles y Govín, writing in 1926, asserts that the early Cuban rebel should not be considered "a paladin of a noble idea" since he denounced the insurrection several years later, probably to seek a royal pardon. Trelles y Govín does not recognize the fact that many Spanish American revolutionaries actually made formal retractions of their activities or made unimportant remarks about freedom when they faced the inquisitorial system of Spanish justice. Roman de la Luz' recant can be found in "Representación que hace don Román de la Luz a S. M. las Cortes generales y extraordinarias de la nación española manifestando la ilegalidad del proceso que le formó en la Habana el marqués de Someruelos, capitán general de aquella isla, etc." (Cádiz, Imprenta de Niel, 1812)

⁶ William Shaler, Special Agent to Cuba, to Robert Smith, October 24, 1810, Department of State, Consular Despatches from Havana, Vol. 2, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁷ Carlos M. Trelles y Govín, "Un precursor de la independencia de Cuba, Don José Álvarez de Toledo," Discursos leídos en la recepción pública del Sr. Carlos M. Trelles y Govín, Academia de la Historia (La Habana, 1926), pp. 8-13. According to Toledo's own account, it appears he had written several letters to his constituents in Santo Domingo, advising them not to trust the apparent protection of Spain. By untoward circumstance, these letters were intercepted and sent back to the Cortes with charges of treason which had been formulated against Toledo. What the interest of the American consul was in this affair is not clear.

⁸ Ibid., pp. 153-154.

⁹ Alexander J. Dallas, U. S. District Attorney for Eastern Pennsylvania, to James Monroe, November 25, 1811, Department of State, Miscellaneous Letters, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

¹⁰ Monroe to Dallas, November 23, 1811, Department of State, Domestic Letters, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

¹¹ Carlos M. Trelles y Govín, Estudio de la bibliografía cubana sobre la doctrina de Monroe (La Habana, 1922), p. 7; Issac Joslin Cox, "Monroe and the Early Mexican Revolutionary Agents," Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1911, Vol. I (Washington, D. C., 1913), p. 203; Joseph B. Lockey, "The Florida Intrigues of José Alvarez de Toledo," Quarterly of the Florida Historical Society, 12 (1934), pp. 152-153.

¹² Toledo to Monroe, January 14, 1812, Department of State, Correspondence Relating to the Filibustering Expedition Against the Spanish Government, 1811-1816, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington. Toledo to Graham, January 14, 1812, Miscellaneous Letters, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

¹³Trelles y Govín, Un precursor de la independencia de Cuba, pp. 23-27,

¹⁴Arturo F. Santana, "The United States and Puerto Rico, 1797-1830 " (Ph. D. dissertation, Department of History, University of Chicago, 1954), p. 130.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Elías Entralgo, Los problemas de la esclavitud. Conspiración de Aponte (La Habana, 1934), pp. 46-47; Clemente Lainer, "Cuba et la conspiration d'Aponte en 1812," Revue de la Société Haitienne d'Histoire, de Géographie e de Géologie, 23 (1943), pp. 26-27; Philip S. Foner, A History of Cuba and its Relations with the United States, Vol. 1 (New York, 1962), pp. 89-91.

¹⁷"Declaración de Clemente Chacón a Juan de Dios Corona," Castillo de San Carlos de la Cabaña, La Habana, Cuba, 24 de marzo de 1812, in Boletín del Archivo Nacional, 8 (1909), p. 123 ff.; Doc. XX in Garrigó, Vol. 2, pp. 54-63.

¹⁸Herminio Portell Vilá, Historia de Cuba en sus relaciones con los Estados Unidos y España, Vol. 1 (La Habana, Cuba), pp. 176-177; Garrigó, Vol. 1, pp. 108-112; Foner, pp. 93-94.

¹⁹"Reglamento sobre la definición de apalencados y cimarrones, su forma de captura, retribución y a quien corresponde pagarla," in José María Zamora y Coronado, Biblioteca de legislación ultramarina, Vol. 2 (Madrid, 1844); Garrigó, Vol. 1, pp. 98-101.

²⁰Garrigó, Vol. 1, p. 150.

²¹Pedro José Guiteras, Historia de la Isla de Cuba, Vol. 3 (La Habana, 1928), pp. 59-60; Garrigó, Vol. 1, p. 153.

²²Robert Granville Caldwell, "The Lopez Expeditions to Cuba" (Ph. D. dissertation, Department of History and Faculty of Princeton University, Princeton University, 1915), p. 10. In Puerto Rico the flow of immigrants was so great that Spain had to provide financial assistance for them.

²³Samuel Flagg Bemis, John Quincy Adams and the Foundations of American Foreign Policy (New York, 1949), p. 355.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Pedro Tomás de Cordova, Memorias geográficas, históricas, económicas, y estadísticas de la Isla de Puerto-Rico, 1831-1833, Vol. 3 (San Juan. 1831). p. 322.

²⁶"Extracto de los sucesos ocurridos en la Habana, remitido por el Intendente del Ejército al Secretario de Estado y del Despacho en Madrid," Boletín del Archivo Nacional, 9 (1910), pp. 73 ff.; Carlos

M. Trelles y Govín, Matanzas en la independencia de Cuba (La Habana, 1928), p. 9; Garrigó, Vol. 2, pp. 92-97; Guiteras, Vol. 3, pp. 53-56; Foner, Vol. 1, pp. 100-101; Niles' Weekly Register, May 6, 1820 and May 27, 1820.

²⁷Hubert H. S. Aimes, History of Slavery in Cuba, 1511-1868 (New York, 1907), pp. 97-98.

²⁸Morales y Morales, p. 41.

²⁹Cuba, "Declaración de José Teurbe Tolón a Felix Lancis, S. Mad. y asesor, Castillo de San Severino, 10 de octubre de 1823," in Causa instruída por el Alcalde Primero D. Francisco Hernández Morejón sobre la conspiración de los Soles de Bolívar, Sección de Historia, Rollo 8, foja 60, Archivo Nacional, La Habana; "Declaración de D. Santiago Jiménez a Felix Lancis, Matanzas, 8 de octubre de 1823," in *ibid.*

³⁰Cuba, "Declaración de José Francisco Lemus a Juan Agustín Ferrety, Alcalde Tercero Constitucional de la Habana, Castillo del Príncipe, 20 de Agto. de 1823," in Causa instruída por el Alcalde ^{3o} D. Juan Agustín Ferrety sobre la conspiración de los Soles de Bolívar, Sección de Historia, 1a pieza, foja 206, Archivo Nacional, La Habana; Foner, Vol. 1, p. 117; José L. Franco, ed., Documentos para la historia de Venezuela existentes en el Archivo Nacional de Cuba (La Habana, 1960), pp. xcv - xcvi.

³¹"José Francisco Lemus, natural de esta isla de Cubanacán y jefe de las primeras tropas republicanas de su patria, á todos los habitantes de ella, - Salud, Independencia, Libertad," in Morales y Morales, Vol. 3, Apéndice 1, pp. 327-338.

³²Morales y Morales, pp. 47-60.

³³Trelles y Govín, Matanzas en la independencia de Cuba, pp. 10-11; Morales y Morales, p. 61.

³⁴Guiteras, Vol. 3, pp. 81-82.

³⁵French E. Chadwick, The Relations of the United States and Spain, Diplomacy (New York, 1909), pp. 224-226; Guiteras, Vol. 3, p. 82.

³⁶Córdova, Memorias, Vol. 3, p. 169.

³⁷*Ibid.*, p. 175.

³⁸"Primera memoria sobre la isla de Puerto Rico que presentó á Su Majestad Don Pedro Tomás de Córdova, Secretario del Gobierno de la Isla," in Cayetano Coll y Toste, Bolétín Histórico de Puerto Rico, Vol. 4 (San Juan, 1917), pp. 177; Córdova, Memorias, Vol. 3, p. 175; Lidio Cruz Monclova, Historia de Puerto Rico, Siglo XIX, Vol. 1 (Río Piedras, 1970), p. 34.

³⁹Monclova, p. 34; Córdova, Memorias, Vol. 3, p. 176.

⁴⁰"Contestación del Ayuntamiento de San Juan al de Cartagena," in Monclova, Vol. 1, Apéndice 2, pp. 521-523. The original document is located in Spain, Audiencia de Santo Domingo, Sección 5, Legajo 2.326 (new designation), Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla. See also Córdova, Memorias, Vol. 3, p. 176.

⁴¹Spain, Audiencia de Santo Domingo, Sección 5, Legajo 2.327 and Ultramar, Sección 10, Legajos 414 and 426, Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla.

⁴²Spain, "Declaración de Señor D. Salvador Meléndez, Brigadier de los Reales Exercitos, Gobernador Ytendente y Captain General de esta Plaza é Ysla, a Juan José de Lloves, Señor Auditor Asesor General, 16 de noviembre de 1810," and Gregorio Sandoval, escribano Real y de Gobierno a Juan José Lloves, 16 de noviembre de 1810, in Francisco Morales Padrón, "Primer intento de independencia puertorriqueña," Revista de Indias, Madrid, Spain, año 22, núm. 87-88 (1961), pp. 108-127, and Journal of Caribbean Studies, Río Piedras, Puerto Rico, Vol. 1, no. 4 (1962), pp. 11-25. During the early stages of the wars for independence in Spanish America the activities of the revolutionaries had been supported by a large part of the lower clergy. In Brazil, the 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 were priests. In Mexico, priests such as Miguel Hidalgo and José María Morelos, led the movement for independence (Foner, p. 83). Miguel José Sanz corresponded also with Diego de Lugo, José Ramón Monzón, José Xavier de Arazamendi; Captain Francisco Antonio Rodríguez; Manuel Saviñón, Joaquín de Castro, and Father Juan Crisóstomo Rodríguez Carrera, who later was exiled from Puerto Rico for his radical tendencies. A "Mr. Robertson," a French citizen who resided in Curacao, normally carried Sanz's letters to the Puerto Rican separatists (See Spain, Audiencia de Santo Domingo, Sección 5, Legajo 2.360, Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla).

⁴³The first casualties were the priests Juan Crisóstomo Rodríguez Carrera, Francisco Fajardo, Juan Antonio Mambrún, Diego Coba and Angel de la Concepción Vazquez. The priests of Aguada and Aguadilla, Pedro José de Mediedo and Andrés Ricardo Martínez were accused of subversive activities. Other accused of being revolutionaries or sympathizers were the Archdeacon of San Juan, José Gutiérrez del Arroyo, the Prosecutor José Ignacio Valldejuli, Ramón Ramírez de Arellano, Bernardo Pabón Cruz José Cardoso, José María Quiñones; Mateo Belvis, Faustino Toro, Domingo Postigó, Manuel Díaz, Pedro de Silva, José Monserrate Jusino, Antonio Quiñones, José Pacheco, and Nicolas Quiñones Ramírez (Monclova, Vol. 1, pp. 39, 45, 46).

⁴⁴Morales Padrón, pp. 108-127.

⁴⁵Monclova, Vol. 1, p. 40.

⁴⁶Coll y Toste, Vol. 6, p. 297.

⁴⁷Loida Figueroa, Tres puntos claves: Lares, idioma, soberanía (San Juan, 1972), p. 6.

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹Spain, Ultramar, Sección 10, Legajos 405 and 426, Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla; El Aviso de la Habana, October 19, 1809; Justo Zaragoza, Las insurrecciones de Cuba, Vol. 1 (Madrid, 1892); Monclova, Vol. 1, p. 20.

⁵⁰Governor Meléndez had similar views concerning the Puerto Rican prelate and so reported them in 1809 to the Consejo de Regencia. After the death of Arismendi in 1814, the Church began an active campaign to remove subversive elements from the clergy. See Carta pastoral que dirige a sus feligreses el ilustrísimo señor D. Mariano Rodríguez de Olmedo, Obispo electo de Puerto-Rico, del Consejo de S. M., &c (Madrid, 1816), pp. 1-43. A modern version, as well as other religious propaganda published during that time can be found in Arturo V. Dávila, Las enciclicas sobre la revolución hispanoamericana y su divulgación en Puerto Rico (San Juan, 1965), pp. 32-92.

⁵¹Copies of the document that Toledo claimed had been signed by the Spanish American delegates have been found in Mexico City, Texas, and Chicago. None of these copies have signatures and the original was destroyed by Toledo. The copy in Texas has a remark that says instructions were signed by all the Spanish American delegates except Pérez de la Puebla, Mariau de Veracruz and Mendoza de Querétaro." Since it does not mention Power, the Puerto Rican delegate must have signed it also, if the document was signed at all, since he could not have refused a consensus of majority of colonial delegates. This fact cannot be proven conclusively. As a result, as Arturo F. Santana indicates, it is not known if Power actually signed the commission. Lidio Cruz Monclova and Roque E. Garrigó erroneously attribute to the Mexican revolutionary Congress of Apatzingán the granting of authority to Toledo for an army to revolutionize Cuba, Santo Domingo and Puerto Rico. These historians utilized the document given to Toledo in Cádiz to justify their assumptions concerning the Congress of Apatzingán. For Toledo's document see Mexico, "Anexo a las cartas reservadas 1 y 18 del Virrey de Nueva España Sr. D. Felix Calleja, 30 de junio de 1815," Correspondencia de Virreyes, Calleja, Vol. 267, Folio 1, Archivo General de la Nación, Mexico, D. F.; Juan E. Hernández y Dávalos Manuscript Collection, doc.5 University of Texas Library, Austin, Texas; Edward E. Ayer Manuscript Collection, doc. 136-7-9, Newberry Library, Chicago, Illinois; Monclova, Vol. 1, p. 85; Garrigó, p. 155.

⁵²Spain, Ultramar, Sección 10, Legajo 450, Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla, and Audiencia de Santo Domingo, Sección 5, Legajo 2.523, or the Conjura de 1810 (conspiracy of 1810), are not available in the United States nor have been found in Puerto Rico. An Expediente oficial is in the personal archives of D. Ramón López Prado, in San Juan. These documents are, perhaps, the most important sources in the investigation of early Puerto Rican nationalism. AGI, 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 utilized these documents extensively in spite of their importance. See Padrón, pp. 108-127.

⁵³Loida Figueroa, Breve historia de Puerto Rico (Río Piedras, 1976), p. 147; José Francisco Heredia, Memorias sobre las revoluciones de Venezuela (Paris, 1895), p. 23.

⁵⁴Figueroa, p. 147. The extent of the conservatives dislike of independence can be judged by the fact that "a rich merchant named Pedro Lamata paid, from his personal funds the expenses required for the transfer of these separatists to the battlefield of Venezuela." Monclova, Vol. 1, p. 39n.

⁵⁵Monclova, Vol. 1, p. 37.

⁵⁶Morales Padrón, pp. 108-127.

⁵⁷Córdova, Memorias, Vol 3, p. 13.

⁵⁸Morales Padrón, p. 16n in Journal of Caribbean Studies, Vol. 1, No. 4 (1962).

⁵⁹Figueroa, pp. 168-169.

⁶⁰María Cadilla de Martínez, Rememorando el pasado heroico (Arecibo, Puerto Rico, 1946), pp. 281-283.

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Governor Salvador Meléndez to Consejo de Regencia, May 23, 1810, in José F. Blanco, ed., Documentos para la historia ee la vida pública del Libertador de Colombia, Peru y Bolivia, publicados por disposicinn del general Guzman Blanco, Vol. 2 (Caracas, 1876), doc. 433, pp. 438-439; Monclova, Vol. 1, pp. 38-39.

⁶³One month later, Mt. Souffrier, on the island of St. Vincent in the Lesser Antilles, erupted with great violence and destroyed most of the nearby settlement. The shock wave was felt from Venezuela to Cuba. On November 14, an earthquake shocked Kingston, Jamaica, and the city of Trinidad in Cuba. Minor tremors continued periodically until the end of the year. These natural disasters considerable affected the people of the Caribbean. See the London Evening Mail for June 30 and December 29, 1812; Lucas Alamán, Historia de Mexico, desde los primeros movimientos que prepararon su independencia en el año 1808 hasta la época presente, Vol. 3 (Mexico, D. F.; 1850-1852), p. 205; Heredia, p. 45; Chadwick, p. 149.

⁶⁴On May 8, 1812, the United States Congress allocated \$50,000 to aid the citizens of Venezuela and chose the merchant 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 Robert K. Lowry, United States Consul at La Guayra, to Monroe, June 5, 1812, and November 11, 1816, Department of State, Consular Despatches, La Guayra, Vol. 1, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.; Salvador de Madariaga, Bolívar, Vol. 1 (Mexico, D. F.; 1951), pp. 329-230.

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶The governor of Puerto Rico ordered members of the government to spread rumors that an insurrection would take place on October 15, 1813, the day of Saint Theresa. Meanwhile, he alerted the armed forces and the police to be ready for mass arrests. At 9:30 in the evening, the Spaniards fired gun shots in several areas of San Juan. Governor Melendez used the occasion to order mass arrest of those considered to be separatists. This incident is known in Puerto Rican history as "the night of Saint Theresa." See Cordova, Memorias, Vol. 3, p. 189; Coll y Toste, Vol. 13, p. 314.

⁶⁷According to Coll y Toste, freemasonry began in Puerto Rico as early as 1805. It is known the Spanish authorities were concerned with the activities of the lodges as a result of their experiences in Mexico, Cuba, and Spain. The impact of freemasonry and their assistance to the independence movement in Puerto Rico has never been studied. Coll y Toste, Vol. 10, p. 52; Spain, Audiencia de Santo Domingo, Sec. 5, Legajo 1.207, Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla; Monclova, Vol. 1, p. 85.

⁶⁸Córdova, Memorias, Vol. 3, pp. 311-312; Jose L. Franco, Política continental americana de España en Cuba (La Habana, 1947), pp. 149-154; Theodore S. Currier, Los corsarios del Río de la Plata (Buenos Aires, 1929), pp. 21, 25, 28; Lewis W. Dealer, Los corsarios de Buenos Aires, 1815-1821 (Buenos Aires, 1937), pp. 39-40.

⁶⁹Monclova, Vol. 1, pp. 85-86.

⁷⁰Franco, pp. 155-157.

⁷¹Córdova, Memorias, Vol. 3, p. 322.

⁷²Ibid., p. 323.

⁷³Ibid., p. 192.

⁷⁴Santana, p. 170.

⁷⁵Cordova, Memorias, Vol. 3, p. 327.

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷Santana, p. 153.

⁷⁸Cordova, Memorias, Vol. 3, p. 434.

⁷⁹"Circular del gobernador D. Salvador Meléndez para proteger a los emigrados venezolanos, No. 326, 15 de agosto de 1813," in Coll y Toste, Vol. 12, pp. 42-43. The exiles increased the number of peninsulares on the island, as over one thousand families arrived during that time. See Cordova, Primera Memoria, in Coll y Toste, Vol. IV, p. p. 169.

⁸⁰Baptist Irvine to a member of Congress, January 12, 1823. This letter was published in Niles' Weekly Register, on March 22, 1823. For a detailed account of this expedition see H. L. V. Ducoudray Holstein, Memoirs of Simón Bolívar, President Liberator of the Republic of Colombia and His Principal Generals, Vol. 2 (London, 1830), pp. 192-204.

⁸¹R. W. Meade, Agent for the Government of Colombia in the United States, to John Quincy Adams, Secretary of State, December 17, 1822, U. S. Congress, Annals of Congress, 17th Cong., 2d Sess., Vol. 40, p. 1271. Historian Loida Figueroa mentions that Ducoudray Holstein received twenty-four thousand pesos (Figueroa, p. 163).

⁸²Robert M. Harrison, U. S. Consul in St. Bartholomeu, to John Quincy Adams, n.d., U. S. Congress, Annals of Congress, 17th Cong., 2d Sess., Vol. 40, pp. 1258-1259; C. J. Ingerson, Collector of the Port of Philadelphia, to John Quincy Adams, January 8, 1823, in *ibid.*, p. 1246; Memorandum of agreement entered into between Thomas Watson of the city of Philadelphia and Ducoudray Holstein, now of said city, viz., in *ibid.*, p. 1247; Irvine in Niles' Weekly Register, March 22, 1823.

⁸³Aaron Burns to Thomas Watson, September 26, 1822, Annals of Congress, Vol. 40, p. 1252.

⁸⁴Córdova, Memorias, Vol. 3, pp. 473-479, Vol. 4, pp. 12-22; Cadilla de Martínez, pp. 302-303; 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, 1824), p. 7.

⁸⁵Figueroa, p. 172. Proclamations of the government can be found in Córdova, Memorias, Vol. 3, pp. 457-460.

⁸⁶Córdova, Memorias, Vol. 4, p. 63.

⁸⁷*Ibid.*

⁸⁸Figueroa, p. 172; Córdova, Memorias, Vol. 4, p. 60.

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, p. 173. Córdova, Memorias, Vol. 4, pp. 139-143.

⁹⁰Monclova, Vol. 1, p. 240.

⁹¹*Ibid.*, p. 176.

⁹²Spain, Audiencia de Santo Domingo, Sección 5, Legajo 2.333 and Ultramar, Sección 10, Legajos 405 y 414, Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla.

CHAPTER V

FOREIGN INTERESTS IN THE CARIBBEAN

The struggle of the United States, Great Britain, and France for political supremacy in the Caribbean during the first three decades of the nineteenth century seriously affected the independence movements in Cuba and Puerto Rico. That conflict influenced the national development of these islands and prevented their independence from Spain when local conditions were most favorable for accomplishing that goal. It also helped shape United States relations with Spanish America and the attitude of Mexico, Colombia, and Cuba toward American foreign policy.

United States and the European powers intervened in the Caribbean to protect their growing national interests and to maintain a balance of power in the West Indies. The uncertainties created by the Congress of Vienna, the fear of imperial restoration in Spain's former colonies, and the threat to American and European commercial interests compelled these nations to attempt the control of the Caribbean -- an area vital to the growing Spanish American markets. Other factors that influenced American determination were the fear that the Spanish American conflict would eventually spread to the United States own borders, the threat of a slave revolt, the concern for national security, and the desire of some Southern political leaders for territorial expansion in the Caribbean. It was not in the best interests of the United States to allow Cuba and Puerto Rico gain their freedom from Spain because of the

possibility that either Great Britain or France would seize them after independence. This circumstance, it was believed, would seriously compromise United States' national security and damage its commercial and trade interests in the Caribbean.¹

General considerations of strategic and commercial policy determined British and French interests in the West Indies. Since Great Britain hoped to secure the trade monopolies relinquished by Spain in South and Central America as a result of the war, it followed closely any political change in the area which could affect that nation's intended purposes. Great Britain also had friendly relations with Spain and was a colonial power with possessions of her own in the Caribbean. Like France, she did not desire to disturb the Antillean settlement reached in the Congress of Vienna. As a result, Great Britain opposed any political change in the Caribbean which could have upset the satisfactory balance of European interests in the area.²

France, like Great Britain, also had important interests in the Caribbean. With the loss of Haiti, Tobago, and St. Lucia, her only remaining possessions in the area were the islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique, which Great Britain had allowed her to keep after the Treaty of Paris. 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 perhaps control of the commerce between Europe and the emerging Spanish American republics.

North American interest in the Caribbean began early in the seventeenth century, when New England merchants traded regularly with the Puritan settlers of the ill-fated colonies of Providence and Henrietta

southwest of Jamaica and with the thousands of British immigrants who had settled in Barbados and St. Kitts in the Lesser Antilles. Shipping enterprises from Boston, Salem, and other New England ports also recognized the excellent trading opportunities offered by illegal commerce in the Spanish colonies. Despite the barriers imposed by Spain's mercantilistic policies, which confined commerce to Sevilla and Cádiz, American merchants did a substantial amount of smuggling in the Caribbean.³

Since official commerce and navigation records of the United States are not available for the period prior to 1790, it is difficult to determine with accuracy the amount of North American trade during the period. Herbert C. Bell, using British trade records, estimates that "one year with another, the continental colonies exported to the islands goods to a value of 500,000 pounds sterling," and the addition of heavy freight charges increased that amount to "725,000 pounds sterling."⁴ In the eighteenth century, Pennsylvania, Maryland, New York, and South Carolina joined the New Englanders and trade between the United States and the Caribbean increased substantially. These colonies sold dried fish, lumber, flour, biscuits, staves and hoops for barrels, and low quality pickled fish with which plantation owners fed their slaves. They purchased sugar, coffee, tobacco, and other tropical products. Crude molasses for the manufacture of rum became a significant New England import by the eighteenth century.⁵

Prior to the American revolution, the British-American colonies considerably increased their trade in the Caribbean. Timothy Pitkin wrote that in 1769 the export trade of the mainland colonies with the West Indies amounted to 747,910 pounds sterling and the importation to £ 789,754.⁶ With the termination of British control over the American

colonies, commercial contacts decreased, especially with the Spanish possessions, but by 1800 a well-organized and profitable carrying trade flourished between the United States, Europe, and the Caribbean.⁷

To preserve Cuba and Puerto Rico from economic ruin and starvation during the political turmoil in Europe, Spain allowed American ships to enter the colonial ports to sell manufactured goods, foodstuffs, lumber, and slaves, and permitted them to purchase sugar, coffee, tobacco, cocoa, and hides for both the American and European markets. American ships "also took large amounts of specie from the Spanish colonial ports."⁸ The vessels, however, had to risk the intervention of the British navy and the danger of foreign privateers, especially if their final destination was Napoleonic France.⁹ The Spanish colonies also augmented their trade with the United States as a result of their proximity to the American ports and the trading facilities offered to the Spanish by the American merchants. Thus, according to historian Arthur P. Whitaker, "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."¹⁰

During the first decade of the nineteenth century, most American commerce with the Spanish colonies was concentrated in Cuba and Puerto Rico.¹¹ 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 1805.¹² During this period, Puerto Rico imported about 20 percent of its goods from the United States and exported to that nation between 15 and 50 percent of its tobacco, sugar, and coffee.¹³

In 1803 Puerto Rico exported to the United States 263,000 pounds of sugar, at six cents 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 percent 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. Thus, in the short span of twenty-five years, sugar exports from Puerto Rico to the United States increased seventy-five times.¹⁴

The commerce between the United States and Cuba increased in a similar proportion. The Cubans, allured by the American trade and by the extraordinary prices of sugar and coffee in the world market as result of the Haitian disaster, multiplied their plantations with the help of some American capital. American commercial agents carried on much of the Cuban sugar business by helping the planters develop their crops and by purchasing their harvests. North American business concerns, such as Messrs. Castillo, Black, & Co. and Latting, Adams & Steward in Havana; and Atkins & Allen and Simpson, Tryon & Co. in Matanzas did considerable business in the colony while the United States Government stationed "agents for seamen and commerce" in the island to protect American economic interests.¹⁵

The Jeffersonian Embargo of December, 1807, considerably reduced American trade but did not prevent it. During a congressional debate on the results of 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 policy would permanently damage American trade in the Caribbean because the Spanish colonies, as result of the embargo, were seeking new markets in France and Great Britain.¹⁶ During the embargo, American trade with the Spanish West Indies decreased from \$12,341,225 between 1806 and 1807 to \$6,685,617 in 1809; sugar imports declined from 82,663,008 pounds to 51,432,442 pounds.¹⁷

During the Madison and Monroe administrations, trade with the West Indies received special attention, since by that time the United States had begun to increase her efforts to control the Caribbean. Records maintained at the Philadelphia Custom House indicate that in 1809 ninety-one commercial vessels arrived from Cuba, thirty-one from Puerto Rico, and thirty from Venezuela. During the same period, eighty vessels departed for Cuba, twenty-six for Puerto Rico, and fifteen for Venezuela. The following year, the United States to Cuba and Puerto Rico goods valued at \$6,787,109 and imported from the Caribbean 40,555,498 pounds of sugar, 21,425,007 pounds of coffee, and 4,394,139 gallons of molasses, the principal tropical products desired by the nation.¹⁸ By January, 1817, Niles' Weekly Register was reporting the yearly arrival of 1109 foreign vessels to Cuban ports, most of them from the United States.¹⁹

In 1818 a Philadelphia merchant reported to the Congress that Cuba annually received 100,000 barrels of American flour and sold 45,759 hogsheads of molasses to Philadelphia merchants every year.²⁰ Trade with Puerto Rico also augmented significantly after the War of 1812. In 1813 American commerce amounted to \$269,008; it increased to \$1,082,299 in 1816 and to \$2,103,498 in 1818. The expanded trade between the two

countries was a result of the concessions granted by the Cédula de Gracias and the continuing political and economic instability in the peninsula. During that time the State Department instructed its commercial agents in Cuba and Puerto Rico "to promote trade and commercial contacts with the Spanish authorities."²¹

While the commerce of the United States with the West Indies increased considerably at the beginning of the nineteenth century, British and French trade suffered as result of the war in Europe. After July, 1807, Napoleon attempted to subdue Great Britain by economic measures. His plan was to keep out of the continent all British manufactured goods and those brought from the British colonies, notably the West Indies. He believed that these measures would result in economic depression and instability in Great Britain since the commercial warfare would inevitably result in unemployment. Therefore, after the defeat of Prussia, Napoleon ordered the seizure of British goods and the closing of European ports to British commerce. The British in return blockaded the continental ports in order to force Napoleon's allies to import British goods. Neutral ships, among those of the United States, were forbidden to trade with ports that did not admit British vessels.

