

CHAPTER VII

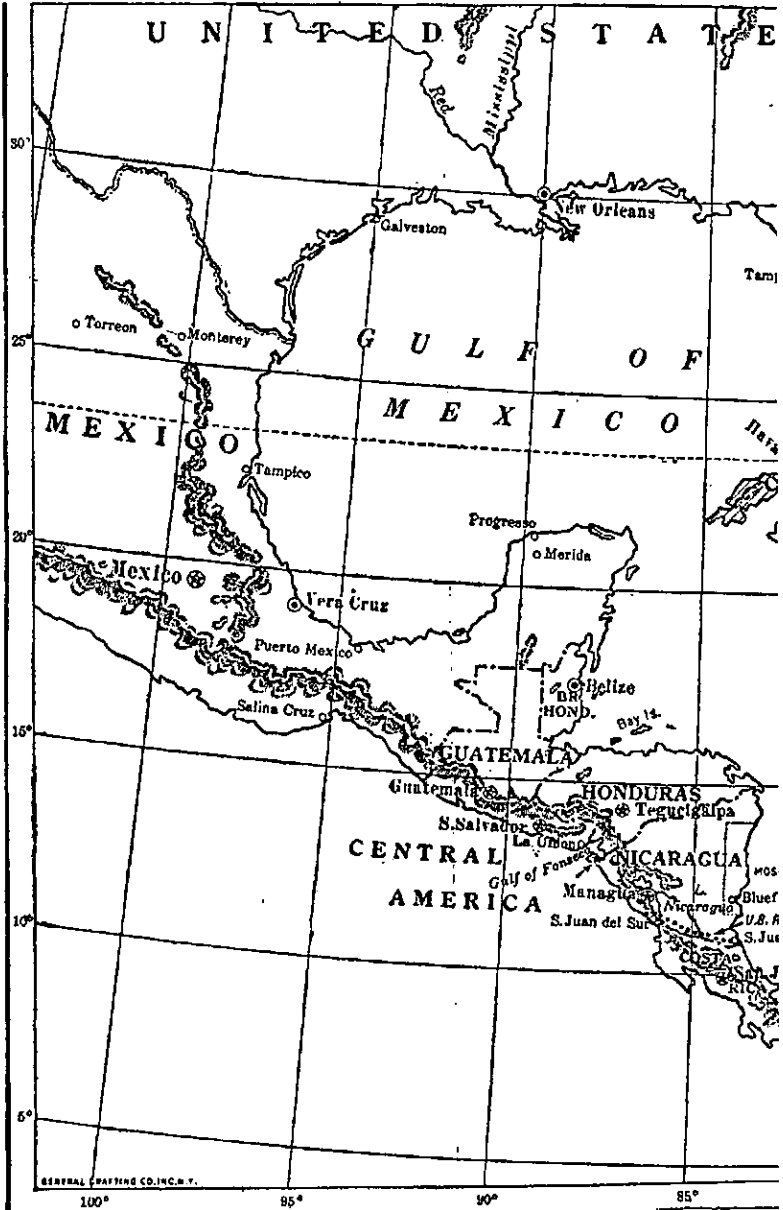
THE ADVANCE OF THE UNITED STATES IN THE CARIBBEAN

AT the beginning of the nineteenth century Spain was still in possession of all the shores of the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico, but the downfall of her vast colonial empire was rapidly approaching. By the secret treaty of San Ildefonso she agreed to cede Louisiana back to France, and in 1803 Napoleon sold the entire province to the United States. This was our first acquisition of territory on the Gulf of Mexico, and it insured a free outlet for the vast region of the Mississippi valley. The boundaries of the province were indefinite, and there ensued a long controversy with Spain as to whether Louisiana included West Florida on the one hand and Texas on the other. These questions were finally adjusted by the Florida treaty of 1819, which ceded both East and West Florida to the United States and fixed the western boundary of Louisiana on the Gulf at the Sabine river. By this treaty the United States gained undisputed possession of the region extending from Mobile bay to the Mississippi, but abandoned the claim to Texas.

It was not many years before American settlers began pouring into Texas and came into conflict with the government of Mexico, which had by this time become independent of Spain. There followed the

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war of independence and the establishment of the Republic of Texas in 1836. Texas promptly applied for admission to the United States, but mainly through the opposition of the Abolitionists she was kept waiting for nine years. The new republic was recognized by the United States and by the principal powers of Europe, but Mexico refused to concede independence. Texas was thus in constant danger of attack from Mexico and unable to secure admission to the American Union. In April, 1844, a treaty providing for the annexation of Texas was submitted to the Senate by President Tyler, but it was rejected by that body. Under these circumstances the public men of Texas lent a ready ear to British and French intrigues. Great Britain wished to encourage the development of Texas as a cotton-growing country from which she could draw a large enough supply to make her independent of the United States. If Texas should thus devote herself to the production of cotton as her chief export crop, she would naturally adopt a free trade policy and thus create a considerable market for British goods. Great Britain, therefore, consistently opposed the annexation of Texas by the United States and entered into negotiations with France, Mexico, and the Republic of Texas for the express purpose of preventing it. Lord Aberdeen proposed that the four powers just mentioned should sign a diplomatic act, or perpetual treaty, securing to Texas recognition from Mexico and peace, but preventing her from ever acquiring territory beyond the Rio Grande or joining the American Union. While the United States would be invited to unite in this act, it was not expected that the government of that country would agree to



