

“THE SHACKLES OF CIVILIZATION”
RACE AND AMERICAN IMPERIALISM IN HAITI
1915-1934

By
WILLIAM CHRISTOPHER MULLEN

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Harding University

Searcy, Arkansas

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RACE AND AMERICAN IMPERIALISM IN HAITI
1915-1934

Thesis Approved:

Dr. Laura Belmonte

Thesis Adviser

Dr. Doug Miller

Dr. Matthew Schauer

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Name: WILLIAM CHRISTOPHER MULLEN

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Abstract: The United States, in its administration of Haiti from 1915 to 1934 effectively exported pre-existing ideas about the inferiority of non-white peoples to the island republic. The American occupation failed to create a functional democratic republic because the administrators focused upon material and infrastructure improvements while not implementing social, civic, and institutional changes conducive to democracy. The intervention was prompted by financial motivations and fear of a German takeover of Haiti, but the protracted military occupation and administration of the island quickly grew into a colonization project never fully supported by either the Haitian or American ruling classes and vociferously resisted by the Haitian commoners. Once Haiti was under American control, the Marines engaged in five years of guerrilla warfare against the *cacos*, or bandit-soldiers. News of war crimes committed by the Marines prompted an inquiry by the United States Senate which resulted in the appointment of Marine Corps Commandant John Russell as High Commissioner. The 1920s saw the High Commissioner act as a military dictator, ruling through the Haitian president as a client and only answering to the American Secretary of State. The Commissioner focused upon physical infrastructure improvement and an educational system focused upon vocational training and manual labor rather than the liberal-arts curriculum favored by the Haitian ruling class. The educational system was not designed for a nation prepared for self-government but a nation being groomed for perpetual dependency upon the United States. The educational system imposed by the United States led to nationwide riots and a massacre of protesters by Marines in Aux Cayes in 1929. The shock and scandal of the violence led the U.S. President to appoint a commission led by Cameron Forbes to organize the withdrawal of the United States and R.R. Moton to oversee the reorganization of the Haitian education system. Upon withdrawal of U.S. troops in 1934, Haiti was left with no significant lasting institutions except the Haitian gendarmerie, which furnished the power base for the post-Occupation dictatorships. Haiti remains an unstable country in the twenty-first century, dependent upon foreign aid for survival. The fragility of Haiti's democracy and its dependence upon foreigners are legacies of the Occupation period.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In 1929, the Caribbean nation of Haiti was in the midst of a crisis. The nation had spent fourteen years in the grips of a foreign occupation, enduring violent suppression of resistance, rule by military fiat, and economic exploitation and stagnation, and was about to reach a violent flash-point. Students of the Haitian Service Technique began a non-violent strike against the educational system which expanded into general protests and riots against the Occupation. As the situation deteriorated and the Haitian people continued to rise and resist against the foreigners, the military resorted to violent methods. Martial law and curfews were declared, airplanes dropped bombs into the harbor of Aux Cayes, and Marines opened fire on protesters.¹ This massacre would prove to be the beginning of the end of the Occupation, but reflected everything wrong with it at the same time.

The American occupiers set out on a wide-scale nation-building exercise in Haiti, primarily focused on the reconstruction of vital infrastructure such as roads, telegraph lines, and hospitals, but they devoted almost no resources to constructing a democratic, liberal society. The United States built empty monuments to independence and good government, but its racial myopia prevented the construction of a society which mirrored those values. Rather, the racially-

1 “Rushing Marines to Haiti, Hoover to Tell Congress of Troubles There,” *The New York Times*, December 7, 1929, 1.

motivated violence endemic to the United States followed the Marines across the sea and was unleashed in Haiti. Rather than becoming, in the words of famous Marine Smedley Butler, a “first-class black man’s country,” Haiti remains desperately poor and unstable in the second decade of the twenty-first century.²

The essential questions raised by this study are: What were the primary motivations behind the intervention in Haiti? Why did the occupation fail to produce a stable, democratic nation? To what extent, if any, did the condition of race relations in the United States inform the conduct of the occupiers and the course of the occupation? The answers to these questions lie not in Haiti, but in the United States and its culture of white supremacy. The occupation of Haiti from 1915-1934 illustrates the essence of U.S. imperialism, built on a culture of exploitation, phony democracy, and paternalistic racism. To understand the U.S. occupation of Haiti is to understand U.S.-Caribbean relations in the twentieth century and the American culture of imperialism in the early twentieth century.

The Haitian experiment was a test of Wilsonian Internationalism, the policy ideals of President Woodrow Wilson, which determined to use American influence to spread liberalism and democracy abroad. In practice Wilsonian idealism did little to spread democracy and furthered only the economic and political interests of the United States. The United States inherited the remnants of the Spanish colonial empire in 1898, and the years of Wilson’s presidency saw an increased vigor for interventionism on the American periphery. This interventionism came hand-in-hand with Progressive-era ideas about paternalism, eugenics, and Social Darwinism. Republics such as Haiti, peopled almost entirely by Africans, were squarely at the bottom of the racial hierarchy.

2 Lowell Thomas, *Old Gimlet Eye: The Adventures of Smedley Butler* (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1933), 241.

Robert Lansing, U.S. Secretary of State during the invasion, denounced the black race as incapable of self-government entirely. “The African race is devoid of any capacity for political organization and lack genius for government. Unquestionably there is in them an inherent tendency to revert to savagery and cast aside the shackles of civilization which are irksome to their physical nature.”³ Assistant Secretary of State William Phillips blamed political instability in Haiti on “the failure of an inferior people to maintain the degree of civilization left them by the French, or to develop any capacity of self-government entitling them to international respect or confidence.”⁴

The chauvinism displayed by these diplomats was egregious, but unsurprising. When the Marines disembarked in Port-au-Prince in 1915, slavery was still in living memory (only fifty years had passed since the end of the Civil War). Millions of black Americans were denied basic constitutional rights by the system of white supremacy commonly called Jim Crow, which would not begin to be dismantled for another four decades. When the Marines took control of Haiti, they effectively exported the Jim Crow system to the island republic. In the words of *The Crisis*, publishing organ of the American National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), “If the ‘civilization’ is to be of the Georgia type may the good Lord deliver Hayti (sic) from it!”⁵

3 Robert Lansing to J.H. Oliver, RADM, USN, governor of Virgin Islands, January 30, 1918; Library of Congress, Papers of Robert Lansing, quoted in Hans Schmidt, *The United States Occupation of Haiti, 1915-1934* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1971), 63.

4 William Phillips, “Notes and Recommendations on the Political Situation in Haiti,” August 1915, quoted in Schmidt, 63.

5 DuBois, W.E.B., ed., “Hayti,” *The Crisis* (October, 1915), 281.

Haitian-U.S. Relations: 1800-1915

Since the nineteenth century, the United States viewed the Caribbean as its sphere of influence. While it did not engage in direct colonization of the Caribbean during the century, it zealously opposed European intervention and colonialism. The United States most eloquently stated these principles in the Monroe Doctrine. This doctrine, drafted by John Quincy Adams and announced by President James Monroe in 1823, denounced European colonialism and asserted the rights of the United States to intervene to prevent colonialism. “The American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers.”⁶ The Monroe Doctrine established the foundations of interventionist anti-colonialism. U.S. imperialism was inherently one-sided, concerned with American economic interests to the detriment of the native population. Social Darwinism of the Progressive Era instilled an ideology of paternalistic racism into U.S. interventionist policies. The Haitian experience mirrored the experience of Cubans, Dominicans, and others who fell under the shadow of American hegemony.⁷

Throughout its history, Haiti occupied an important position in the economic interests of the United States. Haiti occupies the western third of the island Hispaniola and forms the eastern portion of the Windward Passage. This passage is the only direct route between the eastern United States and the Panama Canal. The island nation is only six hundred miles off the coast of Florida, making it strategically important to United States shipping and naval strategy in the Caribbean. Its rich agricultural sector included coffee, cotton, cacao, tobacco, indigo, and sugar plantations.

6 James Monroe, “Monroe Doctrine,” Address to Congress, U.S. Congress, December 2, 1823.

7 Anthony P. Maingot and Wilfredo Lozano, *The United States and the Caribbean: Transforming Hegemony and Sovereignty* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 1.

As early as 1686, the French colony of Saint Domingue began trading with the English colonies on the eastern coast of North America. In 1717, the government of France authorized exchange of molasses from Saint Domingue for fish from New England. This molasses reached Massachusetts distilleries and smugglers brought it back to Saint Domingue as rum. This illicit trade between the British and French colonies continued despite the Molasses Act of 1733 and the Seven Years War between Britain and France. French defeat in the war led the French government to allow British ships limited free trade rights in the Dominican port of Môle St. Nicolas. The trade between two colonies of rival imperial powers contradicted prevailing mercantilist economic theories of the day and emphasized the growing interdependence of the Caribbean islands with the North American mainland.⁸

The trade restrictions imposed by the British Parliament to quash the free exchange between its colonies and French colonies contributed significantly to American grievances against Britain before the American Revolution of the 1770s. Indeed, French desire to preserve trade with the colonies and prevent a British attack on Saint Domingue likely contributed to the Franco-American alliance of 1778.⁹ Article XI of the Treaty of Alliance bound the United States to the military defense of the French West Indies as well as any other French possessions in the western hemisphere.¹⁰ The Treaty of Paris secured American independence in 1783, and France followed with a revolution of its own in 1789.

The turmoil in Europe following the fall of the Bourbon dynasty weakened French control over its overseas colonies. The United States abandoned the Franco-American alliance by

8 Rayford W. Logan, *The Diplomatic Relations of the United States with Haiti, 1776-1891*, (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1941), 6.

9 Logan, *The Diplomatic History of the United States with Haiti*, 7-8.

10 Richard Peters, ed., "Treaty of Alliance with France, 1778," *The Public Statutes at Large of the United States of America*, vol. 8 (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1867), 10.

proclaiming neutrality in the French Revolutionary Wars of 1793, and unilaterally abrogated the treaty in 1798.¹¹ France was left with no allies in North America as its colonial empire crumbled. The French Revolution inspired the free black people of Saint Domingue to demand more rights from the colonial government, followed by a large-scale slave revolt in 1791. Touissant L'Overture, the military leader of the revolt, aligned himself with the French Revolutionary government in 1794 once France abolished slavery. In 1801, he drafted a constitution proclaiming autonomy and made himself governor. Saint Domingue still owed nominal allegiance to France, but the government in Paris held no actual control over the nascent black republic. L'Overture actively sought support for his cause from both Britain and the United States.

However, by 1801, France sought to re-assert control over its colony. Numerous French victories under Napoleon Bonaparte in Europe strengthened French resolve and restored hopes of a French colonial empire in the Americas. In 1802-3, the revolutionaries defeated a French contingent led by Captain-General Charles Leclerc, the brother-in-law of Napoleon Bonaparte. As France retreated, the colony declared its independence on January 1, 1804. The revolutionary leader Jean-Jacques Dessalines renamed the republic Haiti, an aboriginal word meaning "land of the mountains."¹² The population of the new republic was over 90 percent black, and descended from slaves. The revolutionary government drafted a constitution forbidding whites from owning land in Haiti. This policy, as well as the violence suffered under the revolutionaries, caused the

11 "Milestones: 1784-1800," U.S. Department of State, retrieved January 14, 2015, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1784-1800/xyz>.

12 Hans Schmidt, *The United States Occupation of Haiti, 1915-1934* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1971), 19.

French plantation owners to flee to the United States, where many of them settled in South Carolina.¹³

The United States' Southern, land-holding aristocracy balked at the Haitian Revolution. Despite the Declaration of Independence declaring that "all men are created equal," the majority of the United States' black population lived in slavery., and it was the largest slave-holding nation in the world; of its population of 5.3 million, 900,000 people were slaves. Slaveholders in the South feared that the Haitian revolution would encourage similar revolts among their slaves. At the same time L'Overture won his victories against France, authorities in Virginia uncovered a slave rebellion led by Gabriel Prosser. The prospect of violent rebellion frightened United States President Jefferson, who declared "if something is not done, and soon done, we shall be the murderers of our own children."¹⁴ To Jefferson, the Haitian revolution exacerbated the looming threat of servile insurrection already present in the slave society of the South. He saw nothing but violence and bloodshed in the future if the rebellion succeeded. Jefferson opposed Haiti because he believed that blacks would transform the island into a rogue state, and because he feared the loss of French hegemony in the Caribbean, which he viewed as favorable to U.S. interests.

As the Leclerc expedition neared Saint Domingue, Jefferson shifted his policies to oppose France. He learned of French plans to occupy New Orleans after quashing the rebellion. French control of Louisiana would disrupt American shipping on the Mississippi River. Furthermore, he feared the French might attempt to pacify the island by deporting the rebels to North America. He suspected the French would use slave insurrection as a tool to undermine the

13 Ludwell Lee Montague, *Haiti and the United States, 1714-1958* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1958), 9.

14 Tim Matthewson, "Jefferson and Haiti," *The Journal of Southern History* 61 (May 1995): 219.

United States as they had used it against the British in the 1790s.¹⁵ The president publicly announced U.S. neutrality, but in practice traded with the rebels. Ultimately, the Leclerc expedition failed without crucial U.S. support. Leclerc died of yellow fever in 1802 and the expedition fell apart by late 1803. After this failure, Napoleon abandoned his designs on a North American empire. He sold Louisiana to the United States in 1803.¹⁶

Jefferson could not disavow the Haitian revolution entirely, because he opposed slavery on moral grounds and supported gradual emancipation. Nevertheless, his fears of insurrection and desire to establish U.S. hegemony in the Caribbean prevented the United States from extending diplomatic recognition to Haiti. The United States did not recognize Haitian independence until 1862, after the slave-holding states seceded from the Union.¹⁷ Even in the early nineteenth century, the first glimpses of the often acrimonious relationship between the two republics emerged.

The black republic began its independence isolated from the rest of the world. France, though defeated by the revolutionaries, forced the Haitian government to pay a large indemnity to guarantee the nation's independence. Unlike the United States, it did not have a tradition of self-government and democracy. Jean-Jacques Dessalines, the hero of independence, solidified his power by massacring whites who survived the war of independence. He abandoned republicanism entirely and declared himself emperor Jacques I. Haiti's diplomatic and economic isolation bred a culture of militarism and autocracy. Constant threats of invasion from France necessitated a strong military, and the loss of French colonial authority meant the loss of civilian

15 Matthewson, "Jefferson and Haiti," 223.

16 Schmidt, *The United States Occupation of Haiti*, 28.

17 Montague, 86.

government entirely.¹⁸ Haiti spent most of the century in flux, as the presidency shifted between strong-men. From 1908-1915, the six different men held the presidency. This “revolutionary cycle” reinforced a paternalistic racist sentiment among the U.S. occupiers: Because Haiti lacked stable government, the United States needed to provide it.

Haitian Society and Culture

The social order of Haiti consisted of two large groups: the former colonial exploiters and the large mass of former slaves. The former were *affranchis*, or *gens de couleur*, mixed-race descendants of French colonials. The colonial racial hierarchy afforded the *affranchis* a privileged position in society, and many of them lived on plantations in the style of the *grands blancs*. They were educated and wealthy, spoke French, and practiced Catholicism. Haitian *affranchis* hoped to achieve international prestige and recognition by emulating French language, mannerisms, and culture. The Haitian ruling class was educated a French-model classical liberal-arts curriculum which emphasized rhetoric, literature, history, and Latin. These elites despised anything *africain* and identified themselves with French culture.¹⁹ The *affranchis* were largely split in their attitude towards the foreign Occupation. The 1915 intervention came at a time in which the *gens de couleur* were close to losing their monopoly on political power, and the client-presidents selected by the Occupation to lead the country, Dartiguenave and Borno, were members of the mixed-race ruling class themselves.

The *africains* descended from African-born slaves who still held to the culture of their ancestors. They spoke Haitian Creole, a language based on Norman French but incorporating elements from West African languages. They practiced *vodoun*, a syncretic religion which blends

18 Ibid., 13-14.

19 Montague, 11-12.

Catholicism with traditional West African religious practices. During the Occupation, the *africains* were largely opposed to foreign control and resented the elites for tolerating it. During the guerrilla campaign, *africain* soldiers wore charms and amulets believed in *vodoun* to ward off enemy bullets. The peasant-soldier's belief in *vodoun* was so strong and vital to the anti-U.S. resistance that the Marines, allied with the French and *affranchi* clergy, attempted unsuccessfully to ban the practice of *vodoun*.²⁰ Most *africains* were illiterate, and left little surviving records beyond what the occupying Marines or the ruling class wrote about them.

Haitian Finances

Throughout the nineteenth century, Haiti remained in the French sphere of influence, and the ruling class expressed Francophilic sentiments. Nevertheless, by the early twentieth century French influence in the western hemisphere declined. A rivalry between the United States and Germany for Haitian influence dominated Haitian history in the first decade of the century.²¹

German merchants circumvented the constitutional prohibition on white landownership by intermarrying with prominent *affranchi* families. German merchants intermingled freely with Haitian elites, unlike U.S. businessmen whose racial prejudices prevented them from stooping so low. The creation of this Germano-Haitian class greatly increased German influence over the Haitian economy. By 1914, the U.S. State department estimated that Germany controlled 80 percent of commercial businesses, as well as all public utilities in Port-au-Prince and Cap-Haïtien.²² The previous year, war erupted in Europe and Germany had become a potential enemy. Though the United States remained neutral, German interest in Haiti became a larger

20 Schmidt, 23.

21 Schmidt, 34.

22 Ibid., 35.

threat to U.S. security. If Germany took Haiti, the U.S. would lose control over the Windward Passage and quick access to the Panama Canal. Germany's Haitian designs likewise violated the U.S. hegemony in the Caribbean. To subvert German gains, U.S. businessmen such as James P. McDonald used bribery to secure concessions to build a National Railroad.²³ Though McDonald's railroad never saw completion, the concession served as an important pretense for intervention in 1915.²⁴

The poor state of Haitian finances provided an opening for foreign powers. In 1910, the Haitian economy hurtled toward bankruptcy while rebellions broke out in the north, and Haitians looked to foreign investors to revitalize their economy and infrastructure. In 1905, the Haitian government suspended the treasury service offered by the French-controlled *Banque National*. Its re-structuring and reorganization led to a power struggle between Franco-German and U.S.-backed investment firms. The Franco-German investors secured a contract for a 65 million franc loan to Haiti. The *Banque* held the sole right to issue paper money and acted as the government treasury.²⁵ Due to objections from the U.S. State Department, the Franco-German controllers of the bank conceded to 50 percent American ownership of the *Banque*.²⁶ Article XXIII of the contract prohibited diplomatic intervention by U.S. By 1911, Americans replaced Frenchmen as the primary bank directors, leading to virtual U.S. control over the *Banque*.²⁷ American control over the finances and infrastructure of the island republic enabled the United States to intervene in the following years. However, the United States' foreign policy had evolved over the

23 Montague, 202.

24 Schmidt, 37-38.

25 Ibid., 39.

26 Montague, 201.

27 Schmidt, 40.

nineteenth century to justify intervention on humanitarian and moralistic grounds to obfuscate the true, venal motivation of the invasion.

