

**Under the Shadow of the Big Stick:  
U.S. Intervention in Cuba, 1906-1909**

**A Monograph  
by  
MAJ Bruce A. Vitor II  
United States Army**



**School of Advanced Military Studies  
United States Army Command and General Staff College  
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas**

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approved by the monograph director and reader named below.

Approved by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Thomas A. Bruscano, Ph.D. Monograph Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Christof Schaefer, COL, IN Monograph Reader

\_\_\_\_\_  
Stefan J. Banach, COL, IN Director,  
School of Advanced  
Military Studies

\_\_\_\_\_  
Robert F. Baumann, Ph.D. Director,  
Graduate Degree  
Programs

## **Abstract**

UNDER THE SHADOW OF THE BIG STICK: U.S. INTERVENTION IN CUBA, 1906-1909  
by MAJOR Bruce A. Vitor II, US Army, 43 pages.

The U.S. intervention in Cuba in 1906, commonly referred to as the Second Intervention, began on September 28, 1906 with the resignation of the Cuban president and his cabinet and ended on January 28, 1909 when the U.S. relinquished control of the state to its newly elected president. While American political and military leaders clearly made some mistakes before and during the Second Intervention, the U.S. intervention in Cuba in 1906 should be considered a success both politically and militarily for the United States. The military actions of the Army of Cuban Pacification and the provisional government led to a peaceful occupation and pacification of the island. Furthermore, the military objectives met the narrow national political objectives of the day, resulting in fifty years of positive political and economic relations between Cuba and the United States.

This monograph describes the different nature of American military actions conducted during stability operations in support of non-war policy objectives during the Second Intervention. The study examines the conditions and events in Cuba that contributed to the intervention, traces the evolution of U.S. foreign policy that led to the national political objectives in 1906, discusses the U.S. military's actions during the pacification of the country, and analyzes the effectiveness of those military actions to meet political goals.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
Conditions Existing in Cuba in 1906 .....	6
Spanish Colonial Rule.....	6
First Intervention.....	8
President Palma Administration.....	10
U.S. Second Intervention .....	13
Initial Stages of Intervention.....	13
U.S. Military Action in Cuba .....	14
U.S. Foreign Policy.....	23
Background .....	23
Foreign Policy of President Theodore Roosevelt.....	26
U.S. Political and Strategic Objectives in Cuba.....	28
Cuban Political and Strategic Objectives.....	30
Results of the Second Intervention .....	31
Political and Strategic Lessons Learned .....	38
Conclusion .....	41
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	44

## Introduction

“Revolution Spreading. Everything quiet.”<sup>1</sup> So wrote Jacob Sleeper, the U.S. chargé d’affaires in Cuba, in a cable to Washington in the summer of 1906 as an insurgency grew in response to fraudulent national elections the previous year. While most of the destruction of property by the insurgents was exaggerated, the revolution spread quickly throughout the countryside where the Cuban government failed to exert influence. The mixed message from the cable indicated the reality occurring in Cuba at the time and U.S. desires for the island. The cable also demonstrated the difference between U.S. actions and intentions. As costs and casualties escalated during the ongoing insurgency in the Philippines, President Theodore Roosevelt wanted to avoid military action in Cuba, but the precipitous resignation of the Cuban president and his cabinet left him few options. Despite President Roosevelt’s desire to forgo intervention in Cuba in 1906, the U.S. military took actions and emplaced many policies during the three year occupation. These actions and policies led to a successful pacification and directly enabled the U.S. to relinquish control of Cuba to its newly elected president, José Miguel Gómez, on January 28, 1909 after reaching American goals. The reestablishment of Cuban sovereignty marked the beginning of fifty years of productive economic and political relations between the two nations.<sup>2</sup> Although the Second Intervention proved peaceful in nature, the reforms fell short of the expectations of U.S. military leaders involved in Cuba. The military significantly shaped the manner in which U.S. foreign policy was executed between the Spanish-American War and World War II, and the military left a more lasting impression on the people of the affected nations

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<sup>1</sup> Warren Zimmermann, *First Great Triumph: How Five Americans Made Their Country a World Power* (New York, NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2002), 442.

