

HIGH TIDE OF EMPIRE: THE AMERICAN OCCUPATION
OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC 1916-1924

by

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CHAPTER I

As the guns boomed in the old fortaleza of Santo Domingo City the Stars and Stripes was hauled down, and in its place rose the whitecrossed, red and blue flag of the Dominican Republic. The date was July 12, 1924, and after eight years the American Occupation of the Dominican Republic was over.

It had been a strange interlude in American foreign affairs, this military occupation of a nation with which we had never been at war. It was even stranger that this unique intervention by which the United States had replaced the constitutional head of a friendly country with an American admiral should have taken place during the administration of the self-professed non-interventionist par excellence, Woodrow Wilson.

True, the President might not have sanctioned intervention had he been aware that certain State Department officials who had long favored American control of Santo Domingo had taken great pains to present the situation in 1916 as one which demanded the drastic remedy of a military occupation. Like him, many Americans who could not justify the Occupation on legal grounds took comfort in the thought that there was really nothing else we could do.¹ There was further solace, too, in the conviction that the United States had, after all, acted in the real interest of

¹ President Wilson to Secretary of State, November 26, 1916, Foreign Relations of the United States 1916 (Washington, 1861-), 242. "It is with the deepest reluctance that I approve and authorize the course here proposed, but I am convinced that it is the least of the evils in sight in this very perplexing situation."

the Dominican people. Shortly after the Occupation began an American authority on the Dominican Republic stated:

At present it may be said that many Dominicans welcome American assistance, that the great majority accept it, and that only a small minority are bitterly opposed to it, and these objectors are principally former politicians and revolutionaries whose opinion counts for least. The number of those favoring American intervention is being increased by the splendid administrative work of the present American authorities . . .²

While altruism probably ruled at the start, Dominicans soon lost their taste for it. Sumner Welles, who supervised the American withdrawal in 1924, gravely noted the ". . . lasting hostility towards the American people which the Occupation created in the hearts of a very great number of the Dominican people."³

For an understanding of why there was an American Occupation, and why, once undertaken, it had such an unfortunate result, one must first have some knowledge of the Dominican people and their history.

For more than three hundred years, from 1492 to 1795, Santo Domingo, where Columbus, who discovered it on his first voyage, still rests in the oldest cathedral in the New World,⁴ was a colony of Spain. The first

² Otto Schoenrich, Santo Domingo, a Country with a Future (New York, 1918), 393.

³ Sumner Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, The Dominican Republic 1844-1924 (New York, 1928), II, 928-929. In 1928, Dr. Raymond Leslie Buell, Research Director of the Foreign Policy Association, Annals of the American Academy (Philadelphia), CXXXVIII (July, 1928), 70, reported, ". . . there is implanted in the people of Santo Domingo a deepseated feeling which borders on hatred toward the Government of the United States, and you cannot imagine the strength or the depth of that feeling until you go to that country and talk to the people concerned."

⁴ Both Spain and the Dominican Republic claim the tomb of the Discoverer. For a full discussion see Schoenrich, Santo Domingo, 277-302.

forty years of this long era were glorious ones. Up to a million dollars a year in gold was washed from the mountain streams,⁵ and sugar cane was hardly less valuable. Introduced early, sugar sold in sixteenth century Europe for the equivalent of \$2.45 a pound.⁶ Besides the capital, Santo Domingo City (today's Ciudad Trujillo), three other towns achieved the rank of cities and boasted churches, convents, and palaces no whit inferior to those of Spain itself.

The golden age soon passed, however. The bolder spirits departed for the beckoning treasure heaps of Mexico and Peru. The gold fields were exhausted, and the native Arawak population, originally estimated at from one to three million,⁷ which had mined the gold and tilled the cane fields, completely disappeared after 1533, destroyed by slavery, slaughter, and disease.

For the next two hundred years the colony declined. French buccaneers seized the eastern third of the island and made it an official French colony in 1697. By the ruthless exploitation of hundreds of thousands of Negro slaves, French planters made fabulous fortunes from sugar, cacao, tobacco, and indigo. At the same time, the Spanish colony, neglected by the mother country and choked by trade restrictions, dwindled until by 1730 scarcely six thousand impoverished settlers remained.⁸ This date marked the low point, however. With the relaxation of trade

5 Ibid., 134.

6 Pan American Union, The Dominican Republic (Washington, 1920), 15.

7 Schoenrich, Santo Domingo, 163.

8 Ibid., 28.

restrictions in 1740 conditions improved rapidly, and population increased until by 1789 there were more than 150,000 inhabitants including 30,000 slaves.⁹

When Spain ceded the colony to the French Republic in 1795 she abandoned the faithful colonists, who had been stoutly defending her territory against Toussaint L'Ouverture, to the mercy of the black leader and his savage following of white-hating ex-slaves. Toussaint had a long struggle to rid the French colony of its English invaders, and it was not until 1801 that he finally took possession of the former Spanish colony. By that time, almost one third of the white population, fearing Negro rule, had already fled to Cuba.¹⁰

In July, 1801 Toussaint drew up a constitution for the island which made it practically independent of France. Napoleon, taking advantage of the Peace of Amiens, despatched Le Clerc's army to restore French authority. The Spanish population rallied to the French in spite of vicious reprisals by the Negro rulers, and materially aided them in the reconquest of the eastern end of the island.

In the West--the former French colony--Le Clerc's main force met desperate resistance. Even after the capture of Toussaint the blacks fought on under Jean Jacques Dessalines. By the end of 1803 the French, riddled by yellow fever and cut off from reinforcements due to the reopening of hostilities with England, were ordered to evacuate. Dessalines then triumphantly proclaimed the whole island the Republic of Haiti (one

9 Ibid., 29.

10 Ibid., 33.

of the old Arawak names for Santo Domingo) and himself Dictator for life. His first act was to decree the extermination of every remaining white man.¹¹

On learning this, General Ferrand, one of the French commanders in the eastern part of the island, could not bring himself to desert the Spanish colonists. In defiance of the order to evacuate he occupied Santo Domingo City, and declared himself Governor in the name of France in January, 1804.

Early in 1805 Dessalines crossed the old border at the head of 25,000 men, torturing, killing, and burning. On March 6, the Haitian Army stood before the old walls of Santo Domingo City. After an epic defense of twenty-three days Ferrand's little garrison made a last desperate sally, defeated the Haitians, and sent them streaming back to the old French colony; they paused only long enough in their retreat to commit atrocities which outdid those which had marked their advance.

Napoleon, delighted and surprised, supported Ferrand to the limit of his ability, and the energetic general governed wisely and well. Yet the Dominicans, far from showing gratitude, rebelled in favor of Spain in October, 1808. Ferrand, betrayed by his Dominican troops, blew out his brains in despair. By 1809 the Spanish flag again flew over the capital where the unfinished public water system he had begun remained for more than a century as the sole and ironic monument to this truly great, but little known, man.

Whatever hopes the Dominicans might have had of benefits from

¹¹ Ibid., 36.

Spanish rule were soon dashed. For twelve years they endured an administration so maladroit that the whole period is known in Dominican history as that of España boba--Silly Spain.¹²

In 1821 the Dominicans rebelled successfully and proclaimed the state of Spanish Haiti. The new nation applied for membership in the Colombian Federation, but its emissary scarcely had departed for Caracas when the Haitians crossed the border. With no Ferrand at hand, and cowed by memories of the horrors of 1805, the Dominicans offered no resistance. On February 9, 1822 President Jean Boyer of Haiti received the keys to the capital literally on a silver platter.¹³

This initiated the most significant period of Dominican history. Haiti's policy was to Africanize the whole island. The white population, already much reduced, was encouraged to emigrate, and colonies of Haitians and emancipated American Negroes were established.¹⁴ By the time the Haitian occupation was ended by the revolution of February 27, 1844 it had done much to shape the character of the Dominican people.

The emigration of whites and the infusion of Negro blood left a largely mulatto population. However, the term Negro was reserved for the Haitians, and Dominicans of all shades proudly claimed their Latin ancestry and culture. Moreover, a morbid fear of domination by the Negroes of Haiti was imprinted on every mind.

So overwhelming was this fear that the two strong men, Pedro Santana

¹² Ibid., 40.

¹³ Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, I, 51.

¹⁴ Schoenrich, Santo Domingo, 42.

and Buenaventura Báez, who alternated in the Presidency of the new Dominican Republic for the next seventeen years both strove to place the country under the protection of a stronger power. After a complex series of diplomatic maneuvers involving England, France, Spain, and the United States, Santana persuaded Spain to annex her old colony again in 1861.

Once again Spanish rule proved insufferable, and the Dominicans rose in revolt. A bloody war dragged on for three years before the Spaniards departed for the last time in July, 1865.

Santana died in 1864, and with the exit of Spain Báez returned to power still determined to get the best price he could for placing his country under the protection of a stronger nation. He was particularly anxious for the United States to fill the role, and his ambitions were ably fostered by a rather disreputable group of concession hunting American promoters. Their front man in the Dominican Republic was General William L. Cazneau, a Texan who had been engaged in peddling "blue sky" Dominican development schemes to gullible Americans since 1854.

These men, who had organized the American West India Company and several subsidiaries with charters which gave them virtual monopolies over Dominican mining, shipping, and banking,¹⁵ managed to interest both the Johnson and Grant administrations in the project to the extent that a treaty of annexation was signed between the two countries in July, 1869. However, the treaty failed of ratification in the United States Senate largely because of the vigorous opposition of an old abolitionist, Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts, who saw the whole proposition as nothing

¹⁵ Melvin M. Knight, The Americans in Santo Domingo (New York, 1928), 8.

more than a scheme to exploit the colored people of the Dominican Republic.¹⁶

President Grant, who was solidly behind the annexation project, sent a commission consisting of Benjamin F. Wade, Samuel G. Howe, and Andrew D. White to investigate the Dominican Republic at first hand. They studied the Republic as a potential source of wealth, and tried to ascertain native opinion for or against annexation to the United States. Although they issued a favorable report on their return in 1871, Sumner remained adamant, and the report was tabled permanently.

Meanwhile, Báez, believing the annexation assured, had arranged a foreign loan on terms so unbelievably bad that only his conviction that the United States would assume the debt could have persuaded him to agree to them. This foundation of the fantastic edifice of the Dominican debt was rigged so that nearly \$4,000,000 worth of Dominican bonds were to be sold for about \$2,000,000 with \$500,000 of that to go to the underwriter, Edward Hartmont, an unscrupulous English financier who maintained a close relationship with the American West India Company.¹⁸ Scheduled payments during the twenty-five year life of the issue totalled nearly \$7,500,000. This was bad enough even had Hartmont lived up to the contract; but once

¹⁶ Ibid., 10.

¹⁷ Report of the Commission of Inquiry to Santo Domingo, Senate Executive Document No. 9, 42 Cong., 1 Sess. (Washington, 1871). While Schoenrich, Santo Domingo, 64, considers the report authoritative, Knight, Americans in Santo Domingo, 13, points out that the mere three weeks that the Commissioners spent in the nearly roadless country were scanty.

¹⁸ Knight, The Americans in Santo Domingo, 13. Hartmont paid the expenses of Joseph W. Fabens, one of the Cazneau group, while he acted as Dominican ambassador in Washington during the 1870 negotiations.

safely in London, Hartmont claimed remuneration for "unusual expenses," pocketed almost the whole of the receipts, and delivered to the Dominicans exactly \$190,455.¹⁹

Báez did not long survive the overthrow of his plans. A revolution unseated him in 1874, and six years of anarchy and rebellion followed. However, in 1880 Padre Fernando Arturo Meriño, one of many clerical politicians in Dominican history, was elected President. The good father proved to have a will of iron, and, with the cooperation of General Luperón, the leading military figure of the day, he ruthlessly crushed revolutionary activity and gave the country two years of peace. It was during this period that the great foreign-owned sugar plantations were founded,²⁰ and when Padre Meriño actually completed his term, and his legally elected successor took office, it appeared that the Dominican Republic was beginning a true national existence.

Unfortunately, Meriño's successor, Ulises Heureaux, was a tyrant who prolonged his nightmare regime for seventeen years. The Negro dictator, a man of formidable sexual prowess, installed a mistress in almost every town in the Republic as an integral part of the system of espionage,²¹ corruption, and terror by which he maintained himself in power. Such a system

¹⁹ Schoenrich, Santo Domingo, 354.

²⁰ Knight, The Americans in Santo Domingo, 23-24.

²¹ Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, 515-516. "Upon his death it was ascertained that the spy system which Heureaux had organized not only covered Dominican soil and that of the neighbouring Republic, but extended to foreign countries also. Copies were found of his correspondence with his agents in Venezuela, Cuba, Puerto Rico, New York, Paris, London and Berlin as well . . . The great majority proved to be former mistresses of Heureaux, whose loyalty, with singular felicity, he had apparently been able to retain."

required large sums of money--money available only at ruinous rates. By the time Ramon Cáceres assassinated Heureaux in 1899 financial control of the country had passed to an American corporation, the San Domingo Improvement Company.²²

Turmoil followed the death of dictator Heureaux. Revolution followed revolution, and the national debt ballooned. The Improvement company withdrew demanding that the United States enforce its claims against the Republic. At various times French, German, and Italian warships appeared to back the claims of their nationals against the defaulting Dominicans, and by 1904 the danger of a European intervention seemed very real. "Germany," Sumner Welles wrote, ". . . had under favorable consideration the project to purchase the Spanish, Belgian and Italian claims against the Dominican Government, and secure control of the Republic by occupying the customs houses as guarantees for the eventual repayment of the claims which she had taken over."²³

In order to meet this threat, and in response to appeals for aid from the Dominican Government of the moment,²⁴ Theodore Roosevelt pronounced his corollary to the Monroe Doctrine late in 1904. In implementation, the United States and the Dominican Republic signed a protocol which called for American representatives to collect all Dominican customs revenues, and to pay 45 per cent of the receipts to the Dominican Government; the balance went to its creditors.

22 Knight, The Americans in Santo Domingo, 17-19.

23 Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, 621.

24 Ibid., II, 619.

With Senator Tillman of South Carolina assuming the role of Charles Sumner²⁵ the Senate rejected the protocol in February, 1905. Roosevelt, convinced of its necessity, set up the receivership as a modus vivendi.

Meanwhile, an American commissioner was patiently deciphering the Dominican books; in June, 1905 he found that the claims against the Republic totalled exactly \$40,269,404.38.²⁶ On the basis of this study a new arrangement was made whereby the Dominican Government recognized claims against it for about \$30,000,000 and the creditors agreed to accept \$17,000,000 as payment in full. Considering the suspicious, and sometimes fraudulent, nature of many of the claims the repudiation was less than it appeared. Money to pay the claims was to be raised by a \$20,000,000 issue of 5 per cent Dominican bonds.

On this basis the United States and the Dominican Republic made the Convention of 1907. The Convention, ratified and proclaimed in July, 1907, provided that the Customs Receivership would continue in a modified form for the fifty year life of the bond issue. Under the new system only such revenues as remained after the expenses of the Receivership had been paid, and payments toward interest, amortization, and retirement of the bonds had been made would go to the Dominican Government. The agreement also gave the United States the right to intervene to protect the General Receiver of Customs--an American appointed by the President of the United States--and his assistants, and the right to control Dominican tariffs.

25 Ibid., II, 647.

26 Schoenrich, Santo Domingo, 350-373. Schoenrich was secretary to Jacob H. Hollander, the special commissioner referred to, and in 1906 served as secretary to the Dominican Minister of Finance.

In fateful language Article III provided that:²⁷

Until the Dominican Republic has paid the whole amount of the bonds of the debt its public debt shall not be increased except by previous agreement between the Dominican Government and the United States.

After the bonds were issued in 1908 the problems of the Republic appeared solved. The popular hero Ramon Cáceres, the slayer of Heureaux, had become President in 1906. Federico Velásquez, considered the most able of Dominican politicians, served as his Finance Minister and closest adviser. Under the Receivership, revenues rose sharply, and even after payments on the bond issue had been made there was more money in the treasury than ever before. Public works were begun on a large scale, and the Republic enjoyed its first period of progressive government since the days of Ferrand.

The near-idyll lasted until November 19, 1911 when a band of disappointed spoilsmen ambushed Cáceres and shot him dead. As the constitution did not provide for a Vice-president, and the involved machinery for selecting a new President proved unworkable in the hands of ambitious and irresponsible politicians, the Dominicans resorted again to their normal political procedure--revolution.²⁸

The civil strife interfered with customs collections on the Haitian frontier. Under the terms of the Convention the United States had the right to land troops for the agents' protection. The United States

²⁷ Text of Convention in Schoenrich, Santo Domingo, Appendix C, or Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, Appendix I, 1005-1011.

²⁸ Schoenrich, Santo Domingo, 328. So identified were politics and revolution that a woman remarked to the author that her son ". . . had taken a gun and gone into politics." (" . . . cojió un fusil, y se metió en la política.")

Minister, William W. Russell, who held opinions typical of those current in the Latin-American Division of that era,²⁹ favored even stronger action.

On September 19, 1912 he recommended to Secretary of State Philander Knox:³⁰

Only complete control by our Government would permanently insure order and justice, but any degree of control would be beneficial; indeed, without our effective control, one administration here would be as good as another. Once having landed men for protection of the customhouses, in accordance with our rights under the convention, we might be able to dictate a policy beneficial to the country.

General McIntyre of the Bureau of Insular Affairs and Mr. W. T. Doyle, Chief of the Latin-American Division, who formed the commission sent by President Taft to investigate, apparently were ready to intervene. In the face of this threat the squabbling political leaders agreed to accept a compromise candidate, Archbishop Adolfo A. Nouel of Santo Domingo, as Provisional President.

Nouel was not another Meriño, however, and proved unequal to the task. Driven to ill health by the demands of Desiderio Arias, the almost independent political and military leader of the North, Nouel fled the country in despair after serving only four months of his two year term.

Once again there was disorder. The Woodrow Wilson administration was publicly pledged to non-intervention, and Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan was a sincere believer in that policy. However, the heavy-handed meddling of the minister whom Bryan appointed to the

²⁹ Selig Adler, "Bryan and Wilsonian Caribbean Penetration," Hispanic-American Historical Review (Durham), XX, (May, 1940), 203-204.

³⁰ Russell to Knox, September 19, 1912, quoted in Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, 694.

Dominican Republic, a "deserving Democrat" named James Mark Sullivan,³¹ only involved the United States more deeply. Finally, President Wilson fell back on Taft's solution and sent a commission to supervise an election. His instructions to the Commissioners concluded:³²

A regular and constitutional government having thus been set up, the Government of the United States would feel at liberty thereafter to insist that revolutionary movements cease and that all subsequent changes in the Government of the Republic be effected by the peaceful processes provided in the Dominican Constitution.

As a result of this election, Juan Isidro Jiménez, who had demonstrated incapacity for the office in one previous term, regained the Presidency on December 5, 1914. From the very beginning his position was shaky. On the one hand, the United States pressured him to accept the appointment of an American financial adviser who would actually control the Dominican treasury, and on the other, his Congress threatened to impeach him should he agree to this.

Informed of the possibility of impeachment, Secretary Bryan immediately announced that the United States intended to maintain Jiménez in office in spite of what the Dominican Congress might do.³³ Apparently neither he nor Minister Sullivan realized that this served only to embarrass further the President whose opposition was attempting to portray him as

³¹ George Marvin, "Watchful Acting in Santo Domingo," World's Work (New York), XXXIV (June, 1917), 218. So obnoxious did Sullivan become that, according to rumor, after his departure Archbishop Nouel taught his eight year old niece to end her prayers with, ". . . and Good Lord deliver us from any more Sullivans." (" . . . y buen Señor libranos de mas Sullivanes.")

³² Quoted in Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, 738.

³³ Bryan to the American Minister in Santo Domingo, April 9, 1915, quoted in Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, 752.

merely an American tool.

Robert Lansing replaced Bryan as Secretary of State in June, 1915, but there was no change in the policy of demanding greater American control over the Dominican Republic's internal affairs. In September, 1915 William W. Russell, whose views on the capability of the Dominicans for self-government have already been seen, returned as the American envoy to the Dominican Republic. With Russell's appearance on the scene events soon hastened to a climax.

CHAPTER II

The Dominican Republic in 1915 presented the strange spectacle of a land that apparently had been in a state of chronic civil war for four years, yet was enjoying unparalleled prosperity. Save for 1914, when the outbreak of war destroyed the tobacco trade with Germany that accounted for almost 20 per cent of Dominican exports, the total trade volume had increased steadily. From 1905, when the Receivership began keeping adequate records, through 1915 it grew from \$9,632,926 to \$24,327,575.¹

While the greater part of this growth was due to the expansion of the foreign-owned sugar plantations, the average Dominican farmer also shared in the prosperity. A sturdy mulatto, he usually owned a peso or comunero title in one of the old Spanish land grants which entitled him to fence and farm unused land to the value of his share anywhere on the grant. There was plenty of fertile land available, and with the aid of the ubiquitous machete he was able to raise enough cacao, coffee, tobacco, or sugar to support himself very well by West Indian standards. At least he was prosperous enough so that the wage of a laborer on a sugar plantation had no appeal for him. The planters had to import labor from Haiti, Puerto Rico, the British West Indies, and elsewhere.²

1 Schoenrich, Santo Domingo, 232.

2 Phillip Douglass, "Americanizing Santo Domingo," The Nation (New York), CXII (May 4, 1921), 664. This American commercial traveller in the Caribbean compared Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic saying, ". . . we can work there [Puerto Rico] for fifty years with undivided energy before the poor classes are as happy, as well fed, as self-respecting as the poor classes of Santo Domingo."

While the cultural level of the average Dominican was not high by American standards, it probably was above the West Indian average. Certainly it was far above that of his Haitian neighbor with whom he was too often confused by Americans.³

Consciousness of his dignity as a landowner and descendant of caballeros inspired him to maintain high standards of personal honesty (save where Government funds were concerned)⁴ and cleanliness.⁵ No cringing peon, he was accustomed to carry arms openly. While this led to a high rate of homicide--according to one report as many as three hundred cases a year in one province⁶--the Dominican male, like the vaquero of the American Southwest, felt almost undressed without his pearlhandled mu or the sawed off shotgun he called pate de mula.

³ A typical comment is that of Julius Pratt, "Robert Lansing," The American Secretaries of State and Their Diplomacy, Samuel Flagg Bemis (ed.), X (New York, 1929), 118: "Except that language and tradition are Spanish instead of French, conditions of race, culture, and politics differ little from those in Haiti." Racially, the Dominicans were nearly all of mixed blood while in Haiti approximately 90 per cent were pure Negro. Culturally, the Dominican spoke a pure Spanish while the Haitian mouthed a corrupt Creole dialect; wore shoes while the Haitian went barefoot; and practiced the Catholic religion under his own priests while Haiti was sunk in voodooism. Politically, both countries were subject to periodic revolution, but there was little resemblance between the worst of Dominican revolutions and the savage massacre of two hundred prisoners at Port-au-Prince and the subsequent tearing to pieces of President Sam which led to the American Occupation of Haiti in 1915.

⁴ Schoenrich, Santo Domingo, 349.

⁵ Ibid., 241. Soap was an important native manufacture and a leading import item.

⁶ Carl Kelsey, "The American Intervention in Haiti and the Dominican Republic," The Annals of the American Academy of Political Science (Philadelphia), C (March, 1922), 179. Schoenrich, Santo Domingo, 178, says that casualties at a country dance might exceed those of the average revolution.