After American Marines disembarked in Port-au-Prince, Haiti was not formally part of the American colonial empire, but nevertheless the United States administered the island as a colony. The racial prejudices of the United States influenced the Occupation administration to run the republic as if it were an American state under the Jim Crow system. The education system imposed upon Haiti had as its antecedent the Tuskegee Institute's vocational training, designed for agricultural and technical education at the expense of the liberal arts. This system focused to create a permanent underclass of black laborers presided over by white administrators, which mirrored the sociopolitical situation in the American South.

In the South, just as in Haiti, the white American ruling class used racism to justify the subjugation of black people. The Progressive era brought scientific racism along with paternalism, the complex socio-cultural belief in limiting the agency of subjugated peoples to eventually allow their autonomy following a period of "white tutelage." While this idea led to the independence of the Philippines and the assimilation of Hawaii and Puerto Rico, it did nothing for Haiti. The United States, instead of ruling with a light hand and preparing the island for self-government, centralized the administration under the High Commissioner and eliminated any democratic participation in the government. The financial backers of the Occupation, beginning with a major loan in 1922, imposed a regime of foreign aid upon Haiti, deepening ties between Haiti and the United States, but also ensuring the compliance of Haiti's government through dependency upon foreign aid.

Study of Haiti in the context of contemporary U.S. race relations reveals an island both unique and typical. Haiti was typical of the colonized territories acquired after 1898, which were all primarily populated by non-white peoples and all had some form of colonialist "uplift"

program applied to their health, education, and infrastructure system. However, Haiti was not interchangeable with the Philippines, Puerto Rico, or Hawaii. The Haitian people were African, and their republic was forged in a crucible of servile insurrection. The chaotic state of Haiti in 1915 allowed white supremacists and imperialists to point to the perceived futility of self-rule for the black republic. Thus, while the uplift programs of education, health, and infrastructure improvement were allowed in varying degrees to succeed in those colonies destined for self-rule or assimilation, Haiti remained permanently in the American periphery.

The intersection between the foreign and domestic is a recurring theme in the study of Haiti and the United States. The failure of the American Occupation to create a functional state with democratic institutions was the result of shifts in the United States' foreign policy over two decades. The domestic reaction to the scandal of war crimes committed by the Marines led to public hearings in the U.S. Senate and the creation of the office of High Commissioner. This marked an isolationist turn in foreign policy, with the administration of Haiti becoming a purely internal affair in the State Department. The drafting of the Clark Memorandum on the Monroe Doctrine foreshadowed the beginning of the Good Neighbor Policy later fully implemented in the 1930s under Franklin Roosevelt.

Haiti from 1915-1934 was the beginning of Haiti's history as a periphery of the United States, a position it occupies in the twenty-first century. While the Occupation failed in its nation-building, it maintained United States influence over the island, which secured American financial interests, prevented European control of the Windward Passage, and during the Cold War secured Haiti as a counter-weight to Cuba. The African-American press viewed Haiti as a proxy for their own struggles at home. The experiment with nation-building provided a template for other experiments in empire, most recently in Iraq and Afghanistan. The primary reason for its failure was the racial prejudice which undermined the stated mission of preparing the country for self-government.

CHAPTER II

HISTORIOGRAPHY

The United States' 1915 invasion of the Caribbean republic of Haiti and subsequent 19-year occupation of the island illustrates the complex relationship between the United States and its Latin American neighbors as well as the profound effect domestic policy concerning race had upon foreign policy.

The historiographical conversation about the occupation of Haiti is divided into three schools: the imperialist school, the isolationist school, and the post-colonialist school. Essential questions answered by all three schools include: what was the primary motivation behind the U.S. invasion, was the occupation's failure due to American or Haitian deficiencies, and to what extent, if any, did the race relations issue in the United States influence the conduct of the occupiers?

Contemporary Accounts

Journalists and scholars began writing analyses of the Haitian occupation, its motivations, and its goals almost as soon as the Marines disembarked in 1915. The divide in opinion on U.S. policy in the Caribbean almost perfectly mirrored the color divide in larger American society. In the mainstream (white) press, the dominant view of Haiti before 1915 and up to the invasion was that of a backwards country incapable of self-government.

In 1908, U.S. Admiral Colby Chester characterized Haiti as a “degenerating island” when he profiled the country for *National Geographic* in 1908. He described the Haitians (and neighboring Dominicans) as “[disposed] to laziness and vice,” and described the Haitian people as having a “general tendency to revolution” while “degenerating to a condition of barbarism.”²⁸ This, according to Chester, was due in large part to “the white element having been practically exterminated or removed from the island.”²⁹ Chester likewise considered the “pest-hole” of Haiti unsuited for self-government without the tutelage of the United States. “We owe it to ourselves,” he wrote, “to help them over the many pitfalls of popular government, which we by example led them to establish before they had gone through the preparation necessary for the proper use of universal suffrage.”³⁰

The American press took a dim view of Haitian prospects for self-government during the 1915 intervention. The *Richmond Times-Dispatch* described Haiti as “the only country in the world where a white man cannot own land just because he is white,” and

“heavenly by nature though a hell spot by the wishes of its inhabitants [...] The indolent blacks have suffered the fine buildings of the French cities to fall into ruins and live in most miserable shacks. The streets and the sewers are identical[...]Vessels for the Panama Canal from New York will most likely skirt its coast, giving it the chance for great development—a future which it will surely miss unless some outside hand holds down the wild fighting blacks.”³¹

The Caldwell Watchman from Columbia, Louisiana, called the history of Haiti “a story of misery. The characters are childish Negroes, who play at dignity, spill blood, and do no work. In natural advantages, Haiti is a land of fertile opulence, but what is human there is based and

28 Colby Chester, “Haiti: A Degenerating Island,” *National Geographic* XIX (March 1908), 206-215.

29 Ibid., 214.

30 Ibid., 217.

31 *The Richmond Times-Dispatch*, August 22, 1915, 9.

wretched.”³² The Salt Lake City *Broad Ax* characterized the invasion as “[an end] to more than a century of misrule, anarchy, and murder.”³³

The reaction and coverage of the Haitian policy was quite different in the black press, which was largely sympathetic to the Haitians. Two editorials in the November 1915 edition of *The Crisis* commented negatively on the arbitrary use of force in the Caribbean. The first, signed simply “J.C.,” is ironically titled, “Haitians and Other Savages,” and compared the lurid pictures of mob violence from Port-au-Prince with the lynch mobs across the American South.

“Whatever may be the solution of Haiti's difficulties, it is certain that the people will not give their support to a government which even thinks of selling the Haitian's birthright of liberty, licentious as it may be, for the promise of a mess of American pottage [...] But if they must accept enforced subjection to some foreign power, rather than submit to a nation controlled by a press which remains callous in the presence of horrors in Texas and Georgia while vociferously condemning German atrocities and Haitian savagery, the Haitians would sooner trust to the tender mercies of Count Reventlow, the Kaiser, and Kultur.”³⁴

Likewise, in an open letter to Secretary of State Robert Lansing, published in the same volume, Charles F. Dole (cousin of Sanford Dole, Hawaiian territorial governor) criticized the Wilson administration for continuing the imperialistic programs of the Roosevelt years and compared the United States unfavorably to the British Empire, accusing it of arbitrary conquest. He wrote, “a development is inevitable: control quickly hardens into conquest. Does the United States meditate the conquest of Hayti (sic)?”³⁵

In a coda to an otherwise expository article concerning U.S. plans for the occupation, the Baltimore *Afro-American Ledger* acknowledged the role of race informing policy toward Haiti.

32 *The Caldwell Watchman*, September 10, 1915, 8.

33 *Broad Ax*, September 18, 1915, 6.

34 J.C., “Haitian and Other Savages,” *The Crisis* (November, 1915), 32.

35 Charles F. Dole, “To the Secretary of State,” *The Crisis* (November, 1915), 32.

“The fact that Haitians are Negroes and speak a different language makes it seem improbable that the United States would desire to annex them and thus have colored men in the American Congress.”³⁶

Due to the relative stability of the country following the end of the bandit campaign, the 1920s saw an increase in tourism to Haiti from the United States. The perceived exoticism of the black republic drew writers, activists, and missionaries to its shores, where travelogues and memoirs proliferated. Whether white or black, the authors of these accounts projected their own ideas of civilization onto the situation in Haiti, making their books useful to gauge the attitudes of the United States toward the Occupation.

Samuel Guy Inman traveled to both Haiti and the Dominican Republic during the summer of 1919 and published his account the following year. Inman, a Texas native and missionary for the Disciples of Christ denomination, would later be influential in the formation of the Good Neighbor Policy. In 1915, Inman co-founded the Committee on Co-operation with Latin America and served as its secretary until 1939. Beginning with his study of the United States’ involvement in the Mexican Revolution, *Intervention in Mexico*, he began comparative studies of each Latin American republic subject to a recent U.S. intervention.

In *Through Haiti and Santo Domingo: A Cruise with the Marines*, Inman presented his travelogue as a description of the island and its people, along with “recommendations for the development of an educational, social, and spiritual program that will be a real help to these two needy countries.”³⁷ He intended his book to be a missionary’s guide and practical handbook while in the field. While Inman was skeptical

36 “U.S. Not to Leave in Near Future,” *Afro-American Ledger* (August 21, 1915), 1.

37 Samuel Guy Inman, *Through Haiti and Santo Domingo: A Cruise with the Marines* (New York: Committee on Co-operation with Latin America, 1920), 4.

of foreign interventionism (keeping with the pacifism in his denominational tradition), he fully embraced the idea of a *mission civilisatrice*.

Inman viewed Haiti as “a very dark spot on the horizon of the United States.”³⁸ In his estimation, the Haitian people were awash in an ocean of spiritual darkness and sexual immorality. He focused specific harsh criticism toward practitioners of *vodoun*, which he associated with promiscuity and barbarism. He wrote disdainfully of Haitian men, whom he described as effete and lazy, with “little regard for marriage in our sense of the word.” He described rural peasants as “little above the animal” and their traditional dances as “scenes of unbelievable obscenity.”³⁹

Throughout his travels, Inman kept his interactions with Haitians to a minimum while reproducing the opinions of the Marines, who were engaged in a counter-insurgency campaign against these people. He included lengthy sections of apologia excusing the conduct of the Marines, declaring “No man knows but that he might act in the same way under similar conditions. It is the machine, not the man, that is to blame.” Nevertheless, Inman did fault the military administration for his heavy-handedness in dealing with the *cacos*, particularly the harshness of the *corvée*.⁴⁰

The Isolationists

The isolationists wrote during the 1920s and 1930s, during a period of reaction against Wilsonian internationalism. The isolationists disagreed with the interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine used by Wilson to justify interventionism and criticized the Wilson administration for its

38 Inman, *Through Haiti and Santo Domingo*, 85.

39 Ibid., 59, 64.

40 Ibid., 70.

failures. Writers from this school were Roosevelt Democrats or Republicans, rather than Wilsonian Democrats. The isolationists differed in their emphasis on financial and racial motivations for the U.S. conduct during its occupation.

A series of four articles by James Weldon Johnson of the NAACP published in *The Nation* in 1920 reflected the contemporary African-American view of the occupation as a scheme by Southerners to export Jim Crow to the Caribbean. The newspaper considered his articles important enough to compile his articles into a 48-page pamphlet entitled *Self-Determining Haiti* the same year. In his introduction, Johnson refers to the invasion and occupation as a “dark blot [on] the American escutcheon,” and characterizes his report as an exposé designed to turn public opinion against the continued American presence in Haiti.⁴¹

Johnson believed the invasion was not motivated by a desire to restore peace after the violent murder of President Sam. “To know the reasons for the present political situation in Haiti...it is necessary, among other things, to know that the National City Bank of New York is very interested in Haiti.” Johnson documented attempts by the State Department to intervene in Haiti before the violent *coup d’etat* which the United States government used to justify its intervention. “The overthrow of Guillame and its attending consequences did not constitute the cause of the American intervention in Haiti, but merely furnished the awaited opportunity.”⁴²

Johnson decried the undemocratic methods the American military used to seize control of the Haitian government. He decries martial law and military rule by the U.S. Marine Corps, and calls for the United States to restore democratic rule. According to Johnson, Haiti under the occupation suffered censorship of the press, a sham constitution written by American bankers,

41 James Weldon Johnson, *Self-Determining Haiti* (Berkeley, CA: The Bancroft Library, 1920), 3.

42 Ibid., 7.

and violence and intimidation by the military. "Haiti was given a new constitution by an unconstitutional method...All of this has been done in the name of the Government of the United States; however, without any act by Congress or any knowledge of the American people."⁴³

Johnson viewed the guerrilla campaign against the *caco* rebels as completely unjustified. In his articles, he argues the United States perpetuated the revolutionary cycle of violence on the island. "Pacification would never have been necessary had not American policies been filled with so many stupid and brutal blunders; and it will never be effective so long as "pacification" means merely the hunting of ragged Haitians in the hills with machine guns."⁴⁴ He furthermore denied that Haiti had an endemic problem of revolutionary violence, and indicted machinating foreigners for instigating periodic revolts. Of the revolutions, he said: "Not nearly so bloody as reported, their interference with people not in politics is almost negligible. Nor should it be forgotten that in almost every instance the revolution is due to the plotting of foreigners backed up by their Governments."⁴⁵

Writing as a black man during the Jim Crow era, Johnson understood the racial prejudice behind the violence against the *cacos* as well as the racially-motivated inequities in the occupation administration. He notes that many of the foreigners in the occupation administration were Democrats from the American South, enjoying the perks of political patronage while the native administrators enjoyed no such amenities.

Those at Port-au-Prince live in beautiful villas. Families that could not keep a hired girl in the United States have a half-dozen servants. They ride in automobiles not their own. Every American head of a department in Haiti has an automobile furnished at the expense of the Haitian Government, whereas members of the Haitian cabinet, who are theoretically above them, have no such convenience or luxury.⁴⁶

43 Johnson, *Self-Determining Haiti*, 9.

44 *Ibid.*, 10.

45 *Ibid.*, 31.

46 *Ibid.*, 11

Johnson's scathing polemic against the occupation may have resonated among the African-American community and white liberals, but mainstream academic thought did not rely on his report or articles for almost half a century. Johnson occupies a unique place in the conversation about the American occupation of Haiti. He wrote as a contemporary and witness to the events he described, and his assessment is essentially identical to historians writing at the turn of the twenty-first century. Because of the limited temporal scope of his work, one cannot read Johnson's pamphlet to evaluate the later years of the occupation or the policies which led to American withdrawal from the island.

The Imperialists

Works in the imperialist school were written following the American withdrawal in the 1930s. They were tonally apologetic and take a positive view of the influence of the United States during the occupation. Imperialists view the actions of the United States as necessary to pacify an unruly nation and leave it with infrastructure and institutions for full independence. In the context of U.S.-Latin American relations, they view the Monroe Doctrine and its Corollary as positives, and American hegemony in the western hemisphere as benevolent.

A 1942 study of the United States' interventions in the Caribbean by Wilfrid Hardy Callcott exemplified the thoughts of such apologists. Callcott served as an administrator of the University of South Carolina from 1923-1968, during which he wrote *The Caribbean Policy of the United States*. The author's experiences as a white Southerner during the early twentieth century inform his analysis of American foreign policy and the actions of the United States in the Caribbean republics. Callcott divided the foreign policy of the United States into four distinct periods: continental expansion, development of hegemony in the Caribbean, and hegemony in

the western hemisphere⁴⁷ This periodization of American imperialism and hegemony is useful to explain the shift in policy between the Wilson and Roosevelt administrations.

Callcott traced American expansionism in the twentieth century to the Monroe Doctrine in the early nineteenth century and the prevention of foreign monopolies in the western hemisphere. By the end of the nineteenth century, “the public had begun to conceive of [the Caribbean] as economically and morally a United States problem since nature had placed it geographically adjacent to this country.”⁴⁸ He covered the Haitian intervention in the same chapter as the contemporaneous Dominican intervention, and in both cases he asserted “the objective was ultimate democracy and not permanent Yankee control.”⁴⁹ Callcott presented the situation preceding intervention as a humanitarian crisis, and stated, “There was no serious opposition to [intervention] and it was agreed that the better class of Haitians were glad of what had been done.”⁵⁰

Callcott’s conservative and apologetic treatment of United States imperialism hampers the usefulness of his work as an objective study of the Haitian occupation. Callcott primarily uses State Department records and correspondence between Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan and President Wilson to analyze the motives behind the American intervention. Later studies cast Bryan as essentially ignorant of the political realities of Haiti, meaning that the objective historian cannot use Bryan’s account uncritically, as Callcott did.

47 Wilfrid Hardy Callcott, *The Caribbean Policy of the United States, 1890-1920* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 1942), x.

48 Ibid., 58.

49 Ibid., 400.

50 Ibid., 413.

Future Democratic Senator Paul H. Douglas, writing two articles in *Political Science Quarterly* in 1927, recognized the occupation of Haiti as colonialism, but nevertheless justified it and took a largely benign, if critical, view of the colonizers. He characterized this imperialism as occurring “without the knowledge or consent of the voters.”⁵¹ He characterized the Haitian government as an American puppet state, and the Haitian gendarmerie as staffed by non-commissioned officers from the United States. A U.S.-appointed financial advisor controlled the Haitian budget, and a corps of U.S. marines acted as the primary police force on the island. The U.S. legate insisted upon review of all legislation touching upon the terms of the 1915 treaty legitimizing the occupation. In practice, this gave the U.S. High Commissioner veto power over the Haitian government. If Haiti was independent, it was independent in name only.⁵²

Douglas emphasized the unscrupulous nature of foreign investors, such as James P. MacDonald, who bribed the Haitian government to secure rights to construct a railroad from Port-au-Prince in the south to Cap-Haïtien in the north and for exclusive rights on banana cultivation and exportation.⁵³ Douglas blamed this railroad concession and U.S. financial interests in its construction for the Occupation. The United States had a vested interest in the completion of the railroad, and the political instability preceding the Occupation disrupted construction. Likewise, he believed competition for control over the Haitian *Banque National* between U.S. and German interests hastened the invasion.⁵⁴

51 Paul H. Douglas, “The American Occupation of Haiti I,” *Political Science Quarterly* 42 (June 1927), 229.

52 Paul H. Douglas, “The American Occupation of Haiti II,” *Political Science Quarterly* 42 (September, 1927), 368-369.

53 Douglas, “The American Occupation of Haiti I,” 230-231.

54 *Ibid.*, 236.

Douglas was not entirely critical of the occupation, especially concerning advances in railroad construction and improved access to medical care. He considered the U.S. guerrilla campaign against the *cacos*, Haitian rebels, justified, and only criticized the Occupation for its failure to minimize civilian casualties.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, he considered the colonization of Haiti as an affront to American ideals and advised immediate withdrawal. He did not address the racial aspect of the occupation at all. Although Douglas became an advocate for civil rights during his Senate career, he appeared to consider racial equality as a secondary concern in Haiti.

Douglas criticized the occupation from a technocratic and paternalistic worldview. He believed the instability of Haiti necessitated intervention, and that the United States could provide democratic institutions and infrastructure to allow Haiti to recover as an independent nation. He did not reject the motivations of the United States for invading Haiti. He merely denounced the corruption and undemocratic nature of the occupation government. In this sense, Douglas was a Progressive anti-imperialist who opposed colonialism rather than interventionism.

