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The Attitude and Policy of Elihu Root  
Toward Latin America

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THE ATTITUDE AND POLICY OF ELIHU ROOT  
TOWARD LATIN AMERICA

By

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1947

Submitted to the Department of History  
Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

1948

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Preface

This study has been developed from three categories. The first shows the background of Elihu Root with the thought in mind of the influence and bearing of this background upon the attitude of Root in Latin American affairs. Next, this development is devoted to the historic trip of Root to Latin America that helps in a very large degree to make his attitude toward Latin America better understandable by his words. Last, examples of his attitude in his relationships with Latin America are given to make his attitude toward Latin America better understandable by his actions.

In this study no attempt will be made to establish definitely the extent of his attitude and policy toward Latin America. In making such an attempt the questions continually arise, such as, how much of the policy was credited to Root? Can his policy be established from his words, or do his actions belie his words? If the policy can be determined to be entirely that of Root in some particular instance, then since success of the policy is judged by ultimate consequences, one is faced with the insurmountable task of determining whether the consequences of the action trace directly back to the policy of Root, or more likely, is the intermingling of causes developed through succeeding administrations and psychological factors of the particular period involved.

As would be expected historians in the past have not agreed on this controversial subject. In these pages it would be most

inappropriate to attempt any answer in the tone of finality. All that can be done is to note briefly some of the leading considerations on the problems involved, the verbal opinion of Root on the problems, and actions undertaken in handling them. In this manner some light may be cast upon the actual situation.

- J. M. K.

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## Chapter I

### Background and Training of Elihu Root

Elihu Root, one of the first advocates of the good neighbor policy, was born February 15, 1845 in Buttrick Hall, Hamilton College, Clinton, New York. He was the son of one of the leading mathematicians of that time, Professor Oren Root of Hamilton College.

He was brought up in a household where the small salary of a professor imposed a life that was simple, yet strict. By his contacts with many professors Root developed an intellectual ideal that guided his whole career. Elihu Root entered Hamilton College in the fall of 1860. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree at that institution when he was nineteen and one half years old.

For a year after his graduation he taught school at Rome, New York in order to pay for his subsequent law studies at New York University. He received his law degree from New York University the same year he received the degree of Master of Arts from Hamilton College. Root was admitted to the bar on June 18, 1867.<sup>1</sup>

His first years after being admitted to the bar in New York City consisted of a great deal of study and hard work. He could

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<sup>1</sup> Phillip C. Jessup, Elihu Root, vol. 1, p. 62.

barely afford the essentials of life. However through his keen analytical powers, determination and thoroughness he soon won recognition wealth and social power as a corporation lawyer.

He first became known as one of the many lawyers who defended Boss William M. Tweed and James H. Ingersoll in 1873, against charges of graft and corruption in the use of the city's funds. In accepting these cases he unconsciously sowed the seed from which he later reaped a whirlwind of abuse from the yellow journals of William Randolph Hearst. The latter boasted he, more than anyone else, built up the legend of Elihu Root, defender of Tweed and "jackal" to the "hyenas" of Wall Street.<sup>2</sup>

Root became influential in Republican politics in New York. President McKinley appointed Root Secretary of War August 1, 1899. "Of our Secretaries of War, he [Root] was easily the most distinguished as his five Reports, made while incumbent of that post, are, as Lord Haldane describes them, the last word on the organization and administration of an army in a democracy."<sup>3</sup>

Immediately upon taking office several colonial problems fell to Root. The problems which fall in this study and Root's attitude and policy in handling them are part of a later chapter.

An example of Root's efficiency which served him so well in his problems with Latin America, is the drastic program of internal reorganization completed while he was Secretary of War.

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 82.

<sup>3</sup> Nicholas Murray Butler, "Elihu Root" The American Academy of Arts and Letters, Academy Publication No. 92, 37.



There were many complaints concerning the military system of the time. In his first annual report in 1899 Root urged upon Congress a reorganization of the militia, since no one expected that the regulars would ever fight alone, and a reorganization of the regulars to provide for the better training of officers and the preparation of war plans. Through Root's efforts Congress was persuaded to respond with laws carrying both appropriations and legal authority. In November, 1901, the Army War College was opened in Washington, as a post-graduate school for officers.<sup>4</sup> In 1902 Root managed to have the Military Academy at West Point enlarged to make possible the training of the larger number of officers required by the slightly enlarged regular army.

The Administration in its army reorganization created a General Staff Corps for the army. This was also accomplished by the efforts of Root. Newton D. Baker, who was Secretary of War during the World War said of Root concerning this creation of the General Staff that it "was not only his outstanding contribution to the national defense of the country, but the outstanding contribution made by any Secretary of War from the beginning of history." Baker went as far as to say that "without that contribution from him, the participation of the United States in the World War would necessarily have been a confused, ineffective and discreditable episode."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> A. H. Mc Donald, ed., The Encyclopedia Americana, vol II, p. 302.

<sup>5</sup> Frederick Palmer, Newton D. Baker America At War, vol II, pp. 380-381.

In these accomplishments the attention was not drawn away from the need of the navy to keep abreast of the times, however. This fleet created at that time made it possible for President Roosevelt to make a notable display of the reorganized navy and memorable demonstration in 1907. The national policy in which these elements played their part was a coordinated scheme, at whose head stood Root's administrative work.

Another example, and one of the many that illustrate his policy of arbitration in dealing not only with Latin American problems but all situations where arbitration was possible, is his influence in the settlement of the anthracite coal strike in the fall of 1902. Although it was Roosevelt who settled the strike the fact that he settled it by arbitration rather than the use of federal troops was due to Root.

In 1900 Root was compelled to take over the duties of Secretary of State during Hays' illness. This left Root in the limelight in handling the problem of the Boxer Rebellion in June, 1900. The events in this situation are well described by Tyler Dennett and Alfred L. P. Dennis.<sup>6</sup> It is sufficient to note here, in order to illustrate the lenient foreign policy of Root toward China as well as the Latin American countries, that Root did advocate a lenient policy toward China and was instrumental in the United States remitting that portion of its share of the indemnity which was in excess of the actual expenses. The

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<sup>6</sup> Tyler Dennett, Americans in Eastern Asia, pp. 650-668; Tyler Dennett, John Hay, Chapters XXIV-XXVI; Alfred L. P. Dennis, Adventures in American Diplomacy, Chapters VIII-IX.

Chinese Government utilized the remitted portions to establish a fund for the education of Chinese students in the United States.