Illiteracy was common, almost universal, in rural areas. However, the rudiments of education could be had in most of the towns.⁷ The Dominican upper class, with a tradition of education in Europe or the United States for those who could afford it, produced doctors, lawyers, and an abundance of writers and poets who held high rank in Latin American literary circles.

While it is easy to prove the economic and cultural health of the Dominican Republic, it is certain that the country was ailing politically. Twenty-four successful rebellions since 1844 and countless unsuccessful insurrections earned it the sobriquet of the Land of Revolution.

The state of political immaturity bequeathed by the Haitian occupation of 1821-1844 is certainly a factor to be considered when seeking the cause of this chronic instability.⁸ Also the series of nineteenth century revolts against foreign government, twice against Spain, once each against France and Haiti, had helped to establish a tradition of rebellion. Probably more important than either of these reasons was the fact that the national government found it nearly impossible to control effectively nearly twenty thousand square miles of rugged and almost roadless country.

It was this geographic factor which made it necessary for the President to appoint provincial governors who had almost unlimited powers.

7 Colonel Rufus H. Lane, USMC, "Civil Government in Santo Domingo," Marine Corps Gazette (Quantico, Va.), VII (June, 1922), 143. Lane, Minister of Public Instruction in the Military Government, 1917-1920, estimated illiteracy at from 90 to 95 per cent and school enrollments at about 16,000 in 1916.

8 Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, 900-901.

It was inevitable that ambitious men with the power to collect the revenues and raise troops would be tempted to lead or support revolutions.

Most of these "revolutions" were merely personal contests between politicians and involved no fundamental issues. The mass of the people took no part in them and the fighting was between rebellious politicians and the miniature national Army.⁹ By tacit agreement, loss of life and property damage were kept to a minimum, and the Dominicans tended to look on these sporadic upheavals as a sort of game, just as people in the United States speak of the "political game."

A prominent Dominican politician and attorney explained:¹⁰

When we have our sport we may kill each other--not many. The taking of the Government never took many lives, but only a few of the people who liked the sport. Outsiders never were in danger . . . We went every day to the clubs, played cards--the same as today--during the revolution.

Judge Otto Schoenrich, an American of long experience in the Dominican Republic, tells of an assault made on Puerto Plata, one of the major ports of the Republic, during a revolution in 1904.¹¹

. . . a fierce battle ensued which continued from morning till the town was taken by storm in the evening; yet only one man was killed and his death was due to his own carelessness, for he appeared

⁹ Ernesto Vega y Pagan, Historia de Las Fuerzas Armadas (Ciudad Trujillo, 1955), I, 271. The Dominican Army, reorganized in 1912, had an authorized strength of seven hundred men.

¹⁰ Testimony of Francisco J. Peynado, Hearings Before a Select Committee on Haiti and Santo Domingo, United States Senate, 67 Cong., 1 and 2 sess. (Washington, 1922), II, 951.

¹¹ Schoenrich, Santo Domingo, 331. As an example of the careful attitude taken toward property, especially foreign-owned property, he cites another case where a rebel force halted at the edge of a sugar plantation while its leader went to request permission from the manager to cross the property.

not far from where soldiers of the other side were training a cannon and refused to obey their warning to get out of the way, . . .

Nevertheless, people were killed, property was destroyed, and the country's finances were drained. The Government had to expend money on troops and munitions, and the inflated damage claims of both Dominicans and foreigners which grew out of these affairs swelled the public debt. The foreign claims were the most worrisome as not only the large plantations and big commercial concessions, but even a large proportion of the small retail trade of the Republic was in the hands of aliens who were most adept in using their consuls to support them.¹²

This was the Dominican Republic in 1915. Basically, a healthy little nation of some three quarters of a million people, its body politic was

¹² Lane, "Civil Government in Santo Domingo," *Marine Corps Gazette* (June, 1922), VII, 130. ". . . it had long been the custom for every foreigner to take advantage of any circumstances that could possibly be considered as disadvantageous to him in a material, social or spiritual way, as the basis of a money claim for damages against the Dominican government. Due to this practice, enormous claims had accumulated, and because of the fact that the government had been very dilatory in satisfying them, the amounts in money were multiplied not only in strict proportion to the estimated difficulty of collecting, but also in inverse proportion to the real gravity of the case, for the purpose of focusing attention which might not otherwise be attracted . . .

"An incident illustrative of the practice occurred in the village of Duarte . . . [where on October 24, 1916 an armed clash between marines and Dominicans occurred--DCM] After affairs had somewhat settled down, each dweller in the village who could by any stretch of the imagination claim foreign citizenship, submitted, apparently according to an accepted practice, a claim against the government for damages. Tiny stores which could not by any possibility have contained more than a few dollars worth of stock were represented as having sustained loss of merchandise and money amounting to thousands of dollars. These particular claims which were against the United States instead of against Santo Domingo, were formally and ponderously investigated by boards of officers, and voluminous reports were forwarded to Washington, after which they were not again heard of . . ." Schoenrich, *Santo Domingo*, 364, tells of a Danish citizen who presented a claim for ten thousand dollars but authorized the Danish consul to settle for forty dollars.

marred and debilitated by the running sore of revolution.

To William W. Russell, returning to Santo Domingo after a three year absence, it was an article of faith that the Dominicans could never cure this sore by themselves. Russell, the son of a Marine Corps major, was born in Washington, D. C. in 1858. Educated at Annapolis, he had served some years as a Navy civil engineer and had spent most of his adult life, both in the Navy and the State Department, in Latin America.

As a Southerner he mistrusted the ability of colored people to govern themselves; as an old Navy man he held Mahan's belief that control of the Caribbean islands was essential for the defense of the Panama Canal;¹³ as a veteran of the Latin American Division of the State Department he shared the opinion, widely held in that branch, that such entities as the Dominican Republic could hardly be considered sovereign states.

Triply armed against any appeals to the ideals of non-intervention that Woodrow Wilson had expressed at Mobile in 1913, Russell arrived in Santo Domingo City in September, 1915. His photograph shows him as he appeared then, a vigorous heavy-set man in his late prime. An imposing white moustache spread beneath a large, fleshy nose gave an authoritarian cast to a face which looked willing, even eager, to take up "the white man's burden."¹⁴

¹³ Russell to Secretary of State, May 29, 1916, Foreign Relations 1916, 249-250. Russell recommended that any new treaty with the Dominican Republic include right to an American naval base in Samaná Bay.

¹⁴ Contemporary photograph in George Marvin, "Watchful Acting in Santo Domingo," World's Work (New York), XXXIV (June, 1917), 205.

Acting Secretary of State Frank L. Polk instructed Russell before he left for Santo Domingo to inform the Dominican Government that it had violated the Convention of 1907 by increasing its public debt without authorization by \$7,000,000. Consequently, the United States renewed its demand that the Dominican Government consent to the long-urged appointment of an American financial adviser and to the replacement of the Dominican Army by a constabulary under an American commander.¹⁵

When the American Minister presented these demands on November 19, 1915 Jiménez was dumbfounded. The United States, which had vowed to uphold him in office, again was demanding that he take steps which would surely bring about either his impeachment or a general uprising. He rejected the demands.

Meanwhile, General Desiderio Arias, Jiménez's Minister of War, had become the recognized leader of the opposition against his nominal chief. Arias, a tall and powerful Negro, was a known Yankee-phobe who had been the leader in the agitation that had driven Archbishop Nouel to despair and resignation in 1912. Now he hoped to force out Jiménez and gain the Presidency for himself.

He had sufficient control of the Congress to guarantee an impeachment should the President yield to the American demands. At the same time he encouraged the rebellious activity that forced the nation deeper into debt and increased American pressure. Thus Jiménez found himself in a dilemma. Unless he could get the United States to approve a loan large

¹⁵ Russell to Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the Dominican Republic, November 19, 1915, Foreign Relations 1915, 333-337.

enough to buy off some of Arias's support his position would soon become untenable. Yet, the United States would not approve a loan unless he agreed to its demands, an act which would turn the entire country against him.¹⁶

Although the United States did not press its claim, the demands were not withdrawn, and Jiménez's situation remained precarious. The impasse continued until April 14, 1916. Then Jiménez attempted to rid himself of Arias by a coup de main. Urged on by his chief adviser, Federico Velasquez, he invited the two ranking military commanders of the capital to his country home where he arrested them. Next he sent for Arias himself, but the wily revolutionary had word of what had happened. Fearing the same fate, he seized the fortress in the city and declared himself no longer bound by the President's orders.¹⁷

Discouraged by his failure, Jiménez wanted to resign. Russell, who saw the situation leading inevitably to the intervention he desired, importuned him to stay on.¹⁸ So the President stayed in the country not daring to enter his capital, and Arias remained in the fortaleza fearing to venture out. The stalemate lasted until May first, when the Congress impeached Jiménez. The following day the Senate approved the action of the House and called on the President to make his rebuttal.

Jiménez refused on the ground that the entire proceeding was illegal

16 Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, 764.

17. Ibid., 767.

18 Russell to Secretary of State, April 27, 1916, Foreign Relations 1916, 222.

because the Congress had acted under duress. At the same time he charged Arias with treason and formally dismissed him from his cabinet post. Then, gathering about fifteen hundred men,¹⁹ he marched on the capital demanding Arias's surrender.

This sudden boldness on the part of a man who two weeks earlier had been ready to resign in despair was evidently based on promises of American aid. Russell, anticipating, if not directing, every move, had requested an American warship and a landing force on April 27.²⁰ Apparently Jiménez had been led to believe this was a precautionary measure in case things got out of hand, and that the United States would supply his forces with munitions.

He attacked the city on May 5; after a furious, day-long battle, however, he found himself both unsuccessful and out of ammunition.²¹ As he prepared to resume the attack the next morning he learned that the Americans would not give him arms but that the marines and bluejackets who had landed from the USS Prairie on May 4, ostensibly to protect the Legation,²² would take the city for him. Although Russell reported

19 Testimony of Arturo La Grono, Senate Hearings, II, 1075. "General Arias had about 300 men. President Jiménez had between 1200 and 1500 men." La Grono had been Jiménez's private secretary.

20 Russell to Secretary of State, April 27, 1916, Foreign Relations 1916, 222.

21 As usual ammunition expenditure was out of proportion to casualties. A total of two men were killed in the battle.

22 An extensive mythology grew up concerning the danger to the Legation which stood some distance outside the city. Russell's original report, Russell to Secretary of State, May 5, 1916, 7 P.M., Foreign Relations 1916, 223, stated that the Legation was in Arias's "line of fire"

that Jiménez had requested this action,²³ the fact that the President immediately resigned rather than regain the capital in this manner makes the envoy's statement suspect.²⁴

Jiménez's resignation was a blow to Russell's plans. He had counted on installing Jiménez in his capital behind American bayonets, then forcing compliance with the previously unacceptable terms. Now Jiménez had resigned, and Arias still controlled the city.

The Dominican Constitution of 1908 provided that when the presidential office became vacant the Congress should appoint a Provisional President to serve until elections could be held. Under the circumstances it appeared likely that Arias or one of his partisans would be selected. This was the last thing that the American Minister wanted.

Russell, who had been granted complete freedom of action by the

for several hours. Captain Crossley of the Prairie reported to the Navy Department that Dominican troops had "deliberately" fired on the Legation, "and continued the fire although the American flag was flying in view of the gunners." Major Edward N. McClellan, USMC, "Operations Ashore in the Dominican Republic," United States Naval Institute Proceedings (Annapolis), XLVII (February, 1928), 238. Captain Harry Alan Ellsworth, USMC, 180 Landings of U. S. Marines (Washington, 1934), 69, expands this into the sole reason for the intervention, stating that the American Minister did not even request troops until shells had struck the Legation. In 1921, Russell stated that protection for the Legation had been his only motive in requesting troops, and that he still had fragments of a shell which had struck within the grounds. Earnest H. Gruening, "The Senators Visit Haiti and Santo Domingo," The Nation (New York), CXIV (January 4, 1922), 9.

23 Russell to Secretary of State, May 6, 1916, 6 A.M., Foreign Relations 1916, 223-224.

24 Testimony of J. M. Jiménez, Senate Hearings, 1094 and Arturo La Grono, ibid., 1076-1077. Both deny that the Dominican President ever requested use of American troops. Jiménez was the President's son and one of his Cabinet ministers.

State Department,²⁵ evidently reached an understanding with Federico Velásquez, the leading figure in Jiménez's Cabinet. Ignoring the requirement for a Provisional President he declared that the United States recognized the Cabinet as the executive power. Velásquez accepted this because he believed that through his control of the Cabinet he could become President. Russell told the other Cabinet members that if they failed to cooperate a military government would be installed immediately.²⁶

The Dominican Congress protested and began the process of selecting a Provisional President on May 11. More marines landed, and on May 12 Admiral William B. Caperton, who had handled a similar situation in Haiti, arrived on board the USS Dolphin.

Russell and Caperton contended that no election held while Arias dominated the capital could be valid. At any rate, it was unlikely that Velasquez would be chosen. On May 13 they directed an ultimatum to Arias demanding that he surrender the city and turn over his arms to the American forces by 6 A.M. on May 15. If he failed to comply, ". . . force will be used to disarm the rebel forces in the city of Santo Domingo and to support the constituted government."²⁷

Arias was in no position to resist. Besides the guns of American warships he faced nearly six hundred marines and bluejackets armed with

²⁵ Lansing to Russell, May 7, 1916, noon, Foreign Relations 1916, 225.

²⁶ Testimony of J. M. Jiménez, Senate Hearings, II, 1097. ". . . the secretaries of state wanted to resign also, but Minister Russell told us that we ought not to do so because the country would be without a government, and it would be necessary to appoint an American military governor."

²⁷ Russell-Caperton to Arias, May 13, 1916, Foreign Relations 1916, 227.

machine guns and two three-inch naval landing guns.²⁸ On the night of the fourteenth he and his followers fled, taking with them all the arms and ammunition they could carry. Reinforced by the prisoners of the city jails whom he forced to accompany him, Arias headed for Santiago in the interior.

Promptly at six the next morning the landing force moved into a city in which there was no sign of resistance or welcome. The streets were deserted and the houses shuttered in mute protest.²⁹

In spite of the appearance of quiet and order, Russell immediately requested the Presidents of the Senate and House of Deputies to postpone the electoral proceedings until the city recovered its normal aspect.³⁰ As he explained to Secretary Lansing, it was still probable that Arias or one of his supporters would be elected. This would nullify any good effect which the intervention might have produced.³¹

The Dominican House refused to delay, however, and on May 18 the name of Federico Henríquez y Carvajal passed its third reading and was sent to the Senate. Although Russell considered him an opponent of Arias, this made little difference once he informed the American Minister that he

28 Major Samuel M. Harrington USMC, "The Strategy and Tactics of Small Wars," Marine Corps Gazette (Quantico, Va.), VI (December, 1921), 479.

29 Max Henríquez Ureña, Los Yaqueis en Santo Domingo, La Verdad de los Hechos Comprobada por Datos y Documentos Oficiales (Madrid, 1929), 89.

30 Ibid.

31 Russell to Secretary of State, May 15, 1916, Foreign Relations 1916, 227.

would not agree to the demands for financial and military control.³² At this, Russell and Caperton demanded that the Senate postpone action on the pretext that Arias would fight should Henriquez y Carvajal take office.³³

Russell's chief concern was that the Dominican politicians, frightened by the threat of occupation, might unite behind a strong leader and present such a show of reform that the United States would be persuaded to withdraw its demands and its forces, and the golden opportunity for imposing complete American control would be gone. Fearful that Henriquez y Carvajal might be that man, he determined to block his election and put the compliant Velásquez into office. While the Senate delayed its vote, the radio facilities of the United States Navy were used in an attempt to drum up support for Velásquez.³⁴

When none was forthcoming, and the Senate, tired of delay, had announced that it intended to vote, Russell again resorted to force. On June 2, he cabled the State Department requesting permission to arrest enough Senators to block the election.³⁵

Acting Secretary of State Polk replied that the American Minister

³² Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, 774. Welles, who got his information from Horacio Vásquez, later President and at that time the leader of the opposition to Arias, calls Henriquez y Carvajal "favorably disposed to Arias." Russell, Foreign Relations 1916, 229-230, called him "a compromise candidate of Vásquez."

³³ Russell to Secretary of State, May 18, 1916, Foreign Relations 1916, 229-230.

³⁴ Ureña, Los Yanquis en Santo Domingo, 99-100.

³⁵ Russell to Secretary of State, June 2, 1916, quoted in Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, 775.

should make it clear that the United States would not recognize any candidate who did not agree in advance to the American demands, but that United States forces should not undertake the arrest of Dominican Senators.³⁶ However, the rump Cabinet led by Velásquez was obliging and arrested seven Senators and one Deputy on the night of June 4.³⁷

Russell realized immediately that the move had been a blunder. Although Henríquez y Carvajal resigned his candidacy in protest, a wave of popular indignation caused the quick release of the incarcerated legislators. The pretense that the arrests had been ordered by the Cabinet fooled no one, and Dominican resistance stiffened noticeably.³⁸

Unable to secure the election of an amenable candidate, Russell determined to present the Dominicans with a fait accompli. On June 5 he informed the Cabinet that in accordance with the interpretation of the 1907 Convention set forth in the note of November 19, 1915 the Receivership would henceforth take control of all Dominican finances. Even Velásquez protested at this, but to no avail. After an exchange of icily polite notes between Finance Minister Jiménez and Receiver General Baxter, the whole of Dominican finances passed into American hands on June 16.³⁹

Meanwhile, Arias, who still controlled the interior of the country,

36 Polk to Russell, June 3, 1916, ibid.

37 Ibid., 776.

38 Russell to Secretary of State, June 5, 1916, Foreign Relations 1916, 231.

39 Senate Hearings, 1087-1090; Ureña, Los Yanguis en Santo Domingo, 103-110.

remained a force to be reckoned with. On June 20, the 4th Marine Regiment under Colonel Joseph H. Pendleton landed at Monte Cristi and moved inland. The terrain was extremely difficult, and the outnumbered Dominicans showed surprising skill on the defense. However, the motley collection of old rifles which comprised their main armament was no match for the machine guns and field artillery of the marines. Two attempts at a stand were brushed aside,⁴⁰ and on July 7 Colonel Pendleton accepted Arias's surrender at Santiago and occupied the two other important towns of the interior, Moca and La Vega.

In the capital the political situation remained deadlocked. Russell had been instructed to block the election of any candidate who did not agree to the American terms, and the Congress refused to elect anyone who would. The stalemate was finally broken on July 25, when the jefes of all factions united to elect the Republic's most distinguished citizen, Dr. Francisco Henríquez y Carvajal.⁴¹

Dr. Francisco Henríquez y Carvajal was the brother of Federico

⁴⁰ Sergeant-Major Roswell Winans USMC, "Campaigning in Santo Domingo," Recruiter's Bulletin (Philadelphia), III (March, 1917), 15. Winans, who won the Congressional Medal of Honor in this operation, describes their arms: ". . . mostly old fashioned breech loaders with big lead slugs." Their defensive skill: "The trenches were awfully hard to pick up, although we were only about 150 yards away. They were on a hill and had carried their dirt away . . . The enemy had an immensely strong natural position and had they had a few machine guns and some barbed wire they could not have been rooted out without great loss of life."; their morale (and the reason no one knows how many Dominicans were lost): "It seemed to be a religion with these people to carry off their dead and wounded." Three Americans were killed.

⁴¹ Ureña, Los Yanquis en Santo Domingo, 111. The cable notifying Dr. Henríquez y Carvajal of his election was signed by every important political leader--Vásquez, Velasquez, Mota, Vidal, and Brache.

Henríquez y Carvajal whose election had been thwarted by the arrest of the Senators in June. A physician by profession, he had been active in Dominican politics but had left the country in disgust during the upheavals preceding the establishment of the Receivership, and since 1904 had lived in Santiago, Cuba. Although an expatriate, he frequently served his country in diplomatic posts where great dignity or ability was needed. He had represented the Dominican Republic at the second Hague Peace Conference (where, ironically, the United States had called for an end to interventions on financial grounds), and had been named to the Permanent Court of Arbitration at The Hague. Later, he had been envoy to Haiti during the boundary dispute of 1912 and in 1915 had been a member of the mission to Washington which had tried to persuade the United States to withdraw its demands for control over the Dominican Army and Treasury. He had just returned from Buenos Aires, where he had been the Dominican delegate at the International Law Conference, when he received the news of his election.⁴²

The new Provisional President, judged by his record, bore no resemblance to the corrupt and venal grafter who typified the Dominican politician to the men of the Latin-American Division. On June 25, while passing through the United States, he had published in the Spanish language newspaper Las Novedades⁴³ of New York a program of basic reforms which he

⁴² Antonio Hoepelman y Juan A. Senior (eds.), Documentos Históricos, que refieren a la Intervención Armada de los Estados Unidos de Norte-América y la implantación de un Gobierno Militar americano en la República Dominicana (Santo Domingo, R.D., 1922), 251-252.

⁴³ Ibid., 27. Francisco J. Peynado, former Dominican Minister to the United States and later Finance Minister to Henríquez y Carvajal owned this newspaper.

felt the Dominican Republic must carry out: separation of all civil officials, especially the provincial governors, from any control of military forces; establishment of political parties with written platforms to replace the jefes and their personal followings; development of free local government in the communes; presidential control of both police and Army; representation for both majority and minority parties in the national legislature; re-establishment of the office of vice-president; and the bonding of all those entrusted with public funds.⁴⁴

With the old political leaders frightened into a cooperative mood, and the presence of the marines making any armed uprising unlikely, Henríquez y Carvajal appeared to have a good chance to carry out his reform program. Minister Russell, however, was determined to establish American control. He immediately labelled the new Provisional President a tool of Arias.⁴⁵ The State Department had all but given Russell the power of deciding whether or not the new Government should be recognized.⁴⁶ He opposed recognition.

By the terms of his election, Henríquez y Carvajal had only five months to draft a new constitution and to prepare for the election of a new government. It was an almost impossible task under the best of conditions, and he realized that he needed Russell's cooperation.⁴⁷ To secure

⁴⁴ Ureña, Los Yanquis en Santo Domingo, 113-119.

⁴⁵ Russell to Secretary of State, July 25, 1916, Foreign Relations 1916, 233; Russell to Secretary of State, August 4, 1916, ibid., 233.

⁴⁶ Polk to Russell, August 2, 1916, ibid., 233.

⁴⁷ Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, 783.

that cooperation he was willing to recognize the existing financial and military control as a modus vivendi. But he could not, he insisted, officially declare that ultimate control of the country's finances and armed forces rested in the President of the United States and still maintain that the Dominican Republic was a sovereign country.

Such an argument carried little or no weight with Minister Russell. Failing to extort an agreement from Henríquez y Carvajal at their first interview,⁴⁸ he used his broad discretionary powers to strike a blow which he must have felt sure would bring the Dominicans quickly into line. On August 18, the following "Important Notice" appeared in the newspapers:⁴⁹

In accordance with instructions from Washington and additional directives from the American Minister in Santo Domingo, the Receiver-ship will make no further disbursements of funds from the account of the Government under control of the Dominican Public Treasury established June 16, 1916.

This cessation of payment will continue until a complete understanding has been reached in respect to the interpretation of certain articles of the Dominican-American Convention of 1907, an interpretation on which the Government of the United States has insisted since last November; or until the present Dominican Government is recognized by the United States.