A 1926 article by Ulysses B. Weatherly published in the *American Journal of Sociology* defended the occupation on pragmatic grounds. “Probably there has been no case of an intervention avowedly based on pure benevolence. Governments are not accustomed to act on motives other than those of self-interest, although they sometimes inject a tone of philanthropy into the language of public documents.”⁵⁶

Weatherly represented the naked paternalism of the reorganized occupation. The appeals to law and order and national self determination trumpeted by the Marines and State Department during the invasion and guerrilla campaign disappeared. Occupied

55 Douglas, “The American Occupation of Haiti II,” 376-378.

56 Ulysses B. Weatherly, “Haiti: An Experiment in Pragmatism,” *American Journal of Sociology* 32 (November 1926), 354.

Haiti did not lack democracy because of external threats or internal insurrection, but simply because Haitians did not deserve democracy. Weatherly blamed the Haitians because they lacked “white tutelage” like the black citizens of the United States and other Caribbean islands:

As a black republic Haiti practiced for more than a century an aggressive isolation. The color line was drawn against the whites, and until quite recently aliens were not allowed to own land. This policy of exclusion has not even yet been voluntarily abandoned, and it is one of the issues in the present patriotic agitation. With the exception of a small group of mixed bloods, the people at the beginning of their national career had had no preliminary experience in either economic or political self-direction. Political and social forms taken over outright from France and America were set to work among a population at once unfamiliar with them and notably weak in capacity for social organization of any kind.⁵⁷

Weatherly proposed improving the roads and sanitation to enable social cohesion and higher quality of life. From this improved infrastructure, civic life would naturally improve and democracy would emerge naturally: “Before the people can be really free there must be an elaborate process of building; there must be constructed the material equipment through which society may function, and there must be developed the intelligence and the civic spirit which are absolutely essential in a democracy.”⁵⁸ The Haitian people likewise needed a robust economy and investment of foreign capital. According to Weatherly’s theory, the Haitian people needed the authoritarian High Commissioner and foreign occupation to have a future enlightened society: “In 1922 the office of High Commissioner was created[...]Then for the first time it was possible to initiate a systematic constructive policy.”⁵⁹ Nevertheless, Weatherly argued the United States should integrate Haitian natives into the administration as quickly as possible to

57 Weatherly, “Haiti: An Experiment in Pragmatism,” 356.

58 Ibid., 363.

59 Ibid., 364.

prevent social decay. The Occupation administration showed little willingness to follow his advice.

In 1940, Ludwell Lee Montague, who later gained fame for his role in the creation of the CIA, wrote a history of U.S.-Haitian relations spanning the years 1714-1938. Though the scope of the work exceeds the occupation years, Montague believed that cultural misunderstandings and mutual xenophobia between the United States and Haiti caused the violence during the occupation. Unlike Douglas, Lee emphasized the racial composition of Haiti and the racial differences between the Americans, the *cacos*, and the Haitian administrators. His introduction emphasized the strategic importance of the Windward Passage to American naval strategy in the Caribbean.⁶⁰ The temporal scope of his work allows for a chapter covering the attempt by the United States to annex Haiti and the Dominican Republic in the 1860s. “It was not the first, nor yet the last, instance of an aggressive attitude cloaked, without conscious hypocrisy, in the guise of a *mission civilisatrice*.”⁶¹ The annexation schemes of the 1860s failed because of Congressional interference and lack of public support, but the United States still firmly believed both nations of Hispaniola were in its sphere of influence.

Montague connected the Taft Administration’s policy of “Dollar Diplomacy” with the Haitian *Banque National*. Haitians created the bank to introduce foreign capital into the country and stimulate their economic development. Like Douglas, Montague saw the railroad and bank as the primary reasons for U.S. intervention in 1915. “[The Marines] would not have been present had there been no bank, railroad, or any other American investment in Haiti. This action

60 Montague, 3.

61 Ibid., 93.

was not ‘dollar diplomacy,’ but ‘international police power.’”⁶² Montague understood the financial investment enabled by Dollar Diplomacy as directly preceding armed intervention.

Montague presented the U.S. as an essentially rational, if hypocritical actor. He describes the election of Philippe Dartiguenave under military occupation as essentially legitimate, and the opposition candidate Rosalvo Bobo as a dangerous revolutionary leader. Although he conceded “it may be doubted whether the electors cast their ballots in any sense of freedom,” he regards the Dartiguenave government as a force for stability.⁶³

Montague presented the people of the United States as essentially unconcerned with the Haitian occupation. In regards to the scant coverage offered by the *New York Times*, he states rhetorically, “If this were true of a great metropolitan daily, one may imagine how much Haitian news was being reported at Gopher Prairie.”⁶⁴ In Montague’s study, the people of the United States, particularly in the West and South, viewed Haiti as an unimportant backwater republic. They feared the war in Europe and considered the Haitian intervention secondary.

Montague did discuss racial issues within Haiti, but did not extrapolate U.S. racial attitudes from their treatment of the natives. He emphasizes the divisions between northern and southern Haiti throughout the country’s history, and the racial divide between the *affranchi* elites and the *africain* peasantry. He blamed these divisions for the revolutionary cycle which occurred before the U.S. intervention, and credited the U.S. and the Dartiguenave government for stopping the chaos.

62 Montague, 208.

63 Ibid., 214.

64 Ibid., 209.

The wider historiographical conversation about the history of American diplomacy and foreign policy was influenced by the works of William Appleman Williams, who laid the foundations for the emerging Wisconsin School of diplomatic history in 1959 with *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*. In this work, Williams revised the narrative of American expansionism from a triumphalist view of expanded liberties to a declension narrative marked by a pursuit of empire. In his introduction, Williams described the relationship between the United States and Cuba as a tragedy because, in the sixty years Cuba spent in America's shadow, from San Juan Hill to the Bay of Pigs, the United States had gradually transformed from a liberator into a taskmaster. Yet, Williams stressed that the United States did not act with malice aforethought, and that the interventions were natural results of men who held internally-inconsistent values.⁶⁵

The primary motivator for the United States' empire, Williams argued, was the need for free trade and expanded markets. This focus upon markets and capitalistic expansion served as an escapist outlet for the contradictions of class and racial conflict which plagued the nation's core. To assuage these problems, the United States expanded its periphery. The genesis of this capitalistic expansionism was John Hay's notes on the Open Door policy toward China. He described this policy as "the liberal policy of informal empire or free trade imperialism."⁶⁶ Williams's dim view of American expansionism has influenced every other scholar of American foreign relations since the 1950s, as well as the New Left of the 1960s.

The Post-Colonialists

The Wisconsin School, as well as the successes of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s and 1960s allowed U.S. historians to re-examine the Haitian conflict through a racial lens.

65 William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* 3rd ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1972), 2.

66 *Ibid.*, 97.

Additionally, the focus of the conversation shifted away from the motivations and actions of the colonizers and toward the voices and actions of the Haitian people. The post-colonialist school understood the Haitian imperialist venture as the foreign policy version of Jim Crow. They also examined the ways in which the domestic policies of the United States influenced the actions of the United States in its wider empire more generally and Haiti more specifically.

In the 1960s and 1970s, studies of the American South and its relation to expansionism emerged. In 1964, African-American historian Rubin Francis Weston wrote on the racial motivations behind U.S. expansionism in his dissertation at Syracuse University, which he expanded and published as *Racism in U.S. Imperialism* in 1972. Meanwhile, Robert E. May of Louisiana State University wrote a study examining the role of the antebellum South in abortive attempts to expand to the Caribbean to preserve and expand slavery. His 1973 book, *The Southern Dream of a Caribbean Empire, 1854-1861* serves as a complement to Weston's study, and both share a thesis of expansionism as a nationalized project with Southern origins.

Weston argued that both imperialists and anti-imperialists exhibited racial prejudice. While proponents of U.S. expansion used paternalist arguments of both racial superiority and moral uplift to justify imposing American rule on non-white peoples, opponents argued against expansion precisely because non-white peoples could never adapt to U.S.-style democracy.⁶⁷ In his discussion of the American intervention in Haiti, Weston noted that Josephus Daniels, Secretary of the Navy during the 1915 intervention, was a Southern Democrat who staffed the Occupation with Southerners and who had asserted that the Southern position on race was bound to become the national position.⁶⁸ Weston's thesis was that the United States' dreams of

67 Rubin Francis Weston, *Racism in U.S. Imperialism* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1972), 2.

68 *Ibid.*, 219.

expansion were, at their heart, motivated by a desire to spread so-called “Anglo-Saxon civilization” and bring non-white groups under the imperial banner. Throughout his book, Weston identified Southern positions which later became nationalized, and identifies Wilsonian internationalism as a particularly Southern foreign policy, in opposition to the Northern isolationists, who nevertheless shared their Southern counterparts’ ideas about race.

May’s book on the Southern origins of expansionism points to the sectional crisis over slavery which followed the acquisition of territory from Mexico. “In the 1850s, manifest destiny became sectionalized.”⁶⁹ The book focused on the Spanish Empire’s policy on slavery, and the movement to emancipate the Afro-Cuban population, as well as the American South’s dire opposition to the policy, which likely doomed the plan. “The administration [...] let it be known in diplomatic circles that the United States would not tolerate Negro rule in Cuba.”⁷⁰ May also covered the Filibusters, American freebooters who overthrew Latin American governments in an attempt to annex them to the United States. The limited chronological scope of May’s book renders its usefulness in discussing the twentieth-century American empire paltry. Nevertheless, May’s central thesis: Caribbean expansionism was a product of nationalized Southern interests, is illuminating when discussed in this context.

Hans Schmidt, in his 1971 history of the Haitian occupation, considered the Haitian adventure as part of a century of empire-building in Latin America. Schmidt asserted that the United States assumed a free-trade and open-door policy in areas already under European hegemony such as China. Echoing Williams, he characterized this policy as “liberal internationalism.” However, in the western hemisphere, the United States established its own

69 Robert E. May, *The Southern Dream of a Caribbean Empire, 1854-1861* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1973), 21.

70 *Ibid.*, 55.

hegemonic empire. He characterized this policy as an attempt to make the Caribbean an “American Mediterranean” and that the Good Neighbor Policy of the Franklin Roosevelt administration assumed the hegemonic dominance of the United States over Caribbean affairs. Schmidt recognized that the Haitian occupation happened after and was influenced by the Indian Wars, Chinese exclusion, and the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan. “The military logic of guerilla warfare...dictated vicious hunt-and-kill tactics which were most conventionally rationalized in terms of racial and cultural prejudices.”⁷¹ The violence of the guerrilla campaign against the *caco* rebels became a war of racial violence.

While the United States justified its intervention with talk of democracy and equality under law, the racist cultural norms of the country enabled exploitation of the Haitian natives. Schmidt further argued that the United States focused primarily on the material improvement of Haiti rather than political or social reform. He saw this focus on “pragmatic, materialistic uplift” as an outgrowth of the technocratic impulses of the Progressive movement. These impulses assumed the occupiers were enlightened and the Haitians were cogs in the great machine of progress.⁷² The occupiers built roads, hospitals, and telegraph lines but did little to strengthen Haitian democracy or the Haitian economy; the internal improvements benefited only foreign investors.

Mary Renda, professor at Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts, wrote a 2001 monograph on the occupation, *Taking Haiti*, which examines the culture of racism and imperialism which allowed the United States to exploit the Haitians while ostensibly engaged in a humanitarian mission. She specifically addresses paternalistic racism, which assumed white men had a duty to rule over darker-skinned men and save them from their naturally-violent tendencies.

71 Schmidt, 6-7.

72 Ibid., 14.

She considers the United States a republican empire, which governs its people democratically at home but does not apply these principles evenly to its subject possessions. Overseas colonial expansion merely continued the trend of continental expansion which began in the nineteenth century. “The republic itself was, from the first, constructed out of empire insofar as colonial settlement and Indian Wars established its very foundation.”⁷³ Because the United States experienced imperialism from its very inception, the pervading culture of imperialism encouraged expansion and directly affected the mindset of the Occupation administrators.

Renda does not see the Haitian occupation as a backwater conflict. Instead, she devotes the second half of her book to images of Haiti through the popular culture of the United States. She believes the Haitian occupation worked to shape U.S. foreign and domestic policy and cemented interventionism as a key element of U.S. relations with Latin America. “Foreign interventions and territorial seizures overlapped in time and personnel and built on one another to refine the techniques of imperial control and influence. Taken together, they formed a solid overseas foundation for new cultural departures in the United States.”⁷⁴ She considers the Haitian occupation as an important cultural milestone for the United States, influencing music, literature, and poetry.

Two studies examined the attitude of black Americans toward the American empire. The first, a compilation of newspaper articles edited by African-American historian George P. Marks III in 1971, focused on the black press and its response to American imperialism from 1898-1900. The second, a 2002 article by Henry Lewis Suggs in the *Journal of African American History* examined the attitude of the African American press and community toward the Haitian

73 Mary A. Renda, *Taking Haiti: Military Occupation and the Culture of U.S. Imperialism, 1915-1940* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 7.

74 *Ibid.*, 12.

occupation specifically. Both articles drew complex conclusions about how African-Americans in the United States understood foreign expansion, and reveal how the black population defied simple categorization regarding imperialism.

Marks' anthology began with the annexation of Hawaii, and continued through the Spanish-American War. He found a pattern emerged in which the black press supported imperialism when it could be linked to the domestic cause of civil rights. For instance, the black newspapers of 1898 such as the *Kansas City American Citizen* and the *Indianapolis Freeman*, supported war with Spain because military service would build public support for equal rights.⁷⁵ Annexation of the Philippines and Puerto Rico shifted black opinion away from imperialism, as they viewed their hopes of equality-through-expansion betrayed.

In his article, Suggs concluded that the black press did not initially oppose the intervention, as the occupation continued it grew more hostile to U.S. foreign policy and demanded immediate removal of troops from Haiti. "Despite heavy criticism in prominent African-American newspapers, forty-nine out of sixty-nine articles, both African-American and white, endorsed American intervention in the Caribbean from 1904 to 1919."⁷⁶ Sugg's article shows an interesting and often-overlooked segment of foreign affairs: the domestic response of minorities. The black press did not oppose intervention to establish democracy, but opposed making Haiti a protectorate and the racial injustices perpetuated both at home and abroad. Race permeated and defined the Haitian occupation and reflected racial policies in the domestic sphere. However, African-Americans were not monolithic in their opposition to expansion in general.

75 George P. Marks III ed., *The Black Press Views American Imperialism, 1898-1900* (New York: Arno Press and the New York Times, 1971), 29.

76 Henry Lewis Suggs, "The Response of the African American Press to the United States Occupation of Haiti, 1915-1934," *Journal of African-American History* 87 (December 2002), 71.

The continued legacy of Williams and the Wisconsin School is evident in the 2009 collection, *Colonial Crucible: Empire in the Making of the Modern American State*. This collection of essays, compiled and edited by Alfred W. McCoy and Francisco A. Sarano, re-examines and re-contextualizes the relationship between the United States and its empire. While previous studies largely adopted a model emphasizing the centralized nature of the imperial system, the authors of *Colonial Crucible* instead stress the de-centralized nature of the United States' empire, as it lacked a uniform colonial policy which applied to every territory.

The authors of *Colonial Crucible* emphasize domestic policies which were first implemented in the empire's periphery (the territories), only later making their way back to the core (the continental United States). Policies relating to public health, immigration, eugenics, prison reform, and police all were implemented on the colonial periphery and then traveled back to the core. In this way, the American experiment with colonialism was not short-lived or out of character for the republic, and formed the basis for the expanded powers of the federal government in the twentieth century.⁷⁷ *Colonial Crucible* sacrifices breadth of scope for depth, and so concentrates almost all of its analysis on Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and Cuba. Nevertheless, *Colonial Crucible* is relevant to the study of Haiti because it explains the complex interactions between the foreign and domestic spheres, particularly the Progressive-era policies such as eugenics and immigration restrictionism which were developed in colonial laboratories.

Haitian Voices

Most Haitian accounts of the Occupation were written after the withdrawal of U.S. troops in 1934, and form a corpus of a nationalistic narrative which emphasized the heroism of the *caco*

⁷⁷ Alfred W. McCoy and Francisco A. Sarano, eds., *Colonial Crucible: Empire in the Making of the Modern American State* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009), 1-2

rebels and condemned both the U.S. occupiers and the ruling class which collaborated with them. The generation which came of age during the Occupation rejected the Francophilia and European orientation of their parents and embraced Haitian nationalism. The *caco* campaign provided the heroic figures necessary for nationalistic myth-making, and most French-language Haitian historians told a narrative of dauntless rebels fighting to preserve the independence of the black republic against Yankee oppression.

One of the earliest French-language Haitian histories of the Occupation was by Dantès Bellegarde, an *affranchi* diplomat who served as Minister Plenipotentiary to both France and the United States during the Occupation. His history, *La Résistance Haïtienne*, was completed in 1937, only three years after the Americans withdrew from the country. A dominant theme of this work is the resistance of Haitians to those who would violate their territorial integrity, as well as the United States' inability to provide a national-security justification for their intervention. In his first chapter, Bellegarde defended the actions of the crowd which murdered President Sam, who he considered a dictator responsible for the massacre of political prisoners.

It should be noted immediately that no insult had been made to the American flag. No citizen of the United States had been molested in his person or wronged in his property during the unfortunate events that had just happened. The crowd that had entered the French legation to pull out Vilbrun Guillaume Sam had not manifested hostile feeling to France or her representative: it had thought to simply do an act of justice by lynching the man that it held responsible--rightly or wrongly--for the massacre of political prisoners.⁷⁸

Bellegarde likewise emphasized American violations of Haitian financial sovereignty. He devoted a chapter to the American loan of 1922, which he stopped short of describing as extortion. Bellegarde took pride in Haiti's financial standing and credit rating, and derided the United States for forcing Haiti to acquiesce to the loan in exchange for foreign investment.⁷⁹ He

78 Dantès Bellegarde, *La Résistance Haïtienne* (Montreal, QC, Les Éditions Beauchemin, 1937), 32.

79 *Ibid.*, 100.

presented President Dartiguenave as an ineffectual defender of Haiti's honor and sovereignty, who nevertheless fell out of favor with the occupiers. He reserved most of his bile for Louis Borno, who he regarded as a puppet for John Russell, the American High Commissioner in an arrangement he dubbed "La dictature bicéphale," or "The two-headed dictatorship."⁸⁰

Bellegarde's focus on political and financial matters contrasted with other Haitian historians such as Roger Gaillard, whose seven-volume history of the Occupation, *Les Blancs Débarquent*, devoted multiple volumes to the military history of the *caco* campaign. Published in 1987, each volume focuses on a particular personality or theme involved in the Occupation. In particular, Gaillard emphasized the military prowess of the bandit-soldier leaders who caused so much consternation to the Marines during the guerrilla campaign. Volume VI was a biography and military history of the guerrilla leader Charlemagne Perault and his campaign, and included extensive records of correspondence between Marine commanders concerning their campaign against the rebels. Due to the illiteracy of the *caco* leader and his followers, such records do not exist on the opposing side. What emerges, then, is a portrait of the guerrilla through the eyes of his enemies and his admirers, and a narrative emerges of a peasant-soldier's turn into a national hero. Volume VII of the same series continued after Charlemagne's death and followed his successor Benoît Batrville, who met a similar fate at the hands of the Marines in 1920.