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it. Despairing of being received into the American Union, Texas was apparently ready to accept the British proposal, but Lord Aberdeen's plan was defeated by the refusal of Mexico to recognize under any conditions the independence of Texas. Aberdeen was willing to coerce Mexico and, if need be, to fight the United States, but Louis Philippe was not willing to go that far. Meanwhile the Texas question had become the leading political issue in the United States. The Democratic platform of 1844 demanded "the re-annexation of Texas at the earliest practicable period," and on this platform Polk was elected President. Tyler, however, did not wait for his successor to carry out this mandate of the American people, but in the last days of his administration pushed through Congress a joint resolution providing for the admission of Texas.¹

Mexico promptly severed diplomatic relations with the United States. As Mexico had never recognized the independence of Texas, she had of course never agreed upon any boundary with the new republic. This was a matter which had to be adjusted and there were also a number of private claims of American citizens against the government of Mexico which that government refused to settle. President Polk took up both questions with characteristic vigor, and on the refusal of Mexico to receive a special minister sent by him for the purpose of discussing these questions, he ordered General Taylor to occupy the disputed area between the Nueces river and the Rio

¹ E. D. Adams, "British Interests and Activities in Texas, 1838-1845" (1910); Justis H. Smith, "The Annexation of Texas" (1911) and "The War with Mexico," 2 vols. (1919); Diplomatic Correspondence of the Republic of Texas, edited by G. P. Garrison (Annual Reports, Am. Hist. Ass'n, 1907, 1908).

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Grande. Thus began the Mexican War, which established the boundary of the United States on the Rio Grande and added the vast region of New Mexico and California to the Union. Here the tide of American expansion to the South was stayed for a full half century.

✓ With the decline of the Spanish power Great Britain had succeeded to naval supremacy in the Caribbean. As has been related in previous chapters, the United States and Great Britain long regarded Cuba with jealous eyes and had a controversy lasting for half a century over the control of the proposed Isthmian canal. Secretary Seward at the close of the civil war sought to strengthen the position of the United States in the Caribbean by the acquisition of Santo Domingo and the Danish West Indies. In 1867 a treaty was concluded with Denmark providing for the cession of the islands of St. Thomas and St. John for \$7,500,000, on condition that the inhabitants should by popular vote give their consent. In undertaking these negotiations the United States was influenced on the one hand by the desire to acquire a naval base, and on the other by the fear that these islands might fall into the hands of one of the greater European powers. The plebiscite in St. John and St. Thomas was overwhelmingly in favor of the cession, and the treaty was promptly ratified by the Danish Rigsdag, but the Senate of the United States took no action until March, 1870, when Senator Sumner presented an adverse report from the Committee on Foreign Relations and the treaty was rejected.

In 1867 Admiral Porter and Mr. F. W. Seward, the assistant secretary of state, were sent to Santo

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Domingo for the purpose of securing the lease of Samana bay as a naval station. Their mission was not successful, but the following year the president of the Dominican Republic sent an agent to Washington proposing annexation and requesting the United States to occupy Samana bay at once. In his annual message of December 8, 1868, President Johnson advocated the annexation of Santo Domingo and a joint resolution to that effect was introduced into the House, but it was tabled without debate by an overwhelming vote. President Grant became much interested in this scheme, and soon after entering the White House he sent one of his private secretaries, Colonel Babcock, to the island to report on the condition of affairs. Babcock negotiated a treaty for the annexation of the Dominican Republic, and another for the lease of Samana bay. As Colonel Babcock was without diplomatic authority of any kind, the Cabinet received the treaties in silent amazement, and Hamilton Fish, who was secretary of state, spoke of resigning, but Grant persuaded him to remain in office. The annexation treaty was submitted to the Senate in January, 1870, but encountered violent opposition, especially from Sumner, Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations. It was finally rejected June 30 by vote of 28 to 28.

The advance of the United States into the Caribbean was thus delayed until the Spanish War. As a result of that conflict the United States acquired Porto Rico and a protectorate over Cuba. The real turning-point in the recent history of the West Indies was the Hay-Pauncefote treaty of 1901, under the terms of which Great Britain relinquished her claim to an equal voice

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with the United States in the control of an Isthmian canal on which she had insisted for half a century. While the Hay-Pauncefote treaty was limited in terms to the canal question, it was in reality of much wider significance. It amounted in effect to the transference of naval supremacy in the West Indies to the United States, for since its signature Great Britain has withdrawn her squadron from this important strategic area. So marked was Great Britain's change of attitude toward the United States at this time that some writers have concluded that a secret treaty of alliance was made between the two countries in 1897. The absurdity of such a statement was pointed out by Senator Lodge several years ago. England's change of attitude is not difficult to understand. For one hundred years after the battle of Trafalgar England had pursued the policy of maintaining a navy large enough to meet all comers. With the rapid growth of the navies of Russia, Japan, and Germany during the closing years of the nineteenth century, England realized that she could no longer pursue a policy of isolation. Our acquisition of the Philippines, the Hawaiian Islands, and Porto Rico and our determination to build an Isthmian canal made a large American navy inevitable. Great Britain realized, therefore, that she would have to cast about for future allies. It was on considerations of this kind that she signed the Hay-Pauncefote treaty with the United States in 1901, and the defensive alliance with Japan in 1902. In view of the fact that the United States was bent on carrying out the long deferred canal scheme, Great Britain realized that a further insistence on her rights under the Clayton-Bulwer

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treaty would lead to friction and possible conflict. She wisely decided, therefore, to recede from the position which she had held for half a century and to give us a free hand in the acquisition and control of the canal at whatever point we might choose to build it. In signing the Hay-Pauncefote treaty she gracefully recognized the fact that the United States had paramount interests in the Caribbean which it was unwise for her to contest. Since the signature of that treaty American supremacy in this area has not been seriously questioned.