The announcement was signed by C. H. Baxter, the Receiver General.

On the same day Russell coolly cabled the Secretary of State:⁵⁰

I have advised General Receiver to suspend at once all disbursements Dominican funds until a complete understanding is reached in regard to interpretation of certain articles of the Convention or until this Government is amicable. I deem this measure necessary in order to show seriousness of our intention.

⁴⁸ Russell to Secretary of State, August 10, 1916, Foreign Relations 1916, 234.

⁴⁹ Ureña, Los Yaqueis en Santo Domingo, 124.

⁵⁰ Russell to Secretary of State, August 18, 1916, Foreign Relations 1916, 252-253.

The expected pressure from government creditors and pensioners did not materialize, and civil servants remained on the job without pay. The Government did not submit even when Russell hinted that Henríquez y Carvajal could expect a reward should he accept the American conditions.⁵¹

On September 5, Minister of Foreign Affairs Cabral y Báez and Minister of Finance Peynado presented a proposal to Minister Russell. In return for recognition Henríquez y Carvajal would direct the Finance Ministry to cooperate with the Receivership until the present arrangement could be made legal in a new treaty. Further, he would announce a plan to reorganize the armed forces "on a scientific basis" and request the President of the United States to nominate an officer as technical adviser in charge of the reorganization. This officer would serve under a four year contract with the Dominican Government. To substantiate further the fiction that the Republic had not surrendered its sovereignty to the United States, the American officer would be assisted by subordinates from Cuba and South America.⁵²

This plan appeared to be a splendid compromise which substantially complied with the American demands while preserving the façade of Dominican independence. The use of Latin American officers in the military

⁵¹ Ureña, Los Yanguis en Santo Domingo, 135. The author, Henríquez y Carvajal's nephew and secretary, states that Russell told him confidentially that the United States would recognize Henríquez y Carvajal as President for the remainder of Jiménez's six year term in return for accepting the American demands.

⁵² Russell to Secretary of State, September 5, 1916, Foreign Relations 1916, 236.

reorganization⁵³ agreed with President Wilson's desire to seek inter-American cooperation in the implementation of the Monroe Doctrine⁵⁴ and would have scotched charges of Yankee imperialism.

The State Department, perhaps reluctant to submit a treaty negotiated in such an unusual manner to the United States Senate, where treaties extending control over the Dominican Republic had never met with much favor, rejected the proposal. Russell, in submitting it to the Secretary of State, did not try to disguise his satisfaction at the way the situation had developed nor his hope that the proposal would be rejected. He reported⁵⁵

It is rumored on good authority that the President intends to resign unless recognized by us very soon. This would result in chaos and the only thing possible would be a de facto government or complete control by us.

Secretary Lansing was of like mind, and his reply confirmed the stand that there could be no recognition " . . . unless financial control and establishment of constabulary definitely assured and made binding in future."⁵⁶

In spite of the odds, Henríquez y Carvajal did not resign but pushed on with the work on the Constitution. To complicate things further, the terms of many congressmen were due to expire on December 1, and it was

⁵³ Ureña, Los Yanquis en Santo Domingo, 151. The Cuban Government announced that it would be happy to supply military instructors.

⁵⁴ Anonymous, "William Jennings Bryan," Bemis (ed.), American Secretaries of State, X, 20.

⁵⁵ Russell to Secretary of State, September 5, 1916, Foreign Relations 1916, 236.

⁵⁶ Lansing to Russell, September 8, 1916, ibid., 236-237.

necessary to schedule elections in order to have a quorum to ratify it.

Although Arias, disarmed and discredited, was under Presidential arrest charged with misuse of public funds, Minister Russell predicted that these elections would return a large majority of Ariasistas and feared the worst should they be seated. By the beginning of October, he judged the situation to be so complicated that he requested leave to come to Washington to confer on the matter.⁵⁷

After consulting with Assistant Secretary of State Polk, Admiral Benson, the Chief of Naval Operations, Minister Russell, and Captain Harry S. Knapp USN, Ralph Stabler, the Chief of the Latin American Division, reported to the Secretary of State. He concluded that the congressional elections under way in the Dominican Republic would result in the return of an Ariasista majority. This probability, combined with the refusal of the Provisional Government to agree to the American demands, raised a serious problem for the United States. Continued withholding of Dominican funds by the Receivership had brought on an economic crisis which was rapidly worsening ". . . for which this Government would not wish to be placed in such a position that it would be held responsible." He recommended as the only solution:⁵⁸

. . . the declaration of martial law and the placing of Santo Domingo under military occupation, basing this on the interpretation which the United States has given to the Dominican Convention of 1907 and also upon the present unsettled conditions in the Republic.

⁵⁷ Russell to Secretary of State, October 4, 1916, ibid., 238.

⁵⁸ Stabler to Secretary of State, November 21, 1916, enclosure to Lansing to President Wilson, November 22, 1916, Foreign Relations 1916, 240-241.

If resort to force is considered the result of diplomatic failure then Mr. Stabler's memorandum should be viewed as a most revealing confession. In the space of one year interference by the United States had brought about the resignation of the President to whom it had pledged its support. Refusal to compromise on the most favorable terms with the Provisional Government had led to a situation where control appeared to be passing to parties who would not compromise, and, finally, the State Department admitted that it was bringing economic ruin upon the Dominican people.

President Wilson expressed some perplexity as he seconded the endorsement of his Secretary of State. However, he authorized the move.⁵⁹

Captain Knapp, the new Commander of Cruiser Force, Atlantic Fleet, had been tapped for the post of Military Governor, and was already in the Dominican Republic. His initial report to Chief of Naval Operations Benson revealed a situation quite unlike that which Mr. Stabler had declared required such a heroic remedy.⁶⁰

All is quiet, agriculture flourishing, excellent prices are obtained by the farmers. Employees of the government, persons entitled to pensions, and men in business are not satisfied by the withholding of Dominican funds.

However, he had his orders, and Henríquez y Carvajal's proposals for a modus vivendi made no more impression on him than they had on Minister Russell. On November 29, he proclaimed the establishment of a Military

⁵⁹ President Wilson to Secretary of State, November 26, 1916, Foreign Relations 1916, 242.

⁶⁰ Knapp to Chief of Naval Operations, November 23, 1916, "First Annual Report of the Military Government of Santo Domingo, July 21, 1917," Appendix A-1.

Government of the United States over the Dominican Republic.⁶¹

⁶¹ Knapp, Proclamation of November 29, 1916, Foreign Relations 1916, 245-246.

CHAPTER III

Captain Knapp's proclamation was not unexpected. Insofar as it ended the political uncertainty and started the payment of government salaries and pensions again it was welcome. However, Americans who thought that acquiescence meant surrender did not know the Dominicans. Saint-Rémy, the mulatto historian of Haiti, had written of them sixty years before, "They are weak and feeble in defense but full of energy for the overthrow of an established rule, indomitable and persevering in insurrection."¹

During the de facto occupation which had begun on May 6, Minister Russell concentrated on intimidating the politicians without giving much thought to the effect that the American policies had on Dominican public opinion. Unfortunately, his tactics were such that the ruling classes, pinched by the impounding of government funds and exposed to casual and arbitrary violence at the hands of the occupying forces, had to look hard to discern the vaunted American moral superiority.

The problem of maintaining good relations with the Dominicans became more complicated as the number of troops ashore increased. Colonel Pendleton's instructions emphasized the need for courtesy and fair dealing.²

¹ Saint-Rémy, quoted in Manuel de Jesús Troncoso Concho, La Ocupación de Santo Domingo por Haiti (Ciudad Trujillo, 1942), 27. Saint-Rémy (no given name) published his five volume Pétion et Haiti in Paris, 1854-1857. He should not be confused with the Frenchman, Pelletier de Saint-Rémy, who published several works on Haiti in the 1840's.

² Colonel Joseph H. Pendleton USMC, "Instructions to all officers of forces operating ashore in Santo Domingo, June 24, 1916," Marine Corps Gazette (Quantico, Va.), VI (December, 1921), 479.

Recognizing the fact that, in spite of the avowed peaceful purposes of the intervention, "malcontents" would consider the marines invaders, he told his officers to ". . . see that their men do nothing to arouse or foster . . . antagonism towards us." Despite these orders, American military authorities were, in the words of Colonel Lane, ". . . inclined to be somewhat arbitrary and to apply military principles and discipline to the civilian populace at large."³

Soon after Henríquez y Carvajal took office, his Foreign Secretary, José M. Cabral y Báez, protested vigorously to Minister Russell that the occupation forces were "trampling on civil rights."⁴ Russell brushed the protest aside with the comment that reports of such cases had been much exaggerated.⁵ Exaggerated or not, the seeds of a lasting anti-American feeling were being sown.

For a few days after August 29, it seemed that the Dominican Republic and the United States, momentarily united by a tragedy, might be able to resolve their differences on a friendly basis. On the afternoon of the twenty-ninth, a sudden mar del fundo--a near tidal wave--smashed the American ships riding in the nearly unprotected anchorage which served Santo Domingo City as a harbor. The other ships weathered the shock, but the USS Memphis, a light cruiser, her fires drowned by the tons of water

³ Lane, "Civil Government in Santo Domingo," Marine Corps Gazette (June, 1922), 130.

⁴ J. M. Cabral y Báez, "Resumen de las actuaciones de la Cancillería Dominicana durante de gobierno del Doctor Henríquez y Carvajal, relativos al conflicto Dominico-Americana," Hoepelman y Senior (eds.), Documentos Históricos, 280.

⁵ Ibid., 281.

which poured down her stacks, snapped her cables and wallowed helplessly onto the rocks.

Henriquez y Carvajal himself came to the beach to direct rescue operations. Dominican swimmers and boatmen toiled courageously to rescue American sailors and it was largely due to their efforts that only thirty bluejackets were lost. Admiral Pond, who had recently replaced Admiral Caperton, was sincere in his gratitude and recalled the way in which a typhoon had ended German-American tension in Samoa in expressing his hope that the Dominicans and Americans might now come to terms.⁶

The friendly feeling soon faded, however. The Receivership continued to withhold funds, and the actions of the marine commander in the capital soon provoked violent protests.

After the occupation of the interior, Colonel Pendleton divided his command into northern and southern districts along the line of the Cordillera Central, the great central mountain range. Major Henry Y. Bears commanded the southern district. Major Bears, if he had ever read those portions of Colonel Pendleton's orders which referred to "courtesy," "dignity," "avoidance of an appearance of constant suspicion," and minimum use of force, seemed careless about adhering to them. He was a tactless man who was incapable of acting without giving offense.

On September 18, he called Juan F. Sánchez, the Civil Governor of the Province of Santo Domingo, to his office in Santo Domingo City. He

⁶ Ureña, *Los Yanguis en Santo Domingo*, 129-133. The incident almost resulted in the inadvertant recognition of Henriquez y Carvajal. President Wilson acknowledged Henriquez y Carvajal's letter of condolence about the loss of the sailors with a message addressed to "His Excellency the President of the Dominican Republic."

ordered him to prevent the newspapers of the province from printing any material critical of the United States. Sánchez pointed out that he could not do this under the Dominican Constitution which guaranteed freedom of the press. Bears replied that Dominican laws had never been obeyed and that he was holding Sánchez personally responsible to see that his order was carried out. Sánchez's report of this interview to Dominican newspapermen did little to influence the Dominican press in favor of the United States.⁷

The Major also gained the ill will of many of the more prominent citizens of the capital by personally leading midnight raids on private homes in search of arms. Far from being embarrassed by failing to locate any weapons, Bears allegedly threatened at least one suspect with torture unless he revealed where he had hidden them.⁸

On October 3, he went too far, even for Minister Russell. His orderly delivered a message to the fiscal--district attorney--of the capital that the Major required him in his office. The fiscal, aware that Major Bears, in the absence of a state of martial law, had no legal authority over civilians, replied that if the Major wished to see him he could come to his office during business hours.

Major Bears exploded. His messenger returned to advise the fiscal that if he did not appear at the Major's office immediately, he would be placed under arrest. The fiscal hurried to Attorney-General Castro Ruiz, and the pair protested to Minister Russell. By the time Russell located

7 Ibid., 158.

8 Ibid., 157.

Admiral Pond and the two of them had explained to Major Bears that he had exceeded his powers, two armed marines with handcuffs had been sent to the fiscal's office.⁹

If such incidents were occurring in the capital where one might expect that responsible American officials would have more concern for appearances, what must have been going on in the remoter sections? In one particularly flagrant instance, marines at the port of Sánchez held Dominican postal officials at gunpoint in order to prevent the scheduled departure of a mail train until the arrival of a marine officer who wished to ride on it.¹⁰

It was, perhaps, natural that Minister Russell should countenance outrage and insult toward the Dominican official class for which he had only contempt, and which he regarded as responsible for all the ills of the country. Exposing them to humiliation might have hastened their surrender. However, as the months went by the average Dominican, too, began to feel the weight of the occupation.

There were bound to be some unpleasant incidents between the marines and the native population. However, the chances for unfortunate occurrences were multiplied many times over by the policy of using the marines as police patrols within the cities. Armed men, usually young and untrained in police work, speaking no Spanish, patrolled the streets to enforce unfamiliar regulations on a non-English speaking population.

⁹ Ibid., 159.

¹⁰ Cabral y Báez, "Actuaciones de la Cancillería Dominicana," Hoepelman y Senior (eds.), Documentos Históricas, 305.

During September, a marine officer discharged his weapon in the street wounding a Dominican woman. In another unfortunate incident a marine patrol called on a passerby to halt. When he failed to heed repeated commands the marines opened fire and killed him. He proved to be a deaf-mute.¹¹

The worst incident occurred on October 24, when marine forces attempted the arrest of Ramón Batista. Batista was a bandit who had wounded an American customs official in an attempt to rob a customs cutter in 1915. Despite American demands the Jiménez Government had never been able to bring him to trial.

On learning that he was at his home in Villa Duarte, a suburb of Santo Domingo City located on the east bank of the Ozama River, the American authorities determined to arrest him. Sometime after dark on the night of the twenty-fourth, a marine force of approximately forty men under Captain William Lowe, First Lieutenant John Morison, and First Sergeant Atwood crossed the Ozama on this mission. Exactly what happened after they entered Villa Duarte is not clear.

The various accounts agree that the marines surrounded Batista's home and called on him to surrender. In the American version, Batista went for his gun and was shot down. The Dominican story has it that he bolted, was wounded, then finished off in cold blood. In any event, his friends and family, armed with weapons which Major Bears had overlooked, opened fire. Captain Lowe and First Sergeant Atwood were killed. Lieutenant Morison and three other marines fell wounded.

¹¹ Ureña, Los Yanquis en Santo Domingo, 160.

The remainder of the patrol gathered up the casualties and retreated to the capital for machine guns and reinforcements of more than one hundred marines. During indiscriminate firing that lasted several hours a number of Dominicans--innocent citizens by their account--were killed, including at least one woman. Extensive property damage, including the destruction of several houses was recorded.¹²

For the rest of that night and during the next day the marines suffered from nerves, and the Dominicans suffered from their nervous trigger fingers. In the capital marines shot and killed a young musician for no apparent reason, and in Villa Duarte an unarmed blacksmith named Felix Peneyro was bayoneted to death. At least four other instances of marines' beating, shooting, or stabbing Dominicans occurred that night and the following day.

The violence continued on the night of the twenty-fifth. A marine patrol in the capital heard shots which they believed came from a nearby cantina, the Cafe Polo del Norte. Asking no questions, they ran toward it firing. A sixteen year old boy eating his dinner in an adjacent house was killed by a stray round; another bystander was killed in the street;

¹² Cabral y Baez, "Actuaciones de la Cancillería Dominicana," Hoepelman y Senior (eds.), Documentos Históricos, 297-303, gives both the Dominican and American official versions of the affair. Ureña, Los Yanquis en Santo Domingo, 160-162, reprints a Cuban newspaper account. All three substantially agree. Chargé John Brewer, Brewer to Secretary of State, Foreign Relations 1916, 239, believed the incident due to the failure of the marines to appear with an impressive force in the first place, as if robbery suspects normally are apprehended by a regiment. Lane, "Civil Government in Santo Domingo," Marine Corps Gazette (June, 1922), 130, reveals that the citizens of Villa Duarte may have been attacked so vigorously because even prior to the twenty-fourth, ". . . their insolence to and defiance of the American authorities had aroused considerable feeling on the part of the men."

and the seventy-one year old proprietor of the cafe, one Felix Cuevas, was stabbed by a bayonet thrust and riddled with bullets as he tried to close his doors.¹³

On the next day, Attorney General Castro Ruiz delivered an angry protest to Colonel Pendleton.¹⁴

Sir:

The circumstance of having given civil police powers to the military forces of the occupation, as well as the establishment of the ley de fuga, which undoubtedly is neither recognized nor tolerated in your country, has resulted in the outrage which every arbitrary act produces, in this case the battle between the friends of General Batista and your soldiers, an event which resulted, as you know, in some killed on both sides. Had Dominican police been used, General Batista would have been captured and no such clash would have occurred; since this would not have been the first time the said General had been arrested.

Nor is this all, sir: since that unhappy moment, the people have been witness to greater aggressions and more unjust acts of violence.

Whenever a Dominican has committed any sort of offense against one of your men, your complaint has had complete satisfaction. There seems to be no such result when your soldiers commit all sorts of crimes, and the series of monstrous deeds which are continually occurring in the city show this.

In the name of the city which I represent, and in the names of morality and justice, I ask you to repress these acts which have damaged your name and brought a great and terrible curse against the great people of whom you are, at this moment, the highest representative.

R. Castro Ruiz.

Henríquez y Carvajal and his Cabinet met with the American leaders to discuss the problem. The insincerity shown by the Americans at the meeting must have gone far towards making the Provisional President realize that he was dealing with men who had not the slightest respect for him, and that any hopes for compromise he still retained were futile.

13 Ureña, Los Yanquis en Santo Domingo, 162-163.

14 Ibid., 163-164.

Although Admiral Pond expressed his deep regret at the Batista incident, he pointed out that it could have been avoided had the Dominican Government taken action against Batista as the Legation had requested many times. To this Henríquez y Carvajal replied tartly that his Government had never received any request of any nature from the Legation.

Colonel Pendleton promised to punish any marines who committed outrages. The culprits had only to be "properly identified," and the charges submitted through the "proper channels."

The Dominicans insisted that the solution to the problem was the relief of the marines from civil police duties. They pointed out that there had never been much crime in the Republic and that their own police had always proven adequate. At this Admiral Pond and Colonel Pendleton put on a dazzling and hypocritical display of the military art of "passing the buck." Admiral Pond, Pendleton's superior, protested that he would not think of telling the Colonel how to dispose his troops; and Colonel Pendleton said that he had his orders, presumably from Admiral Pond, which made it impossible for him to remove the marine patrols. On this note the meeting broke up.¹⁵

The patrols continued. Hardly a week later, a cabman, one José Augusto, who claimed English nationality, was arrested for possession of a pistol. He was killed "while trying to escape."¹⁶

¹⁵ Ureña, Los Yanquis en Santo Domingo, 164-166, and Cabral y Báez, "Actuaciones de la Cancillería Dominicana," Hoepelman y Senior (eds.), Documentos Históricos, 303. Ureña quotes the Dominican press. Cabral y Báez was an active participant in the meeting.

¹⁶ Ureña, Los Yanquis en Santo Domingo, 166-167.

Captain Knapp, who did not arrive in Santo Domingo until November 22, had no firsthand knowledge of the more flagrant American actions. He had one chance, however, to observe the harsh and tactless manner in which United States officials negotiated with the Dominicans.

At the last meeting held with Dominican officials prior to the Proclamation, Colonel Pendleton delivered the ultimatum. He declared that the Dominicans must either come to terms or see military law and a military government proclaimed. Francisco J. Peynado, the Finance Minister, asked, "What does that mean, military law?" Pendleton replied, "Military law means that if you put your head or one finger in the way of the government--the head or the finger will be cut off."¹⁷

After this it is hard to see why Captain Knapp was surprised that the Dominican Cabinet officers refused to continue serving under the Military Government, and considered their failure to do so as "an evident case of desertion."¹⁸ Even less fair was the judgment of Carl Kelsey of the American Academy of Political Science that their refusal was merely a clever political trick designed to put the onus for any possible failure on American officials alone.¹⁹ Had the Dominican leaders, after the pressure, insults, and abuse delivered by the Americans during this period, consented to serve in the Occupation Government they would only have proved themselves what Russell had always claimed they were--unprincipled, venal, office-seeking parasites.

17 Testimony of F. J. Peynado, Senate Hearings, II, 949.

18 Knapp, Annual Report to June 30, 1917, Foreign Relations 1917, 711.

19 Testimony of Carl Kelsey, Senate Hearings, II, 1274.

The first act of the Military Government was to decree a rigid censorship. Any publication which mentioned the United States or the Occupation had to be submitted to the local military censor. Nothing which was inflammatory, in his opinion, could be printed. Foreign newspapers and magazines had to be passed by the censor before they could be distributed. The mails and cable and telegraph facilities were all censored.²⁰ Foreign Minister Cabral y Báez had to smuggle the official Dominican protest against the Proclamation of Occupation aboard a freighter to get it out of the country.²¹

Dimas Frias, director of the Heraldo-Dominicano, protested immediately. One half hour after his statement announcing that he refused to submit to censorship appeared he was jailed. Two days later he appeared before a court-martial. He was fined and his paper suppressed.²²

On December 1, Major Bears showed his usual finesse in disarming the last remnant of the Dominican Army, the Presidential Guard. Without

20 Ureña, Los Yanquis en Santo Domingo, 182-183.

21 Cabral y Báez, "Actuaciones de la Cancillería Dominicana," Hoepelman y Senior (eds.), Documentos Históricos, 312.

22 Ureña, Los Yanquis en Santo Domingo, 183. After the United States entered the World War the censorship became ridiculous. Archbishop Nouel, Nouel to Russell, December 29, 1920, Documentos Históricos, Hoepelman y Senior (eds.), 12, mentions the suppression of an article lauding Immanuel Kant, ". . . the unhappy censor perhaps believed that this tribute to the great German philosopher would be able to cause the defeat of the allied armies." He also mentions a Spanish priest who was imprisoned for six months at Samaná for having praised the efficiency of the German Army before the United States had entered the war. The Archbishop himself felt the censorship during the war when a zealous censor destroyed historical material dealing with "Charles V, Emperor of Germany," mailed to him from the Vatican Library, considering them "German documents." Earnest H. Gruening, "Santo Domingo's Cardinal Mercier," The Nation (New York), CXIV (January 11, 1922), 42.

warning, he threw a cordon of marines around the President's home and the building across the street which housed the Guard. The marines seized six rifles and arrested the men on duty. On the following day Henríquez y Carvajal sent a dignified protest to Knapp. He pointed out that as President he had the authority to disarm troops as well as arm them, and made a point of formally delivering the fourteen rifles which the raiding party had overlooked. Captain Knapp, whose tact and courtesy were to serve him well during his term as Military Governor, immediately apologized and ordered the release of the men who had been arrested.²³

On December 8, Henríquez y Carvajal left the country. Although he had failed to avert the Occupation, his conduct in office had been irreproachable. He was never paid for his services²⁴ and had to sell his Dominican property in order to pay the debts he contracted during his time in office.²⁵

Meanwhile, the actual work of governing the country had begun. Theoretically, general policies were outlined by the State Department, and the Navy Department indicated this policy to the Military Government. The details of administration were left to the Military Governor who kept the Navy Department informed by means of quarterly reports and correspondence. Major questions were referred to the Navy Department which

²³ Ureña, Los Yanquis en Santo Domingo, 184.