The Haitian contributors to the historiographical conversation served as the foundation of the post-colonial school, providing the primary sources and French-language material which differentiated that school from the isolationists and imperialists. Nevertheless, the lack of literary sources from the *africain* actors in the Occupation drama remains a major gap in the historical literature concerning this period of Haitian history.

80 Bellegarde, *La Résistance Haïtienne*, 105.

Like most histories written in the past sixty years, this study owes a debt to Williams and the Wisconsin School, as all current books and articles since Williams reflect his conscious or unconscious influence. This study's evaluation of American foreign policy has little room for benevolence or altruism, and adheres closely to the Wisconsin School's image of a venal, self-contradictory United States unable to live up to its purported ideals. This study seeks to align itself with the post-colonialists and expand the historiographical conversation to the pivotal role that the Service Technique educational system had upon the Haitian psyche. This agricultural and technical school was essentially an exported Tuskegee Institute, the dominant black college during the era of segregation in the United States. This system of education was chosen and imposed upon Haiti specifically because Haiti was the black republic. The United States created a school system for colonized peoples because they were building a dependent nation, not a self-ruling one. Likewise, this study relies upon Haitian sources concerning the loan of 1922 and connects it to the present-day dependence upon foreign aid which keeps Haiti in the United States' sphere of influence.

The core-periphery relationship between Haiti and the United States examined in this study predominantly runs one way. Unlike the territories examined in *Colonial Crucible*, Haiti saw the implementation of pre-existing policies which existed in the American South. However, just like in Puerto Rico and the Philippines, Haiti was a product of a decentralized colonial policy, administered with little oversight except for the State Department after 1922.

This study seeks to expand upon a theme first elucidated by Weston and May in the 1970s, but little touched upon in later literature: American colonial racism as an outgrowth of Jim Crow. Expansionism was based on the idea of the "white man's burden," a paternalistic idea that only "civilized" Anglo-Saxon peoples had the birthright to rule and that non-white peoples needed to benefit from their "tutelage." Ideas first developed in the American South became

nationalized during the Progressive Era, with Northern judges, politicians, and scientists reinforcing racial prejudices which were not confined to one section of the nation.

CHAPTER III

RACE RELATIONS IN PROGRESSIVE-ERA UNITED STATES

To understand how the United States exported the Jim Crow system, it is first necessary to understand the system itself. Woodrow Wilson, like most white men in the United States, believed in the inherent inequality of races. Wilson was born into a world where slavery was legal and came of age in a world where the specter of Jim Crow hung over the United States. By the time of the Haitian invasion and occupation in 1915, race relations had entered a period described by black historian Rayford Logan as the “nadir of American race relations.” The Supreme Court nullified civil rights legislation and denied black citizens their Fourteenth Amendment rights.⁸¹ Blacks faced segregation across the country. Intimidation from the Ku Klux Klan prevented them from voting. Minstrel shows portrayed them as buffoons. The motion picture *Birth of a Nation*, a favorite of Wilson, glorified the Ku Klux Klan and portrayed black politicians as corrupt and uncivilized. Scientific racism pervaded academia. Black people in the United States lived in a shadow world, hidden away from polite society and kept in an inferior position. The segregation system which oppressed black citizens in the American core would influence the system which would oppress Haitians on the American periphery.

81 Rayford Logan, *The Betrayal of the Negro from Rutherford B. Hayes to Woodrow Wilson* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1997), 97-98.

White Supremacy in Post- Reconstruction America

White supremacist Americans held a fundamental belief in the non-assimilability of other races. During the first period of American imperialism, westward expansion, white settlers displaced the indigenous peoples and the American government sequestered them into Indian reservations. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 blocked immigration from East Asia and deported Chinese immigrants.

Indeed, the Reconstruction era immediately following the American Civil War proved that white society in both the Northern and Southern states did not know what to do with the black slaves once freed. They had no plans to integrate these new citizens into white society.⁸² After the Civil War, the Reconstruction governments worked to secure the voting rights of the newly-freed slaves. While the Constitution and federal laws guaranteed suffrage to blacks, whites used intimidation, poll taxes, literacy tests, and outright vote-rigging to suppress the black vote. U.S. Senator and Governor of South Carolina Ben Tillman said in 1900, “We have scratched our heads to find out how we could eliminate the last one of them. We stuffed ballot boxes. We shot them. We are not ashamed of it.”⁸³

White hostility towards blacks stemmed from fear of black rule, and the white Southerner could point to Haiti as an example *par excellence* of the futility of Negro rule. If the black citizen could vote, so said the South, white Christian society would descend into madness and chaos. Thus, the masked violence of the Ku Klux Klan and the Red Shirts was justified in defense of civilization. Journalist and orator H.W. Grady of Georgia said in 1889, “It would be well if the Northern partisan understands that the Negro vote can never again control the South. The North

82 Logan, *The Betrayal of the Negro*, 10-11

83 *Ibid.*, 91.

may surrender its liberties to the federal election law, but never again will a single state, North or South, be delivered to the control of an ignorant and inferior race.”⁸⁴

The North did little to interfere with the schemes of Southerners. By the mid-1870s, the idealism of Reconstruction had faded. Thomas Nast, a Northern Republican cartoonist, viewed the enfranchisement of blacks as a valuable goal and virtuous outcome of the Civil War. In an 1865 cartoon published in *Harper's Weekly*, Nast depicts Lady Liberty standing beside a black war veteran. The man stands on crutches, maimed from his service, but with a proud expression. The caption reads, “And not this man?” The message of the cartoon to Northerners of 1865 was clear: the black man fought bravely to preserve the Union; he ought to have a voice in its government.⁸⁵ By 1874, Nast had become cynical. He viewed black rule and black votes as a farce. In a cartoon he published in the same periodical he had used to argue for black suffrage, he mocked black citizens and black legislators. The cartoon depicts two black politicians angrily shouting at each other in a state legislature. Unlike the black soldier Nast drew in 1865, these men are caricatures. One is a thick-lipped buffoon, and the other is an obese giant raising his fists and preparing for a fist-fight. All the while a white politician hold his face in his hands, ashamed of the childlike display while Lady Liberty admonishes the brawlers as she stands in front of an inscription reading, “Let Us Have Peace.” The caption reads, “Colored Rule in a Reconstructed(?) State.” After nine years of black participation in the democratic process, Nast now believed civil rights a lost cause.⁸⁶

In 1877, Rutherford B. Hayes withdrew the last federal troops from the South. Southern votes had secured his election as president when the disputed election of 1876 went to the House

84 “Mr. Grady’s Speech,” *Wichita Eagle*, December 13, 1889.

85 Thomas Nast, “And Not This Man?” *Harper's Weekly*, August 5, 1865.

86 Thomas Nast, “Colored Rule in a Reconstructed(?) State,” *Harper's Weekly*, March 14, 1874.

of Representatives. Hayes, though he personally wished to guarantee political equality for blacks, could not do so because he would have lost the election without Southern support. He naïvely believed that the South would protect the rights of its black citizens once federal troops went home.⁸⁷ In the following decades of the nineteenth century, Southern Democrats in Congress blocked what little measures the Republicans took toward securing civil rights and voting rights for all citizens.

The Supreme Court

The Supreme Court in the second half of the nineteenth century was dominated by Northerners, appointed by Republicans, and consistently ruled against civil rights legislation and its enforcement. While the Supreme Court during the prewar period had been an instrument of nationalism, upholding all but four acts of Congress presented before it for judicial review, the Court during the postwar period became increasingly anti-national government. From 1870-73, it overturned six acts of Congress.⁸⁸ In 1883, the court invalidated the Civil Rights Act of 1875 and severely curtailed the anti-Klan Enforcement Act of 1871. The Court heard five cases: *United States v. Stanley*; *United States v. Ryan*; *United States v. Nichols*; *United States v. Singleton*; and *Robinson et ux. v. Memphis & Charleston Railroad*, consolidated into one issue for review. The Court issued an 8-1 decision authored by Justice Joseph P. Bradley, which held a narrow and restrictive reading of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments. The Amendments applied only to state actors, not individuals. In his decision, Bradley stated,

[The Fourteenth Amendment] does not invest congress with power to legislate upon subjects which are within the domain of state legislation; but to provide modes of relief against state legislation, or state action, of the kind referred to. It does not authorize congress to create a code of municipal law for the regulation of private rights; but to provide modes of redress against the operation of state laws, and the action of state officers,

⁸⁷ Logan, *The Betrayal of the Negro*, 16-17.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 97-98.

executive or judicial, when these are subversive of the fundamental rights specified in the amendment.⁸⁹

The Supreme Court effectively nullified any effort by the national government to protect the civil rights blacks from discrimination by private individuals and businesses. The Civil Rights Cases allowed room for states to pass laws which mandated segregation and curtailed voting rights even further. In 1896, thirteen years after the Civil Rights Cases neutered federal enforcement of civil rights, the Court upheld state-mandated segregation in *Plessy v. Ferguson*. The case concerned an 1890 Louisiana law which provided separate traveling cars on railways for whites and blacks, and punished anyone who did not travel in his race's designated car. Homer Plessy, a mixed-race man, boarded a whites-only train car and was arrested for it. The Supreme Court heard the case and issued a 7-1 decision which upheld Louisiana's law. *Plessy v. Ferguson* established the "separate but equal" principle in constitutional law and denied that segregation deprived black citizens of their rights. Justice Henry Billings Brown delivered the Court's majority opinion, which stated:

The object of [The Fourteenth Amendment] was undoubtedly to enforce the absolute equality of the two races before the law, but, in the nature of things, it could not have been intended to abolish distinctions based upon color, or to enforce social, as distinguished from political, equality, or a commingling of the two races upon terms unsatisfactory to either [...] The [plaintiff's] argument also assumes that social prejudices may be overcome by legislation, and that equal rights cannot be secured to the negro except by an enforced commingling of the two races. We cannot accept this proposition. If the two races are to meet upon terms of social equality, it must be the result of natural affinities, a mutual appreciation of each other's merits, and a voluntary consent of individuals.⁹⁰

The Court, through these two cases, argued away the Fourteenth Amendment and its implications. The national government could not impose laws to preserve civil rights, and could not set racial equality as a policy agenda at all. In its decision, the Court ignored the reality of segregation: facilities designated for blacks were almost universally inferior to those designated

89 Civil Rights Cases, 109 U.S. 3 (S.C.U.S. 1883), FindLaw.

90 *Plessy v. Ferguson*, 163 U.S. 537 (S.C.U.S. 1896), FindLaw.

for whites. Segregated facilities and businesses became entrenched in Southern society, relegating black citizens to inferiority.

In the early 1900s, the Supreme Court answered questions about the civil rights of inhabitants of the United States' new overseas territories, recently acquired from Spain during the Spanish-American War of 1898. The Court, which had chipped away the Fourteenth Amendment rights of black Americans to nothingness, decided that residents of these new territories did not deserve complete protection under the Constitution. In 1901, the Court issued *Downes v. Bidwell*, the first of the "insular cases." The case concerned a merchant, Samuel Downes, who imported oranges from Puerto Rico and had to pay import duties on them in New York. The plaintiff argued that Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution provided for uniform duties throughout the United States and that Puerto Rico was part of the United States. The Court decided 5-4 against the plaintiff concerning the import duties, and the decision held long-reaching implications concerning the rights and status of the United States' colonial territories.

The Court held that Puerto Rico and other newly-annexed territories were not a part of the United States proper. Congress therefore held the power to administer the territories separately from the rest of the United States. Because of this special status, Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution did not apply to Puerto Rico and the port inspector of New York could force Mr. Downes to pay import duties which did not apply to the rest of the United States. Significantly, the decision by Justice Brown justified the non-applicability of the Constitution on racial grounds, considering the inhabitants of the territories to be "alien races, differing from us in religion, customs, laws, methods of taxation, and modes of thought."⁹¹ Justice White, in his concurring opinion, considered that the United States had the right to annex territory without conferring

⁹¹ *Downes v. Bidwell*, 182 U.S. 244 (S.C.U.S. 1901), FindLaw.

citizenship upon its residents, referring to Puerto Ricans as “and uncivilized race” and “absolutely unfit to receive [citizenship].”⁹²

A 1904 case, *Gonzales v. Williams*, further specified that Puerto Ricans were not full citizens under the Fourteenth Amendment. The case concerned Isabel Gonzales, a Puerto Rican who moved to New York in 1902 to marry the father of her unborn child. The New York authorities detained her as an alien. While the Court determined that she was not an alien and subject to immigration restrictions, she could not be a citizen by virtue of her race and birthplace. The *Gonzales* decision created a nebulous intermediary category between alien and citizen: the non-citizen national. Ms. Gonzales was a citizen of Puerto Rico, but the Court declined to answer if this meant she was a citizen of the United States.⁹³

The insular cases perpetuated U.S. colonialism by denying equal rights to residents of U.S. territories and granting only partial protection by the Constitution. The insular cases based their conclusions not only on racism but geographic discrimination, allowing the United States to reap the benefits of imperialism without securing the blessings and protections of liberty to the colonized peoples. The Puerto Ricans were dependent and unequal partners in the American republic. The American occupation of Haiti would follow these principles. Because the Haitians were an alien race, they did not deserve an Anglo-Saxon form of government like democracy. Because they were not a part of the United States despite military occupation by the United States, the occupiers did not need to follow the Constitution even as a guideline for governing the island.

92 *Downes v. Bidwell*.

93 *Gonzales v. Williams*, 192 U.S. 1 (S.C.U.S. 1904), FindLaw.

Race and Expansionism

The “Great Migration” of blacks from the South toward Northern industrial centers heightened racial tensions in the North as well, and only emphasized the inability of white society to accommodate blacks as equal citizens. In 1890, numerous Southern and Northern voices called for deportation of blacks from the United States. Senator Wilkinson Call of Florida urged the United States to annex Cuba and use the island as a black homeland. Other proposals called for mass emigration of blacks to Africa, and others suggested an American protectorate over Haiti. The Northern press ridiculed such proposals, but showed little enthusiasm for blacks in its own cities. The *Chicago Tribune* lamented the poor treatment of black people in the South, but argued that they would be even unhappier in the North. The paper stated, “The instinct which has kept the Afro-Americans in the South has been kinder to them than the mistaken philanthropists would be if they could carry out their plans for an exodus to the North.”⁹⁴

The poor state of race relations after the Civil War was an impetus for American expansionism. By 1890, the United States had closed its continental frontier, and needed more territory to sequester its black underclass away from the white majority. The proposals to deport black citizens to Africa, Cuba, or Haiti resembled the reservation policy the federal government used on the American Indians. The United States sought territorial expansion for its white citizens, but these new territories came with non-white inhabitants. Expansion brought minorities into the fold which required more expansion to pacify. While mass deportation of black citizens did not occur, the presence of an exile argument in the national discourse over civil rights suggests an implicit recognition by white America of its right to colonize the western hemisphere.

94 Logan, *The Betrayal of the Negro*, 188.

Indeed, the *North American Review* said in 1881, “in no time or clime have the Caucasian race consented to live with inferior ones save as rulers.”⁹⁵

In Haiti’s case, the U.S. intervened as a pre-emptive strike against European powers under the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine. The shift in interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine occurred as the United States acquired colonies after its victory in the Spanish-American War of 1898. The Venezuelan Crisis of 1902-3, when British, German, and Italian creditors blockaded Venezuela for defaulting on its debts, threatened to allow European powers to re-establish colonial power in the Americas. In 1904, President Theodore Roosevelt declared that the United States held the moral prerogative to act as a police power in the western hemisphere. He felt that “Chronic wrongdoing...may in America, as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation, and in the Western Hemisphere the adherence of the United States to the Monroe Doctrine may force the United States, however reluctantly, in flagrant cases of wrongdoing or impotence, to the exercise of an international police power.”⁹⁶ The Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine firmly established the principle of interventionism in U.S. foreign policy.

Elected in 1912, Woodrow Wilson inherited and expanded the doctrine of interventionism from his predecessors. In 1913, during his first year as president, Wilson intervened in Mexico. He held that the United States had a “moral duty” to aid a weaker state in its pursuit of democracy. He believed in a “spiritual connection” between the nations of the

95 Logan, *The Betrayal of the Negro*, 268.

96 Matthias Maas, “Catalyst for the Roosevelt Corollary: Arbitrating the 1902–1903 Venezuela Crisis and Its Impact on the Development of the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine,” *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 20 (November 2009), 397.

Americas, and that darker-skinned peoples needed U.S. tutelage to achieve self-government.⁹⁷ In his 1915 address to Congress, Wilson characterized his Latin American policy as cooperative, and meant to preserve the independence of the Caribbean and Latin American states. He declared, “This is Pan-Americanism. It has none of the spirit of empire in it. It is the embodiment, the effectual embodiment, of the spirit of law and independence and liberty and mutual service.”⁹⁸

97 Malcolm D. Magee, *What the World Should Be: Woodrow Wilson and the Crafting of a Faith-Based Foreign Policy*, (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2008), 52-56.

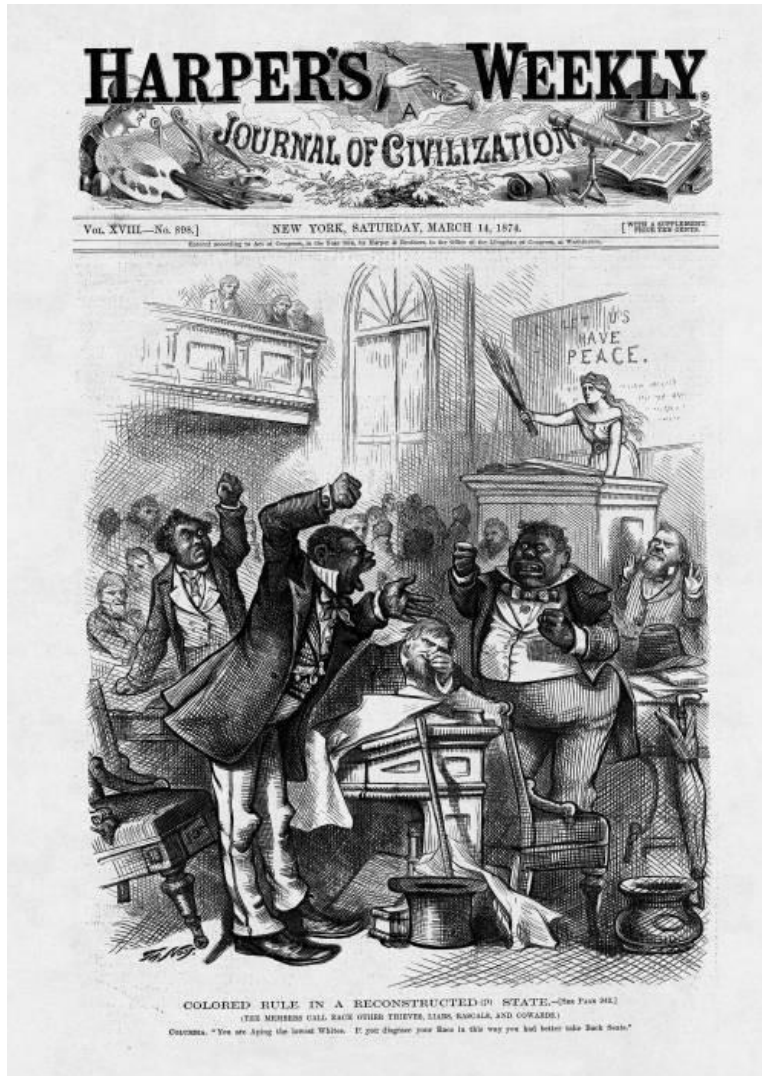
98 Woodrow Wilson, “Address of the President to Congress,” *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States with the Address of the President to Congress, December 7, 1915* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1915), ix.