Root in 1903 was called upon by President Theodore Roosevelt as one of the three eminent jurists from the United States to meet with the three from Great Britain in settling the dispute with Great Britain over the boundary between Canada and Alaska. An American victory in the dispute was obtained when Lord Alverstone cast his vote with the three American commissioners. "I am very glad to get out of the Alaskan Boundary business alive and without discredit," Root wrote to Willard Bartlett on November 12, 1903. "It was a pretty tough looking undertaking for a long time."<sup>7</sup> It was while Root was in Europe on the Alaska Boundary case that Roosevelt "took Panama." Root had nothing to do with this policy at that time. February 1, 1904 Root resigned as Secretary of War.

On the 19th of July, 1905, Root became Secretary of State, after the death of John Hay. Nicholas Murray Butler said of Root regarding that office that "History will confirm the judgment of Lord Bryce that Root was the greatest Secretary of State in the history of the American nation, among all the long list of names which begins with that of Thomas Jefferson."<sup>8</sup> John Hay had wished Root to take his place as Secretary of State when stories of Root's retirement as Secretary of War in 1903

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<sup>7</sup> Jessup, op. cit., p. 401.

<sup>8</sup> Butler, op. cit., p. 37.

were being circulated. Hay recognized Root as having a strength which he lacked.<sup>9</sup> While Secretary of State he attended the Third Pan-American Congress at Rio de Janeiro and made a tour of South America during the summer of 1906. Root had his hand in the pie of the Venezuela dispute and many other Latin American eruptions of this period. In these disputes his byword was arbitration. His utmost aim was arbitration rather than force. Mr. Root believed, however, that arbitration should be a judicial procedure, not based upon the principle of give and take and compromise, so common in diplomacy. He would, as he said in his address at Rio de Janeiro, "substitute the rule of law for the rule of man."<sup>10</sup>

As Secretary of State about forth reciprocal treaty ratifications were brought about by Mr. Root. He resigned as Secretary of State a few days before the inauguration of President Taft March 4, 1909. The same year he took his seat in the United States Senate as Senator from New York, succeeding Thomas C. Platt.

For Root's work in the pacification of the Philippines and Cuba, his part in the negotiations between the United States and Japan and the discussion of the Panama tolls question, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1913. He viewed the award not as a personal tribute, but as a "conservative European approval of the conduct of the American Government in colonial and foreign affairs during the Administrations of McKinley and

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<sup>9</sup> Dennett, op. cit., p. 432.

<sup>10</sup> James B. Scott, "A Review of President Roosevelt's Administration," Outlook, XCI, (February 13, 1909), 356.

Roosevelt."<sup>11</sup>

At the time of the split in the Republican party in 1912, Root stood loyally by the party and supported President Taft for re-election even though Theodore Roosevelt had been a closer personal friend.

Mr. Root decided not to be a candidate for re-election to the Senate. During his career he had been accustomed to comparative free action in reaching his goals as Secretary of War and State. The slow moving Senate caused him to have a feeling of disgust for its lack of speed. He left the Senate in 1915. Action brought about by Root while in the Senate concerning Latin America will be discussed under a later heading.

During his life Elihu Root had many honorary degrees conferred upon him by many colleges and universities in the United States, Latin America and other countries. He belonged to a great many legal, literary, artistic and scientific organizations in Latin America and other countries.

Mr. Root was the author of the following books that have some connection with his tireless efforts in attempting to "keep faith" with Latin America: Addresses on International Subjects, Latin America and the United States, and Miscellaneous Addresses.

Nicholas Murray Butler believed that Root's state papers and

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<sup>11</sup> Jessup, op. cit., p. 504.

his public acts were marked by farsighted vision, human understanding and a great power of interpretation. He said this was all revealed in a literary form which has made these a permanent contribution to the literature of our language and which brought him the distinction of membership in the American Academy of Arts and Letters.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Butler, op. cit., p. 36.

## Chapter II

### Elihu Root's visits to Latin America

The main object of Mr. Root's memorable visit to Central and South America in the summer of 1906 was political. In consequence of the expanding power and prestige of the United States, and especially because of the acquisition of Porto Rico and evident possibility of the eventual acquisition of Cuba, there had developed in Latin America a feeling of fear and distrust of the great republic of the North which seriously threatened the harmonious maintenance of our guardianship. Santo Domingo and Panama, as well as Cuba, came under American influence, and it began to be believed that these events were but a presage to further territorial annexations. Secretary Root believed that a good understanding could be substituted for the existing suspicion by a frank explanation of what he considered the true position of the United States, and that the explanation would be most effective if it were made in the countries where the suspicion existed.

Mr. Root's trip to Latin America was the first of its kind and set an inspiration and precedent for the subsequent trips of later statesmen such as Knox, Hughes, Coolidge, Hoover, Wallace and Roosevelt. Each of these trips added something to a better understanding with our southern neighbors. "The trip was not planned but like Topsy, it just grew."<sup>1</sup> But it

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<sup>1</sup> Jessup, op. cit., p. 474.

has been claimed Mr. Root was sent to South America by Roosevelt to "get a reputation" in being groomed for presidential nomination in 1908.<sup>2</sup>

The newspapers gave the proposed trip much publicity. Root decided to take his wife and children along in order to make the trip be looked upon as more social than diplomatic. They boarded the "Charleston" on July 4, 1906 and landed at San Juan, Porto Rico on July 8. He wished to stop there in order to get a general idea of the place and make his ideas a little more definite on such questions as might arise regarding Porto Rico during the next three years. He looked upon Porto Rico as an aspect of the general problem in the Caribbean.<sup>3</sup>

His next stop on his official tour was Brazil. He was greeted enthusiastically and drove in a two hour triumphal procession. From the time Mr. Root left the "Charleston" and surrendered himself to the hospitality of his hosts nothing that money could buy was spared for his lavish equipment and entertainment.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Edward G. Lowry, Washington Close-Ups, p. 265.

<sup>3</sup> Jessup, op. cit., p. 478.

<sup>4</sup> The cost was \$2,000 to properly upholster the opera-box which Root visited for an hour or two. His carriage was especially ordered from Paris, and every room in the Foreign Office was redecorated especially in his honor. George A. Chamberlain, "Secretary Root's Diplomatic Triumph in South America," Harpers Weekly, II, (September 8, 1906), 1274.