²⁴ Knapp, "Annual Report to June 30, 1917," 5. The United States seized its last opportunity to spite the Dominican politicians by excluding the Provisional President, his Cabinet officers, his major appointees, and all Congressmen and Senators from the order which resumed salary payments.

²⁵ Ureña, Los Yanquis en Santo Domingo, 186.

ruled on them after conferring with the State Department.²⁶

Knapp, newly promoted to Rear-Admiral, had a difficult task before him in December, 1916. Now that the United States had actually taken control of the Dominican Republic the State Department seemed to have few concrete ideas about what to do with it. Apparently, those in high positions had advanced little in their thinking beyond Sergeant John Nichols of the Marine Corps who was shocked and amused by the primitive behavior of his native charges in the Puerto Plata jail. He wrote home, "We hope to initiate many reforms before we are here long and show them the road to proper living."²⁷

No one had estimated how long the occupation would last. No one had indicated whether native institutions should be replaced or strengthened. To a great extent the responsibility for determining the future of the Dominican Republic rested directly on the Military Governor.

Fortunately for both the Dominican Republic and the United States, Admiral Knapp, slight and bespectacled, dapper in his whites,²⁸ proved himself an able and judicious ruler. Although his administration was marked more by good intentions than great accomplishments, and many of the actions of his subordinates were justly condemned later, by his sincere dedication to what he believed to be the best interests of the

²⁶ "Navy Department Memorandum on the Dominican Republic," Senate Hearings, I, 96.

²⁷ Sergeant John H. Nichols USMC, "Life in Puerto Plata, D. R.," Recruiter's Bulletin (Philadelphia), III (November, 1916), 26.

²⁸ Contemporary photograph in Marvin, "Watchful Acting in Santo Domingo," World's Work (June, 1917), 205.

Dominican Republic, and by his display of common sense, tact, and humor, he gained the respect and good will of most Dominicans and foreigners.

At first, many foreigners, especially Americans, believed that the Occupation had been carried out for their benefit. Knapp, however, insisted that he and his administration were trustees for the real Dominican Government, and he refused to countenance any proposal which he did not believe was in the best interests of the Dominican people.²⁹ Significantly, there was a portion of the business community which was always cool toward the Occupation. In some cases, notably that of the Clyde Steamship Line, it was openly hostile.³⁰

The Navy and Marine Corps officers who filled the Cabinet posts left vacant by the Dominican boycott³¹ found much to do at first. Customarily corrupt and inefficient, the departments of the Dominican Government had been completely disorganized and demoralized during the summer and fall of 1916. They looked like Augean stables to the Americans.

Lieutenant Commander Baughman, who served as Minister of Communications

²⁹ Knapp, "Annual Report to June 30, 1917," 20. Commander C. C. Baughman USN, "United States Occupation of the Santo Dominican Republic," United States Naval Institute Proceedings (Annapolis), LI (December, 1925), 2310-2311.

³⁰ Francisco Henríquez y Carvajal, "Protest of Santo Domingo's Deposed President," New York Times Current History Magazine (New York), (June, 1921), 401. Townsend Hills, Jr., "Imperial Frontier," Freeman (New York), VII (June 27, 1923), 373-375.

³¹ Knapp, Annual Report to June 30, 1917, Foreign Relations 1917, 712. The Admiral eventually concluded that the non-participation by the Dominicans was a blessing. "Had the Dominicans remained in office, I should have had to have their actions constantly observed in any event; but the advantage of having officers actually administering, instead of observing and checking the administration of others, has been evident."

and Improvements and as Minister of Agriculture and Immigration, was appalled by the "utterly inefficient" methods prevailing in the postal system.³² The Public Works Department, also under Baughman, was riddled with corruption.

Colonel Rufus H. Lane, probably the only ranking American connected with the Occupation who gained universal praise from Dominicans and Americans alike, became Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister of Justice and Public Instruction. He found the situation in the Department of Foreign Affairs more laughable than serious. Able men usually represented the Republic abroad in the important posts in the United States, Haiti, Cuba, and the Consulate at San Juan, Puerto Rico, but salaries for many other diplomatic and consular positions were drawn by men who dared not leave the country to take up their duties for fear of losing the political influence which had enabled them to be appointed in the first place.³³ The Department of Justice was basically sound.³⁴ Accordingly, he was

³² Baughman, "Occupation of the Dominican Republic," Naval Institute Proceedings (December, 1925), 2319.

³³ Lane, "Civil Government in Santo Domingo," Marine Corps Gazette (June, 1922), 132. "There was one disadvantage in occupying a diplomatic or consular position which was that when the incumbent was obliged to leave the country for a foreign post, he was somewhat handicapped in keeping up his political fences. Being absent, and the clamor of politicians on the spot for position being insistent, the executive power often yielded to the more immediate and present demand and appointed a person on the spot to the office of the absent one. This resulted in a practice which grew to considerable proportions, that of obtaining appointment to a foreign post and remaining within the country with the object of preventing ouster . . . This practice . . . enabled the incumbent to enjoy the emoluments of the office without . . . the onerous assumption of official responsibility and labor."

³⁴ Ibid., 142. "No charges were ever brought against a Dominican judge which justified impeachment."

able to devote himself to Public Instruction where there was real need of reform.³⁵

Admiral Knapp, true to his guiding principle, resisted a surprising amount of pressure from Americans who advocated that English be made the language of instruction in the schools.³⁶ He appointed Archbishop Nouel to head an entirely Dominican Commission charged with reforming the national education system. A young Dominican, Julio Ortega Frier, a graduate of Ohio University, served as secretary of the Commission and later as National Superintendent of Schools. Colonel Lane had the highest praise for him.³⁷

. . . with his high motives, professional qualifications, exceptional ability and courage, he was the inspiration of the education movement. He was made National Superintendent of Schools and was responsible in most part for the excellent work accomplished.

In rural districts Colonel Lane formed parents' societies which

³⁵ Ibid., 143. "The money appropriated for public instruction was fairly reasonable in amount, but was greatly misused. Rural schools were almost completely neglected. The pay of rural school teachers was \$8.00 per month and was almost invariably permanently in arrears. The urban public schools were of the poorest quality imaginable, being housed in wretched buildings furnished with inadequate and worn-out equipment and taught by underpaid teachers who failed usually to receive their meagre salaries. . . . Any person in decayed circumstances who possessed influential political friends started a private school and made immediate application to the government, either national or municipal, or both, for a subsidy. . . . The process of the education of the young was largely lost sight of in the scramble for the enjoyment of the public bounty, which was appropriated almost exclusively to the payment of salaries."

³⁶ Knapp, "Quarterly Report of April 6, 1918," 3. Baughman, "Occupation of the Dominican Republic," Naval Institute Proceedings (December, 1925), 2314. The source of this pressure is not identified but it may have come from Protestant groups eager to expand their activities in Santo Domingo. Samuel Guy Inman, Through Santo Domingo and Haiti, A Cruise with the Marines (New York, 1919), 48-53.

³⁷ Lane, "Civil Government in Santo Domingo," Marine Corps Gazette (June, 1922), 144.

exercised some control over the schools established in the villages. These societies determined whether to employ male or female teachers, the hours of school sessions, and the length and time of vacations. They helped to erect the school buildings, even supplying some of the materials themselves. The parents' societies were highly successful, and as Lane noted with some pride, ". . . might have been considered as beginnings of the propagation of democratic government of the country."³⁸

The state of agriculture received a great deal of attention also. An extension service was started which met with an enthusiastic response,³⁹ and a National Agricultural College was projected. When shipping became scarce during the war, Admiral Knapp saw to it that the hides, honey, tobacco, and cacao of the small farmers were exported by pressing home-ward bound Navy transports into service.⁴⁰

The Military Government made a thorough study of the country's needs in the field of public works. The long neglected program of the Cáceres administration was revived and expanded, and first priority was given to construction of a main highway which would link Monte Cristi in the north with the capital in the south via the chief town of the interior, Santiago. The war delayed the start of the work, however, and little was done

³⁸ Ibid., 145. The parents' societies represent the only conscious effort made throughout the entire occupation to prepare the Dominicans for democratic self-government.

³⁹ Baughman, "Occupation of the Dominican Republic," Naval Institute Proceedings (December, 1925), 2323. ". . . during the first year there were approximately three hundred and fifty conferences held throughout the Republic, the attendance varying from twenty-five to three hundred farmers."

⁴⁰ Knapp, Quarterly Report, October 18, 1918, Foreign Relations 1918, 367.

until 1920.⁴¹

The most pressing of the problems confronting the Military Government was the settlement of the "public debt" which theoretically had occasioned the intervention in the first place. For all the concern the State Department had shown about the debt it had made no concrete plan for handling it, and Admiral Knapp was left to solve the problem as best he could.

On July 9, 1917, he appointed J. H. Edwards of the Customs Receivership to head the Dominican Claims Commission, a board composed of two Americans, two Dominicans, and one Puerto Rican. The Claims Commission, which had full judicial powers, was directed to adjudicate all claims against the Republic and to recommend the method of settling approved claims.

The Commission sifted 9,038 claims amounting to \$19,960,513.48. Six thousand, two hundred and eighty-seven were approved in the amount of \$4,292,342.52.⁴² It had been widely recognized that the claims were inflated, yet Minister Russell, who had so loudly denounced the Dominican Government for running up the enormous debt of \$17,000,000, now estimated that awards should total only \$2,000,000.⁴³

The Military Government hoped to receive a direct loan from the United States so that the claims could be paid off at once. However,

⁴¹ Lane, "Civil Government in Santo Domingo," Marine Corps Gazette (June, 1922), 136. Knight, The Americans in Santo Domingo, 100.

⁴² "Memorandum on the Dominican Republic," Senate Hearings, I, 98.

⁴³ Russell to Secretary of State, December 15, 1917, Foreign Relations 1917, 728-729. Ever the exponent of the iron hand, he noted with satisfaction that the Commission had sentenced two false claimants to prison terms for perjury.

the United States refused to make the loan so all payments over fifty dollars were made in 5 per cent Dominican bonds, the issue of which was approved by the United States in accordance with Article III of the Convention of 1907.⁴⁴

Another immediate task of the Military Government was the organization of the constabulary over which there had been so much negotiation. Here again the State Department revealed its lack of planning. One might have thought that somewhere there was a plan drawn up for this organization, whose acceptance had been a sine qua non for Henriquez y Carvajal. Such was not the case, however, and Admiral Knapp and his staff had to develop it from the beginning.

Brigadier General Pendleton, also newly promoted, as Minister of War and Marine, had the chief responsibility for raising the Guardia Nacional Dominicana, as the force was titled. Although there was much initial optimism and a great deal of time and money were spent on the Guardia, it never became the force which Admiral Knapp envisioned. By all accounts the Dominican enlisted man made a fine soldier and the marine officers and men detailed for duty with the Guardia were supposedly carefully selected.

Yet, by midsummer of 1918, Admiral Knapp was expressing concern at the state of the Guardia.⁴⁵ As Colonel Lane analyzed it, "It was never

⁴⁴ Knapp, Executive Order No. 193, Foreign Relations 1918, 377-380. For those who could not hold the bonds for the twenty year life of the issue this method of payment represented a partial repudiation as the bonds could not be sold except at a heavy discount.

⁴⁵ Knapp, "Quarterly Report, July 1, 1918," 6.

large enough to discharge the military functions incumbent on the national army, and was too military to devote itself, except spasmodically, to its police duties."⁴⁶

Absorbed as the Military Government was in untangling the administrative snarl it had inherited, a task further complicated by America's entry into the World War, it gave little attention to the political development of the Dominicans. Admiral Knapp recognized his responsibilities in this regard,⁴⁷ but with the exception of Colonel Lane's parents' societies nothing was done to encourage participation in affairs of government by the Dominicans.

Soon after the Proclamation of Occupation Admiral Knapp cancelled the congressional elections then under way and on January 2 he suspended those Deputies and Senators whose terms had not yet expired.⁴⁸ The provincial governors were retained, but as their duties had been largely military their powers were absorbed by the marine commanders in the provinces, and the governors became little more than figureheads.⁴⁹

The municipalities--the communes--had been governed by locally elected councils--ayuntamientos. Although usually dominated by the local

⁴⁶ Lane, "Civil Government in Santo Domingo," Marine Corps Gazette (June, 1922), 136.

⁴⁷ "Memorandum on the Dominican Republic," Senate Hearings, I, 95. ". . . it behooved the Military Government to produce out of the people of the Republic a personnel who could be entrusted with the lawful and just administration of a modern civilized sovereign power in the family of nations."

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Lane, "Civil Government in Santo Domingo," Marine Corps Gazette (June, 1922), 135.

jefe, they had given the average Dominican some voice in municipal affairs. In March, 1917, Admiral Knapp made the members of the ayuntamientos appointees of the Military Government,⁵⁰ and the last vestige of democracy in the Dominican Republic was gone.⁵¹

The only branch of the Dominican Government to retain any independence was the judiciary. Even here local military commanders, suspicious of the native judges and unfamiliar with the procedures of the Napoleonic Code in use in the Dominican Republic, were guilty of "summary interference."⁵² Colonel Lane, who tried hard to protect the courts from military pressure, had the matter of military interference carefully investigated and found that the chief cause of friction came from the power of the military commander to determine what cases would be tried by the civil courts or by the provost court.

Even in cases which had originally been assigned to civil court, if

⁵⁰ Knapp, "Annual Report to June 30, 1917," Appendix B, 22.

⁵¹ Lane, "Civil Government in Santo Domingo," Marine Corps Gazette (June, 1922), 135. Lieutenant Colonel Henry C. Davis USMC, "Indoctrination of Latin-American Service," Marine Corps Gazette (Quantico, Va.), V (March, 1920), 158. Davis, a major at the time, was in command in the Province of Macoris from February, 1917 to July, 1918. He proudly describes his methods: ". . . they . . . were made to understand from the first night I was in Macoris that the American Commander was the boss and that his word in the absence of orders from higher authorities to the contrary was absolute law. It was a military government . . . I had to dismiss the City Council on two occasions, and while this action was summary, it had its effect on the natives, and brought forward a much better class of men as candidates for the City Council . . ." Davis believed, ibid., 155, that the Dominican ". . . does not want to be patted on the back and told he is an equal. He has had a master his entire life; he recognizes the necessity of a master, and he wants a master."

⁵² Lane, "Civil Government in Santo Domingo," Marine Corps Gazette (June, 1922), 141.

the verdict was not to the liking of the marine in charge of the district he sometimes tried the case again in the provost court. On the other hand, when Dominicans who had achieved a friendly relationship with the marines were convicted in civil courts the local commanders would sometimes see to it that they never served the sentence. Marine control of the prisons led to another grievance. Assignment to public works was a severe and degrading punishment under Dominican law which was only assigned as punishment for certain crimes. Yet the Military Government required all prisoners, even those awaiting trial, to work on the roads.⁵³

The most persistent problem, oddly enough, was the one which had seemed easiest to resolve at the start of the Occupation. Pacification of the country had been almost accomplished even before the Proclamation, yet the Military Government was never able to put down armed bands, chiefly active in the southeastern provinces of San Pedro de Macoris and Seybo.

The only open resistance to the Proclamation of Occupation had occurred in the northeastern province of San Francisco de Macoris where Governor Manuel de Jesús Pérez Sosa, known as Lico Pérez, refused to surrender his arms to the Americans and barricaded himself in the local fortaleza. Captain John Hughes and six of his marines were wounded in their successful assault, but Pérez, leaving behind two dead and two wounded, escaped to the hills with a few followers.

Some of these tired of life in the brush after a few days and

⁵³ C. Armando Rodríguez, "Reporte de Consultor Jurídico de la Secretaría de Justicia e Instrucciones Públicas," Hoepelman y Senior (eds.), Documentos Históricos, 269-273.

started back to the capital of the province to surrender. They met with a rough reception. Marines, anxious to avenge their wounded comrades, dragged three of them from their horses and killed them.⁵⁴ This naturally discouraged the rest from giving themselves up, and some drifted south to San Pedro de Macoris where outlaw bands had for years lived in the hills preying on the great sugar plantations.

These bands were controlled by a Dominican called Cha-chá who was well paid by the sugar men to keep his gavilleros in check. The planters had long considered Cha-chá as a necessary evil and begged the Military Government not to send troops into the unoccupied provinces for fear that the damage resulting from military operations would prove more expensive than their "protection" costs.⁵⁵

Nevertheless, Admiral Knapp and General Pendleton were determined that such a state of affairs could not be permitted under American rule. Marines occupied the province early in January, 1917, and Cha-chá, in spite of his awesome reputation, soon surrendered.

Far from ending banditry in the region, however, the removal of Cha-chá only made room for a younger and more reckless leader. Vicentico Evangelista gathered the remnants of Cha-chá's band and began an active campaign of violence against Americans.⁵⁶ Two American engineers named Hawkins and Miller were brutally murdered in February, the first American civilians ever deliberately killed in the Dominican Republic. More

⁵⁴ Ureña, Los Yankis en Santo Domingo, 185.

⁵⁵ Knapp, Annual Report to June 30, 1917, Foreign Relations 1917, 710.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

troops were rushed to the area, but the marines had a difficult time in an area "twelve square miles larger than Porto Rico and possessing only fifteen miles of wagon road."⁵⁷

Early in June, 1917, Marine Gunnery Sergeant William West, impersonating his commanding officer, Lieutenant Colonel Henry C. Davis, made his way to Evangelista's camp. The bandit leader, enticed by promises of pardon and high rank in the Guardia, agreed to surrender with his entire band of about two hundred and twenty-five men.

Evangelista should have known that his killing of the two Americans had put him beyond pardon forever. As soon as he arrived in the city of San Pedro de Macoris, Davis threw him in irons to await the boat which would take him to Santo Domingo City for trial.

The boat for the capital docked at about two the next morning. According to the official version, Evangelista asked permission to use the latrine as he was being escorted to the dock. He was allowed to enter the building alone and attempted to escape through another door. His guard, an exceptional marksman, fired three shots at his running figure in the dark, and all three found vital spots.⁵⁸

Evangelista had claimed to be the leader of Dominican patriots, not mere criminals, and the treacherous manner in which he had been taken

⁵⁷ Davis, "Latin-American Service," Marine Corps Gazette (March, 1920), 154.

⁵⁸ Statement of Lt. Col. Henry C. Davis USMC, Senate Hearings, II, 1109-1110. Horace G. Knowles, New York Times Current History (New York) XV (February, 1922), 875, charged that Evangelista had been deliberately executed by order of Captain Thomas Watson USMC. Knowles, a former American envoy to the Dominican Republic, served as counsel for the Dominicans at the Senate hearings in 1921.

and the suspicious way in which he died, made him something of a martyr. Banditry continued, and in spite of, or perhaps because of, the relentless tactics of Colonel Davis,⁵⁹ became an increasing problem.

By the summer of 1918 it was estimated that nearly six hundred Dominicans were in the hills of San Pedro de Macoris and Seybo. Although no definite proof could be found, and Admiral Knapp himself sounded skeptical, many in the Military Government were convinced that German agents were behind the insurgents.⁶⁰ Marine officers, notably Colonel George C. Thorpe, Chief of Staff of the Marine Brigade, urged an all-out campaign to eliminate the bandits once and for all.

Admiral Knapp was absent from the country when General Pendleton as Acting Military Governor ordered a major effort in Macoris and Seybo in the summer and fall of 1918. Colonel Thorpe commanded the troops in the field and prosecuted the campaign with senseless severity. The acts of official callousness and individual brutality which marked this operation, when finally revealed, shocked Latin America.

Attempting to cut the bandits off from their supplies, Thorpe

⁵⁹ Davis, "Latin-American Service," Marine Corps Gazette (March, 1920), 158. As a sample of his approach Davis records an incident where he had arranged to meet alone with a bandit to discuss his surrender. The outlaw, justifiably suspicious, did not appear, but sent spies to make sure that Davis had not set a trap. Reassured, he tried to arrange another interview. ". . . I sent back word that I did not want to see him, as he had not trusted me, and if I saw him I would shoot him on sight . . . I wanted to talk to this fellow because he had a good bit of influence in the country and he had not at that time committed any deprivations of any kind, but he did have quite a number of bad men with him. I am sure I could have persuaded him to break up his band and give himself up, but I had sent him word that I would shoot him on sight, and I would have, and he knew it, so I did not see the gentleman. He is, I believe, still acting in the field in Santo Domingo."

⁶⁰ Knapp, Quarterly Report, July 1, 1918, Foreign Relations 1918, 359.

ordered the entire population of certain areas into concentration camps, and destroyed their villages and crops. Theoretically, the Dominicans left their homes voluntarily. Actually, they were forced into the camps where they met with rough treatment.⁶¹

Even more shocking was the revelation of the atrocities committed by Captain Charles Merckle of the Marine Corps. According to his Dominican guide, Merckle tortured and killed seven suspected bandits who fell into his hands in 1918 and burned at least two hundred houses.⁶² There

⁶¹ Testimony of Dr. Alejandro Coradin, Senate Hearings, II, 1199, describes third degree methods used to question internees about their knowledge of the bandits. Nouel to Russell, December 29, 1920, Hoepelman y Senior (eds.), Documentos Historicos, 12, also charges brutality. Admiral Knapp, Quarterly Report, October 18, 1918, Foreign Relations 1918, 369-370, was led to believe that the concentration camps were pleasure spots. "As a measure in aid of the suppression of the bandits, inhabitants of certain outlying parts of these two provinces were advised to concentrate at the nearest large place, bringing a month's supply of provisions with them. The concentration was not mandatory, but the advice was very generally followed, the work being ably assisted by the native officials. It is a general opinion among the officers who have been engaged in these field operations that the natives in large measure will prefer to remain where they voluntarily concentrated rather than return to their homes, even when entire quiet has been established. One result of the concentration has been that one or more of the sugar estates, which ordinarily have great trouble in getting labor supply, are finding it entirely possible to provide their necessary labor without having to import laborers, as has been the annual custom hitherto."

⁶² Testimony of Luis Suarez, Senate Hearings, II, 1141-1147. Merckle's career ended in October, 1918. Although Colonel Thorpe had witnessed some of Merckle's handiwork no action was taken until an American plantation manager in whose presence Merckle had executed two prisoners complained. Before his court-martial convened, however, he committed suicide. The embarrassed Marine Corps spread the rumor that the German-born Merckle was a German agent planted in the Corps to discredit it. As he had been in the service for sixteen years at the time of his death and no proof was ever offered the story does not ring true. Earnest H. Gruening, "The Senators Visit Haiti and Santo Domingo," The Nation (January 4, 1922), 10.

were only a few authenticated cases of this sort,⁶³ but they embittered Dominicans and damaged American prestige throughout Latin America.

In spite of shortcomings and problems which he recognized as well as anyone, Admiral Knapp, as his term drew to a close felt that his administration had accomplished much. Peace and order prevailed throughout most of the country. Improvement could be seen on every hand. By July of 1918 he could look on his work and pronounce it good.⁶⁴

Looking back over the entire period since the establishment of Military Government, the improvement is enormous in conditions as they exist today over the conditions as they existed on November 29th, 1916; and it is continuing constantly. As soon as the termination of the war shall permit the unrestricted resumption of business in the Dominican Republic, I look forward to a condition of material prosperity and development of the country, and an improvement in the educational, social and moral conditions of the people, that will have no parallel in any previous period in the history of the country.