These measures affected British and French trade in the West Indies and accelerated American commerce to a large extent. The war motivated hundreds of privateers to seize foreign vessels under the pretext that they were complying with the instructions of France or Great Britain. So great was the interference to European commerce by privateers that Great Britain, France, and the United States had to augment their naval forces in the area. Most importantly, the war in Europe upset the commercial contacts of enterprising Englishmen with South America which had been

increasing since the Bourbon reforms. Prior to the conflict, Great Britain command of the sea had forced Spain to suspend her already weakened system of trade monopoly.

Great Britain and France enlarged their trade in the Caribbean during the eighteenth century as result of mercantilism and the economic nationalism which prevailed at that time. As the British and French colonial populations increased in the Lesser Antilles, they created markets that absorbed the surplus commodities and manufactured goods of the homelands. This was the era of the "sugar and slaves" economy; the consumption of coffee, sugar, tobacco, and other tropical products increased in Europe. European drinking habits were further altered in the eighteenth century and rum purchases increased for the benefit of the West Indian colonies.²²

Despite French and Spanish navigation laws forbidding colonial trade with foreigners, British manufactured products were sold in great quantities, since France and Spain were largely unable to furnish needed supplies to their colonies even in time of peace. Because commerce with Great Britain was so vital to the Caribbean, laws prohibiting that trade were ineffective. The outbreak of hostilities between France and Great Britain in 1793 practically gave the United States a monopoly over the Caribbean trade. Great Britain attempted to curtail American commercial influence in the Caribbean, but after the ratification of the Jay Treaty, the United States received tacit permission to continue, with certain restrictions, its profitable trade in the British West Indies.²³

Before the Napoleonic conflict, Great Britain had a successful trade with her Caribbean possessions and annually imported a total of \$39,062, 500 in tropical products. It exported manufactured goods and foodstuffs

with a value of \$42,659,237.50 every year.²⁴ The statistics for British trade with the Spanish colonies are too unreliable to be of any help in determining the volume of commerce with Cuba and Puerto Rico, but it must have been significant since Spain had to open the Caribbean port to foreign commerce as a result of the European war.²⁵

After the defeat of Napoleon and the end of the War of 1812, Great Britain attempted to recapture its lost trade in the Caribbean and gain an ascending position in the emerging Spanish American commerce. The nation underwent a period of uncertainty after the end of the conflict and high unemployment, heavy taxation, agricultural failures, financial distress, and higher prices undermined her economy. The European disaster closed British markets for manufactured products and the resultant closing of factories caused riots and criticism. These conditions spurred the necessity for expanded trade. Competition with the United States was keen, but Great Britain counted on the good will and friendship of the Spanish American revolutionaries to accomplish her goals.

British postwar trade, however, began slowly. On November 4, 1815, the London Morning Chronicle reported that exports to Venezuela and Cumaná amounted only to \$4,500,000 and those of the Spanish West Indies to \$5,000,000. At the same time Panama was receiving imports valued at \$8,500,000.²⁶ Great Britain's economic problems merited special attention because business concerns, especially those in the import and export trade, were declaring bankruptcy as result of the unstable economic conditions in the country.²⁷

To accomplish her economic objectives, Great Britain required political stability in the Caribbean since that nation could not support an international emergency in the area. At the Congress of Vienna, Great

Britain could have demanded the transfer of all the remaining French West Indian colonies and even the Spanish possessions in the Caribbean. An action of that nature, however, would have created distrust among the Spanish American revolutionaries, probably a conflict of interests with the United States, or perhaps a political upheaval at home, since many individuals desired to halt the importation of colonial grains and goods to protect British landowners. The moderate demands of Great Britain at the Congress of Vienna, therefore, resulted in political stability in the nation and in the Caribbean.

In spite of British intentions, France resented the loss of Haiti, Tobago, and St. Lucia, since they reduced her dependencies to the islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique. As a result, she looked with great anxiety upon the fate of Cuba and Puerto Rico. The acquisition of these territories would have given France an important base for the reconquest of Santo Domingo and perhaps for additional territorial expansion.

As previously indicated, Haiti and Santo Domingo had been the most important colonial possessions of France in the Caribbean. In 1789 that colony exported to France 138,663,100 pounds of sugar, 78,494,500 pounds of coffee, and 6,705,600 pounds of cotton. The slave insurrection, however, curtailed local exports, and in 1799 France could obtain only 16,813,900 pounds of sugar, 27,744,100 pounds of coffee, and 2,341,900 pounds of cotton.

After 1818 political and strategic considerations, in addition to commercial and trade interests, also became part of the concern of the United States and the European powers in the Caribbean. The United States feared that Great Britain or France would seize the Spanish colonies in the West Indies as a result of the unstable political conditions existing

in Spain, and the marked inability of that country to protect its overseas possessions. The British government did not want to see the Spanish colonies transferred to France or the United States any more than the United States cared to have them transferred to Great Britain or France.³⁰ Great Britain believed that American possession of Cuba would jeopardize the Jamaica trade and ruin Britain's position and interests in the whole Caribbean.³¹ 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. ³²

American fears were not completely unfounded. In the summer of 1819, it was rumored in Europe that Great Britain might seize Cuba to balance United States hegemony in the Gulf of Mexico, which had been one of the results of the American acquisition of the Floridas. British newspapers reported that the Duke of San Carlos, the Spanish representative, had indicated Spanish desires for the British occupation of Cuba.³³ 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."³⁴

During that time the British press, which had condemned the Florida treaty, demanded that Great Britain 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."³⁵ Great Britain had provided substantial military assistance to Spain, who owed L 15,000,00 for military supplies and maintenance of the British army.³⁶ She also owed money to

many British merchants who had suffered commercial injuries during the war and for the purchase of merchandize and foodstuffs that could not be produced. As Spain was unable to satisfy her financial obligations because of a large national debt, it was believed that she would transfer Cuba and Puerto Rico, her last remaining loyal colonies in the Western Hemisphere, to Great Britian in payment for her debts. There also was some speculation that Spain might cede the islands to France, which had provided substantial military assistance to Ferninand VII to help him regain his Spanish throne.³⁷

In the spring of 1823, rumors circulated in Europe and Washington concerning the possible transfer of Cuba and Puerto Rico to Great Britain or France. Charles S. Todd, the Confidential Agent of the United States to Colombia, informed John Quincy Adams about the Colombian government's concern with "the necessity and propriety of their [Great Britain] having Cuba as an offset to our purchase of Florida."³⁸

For Adams, the possibility of transferring Cuba or Puerto Rico to a European country seemed dangerous. The anxiety of the United States concerning the possible disposition of the Spanish colonies in the Caribbean to Great Britain was expressed by the Secretary of State to John Forsyth, the United States Minister to Spain. On December 7, 1822, Adams wrote:

It is asserted that for more than two years there have been secret negotiations . . . for the cession of the Island [Cuba]. Spain, though disinclined to such an arrangement, might resist it with more firmness, if for a limited time she could obtain the join guarantee of the United States and France in securing the Island to herself. 39

Adams' statement indicates that as early as 1822 the United States was considering the support of Spanish colonialism in the Caribbean.

In a letter to Hugh Nelson, the new minister to Spain, Adams

discussed the reasons for the attitude of the United States:

These islands [Cuba and Puerto Rico] from their local position are natural appendages to the North American continent, and one of them almost in sight of our shores, from a multitude of considerations, has become an object of transcendent importance to the commercial and political interest of our Union. Its commanding position, with reference to the Gulf of Mexico and the West Indian Seas; the character of its population; its situation midway between our coast and the island of St. Domingo . . . give it an importance in the sum of our national interests. 40

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 Puerto Rico to Great Britain as the price of a new Anglo-Spanish alliance in another peninsular war.

Believing that both France and Great Britain had agents "observing the course of events," Secretary Adams stated that the President wanted the United States minister to obtain information concerning any negotiation between Spain and Great Britain about the Caribbean and "if so, to communicate to the Spanish Government . . . the sentiments of this Government in relation to this subject."⁴¹ Thereafter, the Secretary of State sent special agents to Cuba and Europe. These emissaries were really government spies to observe and report activities detrimental to the interests of the United States.⁴²

Many other American political leaders and statesmen, including Thomas Jefferson, James Monroe, James Madison, Henry Clay, and John C. Calhoun, also believed that the control of the Spanish colonies in the Caribbean was, as Adams had indicated, "an object of transcendent importance to the political and commercial interests of our Union."⁴³ 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 the United States could not permit its falling to any

European government "which might make a fulcrum of that position against the commerce and security of the United States."⁴⁴ In 1820 Thomas Jefferson had told Calhoun that the United States ought to take Cuba "at the first opportunity" even "at the cost of a war with England."⁴⁵ 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 Puerto Rico.⁴⁶

In February, 1823, Henry Clay, expressing a similar concern, told Stratford Canning, the British Minister to the United States, that the United States "would fight for it [Cuba] should they [the British] attempt its possession."⁴⁷ The possibility of British seizure of Cuba led Secretary of State Adams to apply the No-Transfer Principle of 1811 to the Spanish colonies in the Caribbean in the summer of 1823.⁴⁸ 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. The resolution emphasized the fact that the United States could not accept that "any part of Spanish territory pass into the hand of any foreign power." The policy continued to be applied in the Caribbean as long as it was important to the security of the United States and to the transit across the Isthmus of Panama.⁴⁹

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 the southern flank and the recently acquired Louisiana territory. Florida, purchased from Spain in 1819 and acquired several years later, could not be properly defended from aggression by a foreign power which controlled the Caribbean. Many thousands of pioneers had crossed the Alleghenies to the rich valley of the Louisiana territory, but transportation between the East coast and the new settlements was so difficult and expensive that they had to float their cargoes down the Mississippi to New Orleans for transfer to the eastern markets. In spite of some improvements in transportation, the renewed migration to the West and the extension of agriculture to the Mississippi made New Orleans the principal commercial link between the rapid developing western region and the Atlantic coast. Since British or French domination of Cuba could cut off communications between New Orleans and the Atlantic ports in the event of a conflict, the possession of that island became essential to the interests of the United States.

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 West Indies required that Cuba and Puerto Rico remain free of foreign interference. American trade, according to John A. Logan, "required that neither Great Britain nor France should establish herself in Havana harbor, virtually impregnable if properly fortified, and so situated that from it a first class sea power could command the commerce of the entire Caribbean region."⁵¹ "I consider Cape Florida and Cuba," wrote President James Monroe to Thomas Jefferson, "as forming the mouth of the Mississippi and other rivers emptying into the Gulf itself, and in consequence, its acquisition is of the highest importance."⁵²

As Cuba had a large black population, any change in her colonial

political status which could have interfered with the Spanish institution of slavery would have also affected the control of the slaves in the southern states. Since Great Britain had indicated in the Congress of Vienna her determination to abolish the slave traffic in the Spanish colonies, it was to be expected that she would have abolished slavery in Cuba and Puerto Rico if these colonies had been ceded to her.⁵³ Or, if these colonies had become independent during this critical time, they would have freed their slaves, as their sister republics in Spanish America had already done. The prospect of either situation arising so close to the United States was viewed by the Southern members of Congress as a threat to the institution of slavery in the United States and as a danger to the peace and security of the South.

These individuals believed that the large black population in the West Indies would create conditions similar to those that had existed in Haiti in 1794 when the black population in that country rebelled and massacred the white French settlers. If, on the other hand, new republics were created in the Caribbean, they 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."⁵⁴ Either of these situations would have given the black slaves in the United States an example of what they could gain if they revolted against their white masters. This circumstance was intolerable to the citizens of the South. An independent Cuba also would have terminated the profitable illegal African slave trade of Texas and Louisiana and gravely reduced the manpower necessary for the southern economy.⁵⁵

The policy of expansionism of United States southern leaders intensified American determination to prevent the independence of the Spanish

colonies in the Caribbean or their transfer to Great Britain or France. Many American statesmen had expressed the desirability of taking Cuba because they believed that the island was indispensable to the security, trade, and commerce of the United States. Since Puerto Rico played an important role in the defense of the Caribbean, the island probably would have followed in the wake of Cuba if that colony had been seized by the United States.

As early as 1786, Thomas Jefferson had expressed his desire to expand the American borders toward the South. "Our Confederacy must be viewed," he said, "as the nest from which all America, North and South, is to be peopled." He also had expressed the fear that Spain could not keep Spanish America "till our population is sufficiently advanced to gain it piece by piece."⁵⁶ In a letter to his successor, Jefferson commented that he believed Napoleon would not object to the conquest of Cuba by the United States.⁵⁷ Although Jefferson continued to discuss the possibility of acquiring Cuba and even suggested the idea of a war with Spain, since Cuba could be seized without much difficulty, the United States took no steps to acquire Cuba or Puerto Rico before 1808.⁵⁸ In the spring of that year, however, Jefferson sent General James Wilkinson to Cuba to convince the captain-general to transfer his allegiance to the United States since the French invasion of the peninsula would probably change the Spanish tutelage of the island. According to Valentín de Foronda, the Spanish chargé d'affaires in the United States, Wilkinson was instructed to negotiate "a reunion of the Kingdom of Mexico, and the islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico under the United States."⁵⁹ Wilkinson's mission failed because the Spanish authorities in Cuba rejected the American suggestion.⁶⁰

President James Madison continued Jefferson's policy toward the Spanish Caribbean. As early as 1810, he indicated that the United States "could not be a satisfied spectator" to the transfer of Cuba to any European power because of the danger to "the commerce and security of the United States."⁶¹ In 1947 a National Congress of Cuban historians held in La Habana declared that Madison's policy toward the Caribbean 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."⁶²

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 the liberal creole planters.⁶³ 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 plantation owners sympathized with this plan, the conspiracy did not take place. As a result of his activities in Cuba, the Spanish authorities arrested Shaler in November, 1811, and ordered him to leave the country. Before departing, Shaler notified the government that the United States would not consent to the transfer of Cuba to another European power and that the local authorities could depend on help from the United States to protect the island.⁶⁴

During James Monroe's administration, Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, as has already been indicated, pursued the same course of action toward the Spanish possessions that Jefferson and Madison had taken. Concerning Cuba, Adams wrote: "Were the population of the island of one blood and one color there could be no doubt or hesitation with regard to

the course the United States would pursue, as directed by their interests and their rights."⁶⁵ "There is nothing I so much desire," Governor William C. Clairborne of Louisiana had also written, "as to see the flag of my Country reared on the Morro Castle." Cuba, according to Clairborne, was 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."⁶⁶

In 1823 Monroe, Jefferson, and Adams discussed the annexation of the Spanish colonies in the Caribbean. On June 30, 1823, Monroe informed Jefferson that he had always concurred with his views concerning the annexation of Cuba and that "we ought to incorporate it into our Union" at the most favorable moment, hoping that it might be done "without a rupture with Spain or any other power."⁶⁷ Jefferson replied to the President that "I candidly confess that I have always looked on Cuba as the most interesting addition which could ever be made to our system of States."⁶⁸ Since Jefferson suggested at that time an alliance with Great Britain concerning Cuba, Monroe replied that he believed the suggestion may have been difficult to implement because the Caribbean problem had not been resolved. He further wrote to Jefferson that it was necessary to insure that the island did not follow the example of Spanish America concerning independence.⁶⁹

Adams, expressing a more positive view about the future of Cuba, wrote:

Such, indeed, are the interests of that island and of this country . . . that 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 that event we are not yet prepared There are laws of political, as well as of physical gravitation, 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 toward the North American Union, which, by the same law of nature, cannot cast off its bosom. 69

The interests of Monroe in the acquisition of Cuba could be related to the Missouri Compromise of 1819 and the desires of the southern states to expand slavery beyond the Mississippi. Monroe did not want Texas because he feared that the acquisition of that territory would reawaken sectionalism and the controversy over slavery in the territories. The members of the administration, therefore, would offer Cuba to the southern leaders until the slavery problem was settled in the United States. The annexation of Cuba would have served to satisfy what Madison had once referred to as the "manifest course of events," while at the same time it would have fulfilled what John Quincy Adams called "the law of political gravitation," that is, Cuba's ultimate annexation to the United States.⁷⁰

While the United States had desired Cuba, she was not yet ready to pay the high price of ownership -- most probably a war with Great Britain 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 a war, how it would be likely to terminate," since "in the present relative situation of our maritime forces, we could not maintain a war against Great Britain for Cuba."⁷¹

Adam's concern for the Spanish Caribbean may have been the consequence of an early belief in "Manifest Destiny." On November 16, 1819, he had told the members of 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. 72

With the Spanish colonies of Cuba and Puerto Rico 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 had already become our own . . . This renders it still more unavoidable that the remainder of the continent should ultimately be ours. United States and North America are identical, and any effort on our part to reason the world out of the belief that we are ambitious will have no other effect than to convince them that we add to our ambition hypocrisy. 73

As Adams indicated, this was an explicit policy of expansionism directed toward the annexation of the Spanish possessions in the Caribbean. The only things that prevented this nascent imperialism from extending to the West Indies were the military weakness of the United States and the threat of war with either Great Britain or France for the possession of the islands and control of the Caribbean.

United States intentions toward the Caribbean had been a matter of great concern to Spain, France, and Great Britain. In 1789, the Spanish

statesman, Pedro Abarca y Bolea, 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 the European nations had provided during the American Revolution, 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.⁷⁴ Concerning American intentions in Spanish America, Pedro Quevedo, Bishop of Orense, declared in 1806 that "the United States would create serious problems for Spain."⁷⁵

The Mexican government had a similar concern and asked Great Britain to restraint American expansionism in the Caribbean. Pablo Obregón, the Mexican Minister to the United States, wrote to Mariano de Michelena in London concerning the possibility of an American attempt against Cuba. Under the pretext of curtailing the piratical depredations in the Caribbean the United States, according to Obregón, was ready to invade the island.⁷⁶ "I have strong reasons to believe," replied Michelena, "that England will oppose any attempt by the United States to seize Cuba." Ten days later, the Mexican representative in London discussed with the British Foreign Sub-Secretary Planta the situation in Cuba. He later wrote to the Secretary of State and Foreign Relations that Great Britain would prevent the expansion of the United States into the Caribbean.⁷⁷

Since Anglo-French conflicts in Europe were invariably connected with rivalry in the West Indies, Great Britain had viewed the conquest of the Spanish possessions in the Caribbean as necessary to her national interests. On October 14, 1762, the British government intended to ask Spain to relinquish its control of Florida and Puerto Rico in exchange

for Havana, but a Parliamentary crisis limited the demands to the acquisition of Florida.⁷⁸ Twenty-three years earlier, the Earl of Hamilton, a member of the Parliament, had proposed the annexation of Cuba:

If the Crown of England could become possessed of the island of Cuba, that Key to all America, no man of knowledge can denye [sic] but that Britain, in that case must become possessed of the whole trade of the Spanish empire; and the simple privilege of trading with these people, upon very high terms, is now become one of the greatest prizes contended for by all the powers in Europe; sure England will not neglect any opportunity which is offered of acquiring such a possession as must infallibly secure that whole invaluable trade to her subjects alone. 79

In 1785 a stirring pamphlet was published in Great Britain concerning the disposition of the West Indies by the European powers. The theme of La Crise de l'Europe was the emancipation of all the European colonies in America by the concerted effort of Great Britain, France, Prussia, and Russia. These nations would be rewarded by a partition of the Caribbean islands as follows: Cuba to Russia, Martinique to Denmark, Guadeloupe to Sweden, Puerto Rico to Prussia, Santo Domingo to France, and the remaining islands to Great Britain. John Adams, United States Minister to Great Britain, epitomized the pamphlet in a letter to John Jay on May 28, 1786, and warned him of the intentions of the European powers. Thirteen years later a joint Anglo-American attack on the Spanish colonies was averted only by the caution and shrewdness of President John Adams.⁸⁰

The United States and the European powers, therefore, were suspected of expansionism in the Caribbean even before the second decade of the nineteenth century. By that time, however, it was clear that none of them could take the Spanish West Indies without inflicting serious damage upon the other's interests. The seizure of Cuba or Puerto Rico would have given a definite advantage in the Caribbean to the controlling power. The concern for these islands was of such importance to the contending

powers that "their subordinates were constantly reporting to each of them the supposed designs of the others."⁸¹ During that time, the London Courier declared that "Cuba is the Turkey of transatlantic politics, tottering to its fall, and kept from falling only by the struggle of those who contend for the rights of catching her in her descent."⁸²

Since the United States, France, and England had conflicting objectives in the Caribbean and desired to maintain spheres of influence there, they resolved to maintain the status quo in the West Indies until they could find a satisfactory solution to the existing problem. To achieve that purpose, the United States, France, and Great Britain opposed not only non-Spanish foreign control of Cuba and Puerto Rico, but also any political change that could affect their interests. 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. At that time, local conditions, created by the instability of the peninsular government and the chaos which resulted from the wars of independence in Spanish America, were most favorable for accomplishing that goal.

FOOTNOTES

¹French Ensor Chadwick, The Relations of the United States and Spain (New York, 1968), pp. 91-92, 186.

²Walter P. Hall and William S. Davis, The Course of Europe Since Waterloo (New York, 1947), p. 23.

³Arturo Morales-Carrión, Puerto Rico and the Non-Hispanic Caribbean, A Study in the Decline of Spanish Exclusivism (Río Piedras, Puerto Rico, 1974), pp. 41-43.

⁴Herbert C. Bell, "The West India Trade Before the American Revolution," American Historical Review, 22 (1917), p. 273.

⁵Arthur P. Whitaker, The United States and the Independence of Latin America, 1810-1830 (New York, 1962), p. 8.

⁶Timothy Pitkin, A Statistical View of the Commerce of the United States of America (Hartford, 1816), p. 15. A rare book located at the Library of Congress.

⁷Roy F. Nichols, "Trade Relations and the Establishment of the United States Consulates in Spanish America, 1779-1809," Hispanic American Historical Review, 13 (1933), pp. 291-293.

⁸Whitaker, p. 8.

⁹Arturo F. Santana, Puerto Rico y los Estados Unidos en el período revolucionario de Europa y América, 1789-1825 (San Juan, 1972), p. 7.

¹⁰Whitaker, p. 14.

¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹²U. S. Congress, American State Papers, Commerce and Navigation, Vol. 1 (Washington, D. C.; 1856). These figures are a composite of amounts recorded on pages 417, 431, 432, 453, 462, 468, 469, 477, 519, 671, and 682.

¹³Thomas G. Matthews, "Puerto Rico," Encyclopedia Britannica, 18 (1972), p. 851.

¹⁴William Dinwiddie, Puerto Rico: Its Conditions and Possibilities (New York, 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 people of the island resources available for commercial exploitation.

¹⁵ José Antonio Saco, Historia de la esclavitud de la raza africana en el nuevo mundo y especial de los países americano-hispanos, Vol. 3 (Habana, 1938), p. 29; Nichols, pp. 301-306.

¹⁶ U. S. Congress, Annals of Congress, 10th Cong., 2d Sess., pp. 21-23, 134-135; 184-185; 1217-1219; Arturo F. Santana, "The United States and Puerto Rico, 1797-1830" (Ph. D. dissertation, Department of History, University of Chicago, 1954), p. 65; Whitaker, p. 50. Professor William Kenneth Bunce believes that the embargo affected Cuba less than the Cubans had expected. Cuba was well stocked with provisions, "as over one hundred vessels, mostly American, had entered the port of Havana between 1 January and 1 February, 1808, and British ships began to appear in Cuban ports." William K. Bunce, "American Interests in the Caribbean Islands, 1783-1850," (Ph. D. dissertation, Graduate School of The Ohio State University, 1939), p. 75.

¹⁷ Roy F. Nichols quotes American sugar imports from the Spanish West Indies for the years 1806-1807 to be 87,763,464 pounds. The correct amount is 82,663,008, American State Papers, Commerce and Navigation, Vol. 1, p. 757. The amount quoted for 1809 is 34,657,330 pounds; the correct figure is 51,432,442, since sugar brought in by foreign vessels from the West Indies must also be included in the total amount. The amount of decreased trade is given as \$13,025,579 while the correct figure is \$12,341,225. Nichols includes at times Honduras, Campeche, and the Mosquito Coast as part of the West Indian trade and sometimes omits them from the trade balance. Historian Santana accept Nichols figures without verification and thus commits the same error. See pages 721, 815, 851, and 857 in *ibid.*

¹⁸ Nichols, p. 313n.

¹⁹ Niles' Weekly Register, January 25, 1817. According to the newspaper, Cuba exported in 1816 200,487 boxes of sugar, 370,229 arrobas of coffee, 26,797 barrels of molasses and 22,865 arrobas of wax. (An arroba was twenty-five pounds, a 'box' had thirty-seven pounds.

²⁰ Spanish America and the United States, or Views on the Actual Commerce of the United States with the Spanish Colonies by a merchant of Philadelphia (Philadelphia, 1818). This was a privately printed publication. Congressman Arthur Smith of Maryland used this pamphlet during the debate of the Neutrality Bill of 1817 to emphasize the value of trade with Spain. U. S. Congress, Annals of Congress, Vol. 30, 14th Cong., 2d Sess.

²¹ Morales-Carrión, p. 122; Nichols, 289.

²² The following statistics concerning tropical products exported to Europe or produced for export are significant. They include an analysis of raw sugar exports from Cuba between 1760 and 1794 and of sugar consumption in European countries during the middle of the eighteenth century. Sugar exports from New Spain, Jamaica, Antigua, and Santo Domingo are annual averages.

Amount of raw sugar exported from Havana by year and quantity:

From 1760 to 1763	-	4,875,000	lbs.
1778	-	18,750,000	"
1786	-	23,727,750	"
1787	-	22,966,875	"
1788	-	25,957,875	"
1789	-	25,921,875	"
1790	-	29,211,000	"
1791	-	31,880,250	"
1792	-	27,320,250	"
1793	-	32,966,250	"
1794	-	38,860,875	"

(Source: Alexander von Humboldt, Essai politique sur l'isle de Cuba (Paris, 1826), vol. 1, p. 191.

Sugar exports from New Spain, Jamaica, Antigua, Santo Domingo, and Cuba, annual averages (1825):

New Spain	-	12,500,000	lbs.
Jamaica	-	212,500,000	"
Antigua	-	249,500,000	"
Santo Domingo	-	100,000,000	"
Cuba	-	188,000,000	"

Source: Angel de Huarte Canga Argüelles, Hacienda (Madrid, 1968), p. 144. This is a reprint of the first edition entitled Diccionario de Hacienda con aplicación a España, por D. José Canga Argüelles (Madrid, 1833).

Consumption of sugar by country, middle of the eighteenth century, annual averages:

German States	187,500,000	lbs.
Genoa and Lionia	50,000,000	lbs.
Netherlands	187,500,000	"
Spain	31,250,000	"
Rusia	18,750,000	"
England	437,500,000 (!)	lbs.
England (1804)	450,000,000	lbs.

Source: Edimburg Review, August 20, 1825.

Note: Where figures indicate cajas, multiply by 375 and where they show arrobas multiply by 25. Prior to 1794 no sugar exports are recorded for other Cuban ports besides Havana.

Rum exports to England were 100,000 gallons in 1700; 1,655,922 in 1764; 3,341,020 in 1776; and 2,011,861 in 1783.

Source: Eric Williams, The History of the Caribbean (Harper & Row, 1970), p. 220.

²³The United States Senate ratified the Jay Treaty on June 24, 1795. England made such slight concessions to American trade in the British West Indies that the Senate rejected the clause that pertain to West Indian trade entirely (Article XII of the Treaty). The rejection did not affect trade, as the following selected statistics indicate. It actually increased trade between 1795 and 1796.

Trade, selected items (U. S. exports to British West Indies :

<u>Merchandise</u>	<u>1795</u>	<u>1796</u>
Beef, barrels	7,347	18,231
Beer, gallons	6,300	16,154
Dried fish, pounds	2,617,700	5,128,500
Oil, whale, gallons	18,113	31,564
Corn, Indian, bushels	323,445	418,338
Beans, pounds	44,191	66,102
Flour, barrels	81,365	133,778
Hams, unit	293,862	476,768
Cheese, pounds	136,688	317,013
Wine, gallons	19,435	48,620
Lumber, feet	18,866,009	20,969,545
Shingles, unit	20,642,371	24,251,259
Total value of exports:	\$2,634,664	\$5,446,559

Source: American State Papers, Commerce and Navigation, Vol. 1, pp. 334-342 and 355-362.

²⁴Canga Argüelles, pp. 288-289.

²⁵Santana, Puerto Rico, pp. 5-7.

²⁶London Morning Chronicle, November 4, 1815.

²⁷The British national debt was 29,869,367,500 reales, or about 491,272,370 pounds sterling, prior to the Napoleonic conflict. As result of the war, it rose to 900,000,000 pounds sterling by 1815. The payment of interest alone absorbed half of the nation's yearly income. The greater part of the debt was internal. The debt resulted in serious confrontations between the taxpayers and the bondholders, since many individuals demanded its partial repudiation. Great Britain levied the same taxes that had been established to conduct the war. This system lasted only for a limited time due to "the revolt of the taxpayers." Between 1817 and 1823, 12,521 commercial bankruptcies occurred in Great Britain and the country was on the verge of total economic collapse. To resolve the existing situation, Great Britain decided to increase trade, especially in the Western Hemisphere, and to expand the foreign investments in the new republics.