Root attended the Third International American Conference at Rio de Janeiro. He provided the delegates with a copy of the instructions used by the delegates to the Conference of 1901, by which they were to be guided. He reminded them, however, that "the true function of such a conference is to deal with matters of common interest which are not really subjects of controversy." Root stated that this "would lead to cooperation along common lines for the attainment of objects which all really desire."<sup>5</sup> His speech at this conference remains one of the greatest expositions of the vital need of a mutual and sympathetic understanding among the American nations. In this address he admitted the differences between the United States and her southern neighbors, but he reminded them that "they were alike in that they were engaged under new conditions, free from traditions, forms and limitations of the Old World, in working out the same problem of popular self-government." He told them that no place else in the world had the progress of popular self-government been more marked than in Latin America. Root clarified this statement by reminding the delegates that strong and stable governments had arisen from the wreck of Indian fighting and race conflicts and civil wars. "Loyalty to country, its peace, its dignity, its honor, has risen above partisanship for individual leaders."

He showed in this speech these results had not been accomplished by national isolation but by all the countries work-

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<sup>5</sup> Third International American Conference, Senate Document 365, 59 Cong., 2 sess., pp. 39-40.

ing together. He said that "no nation can live unto itself alone and continue to live." Root admitted that some might advance more quickly than others but that "no nation can long continue very far in advance of the general progress of mankind, and no nation that is not doomed to extinction can remain very far behind." Root stated that nations were not much different from individuals in that the conditions of growth in civilization was determined by intercourse, association, correction of egotism by the influence of other's judgment, broadening of views by the experience and thought of equals, acceptance of the moral standards of a community the desire for whose good opinion lends a sanction to the rules of right conduct.

He told this group that it was their purpose in this American Conference to promote this mutual interchange and assistance between the American Republics. "There is not one of all our countries that cannot benefit the others; there is not one that cannot receive benefit from the others; there is not one that will not gain by the prosperity, the peace, the happiness of all." Root then brought out what has since been considered the highpoint of this speech, in assuring the Latins that the United States of America desired these beneficent results.

We wish for no victories but those of peace; for no territory except our own; for no sovereignty except the sovereignty over ourselves. We deem the independence and equal rights of the smallest and weakest member of the family of nations entitled to as much respect as those of the greatest empire, and we deem the observance of that respect the chief guaranty of the weak against the oppression of the strong.

Root further assured them that the United States did not

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want any rights, privileges, or powers that any of the Republics in America did not have.

We wish to increase our prosperity, to expand our trade, to grow in wealth, in wisdom, and in spirit, but our conception of the true way to accomplish this is not to pull down others and profit by their ruin, but to help all friends to a common prosperity and a common growth, that we may all become greater and stronger together.<sup>6</sup>

Elihu Root received much praise for his work done at this Conference, especially since he was responsible for the meeting at that time being possible. Russia had been advocating a second conference at the Hague at the same time this meeting was scheduled at Rio de Janeiro. Root had felt that the Rio Conference should have preceded since it had been agreed in advance. This is but another of the indications that his interest was foremost in Latin America. He negotiated with the Russian Ambassador at Washington, and through his intervention the Second Hague Peace Conference was postponed so as not to conflict with that of the American Republics at Rio de Janeiro.<sup>7</sup>

From Brazil he went on to Montevideo, Uruguay, where he also received an elaborate reception. The students of the University of Montevideo were opposed to the tender of a cordial reception to Mr. Root. The Spanish employees of Senor Taranco were indignant at the idea of their employer putting his house at the disposal of the Uruguayan Government for the lodging of Root and his party. They went on strike. Therefore it was with

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States, 1905, pp. 828-830; Ibid., 1906, II, pp. 1625-1634.

especial satisfaction when the United States Government officials learned of the enthusiastic welcome given on August 10th to Mr. Root at the Uruguayan capitol. A success had been achieved in Montevideo where success was by no means absolutely certain.<sup>8</sup> The President of Uruguay gave him a welcoming speech at the government house on August 11th. In his reply Mr. Root answered the President of Uruguay in regard to a remark in his speech that the progress of Uruguay had been slow. Root pointed out that the progress of the elder nations of the world was slow in their beginning and that Uruguay would finally emerge with a "more perfect justice and ordered liberty." Mr. Root also made a friendly reply to a speech given by the Minister of Foreign Affairs at Montevideo. He asserted that the Latin Americans had gained their independence just as the North Americans had done, from a European country. He said these European countries had probably profited more from this than they would have profited if their unwise system of colonial government had been continued. He further assured them that the friendship of the United States for Uruguay "is one that imperils no interest in Europe."<sup>9</sup>

From Uruguay Root went on to Argentina and again received a favorable welcome. While at Buenos Aires he took advantage of the opportunity to express clearly and forcefully the United

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<sup>8</sup> George Harvey, Editorial Comment, Harpers Weekly, (August 25, 1906), 1192.

<sup>9</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States, 1906, II, pp. 1423-1427.

States' acceptance of the Drago doctrine.<sup>10</sup> In reply to a speech in which the eminent Argentinian authority on international law declared his doctrine to be a principle of American diplomacy based upon the sentiment of common defense, just as is the traditional policy of the United States, Mr. Root gave him this answer:

I am glad to be able to declare myself in hearty and unreserved sympathy with you...We deem the use of force for the collection of ordinary contract debts to be an invitation to abuses in their necessary results far worse, far more baneful to humanity, than that the debts contracted by any nation should go unpaid. We consider that the use of the army and navy of a great power to compel a weaker power to answer to a contract with a private individual is both an invitation to speculation upon the necessities of weak and struggling countries and an infringement upon the sovereignty of those countries, and we are now, as we always have been, opposed to it.<sup>11</sup>

The Monroe and Drago doctrines were seen to be in complete accord, and a better foundation for mutual understanding and appreciation between the Argentina Republic and the United States was the beneficial result at the time. Future friction did arise between the two countries, as well as in the other Latin American countries in this discussion. Since that friction arose during later

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<sup>10</sup> Senor Drago had said in one of his contentions December 29, 1902, that "the collection of loans by military means implies territorial occupation to make them effective, and territorial occupation signifies the suppression or subordination of the governments of the countries on which it is imposed; Ibid., 1903, p. 1.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 1906, I, p. 29.

administrations in most cases in which Root played no prominent role, there can not be placed a definite responsibility upon him except where the fault is directly due to Root's past actions. Therefore later developments in these countries will not be covered in this discussion except in the cases that fall in the above category.

Mr. Root with his wife, daughter, son and other members of his party arrived at Santiago, Chile, September 1, 1906. Chile had very recently suffered a severe earthquake. Root, in his reply to the greeting of the President of Chile, expressed sympathy in regard to the great earthquake damage. In his reply to the speech of the Minister for Foreign Affairs he spoke of the misunderstandings that had arisen in the past and expressed the belief that these difficulties arose primarily out of the lack of mutual acquaintance, and declared that the completion of the Panama Canal would bring about commercial ties and was bound to bring about more intimate relations, and that this was the time to say that these relations should be those of friendship.