There is no doubt that many, if not most, Dominicans shared his feelings. Macoris and Seybo were, after all, but two of twelve provinces. Much of the unpleasantness of the Occupation, the censorship and the military law, could be blamed on the war and the emergency conditions which existed at the start of the Occupation.

Admiral Knapp departed on November 18. The war was over, and Dominicans looked forward to an easing of the Military Government. The feeling was widespread that a plan for withdrawal of the marines would soon be

⁶³ Nouel to Russell, December 29, 1920, Hoepelman y Senior (eds.), Documentos Históricos, 12. Ureña, Los Yanquis en Santo Domingo, 218-219. Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, 806.

⁶⁴ Knapp, Quarterly Report, July 1, 1918, Foreign Relations 1918, 364.

announced. Americans and Dominicans alike awaited the arrival of the new Military Governor with a great deal of interest.

CHAPTER IV

The occupation of the Dominican Republic stirred little interest and less protest in the United States. The World War and events in Mexico monopolized the front pages, and only occasional, inaccurate paragraphs told the American newspaper reader what was going on in Santo Domingo. Few knew anything about the Dominican Republic, and many had only a vague notion of where it was.¹

In 1917, Oswald Garrison Villard authored a mild protest in the Annals of the American Academy of Political Science, and readers of the Yale Review were offered a more vigorous indictment of American interventions in the Caribbean by Moorfield Storey, a survivor from the Anti-Imperialist League of Spanish War days. A wider public read George Marvin's article in World's Work which portrayed the United States carrying out a necessary and praiseworthy missionary task in a benighted land.²

Far from condemning Caribbean expansion, delegates to the American Academy of Political Science's Conference on Foreign Affairs at Long

¹ Inman, Through Haiti and Santo Domingo, l. Kelsey, "American Intervention in Haiti and Santo Domingo," Annals of the American Academy of Political Science (March, 1922), 113. "Too many educated people here confuse Haiti and Tahiti. The two islands of Haiti and Santo Domingo appear in questions put to me. 'Is the United States in any way involved in Santo Domingo?' was asked the other day by a man of wide reputation."

² Oswald Garrison Villard, "Rights of Small Nations in America; The Republics of the Caribbean," Annals of the American Academy of Political Science (Philadelphia), XCV (July, 1917), 165-171. Moorfield Storey, "A Plea for Honesty," Yale Review (New Haven), VII (January, 1918), 260-279. Marvin, "Watchful Acting in Santo Domingo," World's Work (June, 1917), 205-218.

Beach, California in May, 1917, showed an unabashed imperialist sentiment. Professor William R. Sheperd of Columbia received an ovation when he called on England and France to cede their West Indian possessions to the United States as the price of American war aid. They were told that Latin American mistrust of the United States was due solely to German propaganda. The New York Times reported, ". . . speakers who demanded practical annexation of all countries bordering on the Caribbean were much applauded."³

The legality of the Occupation was avowed by Philip Marshall Brown, Professor of International Law at Princeton and a former Minister to Guatemala and Honduras, in the American Journal of International Law, founded by Secretary of State Lansing, who was still an associate editor. Professor Brown admitted that a military occupation not preceded by a state of war was an "anomalous situation," but demonstrated, without too much distortion of the facts of the case, that, "there is nothing illegal or reprehensible in intervention of this character in the defense of special rights and the general interests of international law and order."⁴

So far as public opinion existed it approved the Dominican Occupation. The rigid censorship in force during the war prevented any of its less pleasant aspects from being known. There was a comfortable assurance that the Monroe Doctrine somehow justified any American actions in Latin America, and even a certain pride in the fact that the United States had, ". . . strongarmed . . . Santo Domingo into health, good order, and an

³ New York Times, May 31, 1917, 12, 1. Storey, "A Plea for Honesty," Yale Review (January, 1918), 273-274.

⁴ Philip Marshall Brown, "The Armed Occupation of Santo Domingo," The American Journal of International Law (New York), XI (1917), 394-399.

assured material prosperity."⁵ As for those disturbing rumors of the suppression of civil rights, it was reassuring to hear that:⁶

Nervous American newspapers need not worry over the censorship. Healthy newspapers are thriving on it. Those which have died a natural death occupied a similar position to bullfighting or cock-fighting in the exciting and demoralizing amusements of the country. As soon as the libelous political matter on which they subsisted was stopped, they had to stop.

In such an atmosphere there were few prepared to listen to Francisco Henríquez y Carvajal when he arrived in the United States in December, 1916. Unable to get a hearing in Washington he went to New York where he had to content himself with publishing his version of the events of his presidency in Peynado's Las Novedades,⁷ a sheet whose influence was understandably slight. The article was significant, however, because for the first time there appeared what was to become the standard Dominican explanation for the Occupation: the United States, masking its real reasons behind a false interpretation of the Convention of 1907 and the need to suppress nonexistent disorders in the Dominican Republic, had seized the country as a strategic measure to protect the approaches to the Panama Canal.⁸ If the Dominicans could persuade the United States to accept this view, it would be easy to demand a withdrawal immediately after the war.

Once again Henríquez y Carvajal had offered the State Department an

⁵ Marvin, "Watchful Acting in Santo Domingo," World's Work (June, 1917), 218.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Printed in full in Ureña, Los Yanquis en Santo Domingo, 199-213.

⁸ Ibid., 206.

opportunity to accomplish its essential purposes in a defensible manner. Even Latin America could understand strategic necessity. However, the United States, by choosing to justify its action by the unilateral and strained interpretation of the 1907 Convention, the questionable legalisms of Philip Marshall Brown,⁹ and the arrogant assumption of a moral obligation toward the Dominican people, inevitably invited a searching and critical examination of the Military Government and its methods.

Henríquez y Carvajal returned to Cuba where he joined his brother, Federico, and his nephew, Max Henríquez Ureña. Realizing the futility of attempting to organize a protest movement during the war, when to do so would have been to mark himself a "German agent," he remained in retirement until 1918.

On Bastille Day, 1918, Max Henríquez Ureña launched the campaign of propaganda against the occupation of Santo Domingo by making a speech in Santiago de Cuba on the subject, "France and the Latin Race." His passionate oration which voiced the hope that the imminent downfall of German imperialism would signal the end of imperialism everywhere, by his own account brought the Cubans to their feet shouting, "Viva la Republica Dominicana!"¹⁰

The printed speech circulated throughout Cuba by the thousands of copies arousing great interest in the Dominican situation. With the end of the war the campaign went into high gear. Cuban newspapers cooperated

⁹ Knight, The Americans in Santo Domingo, 93. Brown's position and Lansing's relation with the Journal of International Law caused many to regard Brown's article as an official American interpretation.

¹⁰ Ureña, Los Yanquis en Santo Domingo, 220.

actively. Enthusiastic Cubans organized Comités pro Santo Domingo and raised funds to send Henríquez y Carvajal to the Versailles Peace Conference.¹¹

The former Dominican President arrived in Paris on April 1, 1919. He had no success in his attempt to lay his case before President Wilson. J. H. Stabler of the Latin American Division was there and told him that inter-American relations were excluded from consideration at the Peace Conference. Henríquez y Carvajal left a lengthy memorandum with Stabler¹² and used the rest of his time in Paris to plead his cause with the South American delegations.¹³

One solid result of his trip was to arouse interest in Spain. Spanish parliamentary leaders responded by publishing a memorial calling on the Spanish Government to use its good offices to persuade the United States to withdraw from the Dominican Republic.¹⁴

Publication of the Spaniards' statement and the arrival of Henríquez y Carvajal in the United States from Paris near the end of July awakened

¹¹ Ibid., 221-222. Consul Edwards to Secretary of State, March 23, 1919, Foreign Relations 1919, II, 98. Edwards, temporarily in charge of the Legation in Santo Domingo, warned that Henríquez y Carvajal was on his way to Paris and outlined the "wartime defense of the Panama Canal" argument he would use to urge withdrawal.

¹² Henríquez y Carvajal to Stabler, April 19, 1919, Foreign Relations 1919, II, 107-118. This memorandum outlined the reforms which Henríquez y Carvajal had urged since June, 1916, and asked the United States to take steps to restore self-government. He warned that he was starting a Latin American propaganda organization. Joseph C. Grew, Grew to Acting Secretary of State, April 25, 1919, ibid., 106-107, noted that, "Henriquez y Carvajal is not rabidly anti-American."

¹³ Ureña, Los Yanquis en Santo Domingo, 221-222.

¹⁴ New York Times, September 11, 1919, 17, 4.

American curiosity about Santo Domingo. Some idea of what the Dominican Republic meant to the average American may be deduced from the fact that the New York Times noted Henríquez y Carvajal's presence in an article on African unrest headlined, "Negroes of World Prey of Agitators."¹⁵ Another article in the Times referred to "Fernandez Henriquez, the newly-elected President of Santo Domingo," and went on to summarize the American position in the Dominican Republic as follows:¹⁶

U. S. Marines were ordered to Santo Domingo, November 25, 1914 because there was a threat of revolution there. A treaty was negotiated between the United States and Santo Domingo early in 1917 by which this country assumed a virtual protectorate.

In Washington Henríquez y Carvajal managed to get the ear of the Latin American Division, although the attitude of the Americans involved was, according to Ureña, ". . . more officious than official."¹⁷ The burden of the memoranda that he presented was that the time had arrived when the United States should make plans for withdrawing from the Dominican Republic. Therefore, the marines should first be relieved from civil police duties; a census of the Republic should be made; and a Dominican

¹⁵ Ibid., August 24, 1919, 1, 2.

¹⁶ Ibid., September 11, 1919, 17, 4. Charles H. Noxon, Jr., "Santo Domingo, Ward of the Marines," ibid., November 30, 1919, IV, 3. A sign both of increasing interest and continuing misinformation about Santo Domingo was this article by a wartime marine private who served as a Guardia officer. "Boot" Noxon, who believed that the Occupation was training the Dominicans in self-government, described Pendleton's 1916 march to Santiago as a bloody, six month campaign in which ". . . every hole had to be cleared of snipers before, on December 6, 1916 the American flag was raised over Santiago." Old salts retailing war stories to recruits in return for beer figure that a long, bloody campaign is conducive to a long, wet evening.

¹⁷ Ureña, Los Yanquis en Santo Domingo, 224.

commission under American direction should undertake the drafting of organic laws which would correct the inherent weaknesses of the former Dominican organization.

After sufficient preparation, elections of ayuntamientos should be held. Election of provincial governors would follow if the municipal elections indicated that the people were ready. If these were successful, congressional and presidential elections would be held. At each step in the process some marines would be withdrawn.¹⁸

After due consideration, Hallett Johnson, acting Chief of the Division of Latin American Affairs, thought that a reduction of the authority of the Provost Courts "seemed reasonable." However, he believed that Henríquez y Carvajal should return to the Dominican Republic for consultation with the Military Government before the State Department took official notice of his proposals.¹⁹

On September 18, the former Dominican President replied to this suggestion. An opportunity for further conversations with Minister Russell doubtless held no appeal for him, and, as he pointed out, the Military Governor would be unable to commit himself without referring to Washington. He felt he could better serve his purpose by remaining in Washington and speaking directly to the men who would make the decisions anyway. However, he stated that if the United States restored civil rights to the Dominican people and adopted a plan for withdrawal similar to the one he

¹⁸ Henríquez y Carvajal to Johnson, September 4, 1919, Foreign Relations 1919, II, 128-130.

¹⁹ Memorandum of J. C. Dunn of the Division of Latin American Affairs, September 13, 1919, ibid., 131-133.

had outlined, he would be happy to go to the Dominican Republic to counsel cooperation with the Military Government in the reorganization of the Dominican Government and the gradual withdrawal of the American forces.²⁰

While these talks were going on, the State Department was guilty of at least minor duplicity. Immediately on learning that Henríquez y Carvajal had come to Washington the Military Government begged the Department to assure it that no steps toward restoration of civil government were under consideration.²¹ This assurance was given on September 6, two days before Henríquez y Carvajal had appeared for his initial interview with Johnson.²²

In the midst of these discussions, Leo S. Rowe became the new Chief of the Division of Latin American Affairs. On October 9, Henríquez y Carvajal presented him with a detailed amplification of his plan for a reorganization of the Dominican Government and the gradual withdrawal of American forces.²³ Rowe was no more encouraging than Stabler and Johnson had been. On October 27, Henríquez y Carvajal left for Cuba after addressing a note to Secretary of State Lansing which referred to his memoranda and demanded that the United States act to withdraw. Tulio M. Cestero remained

²⁰ Henríquez y Carvajal to Secretary of State, undated, ibid., 134-135.

²¹ Acting Secretary of the Navy Franklin D. Roosevelt to Secretary of State, August 27, 1919, ibid., 120-121.

²² Acting Secretary of State Phillips to Secretary of the Navy, September 6, 1919, ibid., 130.

²³ Ureña, Los Yanguis en Santo Domingo, 224-234. This memorandum is not found in State Department files although it was delivered. A copy was later forwarded to the Military Government. Snowden to Russell, December 2, 1919, Foreign Relations 1919, II, 144.

as his personal representative in Washington.²⁴

Not only the Military Government but rival Dominican politicians watched the activities of Henríquez y Carvajal with suspicion. In spite of his avowal that he would neither seek nor accept office in the Dominican Government that succeeded the Occupation, and the fact that he had invited all the former jefes de partidos to join him in pleading the Dominican case in Washington,²⁵ many of the former political leaders of the Republic felt that he was maneuvering himself into a position where he could claim the honor of liberating his country and resume its chief office.²⁶

Henríquez y Carvajal left the United States a bitter man. His every effort toward reasonable compromise with the State Department since 1916, as he saw it, had met either with refusal or evasion. He himself had been subjected to slander, discourtesy, and deception. Henceforth, he was to put his case before world opinion.

After Admiral Knapp left the Dominican Republic, there was an interregnum of three months during which Brigadier General Ben H. Fuller USMC acted as Military Governor. The long delay in the appointment of a new Governor gave substance to rumors prevalent since the war's end that the Military Government would soon be ended, or at least, relaxed.

²⁴ Henríquez y Carvajal to the Secretary of State, October 27, 1919, Foreign Relations 1919, II, 137-138. Cestero also headed the Dominican Nationalist Committee organized to lobby for withdrawal.

²⁵ Henríquez y Carvajal to Secretary of State, August 22, 1919, quoted in Ureña, Los Yanquis en Santo Domingo, 222-223.

²⁶ Roosevelt to Secretary of State, August 27, 1919, Foreign Relations 1919, II, 120-121.

Soon after the arrival of the new Military Governor any such notions were dispelled. Rear-Admiral Thomas M. Snowden, a New York born Annapolis man of the class of 1879, delighted in posing as a blunt, tough, old seadog. Actually, he was a weak and vacillating man, much under the influence of his subordinates, who earned from his Dominican subjects the title of "Don Juan Isidro" Snowden, a derisive reference to their weak, former President, Jiménez.²⁷

Snowden had not wanted the assignment originally. However, he soon developed a messianic attitude, believing the Military Government, with himself as its head, was an instrument of providence destined to lead the Dominican Republic into the path of civilization.²⁸ Suspicious of civil rule²⁹ and jealous of his authority, he considered every attempt to liberalize the regime as an indefensible interference with his mission. Minister Russell and the Admiral saw eye to eye.

To Snowden the idea of withdrawing from the Dominican Republic within the foreseeable future was unthinkable. On June 28, 1919, he made public

27 Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, 818.

28 Inman, Through Haiti and Santo Domingo, 7. "The Admiral said that when he first received the request . . . to go to Santo Domingo, he said abruptly, 'I won't go.' . . . The Department again put it up to Snowden, telling him that he was holding up the whole Navy program. So he decided to go. Now that he is down there he has become so interested in helping these people that he would like to spend the rest of his official life working out the problems now before him."

29 Snowden, "Supplementary Quarterly Report, 29 May, 1919," 3. "No government based on suffrage can possibly solve this problem. Nothing but arbitrary force will suffice, and no government not military is sufficiently flexible . . . The power of the latter should be sufficient to intimidate the elements that would inevitably revolt under any other form of government." Ureña, Los Yanguis en Santo Domingo, 234. ". . . Rear-Admiral Thomas Snowden (a man of limited judgement, who never understood unrestricted civil liberty)."

his view that the Military Government must continue for a long time. Many Dominicans protested when he declared in his speech at the dedication of the Agricultural College at Jaina that the Occupation would continue until the generation in the cradle had reached adulthood.³⁰

In August, 1919, alarmed at the prospect of Henríquez y Carvajal's success with the State Department, he predicted "anarchy and ruin" should even the least measure of Dominican self-government be granted.³¹ In December, he recommended that the State Department announce that the Military Government was to remain for "ten or twenty years."³²

The more pressure grew for an American withdrawal, the more stubbornly Snowden resisted. In April, 1920, he urged that the Occupation go on for "at least ten years and perhaps more."³³ Later in that year, the third ranking officer of the Occupation, Colonel George C. Reid USMC, Commander of the Guardia, indiscreetly placed his signature to a confidential order which directed, "Officers of discretion . . . to spread a bit of propaganda . . . on the question of annexation."³⁴ Although Reid accepted the

³⁰ Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, 820. The statement was made ". . . without official authorization from the United States Government . . ."

³¹ Paraphrase of dispatch in Roosevelt to Secretary of State, August 27, 1919, Foreign Relations 1919, II, 121.

³² Snowden to Russell, December 2, 1919, Foreign Relations 1919, II, 143-144.

³³ Snowden, Quarterly Report, April 1, 1920, Foreign Relations 1920, II, 111.

³⁴ Quoted in Gruening, "Haiti and Santo Domingo Today," The Nation (New York), CXIV (February 15, 1922), 189-190. "Officers of discretion will be instructed to spread a bit of propaganda here and there in a very careful and discreet manner so that it may not appear that it is being

responsibility for this order³⁵ it is unlikely that he issued it entirely on his own initiative or without the knowledge and approval of the Military Governor and Minister Russell.

To make sure that the Military Government remained, the Admiral had to report conditions which showed a continuing need for it. Yet, the same reports tried to show that his administration was making great progress in carrying out the aims of the Occupation. This led to contradictions which puzzled the State Department.

In April, 1919, he reported that banditry was practically at an end, but that the situation still required military activity.³⁶ This drew a request from Acting Secretary of State Polk for clarification. Consul Edwards, temporarily in charge of the Legation, stated that the situation was "greatly improved," that the disturbances were limited to the San Pedro de Macoris area (Colonel Davis's old territory), and that there were

done officially. Present and past conditions may be compared along many lines, the aims and ambitions of the government explained. A few specially chosen officers might sound some of the people on the question of annexation, merely by conversation telling the people that in 1876 the majority of Dominicans desired annexation and asked for it, but that our Congress refused it because we did not know the country and the Dominicans as well at that time. Certain people who seem to be receptive could be induced to spread the idea by showing them how much better situated they would be today had they been part of the United States for the past forty years. Conditions in Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and even Cuba could be cited as examples."

³⁵ Senator Medill McCormick, Senate Hearings, II, 1528. "You will recall the case of Colonel Reed [sic] in Santo Domingo, who issued a circular to his officers regarding annexation and who has since been reprimanded and had the reprimand placed upon his record."

³⁶ Snowden, Quarterly Report, April 1, 1919, Foreign Relations 1919, II, 100.

no more than three hundred disorganized fugitives hiding in the hills.³⁷ Minister Russell, who was as interested as Snowden in demonstrating the need for strict American control, hastened to amend this report on his return. According to him, ". . . the spirit of banditry in the eastern part of this Republic is still dominant." He went on to say that it was unsafe to travel without a guard in the affected areas.³⁸ Throughout the rest of 1919 and 1920, Snowden continued to report the imminent liquidation of the last gavillero and at the same time request reinforcements of marines.

The same contradictions appear in reports on the Guardia. In April, 1919, he condemned all those who criticized that body as "socialists and visionaries."³⁹ By August, he was declaring that the Guardia was "in no way fitted" to keep the peace should the Marine Brigade be withdrawn.⁴⁰ With State Department concurrence he virtually abandoned attempts to develop Dominican officers.⁴¹

The postwar sugar boom, "the dance of the millions," had just begun when Admiral Snowden arrived in the Dominican Republic. Month after month the revenues of the country rose. The prosperity curve, projected to infinity by the Navy paymasters who filled the post of Finance Minister, tempted the Military Government to expand the scope of the public works

37 Edwards to Acting Secretary of State, May 1, 1919, ibid., 118.

38 Russell to Acting Secretary of State, June 3, 1919, ibid., 118-119.

39 Snowden, Quarterly Report, 1 April, 1919, ibid., 100.

40 Russell to Secretary of State, August 8, 1919, ibid., 120.

41 Polk to Russell, June 20, 1919, ibid., 119.

program. No expense was spared in pushing work on the north-south highway. Harbor dredging, construction of public buildings of all sorts, the agricultural program, and any projects which could be considered beneficial in any way were begun. The program became so ambitious that it outgrew even the record revenues, and in April, 1920, Admiral Snowden sought authorization for a seven million dollar loan to cover its cost. This, too, became a reason for extending the Occupation as the work had been planned over a five year period.⁴²

One of the major projects of the Occupation was a land reform designed to end the comunero system; this would require registration of titles and allow a real property tax to be imposed. The plan worked out by Peynado and Colonel Lane was put into effect in the fall of 1919. Under the prosperous conditions of the boom the tax succeeded beyond all expectations with seven hundred thousand dollars collected during the first quarter of its operation.⁴³ However, Admiral Snowden was quick to demonstrate that the imposition of this reform absolutely required the continuation of the Military Government, ". . . three years at least from the initiation of the reform."⁴⁴

While the State Department had pledged the Military Government privately that there would be no change in its status, it indirectly encouraged the feeling in the Dominican Republic that the United States would

⁴² Snowden, Quarterly Report, 1 April, 1920, Foreign Relations 1920, II, 113.

⁴³ Snowden, "Quarterly Report, 30 October, 1919," 5.

⁴⁴ Snowden, "Supplementary Quarterly Report, 29 May, 1919," 3.

soon leave, or at least introduce a form of civil government, by failing to make its pledge public and by continuing the talks with Henríquez y Carvajal.⁴⁵ Its caution in this regard was doubtless influenced by the apprehensive queries concerning the Occupation which it began to receive from various Latin American governments during the summer of 1919.⁴⁶ Such diverse American groups as the American Federation of Labor and the Protestant Council for Inter-American Cooperation also began to look critically at the Occupation.⁴⁷

Although no one in the State Department appeared ready to recommend even a gradual withdrawal from the Dominican Republic along the eminently sensible lines drawn by Henríquez y Carvajal, and no one had the courage to state definitely the length of time the Occupation forces intended to remain, the feeling grew that steps to liberalize the Military Government had to be taken. In the anti-militarist postwar world, censorship and court-martial were dirty words.

The best thing to do, it seemed, was to appoint a Dominican Advisory Council similar to the one proposed by Henríquez y Carvajal. In view of the fact that the Military Government had long claimed that, with the exception of a few of the old "mercenary, grafting, vicious, office-

⁴⁵ Russell to Secretary of State, October 10, 1919, Foreign Relations 1919, II, 136. Snowden's publication of the State Department's assurance did not halt the rumors as long as Henriquez y Carvajal remained in Washington.