²⁸Canga Argüelles, pp. 185-186; Samuel Hazard, Santo Domingo, Past and Present; with a Glance at Haiti (New York, 1873), p. 497; London Times, April 29, 1830.

²⁹Charles K. Webster, ed., Britain and the Independence of Latin America, 1812-1830 (New York, 1970), pp. 393-394.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Canning Memorandum for the Cabinet, November 15, 1822, Doc. 540, F. O. 72/266, in Webster, Vol. 2, pp. 393-394.

³²U. S. Congress, House, "Cuba and Anglo-American Relations," by James Morton Callahan, 55th Cong., 2d Sess., Doc. 577, 1898 (American Historical Association Annual Report, 1897) (Washington, D. C.; 1898), pp. 195-196.

³³As quoted in Niles' Weekly Register, December 6, 1819.

³⁴Callahan, p. 196.

³⁵U. S. Congress, House, "The Diplomacy of the United States in Regard to Cuba," by John H. Latané, 55th Cong., 2d Sess., Doc. 577, 1898, American Historical Association Annual Report, 1897 (Washington, D. C.; 1898), pp. 220-221. Latané information could not be verified. If the amount quoted was in pounds sterling, it is excessive. The author probably intended to say pesos or pesos duros, which were one-third the value of an English pound and at that time a common monetary unit of Spain and the colonies. The Spanish also used the peso fuerte (the famous gold doubloons), transactions were normally made in the cheaper silver peso. In 1815 a peso duro was equivalent to \$1.25 U. S. currency; a pound sterling to \$3.80, a French franc to \$0.187. There were twenty reales in one peso duro.

³⁶The exact amount is unknown. The nation, however, had a negative balance of payment with England of 493,930,527 reales (\$30.8 million). In 1801 the national debt was 4,108,052,771 reales (\$256.8 million), but it had doubled since then as result of the war.

³⁷French Ensor Chadwick, The Relations of the United States and Spain (New York, 1968), pp. 219-220.

³⁸Charles S. Todd, Confidential Agent of the United States to Colombia, to John Quincy Adams, Secretary of State, February 5, 1823, Department of State, Despatches and Notes Sent from the American Legation, Colombia (August 1820-November, 1823), Consular Post Records, Vol. C8.2, Record Group 84, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

³⁹John Quincy Adams to John Forsyth, United States Minister to Spain, December 17, 1822, Department of State, Diplomatic Instructions, Vol. 9, p. 158, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁴⁰John Quincy Adams to Hugh Nelson, United States Minister to Spain, April 28, 1823, in *ibid.*, pp. 186-187. This statement was part of the general instructions sent to Nelson on April 28, 1823, when he assumed the position of United States Minister to Spain. It appeared in print for the first time in 1852 as part of U. S. Congress, House, Executive Document 121, 32d Cong., 1st Sess., (1851-1852), pp. 6-7. In 1917 Worthington C. Ford, ed., published it in the Writings of John

Quincy Adams, Vol. 7 (New York, 1917), pp. 371-372. Since its publication it has become the favorite statement of Spanish American historians who accused the United States of "Yankee imperialism" during the era of "Dollar Diplomacy." Perhaps for that reason, William R. Manning did not select it for publication in 1925 as part of his work The Independence of the Latin-American Nations (New York, 1925). Since the principal reason for the publication of State Department documents during that time was to create the impression among Spanish Americans that the United States had contributed considerably to Latin-American independence, documents which reflected opposite goals were not published. Manning's work, therefore, is incomplete and should be revised since it has become a standard authority among Spanish-American historians. Furthermore, many of the extracted portions of documents that were published by Manning are out of context. This writer investigated many of them in the National Archives and found that important parts are missing. Manning sign posts (L^x and x/) are clearly discernible, even on the microfilmed version of the Department of State records. Volume 9 contains important information (see note 39 above) which was not published by Manning. The correspondence from the State Department to Forsyth, except for one selection, does not appear in Manning's work. Reuben J. Clark, Memorandum on the Monroe Doctrine (Washington, D. C; Publication No. 37, Department of State, 1928) included some sections of Vol. 9

⁴¹ John Quincy Adams to John Forsyth, December 17, 1822, in *ibid.*

⁴² Some of the more important agents were Thomas Randall, sent to Havana as Special Agent for Commerce and Confidential Agent to Cuba, and Alexander McRae "Secret Agent to observe and report upon the proceedings of the Congresses of European Powers which are expected to discuss the affairs of the South American States." The instructions of Adams to Randall read:

During your residence in the island of Cuba, you will from time to time, as safe opportunities may occur, communicate to this Department, in private and confidential letters, all such information as you may be able to obtain, relating to the political conditions of the Islands, the views of its Government and the sentiments of its inhabitants Should it be French and British agents residing at the Havanna, you will endeavour to ascertain, without direct enquiries, their objects and pursuits; and you will notice whatever maritime force of either of those Powers may be stationed in the West Indies You will be aware 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; or to the assumption by the Inhabitants of an Independent Government.

John Quincy Adams to Thomas Randall, April 29, 1823, Department of State, Special Agents, Vol. 9 (1818-1826), Record Group 59, National Archives.

⁴³See note 40.

⁴⁴James Madison to William Pinkney, U. S. Minister to Great Britain, October 30, 1810, in Gaillard Hunt, ed., The Writings of James Madison, Vol. 11 (New York, 1900), p. 488.

⁴⁵Charles F. Adams, ed., Memoirs of John Quincy Adams, Vol. 6 (Philadelphia, 1875), p. 70.

⁴⁶Samuel F. Bemis, A Diplomatic History of the United States (New York, 1942), p. 94.

⁴⁷U. S. Congress, House, A Digest of International Law, by John Bassett Moore, 56th Cong., 2d Sess., Doc. 551, Vol. 6 (Washington, D. C.; 1906), p. 380.

⁴⁸John A. Logan, Jr., No Transfer: An American Security Principle (New Haven, 1961), p. 119; Bemis, p. 372.

⁴⁹According to official documents, United States interests in an interoceanic waterway on the Isthmus of Panama began after the War of 1812. Acknowledgement of this interest can be seen in Henry Clay, Secretary of State, to Richard C. Anderson and John Sergeant, U. S. Ministers to Panama Congress, May 8, 1826, Department of State, Diplomatic Instructions, Vol. 11, pp. 35-66, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.; Logan, p. 6.

⁵⁰New Orleans became the principal port for cotton producers. In 1810 less than 5,000,000 million pounds of cotton were grown west of the Alleghenies; ten years later, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama produced 60,000,000 pounds. The same states raised production to 150,000,000 pounds, or about one half the entire crop of the country, five years later. The census of 1820 indicate that the western states increased their population 320 per cent. By the apportionment of 1820, 47 of the 213 congressmen and 18 of the 48 senators came from beyond the Alleghenies. See Edward E. Sparks, The Expansion of the American People (New York, 1908), chaps 12 and 13; Henry Adams, History of the United States During the Administrations of Jefferson and Madison (Abridged) (Englewood Cliff, 1963), pp. 166-171; David Saville Muzzey, American History (Boston, 1923), pp. 193-194.

⁵¹Logan, p. 140.

⁵²James Monroe to Thomas Jefferson, June 30, 1823, in Stanislaw M. Hamilton, ed., The Writings of James Monroe, Vol. 6 (New York, 1898-1903), pp. 312-313.

⁵³Jerónimo Becker, Historia de las relaciones exteriores de España (Madrid, 1924), pp. 423-425.

⁵⁴Thomas Hart Benton, Thirty Years' View, 1820-1850, Vol. 1 (New York, 1893), p. 69.

⁵⁵The southern plantation owners had an universal fear that the slaves might revolt and slay their masters, as they had done in Haiti. After the Cato's Conspiracy near Charleston in 1720-1740 in which thirty whites and about 44 blacks died, colonial laws barred blacks from militia training, except in time of emergency. Accounts of slave insurrections in the West Indies and the possibility that they could extend to the Southern states were always a concern for the slaveholders. Records of criminal cases maintained by the Public Library of the City of New Orleans indicate that in spite of the provisions of the U. S. Constitution concerning the importation of slaves, thousands were smuggled in from Texas and Cuba. See John Mitchell, American Consul at Martinique, to his brother, April 18, 1816, concerning revolts in the West Indies in Niles' Weekly Register, May 18, 1816; Benjamin Quarles, "The Colonial Militia and Negro Manpower," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, 45 (1959), pp. 643-652

⁵⁶Jefferson to Archibald Steward, January 25, 1786, in Worthington D. Ford, ed., Writings of Thomas Jefferson, Vol. 5 (New York, 1895-1899), p. 75.

⁵⁷Chadwick, p. 216.

⁵⁸Jefferson to Madison, August 16, 1807, The Papers of Thomas Jefferson, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.

⁵⁹Valentín de Foronda to the Minister of State, June 2, 1809, Madrid, Archivo Histórico Nacional, Sección 1, Legajo 274 (old designation)(transcript), Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.

⁶⁰Issac J. Cox, "The Pan American Policy of Jefferson and Wilkinson," Mississippi Valley Historical Review, 1 (1914), pp. 222-223.

⁶¹James Madison to William Pinkney, October 30, 1810, in Gaillard Hunt, ed., The Writings of James Madison, Vol. 8 (New York, 1900), p. 122.

⁶²Statement reprinted in Antonio Núñez Jiménez, La liberación de las Islas (La Habana, 1959), p. 458.

⁶³Roy F. Nichols, "William Shaler, New England Apostle of Liberty," New England Quarterly, 9 (1933), pp. 76-77.

⁶⁴William Shaler to Monroe, December 8, 1811 and December 27, 1811, Department of State, Consular Despatches, Havana, Vol. 2, Record Group 59, National Archives.

⁶⁵Worthington C. Ford, ed., The Writings of John Quincy Adams, Vol. 7 (New York, 1915), p. 372.

⁶⁶Luis Mariño Pérez, "Relations with Cuba," Southern History Association Publications, 10 (1906), p. 203-214.

⁶⁷Monroe to Jefferson, June 30, 1823, in Hamilton, Writings, Vol. 6, 312-313.

⁶⁸Jefferson to Monroe, October 24, 1823, The Papers of Thomas Jefferson, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.

⁶⁹Monroe to Jefferson, April 14, 1823, Hamilton, The Writing of James Monroe, Vol. 6, p. 307

⁷⁰U. S. Congress, House, 32nd Cong., 1st Sess., Doc. 121, (Washington, D. C.; 1852), pp. 6-7.

⁷¹Adams, Memoirs, Vol. 6, p. 71.

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Ibid., Vol. 4, pp. 438-439.

⁷⁴Count de Aranda, who was present during the signing of the Treaty of Paris of 1783, expressed his fears in a memorial to Charles III. He called the king's attention to the increased danger of losing his possessions in America to the United States. He proposed, therefore, that America be divided into three kingdoms: Mexico, Peru, and New Granada, with a member of the royal family as king over each one. Aranda's plan was rejected. Arthur P. Whitaker questions the authenticity of the Memoir of 1783 (Arthur P. Whitaker, "The Pseudo-Aranda Memoir of 1783," Hispanic American Historical Review, 17 (1937), pp. 287-313, Hubert H. Bancroft and Mexican historian Lucas Alamán accept it. There is no consensus among Spanish historians about Aranda's work. John Rydjord, Foreign Interests in the Independence of New Spain (Durham, North Carolina, 1935), p. 95; Hubert H. Bancroft, Mexico, Vol. 3 (San Francisco, 1885), pp. 288-390; Charles L. Chandler, Inter American Acquaintances (Sewanee, Tennessee, 1917), pp. 4-5; Lucas Alamán, Archivo relativo a su historia de Mexico, Archivo de D. Lucas Alamán, 1808-1849, Legajo 330, The University of Texas Library, Latin American Collection, Austin, Texas; Lucas Alamán, Historia de Mejiño, desde los primeros movimientos que prepararon su independencia en el año 1808 hasta el presente, Vol. 1 (Mexico D. F.; 1850-1852), pp. 126-127.

⁷⁵Lidio Cruz-Monclova, Historia de Puerto Rico, Siglo XIX, Vol 1. (Río Piedras, 1970), p. 171.

⁷⁶Pablo Obregón to José Mariano Michelena, January 16, 1825, in Juan E. Hernández y Dávalos Manuscript Collection, Doc. HD 18-1.4288, The Latin American Collection of the University of Texas, University of Texas Library, Austin, Texas.

⁷⁷Michelena a Ministro de Relaciones de la República de México, "Nota sobre la actitud de Inglaterra respecto a la mediación con España y porvenir de Cuba," Mexico, Archivo de la Segunda Misión de México en Inglaterra, Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, México, D. F.; Michelena a Obregón, February 22, 1825, Legación Mexicana No. 4, Hernández y Dávalos Collection, Doc. HD 18-1-4310, The Latin American Collection of the University of Texas, University of Texas Library, Austin, Texas.

⁷⁸John Stuart, 3rd Earl of Bute, to John Russell, Duke of Bedford, First Lord of the Admiralty, October 14, 1762, in John H. Wiffen, Correspondence of John Russell, Duke of Bedford (London, 1883), p. 137.

⁷⁹Quoted in Charles E. Chapman, A History of the Cuban Republic: A Study in Hispanic American Politics (New York, 1927), p. 60.

⁸⁰John Adams to Timothy Pickering, Secretary of State, October 3, 1798, in Charles Francis Adams, The Works of John Adams, Second President of the United States, With a Life of the Author, Notes and Illustrations, Vol 7 (Boston, 1850-1856), p. 700.

⁸¹Charles K. Webster, Britain and the Independence of Latin America, 1812-1830, Vol. 2 (New York, 1970), p. 35.

⁸²Quoted in Niles' Weekly Register, August 6, 1825.

CHAPTER VI

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

At the beginning of 1822 a serious international problem arose in the Caribbean. The United States could not seize the Spanish possessions or exercise a commercial monopoly in the West Indies without the danger of a war with the European powers; Great Britain and France were similarly restrained because any unilateral action on their part would have probably lead to a conflict with the United States or to a war between themselves. According to Samuel F. Bemis, after the United States acquired Florida, the focus of American attention shifted from the Great Lakes and the Northwest to the Caribbean. The Spanish possessions had become as essential to the protection of the Florida territory as that territory previously had been to the safety of Louisiana.¹ The United States defense system in the Southeast, the integrity of both Florida and Louisiana and the security of New Orleans depended in great part on the control of the Spanish Caribbean.²

During this period, British trade interests in the Caribbean also became a matter of concern. On April 23, 1822, British merchants, ship-owners, manufacturers, and traders met in London to consider ways for increasing commerce with the Spanish American republics. It was agreed to ask the government to permit ships of "the newly established countries to enter British ports. Since Great Britain had not recognized the new republics and treated them as belligerents, opening official trade with

South and Central America would constitute a de facto recognition. To satisfy the demands of the British merchants, Great Britain established trading posts and commercial warehouses on the British possessions in the Caribbean, thereby increasing the importance of the area to Great Britain's overseas trade. The new measures greatly stimulated British commerce in Central America and northern South America, and England was unwilling to allow American intervention in the Caribbean to endanger that trade.³

Of all the continental powers, France was perhaps the nation most interested in the Spanish American colonies. Conflict of interests, however, affected French foreign policy. Merchants wanted to emulate Great Britain and open trade with South America, while the ultraroyalists demanded territorial acquisitions and the suppression of republicanism in the Western Hemisphere. The government, however, preferred to establish independent Bourbon monarchies in America as a means of "reconciling legitimacy with French commercial interests." Since the islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique in the Caribbean were the only possessions from which France could attempt to exercise political control, they became important to France's plans in the Western Hemisphere -- the conquest of Cuba and Puerto Rico.⁴

In March, 1822, President Monroe recommended to Congress the recognition of the Spanish American republics that had successfully gained their independence. On May 4, 1822, the Congress accepted the President's recommendations and voted to establish diplomatic relations with Colombia, Mexico, and Argentina. Since both Mexico and Colombia bordered the Caribbean, British and French interest considerably increased during the summer.⁵ British manufacturers and merchants urged the government to

follow the example of the United States, but Parliament refused to take any action on this matter without the approval of its European allies.⁶ France also refused to recognize the Spanish American republics and criticized the American decision.⁷

In 1822 the three powers increased their naval forces in the Caribbean. The United States sent to the West Indies the frigate Congress, the corvette John Adams, the sloop of war Peacock, the brigantine Spark, and five other ships; the Navy also prepared the sloop Hornet and the brigantine Enterprise to join the other vessels in the Caribbean.⁸ These vessels represented 64 percent of all American warships in service at that time. In spite of the increased defense, the United States observed with considerable anxiety the arrival of a British naval squadron in the area. The Niles' Weekly Register spread alarming reports about a Spanish cession of Cuba and those news served to increase tension in the nation's capital.⁸

At the end of 1822, according to Charles S. Todd, the confidential agent of the United States to Colombia, the American government ordered the construction of fortifications in Key West, Florida. Todd wrote about "plans for extensive preparations on the part of the United States to fortify Key West" even when "it may be found, on examination, that the area is unfit as a naval depot or fortification."¹⁰ The abortive expedition against Puerto Rico, organized and directed by Ducoudray Hols- tein, also became a major concern of both the United States and Great Britain. According to Adams, the British Minister in the United States was very inquisitive about the attempt to liberate Puerto Rico because "he suspected the expedition had been secretly sanctioned or connived at by the American government, and that we intended to make ourselves master

of Puerto Rico."¹¹

In September, 1822, Cuban creoles who desired the annexation of Cuba to the American Union asked the United States to seize the island. During a cabinet discussion concerning the Cuban proposal, it was agreed to refuse the offer because such action would have resulted in a disastrous war with Great Britain. Calhoun coveted possession of the island to insure it against a slave insurrection as well as to prevent its falling into the hands of Great Britain, but knew that Cuba could not be gained easily. As a result, the Cubans were told the President had no authority to promise to admit Cuba as a territory.¹²

The possible acquisition of Cuba by the United States and the future of the Spanish West Indian colonies became a serious problem for the British government at the end of the year. British merchants demanded the acquisition of the island and criticized the Parliament for not taking a positive view toward the protection of British trade in the Caribbean. Afraid of American encroachment in an area which they considered vital to their economic interests, the merchants and the press hardened their demands for action since they expected the United States to invade Cuba in October, 1822.¹³

Since the British government concern also extended to France, "a strange kind of triangular suspicion arose: France suspecting England and the United States, the United States suspecting England and France, England suspecting France and the United States."¹⁴ British suspicions toward France may have been well-founded since the French foreign minister considered acquiring the Spanish possessions in the Caribbean by an agreement with Spain.¹⁴ In respect to the United States, British precaution "had a modicum of truth," since Secretary of State Adams did not

intend to use military force in Cuba, but expected her annexation by peaceful means.¹⁶

On November 15, 1822, George Canning wrote a memorandum to the British Cabinet concerning American intervention in the Caribbean.

The possession by the United States of the channel through which our Jamaican trade must pass would, in time of war with the United States, or indeed in a war in which the United States might be neutral, but in which we claim the right of search, amount to a supervision of that trade, and to a consequent total ruin of a great portion of the West Indian interests. ¹⁷

In spite of that danger, Canning made no apparent overtures to Spain about the transfer of Cuba to Great Britain. The British Minister in Madrid, however, warned Spain about the American intentions in the West Indies and told the Spanish government that Great Britain would not tolerate the transfer of Cuba to another power. Spain herself seemed to think that her control of Cuba and Puerto Rico was seriously threatened by the United States. As a result the government sent troops to protect the islands against a possible North American invasion.¹⁸

The risk of an actual confrontation became more pronounced at the end of 1822. In December of that year, British sailors temporarily occupied a small section of eastern Cuba. This action considerably disturbed the United States government. Its concern did not ease until Canning informed several governments, including the United States, that the landing had been made to suppress piracy and that Great Britain had no aggressive intentions toward Cuba. Canning suggested during that time, however, that if the United States meant to annex Cuba, Great Britain might "have to annex Puerto Rico to preserve the balance of power in the Caribbean."¹⁹

In March and April, 1823, when the threat of war in the Caribbean

appeared stronger, the American Cabinet discussed the West Indian problem and the future of Cuba. John C. Calhoun, the Secretary of War, advocated immediate intervention and a "war with England if she means to take Cuba," while Smith Thompson, the Secretary of the Navy, believed that the problem could be resolved if the creoles declared their independence. Secretary of State Adams, however, disagreed with both proposals because he believed that the Cubans could not maintain their independence and that the United States could not prevent Great Britain from obtaining possession of the Spanish islands if she attempted it. Adams' opposition to an aggressive attack by the United States prevented the Cabinet from deciding a correct course of action. "We must remain cool on the subject," wrote the Secretary of State afterwards."²⁰

In April, 1823, France invaded Spain to reestablish Ferdinand VII as the legitimate ruler. The intervention of France in the internal affairs of Spain had been decided the preceding year by the European powers at the Congress of Verona, the last of the congresses held by the Quadruple Alliance. The success of the ultraroyalist forces in Spain resulted in substantial apprehension in the Western Hemisphere. Rumors spread in the United States that Cuba and Puerto Rico had been transferred to France as result of the invasion. The possibility of such an event seemed dangerous to Adams, who still was concerned with British intentions in the area. The multiple threat to American interests convinced the Secretary of State the time for caution was over and that a positive step had to be taken to establish a definite American policy concerning the Caribbean.

On April 28, 1823, Adams wrote to Hugh Nelson, the United States foreign minister to Spain, that the nation had great interest in the maritime wars of Europe because "they are waged upon an element which is

the common property of all." As "Great Britain [could] scarcely fail of becoming a party" to those wars, "a collision between her and these States" could scarcely have been prevented.²¹ "But in the war between France and Spain now commencing," continued Adams, "other interests, peculiarly ours, will in all probability be deeply involved." Realizing that Cuba and Puerto Rico could be transferred to France as result of the conflict, Adams indicated that "this action must be prevented since the islands had become an object of transcendent importance" to the United States. Concerning the commercial importance of Cuba, the Secretary of State said:

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. 22

About the future acquisition of Cuba, Adams wrote that "it is scarcely possible to resist the conviction that the annexation of Cuba . . . will be indispensable to the Union." Adams realized that an attempt to conquer Cuba by force would be opposed by Great Britain. He equally feared that the invasion of Spain would result in Cuban emancipation. For Adams, Cuba was not ready for that independence, and as soon as the island declared self-government he feared that Great Britain or France would seize the country. According to the Secretary of State, that would have been "an event unpropitious to the interests" of the United States, therefore, the prevention of the transfer of Cuba to Great Britain "if necessary by force" became one of the principal concerns of the nation.²³

It was at this juncture that the status quo in the Caribbean became the official policy of the United States' government. "The wishes of

your government," Adams wrote to Nelson, "are that Cuba and Puerto Rico may continue in connection with independent and constitutional Spain."

Opposing independence for the islands, he further instructed the American minister to say that "no countenance has been given by us to any projected plan of separation from Spain which may have been formed in the islands." He cautioned:

This assurance becomes proper, as, by a late dispatch received from Mr. Forsyth, he intimates that the Spanish government have been informed that a revolution in Cuba was secretly preparing, fomented by communications between a society of Free Masons there and another of the same fraternity in Philadelphia.

While disclaiming any intentions of obtaining Puerto Rico, Adams declared "that the American government had no knowledge" of the expedition organized by Ducoudray Holstein to liberate that island. "You will not conceal from the Spanish government," ended Adams, "the repugnance of the United States to the transfer of the island of Cuba by Spain to any other power."²⁴ While Adams stressed Cuba in his declaration of official policy, the same views extended to Puerto Rico. Historian Graham Stuart has summarized the Caribbean foreign policy of the United States as follows:

In the foreign relations of the United States previous to the war with Spain, Puerto 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 sometime made of Puerto Rico; but, even when nothing was said, it was generally understood that Puerto 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 predominant part, while Puerto Rico is virtually unmentioned. 25

The day following his message to Nelson, Adams instructed the United States agent in Cuba to observe the course of events in that island and to inform him of "any apparent popular agitation; particularly of

such nature as may have reference either to a transfer of the island from Spain to any other power."²⁶ Joel Roberts Poinsett had visited Puerto Rico six months earlier apparently with the same purpose.²⁷ All naval commanders in the Caribbean were instructed to be on the alert for any activities of the British or French naval squadrons in the area. Charles J. Ingersoll, the United States District Attorney for Pennsylvania, stated that Henry Clay had told the British minister in Washington that the United States was ready to fight if Great Britain decided to seize Cuba.²⁸

While the presence of British naval forces in the Caribbean contributed to the unrest of Secretary Adams, the belief that Spain planned to transfer the Spanish possessions to other European powers became the principal worry of the United States. British program for the suspension of the slave trade, the mutual rivalry for commercial and political influence in the emerging Spanish American republics, and the desires of the United States to participate in the British West Indian carrying trade were also important concerns. Many Americans believed that British policy dictated the seizure of all points controlling channels of commerce. Since the United States had intentions of establishing an interoceanic waterway across Central America, British maritime policy was in a direct conflict with American interests in the Caribbean.

The conflict of interests in the West Indies also affected the views of the Spanish American countries. Mexico believed that the Americans were an aggressive expanding people with designs on the whole Western Hemisphere, while the belief that the European powers were attempting to reimpose imperialism in South America was the major concern of Colombia. Colombian foreign policy viewed the United States as a nation capable of

leading the Western Hemisphere against the European powers. It appears, therefore, that Colombia had intentions of inviting the United States to take command of the affairs of the new republics.²⁹

At that time it was intimated in Spanish America that Spain had offered Puerto Rico to France as part of the indemnities paid after the French occupation of the country. The government of Colombia also believed that the British Cabinet may have had a similar concern in view when Great Britain sent its naval forces to the Caribbean. Colombia did not doubt that possession of Cuba or Puerto Rico by any European power besides Spain would have given that nation a valuable foothold in the most vulnerable part of the Western Hemisphere.³⁰ Mexico's preoccupation with United States expansionism predominated in her foreign policy. In Mexico, the local newspaper El Amigo de las Leyes commented bitterly that "American ambition is better concealed than the English objectives, but it is more dangerous. Since they acquired Louisiana, it seems that they do not know the extent of their own ambitions."³¹

The invasion of Spain in 1823 revealed to the United States for the first time the great differences that existed between Great Britain and the members of the Quadruple Alliance. British refusal of the goals of the Quadruple Alliance in the Spanish peninsula divided the Congress of Verona. During the formal discussion concerning French intervention in Spain, Arthur Wellesley, Duke of Wellington and Great Britain's representative at the Congress, further contributed to schism by disassociating Great Britain from the Quadruple Alliance. When hostilities broke out between France and Spain, Canning informed the French government that Great Britain would declare war if France decided to occupy permanently the Spanish peninsula, or extend her operations to the Western Hemisphere.

The British attitude toward the occupation of France and Great Britain's withdrawal of the Quadruple Alliance marked the effective end of the post-Napoleonic system of international congresses.³²

Great Britain's attitude toward France, the Quadruple Alliance, and Spanish America made a very favorable impression on the United States in spite of persistent rumors that she was planning to take Cuba as a set-off to the French attack on Spain.³³ Canning insistence that England would not take advantage of the Spanish distress to "trespass" on Cuban soil for the purpose of appropriating the island, served to convince the United States that a mutual self-denial not to take Cuba could be satisfactorily arranged. The United States, therefore, decided to settle its principal differences with Great Britain on the slave trade, commercial monopolies, and the balance of power in the Caribbean. In two interviews with Stratford Canning, the British Minister in the United States, Adams discussed the Anglo-American problem, the political situation in Spanish America, and the settlement of differences between the two countries.