Root said he did not intend to intrude into their mourning for losses suffered in the earthquake, but felt by sharing their grief with them in their sorrow, would do more to develop understanding than if he had come at a happier period.<sup>12</sup>

Mr. Root left Chile just before another earthquake struck. He landed next in Peru. At Lima he received the cordial welcome

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 1906, I, pp. 151, 153-154.

with which he had been met in all the Latin American countries he had visited. He was greatly commended by that Republic for the lofty ideas which he expressed there. In Root's reply to the Peruvian welcome he emphasized the long friendship that had existed between the two countries, the fact that they would be drawn closer together as neighbors by the completion of the Panama Canal. In reply to a speech in Lima by Janier Prado y Ugarteche, Minister of Foreign Affairs, September 11, 1906, Root expressed his gratefulness of their courtesy, he admitted certain weaknesses of the United States and pledged the United States would attempt to remedy them and to refrain from ever making any act of unjust aggression. He tells of the "slow but majestic progress" being made by all Latin American countries and the improvements they have made since the past century. Mr. Root brings out that an individual man lives his short life and is forgotten but if each individual can do something to prevent greed, selfishness and wrong and bring a better understanding between nations he shall not have lived in vain.<sup>13</sup>

Mr. Root had intended to stop at Guayaquil, Ecuador but this was made impossible by an epidemic of yellow fever in that port. Bolivia could not be included in the trip because of the time it would require to go inland. Therefore his next stop was in Panama, September 20, 1906. In his speech to the people of

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 1906, II, pp. 1229, 1233-1234-1235.

Panama he stressed the friendship existing between the United States and Panama and the advantages of working together and adjusting differences of opinion that were bound to arise between two countries working closely together in building the Panama Canal. He brought out the economic advantages the Canal would bring to Panama and assured the people that,

We do not wish to govern you or interfere in your government because we are larger and stronger; we believe that the principle of liberty and the rights of men are more important than the size of armies or the number of battleships. That independence which we, first among the nations of the earth, recognized, it is our desire to have maintained inviolate. Believe this, be patient with us, as we will be patient with you, and I hope, I believe, that at some future day we shall all be sailing through the Canal together, congratulating each other upon our share in that great and beneficent work.<sup>14</sup>

After Mr. Root's long journeys to many South American countries he made his last Latin American visit in Cartagena, Colombia on September 24, 1906. In Mr. Root's speech he spoke of the President of Colombia, General Reyes with esteem and regard. He acknowledged the observance of a new industrial and commercial awakening in the southern continent. He said in every country there is opportunity. That it was in reality the land of tomorrow. He finished with wishing the Republic continued prosperity and happiness.<sup>15</sup>

Elihu Root visited Diaz in Mexico City and made himself somewhat ridiculous by lavishing praise on the Mexican Caesar. Root stated that of all the men then living, Diaz was the one most worth seeing, then he continued:

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 1906, II, p. 1201.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 1906, I, pp. 441-442.



If I were a poet I would write eulogies. If I were a musician I would compose triumphant marches. If I were a Mexican I should feel that the steadfast loyalty of a lifetime could not be too much in return for the blessings that he had brought to my country. As I am neither a poet, musician nor Mexican, but only an American who loves justice and liberty and hopes to see their reign among mankind progress and strengthen and become perpetual, I look to Porfirio Diaz, the President of Mexico, as one of the great men to be held up for the hero-worship of mankind.<sup>16</sup>

This was the same Root who has often been regarded as a pioneer in the field of Pan-Americanism.

It has been said Root was rushed all over the Continent of South America on good-will missions to offset our previous acts and creating among Latin Americans a vast skepticism regarding the stability, honesty and meaning of our policies.<sup>17</sup> It is true, Root has been criticised as well as praised by those looking back on his visits to Latin America. Vasconcelos of Mexico called Elihu Root's suave Pan-Americanism "more dangerous than the cannon of the old English pirates."<sup>18</sup> But it cannot be denied that Root thirty years before Cordell Hull and Franklin D. Roosevelt toured South America proclaiming: "We neither claim nor desire any rights or privileges or powers that we do not freely concede to any American Republic." The primary difference between the statements made by Root at this

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<sup>16</sup> John A. Crow, The Epic of Latin America, p. 665.

<sup>17</sup> Carleton Beals, Bryce Oliver, Herschel Brickell, Samuel Guy Inman, What the South Americans Think of Us, A Symposium, p. 13.

<sup>18</sup> Crow, op. cit., p. 665.

period, and the recent ones by Cordell Hull seems to be that the statements of Hull fit the facts, while such statements as the one of Root's quoted above did not, due to the trends of imperialism in the administration under which Root served. Prejudices that had grown up over the past half century could not be easily eradicated. Illusions as to the desire of this republic to be the overlord of the Western Hemisphere could not be banished in a day. This fact does not necessarily lessen the sincerity of Root in speaking these words however, for the imperialism of the time was something that had developed before the arrival of Root on the scene. The imperialistic tendencies that did cast an ugly shadow upon the history of American diplomacy during the period of Root's services, saw Root attempting to restrain against acts of aggression against Latin America. The examples given in the following chapter will make this point more clear.

## Chapter III

Examples to Illustrate Root's Attitude  
and Policy Toward Latin America

Elihu Root evidenced his desire to "keep faith" with Latin American nations under many trying circumstances during his long eventful career. Since examples of these circumstances are most plainly seen during his services as Secretary of War and State, his problems and decisions during this particular period will be the ones mainly dwelt upon. To "keep faith" with Latin America during the period Root was in office under Theodore Roosevelt was a problem of extraordinary difficulty. Throughout this discussion the idea of Root's attitude and policy toward Latin America is evident not so much from the point of view of what he actually did for their benefit, that subject is one still being debated and depends upon the viewpoint of the individual investigator, but rather what he prevented Roosevelt from doing against the Latins. Roosevelt's policy can be seen in the portentous "Roosevelt Corollary" to the Monroe Doctrine, stated in his annual message of 1904, which at the time was aimed directly against Santo Domingo.

If a nation shows that it knows how to act with reasonable efficiency and decency in social and political matters, if it keeps order and pays its obligations, it need fear no interference from the United States. Chronic wrongdoing, or an impotence which results in a general loosening of the ties of civilized society, 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 such wrongdoing or impotence, to the exercise of an international police power.<sup>1</sup>

This so-called policy of the Big Stick in other words meant the intervention of the United States to prevent non-American intervention. Root constantly worked on keeping Roosevelt from carrying his policy to the extreme.