The determination to build a canal not only rendered inevitable the adoption of a policy of naval supremacy in the Caribbean sea, but led to the formulation of new political policies to be applied in the zone of the Caribbean—what Admiral Chester calls the larger Panama Canal Zone—that is, the West Indies, Mexico and Central America, Colombia and Venezuela. The policies referred to included the establishment of protectorates, the supervision of finances, the control of all naval routes, the acquisition of naval stations, and the policing and administration of disorderly countries.

The advance of the United States in the Caribbean since the Spanish War has been rapid. The acquisition of Porto Rico and the establishment of a protectorate over Cuba were the natural outcome of that struggle. In 1903 we acquired the canal zone under circumstances already described. The following year President Roosevelt established financial supervision over the Dominican Republic. In 1915 the United States landed marines in Haiti and a treaty was soon drafted under which we assumed financial supervision

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and administrative control over the affairs of that country. In 1916 we acquired by treaty from Nicaragua an exclusive right of way for a canal through her territory and the lease of a naval station on Fonseca bay, and in 1917 we acquired by treaty from Denmark her holdings in the West Indies known as the Virgin Islands. These successive steps will be considered in detail.

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The methods employed by President Roosevelt in the acquisition of the Panama Canal Zone described in a previous chapter caused indignation and alarm throughout Latin America and created strained relations with Colombia. The Colombian government refused to recognize the independence of the Republic of Panama and demanded that her claim to Panama as well as her interests in the canal should be submitted to arbitration. Colombia claimed that President Roosevelt had misinterpreted the treaty of 1846, which established mutual obligations between the United States and Colombia with reference to the isthmus, by construing its provisions as obligations to the world at large against Colombia. As the United States had always advocated the submission to arbitration of questions involving the construction of treaties, the demand of Colombia proved embarrassing, but both Secretary Hay and his successor, Secretary Root, rejected the demand for arbitration on the ground that the questions involved were of a political nature.²

In January, 1909, shortly before the close of the Roosevelt administration, Secretary Root undertook

² House Doc. No. 1444, Sixty-second Cong., Third Sess., pp. 2, 3; Sen. Ex. Doc. No. 1, Sixty-fifth Cong., Special Sess., pp. 47, 48.

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to reestablish friendly relations with Colombia through the negotiation in the city of Washington of three treaties, one between the United States and the Republic of Colombia, one between the United States and the Republic of Panama, and one between Colombia and Panama. In the treaty between Colombia and Panama the Republic of Colombia recognized fully the independence of Panama, and the Republic of Panama made an assignment to Colombia of the first ten installments of \$250,000, the amount due annually to the Republic of Panama from the United States as rental for the canal. According to the treaty between the United States and the Republic of Panama, concluded November 18, 1903, the payment of this annual sum was to begin nine years from date. It was now agreed that the first annual payment should be regarded as due four years from the exchange of ratifications of the said treaty, so that of the \$2,500,000 to be paid to Colombia, half would be paid by the United States and half by Panama. In the new treaty between the United States and Panama the necessary modification of the treaty of 1903 was made so as to permit of this assignment of the first ten installments to Colombia. In the treaty between the United States and Colombia the most important provision was as follows:

The Republic of Colombia shall have liberty at all times to convey through the ship canal now in course of construction by the United States across the Isthmus of Panama the troops, materials for war, and ships of war of the Republic of Colombia, without paying any duty to the United States; even in the case of an international war between Colombia and another country.

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It was further provided that the products of the soil and industry of Colombia should be admitted to the canal zone subject only to such duty as would be payable on similar products of the United States under similar conditions, and Colombian mails were to have free passage through the canal zone on payment of such duties or charges as were laid on the mails of the United States.³

These tripartite treaties were of course to stand or fall together. The United States and Panama promptly ratified the agreements to which they were parties, but Colombia rejected the arrangement with indignation. In fact, when the terms of the settlement were made public, the Colombian administration that urged their acceptance was overthrown, and the Colombian envoy who participated in the negotiation of the treaties was forced to flee from the country with an indignant mob at his heels. Colombia was not to be appeased by the paltry sum of \$2,500,000.

The Taft administration made repeated efforts to placate Colombia, but without success. On September 30, 1912, Mr. Du Bois, the American minister to Colombia, submitted to Secretary Knox an interesting review of the whole question in the course of which, after referring to the friendly relations that had so long subsisted between the two countries, he said:

Nine years ago this was changed suddenly and unexpectedly when President Roosevelt denied to Colombia the right to land her troops upon her own soil to suppress a threatened revolt and maintain a sovereignty guaranteed by treaty stipulations. The breach came and it has been

³ Sen. Ex. Doc. No. 1, Sixty-fifth Cong., Special Sess., pp. 24-34.