Stratford Canning interpreted Adam's remarks as a suggestion for an alliance with Great Britain, but the Secretary of State promptly explained that the intention was "to compare their ideas and purposes together, with a view to the accomodation of great interests upon which they had heretofore differed." Concerning the Spanish West Indies, Adams told Stratford Canning that "it appeared, from the published diplomatic papers and from Mr. George Canning's speeches in Parliament, that France, at least was to make no conquests in this hemisphere."³⁴ At that time, the need to protect Cuba and Puerto Rico from foreign aggression was also discussed. Since the views expressed by the British government corresponded

with those expressed by Adams to the United States Minister in Spain, the Secretary of State suggested the establishment of the status quo in the Caribbean.³⁵

These conversations satisfied the British government, since they appeared to indicate that the United States had no intentions of occupying the Spanish possessions in the Caribbean. Robert Banks Jenkinson, Earl of Liverpool and British Prime Minister, told Richard Rush, the United States Minister in Great Britain, that his country would not attempt an invasion of Cuba but would not tolerate changes in the island's sovereignty.³⁶ "In this way," writes Samuel Flagg Bemis, "a sort of gentlemen's agreement sprang up between Monroe and Canning in 1823 that it would be best to let Cuba rest in the quiet possession of Spain."³⁷

Since a logical result of a status quo was the continuation of Spanish colonialism in the West Indies, the United States and Great Britain accepted as a collateral doctrine Spanish imperialism in the Caribbean and in Cuba and Puerto Rico. This policy remained in effect until the end of the nineteenth century, affected the national development of the Spanish West Indies, and prevented their independence from Spain. According to historian Trelles y Gobín, United States policy toward Cuba "solidified the chains of political control for another three-fourths of a century."³⁸

With peace and stability in the Caribbean, Monroe directed his Secretary of State to review the policy of the United States toward Spanish America. France, however, could not be convinced to accept the status quo in the Caribbean. Since one of the political goals of the Ultra-royalists was the establishment of Bourbon monarchies in the Western Hemisphere and possibly the seizure of Cuba and Puerto Rico, they did not accept the agreement between Adams and Canning. Agents continued

to arrive in the Caribbean borderlands to pursue the plans of the French government. On January 8, 1823, Todd wrote from Bogotá, Colombia, that "the United States would be invited to join in an American confederacy" to forestall French intentions in Spanish America. A day later, Todd informed the Secretary of State that more French agents were arriving in Cartagena on their way to Mexico, Peru, Chile, and Argentina. Todd further indicated that "these agents were dispatched for the purpose of examining into the actual state of affairs and it was possible that they soon will be fomenting intrigues to gain political and commercial advantages for their country."³⁹

Commencing in August, 1823, Canning approached the government of the United States concerning French activities in Spanish America, the reaffirmation of the status quo and the future of the new independent nations. Canning consulted Rush about the feasibility of a joint declaration against French designs in the Western Hemisphere.⁴⁰ At that time the Foreign Secretary reemphasized that Great Britain did not intend to appropriate Cuba or other portions of Spanish America. Canning also expressed his opposition to France's intentions, but since he could not be certain of that country's plans for Spanish America he suggested a joint declaration by the United States and Great Britain concerning European interests in America. He expected that the combined maritime power of the United States and Great Britain would be sufficient to deter French aggression in the Western Hemisphere.⁴¹

On August 20, 1823, the United States Minister to Great Britain received a formal proposal from the British government concerning a bilateral agreement. Rush, without committing his country to a particular course of action, informed James Monroe of Great Britain's proposition.

Receiving the dispatch on October 9, the President consulted with Jefferson and Madison as to their opinions on the subject. Secretary Adams recommended that instead of a multilateral declaration, the nation should independently warn Europe that any attempt to regain the Spanish colonies would be opposed by the United States. The result of Adam's recommendations was the proclamation of the Monroe Doctrine in December, 1823. Noncolonization and noninterference in Spanish American affairs became the two major objectives of American foreign policy in the Western Hemisphere.⁴²

Since the Monroe Doctrine was not a formal law and Congress took no action to make it an official policy, the message fell into disuse for several years. The Spanish American governments received Monroe's declaration with great enthusiasm. The correspondence of Carlos de Alvear, the United Provinces of Río de la Plata Minister to the United States, indicates that the presidential declaration attracted Spanish American sympathies in spite of the realization that "the geography of the New World suggested Monroe was indulging in fantasy."⁴³ In addition, the European powers never accepted the Monroe Doctrine and did not bind them under international law or by treaty commitments.

Cuba's political future played an important role in the Cabinet discussions that led to the Monroe Doctrine. On November 7, 1823, the President's advisors met to discuss the British proposal of a joint declaration against foreign intervention in Spanish America. Calhoun recommended that Rush be authorized to negotiate a joint declaration with the British government and to pledge American non-interference in Cuba. Adams, who was suspicious of Great Britain's motives, believed that a joint declaration would compromise the United States, especially in the

Caribbean. "Without entering now into the inquiry of the expediency of our annexing Texas or Cuba to our Union," wrote the Secretary of State, "we should at least keep ourselves free to act as emergencies may arise, and not to tie ourselves down to any principle which might immediately afterward be brought to bear against ourselves."

Directly connecting the Monroe Doctrine to the status quo, Adams explained to the President that "the answer to be given to Baron Tuyl, the instructions to Mr. Rush relative to the proposals of Mr. Canning, those to Mr. Middleton at St. Petersburg, and those to the minister who must be sent to France must all be parts of a combined system of policy and adapted to each other."⁴⁴ Adams ended by saying that all the presidential advisors agreed that a minister shall immediately be sent to France.

In October, 1823, Great Britain accomplished the principal purpose for which Canning sought an Anglo-American declaration. Since he was primarily concerned with French designs in Spanish America, Canning exerted pressure upon Prince Jules de Polignac, the French Minister in Great Britain, to compromise French policy toward Spanish America. When Great Britain informed the French government that she intended to maintain the status quo in the Caribbean, Polignac signed a memorandum on October 9, 1823, pledging to remain neutral in the Western Hemisphere. France also disclaimed any desire to appropriate any portion of the Spanish possessions and to support the status quo.⁴⁵

Two months after signing the compromise with France, Canning inquired about the official position of the United States concerning Cuba. The British Foreign Secretary requested from H. U. Addington, the British chargé d'affaires in the United States, to determine the position of the

United States on Cuba. Addington, showing little tact, discussed the request with the Secretary of State in the mist of the negotiations for an Anglo-American declaration. On December 1, 1823, he told Canning:

It appeared to me that a good opportunity was here offered for endeavouring to ascertain . . . something positive as to the plans and intentions of this Government with regard to Cuba I accordingly observed that the insular possessions, in consequence of the turn which affairs had taken in Spain, were to make an effort to free themselves from the dominion of the Mother Country would the United States in this case be disposed to recognize their independence also?

Mr. Adams replied without hesitation that this, if it happened, would furnish matter for future consideration. The United States desired not the possession of Cuba or Puerto Rico themselves, but neither could they see them with indifference in the hands of any other Power.⁴⁶

The following day President James Monroe made his now-famous declaration.

The Monroe Doctrine was a direct result of the struggle for supremacy in the West Indies and reflects a fear of European intervention in the Caribbean. "Speaking in practical terms," wrote Dexter Perkins, "the Monroe Doctrine was for the most part a Caribbean doctrine," It also was an attempt to formalize the status quo and the interests of the American traders who wanted a large share of the economic advantages made possible by the independence of Spanish America. The Monroe Doctrine was primarily directed against British and French intentions in the Caribbean in spite of the concern for the Holy Alliance and Russian expansion in the Pacific Northwest. As Perkins has written:

No legend is more persistent than the legend that the countries of the New World were in grave danger from Europe and that the Monroe Doctrine protected them from being overrun by the wicked nations of the Old World. A corollary to this legend is that, though the United States was unable effectively to prevent such action, any hostile move was prevented by the British domination of the seas. Neither of these things happens to be true.

The pronouncements that had been made by the Holy Alliance were little

more than declarations of principles. "I no more believe that the Holy Allies will restore the Spanish dominion upon the American continent," wrote Adams, "that the Chimborazo will sink beneath the oceans."⁴⁷

Neither could Russia have offered a serious challenge in the Pacific Northwest. Its naval forces were obsolete and extremely limited, even for the defense of the homeland. That nation was unable to provide adequate forces to protect her interests in North America. A single war vessel protected the North American settlements most of the time. Count Nesselrode, the Russian Secretary of State, hoped "that the English navy would soon put an end to all piratical raids" in North America since "the Russian flag seldom appeared in Latin American seas." By July 22, 1823, the two nations had already compromised themselves to resolve the northwestern territorial problem.⁴⁸

The concern of the United States with the Caribbean was an entirely different problem. Canning had agreed with the United States that it was necessary to contain French expansion in the West Indies if the status quo was to be satisfactorily maintained. Adams would have preferred a partnership between the United States and Great Britain which would have left intact their commercial relations in Spanish America, but his belief that Canning's offer of an agreement was directed "against the acquisition to the United States themselves of any part of the Spanish American possessions" prevented the issuance of a joint declaration. The United States also did not want to compromise the possibility that a free and independent Cuba may ask someday to join the American Union.⁴⁹

The United States also may have considered the threat of a South American confederation that had begun to materialize under the leadership of Colombia. The year preceding the promulgation of the Monroe Doctrine,

Spanish American leaders planned the establishment of a continental system to coordinate common defense, commercial and trade relations, and resolve disputes among the new republics. Since these nations had ideological and cultural similarities and common national interests, their leaders agreed in principle to the formation of an American confederation under the leadership of Simón Bolívar.

The Anglo-American rivalry in the Caribbean provided the Spanish American republics with minimum interference from the United States or Europe, a necessary condition for the growth of a political entente because it permitted them to adjust relationships without foreign intervention. Under the leadership of Colombia, Spanish American politicians periodically discussed mutual defense agreements, unified military commands, commercial regulations, and other national interests. While these nations did not have adequate naval forces to protect their territories, undoubtedly they had the largest organized armies in the Western Hemisphere. An alliance between Colombia, Peru, Argentina, Chile and Mexico, therefore, would have created a powerful block in the Western Hemisphere.

American commercial agents in Spanish America routinely informed the Secretary of State of these plans. On January 3, 1823, Todd wrote to Adams that there were important negotiations in progress among the nations of the continent. He stated that since they spoke a common language and had common customs and traditions "they might be considered allies." The following month, Todd wrote that Colombia had signed treaties with Peru and Chile and would soon conclude one with Buenos Aires (Argentina). "The United States may be compelled," wrote Todd, "to unite with them in a Continental Confederacy . . . to place its commerce on

the footing of a most favorable nation." On May 8, 1823, Todd informed Adams that the Colombian treaties with Peru and Chile were political in nature and constituted the bases of an Amphyctionic Council at Panama.⁵⁰

Adams' apprehension about the danger of a power block in the Western Hemisphere which could challenge American supremacy in the continent increased with Todd's messages. On May 17, 1823, he instructed Caesar A. Rodney, the United States Minister to Buenos Aires, to inquire about the continental system:

. . . a more extensive Confederation has been projected under the auspices of the new Government of the Republic of Colombia. In the last despatch received from Mr. Forbes he mentions the arrival at Buenos Aires of Mr. Joaquin Mosquera, senator from Colombia, in a mission . . . to engage the other Independent Governments of Spanish America to unite with Colombia in a Congress to be held at such point as might be agreed on, to settle a general system of American Policy For this purpose they had already signed a treaty with Peru. By letters of a previous date . . . it appears that the project is yet more extensive than Mr. Mosquera had made known to Mr. Forbes. It embraces North as well as South America. 51

The danger that Gran Colombia may become a world power capable of **limiting** American influence in the Caribbean disturbed the Secretary of State. Adams believed that Colombia was "undoubtedly destined to become one of the mightiest nations on earth." On the proposed Colombian confederacy, Adams intended that the United States "remain a neutral and tranquil but deeply attentive spectator." The Monroe Doctrine, therefore, provided the ideal diplomatic tool for accomplishing that purpose. It also served to restraint Spanish American political and territorial ambitions in the Caribbean.⁵²

The Caribbean problem between the United States and the European powers had been resolved by the completion of the French invasion of Spain. The status quo became a satisfactory political solution to the growing West Indian problem because it prevented collisions of interests

among the three maritime powers. The peace and stability that followed the international agreement resulted in increased trade for Great Britain. Since that nation did not have to be concerned with American and French threats in the West Indies, it dedicated her resources to international trade. As a result, its commerce with northern South America, Central America, and Mexico grew considerably.

English companies began to operate Colombian, Venezuelan, and Mexican mines and to establish commercial transportation facilities in cities and rural areas. British financial operations extended to government agencies, private investments, and manufacturing. Since restrictions on foreign commerce were abolished in most Spanish American republics, British manufactured goods flooded the local markets. Great Britain extended credits to Colombia, Mexico, and other Caribbean borderlands for purchasing her products. These nations also negotiated loans in London to rebuild their military and commercial fleets and to pay their war debts. As the United States Minister to Colombia wrote at that time:

English enterprises and intelligence has diffused itself into every quarter of the republic. Every day shows a new face belonging to some British house of trade, inundating themselves into the favors of the government. Propositions are now before this Congress by English companies for opening a canal across the Isthmus. 53

Since the United States did not have sufficient investment capital to expand her commercial operations to the emerging Spanish American republics, Great Britain seized upon the new trading opportunities. While the United States exported mostly agricultural products, Great Britain sold manufactured goods. Robert A. Humphreys writes that during the 1820s "British trade, British capital, and the British fleet were of more importance to Spanish America than were those of the United States."⁵⁴

The British West Indies became useful intermediary trading posts, supplies warehouses, and naval repair facilities for Great Britain's trade in the Western Hemisphere. These islands served as storage areas for the manufactured goods brought from England, and as distribution points for the Venezuelan, Colombian, and Panamanian traders. On September 25, 1825, Daniel Webster wrote to Henry Clay that the southern Caribbean had lost its commercial importance to the United States. "Connected with this in the policy of England," wrote Webster.

. . . . is the extension of the warehouse system. We have no right to complain about it I consider the whole system as a master stroke of commercial policy on the part of England, and as one that should awaken all our vigilance and exercise our wisdom Our whole trade with the British West Indies is not so important . . . when compared with that of Cuba and Hispaniola. 55

Webster concluded that the loss of the Spanish American markets to Great Britain had been the fault of the American government.

In the competition for prestige and political advantage in the Caribbean and Spanish America, however, the United States had gained some importance by her recognition of the independence of Mexico and Colombia. On the other hand, France's internal problems reduced French influence in the Caribbean borderlands. The ascension of Charles X to the throne resulted in political turmoil, radicalism, censorship of the press, and internal disturbances that prevented the growth of manufacturing and commercial vitality. Laws establishing noble primogeniture, medieval ceremonies, and royalist preferences curtailed individual initiative. Scaling down interest on government bonds reduced capital expenditures and France's role in international commerce. As a result, that nation could not participate in the expanding commercial trade of Spanish America.

The status quo in the Caribbean did not remain unchallenged for long. The sudden intervention of Mexico and Colombia in the political affairs of Cuba and Puerto Rico in 1825 and 1826 threatened to disrupt the stability of the area and disturb the interests of the United States and the European powers. Since 1824, Cuban and Puerto Rican revolutionaries had asked the Spanish American republics to intervene in the islands to secure their independence. Separatists believed that the only way to accomplish their goals was through 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. The United States and the European powers, however, could not tolerate this attempt by the Spanish American countries because it was contrary to their objectives in the West Indies and a direct threat to the status quo.

As Mexico and Colombia turned their attention to the liberation of Cuba and Puerto Rico, the United States took the initiative in seeking diplomatic intervention by the European powers to prevent such action. Secretary of State Henry Clay sent letters to the foreign ministers of Great Britain, France, and Russia, asking them to exercise their influence to convince the Spanish government to terminate the Spanish American conflict by recognizing the independence of the mainland colonies. By securing peace in the Western Hemisphere, the United States would then prevent Mexico and Colombia from attacking the West Indies. Clay, recognizing the need for peace during this critical time, wrote

. . . 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. 56

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. United States foreign policy, therefore, employed the strategy of attempting to convince Spain that only by making peace with her revolted colonies and recognizing their independence could she keep Cuba and Puerto Rico.⁵⁷ At the same time, the United States reemphasized to Great Britain and France the need to maintain the status quo in the Caribbean. Clay believed that if Mexico and Colombia intervened militarily in the Caribbean, Great Britain and France would feel compelled to join the conflict to protect their interests. According to Bemis, this would have meant "that in the maintenance of the Monroe Doctrine it would have been necessary to defend Spain's possessions and therefore to incur the enmity of the Latin American republics and possibly France or Great Britain."⁵⁸

On April 27, 1825, Alexander Everett, the United States Minister to Spain, was instructed to approach the Spanish government concerning the hostilities between Spain and the Spanish American republics and the security of the Caribbean. "The war upon the continent is, in fact, at an end," wrote Secretary Clay to Everett, "and the armies of the new states . . . have no longer employment on the continent. To what object, then, will the new republics direct their powerful and victorious armies?" Expressing the view that the United States desired peace to secure the status quo, the Secretary of State added:

It is not for the new republics that the President wishes you to urge upon Spain the expediency of concluding the war And, as the views 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 condition

of those islands [Cuba and Puerto Rico] 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. 59

Since "political change" must have included self-determination, it may 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 at that time. To Everett, the Secretary of State also 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."⁶⁰ 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,"⁶¹ 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."⁶²

Middleton, expressing a similar concern, 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 withdraw themselves from the yoke of Spanish domination, it was not so with regard to the islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico." Considering the possibility of slave insurrection on the islands, he also wrote: "The character of the population of these islands render extremely problematical their capacity to maintain independence. A premature declaration would probably result in the afflicting repetition of the disastrous scenes of St. Domingo."⁶³

At that time, newspapermen, naval officers, private citizens, and

even the President of the United States held similar views about the political independence of Cuba and Puerto Rico. Cuban historians have long contended that United States opposition frustrated the independence of their country and that American interference in the political affairs of the Caribbean was the principal reason why Cuba remained a colony of Spain until 1898. American, British, and French interference in the West Indies, in reality, prevented the independence of Cuba and Puerto Rico during the nineteenth century.⁶⁴

A continuation of Spanish rule in the Caribbean, supported by the United States and the European powers, fit perfectly the policy of the American and British governments toward the status quo. The constant apprehension concerning the transfer of Cuba and Puerto Rico to a government less powerful than Spain was lessened by the status quo. Spain, however, did not believe that the United States or Great Britain intended to protect Spanish interests in the Caribbean; she believed that they planned to annex Cuba and Puerto Rico.

As a result, the Spanish government refused to accept the recommendations of the United States concerning peace in the Western Hemisphere. 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.⁶⁵

Zea Bermúdez also told the United States Minister that if the United States was truly concerned over Cuba remaining under Spanish control, it should guarantee her ownership by a defense agreement that protected both American and Spanish interests in the West Indies.

On September 25, and again on October 20, 1825, Spain reemphasized

that view. Everett informed the Secretary of State that Zea Bermúdez had explicitly told him that Spain intended to remain in the West Indies and had no intentions of acknowledging the independence of the new states.⁶⁶ Spanish refusal signified the continuation of the struggle on the continent and the probability that it would extend to the Caribbean. To convince Spain of the necessity of terminating the conflict in America, the United States, therefore, appealed to Russia, France, and Great Britain. "True wisdom," Clay had written 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."⁶⁷

At that time Clay asked the European powers to convince the Spanish government of the futility of the Spanish American conflict. Clay's communications 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. Since France was an ally of Spain, Clay informed the United States Minister in Paris "to open the matter to the French government, in the hope that they [would] cooperate in the great object."⁶⁸

Even Prince Klemens Wensel Nepomuk Metternich, the Austrian Chancellor and post-Napoleonic leader of Europe, became worried about the international problem in the Caribbean. While the distribution of lands that had been taken from Napoleon, the restoration of "legitimate" rulers in Europe, and the encirclement of France had been the principal objectives of the Congress of Vienna, peace among the great European powers had been a special goal of Prince Metternich. Having suppressed the revolts against the Quadruple Alliance and the monarchical regimes of Europe,

he now directed his attention to the Caribbean. He supported the Spanish rule in Cuba and Puerto Rico because it represent legitimate government. As a result, he expressed his opposition to political changes in the area but indicated at the same time "that each of the Allied Powers should feel free to act according to its own interests."⁶⁹

Metternich disapproved a proposal for inviting the United States to send delegates to a congress convoked to consider the impact of the Spanish American revolutions and made it known "that the government of Austria did not acknowledge the rebellious Spanish American colonies as independent so long as the motherland had not taken that momentous step."⁷⁰ As a result, on March 17, 1825, Metternich declared his opposition to revolutions against Spanish rule in Cuba and Puerto Rico and stated that "such events would have an unhappy influence upon the fate of civilization."⁷¹ He urged Spain to reinforce her military forces in the Caribbean to demonstrate that she still was able to reconquer the Spanish American colonies.⁷² To the Spanish Foreign Minister, however, he recommended that Ferdinand VII endeavor "by the adoption of a mild and conciliatory policy, and even if necessary, by concessions and sacrifices," to forestall the expansion of the Caribbean problem.⁷²

While Prince Metternich urged Spain to reinforce her military positions in the Caribbean, Great Britain, wanting to preserve the status quo and the balance of power in that region, supported the United States recommendations toward peace and stability in Spanish America. Great Britain needed the cooperation of the United States and France to preserve the status quo, since she feared that the Spanish American republics might extend their operations to the British possessions in the West Indies.⁷³ Canning, supporting Clay's position, informed Viscount

Levenson-Gower Granville, the British Minister to France, that Great Britain had no interest in acquiring Cuba and Puerto Rico; only on preserving the status quo. To demonstrate to France that Great Britain desired peace in the Caribbean, Canning even indicated that his country would not support the independence of Cuba and Puerto Rico "by receiving any overture which might be made from any party in those islands desirous of throwing off the dominion of Spain."⁷⁴ The British Foreign Secretary also stated to Granville that he supported the continuing attachment of Cuba and Puerto Rico to Spain for the sake of that country and the general peace of the world.

At the end of 1825, France also accepted the views of the United States and Great Britain concerning the status quo in the Caribbean. On January 10, 1826, 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."⁷⁵ France, however, was more concerned with the British reaction than with the position of the United States concerning the West Indies. During 1825, a large French fleet had visited the Caribbean and prompted much speculation about the French government's intentions. The United States protested immediately to France and insisted that there were already an American squadron for the suppression of piracy and other beneficial service for all nations in the Caribbean; another fleet was not needed.⁷⁶ 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."⁷⁷

The threat of Mexico and Colombia and the visit of the French fleet disturbed the peaceful coexistence that had existed in the West Indies

after the Adams-Canning "gentlemen's agreements". During that time Great Britain distrusted France more than she distrusted the United States or the Spanish American republics. The presence of the French squadron in the West Indies disturbed the British government and drew protests from Canning. He became very angry when notified of France's presence in the Caribbean. Ange-Hyacinthe-Maxence, Baron de Damas and French Foreign Minister, replied to the British government that the Governor of Martinique had overstepped his authority and ordered French warships to convoy Spanish troops transports to the West Indies.⁷⁸

The Governor of Martinique had been authorized, should the occasion arise, to intervene with French military forces in Cuba and Puerto Rico in the event of an insurrection or if the separatists threatened the interests of Spain.⁷⁹ Great Britain believed that this action were a direct violation of the Polignac Memorandum and Chateaubriand's pledge in November, 1823, that France would not interfere with the revolutions in Spanish America or with the status quo in the Caribbean.

While the United States' major problem was the activities of Mexico and Colombia in the Caribbean, she was not less interested with those of France or Great Britain. According to Harold W. V. Temperley, Adams "was not the man who patiently would suffer this, and he prepared vigorously to resist, in case of a French attack on Cuba."⁸⁰ As a result, the United States and Great Britain began new negotiations concerning the threat of Mexico, Colombia, and France in the Caribbean. The result of these discussions was a British recommendation for a tripartite agreement. The United States also invoked the aid of Russia, assuming the Tzar, as leader of the Holy Alliance, would exercise a strong influence in the affair.

In spite of the fact that the United States and Great Britain previously had reached a mutual understanding concerning the balance of power in the Caribbean and both nations had disclaimed any aggressive designs against the Spanish colonies, the United States refused to accept the tripartite agreement because it would have reduced the chances of incorporating Cuba into the America Union. France declined the offer because of her commitment to support the objectives of the Holy Alliance.

Russia accepted the American determination to maintain the status quo in the Caribbean. The Tzar's concern was not the danger involved in an attack from Mexico and Colombia but rather the use of force by the United States to impose a military solution to a political problem.⁸¹ This belief prompted Count Karl Robert Nesselrode, the Russian Secretary of State, to inform 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."⁸²

By involving Russia in the political affairs of the Caribbean, however, the United States had committed a serious blunder. Canning had called this action "a desperate move."⁸³ 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 for recognition of the Spanish American republics. "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."⁸⁴

Russia could not have taken any steps to bring peace in Spanish

America without a previous understanding with her European 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," wrote Count Nesselrode to Ferdinand VII, "is that this issue should be discussed in his councils with the care and the impartiality that it deserves."⁸⁵ That was the extent of the Russian participation in the affairs of Spanish America.

The involvement of Russia to protect the status quo in the Caribbean, however, hardened Spain's determination to continue the struggle in Spanish America and maintain her control in the West Indies. This action was contrary to the original purposes of the United States. The Spanish government, which was seeking a respite to relieve the pressure of Great Britain, France, and the United States, saw in the Russian attitude 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 had 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, must know it is impossible for Spain to act without consulting her [Russia] in the question.

This view permitted the Spanish government to postpone making a decision indefinitely.

During that time, the Mexican government attempted to convince Great Britain that the real danger was the intentions of the United States in regard to Cuba. The United States, according to José Mariano de Michelena, the Mexican representative in Great Britain, was making preparations to invade the Spanish West Indies and suppress piracy. Since the action of the United States was contrary to Mexican plans, that nation

hoped that Great Britain would restrain the United States in the Caribbean. Canning told Michelena that Great Britain had been trying for many months to convince Spain that she should stop her belligerent activities in Spanish America and recognize the independence of the revolted colonies, but he had been unsuccessful. Since he did not consider the United States to be a threat to Cuba, Mexico was at liberty to act as she deemed it to be necessary for her national interests." The British Foreign Secretary also commented to Michelena that while he opposed the transfer of Cuba either to the United States or to France, he had no objections to a transfer to Mexico.⁸⁷ Canning did not wish to oppose openly the Spanish American plans in the Caribbean and thereby offend the new republics. When he finally recommended to Mexico and Colombia the abandonment of their project, he did it on the ground that the United States had already announced that she would interfere, and that her action would be bound to result in a military conflict.

Before taking any action in the Caribbean, Colombia wanted to know what the response of Great Britain and France would be to an extension of the Spanish American war to the Caribbean. Colombia was quite familiar with the interests of the European powers in that area, especially with those of Great Britain. "The Spaniards are no longer a danger to us," wrote Simón Bolívar on May 20, 1825, "but the English are very much so, as they, being omnipotent, are therefore to be feared,"⁸⁸ Colombia had previously begun conversations with France to determine that nation's response to an attack on the Caribbean. José M. Lanz, the Colombian representative in Paris, approached the French government "to obtain explanations" concerning the proposed expedition to the Caribbean. "If Colombia and her American allies," indicated Lanz, "should undertake to liberate

Cuba and Puerto Rico from the Spanish rule, would France take and active part against them?⁸⁹

In spite of the assurances given to Colombia and Mexico, neither the United States nor Great Britain or France welcomed the plans of Colombia and Mexico for an expedition to liberate Cuba and Puerto Rico. The European powers, however, by not opposing the Spanish American plans directly, were able to convince Colombia and Mexico that the United States, not they, was responsible for the Caribbean crisis. As it will be seen later, Great Britain continued to emphasize this scheme at the Panama Congress and during the subsequent deliberations of the Spanish American republics concerning the Caribbean. The belief of Colombia and Mexico that the United States was responsible for opposing their plans was intensified on December 20, 1825, when Clay requested that these countries "in the interest of peace" suspend the proposed military expedition to Cuba and Puerto Rico.⁹⁰

Four months earlier, on August 20, 1825, Count Nesselrode had submitted a note to the United States expressing the appreciation of the Russian government for the interests of the United States in protecting the Spanish Caribbean. 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 Puerto Rico."⁹¹ The United States hastened to comply with the wished of the Russian government. Wrongly assuming that Russia intended to urge Spain to seek a compromise in the Western Hemisphere, the Secretary of State recommended to Colombia and Mexico a suspension of every hostile action against Cuba and Puerto Rico.

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,"⁹² had appealed to Great Britain, France, and Russia -- Old World Powers -- to employ their moral and diplomatic efforts to maintain the status quo in the Caribbean.⁹³ By inviting the interference of European powers in the political affairs of the Caribbean, the United States had violated her own "noninterference principle" enunciated barely two years before in the Monroe Doctrine. Despite Monroe's proclamation, the United States asked 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 Mexico and Colombia from helping Cuba and Puerto Rico achieve independence."⁹⁴

FOOTNOTES

¹Samuel F. Bemis, A Diplomatic History of the United States (New York, 1942), p. 372.

²Ibid.

³Richard Rush, United States Minister to Great Britain, to John Quincy Adams, Secretary of State, May 6, 1822, Department of State, Diplomatic Despatches from Great Britain, Vol. 27, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C. The warehouse system, instituted by Great Britain at the beginning of the nineteenth century, utilized the Lesser Antilles as transfer points for British manufactured goods. Great Britain, however, did not allow the purchase of weapons in her colonies nor in the nearby colonies of Holland, France, Denmark, and Sweden. Vicente Lecuna, Crónica razonada de las guerras de Bolívar, Vol. 1 (New York, 1950), p. 90. Following the profitable example of Great Britain, Holland converted Curacao to "the headquarters of the Spaniards, where they could purchase everything required to carry on the war and to furnish the fortresses and places with provisions and ammunitions." See H. L. V. Ducoudray Holstein, Memoirs of Simón Bolívar, President Liberator of the Republic of Colombia; and his principal generals, Comprising a Secret History of the Revolution and the Events Which Preceded It from 1807 to the Present Time, Vol. 2 (London, 1830), pp. 181-182.