When Root took over as Secretary of War in 1899, he faced many colonial problems and responsibilities. These problems were not anything in which he had any hand in making for they were problems that had arisen out of the aftermath of the war with Spain. It would be difficult to state, and be truthful, that Root had anything to do with a policy of expansion and imperialism in regard to Cuba and other territories in trouble at this time. He merely took over in an attempt to straighten things out after the deed had been done. When Root became Secretary of War, the army was still occupying the island of Cuba and the problem was that of rebuilding the country after the devastation of the Spanish Colonial policy and the war with Spain.

The United States had demanded as one of the terms of peace with Spain the immediate evacuation of Cuba and the relinquishment of Spanish sovereignty.<sup>2</sup> By the famous Teller Amendment the United States had promised "to leave the government and control of the island with its people." The Joint Resolution

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<sup>1</sup> James D. Richardson, ed., Messages and Papers of Presidents, X, p. 831.

<sup>2</sup> William M. Malloy, ed., Treaties, Conventions, International Acts, Protocols and Agreements, II, p. 1691.

also stated: "that the people of the island of Cuba are and of right ought to be independent." President McKinley compelled the omission from the resolution of intervention, in April, 1898, of a clause recognizing the insurgent organization called the Republic of Cuba. If it had not been for this the resolution would have recognized the independence of Cuba.<sup>3</sup>

When Root took office as Secretary of War conditions in Cuba were extremely bad. Unemployment was general, disease had reached the stage of people dying by the thousands, and many more were dying from starvation. Filth was apparent everywhere and there appeared to be no existence of a local government. The Spanish authorities left on the island took little interest in anything except looting what they could for themselves.

They looted and gutted them [the public buildings] of everything that could be removed. They destroyed the plumbing and the lighting fixtures. They broke or choked up the drains. They left every place in an indescribably filthy condition. There was nothing in all their record in Cuba more unbecoming than their manner of leaving it.<sup>4</sup>

The condition of Cuba's agriculture was deplorable. Due to lack of care, competition, a high tariff wall in competing countries, and destruction of sugar mills, the production of sugar was at a low level. This was the difficult situation to be faced by Root as Secretary of War. Although most of the

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<sup>3</sup> Charles E. Chapman, A History of the Cuban Republic, pp. 643-644.

<sup>4</sup> Johnson, The History of Cuba, IV, p. 133, quoted in Chapman, op. cit., p. 97.

credit should obviously go to General Wood for the straightening out of the internal disorders in Cuba, Root supported Wood in his decisions and was the backbone behind those decisions. In a letter Wood wrote to Root on March 25th, 1903, after the end of the military government in Cuba, he thanked Root "for the cordial and strong support" which he had always given him. "It would have been impossible to have kept things going as they did go without the support you gave me."<sup>5</sup>

Prisons, hospitals, charitable institutions, light houses, public buildings, tax laws and in fact every aspect of government are among the subjects on which Root reported steady progress in those portions of his Annual Reports dealing with Cuba, but all of these were incidental to the main business of terminating the military occupation and establishing "Cuba Libre." It was to this main theme that Root devoted most of his attention.<sup>6</sup>

It was Root that advised President McKinley to appoint General Leonard Wood to replace General Brooke at the head of Cuban affairs. Root gave General Wood a free hand in handling the situation. With the backing of Root, General Wood decreased unemployment by putting the Cubans to work on a program of public works. Building government structures and roads. By his program of sanitation he brought the variety of diseases rampaging through the country out of the

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<sup>5</sup> Jessup, op. cit., p. 290

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., pp. 302-303.

epidemic stage. In order to relieve the starvation a method of food distribution was established that proved very effective. All rubbish and filth was cleaned from the buildings and streets. A very difficult task was handled in paying the military forces of Cuba and disbanding them. General Wood also reconstructed the governmental machinery. A considerable amount of work was done in establishing popular education in order to make the system of government that was set up function properly. Root said concerning this problem that "If sixty-six percent of the people were to continue illiterate, the permanence of free constitutional government could hardly be expected," he further said the urgent necessity for popular education had been emphasized by a definite ascertainment of the facts.<sup>7</sup>

It is true Root was the author of the much discussed Platt Amendment. Since its passage in 1901 Latin Americans have consistently used it as an example of our imperialistic policies toward Latin America, and perhaps this is true. But regardless of how true these accusations may be Root maintained his purpose in instigating the amendment was preservation of Cuban independence. It cannot be justly said that these benevolent relationships with Cuba were designed as a step toward annexation. Neither Secretary Root, the constitutional architect of the Cuban protectorate, nor his chief, President Theodore Roosevelt worked for that. What they wanted was to preserve the right of intervention in order to insure the defenses of the United States

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<sup>7</sup> Chapman, op. cit., 104.

against any cause for intervention by a European power. The sincerity of these preferences not to annex Cuba is proven by the temporary character of the intervention of 1906-1909.<sup>8</sup>

Mr. Root discussed the kind of government that should be set up in Cuba. His attitude may be more clearly understood by quoting his comment on the Cuban relations:

It seems to me that no one familiar with the traditional and established policy of this country in respect to Cuba can find cause for doubt as to our remaining duty. It would be hard to find any single statement of public policy which has been so often officially declared by so great an array of distinguished Americans authorized to speak for the Government of the United States, as the proposition stated, in varying but always uncompromising and unmistakable terms, that the United States would not under any circumstances permit any foreign power other than Spain to acquire possession of the island of Cuba. Jefferson and Monroe and John Quincy Adams and Jackson and Van Buren and Grant and Clay and Webster and Buchanan and Everett have all agreed in regarding this essential to the interests and the protection of the United States. The United States has, and will always have, the most vital interest in the preservation of the people of that island from the domination and control of any foreign power whatever. The preservation of that independence by a country so small as Cuba, so incapable, as she must always be, to contend by force against the great powers of the world, must depend upon her strict performance of international obligations, upon her giving due protection to the lives and property of the citizens of all other countries within her borders, and upon her never contracting any public debt which in the hands of the citizens of foreign powers shall constitute an obligation she is unable to meet. The United States has, therefore, not merely a moral obligation arising from her destruction of Spanish authority in Cuba and the obligations of the Treaty of Paris for the establishment of a stable and adequate government in Cuba, but it has a substantial interest in the maintenance of such a government.