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growing wider since that hour. By refusing to allow Colombia to uphold her sovereign rights over a territory where she had held dominion for eighty years, the friendship of nearly a century disappeared, the indignation of every Colombian, and millions of other Latin-Americans, was aroused and is still most intensely alive. The confidence and trust in the justice and fairness of the United States, so long manifested, has completely vanished, and the maleficent influence of this condition is permeating public opinion in all Latin-American countries, a condition which, if remedial measures are not invoked, will work inestimable harm throughout the Western Hemisphere.*

Mr. Du Bois reported that on inquiry of prominent Colombians of the causes of the rejection of the Root proposals he received replies to the following effect:

Five years after President Roosevelt had taken Panama from us with rank injustice, your government, still under his chief magistracy, offered us a paltry \$2,500,000 if Colombia would recognize the independence of her revolted province, fix our frontier at a further loss of territory, open all our ports free to the refuge of vessels employed in the canal enterprise, and exempt them from anchorage or tonnage dues, renounce our rights to all of our contracts and concessions relating to the construction and operation of the canal or railroad across the isthmus, release Panama from obligation for the payment of any part of our external debt, much of which was incurred in the interest of Panama, and enter into negotiations for the revision of the treaty of 1846, which five years before had been openly violated by the United States in their failure to help maintain the sovereignty over the rebellious province which they had solemnly guaranteed. The reply was to this, banishment of our minister who negotiated the treaty, and all South America applauded our attitude.†

* Sen. Ex. Doc. No. 1, Sixty-fifth Cong., Special Sess., p. 35.

† *Ibid.*, p. 41.

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Mr. Du Bois then proceeded to state at length Colombia's claims which he summarized as follows: "Panama Railroad annuities, \$16,000,000; value of railroad, \$16,446,942; Panama Canal rights, \$17,500,000; cost of Costa Rican boundary arbitration, \$200,000; total, \$50,446,942. [The total should be \$50,146,942.] Besides this sum, Colombia has lost the Province of Panama, whose value cannot be readily estimated."⁶

In conclusion he urged the importance of a speedy adjustment of the differences with Colombia in the following words:

South America is advancing along commercial lines with giant strides. The character of the future relations of the United States with that country will be of signal importance. Friendly intercourse with all Latin America should be carefully developed and maintained, and especially is this important with Colombia, which borders the isthmus, has fine ports on both oceans, and is destined to become an influential factor in the political and commercial life of South America, especially in all countries bordering on the Caribbean sea. To approach Colombia in a conciliatory spirit and seek a renewal of her ancient friendship would not only be a wise and just move on the part of the United States, but as Colombia and all South and Central America firmly believe that the government of the United States was unjust in the Panama incident, from which has come infinite distress to Colombia, it would be a benevolent and fraternal act, and the time to move is the present, before the canal opens and while the public sentiment of both countries is in harmony with the movement.⁷

At the time that the above report on relations with Colombia was prepared by Mr. Du Bois he was in

⁶ Sen. Ex. Doc. No. 1, Sixty-fifth Cong., Special Sess., p. 44.

⁷ *Ibid.*

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this country, having come home to confer with the Department of State as to the program to be followed in the settlement of the differences with Colombia. On his return to Bogota, Mr. Du Bois submitted the following proposals to the Colombian government: (1) ratification of the Root treaties, involving the payment to Colombia of the first ten installments of the annual rental of the canal zone amounting to \$2,500,000; (2) the payment of \$10,000,000 by the United States to Colombia for the right to build an interoceanic canal by the Atrato route and for the lease of the islands of Old Providence and St. Andrews as coaling stations; (3) the good offices of the United States on behalf of Colombia in bringing about an adjustment of the boundary line between Colombia and Panama; (4) the submission to arbitration of the claims of Colombia to reversionary rights in the Panama Railroad assumed by the United States under Article XXII of the treaty of 1903 between the United States and Panama, estimated by Mr. Taft's secretary of war at over \$16,000,000; and (5) the granting of preferential rights to Colombia in the use of the Panama Canal.

The Colombian government promptly rejected these proposals and in reply demanded "arbitration of the whole question of Panama or a direct proposition on the part of the United States to give Colombia compensation for all the moral, physical, and financial losses which she sustained as a result of the separation of Panama." The Colombian minister declared:

Should Colombia grant any territorial privileges to the United States after the wrong that country has inflicted upon this republic, it would result in intense agitation and possible

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revolution. It seems as though your people have never fully realized the enormity of the wrong the United States has perpetrated against the Colombian people.

Mr. Du Bois then asked whether Colombia would accept \$10,000,000, the good offices of the United States in settling the differences with Panama, arbitration of the reversionary rights in the Panama Railroad, and preferential rights in the canal, without granting to the United States any privileges or concessions whatever. Receiving a negative reply to this proposal, Mr. Du Bois, acting on his own responsibility, then inquired informally whether \$25,000,000 without options of any kind would satisfy Colombia. The answer was that Colombia would accept nothing but the arbitration of the whole Panama question. Mr. Du Bois was instructed February 20, 1913, to stop negotiations. In reporting the matter to the President, Secretary Knox said that Colombia seemed determined to treat with the incoming Democratic administration.⁸

When the Wilson administration came in, Secretary Bryan took up the negotiations with Colombia where Knox dropped them, and concluded a treaty according to the terms of which the United States was to express "sincere regret that anything should have occurred to interrupt or to mar the relations of cordial friendship that had so long subsisted between the two nations," and to pay Colombia \$25,000,000. The treaty further granted Colombia the same preferential rights in the use of the canal which the Taft administration had proposed, and in return Colombia agreed to recognize the independence of Panama and to accept a boundary line laid down in the treaty.