⁴William R. Craven, Jr. "The Risk of the Monroe Doctrine, 1823-1824," Hispanic American Historical Review, 7 (1927), pp. 320-321.

⁵Message of James Monroe relative to the Spanish American Provinces," March 8, 1822, American State Papers, Foreign Relations, Vol. 4, pp. 819, 845-846.

⁶Rush to Adams, June 10, 1822, Department of State, Diplomatic Despatches from Great Britain, Vol. 27, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁷Albert Gallatin, United States Minister to France, to John Quincy Adams, April 26, 1822, Vol. 21, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁸"Message to Congress concerning conditions of the Navy and its operations," December 3, 1822, American State Papers, Naval Affairs, Vol. 1, p. 804.

⁹The actions of several officers assigned to the West Indian squadron damaged substantially the early relations between the United States and Mexico. The participation of these officers in illegal activities for personal profit offended the Mexican leaders. During the Naval Court of Inquiry and subsequent investigations and Court-Martial of Commodore

David Porter, the highest ranking naval officer of the West Indies Squadron, it was disclosed that warship commanders, including Porter himself, routinely carried large amounts of specie to American or Spanish ports, the property of both American traders and Spanish citizens. During the last years of conflict, many wealthy Spaniards emigrated from Mexico to escape revolutionary wrath. They disposed of their financial assets by sending them out of the country. Many American warships were utilized for this purpose, their commanders charging the Spaniards between 2 and 10 percent of the value or amount shipped to the United States or Cuba. The following remarks made during the Court Martial give an example of the practice:

Question: While under the command of Captain Porter, did you carry any money on freight?

Answer: I did. I took on board at Tampico and Vera Cruz, altogether about \$130,000 or \$140,000. The greater part was landed at the Havana; the residue, about \$18,000 was sent home from Havana.

Question: What premium or freight was received and how was it appropriated?

Answer: It was one-or two percent. One third of the net was paid to the Commodore, the rest retained by me.

Statement of Thomas Randall, Confidential Agent in Cuba:

Most of the vessels arriving at Havana from the ports in the Bay of Mexico had specie on board on freight. Captain Gallagher, of the Shark, reported to me that he had \$127,000 to be delivered at Havana and in the United States.

Commodore Porter even asked the Secretary of the Navy for permission to take money directly to Spain in an American warship:

To the Honorable Secretary of the Navy:

Application has been made to me by the American consul, to take one million dollars from Vera Cruz to Cadiz, in October, and as we have but few opportunities in this way, to make a little for ourselves, may I ask the indulgence of the Department in this respect? The request was disapproved.

Niles' Weekly Register, September 20, 1823, reported that "when speaking of our naval officers and money I am naturally led to notice many unpleasant reports that I have heard, as if showing that national vessels were sometimes employed for the benefit of private persons and particular speculation and adventures, not connected with the general interest of the commerce of the United States. I must say that the multitude of courts of inquiry, showing frequent charges of fraud and embezzlement. . . have made many to fear that our officers have been much compromised by the desire of making money or to gratify revengeful feelings. . . (The editor)."

Commodore Porter was found guilty and suspended from service for six months. He resigned his commission and with ten fellow officers joined the Mexican Navy in 1826 and began to cruise the Caribbean again, this time against the Spaniards.

The activities of the American naval officers during the Spanish American wars angered the Mexican government, who closed Veracruz to United States warships for some time. Porter's behavior, however, was not an isolated case. Six months earlier, another naval senior commander, Commodore Charles Steward, received a court-martial sentence for transporting weapons to the royalist forces in Peru. See "Court-Martial proceedings of Captain David Porter, United States Navy," in American State Papers, Naval Affairs, Vol. 2; David Porter, An Exposition of the Facts and Circumstances Which Justified the Expedition of Foxardo /si/ and the Consequences Thereof, Together with the Proceedings of the Court of Inquiry Thereon, Held by Order of the Hon. Secretary of the Navy (Washington, 1825). This pamphlet was an attempt to embarrass the Administration since Porter was a friend of General Andrew Jackson, a political enemy of the President. Fifty years later, David D. Porter, a son of the naval officer, attempted to exonerate him by publishing his memoirs. See David D. Porter, Memoir of Commodore David Porter of the U. S. Navy (Albany, 1875). The relationship between the activities of the U. S. Navy in the Caribbean and the Spanish American movement for independence has never been investigated.

¹⁰ Charles S. Todd, Confidential Agent of the United States to Colombia, to J. M. McPherson, United States Consul in Cartagena, August 20 and September 19, 1822, Department of State, Consular Post Records, Cartagena, Record Group 84, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

¹¹ Todd to McPherson, December 7, 1823, in *ibid.*

¹² Charles Francis Adams, ed., Memoirs of John Quincy Adams, Vol. 6 (Philadelphia, 1875), pp. 69-75.

¹³ George Canning, British Foreign Secretary, to Stratford Canning, British Minister in the United States, October 11, 1822, in Harold W. V. Temperley, "The Later Policy of George Canning," American Historical Review, 11 (1906), p. 789, citing Doc. 165, America, Calendar of State Papers, Foreign Office, London.

¹⁴ Temperley, p. 790.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Canning Memorandum for the Cabinet, November 15, 1822," in E. J. Stapleton, ed., Some Official Correspondence of George Canning, Vol. 1 (London, 1909), pp. 48-63. Also published in Charles K. Webster, ed., Britain and the Independence of Latin America, Vol. 2 (New York, 1970), pp. 393-394.

¹⁸ John J. Appleton, Chargé d'Affaires ad interim of the United States to John Quincy Adams, March 20, 1823, Department of State, Diplomatic Despatches from Spain, Vol. 22, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

¹⁹Harold W. V. Temperley, The Foreign Policy of Canning, 1822-1827 (Hamden, 1966), p. 169.

²⁰Adams, Memoirs, Vol. 6, p. 138.

²¹John Quincy Adams to Hugh Nelson, United States Minister to Spain, April 28, 1823, Department of State, Diplomatic Instructions, Vol. 9, pp. 186-188, National Archives, Washington, D. C. The instructions to Nelson are, perhaps, the most important declaration made by John Quincy Adams concerning United States foreign policy toward the Caribbean. William Benton, in Annals of America, Vol. 5 (Chicago, 1968), p. 57, refers to them as "John Quincy Adams: The Caribbean and Our National Interest." It is interesting to note that this important declaration of policy was not utilized either by William R. Manning or by Samuel Flagg Bemis in their classical works The Independence of the Latin American Countries (Manning) and John Quincy Adams and the Foundations of American Foreign Policy (Bemis). Manning extracted the part of the instructions that referred to piratical depredations but ignored Adam's declaration concerning the Caribbean. As a source reference, Manning cited American State Papers, Foreign Relations, Vol. 5, p. 408, instead of using the copy of the document that is located in the National Archives. The extract of Adams message that is recorded in the American State Papers does not contain a reference to the subject under discussion. Bemis referred to the document briefly in connection with the No-Transfer Principle, but failed to discuss it in detail. See William R. Manning, Diplomatic Correspondence Concerning the Independence of the Latin-American Nations, Vol. 1 (New York, 1925), pp. 166-185; Samuel Flagg Bemis, John Quincy Adams and the Foundations of American Foreign Policy (New York, 1949), p. 373; American State Papers, Foreign Relations, Vol. 5 (Washington, D. C., 1858), pp. 408-414.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Graham H. Stuart, Latin American and the United States (New York, 1922), p. 182.

²⁶Adams to Thomas Randall, Special Agent of the United States in Cuba, April 29, 1823, Department of State, Despatches to U. S. Consuls, Vol. 2, pp. 283-284, National Archives, Washington, D. C. Part of the instructions read:

You will be mindful 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; or to the assumption by the Inhabitants of an Independent Government. If in your intercourse you will say . . . that the first wish of the Government was for the continuance of Cuba in its political connection with Spain. Further, you will collect and transmit to this department the most correct information that you can obtain respecting the real state of the country.

Another "consular commercial agent," Judah Lord, had been sent to Puerto Rico since December 5, 1820, to report the conditions in that colony. "The island," wrote Lord to Adams, "would be in a few years the most valuable of the West Indies as well for its productions as its trade." In another message he wrote: "It would add much to the respectability of the American character if one of our frigates would occasionally visit this Island. . . . They never had a good opinion of the Americans and nothing but the idea of strength would probably give a different opinion to this ignorant and superstitious people." Several months later, someone attempted to assassinate Lord. As a result he left the island on the next vessel en route to the United States without even notifying the State Department. See Judah Lord to John Quincy Adams, January 13, 1821, May 18, 1822, and November 12, 1823, Department of State, Consular Letters, San Juan, Puerto Rico, Vol. 1, National Archives, Washington, D. C. In Colombia, Colonel Charles S. Todd, another "commercial agent" intruded in the internal affairs of that nation and made derogatory remarks about its Vice-president. He was informed to leave the country "at the earliest practicable date." These so-called consular commercial agents damaged considerable United States-Spanish American relations as result of their unprofessional conduct.

²⁷ Joel R. 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 (Philadelphia, 1824), pp. 2-9.

²⁸ U. S. Congress, House, A Digest of International Law by John Bassett Moore, Vol. 7, 56th Cong., 2d Sess., 1906 (Washington, D. C.; 1906), p. 380.

²⁹ Todd to John Quincy Adams, January 8, 1823, Department of State, Consular Post Records, American Legation, Colombia, Vol. C8.2, Record Group 84, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

³⁰ Todd to John Quincy Adams, April 17, 1823, in *ibid.*

³¹ El Amigo de las Leyes, Veracruz(?), July 3, 1823.

³² One of the principal concerns of United States foreign policy was an attack on the Western Hemisphere by the "Holy Alliance" after the Congress of Verona. Supposedly, a secret treaty had been signed by the continental powers concerning military operations in the New World. The acceptance of this treaty as genuine influenced Monroe and Adams into proclaiming the Monroe Doctrine. Diplomatic historians throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, among them, F. J. Snow, J. H. Latané, J. B. Moore, F. J. Turner, G. W. Crickfield, C. R. Fish, A. B. Hart, Charles A. and Mary B. Beard, and many others, also accepted it as genuine. It was not until 1935 that historians recognized it as a newspaper forgery. See Theodore R. Schellenberg, "The Secret Treaty of Verona, a Newspaper Forgery," Journal of Modern History, 7 (1935), pp. 180-191.

- 33 Webster, Vol. 1, p. 44.
- 34 Adams, Memoirs, Vol. 6, p. 152; Webster, Vol. 2, Doc. 592, pp. 495-496; Bemis, John Quincy Adams, pp. 373-374.
- 35 John Quincy Adams to William Ellery Channing, July 31, 1837, and August 11, 1837, New England Quarterly, 5 (1932), pp. 594-600; Rush to Adams, March 10, 1823, Department of State, Diplomatic Despatches from Great Britain, Vol. 18, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.
- 36 Rush to Adams, March 10, 1823, in *ibid.*
- 37 Bemis, John Quincy Adams, p. 374.
- 38 Carlos M. Trelles y Govín, "Estudio de la bibliografía cubana sobre la doctrina de Monroe," Hispanic American Historical Review, V, (1922), p. 102.
- 39 Todd to Adams, January 8 and 9, 1823, Department of State, Consular Post Records, American Legation, Colombia, Vol. C8.2, Record Group 84, National Archives, Washington, D. C.
- 40 Rush to Adams, August 19, 1823, Department of State, Diplomatic Despatches from Great Britain, Vol. 29, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.
- 41 *Ibid.* See also Rush to Adams, August 23, 1823, and August 28, 1823, in *ibid.*
- 42 George Canning to Rush, August 20, 1823, enclosed in Rush to Adams, August 23, 1823, in *ibid.*
- 43 Thomas B. Davis, Jr., "Carlos de Alvear and James Monroe: New Light on the Origin of the Monroe Doctrine," Hispanic American Historical Review, 23 (1943), pp. 632-649; Laura Bornholdt, "The Abbe de Pradt and the Monroe Doctrine," Hispanic American Historical Review, 24 (1944), pp. 201-221; Dexter Perkins, The United States and Latin America (Baton Rouge, 1961), p. 6; Dexter Perkins, "Europe, Spanish America, and the Monroe Doctrine," American Historical Review, 27 (1922), pp. 207-218.
- 44 Adams, Memoirs of John Quincy Adams, Vol. 6, pp. 177-181.
- 45 "Memorandum of a Conference between the Prince of Polignac, French Ambassador to Great Britain and Mr. Canning, October 8-12, 1823," in Rush to Adams, December 27, 1823, Department of State, Diplomatic Despatches from Great Britain, Vol. 29, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C. Early in 1823, Canning attempted to obtain from France a promise barring intervention in the Caribbean, but France refused to make a pledge. Historians disagree about the extent of French intentions in the Caribbean. Harold W. V. Temperley believes that it was very serious; Perkins writes that there was no apparent peril. See Harold W. V. Temperley, "French Designs on Spanish America

in 1820-1825," English Historical Review, 40 (1825), pp. 34-53; Dexter Perkins, The Monroe Doctrine (Cambridge, Mass., 1927), p. 73.

⁴⁶H. U. Addington, British Chargé de Affaires, to George Canning, December 1, 1823, Vol. 177, Doc. 5/177, No. 21, Foreign Office, Public Records Office, Chancery Lane, London. See also Doc. 22 and 25 in *ibid.* Microfilm in the Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.

⁴⁷Perkins, The United States and Latin America, p. 18; Thomas H. Reynolds, Economic Aspects of the Monroe Doctrine (Nashville, 1938), p. 17; Arthur P. Whitaker, The United States and the Independence of Latin America, 1800-1830 (New York, 1962), pp. 492-506; Armin Rappaport, ed., The Monroe Doctrine (New York, 1964), pp. 34-39; Arthur P. Whitaker, "El concepto de la America Latina en la mentalidad norteamericana, 1815-1823," Revista de la Universidad Católica del Peru, Lima, Peru, 9 (1941), pp. 296-308; Perkins, United States and Latin America, p. 10; Adams, Memoirs, Vol. 6, p. 186. The Chimborazo is a volcanic peak in Ecuador, 20,561 feet above sea level.

⁴⁸William S. Robertson, "Russia and the Emancipation of Spanish America, 1816-1826," Hispanic American Historical Review, 21 (1941), p. 211; Adams, Memoirs, Vol. 7, p. 163; U. S. Congress, Senate, Senate Document No. 162, 58th Cong., 2d Sess., 1868-1869, Washington, D. C. pp. 52-56. At that time, Baron Tuyll van Serrooskerken, Russian Minister in the United States informed Adams "that although there would be difficulties in the negotiations [on the Pacific Northwest], he did not foresee that they would be insurmountable."

⁴⁹Jefferson to Monroe, October 24, 1823, quoted in Bemis, John Quincy Adams, p. 383. In 1957 Bradford Perkins published for the first time a dispatch from H. U. Addington, the British Chargé de Affaires, to Canning, dated November 3, 1823, which he found in England at the time that the Henry U. Addington's papers were deposited in the Devon County Record Office. According to Perkins, this document had never been seen by diplomatic historians before in spite of the fact that it reflects Adams' views toward England prior to the enunciation of the Monroe Doctrine. The full discussion between Adams and Addington reported in this dispatch was suppressed by Canning and never published. The report was considered by the British Foreign Secretary to be too confidential to remain in the archives of the Foreign Office and was therefore removed. Addington was even instructed to remove this document from the files of the Legation. As a result, the discussion of November 3, 1823, remained concealed until 1957.

The dispatch discloses that prior to the November 7 Cabinet meeting, which decided Monroe's declaration, Adams contemplated "a combined effort" with Great Britain. Adams spoke of United States and England as "the Mother and the daughter" and felt it necessary that they "stand forward to make a broad declaration of their principles in the face of the world." Addington's dispatch also indicates that the Secretary of State did not believe in the danger of the Holy Alliance. He ridiculed the idea of intervention sarcastically. The intervention of the Holy Alliance was considered by Adams to be "too absurd to be entertained for a moment."

The conversations for a joint declaration appear to have been held

on November 1, six days prior to the Cabinet meeting. On November 7th the Cabinet met to discuss the proposal of George Canning to issue a joint declaration against foreign intervention in Spanish America. Adams, expressing a view different from that of November 1, manifested considerable skepticism about Canning's friendly intentions and proposed a unilateral declaration by the United States. Why the sudden change? His Memoirs contain no entry from September 11 to November 7, 1823. His private Diary is also blank for this period, therefore, no record exists of his views during that time. It is known, however, that he had a discussion with the President on November 5th. While the subject discussed was related to Rush dispatches, the details are also unknown. The President, however, commented on the 17th that he believed Canning had changed his purpose, to which Adams replied that he believed the object of Britain's plans "was to obtain by a sudden movement a premature commitment of the American government against any transfer of the island of Cuba to France, or the acquisition of it by ourselves." That is, England, according to Adams, desired assurances on the status quo. This view is reinforced on the 18th by Addington's request that the United States declare its intentions concerning the independence of Cuba. See Bradford Perkins, "Document: The Suppressed Dispatch of H. U. Addington, Washington, November 3, 1823," Hispanic American Historical Review, 37 (1957), pp. 480-485; Bradford Perkins, Castlereagh and Adams: England and the United States, 1812-1823 (Los Angeles, 1964), pp. 326-347; Richard Rush to Adams, October 10, 1823, Department of State, Vol. 29, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.; Adams, Memoirs, Vol. 6, pp. 177-193. Based on the study of Addington's dispatch, which clearly indicates the probability of a joint declaration, and the fact that Monroe considered a reproof to France on his original draft, Whitaker's view that France was the principal concern of Monroe is probably correct.

⁵⁰ Todd to Adams, January 3, 1823, Department of State, Consular Post Records, Despatches and Notes Sent, August 1820 to November 1823, American Legation, Colombia, Vol. C8.2, Record Group 84, National Archives, Washington, D. C.; Todd to Adams, March 27, 1823, in *ibid.*; Todd to Adams, May 8, 1823, Department of State, Diplomatic Despatches from Colombia, Vol. 2, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C. Consular Records were maintained by the Consular Foreign Posts until they were transferred to the National Archives in 1920-1940. Since they contain the original drafts of the official despatches, to include sections that were deleted from the final document, they are more reliable than the copies that were received by the Secretary of State. Correspondence of private citizens, reports of confidential agents, and other valuable information are also included in these records. Manuscripts, however, are in poor condition and not catalogued. In spite of that, they are valuable to the historian for their marginal notes, supporting documents, and other diplomatic material.

⁵¹ Adams to Caesar A. Rodney, United States Minister to Buenos Aires, May 17, 1823, Department of State, Diplomatic Instructions, Vol. 9, p. 252, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁵² Adams to Richard C. Anderson, United States Minister to Colombia, May 27, 1823, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁵³Anderson to Adams, September 4, 1824, Department of State, Diplomatic Despatches from Colombia, Vol. 3, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁵⁴Robert A. Humphreys, ed., British Consular Reports on the Trade and Politics of Latin America, 1824-1826, (London, 1940), p. xii.

⁵⁵Daniel Webster to Henry Clay, May 9, 1825, Department of State, Miscellaneous Letters, M179, R63, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁵⁶Henry Clay, Secretary of State, to Alexander H. Everett, United States Minister to Spain, Department of State, Diplomatic Instructions, Vol. 11, pp. 21-23, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁵⁷ibid.

⁵⁸Samuel Flagg Bemis, A Diplomatic History of the United States (New York 1942), p. 135.

⁵⁹Clay to Everett, April 27, 1825, Department of State, Diplomatic Instructions, Vol. 10, pp. 297-305, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁶⁰ibid.

⁶¹Clay to Henry Middleton, United States Minister to Russia, May 10, 1825, Department of State, Diplomatic Instructions, Vol. 10, pp. 331-338, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³Middleton to Count Karl Roberts Nesselrode, Russian Secretary of State, July 2, 1825, American State Papers, Foreign Relations, Vol. 5, p. 917; British and Foreign State Papers, Vol. 13, p. 490. According to Manning, this message was enclosed with Middleton to Clay, July 15, 1825, Diplomatic Despatches from Russia. It could not be found in the National Archives.

⁶⁴Philip S. Foner, A History of Cuba and Its Relations with the United States, Vol. 1 (New York, 1963), p. 166; Ramiro Guerra y Sánchez, En el camino de la independencia (La Habana, 1930), pp. 27-39.

⁶⁵Francisco de Zea Bermúdez to Hugh Nelson, United States Minister to Spain, July 13, 1825, U. S. Congress, Senate, 32d Cong., 1st Sess., 1842-1843, Executive Document No. 12, Washington, D. C., 1843, pp. 14-16.

⁶⁶Everett to Clay, October 20, 1825, Department of State, Diplomatic Despatches from Spain, Vol. 25, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁶⁷Clay to Everett, April 27, 1825, Department of State, Diplomatic Instructions, Vol. 10, pp. 297-305, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁶⁸Clay to James Brown, United States Minister to France, May 13, 1825, Department of State, Diplomatic Instructions, Vol. 10, p. 356, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁶⁹William Spemce Robertson, "Metternich's Attitude Toward Revolutions in Latin America," The Hispanic American Historical Review, 21 (1941), pp. 541-546.

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷¹Sir Henry Wellesley to George Canning, December 20, 1823, Vol. 177, Doc. 7/179, Foreign Office Archives, Public Records Office, Chancery Lane, London.

⁷²ibid. For a broad interpretation of Metternich's theories concerning the principle of legitimacy in international relations see Henry A. Kissinger, A World Restored: Metternich, Castlereagh and the Problems of Peace, 1812-1822 (New York, 1957), pp. 1-3, 137, 204.

⁷³Joseph B. Lockey, Pan Americanism, Its Beginnings (New York, 1926), p. 356.

⁷⁴Canning to Viscount Leveson-Gower Granville, British Minister to France, July 12, 1825, Doc. 411, in Webster, Vol. 2, pp. 184-185. For a detailed analysis of British foreign policy concerning the Caribbean see Harold W. V. Temperley, "The Later American Policy of George Canning," American Historical Review, 11 (1906), pp. 779-797.

⁷⁵James Brown, United States Minister to France, to Clay, January 10, 1826, Department of State, Diplomatic Despatches from France, Vol. 23, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁷⁶Clay to Brown, October 25, 1825, Department of State, Diplomatic Instructions, Vol. 10, pp. 404-407, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁷⁷Ibid.

⁷⁸Harold W. V. Temperley, The Foreign Policy of Canning, 1822-1827 (Hamden, 1966), p. 170.

⁷⁹Harold W. V. Temperley, "The Instructions to Donzelot, Governor of Martinique, December 17, 1823," English Historical Review, 41 (1926), pp. 585-587; Cayetano Coll y Toste, Boletín Histórico de Puerto Rico, Vol. 3 (San Juan, 1916), p. 231.

⁸⁰Temperley, Foreign Policy of Canning, p. 170; "Later American Policy of George Canning," American Historical Review, p. 791.

⁸¹Nesselrode to Tuyl, September 4, 1825, and October 4, 1825, Dépeche chiffrée du Comte de Nesselrode, St. Pétersbourg," reproduced in "Documents: Correspondence of the Russian Ministers in Washington, 1818-1825," American Historical Review, 18, Nos. 2 and 3 (January and April, 1913) pp. 561-562. Nesselrode statement reads: "Dans ses entrevues avec vous, Mr. Adams vous a déclaré que si les isles de Cuba et de Porto-Rico devoient appartenir à une Puissance Américaine, les Etats Unis se verroient forcés d'y établir leur autorité."

⁸²ibid.

⁸³Rufus King, United States Minister to Great Britain, to Clay, August 9, 1825, Department of State, Diplomatic Despatches from Great Britain, Vol. 32, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

⁸⁴George Canning to Rufus King, August 7, 1825, Vol. 177, Doc. 115/45, Foreign Office Archives, Public Records Office, Chancery Lane, London. Printed in William R. Manning, Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States Concerning the Independence of the Latin American Nations Vol. 3 (New York, 1925), pp. 1557-1560. Microfilm in the Library of Congress.

⁸⁵Robertson, "Russia and the Emancipation of Spanish America," p. 219.

⁸⁶Frederick Lamb, British Minister to Spain, to Canning, February 2, 1826, Doc. 571, in Webster, Vol. 2, p. 460.

⁸⁷José Mariano Michelena, Mexican Diplomatic Agent, to the Mexican Foreign Relations Secretary, June 17, 1825, Doc. HD 18.6-4463 (2566), Juan E. Hernández y Dávalos Manuscript Collection, Latin American Collection, The University of Texas Library, Austin, Texas.

⁸⁸Simón Bolívar to General Francisco de Paula Santander, Vice President of the Republic of Colombia, May 20, 1825, in Vicente Lecuna, Cartas del Libertador, Vol. 11 (New York, 1948), p. 499.

⁸⁹Quoted in William S. Robertson, France and Latin American Independence (Baltimore, 1939), p. 349.

⁹⁰Henry Clay to José María Salazar, Colombian Minister to the United States, December 20, 1825, Department of State, Notes to Foreign Legations, Vol. 3, pp. 245-246, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.; Clay to Pablo Obregón, Mexican Minister to the United States, December 20, 1825 in *ibid.*

⁹¹Count Nesselrode, Russian Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to Henry Middleton, August 20, 1825, enclosed with Middleton to Clay, August 27/September 8, 1825, Department of State, Diplomatic Despatches from Russia, Vol. 10, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C. In 1899 the French journal La Nouvelle Revue claimed unpublished diplomatic documents from 1823 indicate there were secret negotiations between the United States and Spain concerning Cuba. According to the journal "le diplomate américain [Nelson] devait tendre à obtenir du

gouvernement de Madrid au moins la promesse formelle que Cuba ne serait jamais cédée à une puissance autre que l'Amérique." See Authur de Ganniers, "Les négociations secrètes á Cuba," La Nouvelle Revue, Paris, France, 116 (Janvier-Février, 1899), p. 52.

⁹²Lester D. Langley, The Cuban Policy of the United States (New York, 1968), p. 16.

⁹³Ibid.

⁹⁴Foner, Vol. 1, p. 158. The status quo protected the interests of Spain in the West Indies and helped maintain Spanish colonialism in the Caribbean until the last decade of the nineteenth century. While the Monroe Doctrine, enforced by the strong views of Great Britain, gave a 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

THE SPANISH AMERICAN NATIONS AND THE STATUS QUO IN THE CARIBBEAN

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 Mexico.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 also been active in the Caribbean since the beginning of the Spanish American wars for independence. Because of their geographical isolation, the repressive measures taken by the Spanish colonial officials, the exile of the rebel leaders, and the conflicts between liberals, conservatives, and separatists, Cuba and Puerto Rico had not been able to achieve their independence. A violent revolutionary uprising in the Spanish West Indies had far less chance of success than on the mainland because Cuba and Puerto Rico were more strongly governed than the rest of the colonies as a result of their role in the military defense system of Spain.³

During the Spanish American wars for independence, other problems emerged in the Caribbean colonies. Some revolutionary ideas did not

appeal to the wealthy Cuban creoles and plantation owners who depended on slavery as their source of labor. In addition, many Cubans believed that the black slaves would revolt after an independence as they had done in Haiti. Puerto Ricans, on the other hand, did not concern themselves with a slave insurrection since the white population vastly outnumbered the blacks, and slavery was a limited institution. The Puerto Rican agrarian economy did not support large number of slaves, and free labor predominated during the Spanish regime.

In spite of the opposition of the slaveowners and the wealthy creoles, the great changes that occurred on the mainland stirred in the islands a spirit of revolution and desire for political and economic change. No doubt the underlying antagonism against Spain and the use of the islands as military strongholds served to harden separatism and the motivation for self-government. In spite of the fact that the separatists received help and encouragement from Venezuela and Mexico, they could not succeed, and many Cuban and Puerto Rican revolutionaries emigrated to South America to join Bolívar's revolutionary armies.

Simón Bolívar, under whose leadership most South America became independent, had been unable to devote much attention to the struggle for liberty in the Caribbean; the wars of independence on the mainland consumed all of his available resources. Even after the battle of Ayacucho, Mexico and Colombia were not yet able to provide the necessary military assistance for the independence of Cuba and Puerto Rico. When a group of Cuban separatists arrived in Colombia in 1823 to seek help for the liberation of their country, Colombian leaders expressed great sympathy for the Cuban cause but made clear to them that the liberation of Peru took precedence over the Caribbean. Bolívar promised, however,

"to look into the matter" as soon as the royalists were defeated.⁴

The interest of Bolivar in Caribbean independence had begun eight years before while the South American leader was still in Jamaica organizing the revolutionary struggle. On September 15, 1815, in his famous letter, An Answer of a Southern American to a Gentleman of Jamaica, he had expressed his interest in the political future of Cuba and Puerto Rico:

The islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico, 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? 5

This declaration had served to raise the morale and expectations of the separatists. After that date, Bolivar emerged, in their view, as the principal supporter of Cuban and Puerto Rican independence.