Figure 1



Thomas Nast's 1865 cartoon appeals to patriotic sentiment by reminding the white readership of *Harper's Weekly* of the sacrifices made by black soldiers in the Civil War. The caption, "Franchise: And Not This Man?" argues for black suffrage and demonstrates the hope for racial harmony and equality which dominated the Northern mindset immediately following the war.

Figure 2



Thomas Nast's 1874 cartoon ridicules black politicians by reducing them to caricatures. Columbia, a personification of the United States, admonishes the brawling politicians and warns them, "You are aping the lowest whites. If you disgrace your race this way you had better take the back seats." This cartoon illustrates the contempt white Americans, even white liberals such as Nast, held for black men in places of power. Because black rule was synonymous with corruption in the United States, it was synonymous with corruption elsewhere, such as Haiti.

Scientific Racism and Paternalism

Wilson likewise continued the national policy of Southern appeasement in regards to civil rights. Wilson's childhood in Virginia and his academic background as president of Princeton University instilled scientific racism into his worldview. Early anthropologists considered it an axiom that Europeans possessed innate qualities which made them superior to other races and nations. The scientific establishment latched onto the principles of biological evolution established in *On the Origin of Species* by Charles Darwin and extrapolated justifications of imperialism and subjugation of other races. Social Darwinism did not limit itself to racism, but eventually broadened and became the eugenics movement.

Eugenics, which sought to purify the human gene pool through sterilization and euthanasia, reached the peak of its strength in the United States in the 1910s and 1920s. American eugenicist Madison Grant published *The Passing of the Great Race*, which organized the peoples of the world into a concrete racial hierarchy, with the "Nordic" peoples at its apex. Unsurprisingly, Grant placed black people at the base of this hierarchy. He spoke of race relations with materialistic determinism, confident that the shape of a man's skull and the color of his skin determined his intelligence and ability to participate in society. "It has taken us fifty years to learn that speaking English, wearing good clothes and going to school and church do not transform the Negro into a white man."⁹⁹ Indeed, Grant blamed blacks for what he perceived as a "deterioration" of the white race. Once the government emancipated the slaves, the white man was forced to till his own fields and work his own factories, essentially forced to work below his "natural" station.¹⁰⁰

99 Madison Grant, *The Passing of the Great Race* 4th ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), 16.

100 Ibid., 42.

Psychologists likewise underestimated the natural abilities of black people. Louis M. Terman, who revised the IQ test in 1916, administered tests designed for literate English-speaking adults to illiterate black children and Spanish-speaking children. Their low scores on these tests confirmed his pre-existing biases about race.

Children of this group should be segregated in special classes and be given instruction which is concrete and practical. They cannot master abstractions, but they can often be made efficient workers, able to look out for themselves. There is no possibility at present of convincing society that they should not be allowed to reproduce, although from a eugenic point of view they constitute a grave problem because of their unusually prolific breeding.¹⁰¹

Terman and researchers like him based their conclusions on circular reasoning and *a priori* assumptions about the inability and physiological inferiority of non-white races. They found prominent support among Progressives of the era, such as Woodrow Wilson who signed New Jersey's sterilization bill into law during his tenure as governor.¹⁰²

Because respected academics and politicians likened black people to mentally-retarded or immature white people, white America viewed non-white peoples at home and abroad as children. The United States, never one to think of itself as a tyrant, presumed itself a parent or steward of the inferior races. Wilson's foreign policy and interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine allowed the United States to act as an older brother and protector of the Latin American republics. Children could not yet achieve self-government, and often needed violent correction to punish bad behavior. This particular form of racism is paternalism.

While paternalism ostensibly meant to mitigate abuses of power and tyranny, the United States used paternalistic racism to justify violence against colonized peoples. A cartoon

101 Louis M. Terman, *The Measurement of Intelligence* (Cambridge, MA: Riverside Press, 1916), 92.

102 Francis G. Wickware, ed., *The American Year Book, Volume 1911*, (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1912), 381.

published in *Puck* magazine in 1899 depicted a classroom with Uncle Sam as a teacher and the states personified as obedient pupils (See Figure 3). The new possessions of the United States, the Philippines, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and Cuba, are rambunctious children. The caption of the cartoon read, “Now, children, you’ve got to learn these lessons whether you want to or not! But just take a look at the class ahead of you, and remember that, in a little while, you will feel as glad to be here as they are!” A lesson on the blackboard preaches the virtues of self-government, but qualifies, “The U.S. must govern its new territories with or without their consent until they can govern themselves.” Perhaps most significantly, none of the pupils in the school house are black. The only black child in the room is a window-washer.¹⁰³ This implied that although Filipinos, Hawaiians, Puerto Ricans, and Cubans could one day achieve self-government, black men could not.

Another cartoon published in *Marines Magazine* in 1917 (Figure 4) pertains specifically to the violence of the Haitian occupation. A towering figure labeled “U.S. Marine” picks up and shakes a Haitian *caco*. He angrily shouts, “Listen, son! Do unto your brothers as you’d hav’em do unto you. Savvy?”¹⁰⁴ The *cacos* were petulant children unable or unwilling to learn basic morals. They needed the strong Christianizing influence of the U.S. Marine Corps to become moral actors. According to Mary Renda, “Paternalism, we might say, was the cultural flagship of the United States in Haiti.”¹⁰⁵ Wilson’s international vision divided the world into mature nations and infantile nations, and ascribed mastery to the more powerful nations.¹⁰⁶ Paternalism

103 Louis Dalrymple, “School Begins,” *Puck*, January 25, 1899.

104 Paul Woyshner, “The Missionary,” *Marines Magazine*, April 1917.

105 Renda, *Taking Haiti*, 15.

106 *Ibid.*, 128-129.

essentially denied Haiti the right to national self-determination that the Wilson administration espoused.

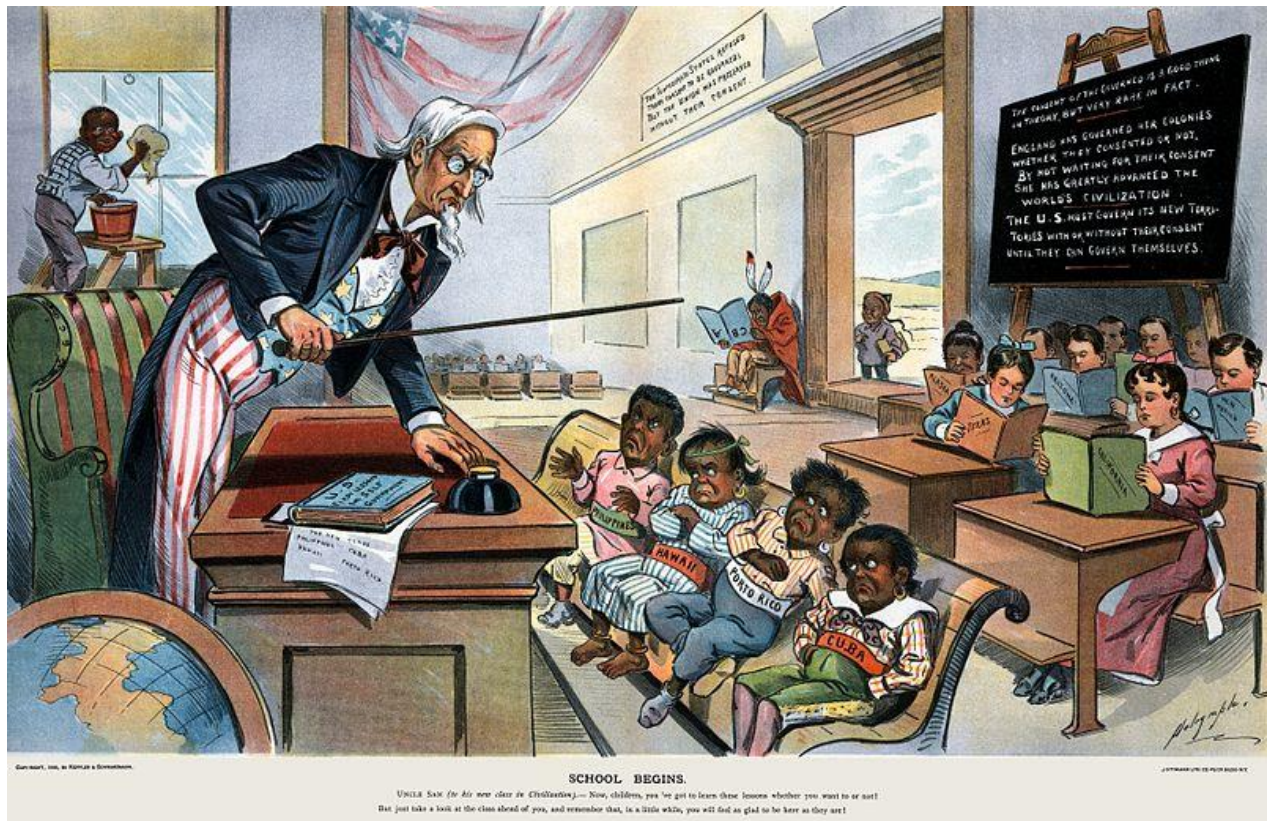
In 1918, Woodrow Wilson addressed Congress with his “Fourteen Points” concerning Europe following the First World War. Wilson declared the United States had committed its guns and men to the European war not for territorial gain, but for a higher purpose. He asserted that all nations had the right to determine their own institutions and laws, apart from any imperialist or colonial overlords. The context of his address, however, concerned only the dissolution of the empires of the Central Powers. He stated,

A free, open-minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that in determining all such questions of sovereignty the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined.¹⁰⁷

Essentially, the Wilsonian vision of a postwar world included the intact colonial empires of the victors. Wilson applied the self-determination principle inconsistently: What Wilson espoused for the Poles, Hungarians, and Serbs did not apply to Filipinos, Cubans, or Haitians.

107 Woodrow Wilson, “Fourteen Points,” Address to Congress, U.S. Congress, January 8, 1918.

Figure 3



Dalrymple, Louis. "School Begins." *Puck*. January 25, 1899.

This *Puck* cartoon depicts the new colonial possessions of the United States (The Philippines, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and Cuba) as petulant children and the United States as well-behaved pupils. Uncle Sam scolds the new students. The caption reads "Now, children, you've got to learn these lessons whether you want to or not! But just take a look at the class ahead of you, and remember that, in a little while, you will feel as glad to be here as they are!" The blackboard reads, "The consent of the governed is a good thing in theory, but very rare in fact. — England has governed her colonies whether they consented or not. By not waiting for their consent she has greatly advanced the world's civilization. — The U.S. must govern its new territories with or without their consent until they can govern themselves." Significantly, the only black child in the schoolhouse is not a student at all, but a window-washer. Although Haiti is not addressed specifically in this cartoon, it illustrates the attitude the U.S. held toward its non-white colonies.

Figure 4



Figure 1. "The Missionary," a cartoon by Private Paul Woyschner, published in the *Marines Magazine*, April 1917. Courtesy of History and Museums Division, U.S. Marine Corps, Washington, D.C.

Woyschner, Paul. "The Missionary." *Marines Magazine*, April 1917.

This cartoon, drawn by a U.S. Marine involved in the campaign against the *cacos*, portrays the Marine as a father figure to the *cacos*, who appear as petulant children. It illustrates the contemporary attitude towards the Haitian rebels and the paternalism ingrained in the psyche of the occupiers.

CHAPTER IV

THE INTERVENTION, 1915

In July 1915, a mob murdered Haitian President Vilbrun Guillaume Sam and dismembered his body. The United States leaped at the opportunity to deploy marines to Port-au-Prince to ostensibly protect Americans in Haiti. The marines met little resistance and soon secured the capital. The New York Times remarked, “The force being sent to Haiti is much larger than is necessary for the mere protection of foreign interests.”¹⁰⁸ Secretary of State Robert Lansing justified the intervention: “In landing marines in Haiti we acted on account of two reasons: first, that it was in the interest of humanity and, second, that in the case we had not taken the step, in all probability some other nation would have felt called upon to do so.”¹⁰⁹

By August, the United States established a protectorate over the island, confirmed by a treaty in September. The State department demanded supervision over the customs houses and finances, and forbade Haiti from ceding territory or negotiating with any other foreign power. Lansing described the American demands as “unselfish,” and “it is a temporary and by no means

108 “Haitians Kill Two of Our Men,” *The New York Times*, July 31, 1915, 3.

109 Robert Lansing to Woodrow Wilson, August 7, 1915, *Lansing Papers, 1914-20, volume 2* (Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Print Office, 1940), 523.

permanent arrangement. We are not even asking for Mole St. Nicholas.”¹¹⁰ The Haitian Gendarmerie became an extension of the U.S. Marine Corps, with American officers and native soldiers. The Gendarmerie would be the most effective tool the United States used to uphold its Haitian client state.

Haiti Under American Administration

The Marine Corps provided hefty incentives for American soldiers to join the Haitian military. U.S. Marines who joined the Gendarmerie received two paychecks for their double role, a career that one U.S. Marine described as “fat jobs for the bachelor officers.” Likewise, enlisted men who joined the Haitian military used it as an easy way to advance their rank and career. Gunnery sergeants and first sergeants in the U.S. Corps used the Haitian corps to advance to first lieutenants, and lieutenants quickly became captains. Gendarmerie officers held power disproportionate to their rank. Officers became “communal advisers,” which effectively allowed them to rule as military governors over villages with little oversight. The Haitian ambassador to the United States complained to the State Department about these arrangements. “The American officers...wish to act as administrators of the commune and not rest within their powers...as intended by the president.”¹¹¹

The United States likewise wrested control of public works and the department of justice from the Haitians.¹¹² The positions occupied by white Americans, though nominally advisory, held tremendous power over the native government. The financial advisor enforced the will of the United States by refusing salaries to the president and legislative council of Haiti. The

110 *The Washington Times*, August 25, 1915, 2.

111 Renda, 147.

112 United States Senate, *Inquiry into Occupation and Administration of Haiti and Santo Domingo vol. I* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1922), 14.

Marines prohibited the possession of firearms without U.S. Military authorization, while the press was tightly restricted and criticism of the occupiers was prohibited.¹¹³ The public works administrators used Haitian money to complete the American-backed railroads, and the Gendarmerie crushed domestic opposition.¹¹⁴

The First Election

Upon securing Port-au-Prince, the United States sought to retroactively legalize its invasion through undemocratic means. To maintain the fiction of Haitian independence, the marines supervised a presidential election in August. The two primary candidates standing were Rosalvo Bobo, a *caco* leader from the north, and Philippe Sudre Dartiguenave, an *affranchi* from the south. According to Smedley Butler, “When the National Assembly met, the marines stood in the aisles until the man selected by the American Minister was made President...I won’t say we put him in. The State Department might object.”¹¹⁵ Secretary Lansing sent a memorandum to Admiral W.B. Caperton: “Allow election of President whenever Haitians wish. United States prefers election of Dartiguenave...The United States insists the Haitian government will grant no territorial concessions to any foreign governments.”¹¹⁶ Despite endorsing the election, Lansing held reservations about the government’s actions. He wrote to Wilson:

I confess that this method of negotiation, with our marines policing the Haytien capital, is high-handed. It does not meet my sense of a nation’s sovereign rights and is more or less an exercise of force and a violation of Haytien independence. From a

113 “Order prohibiting carrying firearms or deadly weapons without U.S. Military authorization, September 10, 1915; “Order restraining disruptive expression in the local press; published by the Grand Provost, Captain Alexander S. Williams, USMC,” September 3, 1915, in Personal Papers of John H. Russell, History and Museums Division, Headquarters USMC, Washington, D.C., Manuscript Box 2, Folder 2.

114 U.S. Senate, *Inquiry* vol. 1, 18.

115 Thomas, *Old Gimlet Eye*, 182.

116 Robert Lansing to Woodrow Wilson, August 9, 1915, *Lansing Papers, 1914-20, volume 2*, 524.

practical standpoint, however, I feel that it is the only thing to do if we intend to cure the anarchy and disorder which prevails in that Republic.¹¹⁷

The undemocratic sham election in Haiti resembled the fraudulent elections held in the southern United States. If the United States could not trust blacks with democratic self-rule at home, there would be no democratic self-rule in Haiti. The *New York Times* presented this view succinctly in August 1915, “Haiti is clearly incapable of self-government without assistance.”¹¹⁸

The Haitian Constitution

The U.S. had its puppet government legitimize the occupation with a treaty and proceeded to present it with a new constitution for ratification. The National Assembly balked at the American proposals, and drafted a constitution of its own. During deliberations on the constitution in June 1916, Marines armed with revolvers and led by Smedley Butler bolted the doors of the Assembly and presented Sténio Vincent, president of the Senate, with an order from President Dartiguenave dissolving the legislature. He instructed newspapers not to print anything about the incident, and expunged the day’s minutes from the official records.