⁸ Sen. Ex. Doc. No. 1, Sixty-fifth Cong., Special Sess., pp. 53-79.

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This treaty was submitted to the Senate June 16, 1914. As soon as its terms were made public ex-President Roosevelt denounced it as blackmail, and wrote a letter to the chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs requesting to be heard before any action was taken on the treaty. During the first session of the Sixty-sixth Congress in 1919 the Colombian treaty was reported from the Committee on Foreign Relations with important amendments. Article I, containing expressions of regret on the part of the United States for the events that had taken place on the isthmus, was entirely stricken out. The clause giving Colombia the right to transport through the canal its troops, materials of war, and ships of war, "even in case of war between Colombia and another country," was amended by the elimination of the words in quotations. The sum of \$25,000,000, instead of being paid in cash, was to be paid in five annual installments. The Senate refused, however, to give its consent to the ratification of the treaty even in this form, and it is understood that it was proposed to cut the payment to Colombia down to \$15,000,000.

A great nation like the United States, which has always professed to be guided in international questions by high standards of justice and morality, cannot afford to delay indefinitely the settlement of a dispute of this kind with a weak nation like Colombia. President Roosevelt's action in the Panama matter made a bad impression throughout Latin America and caused our policy in the Caribbean to be regarded with grave suspicion. As to Colombia's rights in the matter, Secretary Bryan made the following state-

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ment in his argument before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations in support of the treaty :

It is contended by some that the action taken by the United States was based upon the necessities of the case, and those necessities, as stated by those who take this position are, that Colombia was not able to build the canal herself and was not willing to sell to the United States upon reasonable terms the right to build the canal. Those who take this position put the United States in the attitude of exercising the right of eminent domain in the interest of the world's commerce; but the exercise of the right of eminent domain does not relieve those who exercise it of liability for actual damages suffered. Take, for illustration, the condemning of a block of ground for a public building. Suppose that every lot owner excepting one is willing to sell his land to the government at its market value, but that one of the lot owners, whose lot is necessary to the erection of the building, asks more than the land is worth. The government proceeds to condemn the property, but it does not attempt to escape from paying what the land is actually worth, and the actual value of the property is not reduced one dollar by any effort that the owner may make to obtain for it more than it is worth. If it is contended that the price offered by the United States prior to Panama's separation was a reasonable one, and that Colombia ought to have accepted it, that valuation cannot be reduced merely because Colombia was not willing to accept the offer. This illustration is based upon the theory adopted by those who say that Colombia was entirely in the wrong in refusing to accept the offer made by the United States, but this theory, it will be remembered, is disputed by the people of Colombia, who defend the position their government then took and, as has been said before, they have ever since asked that the controversy be arbitrated by some impartial tribunal.⁹

In 1904 President Roosevelt made a radical departure from the traditional policy of the United

⁹ Sen. Ex. Doc. No. 1, Sixty-fifth Cong., Special Sess., pp. 87-88.

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States in proposing that we should assume the financial administration of the Dominican Republic in order to prevent certain European powers from resorting to the forcible collection of debts due their subjects. On September 12, 1904, Minister Dawson reported to the State Department that the debt of Santo Domingo was \$32,280,000, the estimated revenues from customs receipts \$1,850,000, and the proposed budget for current expenses \$1,300,000, leaving only \$550,000 with which to meet payments of interest, then accruing and in arrears, amounting to \$2,600,000. About \$22,000,000 of this debt was due to European creditors. Most of this indebtedness had been incurred by revolutionary leaders who had at various times taken forcible possession of the government and hastened to raise all the money they could by the sale of bonds, leaving the responsibility with their successors. The European creditors of Santo Domingo were pressing for the recognition of their claims. Germany seemed especially determined to force a settlement of her demands, and it was well known that Germany had for years regarded the Monroe Doctrine as the main hindrance in the way of her acquiring a foothold in Latin America. The only effective method of collecting the interest on the foreign debt appeared to be the seizure and administration of the Dominican custom-houses by some foreign power or group of foreign powers. President Roosevelt foresaw that such an occupation of the custom-houses would, in view of the large debt, constitute the occupation of American territory by European powers for an indefinite period of time, and would therefore be a violation of the Monroe Doc-

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trine. He had before him also the results of a somewhat similar financial administration of Egypt undertaken jointly by England and France in 1878, and after Arabi's revolt continued by England alone, with the result that Egypt soon became a possession of the British Crown to almost as great a degree as if it had been formally annexed. President Roosevelt concluded, therefore, that where it was necessary to place a bankrupt American republic in the hands of a receiver, the United States must undertake to act as receiver and take over the administration of its finances.

The policy that he was about to adopt was stated as follows in his annual message of December 6, 1904:

Any country whose people conduct themselves well can count upon our hearty friendship. 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.