Although the Spanish American republics had been unable to assist the Caribbean revolutionaries with sufficient military aid, their agents periodically visited Cuba and Puerto Rico, and corsairs and privateers, operating from South and Central American ports, raided Spanish installations and coastal settlements. Venezuela increased these naval activities after the fall of Cartagena and continued them throughout the conflict.⁶

The Spanish retaliated in the spring of 1822, after the United States recognized the new republics. General Francisco Morales, the commander-in-chief of the royalist forces, established a blockade of the Venezuelan coast with the help of Spanish privateers from Puerto Rico. The Spanish vessels raided neutral ships going to Venezuela and Colombia. Their activities became so harmful to the West Indian trade that both the United States and Great Britain sent naval forces to protect

their commerce and suppress the privateers. The American press urged the government to use force against the Spaniards and take Cuba and Puerto Rico; President Monroe contemplated a naval blockade of Puerto Rican coastal waters.⁷

In spite of General Morales' measures, Colombia continued to send privateers to raid the West Indies. Under the command of Admiral Luis Brión, government vessels and licensed privateers operated throughout the Florida Keys and the Gulf of Mexico. To increase their efficiency Colombia negotiated loans in Great Britain and France for the purchase of warships, the recruitment of seamen, and the training of crews. By June, 1823, Colombia had sufficiently increased her naval forces to defeat the Spanish blockade and consider an attack on the West Indies. "The arrival of warships from England would help us carry out the activities against Cuba and Puerto Rico," wrote Francisco de Paula Santander, the Vice President of Colombia, on June 21, 1823. In September he told Bolívar that he was negotiating another loan in Great Britain in order to purchase more vessels in the United States.⁸

In Mexico, thirteen years of war, confusion, and devastation had left the country exhausted and in economic chaos. The extraction of most of the nation's cash reserves and the dilapidation of the silver mines crippled the Mexican economy and reduced foreign trade. Towns, villages, and rural plantations destroyed during the war could not be rehabilitated. Internal political divisions curtailed government efficiency and fostered mismanagement in public affairs. In spite of these chaotic conditions, on January 27, 1824, the Mexican Congress met to consider, among other things, sending a military expedition to liberate Cuba. The Congress approved the negotiation of a large loan in Great

Britain to rebuilt Mexican naval forces, a necessary part of any plan for an attack on the island.⁹

For the Mexican and Colombian political leaders, the principal obstacle to peace and security in the Western Hemisphere had been the belligerent actions of the royalist forces that controlled the Caribbean. The liberation of the Spanish Antilles was considered to be not only a moral responsibility but also a strategic necessity. Cuba and Puerto Rico served as military strongholds of Spanish power in America and as staging areas for operations against the mainland. If war continued, they would remain launching points for the Spanish armies or for those of any European nation that desired to help Spain.

The safeguard and protection of the republican victories in Spanish America depended, to a large extent, on the removal of the Spanish menace from the Caribbean. The Spanish West Indies had also become a haven and refuge of loyal creoles and peninsulares who had escaped from the rebel areas. These people posed a threat to the stability of the Spanish American countries; their potential for subversion increased with the arrival of new Spanish troops in the Caribbean.¹⁰

In Mexico, Secretary of State Lucas Alamán considered the Spanish presence in Cuba a burden to the Mexican government because it had to maintain a large standing army as a security against a hostile attack from the West Indies. Since the flow of reinforcements from Cuba had prevented the capture of the last Spanish stronghold in Mexico, the fortress of San Juan de Ulúa, Alamán also considered the Spanish occupation of Cuba a national dishonor.¹¹

These considerations, therefore, demanded the intervention of the Spanish American republics in the political affairs of the Caribbean.

Aware of the separatist movements for independence in Cuba and Puerto Rico, the new nations promised to help the revolutionary cause in the West Indies. In addition to their strategic and military interests, moral considerations also influenced their decision. Colombia realized that the independence of Spanish America would not be completed while Cuba and Puerto Rico remained under Spanish colonialism. The concept of freedom had been for Bolívar an ideal encompassing all matters and all people of the Western Hemisphere. He had expressed those views as early as 1816.¹²

To liberate the Spanish colonies in the Caribbean, both Mexico and Colombia rely principally on creole Cuban and Puerto Rican officers who were serving in the revolutionary armies. These officers, who had fought for the independence of Mexico, Venezuela, and Colombia, longed for the opportunity to do the same in the Caribbean. Many of them were already serving as liaison agents between the separatists and the republican governments of the mainland. One of them, the Puerto Rican Antonio Valero de Bernabé, a commander in the Colombian army and one of the principal spokesmen for the separatists, planned one of the earliest attempts for a Spanish American invasion of Puerto Rico.¹³

Valero's project called for an expedition from Caracas and La Guayra under the command of General Carlos Soublette, one of the best tacticians in the Republican army. The military force planned by Valero would be composed of two infantry battalions totalling 1,500 men, one cavalry unit of 500 men, and sufficient war material to arm additional 4,000 men from the separatist forces operating inside Puerto Rico. The invading army would be escorted by warships which, after reaching the island, would blockade the landing site.

The plan envisioned 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 to surrender without a prolonged struggle since the Spanish garrison in San Juan was an elite military unit. To prevent the reinforcement of the city, therefore, he planned to obstruct all roads between the capital and the rural areas. Another force would be sent to the interior to complete the conquest. These plans could not be implemented because the invasion of Peru took precedence in Colombian military strategy. When the Spanish forces were finally defeated in Ayacucho, Colombian leaders decided to launch a much larger invasion than the independent operation planned by Valero. As a result, his plans for the invasion of Puerto Rico were rejected by the military leaders of Colombia.¹⁴

By the middle of 1824, the independence of Colombia and Mexico had been successfully completed. As a result Mexican and Colombian leaders turned their attention to the Caribbean, where the separatists in Cuba and Puerto Rico had renewed their efforts for independence after the return of Ferdinand VII. Confident of a victory over the remaining royalist forces in Peru, Bolívar and Santander planned independent military operations in the Caribbean.

On May 10, 1824, Santander informed Bolívar that the "Cubans and Puerto Ricans were imploring our protection but that inadequate resources precluded giving them assistance."¹⁵ Five days later, the Colombian Congress approved a resolution granting the Executive authority to organize an invasion of the Spanish West Indies "and any other area which was still in Spanish hands." Since July 10, 1823, the Colombian Senate had been secretly considering a request from the Vice President for an

invasion of Puerto Rico. The proposal reappeared for discussion during the legislative sessions of July 19, 21, and 23, 1823, but the "importance of the subject prevented a general agreement at that time." The Senate reconsidered Santander's request on April 17, 1823, and a committee in the Chamber of Deputies discussed it confidentially on May 7 and May 14, 1824. On May 15 the project was finally approved with the provision that "all other provinces still controlled by Spain" be included in the plan. Using that congressional authority, Santander began to prepare a military expedition to liberate Cuba and Puerto Rico.¹⁶

The inclusion of Cuba created a problem for Santander, since the original plan had only considered Puerto Rican independence. While Puerto Rico played a predominant part in Santander's plans, Cuba, until the beginning of 1825, appeared to be less important for Colombian Caribbean designs. Bolivar, Santander, and a great number of other South American creoles had the same racial prejudices about the Cuban people that the Southern senators of the United States Congress had shown during their discussion of Cuban independence. Colombian concern for a slave insurrection in Cuba paralleled the racial beliefs of Adams, Clay, Jefferson, and other North American statesmen and politicians.¹⁷

To achieve the purposes of the congressional resolution and the plans concerning the liberation of the Spanish colonies in the Caribbean, Santander ordered a reorganization of the Colombian naval forces. Carlos Soublette, the Secretary for Marine Affairs, presented a detailed project to the Congress concerning the creation of a modern, more efficient navy. As part of the reorganization, Santander ordered nineteen of the twenty-three vessels that comprised the national navy into the Caribbean. Cartagena became the center for the proposed operation, and

soon a naval squadron of one ship-of-the-line of 74 guns, a frigate of 44, three corvettes, two brigantines, and two sloops of war assembled there for provisioning and refitting. The rest of the available forces were placed under the command of Lino de Clemente and Antonio Beluche, the two most experienced naval officers in Colombia. As part of the naval preparations, Santander petitioned the Congress for authority to purchase new and better warships, since many of the vessels available were obsolete or poorly armed.¹⁸

Using funds from a British loan, Colombia purchased the ship-of-the line Libertador, the brigantine Independencia, the frigates Colombia and Cundinamarca, the corvette Bolívar, and twelve gunboats. The government bought additional warships in Sweden and Great Britain and ordered the construction of modern frigates in the United States. Cartagena received authority for the construction of repair facilities and the creation of a naval school. Colombian agents recruited officers and crewmen in foreign countries, since the nation did not have adequate personnel to operate the vessels that had been purchased in Europe and the United States. The preparation of the Caribbean expedition was of such magnitude that two years later it caused a financial crisis and a full investigation into Santander's political activities. At that time, he was accused of expending needed financial resources in the expedition instead of using the funds for national social improvements.¹⁹

On June 6, 1825, Santander told Bolívar about the military preparations:

I have in my hands a secret project to blockade Havana. It has three principal purposes: (1) to assault, in cooperation with the Mexican forces, San Juan de Ulúa, (2) to restrict the Spaniards in such a way that they stop their hostile operations against our ports, and (3) to contribute to the glory and reputation of Colombia.

Santander also explained to Bolívar that "he could not mount a full scale expedition at that time because for that project the navy needed the additional warships that had been purchased and paid for in Europe." "With those vessels," he continued, "Colombia will have the strongest fleet in the Caribbean. At that time we will consider an invasion of Puerto Rico. have been authorized by Congress to do everything."²⁰

The military campaign in Peru prevented Bolívar's involvement in the military plans of Santander. After the battle of Ayacucho, however, Bolívar recognized the necessity of removing the royalist forces from the Caribbean. On December 24, 1824, he threatened to invade the islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico without waiting for the reorganization of the navy. On that day he wrote Santander, "I think it is advisable that the Colombian government make Spain understand that if she does not make peace soon, the same troops will go straight to Havana and Puerto Rico."²¹

By 1825 other Colombian leaders were also planning the liberation of Cuba and Puerto Rico. On April 9, 1825, Marshall José Antonio Sucre, the victor at Ayacucho, informed Soublette that he had 7,000 men, "without those of Valero," that could be used for an invasion of Cuba, if protected by adequate naval forces. "I understand," wrote Sucre, "that the patriotic fervor in Cuba is very high and they are ready to join us, so victory will not be difficult." Four months later, Sucre repeated the offer to Bolívar. "We have now received the Pichincha Battalion, and I believe that these men placed inside Cuba will give America and Colombia a brilliant page in their histories."²²

By the end of 1825, Santander observed that "too many unemployed troops in Venezuela could be dangerous to the stability of Gran Colombia." Three years earlier, General Santiago Montilla had informed Santander

about the "necessity of entertaining the thousands of unemployed soldiers who roved across the northern provinces." Montilla had suggested using them in an expedition against Puerto Rico, "since it is necessary for our government to remove that Spanish bastion from the Caribbean." "I will be quite happy to lead such an expedition," he added, "but I believe that General Páez could do a better job if you provide the necessary assistance." Since General José Antonio Páez was the principal Venezuelan caudillo who could lead a separatist movement against Gran Colombia, Santander reconsidered Montilla's earlier suggestion. As a result on August 30, 1825, Bolívar offered Páez the command of an expedition to liberate the Spanish West Indies. Bolívar also told Santander to utilize the troops that were stationed in Venezuela for the maritime expedition.²³

As part of the plans for extending the war to the Caribbean, Bolívar ordered General Francisco Rodríguez del Toro to transfer 1,600 men from the Junín and the Ayacucho battalions to Panamá.²⁴ On October, 1825, he also ordered General Salom in Peru to send 1,400 men to Panamá, including the Callao Battalion under the command of Marshall Valero. These particular units had been selected because they were accustomed to the tropical conditions of the Caribbean which were entirely different from the Andean battlegrounds. These units were later transferred to Cartagena, Turbaco, Valencia, and Caracas near the Caribbean in order to accustom them to the warm climate of the region.²⁵

Undoubtedly, the Venezuelan and New Granadan armies were the most experienced fighting units in America at that time; they could have easily defeated the Spanish forces in the West Indies. As it has been already indicated, before taking any action in the Caribbean Bolívar

and the Colombian leaders wanted to know the reaction of Great Britain and France. In 1825 a French squadron visited the Caribbean to convoy Spanish reinforcements to Cuba and Puerto Rico. Bolívar believed that those vessels might oppose Colombian efforts in the Caribbean. On October 13, 1825, he wrote that "this incident reveals that the French government is in Buonaparte with the Spaniards in their usual treacherous fashion."²⁷ Fearing an attack on Cartagena by either the French or the Spaniards, Bolívar ordered more troops to the north. When the attack failed to materialize, he decided to leave these reinforcements in Venezuela and Colombia to replace the forces that had been selected for service in the Caribbean. The French military designs further convinced Bolívar that the Spaniards had to be expelled from Cuba and Puerto Rico. Santander saw the French intervention in the Caribbean as an opportunity to use his forces in the West Indies without fear or suspicion, or as a mean "of providing a meaningful occupation to our army and navy."²⁸

In France, Colonel José M. Lanz asked the French government if it intended to provide soldiers for the defense of the Spanish colonies, and if it considered opposing the Colombian invasion of Cuba and Puerto Rico. Since the Polignac Memorandum of October, 1823, restricted French interference in the Caribbean, France replied that it had no intentions of joining the struggle. "Lanz received assurances from Villele [Jean Baptiste Guillaume, Count de Villèle, President of the Council of Ministers] that France will not participate in the conflict," Santander wrote to General Mariano Montilla.²⁹

Concerning Colombian privateers, however, France informed the Colombian representative that "she would seize any vessel that carried artillery, if the size of its crew should be unduly large in proportion to

its tonnage, or if three fourth of the crew should not be composed of mariners belonging to the country where the ship had been fitted out." Thus France indirectly threatened to stop Colombia's invasion of the Caribbean by treating her national vessels as privateers. It cannot be doubted that the interests of France would be greatly promoted by imitating the policy of the United States and Great Britain in relation to the status quo. The expenses of the war in Spain and the additional increase to the public debt by the law of compensation to the emigrants of the Napoleonic conflict had place the French financial system in jeopardy. The government, therefore, also wanted to increase its trade to resolve its serious financial difficulties. To accomplish that purpose, it was necessary that France remained at peace, especially in the Western Hemisphere, where she planned to increase her trade.³⁰

Mexico had also promised to assist the Cuban revolutionary exiles in achieving their independence. In October 21, 1823, José A. Torrens, the Mexican representative in the United States, informed his government that Colombia was planning to liberate Cuba and Puerto Rico. According to Torrens, the Colombians "had an adequate navy and 30,000 men that they could use for that purpose." He also expressed the belief that if Mexico joined Colombia, they could undertake together an enterprise that would successfully liberate Cuba.³¹ On these recommendations, Mexican General Guadalupe Victoria recommended to the Senate the dispatching of General Anastasio Bustamante to Colombia with a proposal for an unified invasion of Cuba.³²

At the beginning of 1824, the Mexican Congress met to consider, among other things, a request from General Victoria for an expedition to Cuba.³³ The absence of an adequate navy and the shortage of funds to

finance the proposed expedition precluded a congressional decision on Cuba. British Commissioner Patrick Mackie, on the other hand, told Victoria that "England also wanted complete freedom of Cuba, but it would not accept its occupation by a foreign power."³⁴ Lucas Alamán, the Secretary of State, was skeptical about British and Colombian intentions concerning Cuba. "As soon as the war in Peru is over," he wrote, "Bolivar would dedicate all his energies to the liberation of Cuba and Puerto Rico."³⁵ The Secretary of State, however, believed that Colombia desired the annexation of the Spanish islands. "Under these circumstances," wrote Alamán to Michelena, "it will be necessary that Mexico proceed ahead of Colombia to make Cuba an independent state and prevent its annexation by another power."³⁶

In March, 1825, Michelena approached the British government to obtain its views concerning an expedition to liberate Cuba. He stated that Spain was unable to control the island and that it could be expected that "the spirit of liberalism there would soon proclaim its independence."³⁷ The following month, Antonio López de Santa Anna, the military governor of Yucatán, organized an expedition to invade Cuba without the authority of the central government. His complicity in the scheme caused his removal from office and the discovery of the Mexican intentions toward the Caribbean."³⁸

In June, 1825, The Mexican government received from Colombia the first official proposals for a joint invasion of Cuba. The Mexican Congress discussed the recommendation in a secret session, but it resolved that the enterprise could not be accomplished at that time. It appears that Mexico would have preferred to undertake the expedition without the aid of Colombia. The invasion of Cuba was subsequently discussed

in the secret sessions of the Chamber of Deputies, but the government realized that it had to rebuild its naval forces before any attack on the West Indies.³⁹

In July the Mexican government negotiated loans with Barckay, Herring and Company, a British firm, to buy ships and armaments. Two months later, Michelena began to send modern weapons to Mexico; on September 20, 1825, he returned to his country in a forty-four gun frigate that had been purchased in Denmark and equipped in Great Britain.⁴⁰ Two other warships, the Guerrero and the Bravo, arrived afterwards; the government increased its naval force to eleven ships. During this time, the Aguila Mexicana applauded the decision to increase the navy. "Soon we will have one of the strongest naval contingents in the Caribbean," proclaimed the newspaper, "and with the union of Cuba to our Federation we will have the most important defense force in the hemisphere."⁴¹

The plans for the invasion of Cuba began to materialize in the fall of 1825. President Victoria authorized the formation of the Junta Promotora de la Libertad de Cuba, composed of Cuban exiles and Mexican volunteers. Shortly after its formation, this group expanded to include the principal officers of the Mexican army and navy and the most distinguished members of both houses of Congress. Similar groups were organized in Colombia and Venezuela by Cuban and Puerto Rican separatists.⁴² The Junta organized in Mexico proposed sending agents to Great Britain and the United States. Among the plans sponsored by the Cuban exiles was the landing of a revolutionary army of 2,000 men in Oriente Province. At that time Poinsett wrote to Clay to explain that the Mexican Congress had to consent first to any such proposal. "It appears to me," wrote Poinsett,

. . . that the attempt will fail and produce only the most disastrous consequences. What I most dread is that the blacks may be armed and used as auxiliaries by one or both parties. I am somewhat afraid too that an ineffectual attempt on the island of Cuba may induce Spain to cede it to France. This government does not know that I am acquainted with their designs and I cannot therefore speak openly on the subject but I shall endeavor to make them sensible to the vastness of the attempt they meditate. 43

After the Spanish surrender of the Castle of San Juan de Ulúa, the Mexican Cabinet proposed an expedition against Cuba before the end of the year. The Chamber of Deputies debated the proposal for two days in secret sessions, and on December 1, 1825, the proposition was approved twenty-four votes to twenty-two. Poinsett described these proceedings as follows:

The minority was not opposed to the spirit of the report of the Committee but proposed to strike out the words 'at present.' Of the two secretaries who took part on the debate to sustain the proposition, the Secretary of War urged the necessity of getting rid of at least six thousand men and a number of officers whose presence he considered dangerous to the liberties and peace of the republic. Fortunately, the House was aware of the still greater danger of collecting at one spot so large a force of the character described by the secretary and of the imminent risk that would attend either their success or defeat. 44

Thus it appears that both Mexico and Colombia desired to conduct a military operation in the Caribbean not only to emancipate Cuba and Puerto Rico but also as a precautionary measure for the peace and stability of the republics.

Contrary to the belief held in the United States about a joint operation, it seems that Mexico and Colombia were organizing separate expeditions. In spite of that problem, both nations informed the other of their own preparations. From the United States, Obregón wrote to the Mexican Foreign Minister that agents of Colombia had informed him that

the government intended to use all the nation's vessels and nine thousand men that were being assembled at Cartagena. "I have confirmed those reports," wrote Obregón, "and they begin to alarm this country [the United States]."45

To summarize, by the end of 1825 seven nations were involved in the affairs of the Caribbean. The United States, Great Britain, and France each feared the plans of Colombia and Mexico for the liberation of Cuba and Puerto Rico because they would have disrupted the status quo. Russia was drawn in by the United States because, in spite of their differences, relations between the two countries had always been on cordial terms, and the Tzar was a friend of Spain. Mexico and Colombia were interested in the independence of Cuba and Puerto Rico for a multitude of reasons. Spain's policy in the Caribbean was a matter of pride and stubbornness, since she wanted to retain a foothold in the New World. While the diplomacy of the period reflected a clash of forces and interests, the nations involved concealed their intentions and objectives. As a result, the threat of war lingered over the Caribbean for many years, threatening the status quo and the stability of the area.

FOOTNOTES

¹The 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 Mexico, the royalist forces were driven from their last stronghold, the castle on San Juan de Ulúa, at the entrance of Veracruz, in September, 1825.

²The Republic of Haiti was not recognized, in spite of the fact that it had been the first republic established in Spanish America. The United States wanted no black republics in the Caribbean. The Monroe Doctrine did not embrace Haiti either. Bolívar also refused to accept Haiti as part of the Spanish American republics and did not invite representatives from Haiti to the Panama Congress.

³In 1820 Spain had 10,996 soldiers in Cuba and 4,822 in Puerto Rico. These forces were considerably augmented in 1824 as result of the departure of the Spanish Army from South America and Mexico. See Documents 1 and 3, Appendix 1, in Lucas Alamán, Historia de Méjico, desde los primeros movimientos que prepararon su independencia en el año de 1808 hasta el presente (Mexico, D. F.; 1850-1852) pp. 4-5.

⁴Evelio Rodríguez Landian, "El Congreso de Panamá y la independencia de Cuba." Revista de la Facultad de Letras y Ciencias, Universidad de La Habana, Havana, Cuba, 12 (1911), pp. 15-16.

⁵José F. Blanco, Documentos para la vida pública del Libertador de Colombia, Peru, y Bolivia, publicados por disposición del general Guzmán Blanco, Vol. 5 (Caracas, 1876), p. 333; Vicente Lecuna, Cartas del Libertador, Vol. 1 (New York, 1948), p. 186.

⁶Baptist Irvine, Special Agent to Venezuela, to Adams, July 20, 1818, Department of State, Special Agents. Vol. 8, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C. Irvine, a personal acquaintance of Henry Clay, Governor De Witt Clinton, and Congressman Samuel Smith, had been sent to Venezuela to collect and send to the State Department information concerning the state of the Spanish American revolts, the situation of the patriot and royalist forces, and the effects and probable consequences of the emancipation of the Colombian slaves. In 1822 he joined the expedition organized by Ducoudray Holstein to liberate

Puerto Rico. Prior to the landing of the expeditionary force, he staged a short revolt and forced the expedition to change its course. Irvine's action resulted in the cancellation of Ducoudray Holstein's operation. Adams to Irvine, January 31, 1818, Department of State, Despatches to Consuls, March 12, 1817 to May 31, 1828, Vol. 2, p. 99, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.; Bastist Irvine, Traits of Colonial Jurisprudence, or a Peep at the Trading Inquisition of Curacao (Baltimore, 1824)(Library of Congress-rare book).

⁷U. S. Congress, Senate, Message from the President of the United States Transmitting Information Relative to Piratical Depredations, Senate Doc. 15, 18th Cong., 2d Sess., 1825, Washington, D. C.

⁸Francisco de Paula Santander, Vice President of Gran Colombia, to Simón Bolívar, June 21, 1823, in Vicente Lecuna and Ernesto Barret de Nazaris, eds., Cartas de Santander, Vol. 1 (Caracas, 1942), pp. 217, 235.

⁹Lionel Hervey, British Commercial Agent in Mexico to George Canning, British Foreign Secretary, January 18, 1824, in Charles K. Webster, Britain and the Independence of Latin America, Vol. 1 (New York, 1970), Doc. 228, pp. 442-444; Carlos María Bustamante, Continuación del cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana, Vol. 2 (Mexico, D. F.; 1953), p. 206.

¹⁰Emeterio Santovenia, Bolívar y las antillas hispanas (Madrid, 1935), pp. 108-113; Salvador de Madariaga, Bolívar (New York, 1952), pp. 542-543.

¹¹Mexico, Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, Un esfuerzo de Mexico por la independencia de Cuba, Publicación No. 32, Mexico, D. F.; 1930, p. xxii. The Spanish forces, still holding the fortress of San Juan de Ulúa, were being supported by the Captain-General of Cuba. They were causing considerable damage to Veracruz and the nearby towns. They also obstructed local and international trade through the port of Veracruz.

¹²Simón Bolívar, An Answer of a Southern American to a Gentleman of Jamaica. This letter, in its entirety, can be found in Emilio Roig de Leuchsenring, Bolívar, el congreso interamericano de Panamá, en 1826, y la independencia de Cuba y Puerto Rico (La Habana, 1956), pp. 139-162. The reader is cautioned about this letter. Many versions exist, both in English and Spanish. Most of these versions are incomplete since Spanish American historians have used it, out of context, to justify a particular political view of the revolution. Roig de Leuchsenring and Blanco offer the most complete versions.

¹³Antonio Valero de Bernabé was born in Fajardo, Puerto Rico, on October 26, 1790. During the war against Napoleon, he fought in Spain and was 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 Mexico, he became one of the principal agents of the Spanish viceroy in his discussions with Agustín de Iturbide, which resulted in the Treaty of Córdoba and the independence of Mexico. He served in Mexico 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. Many of the Colombian officers, including Bolívar, disliked him because of his aggressiveness, daring, disrespect for orders, and philandering. See Mariano Abril's biography: Antonio Valero - un héroe de la independencia de España y América (San Juan, 1971).

¹⁴Jorge Quintana, "El plan para la independencia de Puerto Rico del General Antonio Valero de Bernabé," Revista del Instituto de Cultura Puertorriqueña, San Juan, 18 (1963), pp. 7-11.

¹⁵Simón B. O'Leary, Memorias del General Daniel Florencio O'Leary, publicadas por su hijo Simón O'Leary, Vol. 3 (Caracas, 1879-1888), p. 146.

¹⁶Memorial del Senado, Congreso de Angostura, a Santander, May 19, 1824, Archivo del Congreso, in Roberto Cortazar, Correspondencia dirigida al General Francisco de Paula Santander, Vol. 11 (Bogotá, 1968), Doc. 3945, p. 465. See also Sesiones del Senado, Congreso de Colombia, Julio 19, 21, y 23, 1823, in Vol. 10 and 11, in *ibid.*

¹⁷Bolívar's concern with black insurrections was the result of creole belief in the supremacy of the white race. In 1815, Pedro Briceño Méndez, Bolívar's secretary, wrote, with Bolívar's approval and personal corrections, a letter to the editor of Gaceta Real de Jamaica saying: "The black people respect the European as his master; slavery had diminish their moral fiber and their love of liberty. The white race possess unquestioned superiority and intellectual quality which separates it from the general mass of the people." The article was never published. Prior to his acceptance of Cuban emancipation, he wrote to Santander: "Do not attempt to liberate Havana...we do not want to create another Republic of Haiti." On August 14, 1823, Avila, one of the Colombian agents that had been sent to Cuba, returned to Maracaibo. In his report to the authorities he mentioned that he could guarantee that "with 1,000 soldiers, all whites, and 6,000 rifles we can free that island." On subsequent reports to Santander, the race of the invading forces that were being assembled was always a matter of concern since the Colombian officials did not want to provide the Cuban slaves with a motive for an insurrection. See Bolívar to Santander, May 20, 1825; Colombia, Academia Colombiana de Historia, Archivo Santander, Vol. 12 (Bogotá, 1913-1932), p. 371; Avila a Carabaño, August 14, 1823, Vol. 11, p. 18, in *ibid.*; Mariano Montilla a Santander, August 20, 1823, Vol. 11, pp. 29-30; Vicente Lecuna, Papeles de Bolívar, Vol. 2 (Madrid, 1920), pp. 54-55.

¹⁸Colombia, Senado, Secretaría de Estado y del Despacho de Marina, "Memorial sobre creación de una Marina de Guerra," n.d., Sesión de 1824, in Roberto Cortazar, ed., Congreso de 1824, Cámara de Representantes, Actas, Vol. 65 (Bogota, 1942); O'Leary, Vol. 12, pp. 24-27.

¹⁹Gabriel Porras Troconis, "Bolívar y la Independencia de Cuba," Cuba Contemporánea, 15 (1917), p. 193; Colombia, Senado, Secretaría de Estado y del Despacho de Marina, "Exposición que presenta el Secretario de Estado y del Despacho de Marina al Congreso de 1824," in Academia Colombiana de Historia, Archivo Santander, Vol. 12 (Bogota, 1913-1932), pp. 176-177;

²⁰Santander to Bolívar, June 6, 1824, in Archivo Santander, Vol. 13, p. 76.

²¹Bolívar to Santander, December 20, 1824, in Vicente Lecuna, Cartas del Libertador, Vol. 4 (Caracas, 1929), pp. 226-227.

²²Santiago Mariño Montilla to Santander, November 20, 1823, in Archivo Santander, Vol. 11, pp. 140-141; Sucre to Soublette, April 9, 1825, in Daniel F. O'Leary, Cartas de Sucre al Libertador, 1826-1830, Vol. 2 (Madrid, 1919), p. 368; Sucre to Bolívar, August, 10, 1825, in *ibid.*, p. 383. Bolívar considered appointing Sucre to command the expedition before sending him to liberate Bolivia.