⁴⁶ Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, 823. Ureña, Los Yanquis en Santo Domingo, 234.

⁴⁷ Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, 823. Inman, Through Haiti and Santo Domingo, 1-2.

seeking politicians," all Dominicans were solidly behind it,⁴⁸ it seemed a simple matter to appoint a board of nationally respected, tame Dominicans who could be counted on to endorse the Occupation and its works. The mere existence of such a board would silence critics charging government without consent of the governed, and would also serve to, ". . . appease the desire of Dominicans for a voice in their country's affairs."⁴⁹

Admiral Snowden never doubted that a complaisant group of Dominicans could be assembled. He readily assented to the nominations of Archbishop Nouel, Francisco J. Peynado, Federico Velasquez, and Jacinto R. de Castro, a prominent lawyer, all of whom had cooperated actively with the Military Government in the past by serving on various boards and commissions of the Occupation. A place was also made for Henríquez y Carvajal, chiefly in the hope of ending his embarrassing presence in Washington.⁵⁰ However, he declined to serve.

Nevertheless, Admiral Snowden objected to the principle of an Advisory Council, and he made it clear that it was the State Department's

⁴⁸ Snowden to Russell, December 2, 1919, Foreign Relations 1919, II, 143. "The best people in the Republic have repeatedly assured me that they did not want any other government, either their own or a civil government of foreign personnel . . ." This is a typical report. Similar statements may be found in the correspondence of all the Military Governors. A partial explanation for this conviction in the face of evidence to the contrary may be found in Samuel A. Stouffer and Associates, Studies in Social Psychology in World War II (Princeton, 1949), I, 392. "All comparative studies made by the Research Branch showed that officers tended to believe that their men were more favorably disposed on any given point than the men's own anonymous responses showed them to be."

⁴⁹ Snowden to Chief of Naval Operations Coontz, 1 November, 1919, Foreign Relations 1919, II, 139.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 139-140.

idea, not his.⁵¹ He intended to take little advice from his Councilors, if they presumed to give any.

The Council met on November 5, 1919, and set to work studying the recommendations that Henríquez y Carvajal had made to the State Department. Contrary to the Military Governor's expectation it attempted to assume a responsible role in the Government.⁵² It drafted legislation for electoral reform and governmental reorganization along the lines of Henríquez y Carvajal's suggestions. This was harmless enough from Admiral Snowden's point of view, but on December 3, the members had the effrontery to recommend against floating a new loan for public works and criticize the extravagance of the public works program.⁵³ On December 16, only two weeks after he had stated definitely that the Censorship met with the approval of the Council,⁵⁴ it recommended that the Censorship be ended and that Provost Courts be restricted to handling military offenses only.⁵⁵

Admiral Snowden replied to this suggestion on December 22 by issuing a proclamation that abolished the Censorship. However, he ordered the

⁵¹ Snowden to Coontz, 7 November, 1919, ibid., 140. Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, 824.

⁵² Snowden to Consulting Board, January 9, 1920, "Consulting Board and the Occupation," The Nation (New York), CXI (July 17, 1920), 83. Snowden complained, "The board will no doubt recall that it was first appointed as a consulting body to assist the Governor with its experience and counsel, and that the presentation of memoranda came as a later feature." Also note 49, supra.

⁵³ Consulting Board to Snowden, December 3, 1919, ibid., 80-81.

⁵⁴ Snowden to Russell, 2 December, 1919, Foreign Relations 1919, II, 143.

⁵⁵ Consulting Board to Snowden, undated, "Consulting Board and the Occupation," The Nation (July 17, 1920), 81-82.

Brigade Commander, in effect, to continue all the restrictions on press, speech, and assembly that had existed previously.⁵⁶ This action, taken without consulting the Advisory Council, opened the members' eyes to the puppet role intended for them. Disillusioned, they resigned en masse on January 6, 1920.

The Admiral had been against the Council from the beginning. To him the fact that they had made recommendations for the restoration of the most elemental civil rights was proof positive that those bogeymen, the "vicious, grafting politicians," controlled even the Dominicans who "privately and honestly" favored the Military Government. The resignation was good riddance.⁵⁷

Smugly blind, Snowden failed to realize that he had completely alienated the moderate Dominican leaders who were willing to cooperate

⁵⁶ Tulio M. Cestero, "American Rule in Santo Domingo," ibid., 79-80.

⁵⁷ Snowden, "Quarterly Report, 12 January, 1920," 2. "The Advisory Council . . . resigned on January 6, 1920, owing to attacks made upon them by the local press and the remaining politicians of the old school . . . The politicians are very vicious. They are at present being stirred up by Mr. Tulio M. Cestero, now in Washington, and by Dr. Henriquez y Carvajal, now in Santiago, Cuba, and have formed a so-called Union Nacionalista Dominicana which is supposed to be patriotic, but is another effort of the grafting politicians to obtain the turning over of the government to them, when the same former exploiting of the government and people will begin anew. It is not believed advisable to renew the Advisory Council to the Military Governor, as it was used as a tool to force unripe measures in the interests of the political factions. The politicians apparently pulled the strings. However, the Military Governor has a number of Dominican friends of high station and high class and from these he can and does obtain any advice required as to the point of view of the Dominican people. This will fulfill all the needs and the advisers will not be subject to political attack. I regret to say that the Archbishop and the other distinguished members of the former Advisory Council have lent themselves to present propáganda against the existing government and in favor (outwardly) of the former regime, although I know that privately and honestly they have a contrary view."

with the Military Government, and who would have supported it had he been willing to correct its abuses. His abuse and arrogant rejection of their services drove them all into the camp of the extremists who were starting to demand immediate evacuation.

Archbishop Nouel was most bitter of all. Since 1912, he had cooperated with the United States in every way that he could if he thought it would benefit the Dominican people. It was too much to be assigned the role of a puppet on a board set up to deceive not only the Dominican people, but the world as well, and then to be slandered because he rejected the part. Shortly before his resignation he replied to a request from Minister Russell for his opinion of the state of the country with a letter condemning the Occupation in measured and judicious terms.⁵⁸ Copies of the letter stirred anti-American feeling throughout South America.

The State Department apparently failed to grasp the significance of the resignation of the Advisory Council. Secretary Lansing merely advised that the order "repealing" the Censorship be published as an Executive Order. This was done on January 15, 1920, with the publication of

⁵⁸ Nouel to Russell, December 29, 1920, Hoepelman y Senior (eds.), Documentos Históricos, 13-15. His bitterness did not pass with time. Interviewed by Ernest Gruening late in 1921, Gruening, "Santo Domingo's Cardinal Mercier," The Nation (January 11, 1922), 42, he said he believed the Occupation had not been beneficial in any way. ". . . on the contrary the expectations of the Dominican people in regard to the American Occupation have been completely disappointed." For Snowden's opinion of Nouel prior to his resignation, Snowden to Russell, 2 December, 1919, Foreign Relations 1919, II, 144. "Dr. Henriquez y Carvajal is discredited with the majority of Dominicans now and the evidence of such a man as the Archbishop of Santo Domingo, Monseñor . . . Nouel, is of vastly more value. I beg to refer the Department to him for any information desired. He is a patriot, an ex-president of the republic, and man of great prestige and influence."

Executive Order No. 385. The pertinent paragraph of this order read as follows:

2. In order to prevent disturbances of the public order, all persons are forbidden to publish articles in magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, periodicals, handbills, or any other publications or to make speeches in public of the following nature:

(a) Those which teach the doctrines now commonly known as Bolshevism or anarchy which, under the present circumstances prevailing in the Republic, may lead to unrest or disorder.

(b) Those which teach doctrines or practices contrary to public morality as understood by all civilized nations.

(c) Those which are so hostile in tone towards the Government of the United States, its policies and its officers, or so severely critical of them as to incite the people to unrest, disorder, or revolt.

(d) Those which are so hostile in tone towards the Military Government, its policies and officers, civil or military or which are so severely critical of them as to incite the people to unrest, disorder, or revolt.

(e) Those which hold up to scorn, obloquy or ridicule, the conduct of the United States Government, of the Military Government, or of their officers, in such a manner that they tend to create disorder or revolt in the Republic.

(f) Those which describe present conditions in Santo Domingo in a manifestly unfair or untruthful manner and in such terms as to incite the people to disorder.

Violators of the order were subject to the Provost Courts.⁵⁹

There had been a flurry of arrests under the Brigade Order superseded by Executive Order No. 385,⁶⁰ but 385 itself was not enforced rigorously until the summer of 1920. The statements of Henríquez y Carvajal circulated freely, and the anti-Occupation Unión Nacional Dominicana operated

⁵⁹ Executive Order No. 385, January 15, 1920, Foreign Relations 1920, II, 163-164.

⁶⁰ Cestero, "American Rule in Santo Domingo," The Nation (July 17, 1920), 78-79. Three editors paid three hundred dollar fines, and a priest in Puerto Plata spent several hours in jail for some strong statements made at a "literary meeting."

openly.⁶¹

In June, the UND held a "Patriotic Week" to raise money to support Henríquez y Carvajal's propaganda effort. The Military Government permitted the speechmaking and fund raising to go on without interruption.⁶² One member of the Occupation Forces, at least, gladly supported the "Patriotic Week." A homesick marine approached by a girl selling raffle tickets asked the price. On being told that the money raised from ticket sales was to be used to get the marines out of the Dominican Republic, the marine blurted enthusiastically, "Gimme two, and I don't care what they cost!"⁶³

Admiral Snowden, however, became somewhat alarmed at the hostile tone which prevailed during the week. It was time, he decided, to crack down. Triumphantly, he reported:⁶⁴

. . . it was necessary to take immediate and decisive action to check the . . . agitation. As a result several writers and publishers who have written and published the most hostile articles tending to stir the people to revolt and who have most flagrantly violated the provisions of Executive Order No. 385, have been arrested and are being tried by Military Courts. The effect produced by these arrests and trials has been excellent. A marked decrease in agitation has been noted and the people, having lost faith in the predictions of the early return of Dominican Sovereignty made by these men, are settling down to the peaceful pursuit of their occupations. It is hoped that this will prove a lesson to the incendiary speakers and writers and prevent another effort on their part to stir up the people to revolt against the Military Government.

61 Snowden to Russell, 2 December, 1919, Foreign Relations 1919, II, 143.

62 Snowden, Quarterly Report, 1 July, 1920, Foreign Relations 1920, II, 121.

63 John T. Vance, "A Good Word for Santo Domingo," New York Times Current History (New York), XVI (August, 1922), 851.

64 Snowden, Quarterly Report, 1 July, 1920, Foreign Relations 1920, II, 121.

The arrests, especially that of Fabio Fiallo, who was an internationally known poet, raised a storm of protest in Latin America.⁶⁵ The article for which he was condemned called on Dominicans to put aside their own political differences to unite in working against, not revolting against, the Occupation and to ostracize those Dominicans who cooperated actively with the Americans. Technically, the Provost Court which tried him could award capital punishment. The impression abroad was that Fiallo was facing a death sentence.⁶⁶

The new Secretary of State, Bainbridge Colby, inquired anxiously about the matter.⁶⁷ Chargé Brewer replied in a typically contradictory note belittling the Dominican urge for independence and, at the same time, justifying the arrests as necessary to prevent imminent revolt.⁶⁸ On August 13, Colby informed Russell that the State Department was being bombarded by protests from Latin American press associations. He directed that the trials of Fiallo and his co-defendants, Americo Lugo and Flores Cabrera, be concluded speedily, and that only light sentences be imposed for fear of "an unfortunate effect in Latin American countries."⁶⁹

⁶⁵ Knight, Americans in Santo Domingo, 113. "The Fabio Fiallo case was America's Cavell case. To most Americans the 'Poet Patriot' was a passing headliner in the press, but his trial in 1920 made the 'Yankees' about as loathesome as possible to the Latin peoples of the two hemispheres."

⁶⁶ Ibid. New York Times, August 11, 1920, 1, 2. The Montevideo Press Club cabled a plea to President Wilson begging him to avert the death penalty in the Fiallo case.

⁶⁷ Colby to Brewer, July 30, 1920, Foreign Relations 1920, II, 164.

⁶⁸ Brewer to Colby, August 3, 1920, ibid.

⁶⁹ Colby to Russell, August 13, 1920, ibid., 165. Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, 829.

Regardless of the State Department's wishes, Admiral Snowden was determined to make an example of Fiallo. Colby was jolted when he learned that Snowden had approved a sentence of one year in prison and a twenty-five hundred dollar fine. Immediately, he asked Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels to restrain his Admiral.⁷⁰ Even under pressure from his own Department, the Military Governor complied but grudgingly. Not until October 13 was Fiallo placed at liberty. Lugo never came to trial, and Cabrera, a Venezuelan, was allowed to post bond and leave the country without paying his twenty-five hundred dollar fine.⁷¹

Even this fiasco failed to teach Admiral Snowden and Minister Russell that the time for such tactics had passed. In November, Horacio Blanco Fombona, another Venezuelan journalist, was convicted and fined for publishing a picture of a Dominican allegedly tortured by marines. The State Department learned of this case only through the uproar in the Latin American press. Neither Admiral Snowden, who approved the sentence, nor Russell, who knew of it, bothered to inform their superiors in the United States.⁷²

Meanwhile, more and more people in the United States were becoming curious about the Occupation. The audience at a conference on Mexico and the Caribbean held at Clark University in May, 1920, heard three speakers

⁷⁰ Colby to Daniels, September 2, 1920, Foreign Relations 1920, II, 165-166.

⁷¹ Russell to Colby, October 11, 1920, and October 13, 1920, ibid., 167-168.

⁷² Under Secretary of State Norman H. Davis to Daniels, November 16, 1920, ibid., 168, and Daniels to Secretary of State, November 23, 1920, ibid., 169. Photographs of the branded Dominican and Fabio Fiallo in prison stripes under a picture of the Statue of Liberty circulated through the Spanish speaking world. Knight, The Americans in Santo Domingo, 116.

present three different views of the Military Government.

Otto Schoenrich condemned it. While admitting that much good had been accomplished in a material way, he pointed out that more had been done in less time in Cuba and Puerto Rico without the suppression of civil liberty. Schoenrich, a recognized authority on the Dominican Republic, originally had been a supporter of American intervention. Thus, his words carried weight.

Americans in the audience squirmed as he told them that the Occupation was "a hateful foreign military aristocracy" and that "local American military commanders have acted like little kings, to the disgust of Americans and foreigners alike."⁷³ Citizens of a nation which had just fought to make the world safe for Democracy blushed to hear that its representatives in Santo Domingo had banned the printing of such phrases as "freedom of thought," and "freedom of speech."⁷⁴

Colonel Thorpe, of concentration camp fame, spoke in defense, not only of the Occupation, but of the necessity for a Military Government. He told his audience that Dominicans were unfit for self-government and urged that there be no public criticism of the Military Government as it only encouraged the bandits.⁷⁵

Samuel Guy Inman took a position midway between Judge Schoenrich and Colonel Thorpe. He thought that the Occupation had accomplished a lot of

73 Otto Schoenrich, "Intervention in Santo Domingo and Haiti," George Blakeslee (ed.), Mexico and the Caribbean (New York, 1920), 211.

74 Ibid., 213.

75 Colonel George C. Thorpe USMC, "American Achievements in Santo Domingo," ibid., 224-236.

good, although he, too, felt that less had been accomplished than should have been. On the other hand, he wondered aloud why banditry had increased so much under American rule and why the Dominicans were not being prepared for self-government.⁷⁶

In the American press, The Nation, whose editor, Oswald Garrison Villard, had condemned the Occupation from the first, now began an editorial barrage against it. 1920 was an election year and the impartial Nation attacked the shortcomings of both parties.⁷⁷ On July 17, 1920, it scored the Democratic vice-presidential nominee, Franklin D. Roosevelt, as a Big Navy imperialist, ". . . who had never opened his mouth to protest against the wrongs which are being committed by Navy men in Haiti and Santo Domingo."⁷⁸ On August 28, it sneered at him for saying that the Haitians and Dominicans regarded Americans as big brothers. "Dr. Dernburg used to tell how happy the Belgians were under German Rule."⁷⁹

Roosevelt himself made Haiti and the Dominican Republic a campaign issue when he boasted of having written the Haitian Constitution.⁸⁰ Joyfully, Harding seized the opportunity. In a speech from the front porch

⁷⁶ Samuel Guy Inman, "Present Situation in the Caribbean," ibid., 248-253.

⁷⁷ "How Will You Vote," The Nation (New York), CXI (September 4, 1920), 280. ". . . the choice is between Debs and dubs."

⁷⁸ Editorial, The Nation (New York), CXI (July 17, 1920), 57.

⁷⁹ Ibid., (August 28, 1920), 231.

⁸⁰ Ibid., "You know I had something to do with the running of a couple of little republics. The fact is that I wrote Haiti's Constitution myself, and if I do say it, I think it is a pretty good constitution."

at Marion, he declared:⁸¹

To the best of my information this is the first official admission of the rape of Haiti and Santo Domingo by the Wilson administration. To my mind, moreover, it is the most shocking assertion that ever emanated from a responsible official of the United States Government.

Talk about self-determination! Talk about American ideals! Talk about equal rights for small nations! Before the confession of deeds such as this what becomes of the smooth rhetoric of vaunted righteousness to which we have been so long accustomed?

Although the Occupation of the Dominican Republic was only a minor factor in the campaign,⁸² by November, it had become of paramount concern to Secretary of State Colby. While preparing for a December good will cruise through Latin America he came to realize that the United States had to do something concrete to offset the criticism that the Dominican Occupation had aroused. On November 13, he recommended to President Wilson that he should announce a plan of withdrawal from the Dominican Republic. The President agreed, and on November 29 Secretary Colby wrote the Secretary of the Navy outlining a program for gradual evacuation which Admiral Snowden was to put into effect.⁸³

81 Quoted in Senate Hearings, II, 1528.

82 Although Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, 836, says the Dominican question played a "considerable role" in the campaign, The Nation, "How Will You Vote," The Nation (September 4, 1920), 280, does not list it as one of its six major campaign issues. Search of the New York Times index reveals few references to it during the campaign.

83 Colby to Daniels, November 29, 1920, Foreign Relations 1920, II, 136-138. The program called for a Commission of Representative Dominicans to formulate such laws and constitutional amendments as they deemed necessary. On approval by the Military Governor, these would be submitted to a Constitutional Convention and a National Congress. Although Ureña, Los Yaqueis en Santo Domingo, 238, claimed that Henríquez y Carvajal had by this time rejected any idea of a gradual withdrawal, Undersecretary of State Norman H. Davis stated, Davis to Horace G. Knowles, February 7, 1921, Foreign Relations 1920, II, 145, footnote, "Prior to the . . . Proclamation

The Military Governor felt he had been betrayed. He had to beg the despised Dominican politicians to serve on a new Commission similar to the Advisory Council which he had scorned a year before. Still worse, Washington demanded that he revoke Executive Order No. 385.⁸⁴

Anticipating the order, he repeated his tactics of the year before. He repealed No. 385 but, on December 6, 1920, issued Executive Order No. 572, Regarding Sedition, and No. 573, Regarding Defamation, which, taken together had substantially the same effect as the original order.⁸⁵ The State Department was not fooled. Acting Secretary Davis considered the new Executive Orders, ". . . peculiarly objectionable as breathing a spirit foreign to American ideals and actions." He requested the Secretary of the Navy to have them repealed forthwith.⁸⁶

Proclamation of the Wilson Plan, as the withdrawal proposal was known, on December 23, 1920, stirred violent opposition in the Republic. The maligned and vilified politicians saw themselves back in the saddle and wanted no part of negotiations with the arrogant Yankee admiral. Terms which would have been accepted gratefully a year earlier were now despised, and the cry of withdrawal without conditions was raised.⁸⁷

of December 23, 1920, repeated conferences were held at the Department of State with Señor Henríquez y Carvajal . . . His opinion was sought and he was found to be in accord with the policy projected."

⁸⁴ Davis to Daniels, December 13, 1920, Foreign Relations 1920, II, 147-148.

⁸⁵ Executive Orders 572 and 573, December 6, 1920, ibid., 169-172.

⁸⁶ Davis to Daniels, January 3, 1921, ibid., 172.

⁸⁷ Russell to Davis, December 27, 1920, and December 29, 1920, ibid., 150.

No matter what had been said about political conditions under the Occupation the Military Government had always been able to point with pride to financial conditions. "Dominicana [sic] Thrives Under Our Control," was the headline over a laudatory article on the Times financial page of August 16, 1920.⁸⁸ Even the critics agreed.

Then, just as the political storm broke over his head, Admiral Snowden felt the economic earth open beneath his feet. The "dance of the millions" ended abruptly.⁸⁹ Government revenues dwindled. The ambitious public works program came to a halt. The boasted school system closed down.⁹⁰ Government employees were furloughed without salary.

The Military Government had made its situation even worse by dabbling in the sugar market. In an attempt to secure a domestic supply at a time when export prices were around twenty-one cents a pound it commandeered eight million pounds at an arbitrary price of seventeen and a half cents. When the market collapsed to less than five cents the sugar remained unsold, and Admiral Snowden demanded that the sugar men release the Military Government from the contracts. The producers refused, complaining that not

⁸⁸ New York Times, August 16, 1920, 20, 2.

⁸⁹ Snowden, Quarterly Report, January 2, 1921, Foreign Relations 1920, II, 155. The Military Government was criticized for failing to foresee the crash. However, even the National City Bank of New York, the dominant financial institution in the Dominican Republic since the Occupation, stated in its house publication, The Americas (New York), VII (February, 1921), 17, that the sugar market had only suffered a momentary break, and that high prices would soon return. However, as the Military Government had taken the credit for the prosperity of the boom it was only just that it take the blame for the crash.

⁹⁰ Snowden, "Quarterly Report, April 20, 1921," 38. Schools for about 30,000 children were closed entirely. The rest went on half sessions.

only had they lost the peak prices but they had had to store the sugar themselves without compensation and would have to rebag it before it could be shipped. Eventually, they absorbed the one and a half million dollar loss by agreeing to the release, but only after Snowden intimated that ". . . he would make matters . . . unhealthy for the sugar men by making them comply with every law on the statute books to the last letter."⁹¹

Even amid the wreckage the Admiral was determined to prolong the Occupation. He deliberately misrepresented the terms under which the new Commission of Dominicans would serve, hoping that they would refuse and thus demonstrate their inability to cooperate in an orderly return to self-government.⁹² The State Department intervened effectively, administering a sharp reproof to both Snowden and Russell,⁹³ but due to the misunderstandings which arose it was not until February 16, 1921 that the Commission finally met.

It was a vain hope that the Commissioners, four of whom had been on the old Advisory Council, and Snowden could work together. While the Commission studied constitutional amendments and legislation along the lines often suggested by Henríquez y Carvajal, the Admiral gave substance to Dominican press claims of bad faith by continuing to warn the Navy Department that ". . . ninety or ninety-five per cent of the Dominican people

⁹¹ "Santo Domingo Government in Embarrassing Position," Facts About Sugar (New York), XI (September 11, 1920), I. "Santo Domingo Industry in Difficult Position," ibid., XII (January 1, 1921), 4.