About the same time Minister Dawson was directed by Secretary Hay to suggest to the Dominican government that it request the United States to take charge of its customs. As the Dominican government saw no other way out of its difficulties, it responded to

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this suggestion, and on February 4, 1905, a protocol was signed by Mr. Dawson and the Dominican foreign minister which provided that the United States should guarantee the territorial integrity of the Dominican Republic, take charge of its custom-houses, administer its finances, and settle its obligations, foreign as well as domestic. In calling the new agreement a "protocol" instead of a "treaty," the President had probably not intended to submit it to the Senate, but the proposal to depart so radically from our past policy created so much criticism that the Senate was finally asked to ratify the protocol in regular form. This they failed to do, but the President did not propose to be thwarted in this way. As the Senate would not sanction his appointment of a receiver of customs for Santo Domingo, he drafted a *modus vivendi*, under the terms of which the President of the Dominican Republic appointed a receiver of customs named unofficially by President Roosevelt, who proceeded to administer the affairs of the republic under the protection of the United States navy, whose ships the President could as commander-in-chief order wherever he pleased. The President's course met with determined opposition both in and out of Congress, but as he was bent on having his way and continued to carry out his policy without the sanction of the Senate, that body finally decided that it would be best to give the arrangement a definite legal status. On February 25, 1907, the Senate agreed to the ratification of a revised treaty which omitted the territorial-guarantee clause, but provided that the President of the United States should appoint a general receiver of Dominican customs and such assist-

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ants as he might deem necessary; that the government of the United States should afford them such protection as might be necessary for the performance of their duties; and that until the bonded debt should be paid in full, the Dominican government would not increase its debt except with the consent of the United States. In the meantime, under the *interim* arrangement, conditions in Santo Domingo had greatly improved, the customs receipts had nearly doubled, and the creditors had agreed to compromise their claims, so that the total debt at the time the above treaty was ratified amounted to not more than \$17,000,000.¹⁰

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In spite of the criticism that President Roosevelt's policy encountered, the Taft administration not only continued it in Santo Domingo, but tried to extend it to Nicaragua and Honduras. The five republics of Central America had been for years in a state of political and economic disorder as the result of wars and revolutions. In 1906 there was a war between Guatemala and Salvador, in which Honduras became involved as the ally of Salvador. President Roosevelt invited President Diaz of Mexico to unite with him in an offer of mediation, which resulted in a peace conference held aboard the U. S. *Marblehead*. At this conference the belligerents agreed to suspend hostilities and to attend another conference for the purpose of drafting a general treaty of peace. The second conference was held at San José, Costa Rica, but President Zelaya of Nicaragua declined to send a representative because he was unwilling to recognize the right of the United States to intervene

¹⁰ Foreign Relations, 1905, p. 298; Moore, "Digest of Int. Law," Vol. VI, pp. 518-529; *Am. Journal of Int. Law*, Vol. I, p. 287, and Documentary Supplement, p. 231.

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in Central American affairs. At this time Zelaya was systematically interfering in the internal affairs of the other Central American states, and exercised such complete control over the government of Honduras that Guatemala and Salvador were endeavoring to stir up revolutions against him in that state and in Nicaragua. War was about to break out in the summer of 1907 when President Roosevelt and President Diaz again intervened diplomatically and persuaded the Central American governments to suspend warlike preparations and to attend a conference in the city of Washington. In November the delegates of the five Central American states met in the Bureau of American Republics and were addressed by Secretary Root and the Mexican ambassador. The delegates adopted a general treaty of peace, providing for the settlement of existing differences and for the establishment of a Central American court of justice composed of five judges, one to be elected by the legislature of each state. The five republics agreed to submit to this tribunal all controversies of whatever nature that might arise between them which could not be settled through ordinary diplomatic channels.

But President Zelaya of Nicaragua, who still controlled Honduras, continued his interference in the affairs of the other republics by encouraging revolutionary movements and sending out filibustering expeditions. He was also hostile to the Central American court of justice, and it became evident that there was little chance of permanent peace as long as Zelaya remained in power. When, therefore, in October, 1909, members of the conservative party started a revolution at Bluefields against Zelaya's government,

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the movement was regarded with sympathy in the other Central American republics and in Washington. Conditions became so intolerable that many people in Nicaragua and Honduras appealed to the United States to intervene for the purpose of restoring order. President Diaz of Mexico was friendly to Zelaya and informed the United States that he did not care to take any further action. This brought to an end the coöperative efforts of the two governments and thereafter the United States had to act alone. Nothing was done, however, until two Americans were executed by Zelaya's order in November, 1909. As a result of these executions, which were without legal excuse and attended by barbarous cruelties, President Taft promptly severed diplomatic relations with Zelaya's government. In a dispatch to the Nicaraguan chargé, December 1, 1909, Secretary Knox said:

Since the Washington conventions of 1907, it is notorious that President Zelaya has almost continuously kept Central America in tension or turmoil; that he has repeatedly and flagrantly violated the provisions of the conventions, and, by a baleful influence upon Honduras, whose neutrality the conventions were to assure, has sought to discredit those sacred international obligations, to the great detriment of Costa Rica, El Salvador, and Guatemala, whose governments meanwhile appear to have been able patiently to strive for the loyal support of the engagements so solemnly undertaken at Washington under the auspices of the United States and Mexico.

He added that under the régime of President Zelaya republican institutions had ceased to exist in Nicaragua except in name, that public opinion and the press had been throttled, and that prison had been the reward of

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any tendency to real patriotism. The government of the United States was convinced, he said, "that the revolution represents the ideals and the will of a majority of the Nicaraguan people more faithfully than does the government of President Zelaya."¹¹

This note caused the speedy downfall of Zelaya's government. He tried to perpetuate his party in power by resigning the presidency to Dr. Madriz, but President Taft refused to recognize the Madriz government, and a few months later it was overthrown and the revolutionary party came into power, first under the presidency of Estrada and then under that of Adolfo Diaz.