²³Montilla to Santander, November 20, 1823, in Archivo Santander, Vol. 11, pp. 140-141; Bolívar to Santander, July 10, 1825, in *ibid.*, Vol. 13, p. 76. For Páez activities in Venezuela see José Antonio Páez, Autobiografía del General José Antonio Páez, Vol. 2 (New York, 1869).

²⁴Roig de Leuchsenring, p. 60; Bolívar to General Francisco Rodríguez del Toro, September, 25, 1825, in Vicente Lecuna, Cartas del Libertador, Vol. 11 (New York, 1948), p. 285; Bolívar to General Bartolomé Salom, October, 1825, in Blanco, Documentos para la historia de la vida pública del Libertador, Vol. 10, p. 141; Bolívar to Santander, May 20, 1825, in Vicente Lecuna and Harold A. Bierck, Jr., eds., Selected Writings of Bolívar, Vol. 2 (New York, 1951), p. 499.

²⁵*Ibid.*

²⁶Bolívar to Santander, May 20, 1825, in Archivo Santander, Vol. 12, p. 371.

²⁷Bolívar to Santander, October 13, 1825, in Vicente Lecuna, ed., Selected Writings, Vol. 2, p. 537.

²⁸Santander a Bolívar, July 21, 1825, in Archivo Santander, Vol. 12, p. 80.

²⁹Pedro Ignacio Cadena, ed., Anales diplomáticos de Colombia, Vol. 2, (Bogota, 1878), p. 493; Santander to Bolívar, June 21, 1825, Lecuna, Cartas de Santander, Vol. 2, p. 53; William S. Robertson, France and the Latin American Independence (Baltimore, 1939), p. 349.

³⁰Pedro A. Zubieta, Congresos de Panamá y Tacubaya, datos breves para la historia diplomática de Colombia (Bogotá, 1912), pp. 474-475; Robertson, p. 349.

³¹Mexico, Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores, Primera Misión de Mexico en los Estados Unidos, "Nota del Encargado de Negocios, Torrens," October 21, 1823, La Diplomacia Mexicana, Vol. 1 (Mexico, D. F.; 1910-1913), pp. 42-43.

³²William R. Manning, Early Diplomatic Relations Between the United States and Mexico (Baltimore, 1916), p. 99. The Mexican Senate refused the confirmation of General Bustamante as Minister to Colombia.

³³Carlos María Bustamante to J. Trigueros, December 9, 1843, in Continuación del cuadro histórico de la revolución mexicana, Vol. 2 (Mexico, D. F.; 1953), p. 206. Victoria became the President of Mexico on October 10, 1824.

³⁴Mexican concern for an aggression by the United States to Texas is documented fully in Legajo 5-8-793, "Correspondencia de Tadeo Ortiz, consul en Burdeos sobre colonización de Texas con elementos europeos, 1830-1831; Legajo 5-9-8255, V-1, "Pretendidas invasiones a Texas por soldados españoles residentes en Nueva Orleans"; Legajo 6-19-6, V-1, "Sobre la conducta que observó el gobierno de los Estados Unidos de Norteamérica, respecto de los asuntos de Texas" Archivo de la Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores de Mexico, Mexico, D. F. See also Victoria to Alamán, August 28, 1823, in La Diplomacia Mexicana, Vol. 2, p. 127; Mexico, "Providencias tomadas sobre invasión proyectada por los Anglo-Americanos y facciosos del Norte contra la provincia de Texas," Cuaderno No. 1, Historia, Vol. 162, Relaciones diplomáticas con los Estados Unidos de America, Archivo General de la Nación, Mexico, D. F.

³⁵Alamán a Michelena, n.d., in La Diplomacia Mexicana, Vol. 3, p. 103.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Memorandum from Michelena to the Sub-Secretary of Foreign Relations, Great Britain, March 4, 1825, in Juan E. Hernández y Dávalos Manuscript Collection, Document No. HD 18-2.4329 (2465), The Latin American Collection, University of Texas Library, Austin, Texas.

³⁸Antonio Lopez de San Anna to Secretary of State, August 18, 1824, in Mexico, Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores, Comandancia General del Estado Libre de Yucatán, Archivo Histórico Diplomático Mexicano, No. 32, (Mexico, D. F.; 1930), pp. 123-125; P. D. F. (?) to Pablo Obregón, August 3, 1825, in *ibid.*, pp. 9-10. Santa Anna, without consultation with the Mexican government embarked five hundred men, awaiting orders to sail, for an invasion of Cuba. He believed that the time was ripe for an invasion because of the serious discontent in Cuba.

³⁹Joel Roberts Poinsett, United States Minister to Mexico, to Clay, June 15, 1825, Department of State, Diplomatic Despatches from Mexico, Vol. 1, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C. Poinsett's communications to the State Department have been used to document the

the activities of the Mexican Congress because, in spite of great efforts, the congressional archives could not be consulted. Personnel at the archives of the Chamber of Deputies and Senate explained that "the early records of the government were destroyed by fire." They provided, instead, the Juan Antonio Mateos, Historia parlamentaria de los Congresos Mexicanos (Mexico, D. F., 1882). This reference contains little information on the First and Second Congresses. Later, this writer found that the same information has been given to other historians. As a result the materials that exist have remained untouched to this date. Poinsett reports contained considerable hearsay evidence and should be read carefully.

⁴⁰Poinsett to Clay, September 20, 1825, Department of State, Diplomatic Despatches from Mexico, Vol. 1, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁴¹El Aguila Mejicana, September 19, 1825.

⁴²Poinsett to Clay, September 13, 1825, Department of State, Diplomatic Despatches from Mexico, Vol. 1, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.; "Documentos de José Aniceto Iznaga y de A. de las Heras y José Agustín Arango referentes al proyecto de conquistar la independencia de las islas de Cuba y Puerto Rico mediante la cooperación del Libertador Simón Bolívar," in Roig de Leuchsenring, pp. 139-162; Mariano Abril, Un héroe de la independencia de España y América (San Juan, 1971), pp. 141-152.

⁴³Poinsett to Clay, October 29, 1825, Department of State, Diplomatic Despatches from Mexico, Vol. 1, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁴⁴Poinsett to Clay, December 2, 1825, Department of State, Diplomatic Despatches from Mexico, Vol. 1, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁴⁵Obregón to Secretary of State, December 10, 1825, Legación Mexicana en Estados Unidos, No. 189, Mexico, Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, Archivo Histórico Diplomático Mexicano, No. 32, pp. 39-40.

CHAPTER VIII

THE STATUS QUO AND THE INDEPENDENCE OF CUBA AND PUERTO RICO

The projected intervention of Mexico and Colombia in the political affairs of the Caribbean had serious implications for the status quo. The United States government did not welcome the rumors or the official reports of the proposed invasion. The expedition threatened the compromise that had been arranged with Great Britain and France in 1823. While the United States had been aware of the intentions of the Spanish American republics as early as 1824, and had conducted extensive diplomatic efforts to prevent the fulfillment of the Spanish American plans, it was clear that by the middle of 1825, the problem was reaching a critical level. The combined revolutionary forces of Mexico and Colombia, assisted by the separatists, threatened to end Spanish rule in the Caribbean. The intervention of these powers on the West Indies, according to Harold W. Temperley, "meant not only war but an invitation to slaves to rise against their masters, and the flame of a successful Black revolt might easily spread from Cuba to Georgia and Virginia."¹ The government of Colombia had already prepared a proclamation emancipating the black slaves in Cuba and Puerto Rico.²

The threat of political turmoil in the Caribbean became a serious matter for many United States statesmen. Later, during the debates for the nomination of American representatives to the Congress of Panama,

Senator Thomas H. Benton of Missouri justified American intervention in the Caribbean in 1825 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."³

John Randolph, a 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 revolts in the United States. Randolph described Mexico and Colombia as being instigators of domestic slave rebellions. He declared that an invasion of the West Indies would invariably lead to destruction and mass bloodshed among blacks and whites.⁴

Other congressional representatives had opposed the Spanish American plans for the independence of Cuba and Puerto Rico because of the danger involved in the emancipation of the 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 juxtaposition 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 forces; . . . they are swallowed up in 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. 5

The Southern members of Congress had viewed the independence of Cuba and Puerto Rico as a threat to the peace and security of the South. These individuals believed that after independence, the large black population of Cuba would create a black republic similar to Haiti. The new republic, 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."⁶ This situation would have given slaves in the United States an example of the rights which awaited them if they did likewise and revolted against their masters. According to Senator Benton, this danger had to be prevented by the United States.

The Mexican and Colombian plans for a military expedition to blockade Havana, destroy the Spanish fleet, emancipate the slaves, and proclaim Cuban and Puerto Rican independence, could not be kept secret. The recruitment of seamen, the arrival of warships to Cartagena and Veracruz, the construction of repair facilities in Cartagena, and the congressional debates, both in the United States and in the Spanish American republics, could not be concealed from the press. In Mexico, the abortive plans of General Santa Anna for an expedition to Cuba and the activities of the Cuban exiles soon became the subject of political debates in the national capital. On January 2, 1825, the Gaceta Diaria de Mexico commented editorially:

Could the Antilles be kept European when they are located at the entrance of the Western Hemisphere? In September, we will have a ship-of-the line of 80 guns, two frigates of 40, and two brigantines. Then, Havana, will be free in a year. When ten flags are ready to cover the Caribbean, what force could prevent it? 7

In Philadelphia, the National Gazette published a letter from a member of the Colombian navy who asserted that "ten thousand men and a strong squadron were ready to liberate Cuba."⁸ Niles' Weekly Register predicted that the "expedition will be easily accomplished since the people of the islands are prepared to give a favorable reception to the invasion." Strongly opposing the operation, the newspaper commented:

There is every reason to believe that Mexico and Colombia are preparing a very formidable expedition to divest Spain 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 . . . the excess of the colored population will take advantage, and the scenes that were acted in Haiti will be reacted in Cuba. The present contemplated expedition may only hasten events that must happen. 9

In subsequent editorial commentaries, both the National Gazette and Niles' Weekly Register demanded American intervention in the Caribbean. Prior to these demands, the Government of the United States had already taken the necessary steps to discourage Mexico and Colombia from attempting an invasion of Cuba and Puerto Rico. On March 26, 1825, Clay instructed Joel Roberts Poinsett, the United States Minister to Mexico, to inform the Mexican government that "while the United States have no desire to aggrandize themselves by the acquisition of Cuba," Mexico should know "that if that island is to be made a dependency of any one of the American states, it is impossible not to allow that the law of its position proclaims that it should be attached to the United States."¹⁰

In his message to Poinsett, Clay also stated:

If the war be indefinitely protacted, to what object will the arms of the new Governments be directed? It is not unlikely that they may be turned upon the conquest of Cuba and Puerto Rico, and with that view, a combined operation will be concerted between those of Colombia and Mexico. The United States cannot remain indifferent to such a movement . . . The United States could not see the dominion [of Cuba and Puerto Rico] passing either to Mexico or Colombia without some apprehension of the future What the President, however, directs you to do is to keep a vigilant attention upon every movement towards Cuba, to ascertain the designs of Mexico in regard to it, and to put him, early, in full possession of every purpose of the Mexican government relative to it. And you are authorized, if, in the progress of events it should become necessary, to disclose frankly the feelings and the interests as here develop, which the people of the United States cherish in respect to that island. 11

Two days later, Poinsett warned Mexico that the United States would not permit any attempt to seize the island of Cuba. At that time the United States believed that neither Colombia nor Mexico had the naval strenght to protect Cuba and Puerto Rico after independence. The military weaknesses of these nations, therefore, would had made possible the seizure of the islands by Great Britian or France.

In a detailed analysis justifying the American position in the Caribbean and the necessity of preserving the status quo, Clay used the Monroe Doctrine for the first time by directing Poinsett to inform the Mexican government that the United States hadno intentions of disturbing the colonial possesions of Spain. But he also indicated "that any attempt to establish new ones in an area open to the enterprise and commerce of all Americans" without the consent of the United States would not be tolerated.¹²

Perhaps the most important reason why the United States desired to control the Caribbean at that time was to provide security to a waterway being planned across Central America. On April 18, 1825, Clay wrote to Antonio José Cañaz, the Envoy from the United Provinces of Central America, empressing his approval for such a plan. "The Unites States," wrote Clay, "will cooperate in promoting the opening of a Canal through the Province of Nicaragua The idea has long been conceived and the evidence tends to show the superiority and advantages of the area which traverse the Province of Nicaragua. [The United States] have settled the question in favor of that route."¹³

Colombia was similarly warned to keep hands off the Spanish possessions in the Caribbean. The United States also endeavored to bring indirect pressure on Spain through the influence of Great Britain, France,

and Russia, to terminate the Spanish American conflict. By making peace in the Western Hemisphere, the United States would have prevented the invasion of Cuba and Puerto Rico. The Secretary of State began with Russia, the power whose influence had for more than a decade been dominant in the councils of the reactionary states.¹⁴ The United States appealed to the Tzar's sense of justice and humanitarianism to convince Spain to end the Spanish American war. He attempted to persuade Russia that Spain was in imminent danger of losing Cuba and Puerto Rico unless she sacrificed her pride and make peace. In spite of the efforts of the United States, Great Britain, France, and Russia, Spain did not recognize the Spanish American republics at that time.¹⁵

On October 3, 1825, Clay wrote to President Adams concerning Cuba. He told the President that "matters are fast hastening to a crisis in Cuba and that shortly there will be an explosion."¹⁶ It appeared that the Cuban plantation owners feared Colombia's black troops and that they preferred Mexican intervention. Clay mentioned that he had been informed that "as soon as the Mexican squadron appear, a revolution will begin in the island to throw off the Spanish regime." He suggested that the United States send immediately a confidential agent to Cuba to determine the extent of the planned insurrection. President Adams, after some consideration, approved Clay's request.¹⁷

On December 7, 1825, Clay directed Thomas B. Robertson to go to Havana as a confidential agent of the United States. By that time, the confusing and chaotic conditions in the Caribbean had reached a dangerous level. Clay told Robertson to provide "by the most rapid means" information on the political conditions prevailing on the island, the views of the Cubans in regard to Spain, the extent of the independence

movement, the ability of Spain to resist an armed attack, and the creoles views concerning annexation to the United States. "You will keep yourself aloof," directed Clay, "and under no circumstances you should give stimulus or countenance to insurrectionary movements, if such be contemplated."¹⁸ Concerning American direct involvement in the political affairs of Cuba, Clay stated:

With reference to any commotions, either meditated or spontaneous, that may arise, and they should happen to be of a character, or take a turn, which would require of the United States, from the relations in which they stand to that island, to interpose their power, it will then be time enough for the Government here to consider and decide the nature of their intervention that the exigency demands. ¹⁹

Judge Thomas B. Robertson of Louisiana was not the type of man for a mission of that nature. A quiet and unassuming individual who preferred the surrounding of a court room to international intrigue, he could not become the confidential agent that Clay expected. As a result, he declined the mission, in spite of the fact that the captain-general of Cuba, General Dionisio Vives, was a personal friend of President Adams.

On December 12, 1825, the Secretary of State received a distressing report concerning Colombian preparations in Cartagena. According to information sent by Richard C. Anderson, the United States Minister to Colombia, "there is manifestly a naval expedition fitting out by this republic."²⁰ An invasion, according to Anderson, was being organized in Cartagena and there was no doubt about the destination of the expedition. "There is now collected in this port almost all the naval forces of the republic," wrote the American minister.

Anderson sent to Clay a detailed information, "of some precision," concerning the number of vessels and their armament. According to him, "all the vessels were well armed and headed by English and North American

officers, but insufficiently manned, since the government had great difficulty in acquiring adequate and experienced seamen.²¹ The report also made reference to the return of Colombian troops from Peru and the arrival of transports from Panamá. Evaluating Colombian ability to launch an expedition, Anderson wrote:

The Ceres is a frigate mounting forty guns and is a remarkable fine vessel. There is also a Swedish frigate with a foreign crew ready for action but I do not know the terms under which the crew is to act. The Boyaca, of twenty-two guns is also a fine ship and the Venezuela is a frigate of forty guns that was formerly an East Indiaman. 22

Three days later, Clay received a report from Robert Tillotson, the Collector of the Port of New York, "about a ship pierced for 64 guns, called the America del Sur that sailed with complete armament on board" for Cartagena.²³ The confirmation of the Colombian preparations for the invasion of Cuba and Puerto Rico induced the Secretary of State to request from Mexico and Colombia, in the "interest of peace," a suspension of the expedition. On December 20, 1825, Clay advised the foreign ministers of both countries that Russia had taken the subject of peace in America under advisement. Under those circumstances

. . . the President believes that a suspension, for a limited time, of the sailing of the expedition against Cuba and Puerto Rico, which is understood to be fitting out at Cartagena, or of any other expedition which may be contemplated against either of those islands, by Colombia or Mexico, would be salutatory influence on the great work of peace. 24

While the notes were conciliatory in nature and written in diplomatic language, their meaning was clear: the United States intended to stop the plans of Mexico and Colombia. Clay's note also suggested that the suspension of the expedition would prevent both the intervention of Great Britain and France in the affairs of the Caribbean and the danger of a conflict of interests between the United States and the Spanish

American republics. "It would also postpone, if not forever render unnecessary," Clay also wrote, "all consideration which other powers may, by an irresistible sense of their essential interests, be called upon to entertain of their duties, in the event of the contemplated invasion of those islands, and of other contingencies which may accompany or follow it."²⁵

Eight months earlier, the Secretary of State had indicated in a diplomatic note to Alexander Everett, the United States Minister to Spain, that the nation was ready to go to war to prevent an invasion of Cuba and Puerto Rico. "The United States," said Clay, "could not be an indifferent spectator" if Mexico and Colombia extended their conflict with Spain to the Caribbean. "The possible contingency of such a protracted war," added Clay, "might bring upon the government of the United States duties and obligations which, however painful it should be, they might not be at liberty to decline." In other words, the United States was ready to go to war against Mexico and Colombia to maintain the status quo in the Caribbean.²⁶

On February 11, 1826, the American Minister to Russia made it clear to the Russian government that the United States was considering intervention in the West Indies. Henry Middleton informed Count Nesselrode that in case of the invasion of Cuba and Puerto Rico, the United States will be compelled to interfere in the Caribbean. He based his position on the fact that six days after the diplomatic exchange between Clay and the ministers of Mexico and Colombia, the Secretary of State had informed him that the Government of the United States might use its power to prevent a war against the Spanish possessions in the Caribbean.

The Secretary of State attempted to convince the Spanish American

countries that suspension of the attack would have afforded sufficient time for the United States to ascertain Spain's plans in regard to the conflict in Spanish America and would have provided the Emperor of Russia with the necessary support to convince Spain of the futility of the conflict. The Mexican and Colombian governments, exhausted by years of war, unaware of the extent of Russia and the United States' involvement in the peace negotiations, and afraid of an armed conflict with the United States, postponed their plans for the invasion.²⁷

The United States government was certain that an attack to Cuba and Puerto Rico by the armies of the Spanish American republics, supported by the separatists, would have been successful. In a letter to the United States Minister in Russia, Clay had indicated the certainty of victory.

The success of the enterprise is, by no means, improbable. Their [Mexico and Colombia's] 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, their success becomes almost certain. 28

The Spanish colonial government in Cuba and Puerto Rico had also recognized that possibility and the inevitability of defeat. Two days before Clay's communication to the United States Minister in Russia, the Mexican government received information that the Cuban slaveowners had urgently requested reinforcements from Spain to defend the island. Due to the fear of invasion, the Ayuntamiento de la Habana had even suggested to Spain the immediate recognition of the Spanish American republics as the only possible way to prevent an invasion of Cuba.²⁹

In 1825 the situation in Cuba and Puerto Rico had become extremely dangerous for Spain. American, Europeans, and creoles residing there, according to an American consular agent residing in Havana, "look forward, some with joy, and others with fear, to an invasion of the islands."³⁰ 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.³¹ An American businessman wrote to Clay from Santiago de Cuba that the principal competition for trade was between France and the United States, but that the United States should demand most favorable nation treatment. Concerning the threat of invasion, he suggested that the United States immediately send military forces to Cuba to protect American citizens and property in Havana.³²

Before the Colombian and Mexican ministers received the official request from the Secretary of State for a cancellation of the expedition, the United States had considered military intervention in Cuba to prevent the Spanish American attack. Commodore David R. Porter, the commander of the Caribbean naval squadron, had been directed to increase his surveillance of the Cuban and Puerto Rican coasts and to report any suspected movement 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 authorized to land in unpopulated areas to pursue privateers when necessary. President Monroe even considered a naval blockade of the Spanish West Indies to protect American interests. In 1825 he requested congressional authority to use force, "according to his discretion and as circumstance may imperiously require," in Cuba and Puerto Rico.³³

On August 27, 1825, the Florida Intelligencer reported the establishment of a naval depot at Pensacola for the West Indian squadron. "The danger," said the newspaper, "would probably awake the general government to the importance of fortifying the sea coast." ³⁴

The projected invasion of Cuba and Puerto Rico also caused considerable alarm in Great Britain. Canning saw the extension of the Spanish American conflict to the Caribbean as a dangerous development that would serve as a pretext for United States intervention in Cuba. For Great Britain the real danger was not an invasion of Cuba by Mexico or Colombia but the seizure of the island by the United States to prevent such an attempt. The proximity of the United States to Cuba and Puerto Rico created for Great Britain a difficult strategic problem since the nation could not prevent an American invasion of the Spanish West Indies. ³⁵

Since November, 1824, Great Britain had been aware of the plans of the Spanish American republics for the emancipation of the Spanish colonies. In a conference with José Mariano Michelena on November 30, 1824, Canning inquired about the condition of the Mexican and Colombian navies and the plans for the invasion of the Spanish islands. He asked Michelena if there were any defense pacts or agreements between Mexico and the Spanish American republics, the extent of those agreements, and if they included exclusions or concessions to foreign powers. He reminded Michelena of the large number of blacks in Cuba and the danger of a racial confrontation on that island. ³⁶

On June 17, 1825, Canning told the Mexican representative that Mexico was at liberty to act as she felt necessary. He also indicated that Great Britain had no objection to the transfer of Cuba to Mexico, but that she would not accept an American or French seizure of the

islands.³⁷ Four days later, Canning repeated the same views to Leveson-Gower Granville, the British Minister to France: "We sincerely wish her [Cuba] to remain with the Mother Country. Next to that I wish her independent, either singly or in connection with Mexico, but what cannot or must not be, is that any great maritime Power should get possession of her."³⁸ Canning "certainly never had any notion of annexing Cuba for England, but he desired to maintain the status quo."³⁹

Great Britain did not oppose the projected invasion. Canning had no desire to associate Great Britain with the American objective because he did not want to alienate the Spanish American countries. He also considered the seizure of Cuba or Puerto Rico by the Spanish American countries as insignificant to British interests in the Caribbean. For Canning, the independence of Cuba or Puerto Rico would not have affected the status quo because these nations were poor dependencies and sooner or later they too would have become client-states of Great Britain, since that nation was regarded as the European country most important to the security, commerce, and prosperity of the Spanish American republics.⁴⁰ In spite of the apparent neutral attitude of Great Britain, the British Foreign Secretary hoped that the plans of the Spanish American republics would not succeed, and his diplomacy was subtly directed toward that end.⁴¹

To protect the status quo in the Caribbean, in 1824 Great Britain offered to guarantee Spain's continued possession of Cuba and Puerto Rico on the condition that the Spanish government recognized the independence of the Spanish American republics.⁴² At that time, Canning, according to Harold W. V. Temperley, followed closely "his twin pillars of policy -- non-intervention in the internal affairs of other States, and preservation

so far as possible, of their existing territorial integrity against external attack." But when Spain refused to accept the suggestion, Great Britain decided that the status quo could only be guaranteed by the cessation of hostilities in Spanish America.⁴³

In 1825 Great Britain asked United States and France to sign an agreement disclaiming any desires of annexation in the Spanish West Indies. Canning suggestion was unaccepted by the United States because it would have prevented the incorporation of Cuba into the American Union.⁴⁴ On October 17, 1825, Clay wrote that "a declaration on the part of the Government of the United States that they will abstain from taking advantage of the incidents which may grow out of the present war to wrest Cuba from Spain, is unnecessary." Great Britain also received a formal rejection from France because of her commitment to support the objectives of the Holy Alliance.⁴⁵ The British Foreign Secretary remarked to the United States Minister in Great Britain that he was greatly disappointed with the attitude of the United States and France. As for the American objection concerning the threat of Mexico and Colombia, Canning commented that they had the right as belligerents to attack Cuba and Puerto Rico.⁴⁶

At the end of 1825 Charles R. Vaughan, the British Minister in the United States, discussed the problem in the Caribbean with Clay and suggested then that the United States "dissuade the Mexican and Colombians from making any attack upon Cuba. Vaughan later wrote to Canning:

In the conversations which I have had with Mr. Clay upon the subject of the proposed attack upon the island of Cuba by the Governments of Colombia and Mexico, I ventured to suggest the advantage, which might be derived from the Government exerting any influence which it might possess over those new States, to dissuade them from such an enterprise. Mr. Clay informed me that he was this day

engaged in drawing instructions to the plenipotentiaries . . . to suspend at least their intended operations The United States would not see with indifference any proceedings which should tend to arm the black against the white inhabitants, and the plenipotentiaries from those countries would, therefore, be instructed to require the abandonment of any part of their scheme of conquest in which the aid of the blacks was to enter as an essential part. 47

Vaughan's conversation with Clay reflects the preoccupation with a slave insurrection in Cuba. While Clay did not use this argument in his request to the Ministers of Mexico and Colombia it is certain that, among all the reasons which the United States utilized to justify her actions in Cuba, the threat of a slave insurrection was of decisive importance. Puerto Rico played a secondary role in the foreign policy of the United States because she had a very small slave population and the concern for a slave insurrection there was not that important. Cuba, on the other hand, was the object of considerable attention because of the large number of blacks on the island.

Canning was furious after receiving Vaughan's communication and he promptly disavowed the British Minister's conversation with Clay. Canning's reply read in part:

. . . you suggested an interference by the United States to dissuade the Mexicans and Colombians from making any attack upon Cuba. You will not find in your Instructions any authority to hold this language If the United States think that particular interests of their own required that a certain operation of war should not be undertaken by one of the belligerents, it is a question, and a very nice one for them, how they will prevent the undertaking of it; but it is manifest that we have not the like interest either to induce, or to justify us, in so unusual an interposition If there were anything in the attack upon the insular possessions of Spain by a Power, openly and lawfully at war with her, which was beyond the rights of war, or contrary to those of humanity, there might be some ground of interference on the part, not of the United States only, but of all neutral Powers. But if it be merely the interests of the United States that are concerned, that ground

of interference can only belong to them, nor is there any obligation upon us to share the odium of such an interposition. 48

Canning's message to Vaughan summarized British policy toward the Caribbean. While Great Britain wanted to preserve the status quo, she intended to remain neutral in the Caribbean. That attitude gave Canning "an advantage which he used with great skill to establish his position with Mexico and Colombia at the expense of France and the United States."⁴⁹ At the Congress of Panama in the following year, the British representative told the Spanish American delegates that the United States was responsible for the suspension of the operation against Cuba and Puerto Rico. He recommended, therefore, the abandonment of the project "on the ground that the United States had already announced that they would interfere, and that their action would be bound to bring Britain also." Since the United States had no representatives at Panama, the British viewpoint of American responsibility for thwarting the invasion plans of Mexico and Colombia gained immediate acceptance by the delegates.⁵⁰

France played a minor role in convincing the Spanish American republics of the dangerous effects of their proposed action. The fate of Cuba and Puerto Rico, however, was a subject of considerable interest to the French government. Jean Batiste Villèle, President of the Council of Ministers, told Granville that the French government had approved a new policy toward Spanish America. Emphasizing the importance of Cuba and Puerto Rico, he expected a continuation of the status quo in the Caribbean. As a result, Great Britain gave assurances to France that she had no desire to interfere in the affairs of Cuba and Puerto Rico but that she would not permit their occupation by the United States. Granville told Villele that he had been authorized to express the

. . . readiness of His Majesty's Government to record conjointly with France, the determination, common to both Governments, not to aim at the West Indies, nor to permit such occupation by the American government. 51

In spite of these assurances, in August, 1825, France increased her naval forces in the Caribbean. The United States and Great Britain immediately protested. On October 25, 1825, the United States 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."⁵² Great Britain also demanded an explanation from the French government concerning its intentions in the Caribbean. The French Foreign Minister replied that the Governor of Martinique had been the official responsible for ordering the French squadron into the Caribbean and that France had no territorial ambitions in the West Indies. The explanation satisfied the British government, but Canning protested the lack of control over colonial officials. "No plea whatever could justify in our eyes the introduction of a French military force into the Spanish islands," Canning informed Villéle.⁵³

During the emergency, Great Britain discovered that France had intentions of sending armed forces to Puerto Rico to suppress local insurrections. Canning, therefore, warned the Spanish Foreign Minister that Great Britain would not allow the use of French forces in Cuba or Puerto Rico to restrain independence.⁵⁴ He also refused to compromise with France on a joint declaration guaranteeing the Spanish possession of Cuba and Puerto Rico, in spite of the fact that he desired a formal written agreement with that nation concerning the status quo in the Caribbean.⁵⁵

The arrival of the French squadron in Cuba also caused considerable alarm in Mexico; her motives were not unfounded. Spain's plans for the

reconquest of her lost empire gave precedence to Mexico because of her rich silver mines, her larger peninsular population, and her proximity to Cuba.⁵⁶ Since the beginning of the year, Mexico had received reports that Spain and France were organizing a large expedition to protect the Caribbean and attack the Mexican coast.⁵⁷ When the French squadron arrived, the President of Mexico requested that Great Britain and the United States intervene to defend the Mexican territory by invoking the Monroe Doctrine. The United States, however, rejected the request because the Mexican government implied "that the declaration of Monroe gave Mexico the right to demand that the United States interfere on behalf of the new state."⁵⁸ This action would have clearly violated American neutrality.