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<sup>8</sup> Samuel Flagg Bemis, The Latin American Policy of the United States, p. 140.



We are placed in a position where, for our own protection, we have, by reason of expelling Spain from Cuba, become the guarantors of Cuban independence and the guarantors of a stable and orderly government protecting life and property in that island. Fortunately the condition which we deem essential for our own interests is the condition for which Cuba has been struggling, and which the duty we have assumed toward Cuba on Cuban grounds and for Cuban interests requires. It would be a most lame and impotent conclusion if, after all the expenditures of blood and treasure by the people of the United States for the freedom of Cuba and by the people of Cuba for the same object, we should, through the constitution of the new government, by inadvertence or otherwise, be placed in a worse condition in regard to our own vital interests than we were while Spain was in possession, and the people of Cuba should be deprived of that protection and aid from the United States which is necessary to the maintenance of their independence.<sup>9</sup>

Five provisions were then given by Root which he felt the people of Cuba should desire to have incorporated into her fundamental law. They were phrased differently but were virtually the same as articles one, two, three, four, and seven of the eventual Platt Amendment.

Politicians in Cuba were very much opposed to the Amendment. Their opposition ran along much the same lines in criticizing the Amendment as the criticism of their sons in Latin America today, long after its abrogation. In an endeavor to calm Cuban opinion, Mr. Root issued a statement to the effect that no limitation of the new republic's independence was intended. Writing to Wood on April 3, 1901, he said:

You are authorized to state officially that in the view of the President the intervention described in the third clause of the Platt Amendment is not synonymous with intermeddling or interference with the affairs of the Cuban government, but the formal action of the Govern-

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<sup>9</sup> Chapman, op. cit., p. 138.

ment of the United States, based upon just and substantial grounds, for the preservation of Cuban independence, and the maintenance of a government adequate for the protection of life, property, and individual liberty, and adequate for discharging the obligations with respect to Cuba imposed by the Treaty of Paris on the United States.<sup>10</sup>

With this assurance, and since the Cubans had no other choice, the convention adopted the Platt Amendment, June 12, 1901, and added it as an appendix to the constitution.

However right Root may have considered himself on his attitude and policy in this particular incident, proof is self evident that he was wrong by the Platt Amendment later being abrogated. But one might leave the topic with this question in mind: If this control had not been placed over Cuba in this manner at this particular time, or in a similiar manner, is it not probable the United States would have taken Cuba permanently into her fold in the heat of the United States' period of imperialism?

The Venezuela dispute in 1902 meant trouble for Root and is another example of his attitude toward Latin America. Cipriano Castro was the President of Venezuela and according to Roosevelt, was an "unspeakably villainous little monkey."<sup>11</sup> In December, 1902, his consistent refusal to recognize certain foreign claims led relations to reach a critical stage with eleven other governments. A joint blockade of Venezuelan ports was set up by England, Germany and Italy. The dispute was brought before the Hague Tribunal for arbitration of all the

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<sup>10</sup> Senate Document 312, 58 Cong., 2 sess., p. 12.

<sup>11</sup> Henry F. Pringle, Theodore Roosevelt: A Biography, p. 282

foreign claims and to settle trouble concerning the disposition of the claims among the foreign powers.<sup>12</sup>

Even after it was thought things were settled Castro continued to ride roughshod over the juridical rights of foreign nationals (including those of the United States) in Venezuela. In 1904 Castro's soldiers took over an asphalt lake that was being exploited by a New York firm. Castro began shipping asphalt to the competitor of the company in the United States. Although the United States minister at Caracas demanded warships be sent to Venezuela Root refused to go beyond diplomatic methods of solution. Castro also interfered in the affairs of a large French company which brought angry protests from France, the breaking off of diplomatic relations with Venezuela and the threat of war. Even Castro apparently appeared worried at this turn of events and appealed to the United States for assistance. The President, heeding Root's cautious advice showed himself not unwilling to allow France to use force there and take over the customs houses, provided the French Government would solemnly pledge itself against any "permanent occupation of Venezuelan territory." Thanks to patience, on the part of France and Root's refusal to use force despite other repeated provocations, Castro fell from power in 1908 before his arbitrary actions brought further chastisement to his country. Without doubt

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<sup>12</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States, 1904, p. 506.

the fiery Theodore Roosevelt would have been quite ready to assume a more aggressive attitude toward the Latin American Republic if Root had not held the check rein.<sup>13</sup>

The Dominican Republic was deeply in debt to European creditors, and was in a state of chronic revolution. The year 1904 which witnessed the culmination of debts of the Dominican Republic saw the announcement of the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine previously mentioned. Roosevelt expressed his attitude toward the situation in an address to the Senate in which he told how conditions in Santo Domingo had been growing worse for many years. He told of the many revolutions and debts that had resulted. He further stated that these debts could only be paid by the creditors taking possession of the custom-houses.<sup>14</sup>

Morales, the president of the Dominican Republic, because of the danger of European intervention and of internal insurrection, and also because the American Minister suggested that the Dominican Government ask the United States to take charge of the collection of revenues, consented to make the request.<sup>15</sup>

Roosevelt submitted the protocol that was to grant assistance in restoring their credit, order and efficiency. The Senate failed to ratify the treaty mainly because they felt Roosevelt did not have the power to make such a treaty and that

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<sup>13</sup> Jessup, op. cit., pp. 496-499.

<sup>14</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States, 1905, p. 334.

<sup>15</sup> Howard C. Hill, Roosevelt and the Caribbean, p. 157.

if the United States Government once obtained possession of any portion of Santo Domingo, the experience with the Phillipines and Panama would be renewed.<sup>16</sup>

The ratification of the modus vivendi officially was approved by Roosevelt after the Senate refusal of the protocol. It seemed the Senate fears to a suzerainty over Santo Domingo were not exaggerated. For instance Roosevelt went so far as to send orders to his Secretary of Navy (September 5, 1905) in which he said "I intended to keep the island in status quo until the Senate had had time to act on the treaty, and I shall treat any revolutionary movement as an effort to upset the modus vivendi."<sup>17</sup> After Elihu Root became Secretary of State upon the death of John Hay, Roosevelt seemed to change his mind about preventing any revolutionary movement. The attitude of Hay had been one of arrogance but the policy of Root was one of leniency and friendship. The dispatches of Root repeatedly laid emphasis upon the use of American marines and warships only after an explicit request had come from the Dominican authorities and only for the "temporary protection of life of American citizens which the Dominican Government was itself for a time unable to protect."<sup>18</sup> Trouble developed

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<sup>16</sup> F. G. Newlands, "The Santo Domingo Question," North American Review, 180, p. 885.