⁹² Russell to Acting Secretary of State, January 6, 1921, Foreign Relations 1921, I, 828.

⁹³ Davis to Russell, January 8, 1921, ibid., 829-832.

are satisfied with conditions under the Military Government,"⁹⁴ and that it would be "disastrous" if:⁹⁵

. . . the Government should be turned over to the native rabid professional political agitators who oppose any government which does not give their inefficiency an opportunity to 'bask in the sun.'

Dominican leaders took offense at what appeared to be an official attempt to discredit them in the American press. Alvin M. Gottschall, Director of Publicity for the Military Government's Department of Finance, published an article portraying the average Dominican as a syphilitic degenerate sunk in "barbarism and slavery," the serf of an upper class described as ". . . cunning, sly and indefatigable in its nefarious labors."⁹⁶

As soon as President Harding's Secretary of State, Charles Evans Hughes, turned his attention to the Dominican situation he realized that the Military Governor was in open opposition to the announced policy of the United States. He immediately removed him. On June 3, 1921, Rear Admiral Samuel S. Robison arrived to take the post.⁹⁷

94 Snowden, "Quarterly Report, April 20, 1921," 2.

95 Ibid., 4.

96 Alvin M. Gottschall, "Our Rule in Santo Domingo," New York Times Current History (New York), XIII (February, 1921), 212-218.

97 Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, 840.

CHAPTER V

Admiral Robison came to Santo Domingo with a new withdrawal plan which he proclaimed on June 14. The Harding Plan, as it was known, was a complete departure from the Wilson Plan or the schemes advanced by Henriquez y Carvajal. Instead of making withdrawal dependent on the prior preparation of a new Constitution and political reforms, it merely called for an election, under the 1908 Constitution, of the Senate and House of Deputies to be held within one month. The Military Governor, acting as President, would appoint a group of Dominican plenipotentiaries to negotiate a Convention of Evacuation. Once the Congress confirmed the Convention, the Military Governor would again call the electors to choose a President. As soon as the new President signed the Convention the Occupation Forces would withdraw.

The terms of the Convention called for the ratification of all acts of the Military Government, validation of the recently negotiated \$2,500,000 loan necessary to complete essential public works projects already underway, extension of the Receivership to cover the four year life of this loan, extension of the powers of the Receivership to collection of internal revenues whenever customs receipts failed to cover the obligations of the 1908, 1918, and 1921 bond issues, and a requirement that the Dominican Government accept a Military Mission to command the Guardia.¹ The last two requirements were, of course, the same old

¹ Proclamation for Withdrawal of American Forces from the Dominican Republic, Foreign Relations 1921, I, 835-837.

demands for financial and military control.

Five years of occupation had made the Dominicans no more ready to accept these terms than they had been in 1916. Howls of protest arose. "Harding," declared Listin Diario, the leading newspaper of Santo Domingo City, "with the most absolute tranquility has declared us slaves of the White House" El Tiempo, another paper of the capital, mourned, "Alas for us and for our children; for the captivity will be eternal."² Protesting crowds appeared in every city.³ In the capital some three thousand people marched to the Palace to present a petition of protest.⁴

Robison responded to press attacks and popular misgivings with sincere attempts to reach an understanding. He realized that the Dominican press was glorying in its new impunity, and that editors were vying with each other in vituperative attacks on the Military Government. The influence they wielded was pointed up when, in response to their demands that all Dominicans break official ties with the Occupation, two provincial governors resigned.⁵ In a letter to two leading newspapermen he tried to enlist press support for the Harding Plan. He pointed out that the

2 "How We Make Enemies," The New Republic (New York), XXVII (July 13, 1921), 184.

3 Ureña, Los Yanquis en Santo Domingo, 245.

4 Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, 850. Vance, "A Good Word for Santo Domingo," New York Times Current History Magazine (August, 1922), 851, shows that the Marine Brigade hadn't learned of the switch from Snowden's policy of repression to Robison's conciliatory line. Although Robison received the petition courteously the Marines had attempted to stir the marchers to riot on the way to the Palace by deliberately passing armored cars through the crowd and by buzzing it with aircraft while the speakers were attempting to present the petition.

5 Robison, "Quarterly Report, 12 July, 1921," 8.

ratification of the acts of the Military Government was only for the purpose of giving them legal status in the courts, and that the new Dominican Government would be free to amend or void them after the withdrawal. The extension of the Receivership was only for the purpose of securing the new loan and should not last beyond the term of the first President. As for the Military Mission, that was no different than missions which had been sent to such countries as Brazil or Peru. With cooperation from Dominican leaders and people, the country would be free of the Occupation within eight months.⁶

Even as he wooed Dominican journalists the new Military Governor was thinking of restrictive measures should his courtship fail. A man with a highly developed sense of his country's honor, Admiral Robison found it hard to ignore the calumnies which the Republic's newspapers daily heaped on both the Military Government and the United States. "Writers have been warned against articles of this nature," he wrote soon after his arrival, "but it is believed that more drastic action will be necessary to curb their efforts to create disorder."⁷

In his dealings with the politicians the Admiral was determined to avoid the mistakes of his predecessor. He carefully distinguished between the petty grafters who infested the lower ranks of Dominican politics and the leaders such as Vásquez, Velasquez, and Peynado. He endeavored ". . . to deal with these people on a footing of absolute equality and in

⁶ Ibid., Appendix, Robison to A. Pellerano Sarda and Rafael Brache, June 20, 1921.

⁷ Ibid., 2.

a spirit of generosity"⁸ By this time, however, mistrust of American motives was deeply rooted. Two years of Snowden could not be erased by two weeks of Robison. Although much political protest was strictly for the consumption of voters, Dominican leaders were half convinced, as Welles put it, ". . . that some hidden danger, some threat to their independence, must necessarily lurk in every phrase of the plan of evacuation"⁹

They balked, and in spite of an appeal directed to the people of the Dominican Republic which sought to explain the offensive portions of the Proclamation of June 14,¹⁰ no one moved to hold elections. July 14, the date set for the commencement of electoral proceedings, came and went, and still nothing happened. On July 27, Admiral Robison, acting in accordance with orders from the State Department, issued a proclamation which indefinitely postponed the elections.¹¹

At his first conferences with the leaders of the political parties the Military Governor had been sanguine about chances for acceptance of the terms of evacuation. However, after two meetings, the second of which closed on a note of great optimism, the party leaders refused to come to a third conference. They gave as their reason that it was useless to confer with the Military Governor who could only explain but could not

⁸ Ibid., 5.

⁹ Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, 846.

¹⁰ Robison, "Quarterly Report, 12 July, 1921," Appendix. Hughes to Russell, June 28, 1921, Foreign Relations 1921, I, 839-840.

¹¹ Robison, Proclamation of July 27, 1921, Postponing the Elections, Foreign Relations 1921, I, 842-843.

modify the terms.

The disappointed Admiral blamed the failure largely on the fact that Henríquez y Carvajal, still active in Washington, held out to them the prospect that continued resistance would soon result in the agreement of the United States to withdraw without terms. He also thought that the depressed state of the national economy had made them less enthusiastic about an immediate resumption of self rule.¹²

In spite of later claims that Henríquez y Carvajal had approved the Harding Plan,¹³ the indefatigable ex-President maintained that he had opposed it from the start. In a memorandum to the State Department on July 14, 1921, he pointed out that he had warned repeatedly that any plan of evacuation that depended on recognition of the legality of the Occupation was unacceptable. With telling logic he argued that there was really no need for a treaty of evacuation at all:

The concrete thinking of the Dominican people is that the evacuation of the territory of the Republic by the American troops doesn't require any treaty, and they are not disposed to give their consent to any convention which limits or restricts in the slightest way their right to the full exercise of their sovereignty, nor to accept more obligations than those to which they have already consented in treaties freely negotiated.

He went on to say that the only constitutional way to restore a native Dominican Government was to allow him to renew his interrupted provisional term so that he, the last legal President of the Dominican Republic, could

¹² Robison to Secretary of the Navy Denby, August 3, 1921, ibid., 844-849.

¹³ Kelsey, "American Intervention in Haiti and the Dominican Republic," Annals of the American Academy of Political Science (March, 1922); 193.

issue the calls for elections.¹⁴

Returning Henríquez y Carvajal to his former position for the sole purpose of calling the electoral assemblies would have been a harmless legal fiction which would have answered one of the main objections to the Harding Plan. However, his adamant refusal to consider the treaty obligations demanded by the United States made his proposals unacceptable. At this time Secretary Hughes was in complete agreement with Admiral Robison who advised against any further offers to the Dominicans. A bona fide offer to restore self-government had been made. If the United States stood firm, the politicians would have to agree to it or be revealed as the men to blame for the continuation of the Occupation.¹⁵ As Knapp and Snowden before him had done, the Military Governor underestimated the tenacity of the Dominican leaders. The months passed, and except for the always pliant Velasquez,¹⁶ none of the jefes de partidos showed signs of giving in.

While he awaited the capitulation of the politicians, Admiral Robison turned his attention to the actual government of the country. Snowden's unhappy administration and the collapse of the economy had produced a sorry state of affairs. Customs receipts for the first nine months of 1920 had been \$5,044,254.19. The same period in 1921 produced only \$2,172,918.30.

¹⁴ Henríquez y Carvajal to Hughes, July 14, 1921, Ureña, Los Yanquis en Santo Domingo, 245-250.

¹⁵ Hughes to Denby, July 20, 1921, Foreign Relations 1921, I, 840-841. Robison to Denby, August 3, 1921, ibid., 849.

¹⁶ Robison, Quarterly Report, 17 October, 1921, ibid., 850-852.

Internal revenues dropped from \$3,550,333.54 to \$2,249,729.62.¹⁷ The wildly optimistic budget which Snowden had prepared for 1921 was slashed again and again.¹⁸ Many schools remained open only because teachers remained on without pay, or because the parents' societies raised the money themselves.¹⁹ The Guardia, renamed the Policía Nacional Dominicana in June, 1921, was cut to five hundred men,²⁰ and these had to serve at times without pay.

The Dominicans, who suffered for years under American accusations of financial irresponsibility, openly enjoyed the embarrassment of the Military Government. Russell in 1916 had withheld the customs receipts to pressure Henríquez y Carvajal. In 1921, even those Dominicans able to pay the land tax refused to do so for purely political reasons.²² At first Robison attempted to force payment by changing the law to provide for quick tax sales;²³ later, in a wiser and more effective move, he decreed that all receipts from the property tax would go to support the schools.²⁴

17 Robison, "Quarterly Report, 17 October, 1921," 14.

18 Snowden to Denby, March 28, 1921, Foreign Relations 1921, I, 858-864.

19 Robison, "Quarterly Report, 25 January, 1922," 54-57.

20 Robison, "Quarterly Report, 12 July, 1921," 7.

21 Robison to Denby, 30 November, 1921, "Quarterly Report, 25 January, 1922," 21.

22 Ibid.

23 Ibid., 20.

24 Robison to Denby, May 27, 1922, "Quarterly Report, 15 July, 1922," Appendix, 8.

By the end of the year the Military Government faced a situation in which receipts from all sources, exclusive of the sums pledged to cover the outstanding bond issues, totalled only two hundred thousand dollars monthly. Monthly expenditures under the greatly reduced budget were four hundred thousand. Almost frantically Robison begged Washington to approve a new loan.²⁵ Eventually, the State Department authorized a loan of ten million dollars which proved barely sufficient to complete the north-south highway and pay current indebtedness.

Besides the paramount problems of evacuation terms and financial depression, Admiral Robison faced other difficulties. One was the fact that the morale of the Marine Brigade had sunk to an alarming low. During the last three months of Snowden's administration and the first three of Robison's there had been a total of 551 courts-martial among the two thousand men of the Brigade.²⁶ One hundred and three had been general courts, indicating serious offenses.

At the town of Guaybo Dulces on December 26, 1920, the 70th Company ran amok. No officers were in camp; the First Sergeant had no control over the men; the Gunnery Sergeant, under arrest in his tent awaiting trial for drunkenness, was drunk again. Most of the company went AWOL to the neighboring town where they demanded liquor at the store of Luis Bautista. The young boy tending the store refused them. Angered, the

²⁵ Robison to Denby, December 19, 1921, "Quarterly Report, 25 January, 1922," 22. "Believe Department does not understand seriousness of financial situation here as no word approval proposed bond issue received . . . Military Government will be thoroughly discredited if work on road stops."

²⁶ Snowden, "Quarterly Report, April 20, 1921," 4. Robison, "Quarterly Report, 12 July, 1921," 7.

crowd of juvenile delinquents in uniform--most of the marines involved were under nineteen, only two were over twenty--seized the liquor stock and burned down the store. They ran wild through the town, burning down four more houses and looting three others.²⁷

This was not a typical incident, and the men involved received heavy sentences. However, it was an indication of the morale situation which had developed as a result of isolation, inactivity, lack of recreation, and the growing hostility between the native population and the marines. At the Admiral's insistence an intensive training program for the marines was instituted, recreational facilities were improved, and athletics were emphasized. The report for July, August, and September, 1922, showed only eight general courts-martial.²⁸

Inactivity had never been a problem for the marines of the Thirteenth Regiment stationed in the vicinity of San Pedro de Macoris. The banditry so often reported as practically at an end never ceased, and in the summer of 1921 increasing unemployment drove more men than ever into gavillero life. The climax to a series of increasingly bold depredations came on September 27, 1921, when Ramón Natera, the latest pretender to Cha-chá's former position, kidnapped Thomas J. Steele, the British manager of the Angelina sugar estate.²⁹

²⁷ Senate Hearings, II, 1149-1156. Knight, The Americans in Santo Domingo, 109. Not only did poor Bautista fail to collect damages, but on the testimony of the same men who burned down his store he was convicted of selling liquor to marines in the past in violation of Occupation law. He paid a five hundred dollar fine and spent eleven months in jail.

²⁸ Robison, "Quarterly Report, 18 October, 1922," 4.

²⁹ Knight, The Americans in Santo Domingo, 117.

The abduction took place at the very time that the new commander of the Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel William C. Harllee, was attending a farewell reception for his predecessor. The party was called off at once, and the entire Regiment started off on a hunt for Natera. Steele was recovered unharmed within a day or so, but the incident inspired Harllee to find out why, after five years of constant activity by nearly a thousand marines, there had been no improvement in the situation.

He discovered that the sugar men still preferred to pay reasonable protection money to a recognized gavillero chief than to suffer the multiple exactions of the petty leaders who sprang up each time one of the strong jefes was caught by the Occupation Forces. Consequently, they would not cooperate actively with the marines. The terrain which had baffled Thorpe and Davis was the same. All the major sugar plantations of Macoris bordered on the nearly impenetrable Jagual Woods in which the bandits hid.

He also discovered that virtually the entire population of the towns in the area, San Pedro de Macoris, Hato Mayor, and Los Llanos, were either bandits themselves or bandit sympathizers. This puzzled him, but when one recalls that Los Llanos and Hato Mayor had been the scenes of Merckle's atrocities, and that San Pedro was where Colonel Davis had ruled in such highhanded fashion, this is not so surprising. Ironically, it was in San Pedro where Davis had boasted of his success in handling the ayuntamiento that Harllee found:

There is a most vicious element of politicians . . . who compose the Ayuntamiento [sic] . . . of San Pedro de Macoris, who are in league with the instigators of bandits. They are openly inimical to the Military Government . . ."

However, it was the tactics employed until then which he blamed for the failure to eradicate the bandits. The marines remained in camp until an act of banditry was reported; then patrols were sent out in an attempt to track down the gavilleros. After trying this method Harllee realized its uselessness. He commented:

The game of Blind Man's Buff with the Marines for "It" has been played . . . since the beginning of the occupation. It has resulted in numerous patrols wandering around aimlessly trying to get contact with the bandit group. During my first few weeks of service in command of this District, it seemed difficult to find enough men to carry out this system of chasing raiding parties. This system results in the necessity of sending out patrols under leaders who are not always men of responsibility. Under those conditions men become hardboiled and after being fired at a number of times from the brush they do not always stop to investigate before shooting. The system of aimless patrolling offers no cure for the situation and results in bloodshed and a continued unsettled condition of the countryside and makes the job of the marine interminable.

Harllee's solution was to turn what had been treated as a military operation into a police action. When Natera released Steele, the fleeing bandit also left behind a Dominican girl whom he had kidnapped and made his unwilling paramour. The girl formed the nucleus of a corps of informers which Harllee used to good effect. During the fall of 1921, the Colonel visited each town of the area and had all the male inhabitants assembled for scrutiny by his concealed informers. The work was done as tactfully as possible with Harllee and his aides making polite speeches in Spanish, French, and English explaining the reason for the lineup, apologizing for the inconvenience, and offering to all a free meal of salmon and rice. By the first of the year 430 men had been identified and convicted for banditry.

No attempt was made to charge the men with specific crimes. All those convicted were given identical six month sentences during which

they were employed in cutting wide trails eight hundred yards apart through the Jagual Woods.³⁰ The network of trails destroyed the woods as a hiding place, and another series of roundups and identifications held early in 1922 netted 191 bandits³¹ bearing such curiously beautiful names as León Lampara, Andrés Cornelia, Génaro Rosario, and Agapito Santana. All through the spring of 1922 hungry and discouraged gavilleros straggled in to surrender.³²

Solution of the bandit problem was not the only triumph of Robison's administration. Virtually all other public works were abandoned, but every effort was made to complete the north-south highway which was formally opened on May 6, 1922.³³ Nothing the Military Government did was so universally appreciated as this long dreamed of road that was named Carretera Duarte after Juan Pablo Duarte, the leader of the successful revolt against Haitian rule in 1844. One enthusiastic speaker at the ceremony which opened the road assured Robison that if he now worked for the restoration of a Dominican Government with the same success as he had had in completing

30 Lieutenant Colonel William C. Harllee to Brigadier General Harry Lee, 2 January, 1922, in Robison, "Quarterly Report, 25 January, 1922," Enclosure. Harllee was proud of the near bloodlessness of his method. Only five Dominicans were killed during the operation including one shot during the recovery of Steele. One of these was a Dominican agent of marine intelligence accidentally killed by a marine patrol; two prisoners were killed "while trying to escape;" and one unfortunate farmer was murdered by an AWOL marine. For a description of pre-Harllee patrolling in the east see Alvin B. Kemp, "Private Kemp Reports on Our War in Santo Domingo," Literary Digest (New York), LX (February 22, 1919), 105-107.

31 Robison, "Quarterly Report, 22 April, 1922," 19.

32 "March of Events," Marine Corps Gazette (September, 1922), 296-298.

33 Robison, "Quarterly Report, 15 July, 1922," 2.

the road his name would go down in history with those other great benefactors of the human race, ". . . Jesus Christ, Lincoln, Lee and Jefferson Davis."³⁴

The carping Dominican press found grounds to criticize even this popular achievement. The Americans, it was claimed, were taking credit for a project already well under way when the Occupation began. There were complaints about the workmanship; charges of extravagance³⁵ and graft.³⁶ This was the sort of thing guaranteed to rattle the thin-skinned Military Governor. He gave up his efforts to enlist the support of Dominican newspapers, but he could never learn to ignore their attacks. Although the Censorship had been abolished, he firmly believed that there were limits beyond which no newspaper should be allowed to go. An alarmed State Department began to hear that papers were being seized and editors hailed into Provost Court again.

Upon inquiry Admiral Robison made his position clear.³⁷

³⁴ Ibid., Appendix.

³⁵ Knight, The Americans in Santo Domingo, 102. Total cost of all public works during the Occupation, of which the 180 mile Carretera was by far the largest and most expensive, was \$6,688,536.

³⁶ Robison, "Quarterly Report, 15 July, 1922," Appendix. A notable exception was the Velasquez organ, Pluma y Espada, which condemned Dominican critics. It pointed out that the money wasted in fruitless revolutions should have built the road long ago.

³⁷ Robison to Denby, May 27, 1922, "Quarterly Report, 15 July, 1922," Appendix. Carl Kelsey, "American Intervention in Haiti and the Dominican Republic," Annals of the American Academy of Political Science (March, 1922), 185-187, sympathized with Robison, could see no harm in Executive Orders 572 and 573, and thought Washington should have supported the Military Government against the press. Apparently the political scientist from the University of Pennsylvania had forgotten that the free press of the United States itself was even then questioning the motives of both the United States Government and the Military Government.

The Press has been informed that the Military Government welcomes criticisms of its policies and of their results, but will not permit its motives, or the motives of the United States Government to be questioned in print, nor the private character of the Forces of Occupation either individually or collectively to be attacked; nor will it permit the publication of articles reviling those Dominicans who accept employment from the Military Government, or which call upon the people to resist any of the laws or executive orders or to forcibly resist the Military Occupation as such.

Thus, when La Informacion of Santiago attacked Colonel Lyman, the District Commander, on January 25, 1922, by terming him a freak "worthy to be selected for a new treatise on the Origin of Species," Robison closed it down.³⁸ He defended his stand by saying, ". . . the Press . . . has all the liberty that the Press of any occupied country ought to have."³⁹

The Military Governor's sense of national honor finally destroyed his usefulness in negotiating for the withdrawal. He considered the Dominicans' efforts to inquire into the motives behind the American proposals as insults.⁴⁰ Unable to conceal his feelings, Robison soon became a liability at the conference table.

The outcry over the Wilson administration's Caribbean adventures during the presidential campaign of 1920 finally aroused some interest in Congress. A Select Committee under the chairmanship of Senator Medill McCormick of Illinois began hearings in Washington in August, 1921, on the occupation and administration of Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

³⁸ Robison to Denby, May 27, 1922, "Quarterly Report, 15 July, 1922," Appendix.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid. He regretted being unable to jail Peynado for questioning American good faith at a conference with himself, Russell, and the other Dominican leaders on February 22, 1922. As a veteran of Henriquez y Carvajal's Cabinet Peynado had some reason to be suspicious of Russell's good faith.

During November and December the Committee went to hear testimony in Haiti and Santo Domingo.

The Dominicans were represented before the Committee by the lobbyist for the Dominican Nationalist Committee, Horace G. Knowles, a New York lawyer and former American Minister to the Dominican Republic. Henriquez y Carvajal himself returned to the Republic for the first time since 1916 at the end of November to prepare the ground for the Senators' visit after indicting the Occupation at the first session of the Committee.

Although Velasquez and Vásquez, working hard to make sure that the end of the Occupation would find them in control of the Dominican Government, had been assuring the Military Governor for months that the former Provisional President no longer had any support in the country,⁴² he received a hero's welcome on his arrival. He presided at a meeting of all factions at Puerto Plata in early December, in order to rally all political groups for a common stand before the Senate Committee. The agreement reached at Puerto Plata called for a refusal to cooperate in the Harding Plan under any conditions, a reavowal of support for the old Henriquez y Carvajal reform program, and the formation of a Committee of Restoration composed of representatives of all the major political parties and social organizations of the Republic headed by Henriquez y Carvajal. When the United States agreed to withdraw without terms, this Committee would form

⁴¹ Statement of Francisco Henriquez y Carvajal, Senate Hearings, I, 51-57.