The Haitian Assembly dissolved, the Marines presented the constitution directly to the Haitian people in a plebiscite in June 1918. The Gendarmerie, of course, closely monitored the vote, distributed the ballots and counted them. The Americans arrested any opponents of the new constitution who publicly expressed their opposition. Not surprisingly, the plebiscite affirmed the new constitution, with 98,225 in favor and 768 opposed. Brigade Commander John H. Russell wrote a special report to Washington, wherein he argued that the lopsided poll results had nothing to do with the American military presence or voter intimidation. Instead, he stated that the

117 Robert Lansing to Woodrow Wilson, August 13, 1915, *Lansing Papers, 1914-20, volume 2*, 526.

118 “Haiti,” *The New York Times*, August 27, 1915.

opposition simply did not vote.¹¹⁹ The new constitution made Haiti a protectorate of the United States. It removed the prohibition on white landownership, enabling U.S. interests to firmly establish themselves and drive out German investors. It moved legislative functions from the National Assembly to a Council of State appointed by the president. A special article of the constitution retroactively validated all actions of the military occupation.¹²⁰

The Guerrilla Campaign

The U.S. occupation harshly dealt with the natives. In August 1916, the U.S. military began construction of roads and railways by resurrecting the 19th-century *corvée* system of conscripted labor, essentially re-introducing slavery to the impoverished peasantry.¹²¹ While the official guidelines for *corvée* specified that conscripted peasants required wages and shelter, the gendarmerie seldom followed those guidelines. For example, in St. Marc, the Americans paid laborers only one Haitian gourde per week, the equivalent of twenty cents. They did not compensate the peasants with meals.¹²²

Instead of relying on volunteers, the Gendarmerie conscripted laborers from the peasantry, often violently. Capsine Altidor, a Haitian peasant from the village of Maïssade in the north, testified before the U.S. Senate in 1921. Altidor told of how the gendarmes killed his sons when coming to collect for *corvée*. A division of gendarmes led by a white officer came and struck his son on the head, causing him to lose a large quantity of blood. The gendarmes then took the boy away, and Altidor never saw him again. He likewise told of how the gendarmes

119 John H. Russell to Chief of Naval Operations, June 17, 1918, quoted in Schmidt, 97-99.

120 Bellegarde, 43.

121 Ibid., 49.

122 Renda, 148.

executed his second son on the roadside when he did not comply.¹²³ Another Haitian named Joachin Nord testified that the gendarmes killed his wife when they arrived, and a man named Heraux Belloni related how the gendarmes killed his parents.¹²⁴

Baptist missionary L. Ton Evans recounted how the Marines rounded up members of his congregation on a Sunday in June, 1918:

[I] saw two groups of natives, and including native members and native preachers who had been caught, roped tightly and cruelly together, and driven like slaves toward the [Gendarmerie office]... I demanded they should be freed and permitted to come back with us to the House of God. This [the corporal] sternly refused to do and forcibly drove them along like cattle. Where they were put and what became of them, I do not know. From the common talk of these mountain people, and what I witnessed. I believe that many are caught, arrested, and roped thus on Sunday, as well as during the week, not merely for the "corvée," but for the sake of graft and extortion of money, when some would be let free again on payment of 2 or 3 gourdes.¹²⁵

Evans spent the end of the year in a jail cell in the city of Saint-Marc, arrested by Captain Fitzgerald Brown on charges of inciting rebellion. In prison he described even more brutality. "I could hear the yelling and groaning of the native prisoners, as well as their being beaten and pounded by gendarmes. Many a time these yells and groans would suddenly cease, and then a scuffle, whispering, and the sound like if they were carrying out a dead body or bodies."¹²⁶

Haitians fled from the forced labor of the occupiers and quickly organized a resistance movement in the hill country. The ensuing guerrilla war lasted three years and became infamous for its savagery. NAACP secretary Herbert Seligman wrote of the violence in *The Nation*: "Haitians carrying a gun were for a time shot on sight. Machine guns have been turned on crowds

123 United States Senate, *Inquiry into Occupation and Administration of Haiti and Santo Domingo*, vol. 2, (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1922), 911.

124 Ibid., 916-920.

125 United States Senate, *Inquiry* vol. 1, 166.

126 Ibid., 246.

of unarmed natives, and United States marines have, by accounts which several of them gave me in casual conversation, not troubled to investigate how many were killed or wounded.”¹²⁷ By his own admission, Smedley Butler and his marines hunted the *cacos* “like pigs.”¹²⁸

While the Marines were optimistic that the 1918 constitution would facilitate military control over the island, the *caco* rebellion in the hill country only intensified after its adoption. 30,000 to 40,000 men joined the resistance movement of Dominican-born guerilla Charlemagne Perault in addition to the thousands of fighters already with Rosalvo Bobo. Unable to defeat Perault on the battlefield, two Marines disguised themselves as Haitians and infiltrated his camp to kill him. They took photographs of the *caco* leader’s body to drain morale among the resistance, but mistakenly propped up his body to resemble a dying Christ on the cross. Months after his death, captured *cacos*, when asked about their commander, responded, “Mais, c’est Charlemagne.” The Gendarmerie gave the *caco* leader five funerals and created five spurious grave sites to prevent his real resting place from becoming a pilgrimage site. The assassination of Perault thus only emboldened the guerillas.¹²⁹

The *cacos* were untrained in tactics and armed with pitchforks, machetes, and pistols. Yet they were more than a match for the Gendarmerie. The language barrier between the Marine commanders and the native gendarmes impeded communication and strategy on the battlefield. The Americans selected for positions in the Haitian officer corps were privates promoted beyond their level of competence and lacked advanced military training; the Americans had established

127 Herbert Seligman, *The Nation*, July 10, 1920, 111.

128 Schmidt, 85.

129 Harry Franck, “The Death of Charlemagne,” *The Century Illustrated Magazine* 100, No. 1 (May, 1920), 35.

no officer training school for them.¹³⁰ Native troops likewise were reluctant to wage war on behalf of a foreign power against their own countrymen. But perhaps most damaging to the fighting ability of the Gendarmerie was the racial division between the soldiers and their commanders. At the onset of the American occupation, Colonel William Waller warned his fellow Marines, “You can never trust a nigger with a gun.” Because the Gendarmerie could not suppress the revolt, the Marine Corps themselves assumed control of the operation. But the *caco* forces would not capitulate easily. The superior firepower and air supremacy of the Marine Corps, combined with their frustration and violent prejudice against the natives, inevitably led to atrocities and war crimes.¹³¹

The Marines had difficulty distinguishing the “good” Haitians uninvolved with the armed rebellion from the *cacos*. The Marines embarked on a policy of indiscriminate killing. Marine Corps Commandant George Barnett testified before Congress about the courts martial of two Marines convicted of unlawful execution: “Indiscriminate killing...the evidence in those two cases of Johnson and McQuilkin, particularly the statement of the counsel for the accused, who stated, in effect, that these men should not be punished for their acts, because they were following the general custom, and that he himself had seen many similar cases.”¹³²

In October 1919, Colonel John H. Russell issued a confidential order decrying and forbidding the “open season” killings of Haitians by Marines. The order tacitly acknowledges that, until 1919, “troops in the field have declared and carried on what is commonly known as an ‘open season,’ where care is not taken to determine whether or not the natives encountered are bandits or ‘good citizens’ and where houses have been ruthlessly burned merely because they

130 United States Senate, *Inquiry* vol. 1, 15.

131 Schmidt, 103.

132 U.S. Senate, *Inquiry* vol. 1, 427.

were unoccupied and native property otherwise destroyed.” The same day, Russell issued a proclamation to the Haitian people which did not mention the killings or apologize for them in any significant manner, and stated, “The occupation is determined to enforce only the laws of Haiti and have them respected, and it will assure its entire protection to all the good and peaceable citizens while it will drive out the bandits.”¹³³ This Janus-like duplicity indicated the Marine Corps’ embarrassment and shame about their conduct during the guerrilla war but their dishonesty towards the Haitians citizens about it. The Marines considered these war crimes an internal disciplinary manner and not fit for the Haitian peasantry to hear.

¹³³U.S. Senate, *Inquiry* vol. 1, 429.

CHAPTER V

HAITI IN THE 1920S

The Senate Hearings, 1921

By the early 1920s, the Americans found themselves in an unenviable position in Haiti. The prolonged guerrilla campaign precluded a planned withdrawal of American troops in 1919. The Dartiguenave government extended the treaty of 1915 for twenty years, hoping to open the island to American capital investment and secure loans from American banks. The Marines controlled the Haitian military and almost all levels of Haitian government, making smooth and expedient withdrawal impossible. The Haitian government favored military occupation because it feared violent reprisals and a renewed revolutionary cycle, while the United States feared a hypothetical anti-American regime that would inevitably depose its client regime. Because the threat of German influence over Haiti died with the end of the war in Europe, the occupation no longer served any strategic purpose. Nevertheless, the United States held onto Haiti like a boy with his finger in a dike, unable to remove it for fear of the oncoming deluge.¹³⁴

134 Schmidt, 113-114.

The Occupation of Haiti became an important election-season issue in 1920. The Senate had rejected the Treaty of Versailles and membership in the League of Nations, both major blows to Wilson's legacy, and Republican candidate Warren G. Harding embarked on a campaign rejecting Wilsonian internationalism and foreign intervention in favor of isolationism, which he framed as a "return to normalcy."

In September 1920, Harding seized upon a gaffe by Democratic Vice-Presidential nominee Franklin Roosevelt in which he claimed he had written the Haitian constitution and that he had "something to do with the running of a couple of little republics." Additionally, he alleged that Roosevelt said that, until his resignation as Assistant Secretary, "I had two votes in the League [of Nations] Assembly, but now Secretary Daniels has them." Harding accused Roosevelt of his connection to the "rape of Haiti and Santo Domingo" and accused the Wilson administration of unconstitutional usurpation of power. Harding said, "We are at war with our neighbors to the south through the usurpation by the Executive of powers scrupulously withheld by the Constitution."¹³⁵ Harding later apologized for his attacks, but the association of the Democratic Party with imperialism remained.¹³⁶

The Wilson administration swiftly prepared a rhetorical defense of its Haiti policy. On October 5, Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels made public a report by Major General John A. Lejeune, Commandant of the Marine Corps since July, which glowingly defended the Marines in Haiti. Lejeune praised the administration of Colonel Russell, whom he described as "an able, just, and humane officer." He described a September 6 speech given by President Dartiguenave

135 "Constitution or League—Harding," *The New York Times*, September 18, 1920, 14.

136 "Harding Sends Apology: Expresses Regret to Roosevelt for Quotation on Haiti," *The New York Times*, September 22, 1920, 3.

in which he praised the Marine Corps and begged their continued presence to combat the so-called “bandit problem.”¹³⁷

The Lejeune Report was essentially a pre-emptive strike against the forthcoming Barnett Report. In October 1920, Former Marine Corps Commandant George Barnett released a report concerning the first five-and-a-half years of the occupation and the counter-insurgency campaign, wherein he acknowledged the unlawful and indiscriminate killings of Haitian civilians. *The New York Times* published abstracts from the report, along with Barnett’s attempts to downplay the severity of the “open season” policy. Regardless, Barnett’s apologia was less fulsome than the administration would have liked.

Of the total number killed during the five and a half years the marines have operated in Haiti, considerably more than half, in fact, 1,763, were killed in the repulse of the attack on Port-au-Prince and during the operations immediately following and made necessary by the attack[...]. While the total number killed may seem large, it should be remembered that these operations extended over a period of five and a half years, and I believe without the operations by the marines a much larger number of natives would have been killed by the bandits during this time.¹³⁸

When the polls closed on November 2, Harding and the Republicans cruised to an easy victory, signifying the electorate’s rejection of Wilsonian internationalism. Public opinion in the United States had turned against the numerous interventions and military operations in Latin America. The public viewed the expanded view of the Monroe Doctrine, which condoned imperialism, as an aberration.

Buoyed by Harding’s wide margin of victory, the Republican Party entered 1921 with an expanded Senate majority, and used their electoral mandate to investigate the mistakes of the previous administration. The Senate began by holding hearings on alleged war crimes in Haiti as

137 “Says Haitians Approve Our Action: General Lejeune Reports to Daniels Their Praise of Marines,” *The New York Times*, October 6, 1920, 2.

138 “Reports: Unlawful Killing of Haitians by Our Marines,” *New York Times*, October 14, 1920, 3.

detailed in the Barnett Report. The Senate committee heard testimony from members of the NAACP and the *Union Patriotique d'Haiti*, a Haitian-American organization opposed to the occupation. In his opening testimony, Sténio Vincent, president of the Haitian Senate and future President of Haiti, accused the Wilson administration of conspiring against Haiti and the Haitian people.

The truth is that the Wilson administration took advantage of the political adventures of a weak and defenseless nation and forced upon it an intervention which, through the agency of the American minister in Haiti in December, 1914, of the Fort Smith mission in March, 1915, and of the Paul Fuller, jr., mission in May, 1915, had been long in preparation...The Haitian people never asked American intervention. The conditions of the American occupation, as described in the Haitian memoir, have not been such as to cause the Haitian people to change their minds.¹³⁹

The *Union Patriotique* presented a memo to the Senate detailing the illegal actions of the Occupation regime. It presented a list of twenty-five atrocities which the naval court already in place had not yet investigated, and stressed that “numberless abominable crimes have been committed.” Specifically, the Marines burned houses, executed Haitians without trial, and kept prisoners in deplorable conditions, resulting in 4,000 deaths in the prisons from 1918-1920.¹⁴⁰ The memo demanded an end to martial law in Haiti, reorganization of the Gendarmerie to remove American officers, withdrawal of American forces from the island, abrogation of the 1915 treaty, and restoration of the National Assembly.¹⁴¹

The United States Navy prepared its own memorandum on the Haitian Occupation to justify intervention in light of Haiti’s violent history. The Navy memo

139 United States Senate, *Inquiry*, vol. 1, 4.

140 *Ibid.*, 30-32.

141 *Ibid.*, 33.

refers to Haiti as a land “afflicted with perpetual discontent and revolution.” The Navy argued the violent climate which killed President Sam was not temporary, but an endemic aspect of Haitian political life. The Navy describes,

Visits [by American warships] in 1868, 1869, 1876, 1888, 1889, 1892, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908, 1909, 1911, 1912, and 1913. In these years the trouble and disturbances in Haiti was of such a serious nature that the Secretary of the Navy felt called upon to comment upon the fact that warships had been sent there. No doubt there were many times during this period that interior disturbances affected foreign interests without the restraining hands of the United States.¹⁴²

Furthermore, the Navy denied establishing a military occupation on the island, and insisted that the United States’ forces only supplemented and supported the native Haitian government. This abstract legal fiction allowed the Navy to deny involvement in publicly-known abuses and scandals, such as forced labor in the *corvée* system and the massacres and tortures undertaken by the Marines. Representatives of the Navy deflected blame for these atrocities to their Haitian subordinates.¹⁴³ Likewise, the Navy excused the atrocities it committed against Haitians by insisting that the *caco* campaign was a different, more savage form of war, which justified savage conduct against the rebels.

The enemy which our men had to meet and overcome were savages who operated free from all the restraints of civilized warfare. Not only did they give no quarter; they tortured with unspeakable tortures the prisoners they took [...] For their acts, not exceeded in brutality by any other breed of savages at any time, they forfeited any claim to treatment such as should be accorded to those who abide by the rules of land warfare. It would have been justifiable to refuse every one of them quarter on surrendering and to exterminate every last member of those bands. That this was not done is clear enough proof that there was no indiscriminate killing of natives who had taken the field against us.¹⁴⁴

142 United States Senate, *Inquiry* vol. 1, 63.

143 United States Senate, *Inquiry* vol. 2, 1666.

144 *Ibid.*, 1664-65.

The chairman of the Senate committee, Medill McCormick of Illinois, opined that “We are there, and in my judgment we ought to stay there for twenty years.”¹⁴⁵ The stories of torture and executions by the Marines failed to sway the public and the Senate, who despite their misgivings about the Wilson administration’s blunders agreed with the presence of the U.S. military on the island. The final report of the McCormick Committee recommended that the United States abolish martial law and drastically reduce the number of American troops in Haiti. To remedy the abuses of the gendarmerie, the committee called for a High Commissioner appointed by the State Department. This would be a military office rather than a civilian one. Secretary of State Charles Evans Hughes selected John H. Russell for the position, and he was confirmed in 1922 by Senate Resolution 249.¹⁴⁶

The High Commissioner

General Russell did not view himself as head of a transitional administration, and considered the Haitians junior partners in the administration of their own country. He said, “If the United States is to ride behind in its conduct of Haitian Affairs it had better withdraw entirely and let the country return to a condition of chaos when, after a time, the United States would be forced to again occupy Haiti or permit some foreign nation to do so.”¹⁴⁷

145 Schmidt, 122.

146 United States Senate, *Appointment of Brig. Gen. John H. Russell as high commissioner to Haiti. April 20 (calendar day, April 24), 1922. -- Ordered to be printed.* (United States congressional serial set; serial set no. 7953, Washington, DC.: Government Printing Office, 1922), 2.

147 Schmidt, 124.

Racial prejudice strongly informed Russell's attitude toward the Haitian administration. Russell did not view the Haitians as analogous to black Americans, but as a distinct race which nevertheless needed the influence and strong arm of the white man to achieve self-government. Russell considered the average Haitian of the *affranchi* class as "an animal who will do whatever he is told," and felt that the Haitians lived in a state of "savagery." While High Commissioner, he promised to engage the Haitian ruling class and "cultivate Haitian society regardless of color," but the *affranchis* received him coldly.¹⁴⁸

Russell's administration centralized authority into the office of High Commissioner to the detriment of the civilian government. Russell's stern hand and low view of Haitians meant that Haiti essentially became a military dictatorship. Whatever authority the Dartiguenave client-government possessed before 1922 atrophied. Russell demanded record of all correspondence between Haitian officials and the Gendarmerie, and insisted that the State Department refrain from contacting the American treaty officers directly. He directly controlled all Haitian budgetary matters and vetoed any unsatisfactory legislation. He likewise directly administered the Gendarmerie.¹⁴⁹ The United States was reluctant to remove Americans from their positions in the Gendarmerie, which ultimately delayed full Haitian control of the armed forces until 1929.¹⁵⁰

President Dartiguenave found this new onerous administration intolerable, and his protests to the United States led to his fall from power. Dartiguenave knew he owed

148 Schmidt, 125.

149 Ibid., 127.

150 Ibid., 123-124.

his position to the Marine Corps and their rigged election, but he needed to appear patriotic to secure the support of the Haitian people, whom he feared would subject him to the same fate as Vilbrun Sam once the Marines steamed away from Port-au-Prince. His frequent protests caused occupation officials to disparage the president as an opportunistic agitator only marginally better than the *cacos* he opposed. Russell described Dartiguenave as “anti-American, a man of no integrity, a schemer.”¹⁵¹ When the United States proposed to transfer the 1910 charter of the *Banque Nationale* to the National City Bank and consolidate Haiti’s foreign debt, he protested and refused to implement the changes. Dartiguenave likewise proposed to return to Germans property sequestered in the 1915 invasion against the wishes of the United States. In response, the financial adviser refused to pay the salaries of the president and his cabinet.¹⁵² Dartiguenave attempted to seek a second term in the election of 1922, but the Americans prevented him from doing so. His replacement, Louis Borno, was much more pliant to the demands of the High Commissioner. Borno was immediately unpopular with the Haitian people from the beginning of his term, and his election was challenged as unconstitutional, because the State Council did not have the same authority as the defunct National Assembly to select the head of state, and that Borno himself was ineligible for the office since his father was French. Nevertheless, the High Commissioner ignored these protests and allowed Borno to be seated. The State Council elected Borno in April and he was seated in May.¹⁵³

151Schmidt, 129.

152 Ibid., 130.

153 Bellegarde, 100.

The United States assumed full responsibility of Haitian finances for the remainder of the decade. Borno immediately passed the loan contract which Dartiguenave had refused and sold \$16 million of bonds to American financial interests, backed by a general lien on Haitian revenues. The loan was not granted, however, until a humiliating capitulation to the Occupation was achieved. Haiti, as a point of national pride, had always paid its debts, however onerous, and among the Caribbean nations had the highest credit rating.¹⁵⁴ The High Commissioner leaned heavily upon the Haitian Minister of Finance to authorize the loan, or foreign investment in Haiti would cease and American payments into the national budget would cease. The loan was therefore another tether binding Haiti to the United States, preventing the Republic's full independence. The 1922 loan, although seemingly minor in its place in the pageant of Haitian history, marked a turn away from the republic's financial self-reliance and toward dependence upon foreign aid, a state of affairs which persists to the present.