President Guadalupe Victoria viewed the American refusal as a sign that the Monroe Doctrine served only the peculiar interests of the United States. By that time the relations between the United States and Mexico had deteriorated rapidly. On September 1, 1815, the United States had issued a proclamation prohibiting American citizens from helping the Mexican insurgents. The directive also prohibited the sale of weapons and military supplies to the revolutionaries and the departure of armed expeditions from American ports. Two years later, the United States prohibited still further American participation in the Mexican revolution. With the official proclamations of neutrality, Mexico completely changed its attitude toward the United States.

By the time that Mexico achieved her independence, the leaders of the revolution had developed a strong sense of distrust for the United States. President Victoria's dissatisfaction was so great that he campaigned for the establishment of an organization of Spanish American

states to oppose what he considered to be the aggressive policies of the United States.

As a result of the congressional debate concerning the confirmation of the American delegation to the Congress of Panama, President Adams removed the injunction of secrecy from all the messages and documents concerning United States policy in the Caribbean. The President submitted carefully selected extracts of this correspondence, but in spite of the editing, publication of these documents, especially the communications between Mexico and the United States concerning the Monroe Doctrine, irritated President Victoria. The Mexican chief executive considered the intervention of the United States in the affairs of the Caribbean ill-judged, unsolicited, and detrimental to Mexico and Colombia. According to the Mexican government, the United States insistence on the status quo had guaranteed Spain's continued control of Cuba and Puerto Rico.⁵⁹

In spite of the international effort to prevent the Colombian and Mexican attack on Cuba and Puerto Rico, by the end of 1825 war appeared to be imminent in the Caribbean. As a result on December 30, 1825, Secretary Clay instructed Richard C. Anderson to inform the Colombian government that the United States would oppose any military action in the Caribbean. Clay wrote:

It is the wish of the President that you should lose no time in making known to the Colombian Government the purpose of the letter to Mr. Salazar . . . and that you further the object of it as far as may be in your power by direct and friendly explanations with the Government upon that subject. 60

In spite of the fact that the United States had received "nothing but polite generalities" from Russia about the termination of hostilities,⁶¹ Clay instructed Anderson "to use the papers and facts" that had been

communicated to Count Nesselrode to justify the request for a suspension of "any military or naval expedition preparing against Cuba and Puerto Rico."⁶² A similar directive, adapted for the Mexican government, was sent to Joel R. Poinsett, the United States Minister to Mexico.

On March 1, 1826, Anderson informed the Colombian government of his instructions. In his Diary, he later wrote:

Went to see [James] Henderson, [British] Consul General and [José Rafael] Revenga. Had a long conversation with them concerning the attempt of this Government and Mexico to make Cuba and Puerto Rico independent. I am instructed to dissuade [Anderson's emphasis] this Government from the attempt on account of the fear that those islands cannot maintain their independence and 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 and distress its enemy in every practicable way. 63

Both Mexico and Colombia coldly received the United States' request for a suspension of the planned attack upon Cuba and Puerto Rico. On January 4, 1826, Pablo Obregón, the Mexican Minister in the United States, informed Clay that the communication had been forwarded to the Mexican government.⁶⁴ Upon the receipt of Obregón's note, the Mexican Senate angrily decided to act against the wishes of the United States. On January 28, 1826, the Senate approved a proposal for a joint expedition against Cuba. According to Poinsett, it also requested that the Chamber of Deputies direct the delegates to the Panama Congress "to concert means with those of Colombia for a joint expedition."⁶⁵

The Mexican Chamber of Deputies, however, reconsidered the Senate resolution and postponed any action "until the Executive could submit to the consideration of Congress the plans which may be agreed upon at Panamá."⁶⁶ President Victoria agreed with the decision of the Chamber

of Deputies "to let the Plenipotentiaries at Panama decide the future of Cuba and Puerto Rico." He also told Poinsett "that the government of Mexico had no intention to conquer or take possession of the island of Cuba," and that the object of the intended expedition "was to assist the revolutionaries drive out the Spaniards, and, in case they succeeded, to leave the people to govern themselves."⁶⁷ Colombia, apparently, had the same intentions toward Cuba and Puerto Rico.⁶⁸

The warnings of the United States and the uncertain conditions in the Caribbean, which may have warranted the intervention of both France and Great Britain, resulted in the postponement of the planned expedition to liberate Cuba and Puerto Rico. Mexico and Colombia did not want another armed conflict immediately after years of savage fighting for independence. Their insistence on liberating Cuba and Puerto Rico had been primarily the result of strategic considerations. When Spanish power considerably diminished in the Western Hemisphere and the threat of royalist armed attacks from the Caribbean subsided, both Mexico and Colombia reconsidered their actions.

Since an invasion of the Spanish Caribbean would have upset the status quo maintained by Great Britain, France, and the United States, Mexico and Colombia decided to let the representatives at the proposed Congress of Panama evaluate the political status of Cuba and Puerto Rico. When the United States and the European powers objected to the invasion of Cuba and Puerto Rico at the Congress of Panama with the same vigor that they had shown so far, the Spanish American republics did not include the subject on their agenda. Without the support of the other Spanish American nations, Mexico and Colombia cancelled the plans for

the liberation of the Spanish West Indies. That decision prevented the independence of Cuba and Puerto Rico during the first part of the nineteenth century.

FOOTNOTES

¹Harold W. V. Temperley, The Foreign Policy of Canning, 1822-1827: England, the Neo-Holy Alliance, and the New World (London, 1925), p. 173.

²Ibid.

³U. S. Congress, Register of Debates in Congress, 19th Cong., 1st Sess., Vol. 2, Part 1 (1825-1826), pp. 152-234, 289-293 (Pan American Debates).

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Thomas Hart Benton, Thirty Years' View, 1820-1850, Vol. 1 (New York, 1893), p. 69.

⁷Gaceta Diaria de Mexico, January 2, 1825.

⁸National Gazette, December 16, 1825.

⁹Niles' Weekly Register, December 24, 1825.

¹⁰Henry Clay to Joel Roberts Poinsett, Department of State, Diplomatic Instructions, Vol. 10, pp. 225-238, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Clay to Antonio José Cañaz, Envoy from the United Provinces of Central America, April 18, 1825, Department of State, Notes to Foreign Ministers and Consuls, Vol. 3, pp. 215-216, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

¹⁴Clay to Everett, April 27, 1825, Department of State, Diplomatic Instructions, Vol. 10, pp. 297-305, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Clay to John Quincy Adams, October 3, 1825, in James F. Hopkins, ed., The Papers of Henry Clay, Vol. 4 (Lexington, Kentucky, 1972), pp. 711-712.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Clay to Thomas B. Robertson, Confidential Agent to Cuba, December 7, 1825, Department of State, Diplomatic Instructions, Vol. 10, pp. 418-420, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Richard C. Anderson, United States Minister to Colombia, to Clay, November 10, 1825, Department of State, Diplomatic Despatches from Colombia, Vol. 3, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C. During this time, the United States Consul at Cartagena exerted considerable pressure to prevent the recruitment of American seamen for service in the Colombian navy. Many times he personally demanded from the local authorities information about the number of sailors recruited and their status in the Colombian navy. North American seamen who did not have passports or letters of authorization were forced by the consul to return to the United States. His activities were severely criticized by the Colombian government since he was trying to get personnel for their war vessels. The Consul utilized official and unofficial prerogatives to locate and arrest American deserters who were serving in the Colombian navy. There is no evidence that the American Consul acted on official orders from the Department of State, but it seems that the prevention of recruitment of American sailors for service in the Colombian squadron being readied for an attack on Cuba was part of the Consul's activities. See Antonio Beluche, Commander of the Operations Squadron, to John M. McPherson, United States Consul at Cartagena, September 23, 1823; José Padilla to McPherson, September 24, 1825; Soubllette to McPherson, January 21, 1825; Comandancia General de Operaciones to Consul, April 26, 1826; Department of State, Consular Post Records, Correspondence from Local Officials, Vol. C8.1, Cartagena, Record Group 84, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

²¹Ibid.

²²Ibid.

²³Robert Tillotson, Collector of the Port of New York, to Clay, December 15, 1825, Department of State, Miscellaneous Letters, M179, R63, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C., Niles' Weekly Register, May 13, 1826.

²⁴Adams writes that "Clay had a long conference with Baron Tuyll, the Russian Minister in the United States, and that "Baron Tuyll is very earnest in the desire that we should interpose to prevent the invasion." There is no record of that conference in the National Archives. Clay's views may have been derived from an unofficial talk with the Russian Minister since Henry Middleton, the United States Minister in Russia, wrote on December 21 that as a result of the death of Alexander I the Russian government had taken no action on the American proposal and it had to await "the orders of the new Sovereign." On December 26, 1825, Clay gave Tuyll copies of the notes that he had given to the Mexican and Colombian Ministers. On December 30, 1825, Clay wrote to Anderson that "The Baron de Tuyll, the Russian Minister accredited here, indicated recently that he had . . . information and instructions

. . . from St. Petersburg corroborating and supporting the views that Mr. Middleton presents of the effect of the appeal to the Emperor of Russia." It is doubtful that Tuylly conveyed that information to Clay. It appears that the Secretary of State asked a cancellation of the Colombian and Mexican attack as result of the concern of the United States for the status quo. See Adams, Memoirs, Vol. 7, p. 88; Henry Middleton to Clay, December 21, 1825, Department of State, Diplomatic Despatches from Russia, Vol. 10; Clay to Baron de Tuylly, December 26, 1825, Department of State, Notes to Foreign Legations, Vol. 3, p. 247; Clay to Anderson, December 30, 1825, Diplomatic Instructions, Vol. 10, pp. 426-427; in Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C. For the notes to the Colombian and Mexican Ministers see Clay to José María Salazar, Colombian Minister to the United States, December 20, 1825, Department of State, Notes to Foreign Legations, Vol. 3, pp. 245-246, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.; Clay to Pablo Obregón, Mexican Minister in the United States, December 20, 1825, in *ibid.*

²⁵*Ibid.*

²⁶Clay to Alexander Everett, April 27, 1825, Department of State, Diplomatic Instructions, Vol. 10, pp. 297-305, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C. On December 26, 1825, Clay wrote to Middleton:

. . . If war against the islands should be conducted by these 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.

It is interesting to note that this declaration, the equivalent of war, was made only six days after Clay had requested the cancellation of plans for the invasion of Cuba and Puerto Rico. See Clay to Middleton, December 26, 1825, Department of State, Diplomatic Instructions, Vol. 10, pp. 424-426, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington D. C.; British and Foreign State Papers, 1822-1826, Vol. 13, p. 412.

²⁷José María Salazar to Clay, March 19, 1826, Department of State, Notes from Colombian Legation, Vol. 1, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.; Anderson to Clay, March 19, 1826, Department of State, Diplomatic Despatches from Colombia, Vol. 3, in *ibid.* Colombia accepted the proposal with the condition that the United States convinced Spain to suspend hostilities and not to send reinforcements to Cuba or Puerto Rico. José Revenga, the Colombian Foreign Minister, replied to Anderson that Colombia would not move against the islands until the problem had been considered by the Panama Congress. That was the best alibi that he could find to justify the suspension. Mexico provided a similar reply.

²⁸Clay to Middleton, May 10, 1825, Department of State, Diplomatic

Instructions, Vol. 10, pp. 331-338, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

²⁹Thomas B. Robertson to Clay, April 20, 1825, in Hopkins, The Papers of Henry Clay, Vol. 4, p. 272.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Lidio Cruz Monclova, Historia de Puerto Rico, Vol. 1 (Fío Piedras, 1970), p. 184.

³²James J. Wright to Clay, July 31, 1825, Department of State, Consular Despatches, Santiago de Cuba, Vol. 1, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

³³Adams, Memoirs, Vol. 6, p. 230; U. S. Congress, Senate, Message from the President of the United States Transmitting Information Relative to Piratical Depredations, 18th Cong., 2d Sess., Doc. 15, 1825, Washington, D. C., p. 3.

³⁴Florida Intelligencer, August 27, 1825.

³⁵Harold W. V. Temperley, "The Later American Policy of George Canning," American Historical Review, 11 (1906), pp. 790-793.

³⁶José Mariano de Michelena, Mexican Representative in England, to Secretary of State, March 4, 1825, in Juan E. Hernández y Dávalos Manuscript Collection, Document HD 18-2.4329 (2465), Latin American Collection, University of Texas Library, Austin, Texas.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸E. J. Stapleton, Some Official Correspondence of Lord Canning, Vol. 1 (London, 1887), p. 270.

³⁹Temperley, "The Later American Policy of George Canning," p. 790.

⁴⁰Rufus King, United States Minister in Great Britain, to Clay, August 9, 1825, Department of State, Diplomatic Despatches from Great Britain, Vol. 32, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C. King included in his communication several notes of conversations between Canning and himself. He included extracts of despatches from Addington to Canning, May 2, 1825, Addington to Canning, May 21, 1825, and Canning to King, July 29, 1825. For the origins of British commercial policy in Spanish America see William Kenneth Bunce, "American Interests in the Caribbean, (Ph.D dissertation, Graduate School, The Ohio State University, 1939), pp. 121-131.

⁴¹Temperley, The Foreign Policy of Canning, pp. 172-174.

⁴²Ibid. p. 172.

⁴³Ibid. p. 169.

⁴⁴Stapleton, Vol. 2, p. 353.

⁴⁵Clay to Rufus King, October 17, 1825, Department of State, Diplomatic Instructions, Vol. 10, pp. 394-401, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁴⁶Michelena to Secretary of State and Foreign Relations, n.d.; in Juan E. Hernández y Dávalos Manuscript Collection, Document HD 18.6. 4463 (2566), Latin American Collection, University of Texas Library, Austin, Texas.

⁴⁷Charles R. Vaughan, British Minister in the United States, to Canning, December 21, 1825, Doc. F. O. 5/199, Foreign Office Archives, Public Records Office, Chancery Lane, London.

⁴⁸Canning to Vaughan, February 8, 1826, F. O. 5/209, No. 10 (Secret and Confidential), Foreign Office Archives, Public Records Office, Chancery Lane, London.

⁴⁹Charles K. Webster, ed., Britain and the Independence of Latin America, 1812-1830, Vol. 1 (New York, 1970), p. 36.

⁵⁰Temperley, "The Later American Policy of George Canning," pp. 792-793; Cuba, Ministerio de Educación, Archivo Nacional, Documentos para la historia de Mexico, Vol. 52 (La Habana, Publicaciones del Archivo Nacional de Cuba, 1961), pp. xci-xcvi; Cuba, Ministerio de Educación, Archivo Nacional, Documentos para la historia de Mexico, Vol. 51 (La Habana, Publicaciones del Archivo Nacional de Cuba, 1960), pp. xcv-cv.

⁵¹Viscount Leveson-Gower Granville, British Minister to France, to Canning, August 11, 1825, F. O. 27/331, No. 164, Foreign Office Archives, Public Records Office, Chancery Lane, London.

⁵²Clay to James Brown, United States Minister to France, October 25, 1825, Department of State, Diplomatic Instructions, Vol. 10, pp. 404-407, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C. For reports concerning French intentions to occupy Cuba and Puerto Rico see Daily National Intelligencer, August 8, 1825, New York Evening Post, August 2, 1825, and Niles' Weekly Register, August 13, 1825.

⁵³Webster, Vol. 1, p. 37.

⁵⁴Harold W. V. Temperley, "Instructions to Donzelot, Governor of Martinique, December 17, 1823," English Historical Review, Vol. 41 (1926), pp. 583-587.

⁵⁵Webster, p. 38.

⁵⁶Jaime Delgado, España y Mexico en el siglo XIX, (1820-1830) (Madrid, 1950), pp. 337-338. 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.

⁵⁷For a detailed description of these reports, see William R. Manning, Early Diplomatic Relations Between the United States and Mexico (Baltimore, 1916), p. 117n.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 120-121.

⁵⁹H. G. Ward, British Minister to Mexico, to Canning, May 29, 1826, F. O. 50/21 (Secret), Foreign Officers Archives, Mexico, Public Records Office, Chancery Lane, London.

⁶⁰Clay to Anderson, December 30, 1825, Department of State, Diplomatic Instructions, Vol. 10, pp. 426-427, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.; Clay to Poinsett, December 30, 1825, in *ibid.*

⁶¹Webster, Vol. 1, p. 37

⁶²Clay to Anderson, December 30, 1825. See note 60.

⁶³Alfred Tischendorf and E. Taylor Parks, eds., The Diary and Journal of Richard Clough Anderson, Jr., 1814-1826 (Durham, 1964), p. 245.

⁶⁴Obregón to Clay, January 4, 1826, Department of State, Notes from Mexican Legation, Vol. 1, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C. The note was originally written in Spanish. A translation, quite different from the original, was published in American State Papers, Foreign Relations, Vol. 5, p. 857.

⁶⁵Poinsett to Clay, January 28, 1826, Department of State, Diplomatic Despatches from Mexico, Vol. 1, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

⁶⁶Poinsett to Clay, February 25, 1826, in *ibid.*

⁶⁷*Ibid.*

⁶⁸Anderson to Clay, March 9, 1826, Department of State, Diplomatic Despatches from Colombia, Vol. 3, Record Group 59, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSIONS

The status quo maintained by the United States and the European powers in the Caribbean during the first quarter of the nineteenth century prevented the expansion of the Spanish American movement for independence to the Spanish West Indies. It also inhibited the political emancipation of Cuba and Puerto Rico when local conditions, created by the instability of the peninsular government and the chaos which resulted in Spanish America, were most favorable for accomplishing that goal. The struggle between the United States and the European powers for control of the Caribbean also shaped the relations of the United States with Spanish America and the attitude of Mexico and Colombia toward American foreign policy.

Spanish colonialism retarded the national development and the political, economic, and social growth of Cuba and Puerto Rico. During the entire colonial regime, these islands did not advance beyond the status of poor colonies. Since agriculture played a significant role on the islands and the government limited land distribution to a few individuals, the latifundio, or landed estates with primitive agriculture and often servile labor, dominated the colonial economy. As a result, industrialization and manufacturing, aided by foreign capital, technicians, and immigrant labor from Europe, did not develop during the second half of the nineteenth century, a period when expanded industrial and commercial concerns were improving the economic conditions of Latin

America.

Repressive monopolies, high taxes, and a centralized and autocratic system of government also restricted progress in Cuba and Puerto Rico. Spain did not extend to the insular possessions the civil liberties and political concessions that had been granted to the citizens of the peninsula until the last decades of the nineteenth century. When the Constitution of 1812 was restored in 1836, the insular governors protested to Spain that it was unwise to introduce parliamentary reforms into the Spanish possessions. As a result, in 1837 the government decided to rule Cuba and Puerto Rico by Leyes Especiales (Special Laws), instead of extending to the islands the constitutional guarantees and political reforms granted to the mainland.

Despite the repressiveness of the government and the backwater conditions of the colonies, the people remained loyal to Spain for more than three hundred years. In the nineteenth century, however, the political turmoil that besieged Spain and her colonies as a result of the Napoleonic invasion caused great anxiety and concern among the Cubans and Puerto Ricans. The French invasion of Spain and the indecisive actions of the Spanish government also affected the political expectations and loyalty of the colonies. A rising national consciousness began to manifest itself among the Cubans and Puerto Ricans, influenced both by the political events on the peninsula and by their belief in the inevitability of a prolonged struggle for independence in Spanish America.

Social, economic, and political discrimination resulted in creole dissatisfaction. Spanish Crown officials and the peninsular aristocracy in the islands distrusted and feared the creoles, considered them inferiors, and believed that they lacked the proper cultural and social

graces. Cubans and Puerto Ricans, except on a few occasions, did not attain positions of responsibility or authority in the local government because the peninsulares normally monopolized the lucrative bureaucratic posts. The Spaniards also controlled the business and commercial monopolies and the military forces that defended the islands. Furthermore, the creoles did not have representation in the political affairs of Cuba and Puerto Rico and could not change any law promulgated by Spain. The peninsulares believed the creoles were incapable of self-government and unable to direct the political affairs of the colonies.

The brief period of free trade and economic concessions which Spain bestowed at the end of the eighteenth century, however, diminished the creoles narrow provincialism and their sense of inferiority and brought to their attention the importance of world events. As a result of that awareness, the Napoleonic invasion of Spain, and the imprisonment of Ferdinand VII, Cubans and Puerto Ricans began to demand meaningful concessions. During that time, the creoles identified themselves with colonial goals rather than with national objectives. A strong sense of individualism, personality, and identity became evident in their desires for increased social equality and decreased political control. Since the prosperity of many Cuban creoles depended on slavery and the plantation system, they demanded the continuation of the slave trade, unrestricted migration, and labor control and advocated free trade with all countries and popular education. On the other hand, the principal concerns of the Puerto Rican creoles were the reduction of trade barriers, the elimination of commercial restrictions, the promotion of agriculture, reduction of taxes, and equality of opportunity for private economic interests.

The liberal outlook of some colonial rulers, the improvement of the economy, and the efforts made to resolve the colonial differences that existed between creoles and peninsulares, however, could not stifle the strong sense of nationality and pride in creole leadership which had arisen among the Cubans and Puerto Ricans. Spain's erratic administration further increased creole nationalism. The insular planters and merchants of an emerging bourgeoisie, having profited greatly by the few economic concessions of the preceding century, realized that additional reforms were necessary if they were to maintain a viable commercial system. Since the desired concessions appeared to be unattainable without substantial changes in the political system, Cuban creoles began to favor local autonomy, annexation by the United States, or outright independence. In Puerto Rico, many creoles demanded complete assimilation into the political system or separation from Spain as the only solution for resolving the colonial problem.

The few concessions granted by Spain were mostly economic in nature and primarily benefited the wealthy creoles and the middle class merchants. They did not, however, improve the political conditions of the colonies or the economic status of the poor peasants, free blacks, and slaves who lived in poverty, had no education, and were unaware of the fundamental needs of social change. As a result, the political apathy of the masses, intensified by years of oppression and military controls, began to change after 1810. Under the leadership of the separatists, secret societies, and Masonic lodges, many Cubans and Puerto Ricans began to reconsider the extent of their loyalty to the Crown.

The movement for political emancipation in Venezuela and Santo Domingo also strengthened the nationalistic spirit of many Cubans and Puerto

Ricans. The revolutionary leaders that emerged to direct the independence effort came mostly from the middle class. These separatists began to furnish the directing force of the movement for Cuban and Puerto Rican independence, in spite of the opposition of the peninsulares, the liberal and conservative creoles, and the passivity of the rural lower classes. In Cuba, the Soles y Rayos de Bolívar became a true revolutionary organization with thousands of followers from all sectors of society.

In spite of their efforts, Cubans and Puerto Ricans could not achieve independence. The dictatorial measures of the government and the exile of many important leaders significantly affected the struggle for independence in both countries. The geographical position of Cuba and Puerto Rico prevented the spread of the national liberation movements from Spanish America, and the factional disputes between conservatives, liberals, and separatists also affected the struggle for independence. Racial peculiarities, regionalism, apathy, and ignorance would have made a local insurrection difficult without help from the Spanish American republics.

The rapacity of the insular governors, the suppression of individual liberties, and the reestablishment of absolutism did not discourage independence. The military garrisons and the government's protective measures, however, made an internal revolt virtually impossible. Thus, after years of continuous defeats, improper preparation, and poor coordination, the separatists decided to take a different approach to accomplish their objectives. They resolved to place their hopes for success in the victorious armies of the Spanish American republics.

The intervention of Mexico and Colombia in the political affairs

of the Caribbean added a new dimension to the independence movements of Cuba and Puerto Rico. While the goals of the separatists paralleled the interests of the Spanish American republics, they were diametrically opposed to those of the United States, Great Britain, and France. When Colombia and Mexico turned their attention to the liberation of Cuba and Puerto Rico, the United States and the European powers opposed their plans because they would have threatened the status quo in the Caribbean.

The United States intervened in the Caribbean to protect its growing interests in the West Indies. The concern for the nation's security, the need to protect her trade and commerce, and the fear that the Spanish American conflict would eventually spread to her own borders were compelling reasons for the intervention of the United States. The threat to the institution of slavery and the desire of some Southern political leaders for territorial expansion in the Caribbean were also factors of considerable importance.

National interests made necessary the prevention of non-Spanish foreign control of the Caribbean. Neither was it in the best interests of the United States to allow Cuba and Puerto Rico to gain self-government because of the possibility that Great Britain or France would seize them after independence. This circumstance, it was believed, would seriously compromise United States national security and damage her commercial and trade interests in the area.

As Mexico and Colombia began to organize an expedition to liberate Cuba and Puerto Rico, the United States sought direct intervention by the European powers. The American government asked Great Britain, France and Russia to exercise their influence to convince Spain to terminate

the Spanish American conflict by recognizing the independence of the mainland colonies. By securing peace in the Western Hemisphere, the United States would prevent the expansion of the successful Spanish American movement for independence to the Spanish West Indies and protected the status quo in 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 also was designed to influence Mexico and Colombia, who desired to end the hostilities in the mainland. At the same time, the United States reemphasized to Great Britain and France the need of maintaining the status quo. The United States believed that if Mexico or Colombia intervened militarily in the Caribbean, Great Britain or France would feel compelled to join the conflict to protect their own interests.

Great Britain supported the actions of the United States because she wanted to prevent possible American intervention in the West Indies. She also feared that the Spanish American republics might extend their operations to her own colonies. The British government, however, did not wish to oppose openly the Spanish American plans and thereby alienate the new republics. Instead, she recommended the abandonment of their project because the United States had indicated that she would interfere to protect the islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico. Great Britain, therefore, made the United States responsible for thwarting the invasion plans of Mexico and Colombia.

France did not approve the plans of Mexico and Colombia but remained neutral as result of Great Britain's influence in the Caribbean.

The Russian government also accepted the recommendations of the United States. Russia's concern, however, was not the danger involved in an attack from Mexico and Colombia but rather the use of force by the United States to impose a military solution to a political problem.

Colombia and Mexico decided, in view of the American opposition, to bring the subject of the colonial status of Cuba and Puerto Rico before the Congress of Panama during the summer of 1826. When the representatives of the Spanish American republics met in June, renewed attempts by the United States and the European powers to maintain the status quo in the Caribbean further dissuaded the leaders of Mexico and Colombia from intervening in the islands.

The actions of the United States created distrust of American intentions in Spanish America and strained hemispheric relations. By the time the United States decided to commit its influence to preserve the status quo, relations with Mexico had deteriorated. President Victoria's dissatisfaction with the United States was so great that he campaigned for the establishment of an organization of Spanish American states to oppose the growing power of the United States. The intervention of the United States in the affairs of the Caribbean, an area which Mexico considered important for the defense of her eastern boundaries, increased Mexican concern. The suppression of assistance for the Mexican revolutionaries, the intervention in the Caribbean, and the refusal of the United States to help and acknowledge President Monroe's declaration when Mexico asked for assistance resulted in the ill-will of the Mexican government during the first half of the nineteenth century.

When news arrived in the Venezuelan capital about the decision to cancel the expedition the separatists immediately sought Bolívar's

opinion. He told them that the opposition of the United States had been the decisive factor in the suspension of the proposed invasion. The National Congress of Cuban Historians which met in 1947 in Havana also declared that the opposition of the United States was the principal reason which prevented the Spanish American republics from agreeing on the Caribbean problem in 1826. This belief still predominates in many parts of Spanish America.

The leaders of the Cuban and Puerto Rican movements for independence clearly understood that to continue the struggle for political emancipation would be futile without direct assistance from the Spanish American republics. Rebellion in Cuba and Puerto Rico during that time had less chance of success than on the mainland because of the islands' geographical isolation and the repressive measures of the Spanish government. Many creoles, who feared that they would not be able to control the black slaves after independence, opposed insurrection. Their reticence greatly inhibited revolutionary activities in Cuba.

The status quo supported by the United States and the European powers in the Caribbean prevented the liberation and independence of the last Spanish colonies in the Western Hemisphere during the first part of the nineteenth century. As a result of this political restraint which assured Spain control of her dependencies in the West Indies, Cuba and Puerto Rico were unable to gain their independence when local conditions were most favorable for accomplishing that goal.

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VITA

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