⁴² Robison, "Quarterly Report, 17 October, 1921," 5. After talks with leading politicians Robison reported that Henriquez y Carvajal had lost all his support due to his apparent failure in the United States and rumors of graft in connection with the "Patriotic Week" funds. ". . . his following now consists only of riffraff."

itself into a Junta Electoral which would take charge of the formation of a Dominican Government.⁴³

It appeared to be a great victory for the former Provisional President. Every important leader with the sole exception of Velasquez signed the agreement. However, there was plenty of concealed opposition. Vásquez, who had the largest personal following in the nation, assured the Military Governor soon after the meeting that his signature on the agreement did not mean he was completely unwilling to compromise.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, the immediate effect of the Puerto Plata meeting was that all Dominicans appearing before the Senate Committee supported Henríquez y Carvajal's stand.

Knowles had outlined the points he hoped to prove during the opening session of the hearings in Washington: there had been no legal ground for the "invasion" and occupation; the "invasion" was in violation of the Constitution of the United States, existing treaties with the Dominican Republic, the resolutions proposed by the United States itself at The Hague, international law, the Monroe Doctrine, and President Wilson's Fourteenth Point; excesses, abuses, cruelties, and murders were committed by the marines in a reign of terror; the orders of the Military Government were unreasonable, cruel and un-American; the Military Government had interfered with property rights; and the Military Government had been "incompetent, wasteful, and extravagant."⁴⁵

⁴³ Ureña, Los Yanquis en Santo Domingo, 251-255.

⁴⁴ Robison to Denby, 20 December, 1921, "Quarterly Report, 25 January, 1922," Appendix.

⁴⁵ Knowles, Senate Hearings, I, 51.

In Santo Domingo City Knowles pressed his case hard--perhaps too hard. For three days Dominican witnesses paraded before the Committee, denying the truth of the American statement on the reason for intervention and exposing the ruthlessness with which Russell and Caperton had forced the Occupation. The Military Government's dirty linen was thoroughly and publicly washed; for the first time Merckle's atrocities and the Guaybo Dulces affair were brought into the open.

Senator McCormick had not expected such a torrent of denunciation. First embarrassed, then angry, he realized that any more testimony could only harm the United States. Although the hearings had been scheduled to run until the eighteenth of December, he announced on the morning of the fifteenth that they would conclude that afternoon.⁴⁶ Surprised, Knowles protested that he still had many witnesses to call, among them Fabio Fiallo and Francisco Henríquez y Carvajal.

The Senator, who had been growing more and more annoyed with Knowles, demanded to know why he had not presented any withdrawal plans. He hinted darkly that if the Dominicans were trying to prove trespass and damage against the United States there was ample precedent for the requirement that the occupied country pay all the expenses of military occupation.⁴⁷ Knowles took full advantage of McCormick's hasty remark by first pointing out that as the announced purpose of the Committee was to inquire into the "occupation and administration" of the Dominican Republic by the United States, he confined himself to those two subjects and had not

⁴⁶ McCormick, ibid., II, 1161-1162.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 1163.

concerned himself with withdrawal. He expressed horrified amazement that a United States Senator would bring up the "barbaric precedent" of charging the cost of occupation to the natives.⁴⁸

Senator McCormick went to the Dominican Republic hoping to get the Dominican leaders to agree to the Harding Plan.⁴⁹ Not only had he failed, but the hearings became a sounding board for damaging and embarrassing charges against the United States. The Senator was irked by Knowles' tactics; Admiral Robison nearly choked with rage. That an American should attack the reputation of his country in this way was nothing but treason.

When the Military Governor saw Knowles at the wharf the next day attempting to send a message to the USS Argonne which the Senators had just boarded for the voyage home, he lost control of himself. "Get out of this," he bellowed. "Get the hell off this wharf!" The startled lawyer hurriedly withdrew. Robison, still steaming, told everyone within earshot, "We've seen enough of that man around here; I've got no use for him. Any man that will make the charges he has, has no right here."⁵⁰ Later he urged that Knowles be prosecuted in American courts for ". . . arousing the enmity of the inhabitants against the United States Military

⁴⁸ Knowles, ibid., 1164.

⁴⁹ Hughes to Denby, December 17, 1921, Foreign Relations 1921, I, 868. ". . . Senator McCormick is to make an effort to bring about an agreement with the Dominican leaders under which our plan of evacuation can be carried out. It is hoped that his efforts will put an end to the present deadlock."

⁵⁰ Gruening, "Haiti and Santo Domingo Today," The Nation (February 15, 1922), 189.

Forces⁵¹

The outcome of the hearings convinced Secretary of State Hughes that the Harding Plan would never be accepted. Meanwhile, the prestige of the United States in Latin America slipped lower every day that the Occupation continued.⁵² Early in January, 1922, Hughes called Admiral Robison and Minister Russell to confer with him in Washington.

Over the objections of the Military Governor it was decided to make one final concession to the Dominicans. The demand for the Military Mission was withdrawn. However, the United States was to be granted the right to maintain a Legation Guard of marines whose officers would, informally, be available to aid in the instruction of the Policia. If the Dominican leaders did not accept this, they were to be informed that the United States cancelled its offer of withdrawal, that the Military Government would be authorized to negotiate a foreign loan for ten million dollars for the life of which the Receivership would be extended, and that the Occupation would continue in its present form until at least July 1,

⁵¹ Robison to Denby, May 27, 1922, "Quarterly Report, 15 July, 1922," Appendix. It is hard to blame Occupation officials for losing patience with Knowles. Both before and after the hearings he issued numerous extravagant and often untrue statements. He charged the Military Government with waste because it ordered a large supply of smallpox vaccine at a time when an epidemic was raging in Haiti on grounds that Dominicans never caught smallpox. Later the disease reached serious proportions in the Republic. He also showed poor judgment in repeating charges made by the Clyde Steamship Line. Breaking the Clyde Line's vicious monopoly was one of the best services of the Military Government. Horace G. Knowles, "Santo Domingo's Bitter Protest," New York Times Current History (New York), XIII (June, 1921), 397.

⁵² Hughes to Russell, February 10, 1922, Foreign Relations 1922, II, 11.

1924.⁵³

Russell and Robison presented the new terms to a representative group of Dominican leaders which included, besides the party leaders, such usually cooperative men as Jacinto de Castro and Manuel de Jesús Troncoso de la Concha; Juan F. Sánchez, who had served throughout the Occupation as Governor of Santo Domingo Province; and Francisco J. Peynado. Peynado, whose excellent command of English usually made him the spokesman at such meetings, loudly denounced the introduction of the Legation Guard as an underhanded trick which would allow the United States to dominate Dominican politics as it dominated Nicaragua's through the Legation Guard there.⁵⁴ This charge infuriated the Admiral and broke up the meeting.

The following day the Dominicans who had attended the meeting issued a statement unanimously rejecting the American proposal.⁵⁵ On March 6, the Military Governor proclaimed the cancellation of the offer to withdraw.⁵⁶ On March 28, he issued Executive Order No. 735 which announced that the first installment of the authorized ten million dollars had been borrowed--a \$6,700,000, 5½ per cent, twenty year bond issue.⁵⁷

Meanwhile, Peynado had come to the conclusion, previously reached by Henríquez y Carvajal, that it was useless to talk in Santo Domingo

⁵³ Ibid., 11-12.

⁵⁴ Russell to Hughes, March 5, 1923, ibid., 13-14.

⁵⁵ Reply of the Political Leaders and Representative Dominicans, February 23, 1922, ibid., 17.

⁵⁶ Robison, Proclamation of March 6, 1922, ibid., 18-19.

⁵⁷ Robison, "Quarterly Report, 22 April, 1922," Appendix.

City with an Admiral and a Minister who had neither the power nor the inclination to compromise. Henríquez y Carvajal, his funds exhausted, retired to Cuba after the Senate hearings; Cestero remained in the Dominican Republic. Peynado headed for Washington to talk with the Secretary of State.

The Dominican lawyer argued that the last real stumbling block in the path of agreement, now that the requirement for the Military Mission had been discarded, was the purely legalistic objection to having the American Military Governor act as the head of state during negotiations for withdrawal and election of a Dominican Government. He proposed that a Provisional Dominican Government be established alongside the Military Government to carry out these duties.⁵⁸

As it became apparent that Peynado was making real progress in Washington, Vásquez and Velasquez hurried to the United States to gain a share of the credit. Arriving in the middle of June, they found affairs well advanced. Peynado's proposals had been given tentative approval, and Sumner Welles, who had resigned as head of the Latin American Division in March, was recalled by the State Department to take charge of further negotiations with the Dominicans.⁵⁹

There was really little for the tardy politicians to do but put their signatures to what became known as the Hughes-Peynado Plan on July 3, 1922. The new plan called for the immediate appointment of a Provisional Government--a President and Cabinet--which could promulgate decrees for

⁵⁸ Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, 815.

⁵⁹ Welles to Hughes, June 20, 1922, Foreign Relations 1922, II, 25.

the election of a Constitutional Government without the intervention of the Military Governor. The Provisional President and his Cabinet would be selected by majority vote of a Commission composed of Peynado, Vásquez, Velasquez, Archbishop Nouel, and Elias Brache, the representative of the old Jimenista Party renamed Partido Liberal.⁶⁰ The Palace would be turned over to the Provisional Government; the marines would be concentrated in no more than three locations, and all police duties turned over to the Policia. The United States still required the ratification of a Convention before final withdrawal, but there was no further mention of a Military Mission, a Legation Guard, or any control over internal revenues. The Dominicans had only to agree to ratify those acts of the Military Government which levied taxes, authorized expenditures, or granted contract rights, and to agree to extend the Receivership for the life of the last bond issue.⁶¹

At the conclusion of the Washington talks, Welles was designated a Special Commissioner to represent the President of the United States in the Dominican Republic. He departed at once for Santo Domingo to supervise the implementation of the plan, arriving on July 29.⁶²

The new proposals had not yet been made public, and protests against a rumored sell-out in Washington were widespread in the Republic. Commissioner Welles made a rapid tour of the more important towns conferring

⁶⁰ Ibid., Vásquez and Velasquez claimed at first that they alone should name the Provisional Government, but Welles would not allow this.

⁶¹ Plan of June 30, 1922, for the Withdrawal of the Military Government, Foreign Relations 1922, II, 33-35.

⁶² Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, 859.

with the leading citizens of each to get their reaction to the plan. An overwhelming majority approved. However, Welles, moving cautiously, withheld publication until all possible difficulties and misunderstandings had been cleared up.⁶³

A place on the Commission had been reserved for Henriquez y Carvajal, but he refused it, saying that his commitment to withdrawal without conditions made his cooperation with such a body impossible.⁶⁴ Admiral Robison, who believed that far too many concessions had been made, proposed modifications to the agreement signed in Washington which would have extended American control in ways completely unacceptable to the Dominicans. The manner in which the Military Governor attempted to force his views made it clear to Welles why negotiations had bogged down for so long. He wrote:⁶⁵

In the early months, before the Provisional Government had been installed, the grounds of contention between the Dominican leaders and the . . . Military Government were so numerous, and in many cases so grave, that a deadlock might once more have ensued as it had in the past, had it not been possible for the views of the Dominican members of the Commission to be transmitted directly to the Secretary of State in Washington, and for the determinations reached by Secretary Hughes to be transmitted to the Dominican leaders solely through the channel of President Harding's representative.

Had the State Department still relied on Minister Russell, who pursued the goal of evacuation with measurably less zeal than he had that of intervention, it is probable that another embarrassing stalemate would

⁶³ Welles to Hughes, August 7, 1922, Foreign Relations 1922, II, 38-39. The agreement, essentially unchanged, was published on September 19, 1922.

⁶⁴ Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, 863.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 862.

have occurred. Commissioner Welles, however, was determined to bring the Occupation to a speedy end, and firmly rebuffed Robison.⁶⁶ The Admiral did not take this gracefully; such cooperation as Welles received from him thereafter was given grudgingly.

At one point the Military Governor came close to open rebellion. The Dominicans requested that all marines be confined to barracks on election day to avoid any suggestion that the Provisional Government was unable to maintain order, and to prevent clashes between Dominicans and marines which might easily occur in the excited atmosphere of the day. Welles thought that this sounded reasonable, but Robison refused. He thought that the request was an expression of personal dislike for the Occupation Forces and that acceptance of it would be an admission that the presence of the marines was wrong in itself.⁶⁷ The Navy Department had to order his compliance, and even then he registered a written protest.⁶⁸

The inauguration of the Provisional Government took place on the morning of October 21, 1922. Amid scenes of wild rejoicing, Juan Bautista Vicini Burgos, a non-politician and reputedly the richest citizen of the Republic, swore to carry out the duties of Provisional President according to the terms of the agreement. Ecstatic Dominicans broke police lines to invade the inaugural reception, completely disrupting ceremonies in which Admiral Robison and his staff were formally welcoming the new

⁶⁶ Welles to Hughes, August 9, 1922, Foreign Relations 1922, II, 39-42. Hughes to Welles, August 11, 1922, ibid., 43.

⁶⁷ Welles to Hughes, October 2, 1922, ibid., 64-65.

⁶⁸ Welles to Hughes, October 9, 1922, ibid., 72.

President and his Cabinet. The Military Governor, jostled aside in the crush, quietly withdrew. A Dominican President possessed the Palace for the first time since November 29, 1916.⁶⁹

The United States had realized for some time that Admiral Robison's further presence in Santo Domingo was not conducive to the accomplishment of its program of withdrawal. Two days after the inauguration he boarded a ship for home, and Brigadier General Harry Lee USMC, the Brigade Commander, became the last American Military Governor.⁷⁰ Lee adhered to the spirit as well as the letter of the evacuation plan and studiously avoided any interference with the Provisional Government. The events of his administration belong more to the history of Dominican politics than to the history of the American Occupation.

Rising sugar prices in 1922 and 1923⁷¹ enabled the Provisional Government to operate in an atmosphere of returning prosperity. Peynado announced his candidacy for President, and Vásquez and Velasquez united to meet his threat, Velasquez accepting the vice-presidential spot on the Vásquez ticket. In the rush for votes the work of the Provisional Regime was nearly forgotten, and it took the most strenuous efforts by Sumner Welles to get the necessary electoral laws drafted and promulgated. Even so the

69 Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, 877.

70 Welles to Hughes, October 23, 1922, Foreign Relations 1922, II, 75-76.

71 Robison, "Quarterly Report, 18 October, 1922," 22-28. Drought in 1922 cut Caribbean sugar production at the same time that bumper fruit crops in the United States brought increased demand from canneries. Knight, The Americans in Santo Domingo, 124, notes caustically, "It is not recorded that the Provisional Government followed the . . . Military Government precedent by crediting its own astuteness with the increase."

original schedule, which called for election of a Constitutional Government in the fall of 1923, was not met.⁷²

Alarmed, General Lee reported that the political situation in the summer of 1923 was "the worst in the history of the Republic." For a time it appeared that the worst predictions of Admiral Snowden were coming true. Twelve political assassinations were reported during the month of June alone.⁷³

As it became apparent that the combined Vásquez-Velasquez forces would win, Peynado was urged to quit the race. He realized, however, that his withdrawal would discredit the elections and determined to stay in. On March 15, 1924, Dominican voters went to the polls in the largest and most orderly election in the history of the Republic. As expected, Vásquez was elected by a healthy majority. Peynado then did something unprecedented in the annals of Dominican politics. He publicly congratulated his successful rival and promised faithfully to support him in office. It seemed that political maturity had come at last to the Dominican Republic, and Peynado was hailed as the savior of his country.⁷⁴

The United States, anxious to increase the prestige and stability of the new Government, invited Vásquez to Washington. He was received with the honors due a head of state; so that his return might be a triumphal

72 Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, 883-885.

73 Lee, "Quarterly Report, April, May, and June, 1923, undated," 2.

74 Lee, "Quarterly Report, January, February, and March, 1924, undated," 2-3.

one, he was allowed to negotiate some minor reforms to the 1907 Convention.⁷⁵

All that remained to be done was to inaugurate the new Government. On July 12, 1924, to the great joy of the Dominican people, and the profound relief of the American Government, the American Occupation of the Dominican Republic ended.

⁷⁵ Welles, Naboth's Vineyard, II, 897-898. Ibid., Appendix I, 1018-1024. The sum set aside for Receivership expenses was increased from 5 to 8 per cent, but the Dominican Government was allowed more discretion in the matter of tariff rates, and surplus directed to the sinking fund was reduced from 50 per cent of all collections in excess of \$3,000,000 to 10 per cent of all over \$4,000,000.

CHAPTER VI

The Occupation of the Dominican Republic was the result of an historical process in which many people, Dominicans and Americans, played important parts. One man, however, was most responsible for the denouement.

Woodrow Wilson and Robert Lansing should not be judged too harshly for allowing a minor diplomatic official, William W. Russell, the free hand he had in the Dominican Republic. Absorbed in the drama of the World War, they can hardly be blamed for failing to pay strict attention to the sordid little sideshow of Santo Domingo. It seemed expedient to continue the old policy of expanding American control in the country, and when Russell urged following that policy to its logical conclusion no one protested. If a little American control was good, more American control would be better, and complete American control would be best.

Russell also bears a large part of the blame for the fact that the Occupation did so much to discredit the United States in the eyes of the Latin World. Spanish America long remembered his bullying tactics in the summer of 1916.

In spite of Russell's efforts and those of his true disciple, Admiral Snowden, to rivet American control on the Dominican Republic, the end of the Occupation saw the little country emerge more truly sovereign than it had ever been. This result, too, was largely due to one man.

From first to last, whether pressured, bribed, vilified, or ignored, Francisco Henriquez y Carvajal held fast to one unshakeable position: the Dominican Republic could not legally surrender its sovereignty.

The American demands, and the Occupation which followed the Dominican refusal of those demands, were, ipso facto, illegal.

Few people in the United States in 1916 were willing to listen. Even those whom his arguments reached rejected them on pragmatic grounds. After all, the Dominican people were much better off under the Occupation, legal or not, and what was more, they preferred American rule--humane, just, honest, progressive, and sanitary--to a native Government. Irrefutable statements by our Military Government proved it.

The State Department, after allowing the Military Government to run without supervision for four years, awoke to the fact that Latin America was listening to Henríquez y Carvajal and was very much interested in the legality of the Occupation. Furthermore, Latin America did not believe that the Military Government was either popular, progressive, honest, or humane. Embarrassed by this discovery, the United States sought to withdraw at once, provided that the Dominicans would save American face by recognizing the legality of the Occupation, and accepting the same demands whose rejection had brought it about in the first place.

The offer was tempting, but Henríquez y Carvajal stood firm. The Dominican people stood with him.

When the first offer to withdraw was published, most Americans who even knew that there was an American Military Government in the Dominican Republic shared the regrets of Admiral Snowden. Press reaction to the Wilson Plan was epitomized by the Weekly Review.¹

¹ Weekly Review (New York), IV (January 12, 1921), 22. For a survey of press reaction to the Wilson Plan see, "Home Rule for Santo Domingo," Literary Digest (New York), LXVIII (January 15, 1921), 15-16.

So then after seeing to a revision of their Constitution, we are to turn back Santo Domingo to the Dominicans. Our military administration did very well; got the Government out of debt, suppressed banditry, improved the roads, gave the Dominicans their first taste of efficiency. But solvency, industry, efficiency, are things foreign to the Dominican genius; it is to be expected that the Dominicans will revert to their old ways as soon as our Marines leave. We take it that they have a heaven-derived right to be as lazy and unsanitary as they please . . . In time, probably, it will be necessary to step in again and compel the Dominicans to solvency, when the sentimentalists will again have a whack at the party in power and the officers and troops of occupation.

After the Senate hearings and the propaganda campaign of the Dominican Nationalist Committee revealed the American Military Government as something less than the paragon it had proclaimed itself, more Americans began to listen to the "sentimentalists." Racial strife, labor violence, and the increase in crime which marked the Prohibition era in the United States made thoughtful people less confident of American moral superiority. Phillip Douglass, a commercial traveller in the Caribbean, spoke for many when he wrote:

The people who are now holding the reins in Santo Domingo through steel and gunpowder had better return to the United States. Law and order need to be maintained here in more extended regions where lynching bees are as regular as every fourth day. If they want to organize street-cleaning brigades there is more work, relatively, in New York than in Santo Domingo. If they want to develop civic pride, Kensington, Philadelphia, will claim their attention for a decade. If they want to develop a good system of schools, let them go to Delaware, or to any state in the South. If they want to raise the standard of well-being of a Caribbean people, Porto Rico, our Porto Rico, cries out most pitifully . . .

Even those Americans, such as Carl Kelsey, who defended the necessity and conduct of the Occupation regretted the occasional crudeness of the Military Government and suggested that the answer to this problem was the

2 Douglass, "Americanizing Santo Domingo," The Nation (May 4, 1921), 664.

assignment of better trained men and the development of a "definite program." They were naive, indeed, if they believed that a better managed American Occupation would have spared the United States from charges of tyranny and despotism. As Melvin M. Knight pointed out:³

A military occupation has to adopt standards of conduct and legal procedure which would be atrocious on the part of a civil government . . . Even if there had been no . . . torturings . . . or . . . "bumping off" . . . of people without trial . . . , the charge of Cossack methods would have been inevitable. The only sure way to escape this kind of unsavory publicity is to avoid military occupations.

Had the Dominican people no Henriquez y Carvajal to speak for them, had they accepted the Occupation, had there been no depression in 1920 to destroy the Military Government's claims to perfection, the effect of the American seizure of Santo Domingo could have been very different. Public opinion might have supported other Russells in other "Banana Republics."

The revelation that the American Occupation of Santo Domingo differed only in degree from the German Occupation of Belgium, and, above all, the financial collapse of the Military Government worked a great change in American public opinion.⁴ Both the Government and the people of the United States came to accept the idea to which lip service had been paid for so long: the little nations of the Caribbean were truly sovereign and must be treated as such. There would be no American empire in the Caribbean.

³ Knight, The Americans in Santo Domingo, 118.

⁴ A, "Two Years of American Foreign Policy," Foreign Affairs (New York), I (March 15, 1923), 7-8. "Of late, however, the American Public, which at first paid little heed to what had taken place, has shown a disposition to look into the matter more closely and to disapprove of the depriving of even turbulent or backward peoples of their right to manage their own affairs."

EPILOGUE

The main actors in the drama of the Occupation of the Dominican Republic passed into obscurity soon after the withdrawal. William Russell, his usefulness in Latin America considerably diminished, finished his State Department career in Bangkok. The Admirals, Caperton, Knapp, Snowden, and Robison, all retired soon after leaving Santo Domingo. It is pleasant to learn that Colonel Lane was rewarded with a brigadier's star not many years after his departure from the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs, Justice and Public Instruction. Henríquez y Carvajal resumed the practice of medicine in Santiago de Cuba and never returned to the Dominican Republic.

The Occupation left behind it a good highway across the Republic, the nucleus of a good public education system, an efficient national police, and some bitter memories. The oil which Sumner Welles had poured on the Dominican political waters was soon dissipated. Vásquez, already old, became sick and feeble. Peynado, Velasquez, and even old Desiderio Arias began to intrigue busily.

Just coming to public notice was another product of the Occupation. Marine superiors had commented favorably on the good looks, hard work, and deferential manner of a young Dominican officer and left him in one of the top posts of the Policía Nacional.¹ Gradually, Major Rafael L.

¹ Ernesto Vega y Pagan, A Military Biography of Generalissimo Rafael L. Trujillo Molina (Ciudad Trujillo, D. R., 1956). Aside from panegyrics to El Benefactor, this is mainly a collection of photostats of reports and correspondence dealing with Trujillo's career in the Guardia from 1918 until 1924.

Trujillo Molina strengthened his control over the Policía and waited for his chance.

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