After the loan, the United States took little interest in the occupation as long as the island kept quiet. While the president and the State Department publicly expressed intention to withdraw American troops from Haiti. In 1924, Secretary Hughes wrote that the United States would no longer intervene in Latin America and in 1928 wrote "we wish to leave as soon as we can do so with assurance that there will not be a recurrence of bloodshed." Calvin Coolidge promised repeatedly to withdraw from Haiti before the 1936 treaty deadline, but took no positive action to do so.¹⁵⁵

Haiti during the 1920s was no more democratic than in 1915, despite the end of the guerrilla campaign. President Borno served his term without a legislature and while

¹⁵⁴Bellegarde, 92.

¹⁵⁵Schmidt, 134.

communal elections for mayors and city councils had been scheduled for 1926, Commissioner Russell nullified the results as “not altogether satisfactory” and directed the Haitian government to appoint communal commissions directly.¹⁵⁶ The only times common Haitians voted during the occupation were the 1918 constitutional plebiscite and a plebiscite on constitutional amendments in 1928. The Occupation closely monitored both votes to ensure a pro-American outcome. A representative of the High Commissioner felt Haitians were “so ignorant that they would have no conception of the meaning of an election.”¹⁵⁷

The amendments to the constitution of 1918 were primarily proposed by President Borno, in 1927 and aimed to solidify his own grip on power. The sixth and eighth amendments both lengthened the presidential term and provided for re-election of the president three times, and reduced the number of judges in the court system while making them appointed by the president.¹⁵⁸ Secretary of State Frank Kellogg expressed severe reticence at the amendments, and wrote to Chargé d’Affaires Christian Gross that “The Department of State [...] disapproves emphatically of amendment number 6, and is of the opinion that this proposed change in the Constitution is contrary to the principles of democratic government.”¹⁵⁹ The reticence of the Secretary of State to approve of these amendments led to the elimination of the provision for immediate re-election, although

156 John H. Russell, *Fifth Annual Report of the American High Commissioner* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1926), 2-3.

157 Francis White to Frank B. Kellogg, February 25, 1925, Quoted in Schmidt, 156.

158 John Russell to Frank Kellogg, June 1, 1927 in *Papers relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1927* (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1928), 3: 49.

159 Frank Kellogg to Christian Gross, June 24, 1927 in *Papers relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1927* (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1928), 3: 52.

High Commissioner Russell intervened to allow the president the possibility of two 6-year non-consecutive terms.¹⁶⁰

The correspondence between the High Commissioner and the Secretary of State illustrates the power imbalance between the Haitian president and his American overseers. Furthermore, it illustrates that the High Commissioner operated with little oversight save that given by the State Department, which during the 1920s operated largely in a hands-off fashion. All political changes to Haiti came from High Commissioner Russell and were approved by the State Department. The Haitian government had little say in the writing of their own constitution, and the Haitian people even less. This arrangement concentrated political power in the person of the High Commissioner, and more broadly in the hands of the military. Russell saw little need for a bureaucracy in administering the island, and even less in a democracy. His approach to reforming the educational system illustrated this philosophy best.

¹⁶⁰ Russell to Kellogg, September 26, 1927 in *Papers relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1927* (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1928), 3: 74.

CHAPTER VI

THE PROBLEMS OF EDUCATION

The American authorities embarked on programs focused on “moral uplift” and material pragmatism. The Americans hoped to make Haiti look like the United States by improving infrastructure. By improving the body of the country, they hoped to heal its spirit, but in the process the Occupation abandoned pretense of national self-determination and related principles. In Commissioner Russell’s annual reports to the Secretary of State, he spent most of his ink discussing roads, telegraphs, hospitals and the gendarmerie while his discussion of education and elections was sparse. His first report completely omitted any mention of the state of education in the Republic, and his second report only mentioned widespread illiteracy without offering any solutions, only “The erection of new schools must necessarily await an increase in the revenues of the country” and that “the energies of the Haitian Government at present should be directed along lines of agricultural development and training, and vocational instruction.”¹⁶¹

¹⁶¹ Russell, *Second Annual Report of the American High Commissioner*, (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1923), 5, 26.

When he toured the country in 1919, Samuel Inman remarked on the dilapidated schoolhouses and generally nonexistent state of higher education. The treaty of 1916 had established U.S. control over almost all domestic improvements: Americans could appoint officials to improve roads, sanitation, the postal service, hospitals, the gendarmerie, but nothing in the treaty concerned education. In place of establishing educational institutions, the Occupation imported the superintendent of Louisiana's public schools to oversee instruction.¹⁶²

Colonial Education in the American Empire

The poor quality of the segregated education provided to black pupils in Louisiana was not incidental in the Occupation's decision. Education throughout the American South was based on the "Atlanta compromise" forged between black educational leader Booker T. Washington and Southern white political leaders. According to the terms of this gentleman's agreement, black Americans would submit to the Jim Crow system and cease petitioning for basic suffrage or protection from racist violence in exchange for a basic education in vocational or agricultural training. Washington summarized his reasoning for submission in his address to the 1895 Cotton States and International Exposition, "The agitation of questions of social equality is the extremest folly, and the progress in the enjoyment of all the privileges that will come to us must be the result of severe and constant struggle[...]The opportunity to earn a dollar in a factory just now is worth infinitely more than the opportunity to spend a dollar in an

¹⁶² Inman, 74.

opera-house.”¹⁶³ The compromise left black Americans with second-class citizenship and added justification for the paternalism which informed the U.S. administrators of Haiti.

Lionel Bourgeois, the Louisianan selected for the task of school reform, did not involve Haitians at any level of the planning process, and justified this exclusion with paternalism. In a letter to Commissioner Russell, Bourgeois declared that the “peculiar psychology of the Haitian mass” was “unaccustomed to disciplining itself” and that “It is an incontrovertible fact that the Haitians are unfitted to the proper administration of the school system.”¹⁶⁴ Thomas Snowden, the Military Governor of Santo Domingo (which the United States occupied concurrently with Haiti), who also served as a Military Representative of the United States to Haiti, likewise believed that only “civilized and educated white teachers” could improve the Haitian schools.¹⁶⁵

Americans implemented in Haiti a similar system to those used in the Philippines and Puerto Rico. When the United States first occupied the Philippines in 1898, it embarked upon similar programs of “moral uplift” and infrastructure improvement, with education based upon economic development, vocational training, and manual labor. However, by the 1920s, the U.S.-controlled Filipino government increased the portion of the budget devoted to education five times in ten years and expanded the curriculum to include liberal arts education, law, economics, and other disciplines conducive to bureaucratic and government work rather than manual labor. Indeed, by 1928, American critics of the progressive educational policy implemented in the Philippines remarked that

163 Booker T. Washington, “Atlanta Exposition Address,” September 1895.

164 Lionel Bourgeois to Russell, June 19, 1920, quoted in Leon D. Pamphile, “America’s Policy-Making in Haitian Education, 1915-1934,” *The Journal of Negro Education* 54 (January 1985), 99.

165 Thomas Snowden to Russell, July 1, 1920, quoted in Pamphile, 101.

“There are too many half-baked law students, bankers, and other white-collar job-hunters being turned out by the schools and colleges in the Philippines.”¹⁶⁶ The school system implemented in the Philippines was designed to prepare the indigenous population for self-rule and gradually reduce their dependence upon the United States.

Similarly, the educational system of Puerto Rico initially focused upon vocational and agricultural instruction, but shifted to add a classical liberal-arts curriculum following the passage of the Jones Act of 1917, which granted U.S. citizenship to the island’s denizens. Education was likewise conducted in English. The Puerto Rican colonial education system was designed to assimilate the islanders rather than prepare them for self-rule, since Puerto Rico was a permanent fixture of the United States’ colonial empire rather than a temporary one like the Philippines. Haiti, in contrast, was neither, and its status as the black republic led the High Commissioner to create an educational system both based on the perceived inferiority of the inhabitants and their inability to either assimilate or rule themselves.

The Service Technique

First formed in 1923 upon the recommendation of the Senate Committee and implemented by Commissioner Russell through the Borno client-presidency, the Agricultural Extension and Teaching Service (hereafter the Service Technique) reformed Haitian education along American lines, replacing the system of civil education and religious schools already extant. The Service Technique was under the purview of the Department of Agriculture, and its head was appointed by the Haitian President on the

¹⁶⁶ Henry F. Misselwitz, “Difficulties Beset Filipino Education,” *The New York Times*, May 6, 1928, 55.

nomination of the President of the United States, and Americans had general supervision of all schools within the Service.¹⁶⁷

The schools of the Service Technique were the only ones built during the Occupation, and did little to alleviate the illiteracy problem. In a report to President Herbert Hoover, Robert Russa Moton of the Tuskegee Institute estimated that the ratio of students to schools in northern Haiti was one to 1,759 and one to 3,317 in southern Haiti in 1930. Moreover, only one-eighth of school-age children were enrolled in school at all.¹⁶⁸ Service Technique schools reduced curriculum emphasis on liberal arts or literary studies and replaced them with vocational training, but were still woefully understaffed and unequipped to train a large volume of students.

In his annual reports to the Secretary of State, Commissioner Russell treated education as of secondary importance to agricultural and infrastructural development. In his third report, he outlined his focus on vocational training by essentially dismissing higher education as unnecessary for Haiti's largely-illiterate population. "The Haitian Government [...] is obviously desirous not to turn out from its schools many young men prepared solely for clerical and government work but to train the Haitians along economic and industrial lines."¹⁶⁹ In his fourth report, he derided the prior emphasis on liberal arts education. "The members of the [educated] class do not know how to use

167 Robert R. Moton, *Report of the United States Commission on Education in Haiti: October 1, 1930* (Washington, D.C.), Government Printing Office, 1930, 11.

168 Moton, *Report of the United States Commission on Education in Haiti*, 9.

169 Russell, *Third Annual Report of the American High Commissioner* (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1924), 12.

their hands and have no idea of the dignity of labor[...] It is among such a class that revolutions are bred.”¹⁷⁰

The Service Technique was not entirely without its merits. The schools included laboratory studies and other aspects of agricultural science, and in many rural areas of Haiti, were the only schools open. The *École Centrale* in Port-au-Prince compiled invaluable data on soil and climate, forestry, cultivation of bananas, dairy and livestock ranching, and other forms of agriculture. Nonetheless, the type of education promoted by the Service Technique was colonial in nature, administered by the Occupation for its financial betterment rather than the betterment of the Republic and its people.¹⁷¹

The Haitian people chafed at the sudden imposition of an “Anglo-Saxon” system of education based on the Jim Crow model. In a rare dispute between the client-president and the High Commissioner, Louis Borno objected to the manner in which the Occupation had remodeled the pedagogical system. In an address given during his 1926 visit to the United States, the Haitian leader laid out his objections on cultural and ideological grounds, although couched them in conciliatory language:

Sometimes there seems to be a tendency on the part of the United States to regard Latin America merely from the point of view of economic possibilities rather than from that of cultural stimulation. Although making a living is an excellent and honorable objective, there is, in addition, life itself. And Latin Americans possess a certain philosophy of life which [...] will merit the study of the Anglo-Saxon.¹⁷²

170 Russell, *Fourth Annual Report of the American High Commissioner*(Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1925), 7.

171 Russell, *Fourth Annual Report*, 33.

172 Louis Borno, “Problems of Interest to Haiti and the United States,” *Bulletin of the Pan-American Union* LX (July-December 1926), 850.

Zonia Baber and Emily Greene Balch of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, a U.S.-based anti-imperialist and anti-interventionist advocacy group, described how the imposition of a foreign educational system upon Haiti threatened the national character of its people. In *Occupied Haiti*, a collection of essays critical of the Occupation, they summarize Haitian feelings about the Service Technique thus, "Haitians so far as we talked with them, dread American influence on their educational system, fearing that if it is 'Anglo-Saxonized' it will be turned away from the French cultural tradition [...] It is if their soul itself were in danger of being tampered with by alien hands."¹⁷³

The Occupation's educational policy would have dire repercussions as the 1920s waned and the withdrawal deadline loomed. The educational establishment, instead of reducing illiteracy and educating voters to prepare them for the democratic process, focused on training for menial agricultural work without schools for bureaucrats and civilian administrators, because military officials controlled civilian offices. The Occupation prepared the political elite for subordinate administrative positions and did little for the peasantry, who were positioned to become landless and unemployed after withdrawal. The Occupation prioritized material progress over political progress, and was poised to lose both.¹⁷⁴

173 Zonia Baber and Emily Greene Balch, *Occupied Haiti* (New York: The Writers Publishing Company, 1927), 104.

174 Montague, 265.

CHAPTER VII

WITHDRAWAL: 1929-1934

In the 1920s, the United States attempted to reformulate its policy toward the Latin American republics. The Harding and Coolidge administrations did not reject the Monroe Doctrine entirely, but rejected the interventionism required by the Roosevelt Corollary. The Republican administrations attempted to construct a new policy which allowed the United States to protect its national interests without resorting to foreign interventions.

The Clark Memorandum

Charles Evans Hughes, who served as Secretary of State under Warren G. Harding and Calvin Coolidge from 1921-1925, completely rejected Wilsonian internationalism and the collective security arrangements of the League of Nations. During his time in the Senate, Hughes was a driving force in the isolationist camp which opposed the Treaty of Versailles and American membership in the League.

The lengthy Clark Memorandum, released in 1930 during the Hoover Administration, articulated the government's new attitude. J. Reuben Clark, undersecretary of State during the Coolidge Administration, prepared the 238-page memo for Secretary of State Stinson. Clark believed that the Monroe Doctrine applied only to

interventions by foreign powers, and that the Roosevelt Corollary allowed it to become a sword of imperialism instead of a shield for the United States. He decried the “grandiose schemes of national expansion” which invoked the Doctrine.¹⁷⁵ Clark considered the Doctrine a self-preservation mechanism.

According to Clark, the Doctrine defines the relationship between the United States and Europe, not the United States and Latin America. Therefore, the United States could only prevent intervention by European powers in Latin America. The United States could not intervene itself, and the United States could not colonize, oppress, or victimize Latin American nations. The Clark Memorandum removed the Roosevelt Corollary from the Monroe Doctrine entirely.¹⁷⁶

The Clark Memorandum was not the prime mover of United States foreign policy, but it did indicate a shifting trend in American foreign policy in the 1920s and 1930s from progressive internationalism to conservative isolationism. With the Clark Memorandum, the United States indicated its willingness to abandon interventionism. Foreign wars and interventions in Latin America never enjoyed popular support, and the Latin American interventions of the early twentieth century never accomplished their goals.¹⁷⁷

The Clark Memorandum and indicated that the United States was ready to withdraw from Haiti and return control of the government to the Haitians, but no Republican administration assembled a formal exit policy. The United States seemed

175 J. Reuben Clark, *Memorandum on the Monroe Doctrine prepared by J. Reuben Clark, Undersecretary of State* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1930), 177.

176 *Ibid.*, 6.

177 Gene A. Sessions, “The Clark Memorandum Myth,” *The Americas* 34 (July 1977), 40.

content to let American troops remain in Haiti until the 1936 deadline. The 1932 election of Franklin Roosevelt led to a comprehensive Good Neighbor Policy which sought to cultivate positive relations and cultural exchange between the United States and Latin America.

Haitian Unrest

The Occupation administration of Haiti made little effort to promote Haitians to high-level government positions as the 1936 treaty deadline approached. High Commissioner Russell excluded Haitians from the government and alienated dissident American officials. Russell's administration considered Haitian ministers and Haitian ideas useless. Financial adviser W.W. Cumberland said of Haitian financial ministers, "in my four years of experience in Haiti not a single [Haitian] Minister of Finance made one *single* constructive suggestion on any economic, commercial or financial subject."¹⁷⁸

President Borno remained subservient to the High Commissioner, and only exerted token displays of his executive authority when prompted to by his superiors. In 1927, Borno blocked Senator William H. King, a longtime critic of the Occupation, from visiting Haiti. While the American press viewed this as an assertion of Haitian sovereignty, Financial Adviser Cumberland had orchestrated the move to improve the popular image of Borno's government. Russell permitted Borno to rule without a legislature and suppressed democratic elections, to the chagrin of the State Department.

The High Commissioner demonstrated his preference for legislation-by-bayonet when, in 1927, he requested 350 Marines who had left Haiti for Nicaragua to return in time for "constructive work contemplated for next winter, including, perhaps, the

178 Schmidt, 189.

modifying of the present constitution and drastic, but much-needed reforms in the judiciary system of Haiti.”¹⁷⁹ Said reforms included further centralization of power and an extension of the presidential term from four years to six years, ensuring the client-president’s continuance in office. Laws regulating the freedom of the press and jury trials would originate from the Council of State, a legislative body appointed by President Borno himself. The president appointed the legislature, which in turn elected the president, but every body of Haitian government followed the orders of the High Commissioner.

While the State Department initially prodded the Occupation to hold free elections in 1930, to ensure withdrawal of American troops by the 1936 deadline, department officials soon realized that Haitians would vote overwhelmingly against the Occupation-endorsed candidates. Dana G. Munro of the Division of Latin American Affairs wrote,

It is very doubtful, furthermore, whether an election held at present would have any appreciable value in training the Haitian people for self-government. The masses of voters are still too ignorant and too much out of touch with the world. A continuance for a relatively short time of the development work now in progress, including the opening of roads and trails and the education of the peasants in the new rural schools, will work a great change in this respect.¹⁸⁰

The people of Haiti grew restless and became enraged when the United States reneged on its promise to hold elections for the National Assembly. The Occupation maintained a monopoly on radio broadcasting in Haiti, and by the late 1920s, the Haitian opposition had little political tools of expression except for heavily-censored newspapers. The worldwide economic depression which began in 1929 affected the island, and the

179 Schmidt, 190-191.

180Ibid., 193.

Occupation stifled foreign investment and development. Amid this climate, the Haitian government imposed new taxes on coffee, and restricted migrant labor emigration to Cuba.¹⁸¹

1929 was a year of general unrest. The first sparks of opposition were student strikes beginning in October. Students from the Haitian Service Technique's central agricultural college walked out of school in protest of scholarships which incentivized field work and a reduction of scholarships for students from the city. High Commissioner Russell viewed the protests as a "petty students' affair" seized by disgruntled opposition politicians to undermine the Haitian government. Nevertheless, the protests spread across the country.

The students focused much of their ire on Dr. Freeman in his role as head of the Service Technique. Students surrounded his house in Port-au-Prince and pelted it with rocks before being dispersed by the *Garde* with warning shots, while other protesters carried an effigy of the professor in the streets. The colleges of applied sciences, medicine, and law joined the protest in solidarity and soon non-students and Haitian nationalists were voicing their disaffection in the streets of Port-au-Prince. In Cap-Haïtien a thousand protesters gathered around American outposts chanting, "Down with Freeman!" and "Down with Borno!"¹⁸²

By early December, Russell decided to implement martial law and curfews in the cities of Port-au-Prince and Cap-Haïtien. Non-Occupation-controlled press temporarily

¹⁸¹Schmidt, 269.