The revolution had paralyzed agriculture and commerce and thrown the country into financial chaos. In October, 1910, the United States government sent Thomas C. Dawson to Managua to investigate conditions and to straighten out the political and financial affairs of Nicaragua. While he was engaged in this task, Secretary Knox negotiated at Washington two treaties, one between the United States and Honduras, signed January 10, 1911, and a similar treaty between the United States and Nicaragua, signed June 6. These treaties were intended to place the two countries concerned under the financial supervision of the United States. They provided for the appointment in each case of a collector of customs approved by the President of the United States, and made the customs receipts responsible for loans to be advanced by American bankers. The collectorship of customs was immediately established in Nicaragua without waiting for the ratification of the treaty by the Senate, and

¹¹ Foreign Relations, 1909, p. 455.

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through the efforts of the State Department American bankers made preliminary loans to the Nicaraguan government. When the Senate rejected the treaty, the bankers refused to make further loans, and the situation was almost as bad as ever. In October, 1911, General Mena, minister of war and head of a faction of his own, was elected by the Assembly president of the republic, but as this was contrary to an agreement which had been made with Dawson, it did not meet with the approval of the United States, and President Diaz removed Mena from office and forced him to flee from the capital. Shortly afterwards Mena was taken seriously ill, and the opposition to President Diaz fell again under the control of Zelaya's followers. As President Diaz was unable to guarantee protection to the life and property of foreigners, he asked the United States for assistance. In answer to this request American marines were landed at Corinto and assumed control of the national railway which connected that port with the capital and the principal cities. The American minister made a public announcement to the effect that the United States intended to keep open the routes of communication and to protect American life and property. This announcement was a great blow to the revolutionists. Some of their leaders surrendered voluntarily to the American marines, while others were attacked and forced to surrender positions along the railroad which they insisted upon holding. In these operations seven American marines lost their lives. Since 1912 a legation guard of one hundred marines has been maintained at the capital of Nicaragua and a warship has been stationed at Corinto.

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After the revolutionary movement was thus overthrown, Secretary Knox negotiated a new treaty for the purpose of helping the Nicaraguan government out of the financial straits in which it found itself. Great Britain was threatening to force the payment of its claims and certain German interests, which were operating banana plantations in Costa Rica, were trying to secure from the Nicaraguan government a concession for the construction of a canal from the Great Lake to the Atlantic along the San Juan river. According to the terms of the Knox treaty the United States was to pay Nicaragua \$3,000,000 in return for an exclusive right of way for a canal through her territory, a naval base on the Gulf of Fonseca, and the lease for ninety-nine years of the Great Corn and Little Corn Islands in the Caribbean. This treaty was submitted to the Senate February 26, 1913, but the close of the Taft administration was then at hand, and no action was taken.

The Wilson administration followed the same policy, however, and in July, 1913, Secretary Bryan submitted a third treaty with Nicaragua containing the provisions of the second Knox treaty and in addition certain provisions of the Platt Amendment which defines our protectorate over Cuba. This treaty aroused strong opposition in the other Central American States, and Costa Rica, Salvador, and Honduras filed formal protests with the United States government against its ratification on the ground that it would convert Nicaragua into a protectorate of the United States and thus defeat the long-cherished plan for a union of the Central American republics. They also claimed that the treaty infringed their own rights.

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In 1858 Costa Rica had been granted perpetual rights of free navigation in the lower part of the San Juan river, and Nicaragua had agreed to consult her before granting any concessions for the construction of an interoceanic canal. Salvador and Honduras objected to the establishment of a naval base in the Gulf of Fonseca in close proximity to their coasts. They also asserted proprietary rights in the Gulf of Fonseca, claiming that Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua, as successors of the old Central American Federation, exercised joint ownership over the gulf. Efforts were made by the United States to arrive at a settlement with Costa Rica and Salvador on the basis of a money payment, but without success. Moreover, the Senate of the United States objected to the protectorate feature of the treaty and refused to ratify it, but the negotiations were renewed, and on August 5, 1914, a new treaty, which omits the provisions of the Platt Amendment, was signed at Washington. This treaty, which was finally ratified by the Senate, February 18, 1916, grants to the United States in perpetuity the exclusive right to construct a canal by way of the San Juan river and Lake Nicaragua, and leases to the United States for ninety-nine years a naval base on the Gulf of Fonseca, and also the Great Corn and Little Corn Islands as coaling stations. The consideration for these favors was the sum of \$3,000,000 to be expended, with the approval of the Secretary of State of the United States, in paying the public debt of Nicaragua, and for other purposes to be agreed on by the two contracting parties.

In consenting to the ratification of the treaty the Senate, in order to meet the objections raised by Costa

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Rica, Salvador, and Honduras, attached to their resolution of ratification the proviso "that nothing in said convention is intended to affect any existing right of any of the said states." This reservation did not satisfy Costa Rica and Salvador, who took their cases to the Central American Court of Justice, requesting that Nicaragua be enjoined from carrying out the provisions of the treaty. Nicaragua refused to be a party to the action, but the court nevertheless assumed jurisdiction. Its decision in the case of Costa Rica was announced September 30, 1916. It declared that Nicaragua had violated Costa Rica's rights, but, as the court had no jurisdiction over the United States, it declined to declare the treaty void. A similar decision in the case of Salvador was handed down on March 2, 1917.¹²

Neither Nicaragua nor the United States has paid any attention to the decision of the Central American Court of Justice, which was set up under such favorable auspices by the Washington conventions. As a matter of fact, the court had not fulfilled the expectations of those who had been interested in its establishment, but it was unfortunate that it should have received its *coup de grâce* from the United States. Furthermore, it has been charged that the State Department, under the Knox régime, exploited the situation in Central America for the benefit of American capitalists, and that the Wilson administration has for years maintained a minority party in power through the presence of a body of American marines at the capital and a warship at Corinto. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that as a result

¹² D. G. Munro, "The Five Republics of Central America," p. 257.