<sup>17</sup> Joseph B. Bishop, Theodore Roosevelt and His Time, I, p. 433.

<sup>18</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States, 1905, pp. 405, 408.

between President Morales and his cabinet in December, 1905, Root telegraphed the American Minister urging an amicable settlement of differences within the government, but he assured:

We can not take any part in differences between factions or officers of Dominican Government. No troops are to be landed except when absolutely necessary to protect life and property of American citizens, and if landed, they must confine themselves strictly to such protection, which will extend to the peaceful performance of duty by the Americans who are collecting revenue in the custom-houses so long as the Dominican Government determines to end the modus vivendi and the collection of duties by Americans nominated by President of the United States, protection will extend to their safe withdrawal with their property. Notice of their termination should be given formally. We are about to withdraw several of our ships, which will return to the United States with Admiral Bradford.<sup>19</sup>

But this attempt of Root to promote peace proved unsuccessful. A struggle took place in the Dominican Government between Vice-President Carceres and President Morales. Caceres won out and Morales left the country.

Throughout this struggle the altruistic motives of Roosevelt are debatable, but the policy of Root in laying a restraining hand upon the shoulder of his chief is fact. Root again showed his unwillingness to intervene during times of revolutionary disturbances in Latin America. It was in regard to the Dominican Republic that Root first used the phrase "The Good Neighbor" in 1907.<sup>20</sup> A phrase that was to be credited to

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Jessup, op. cit., p. 563.

a statesman of the future

Another complex issue that arose while Root was Secretary of State, and one that further exemplifies his attitude toward Latin America, concerned article six of the Platt Amendment, concerning title to the Isle of Pines. Whatever may have been the underlying reason for including this provision in that document, the legal basis for any United States claim grew out of article two of the treaty with Spain. The main feature of article two was the "cession to the United States... of the Island of Porto Rico and other islands now under the sovereignty of Spain in the West Indies." The question was to determine whether the Isle of Pines should be regarded as included in the "other islands" mentioned in the Spanish Treaty. The normal interpretation of the article in the Treaty of Paris would have been to apply it to the islands around Porto Rico. But several things tended to complicate matters. One of the main ones being the many Americans living in this area. They continually brought pressure for the United States to consider the island as a part of its territory. Elihu Root in 1903 wrote Senator Platt repudiating the action of his subordinate in saying the island belonged to the United States. He firmly stated that these thoughts had been expressed without his knowledge or authority. He further said he had never thought the island belonged to the United States. He reminded Platt that for several centuries it had been, "in common with hundreds of other islands surrounding the coast of the mainland of Cuba, included in the political division of the Spanish

Kingdom known as Cuba. It had long been a part of the province of Habana, which was a political division of Cuba. Root said he thought it was included under the term "Cuba" as used in the Treaty of Paris, and, therefore, not in the description "Porto Rico and other islands."<sup>21</sup>

The president of the American Club, Charles Reynard, was asking Mr. Root for advice as to the necessary procedure for the establishment of a territorial form of government for the Isle of Pines, West Indies, United States of America. The American citizens felt that the United States had done an injustice to their own countrymen by leaving the Isle as a de facto government under the jurisdiction of Cuba. But Root answered this letter to the president of the American Club of the Isle of Pines on November 27, 1905, wholly in accord with the Cuban contentions. He said that it was not part of his duty as Secretary of State to give him advice on such subjects, but that he was answering him in order to remove Reynard's impression of the status of the island of Pines and his rights as a resident of that island. He told Reynard there was no procedure to lawfully establish a territorial form of government in that island. Root said that the island was lawfully subject to the control and government of Cuba, and that Reynard and his associates were bound to render obedience to the laws of that country as long as they remained on the island. He further told them they were

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<sup>21</sup> Benjamin Williams, "The Isle of Pines," Foreign Affairs, III, (July, 1925) 690.



not likely to have any greater power in the future, for the treaty that was then pending before the Senate would relinquish all claims to the Isle of Pines. "The treaty merely accords to Cuba what is hers in accordance with law and justice."<sup>22</sup> According to Mr. Root, the island "is not and never has been territory of the United States....Nor would a rejection of the pending treaty put an end to the control of Cuba over the Island. A treaty directly contrary to the one now pending would be necessary to do that."<sup>23</sup> In spite of the backing of Root and many other prominent American statesmen, the treaty that was signed March 2, 1904 in which the United States gave up sovereignty over the Isle of Pines to Cuba, was not ratified, until 1925.

The Central American trouble was another reflection of Elihu Root's attitude and policy that sprang from concern over the perennial revolutions and international wars of the Central American States north of Costa Rico. In dealing with the situation in Central America Root used the definite policy he pursued in the other Latin American countries. Conditions in Central America had been unsettled for some time. About the time Root departed on his trip to South American countries another of these wars developed. This one was a revolt against the government of Guatemala and spread to the other Republics of Central America. Root knew that if the United States took

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<sup>22</sup> Sen. Doc. 166, 68 Cong., 2 sess., p. 4.

<sup>23</sup> Sen. Doc. 205, 59 Cong., 1 sess., p. 11.

action alone against these countries it would be subject to a good deal of criticism. But by joining hands with Mexico in attempting to settle the difficulties, Latin America would be convinced that domination was not the intention of the United States.<sup>24</sup> By this method an armistice was declared, and on the 20th of July 1906 an agreement was reached by Guatemala, San Salvador, and Honduras, by which peace was to be established, treaties concluded, and their future disputes arbitrated by the Presidents of Mexico and the United States. This was not an end to the disturbances however. A peace conference was held in November and December 1907. The conference was formally opened by Root November 14 with this address:

The people of the United States are sincere believers in the principles that you are seeking to apply to the conduct of your international affairs in Central America. They sincerely desire the triumph and the control of the principles of liberty and order everywhere in the world. They especially desire that the blessings which follow the control of those principles may be enjoyed by all the people of our sister republics on the Western Hemisphere, and we further believe that it will be, from the most selfish point of view, for our interests to have peaceful, prosperous, and progressive republics in Central America.

He ended his words of welcome with a question, an answer, and a warning:

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<sup>24</sup> This was the first step of a practice of inter-American cooperative therapeutics that Woodrow Wilson afterward expanded to include, first the ABC republics of South America, and later six Latin American states, in his disputes with Mexico; and which Franklin D. Roosevelt extended to the hemispheric peace machinery of the Good Neighbor Policy. Bemis, op. cit., p. 160.