¹⁸²"La Manifestation spontanée de Étudiants hier soir dans la ville. Le Monôme devant la résidence du Dr. Freeman. Coup de feu pour le disperser. L'École des Sciences Appliquées, L'École nationale de Médecine, de Chirurgie Dentaire et de Pharmacie se solidarisent avec leurs camarades de l'École Nationale de Droit et de l'École Centrale d'Agriculture," *Le Nouvelliste d'Haiti*, November 8, 1929, 1.

ceased publication, but this did little to abate the growing unrest in the country.¹⁸³ As the riots spread, the Occupation resorted to violence. The protesters became so unruly that the *Garde d'Haiti* required American Marines to quell the riots.¹⁸⁴ On December 4, Russell invoked martial law and incorporated the *Garde* into the Marine Corps. On December 6, 1,500 armed peasants marched on Cayes. The marines ordered the crowd to halt, then opened fire on the protesters, killing ten.¹⁸⁵

Commissioner Russell hastily attempted to downplay the significance of the massacre. He continued to blame a nebulous body of agitators and unscrupulous politicians for the violence, and reached far to tie the massacre to Communist conspirators and rum-runners. Russell remained clear about his message: the Occupation was innocent of any bloodshed, and the Cayes massacre proved that the Haitian people were not sober or rational enough for free elections; only martial law could restore peace.¹⁸⁶

The Cayes massacre was an embarrassment to the Occupation and an outrage to the U.S. public, and was a major factor in the decision to end the Occupation and restore Haitian independence. The massacre was also seminal moment in the development of

183 “Les Directeurs du ‘Nouvelliste’ ayant pris connaissance de la Proclamation ci-dessus dans l’incertitude les limites fixées à leur, droit d’écrire, ont décidé de suspendre provisoirement la publication de leur quotidien, et s’en excusent auprès de leurs abonnés et lecteurs qui, certainement, comprendront l’opportunité de cette attitude,” *Le Nouvelliste d’Haiti*, December 5, 1929.

184 Schmidt, 197.

185 Montague, 270.

186 Schmidt, 202.

film journalism. Newsreels in the United States presented moving images of the violence and brought the visceral reality of the carnage to the eyes of the viewers.¹⁸⁷

The Forbes Commission

Foreign newspapers lambasted American imperialism in Haiti, especially in light of the recently-signed Kellogg-Briand Pact, which purported to disavow warfare and other violent means to resolve disputes between nations. The *Manchester Guardian* declared in December 1929, “Resentment against the American occupation has long been smoldering and needed only some minor dispute to cause it to burst into flame.”¹⁸⁸

Several Paris newspapers called for a League of Nations investigation into the Occupation. The *Journal des Débats* remarked, “It is incontestable that the American occupation, which has lasted thirteen years, irritates the islanders, who realize that the independence of their country, which is a member of the League of Nations and a signatory of the Kellogg pact, has become fictitious.”¹⁸⁹ Russian newspapers eagerly satirized the Occupation with cartoons of a belligerent Uncle Sam holding a gun to a Haitian’s head and captions mocking American imperialism and the Kellogg-Briand Pact.¹⁹⁰

President Hoover called for an inquiry into the conduct of the Marines, and the Americans at last appeared to exercise direct oversight over the Occupation. In his

187 Renda, 221.

188 *The Manchester Guardian*, December 9, 1929, quoted in Schmidt, 205.

189 “Paris Press Assails the Situation in Haiti; League Urged to Act for that Member State,” *The New York Times*, December 10, 1929, 3; Norman Armour to Henry Stimson, December 12, 1929, quoted in Schmidt, 205.

190 “Haiti Stirs Soviet Gibes,” *The New York Times*, December 11, 1929, 4.

directive establishing the commission, Hoover declared “I have no desire for representation of the American government abroad by our military forces.”¹⁹¹ The head of the Commission, W. Cameron Forbes, had previously served as Governor-General of the Philippines and headed a presidential commission investigating conditions in the Philippines under the Harding administration. Since the catalyst for the protests at Aux Cayes was the shoddy state of the Haitian education system, the commission included four senior faculty members of black universities in the United States, one of whom, R.R. Moton of the Tuskegee Institute, was appointed to head a second commission overseeing the Haitian educational system later in 1930.¹⁹²

Forbes’s commission began its investigation in February 1930 with a primary goal of liquidating American responsibilities in Haiti and preparing the country for withdrawal of troops.¹⁹³ He concerned the majority of his report with the state of Haitian infrastructure and education, for which he highly praised the Occupation, along with the constabulary, hospitals, and highways.¹⁹⁴ Nevertheless, Forbes understood that the Occupation had failed in its mission to prepare the Haitian people for self-government. He tacitly acknowledged that the High Commissioner had treated Haiti as a colony.

The acts and attitude of the Treaty officials gave your commission the impression that they had been based on the assumption that the Occupation would continue indefinitely. In other words, their plans and projects did not seem to take into account that their work should be completed by 1936, and the commission

191 “Marines Fighting in Haiti: Cruiser is Rushed There; Hoover Calls for Inquiry,” *The New York Times*, December 8, 1929, 1.

192 W. Cameron Forbes, *Report of the President’s Commission for the Study and Review of Conditions in the Republic of Haiti: March 26, 1930* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1930), 2.

193 “Hoover Aims to End Our Stay in Haiti,” *The New York Times*, February 5, 1930, 1.

194 Forbes, 6-14.

was disappointed to find that the preparation for the political and administrative training of Haitians for the responsibilities of government had been inadequate.¹⁹⁵

During the deliberations of the commission, the Haitian people perceived themselves as being in a state of political limbo, and Louis Borno lost most of his remaining political support. On the night of February 28, the Haitian *Garde* battled protesters in the streets of Port-au-Prince who feared that Borno was orchestrating a *coup d'etat* by sacking six members of the Council of State. When the commissioners arrived in Port-au-Prince, the same crowds called for a speedy end to Borno's government and the withdrawal of the United States. In his report, Forbes noted the conspicuous absence of any counter-protesters or public support of Borno's government anywhere in the Republic. He remarked, "It is fair to assume that public sentiment in Haiti was more responsive to the opposition than to the government."¹⁹⁶

Forbes determined that the method of selecting the Haitian president, indirect election by the Council of State, would not quell the riots and any successor to Borno selected in this manner would not enjoy public support. The commission recommended the High Commissioner install a neutral president nominated by Borno and approved by Commissioner Russell, President Borno, and President Hoover. Once this compromise candidate took office, the National Assembly would then hold elections for a permanent president.¹⁹⁷

In his report, Forbes was largely resigned to the failure of the Occupation. The Commission reported that it was "under no delusions" that once American troops

195 Forbes, *Report of the President's Commission*, 8.

196 *Ibid.*, 5.

197 *Ibid.*, 5-6.

withdrew, chaos would resume in Haiti. In private correspondence with Lord Irwin, the Lord viceroy of British India, he regarded the Haitians as unfit for self-rule, and wished for a benevolent dictator to take the reigns of government.¹⁹⁸ Commissioner Russell, writing in his memoirs in 1934, justified his dictatorial control of the Haitian government by saying, “A military dictatorship for a country in which the foundations of democracy do not exist is not necessarily a bad thing.”¹⁹⁹

R.R. Moton, who chaired a commission of black educators, issued his report in October of 1930, primarily aimed at the inadequacies of the Service Technique. He considered the Service Technique to be woefully inadequate to the educational needs of the Haitian population, and recommended a “change of attitude” to reform the school system.²⁰⁰ None of Moton’s recommendations were implemented, as the energies of both the Haitian and American governments turned to the final settlement for withdrawal.

Final Withdrawal

Eugene Roy, a private banker, assumed control of a provisional government in May 1930, and preparations promptly began for a legislative election in October. The State Department, wary of vote-tampering and voter intimidation, ordered the Marines to stay in their barracks during polling. This was the first free election in Haitian history, and resulted in the resounding defeat of every pro-American and pro-Occupation

198 Cameron Forbes to Lord Irwin, April 10, 1930, quoted in Schmidt, 216.

199 Schmidt, 216-217.

200 “Haitians Upheld Over Education Issue,” *The New York Times*, December 1, 1930, 3.

candidate on the ballot.²⁰¹ The National Assembly promptly elected opposition leader Sténio Vincent in November, and General Russell resigned as High Commissioner the same month.²⁰²

The election of Vincent initiated the last phase of the American administration: Haitianization. Vincent had eloquently testified before Congress a decade earlier on behalf of the *Union Patriotique d'Haiti* concerning the abuses committed by the U.S. Marines, but he understood the necessity of stability during the transition between American and Haitian administrations. The Haitian government removed Americans from political positions and replaced them with Haitians, with the notable exception of the Haitian military. In October 1931, Haitianization of the *Garde* began, and completed in December 1934. The United States imposed strict fiscal policies as conditions for full withdrawal of troops, and retained a fiscal representative to observe the Haitian payment of loans to the United States. Restoration of Haitian independence would occur gradually and with American supervision. Haiti would be free on American terms.²⁰³

Herbert Hoover lost the U.S. presidency in 1932 to Franklin Roosevelt. Despite his involvement with the Wilson-era Occupation, Roosevelt was eager to reduce American military presence in the Caribbean. The new president committed himself to a Good Neighbor Policy and warmer relations with Latin American republics, but pragmatic financial concerns likewise informed his commitment to troop withdrawal.

201 Schmidt, 219.

202 Montague, 271.

203 Ibid., 273.

The Vincent government reluctantly agreed to continued financial of the *Banque Nationale* in 1932 and used this concession to secure another foreign development loan, although the Haitian legislature balked at both proposals, viewing both American control of the *Banque* and another loan as undermining Haitian independence. Both Vincent and Roosevelt bypassed the Haitian legislature and reached an Executive Accord in August 1933, wherein American control of all Haitian financial institutions would remain in exchange for troop withdrawal two years before the treaty deadline of 1936. In this way, Roosevelt benefited from appearing benevolent while still maintaining a sphere of influence over Haiti. Haiti would not regain control of its finances until 1941.²⁰⁴

²⁰⁴ Schmidt, 225-226

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

In the years following the withdrawal of U.S. troops, Haiti reverted to its revolutionary cycle. The campaign to crush the *caco* rebellion did little to bring peace or stability to the country. The violence inflicted by the Marines upon the Haitians reflected the pervasive racism of their home country and undermined the efforts of the Occupation government to reconstruct the island nation.²⁰⁵

Upon leaving office, High Commissioner Russell presciently remarked that Haiti would soon revert to military dictatorships, but that they would not be “as cynical, cruel, and reactionary as the past.”²⁰⁶ While Russell meant to minimize the failures of his own administration with the remark, he belied the democratic nation-building goals of the United States. The paternalistic racism and anti-democratic policies of the Occupation inhibited chances for Haitian self-rule and independence. A country accustomed to autocratic rule will revert to authoritarianism to restore stability in the absence of any other alternatives, and the violent and incompetent Occupation

205 Renda, 180-181.

206 Schmidt, 217.

provided no such alternative. The United States Occupation actually interrupted a trend toward peasant enfranchisement and power-sharing between the elite and the peasantry. Before the two client-presidents, Dartiguenave and Borno, eleven of the twelve preceding Presidents of Haiti had been from the peasant underclass.²⁰⁷ The brief attempt at a *mission civilisatrice* by the United States utterly failed to instill liberal democracy by restoring the ruling class to political power and preventing the Haitians from electing their own legislature and president.

While American administration of Haiti and the presence of U.S. troops ended in 1934, Haiti did not regain control of its finances until 1941, and still remains dependent upon foreign aid to prop up its own economy. U.S. investors expected large profits from the Haitian building projects, which never materialized. The technocratic impulse of the United States to build and improve infrastructure relied upon American capital. Once the occupation ended, this stream of capital dried up, and Haiti had few natural resources or domestic capital. The public works system of bridges, railways, and canals fell into decay under corrupt and inefficient governments. The swelling population in post-occupation Haiti proved too great a burden for the health system.²⁰⁸ The regimen of foreign aid which began in 1922 did not allow foreign investors return on their capital, and led to domestic industries to atrophy, creating dependency upon foreign investment and aid which continues to the present.

The Gendarmerie staffed and trained by the occupation proved the most durable and lasting legacy of U.S. rule. The *Garde d'Haiti* became the new ruling class, and political authority became centralized in Port-au-Prince. This allowed autocratic dictators to gain and keep power with ease. Under U.S. rule, the *Garde* shifted from province to province to break the will of the resistance fighters as well as local political organizations. Post-occupation Haiti was a

207 Schmidt, 147.

208 Ibid., 235.

fertile ground for strong-man governments. The first post-Occupation president, Sténio Vincent, immediately amended the constitution to allow himself an extended term without a democratic election. This penchant for dictatorship continued in Haiti for another half-century.²⁰⁹ The U.S. Occupation enabled Haitian nationalism by breaking the oligarchy of the ruling class, allowing the previously-disfranchised *africains* to assume political power. While this social development could have aided a liberal democracy, it only strengthened dictatorships in Haiti.

The post-Occupation dictatorships grew organically from Haiti's political culture because they were reinforced by the imperial culture of the Occupation. The client-presidents controlled relatively little of their own country, subservient in almost all respect to the High Commissioner. The "tutelage" program of the Occupation did not allow for free elections or participation by average Haitians in the legislative process. This form of top-down white rule was directly imported to Haiti from the American South, where the white ruling class lived in fear of black citizens exercising their right to suffrage, and "colored rule" became a punchline in the cartoons of Thomas Nast.

Conversely, the interactions between African-Americans and Haitians strengthened the Haitian's self-conception and led to Haitian nationalism based on Pan-Africanism. Haitians of the *africain* class, frequently unable to find employment in Haiti, migrated elsewhere in the Caribbean or to the continental United States. There, they came in contact with the NAACP and the United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), which both publically condemned the Occupation and sought to liberate Haiti by turning American public opinion against the Occupation.²¹⁰ Additionally, the racism and brutal suppression of the *caco* rebels led the

²⁰⁹ "Five More Years for Sténio," *Time Magazine*, March 24, 1941.

²¹⁰ B.G. Plummer, "Garveyism in Haiti During the U.S. Occupation," *Journal of Haitian Studies* 21, no. 2 (2015), 69.

affranchis to reject the Francophilia of their ancestors. Francois Duvalier, dictator of Haiti from 1957-1971, adopted a *négritude* philosophy which emphasized pan-Africanism and *vodoun*.²¹¹

The educational system imposed from above by the United States, which had led to the riots precipitating the Cayes Massacre, did not long survive the Occupation. With the dismantling of the Service Technique even before the final withdrawal in 1934, Haitians attempted to create a replacement school system, but funding always came up woefully short in the post-Occupation administrations. Today, Haiti has the lowest literacy rate among Latin American countries at 61 percent.²¹²

The Haitian intervention experiment would provide lessons to the United States about fighting small-scale guerrilla campaigns and about nation-building. The Occupation far outlasted its popularity and did not leave behind a stable government or a democratic society. Because of this, the United States coordinated state-building with native governments and allies in occupied countries following World War II. The Cold War and the spread of Communism to the Western Hemisphere led the United States to resume direct interventions in Latin America to preserve its regional hegemony, but these interventions occurred either covertly or with support of U.S.-friendly interests in the affected countries. The United States only softened its touch with Latin America once it secured its hegemony over the Americas once again after the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991. The United States in the early twenty-first century attempted to establish a similar hegemony over the Middle East, and intervened directly in Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003. Both invasions preceded long and costly guerrilla campaigns which did little to support

211 Schmidt, 234-6.

²¹² "The World Factbook: Haiti," Central Intelligence Agency, February 01, 2018, accessed November 25, 2018, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ha.html>.

either democracy or regional stability. In its continuing pursuit of foreign adventurism, the United States forgot the lessons of Haiti.

Democracy remains an elusive goal for modern-day Haiti. In the wake of the Duvalier dictatorships, Haitians drafted a constitution in 1987 which provided for direct election of the president and prohibited him from serving consecutive terms. Haiti held its first truly democratic election in December 1990, which resulted in a victory for former Catholic priest Jean-Bertrand Aristide. The Haitian military overthrew Aristide in a *coup d'état* in September 1991, but he returned to power after the United States' 1994 intervention, Operation Uphold Democracy. Aristide peacefully ceded power to René Préval in 1996, marking the first democratic transition of governments since Haitian independence almost two centuries prior. Aristide won a second term in 2000, but another *coup* toppled him in 2004, and American, French, and Canadian forces escorted the deposed president to exile in Africa despite his protests. The devastating earthquake of January 2010 indebted Haiti to foreign aid, mostly from the United States.

Haiti in the twenty-first century was firmly within the American sphere of influence. The dependence upon foreign aid was first engendered during the Occupation, with the loan of 1922 which the United States strong-armed the client-president into accepting. The economy of Haiti became increasingly tied to foreign investments, until that money dried up following the withdrawal of American troops. Today, Haiti must go hat-in-hand to the United States to alleviate its most pressing financial needs.

According to a 2012 Gallup poll, 79 percent of Haitians approved of American world leadership and generally held high opinions of the United States and its people.²¹³ The United States remained the nation's largest trading partner and large amounts of American money and

213 Median International Center and Gallup, *U.S. Global Leadership Report* (Washington, D.C., Gallup, 2013), 6.

manpower poured into the country after 2010. Haitian expatriates in the United States number around two million, and according to a 2005-6 poll, 67 percent of Haitians would emigrate to the United States if they could. Four-fifths of college-educated Haitians live in the United States.²¹⁴ The United States, due to its close diplomatic and geographic ties with the island, still views the well-being of Haiti as its responsibility. Foreign aid offered to Haiti often comes with provisos and conditions which indicate that the United States only offers aid to Haiti in accordance with its own interests rather than the interests of Haiti.²¹⁵

The U.S. experiment in Haiti failed to create a functional state independent of U.S. aid or control. The United States made an ineffectual and half-hearted effort to change the status quo of perpetual political violence, poverty, and dependency upon foreign aid and financial interests. The endemic racism of U.S. society prevented the U.S. from affording Haitians any measure of real independence and self-rule. The undemocratic practices at home prevented free and fair elections, and the lasting legacies of the occupation were more authoritarian governments and more hunger and abuse for the people of Haiti. The United States failed Haitians because of its own prejudices.

In his 1921 testimony before Congress concerning the *caco* campaign, Smedley Butler remarked, “We were all embued [sic] with the fact that we were the trustees of a huge estate that belonged to minors. That was the viewpoint I personally took...that we were endeavoring to make for them a rich and productive property, to be turned over to them at such a time as our government saw fit.”²¹⁶ If Butler spoke the truth, then the United States treated its

214 Terry F. Buss and Adam Gardner, “Why Foreign Aid to Haiti Failed,” *National Academy of Public Administration* (Washington, D.C., National Academy of Public Administration, 2006), 5.

215 *Ibid.*, 27.

216 Renda, 13.

wards not as heirs but as illegitimate children, barely acknowledged and abused. They limped along the century sickly as they became ever more dependent upon their guardians for sustenance. A century after the Marines took Port-au-Prince, the shackles of civilization still bind a nation struggling to find its own identity.

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VITA

William Christopher Mullen

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Arts

Thesis: "THE SHACKLES OF CIVILIZATION: RACE AND THE AMERICAN
OCCUPATION OF HAITI, 1915-1934"

Major Field: American History

Biographical:

Education:

Completed the requirements for the Master of Arts in History at Oklahoma State
University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in December, 2018

Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Arts in History at Harding
University, Searcy, Arkansas in 2012.