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of American policy, Central America has been freer from wars and revolutions for a longer period than at any other time in its history. The better element of the population appears to be satisfied with the situation.¹³

the
The treaty with the negro republic of Haiti, ratified by the Senate February 28, 1916, carries the new Caribbean policies of the United States to the farthest limits short of actual annexation. Shortly before the outbreak of the European war, Haitian finances were in such bad shape as the result of internal disorders that there was grave danger of European intervention, and the United States was considering the question of acquiring supervision over the finances of the republic. In June, 1915, a crisis in the internal affairs of Haiti seemed imminent and, at the request of the State Department, Rear-Admiral Caperton was ordered to Haitian waters. Towards the latter part of July the government of President Guillaume was overthrown, and he and members of his cabinet took refuge in the French and Dominican legations. These buildings were entered by a mob, President Guillaume was slain at the gate of the French legation, his body cut in pieces, and dragged about the town. Admiral Caperton at once landed a force of marines at Port au Prince in order to protect the lives and property of foreigners. An additional force was brought from Guantanamo and the total number raised to two thousand and placed under the command of Colonel Waller. There was but slight resistance to the landing of the marines, but a few days later

¹³ For recent and authoritative information on Central American affairs, see the volume by Dana G. Munro, "The Five Republics of Central America." (Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1918.)

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a conflict occurred in which two Americans were killed.¹⁴ On August 12 a new president was elected who coöperated with the American forces in their efforts to establish peace and order, and on September 16 a treaty with the United States was signed at Port au Prince. This treaty provides for the establishment of a receivership of Haitian customs under the control of the United States similar in most respects to that established over the Dominican Republic. It also provides for the appointment, on the nomination of the President of the United States, of a financial adviser, who shall assist in the settlement of the foreign debt and direct expenditures of the surplus for the development of the agricultural, mineral, and commercial resources of the republic. It provides further for a native constabulary under American officers appointed by the President of Haiti upon nomination of the President of the United States. And it extends to Haiti the main provisions of the Platt Amendment. By controlling the internal financial administration of the government the United States hopes to remove all incentives for those revolutions which have in the past had for their object a raid on the public treasury, and by controlling the customs and maintaining order the United States hopes to avoid all possibility of foreign intervention. The treaty is to remain in force for a period of ten years and for another period of ten years if either party presents specific reasons for continuing it on the ground that its purpose has not been fully accomplished.

The latest acquisition of the United States in the Caribbean is that of the Danish West Indies, or Virgin

¹⁴ Secretary of the Navy, Annual Report 1915, pp. 15-17.

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Islands. Reference has already been made to the treaty negotiated by Secretary Seward in 1867 for the purchase of these islands, which was unfortunately rejected by the Senate. Another attempt at purchase was made by President Roosevelt in 1902. A treaty providing for the cession of the group to the United States was signed at Washington on January 24 of that year and approved by the Senate February 17, but this time the Danish Rigsdag refused to give its approval. President Roosevelt was moved by the consideration that the Danish Islands were of great strategic importance in connection with the problem of guarding the approaches to the Panama canal. The commercial value of the islands is also great. Moreover, the United States was confronted by the possibility of their falling under the control of Germany or some other European power, which might use them as a naval base. Had Germany been successful in the recent war, she might have forced Denmark to sell or cede the islands to her. In view of this possibility, negotiations were taken up again with Denmark in 1916, and on August 4 Secretary Lansing concluded a treaty by which the United States acquired the islands of St. Thomas, St. John, and St. Croix, together with some adjacent small islands and rocks, for the sum of \$25,000,000. This treaty was duly ratified by the Senate and the ratifications were exchanged January 17, 1917.

The rapid advance of the United States in the Caribbean, described in the preceding pages, naturally aroused the fears of the smaller Latin-American states and lent color to the charge that the United States had converted the Monroe Doctrine from a policy of

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benevolent protection to one of imperialistic aggression. As a matter of fact, the Monroe Doctrine has never been regarded by the United States as in any sense a self-denying declaration. President Monroe said that we should consider any attempt on the part of the European powers "to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety." The primary object of the policy outlined by President Monroe was, therefore, the peace and safety of the United States. The protection of Latin-American states against European intervention was merely a means of protecting ourselves. While the United States thus undertook to prevent the encroachment of European powers in Latin America, it has never admitted any limitation upon the possibility of its own expansion in this region. The silence of the Monroe Doctrine on this question has been remedied to some extent by President Wilson, who, at the outset of his administration, gave the assurance that "the United States will never again seek one additional foot of territory by conquest." This declaration, followed by his refusal to be forced into war with Mexico, has done much to remove the suspicion with which our recent policies in the Caribbean have been regarded by our Southern neighbors. His sincerity was further attested by his ready acceptance of the proffered mediation of the A B C powers in the Mexican embroglio and by the encouragement which he has given to the Pan American movement.