Why should you not live in peace and harmony? You are one people, in fact, your citizenship is interchangeable--your race, your religion, your customs, your laws, your lineage, your consanguinity and relations, your social relations, your sympathies, your aspirations, and your hopes for the future are the same.

It can be nothing but the ambitions of individuals who care more for their selfish purposes than for the good of their country that can prevent the people of the Central American states from living together in peace and unity.<sup>25</sup>

Eight peace conventions were signed by the Central American republics at this conference, but these treaties proved more than the Central American republics could uphold. Root had sowed the seed of peaceful relationship between the countries but soon after Philander C. Knox had taken over the duties of Root, General Zelaya, dictator--President of Nicaragua, uprooted the young plant of peace.

Secretary Root justified the recognition of Panama's independence in an address that he delivered on "The Ethics of the Panama Question."<sup>26</sup> He was, however strongly of the opinion that President Roosevelt's administration should, before its close, reach a settlement of the outstanding difficulties between Colombia and the Government of the United States. The Colombian Government of that day was anxious to reach an agreement and invited Secretary Root, on his return from his South American visit, to go to Bogota. This he did, and as a result of the visit the Colombian Government transferred Dr. Enrique Cortes from London to Washington to undertake necessary negotiations.

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<sup>25</sup> Samuel F. Bemis, The American Secretaries of State and Their Diplomacy, Vol. IX, pp 264-265.

<sup>26</sup> Elihu Root, Addresses on International Subjects, p. 175.

Three treaties for the full settlement of the difficulties arising out of the separation of Panama were signed, on January 9, 1909. The entire agreement was entitled "The Ship Canal Treaty," was signed at Washington, January 9, 1909. The first treaty was between Colombia and the United States for the purpose of "removing all the obstacles to a good understanding between the United States of America and the Republic of Colombia" and to "facilitate the settlement of the questions heretofore pending between Colombia and Panama by adjusting at the same time the relations of Colombia to the canal" which the United States was then constructing across the Isthmus of Panama. The treaty's ratification was advised and consented by the Senate on February 24, 1909; the second treaty was between Panama and the United States "to facilitate the construction, maintenance, and operation of the interoceanic canal across the Isthmus of Panama and to promote a good understanding between the nations most closely and directly concerned in that highway to the world's commerce," and "thereby to further its construction and protection by amending and supplementing the treaty concluded between the United States and Panama on November 18, 1903." The ratification of this treaty was advised and consented to by the Senate on March 3, 1909; the third treaty was between Colombia and Panama. It was to "remove all obstacles to their good understanding, to adjust their pecuniary and other relations to each other, and to secure mutually the benefits of amity and accord. This treaty was ratified by Panama, January 30, 1909.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Foreign Relations of the United States, 1909, pp 223-233.

Since these treaties were of a tripartite nature and Colombia failed to ratify these treaties, or any of them, this rendered the treaty between the United States and Panama non-operative and prevented the adjustment of the difficulty between Colombia and the United States during Mr. Root's tenure of office.<sup>28</sup>

This study could not be considered finished without an attempt being made to discuss the attitude of Root concerning the Monroe Doctrine. Elihu Root makes his attitude fairly clear in a Presidential address called "The Real Monroe Doctrine" at the eighth annual meeting of the American Society of International Law at Washington on April 22, 1914. In that speech he contended that there had been no change or enlargement of the Monroe Doctrine except for an extension made by President Polk. He states that the only reason for the Doctrine is that "the safety of the United States demands that American territory shall remain American." But he assures "the Monroe Doctrine does not assert or imply or involve any right on the part of the United States to impair or control the independent sovereignty of any American state." He further emphasizes the statement by saying: "the common judgment of civilization awards to the smallest and weakest state the liberty to control its own affairs without interference from any other power, however great."

Although this policy of Root was not strictly adhered to during the administrations under which he served he maintained

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<sup>28</sup> Bemis, op. cit., p. 230.

the deviations were not infringements upon independence resulting from the Monroe Doctrine but were the limiting of the sovereign rights of each American republic by the equal sovereign rights of every other American republic.<sup>29</sup>

While in the Senate Root laid down the rules by which the United States might intervene in Mexico. The essence of these views were accepted. In this address called "The Mexican Resolution" delivered April 21, 1914,<sup>30</sup> Root stated our intervention was acceptable only when it was to protect American life and property in accordance with the principles of international law and the practice of nations.

Elihu Root's attitude was always characterized by a friendly interest in Latin America. His series of addresses given while visiting in Latin America are written proof. Visual evidence can be seen in Washington, D. C. at the Pan American Union whose ground upon which it stands was deeded, at his suggestion, by the Congress of the United States, to the twenty-one republics. The building is a gift from Mr. Andrew Carnegie who gave \$900,000 of the \$1,100,000 needed. This gift was made through the persuasion of Root. The remaining sum was contributed by the countries directly interested.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Root, op. cit., pp. 112-113, 115.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 327.

<sup>31</sup> Federal Writers Project Works Progress Administration, American Guide Series, Washington City and Capital.

### Conclusion

A clearcut picture of Elihu Root's diplomacy and his policy or influence on policy would be impossible from the evidence extant. Any attempt to reach such a conclusion would be biased. Probably no decision will ever be reached which will satisfy all. It is obvious that Roosevelt dominated the scene. This study attempted to show Root did try to hold Roosevelt in check in his relations with Latin America, and in doing so perhaps Elihu Root kept the map of Latin America somewhat cleaner from the footprints of North American aggression and imperialism than it might otherwise have been. The exact influence of Root is still somewhat a question. With these facts in mind this writer has based his first conclusion in the fact Root did exert an influence for the benefit of Latin America. Roosevelt told Andrew Carnegie, February 26, 1909 the work on Latin American affairs was entirely Root's. Roosevelt said his part in it was little beyond cordially backing him up. This statement of Roosevelt is known to be exaggerated, for there are cases in Latin American relations which were strictly from the mind of Roosevelt. But the statement does further help to indicate Root played a major role in Latin American affairs.

The second conclusion of the writer is based on the fact that as a lawyer and a master of arbitration Root had a firm belief in the efficacy of peaceful measures as a substitute for force in dealing with Latin America, as shown in this study. There were no doubt many exaggerations in his flights of oratory

and mainly for this reason his policy is hard to follow as to where truth leaves off and fiction begins. Nevertheless many examples have been shown in this study that the byword of Root was arbitration rather than force. If Roosevelt's policy is exemplified by the term "big stick," then the title for that of Root should be "soft hand."



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