<sup>2</sup> Jaime Suchlicki, *Cuba: From Columbus to Castro and Beyond*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Washington D.C.: Pergamon-Brassey’s International Defense Publishers, 1997), 155.

than the civilian leaders.<sup>3</sup> However, the responsibility of making policy falls on the politicians. Military leaders on the other hand make strategy in war and conduct appropriate operations while not at war to support national policies. Success for the military should be measured by how effectively it accomplishes these objectives and to the extent in which they support national goals. Because the military objectives of the Second Intervention met the narrow national, political objectives of the day, the military accomplished its mission and resulted in an American political and military victory.

The majority of literature that discusses the U.S. intervention in Cuba in 1906, commonly referred to as the Second Intervention, tends to focus on the larger history of Cuba. These authors provide substantial works studying the Spanish-American War and the First Intervention which occurred from 1899 to 1902. Many of these works have described General Leonard Wood's interim government and the implications of the Platt Amendment in U.S. and Cuban affairs. Among the authors who take this perspective is Jaime Suchlicki, author of *Cuba: From Columbus to Castro and Beyond*, who described the circumstances and political, social, and economic conditions that allowed Fidel Castro to come to power and provides an excellent view of trends and events in Cuba from a Cuban perspective.<sup>4</sup> British journalist Richard Gott also provided an overview of the history of Cuba in his work, *Cuba: A New History*. Both Suchlicki and Gott illustrated that after more than three centuries of Spanish colonial rule, the Cubans' inclination for government was one of autocratic control.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Lester D. Langley, *The Banana wars: United States Intervention in the Caribbean, 1898-1934* (Chicago, IL: The Dorsey Press, 1988), 6.

<sup>4</sup> Jaime Suchlicki does not go into much detail on the Second Intervention; however, like most Cuban writers on the subject, he emphasized the negative effects the Platt Amendment had on Cuban politics and downplayed the provisional government's accomplishments under Charles Magoon. *Ibid.*, 90.

<sup>5</sup> Gott highlighted the racism present in Cuba and its effects more than most other works on the country, and he was as critical of American involvement in the small island as Cuban authors. Richard Gott, *Cuba: A New History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004), 58.

Ivan Musicant described the rise of U.S. imperialism after the Spanish-American War and its strategy to protect its new territories: the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Cuba.<sup>6</sup> Andrew J. Birtle, author of *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine, 1860-1941*, on the other hand, looked at American counterinsurgency actions in Cuba during the First and Second Intervention. Birtle gave readers a more holistic view of American counterinsurgencies than specific actions of the Army of Cuban Pacification and its successes and failures.<sup>7</sup> Finally, Max Boot in *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power* looked at American low intensity conflicts over the past two hundred years to determine lessons learned for current and future “small wars.”<sup>8</sup>

Another approach in previous literature has been taken by Cuban authors. These authors who have written on the Second Intervention largely denounce the Platt Amendment and the actions of Charles Magoon, which they believe caused most of Cuba’s subsequent socio-economic and political problems. While these authors seem biased compared to American historians, it is useful to consider this perspective which should remind a nation’s military to define victory for itself but to understand a rival’s definition of victory. José Hernández in *Cuba and the United States: Intervention and Militarism, 1868-1933* drew different conclusions from much of the same material used by American historians. While Hernández conceded the success of the Army of Cuban Pacification in some areas, such as the training, recruitment, and depoliticization of the Rural Guard, he saw most accomplishments of the provisional government as legitimizing the power of the Liberal Party and setting the conditions for future violent outcomes from political

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<sup>6</sup> Ivan Musicant, *The Banana Wars: A History of United States Military Intervention in Latin America from the Spanish-American War to the Invasion of Panama* (New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1990), 67.

<sup>7</sup> Andrew J. Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine, 1860-1941* (Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, United States Army, 2004), 174.

<sup>8</sup> Max Boot, *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power* (New York, NY: Perseus Books Group, 2002), xv.

disputes.<sup>9</sup> Another Cuban writer, Louis A. Pérez, Jr., author of several books on Cuba, equally subscribed to the opinion that the root of most of Cuba's troubles can be traced to American involvement. Pérez argued that under the Platt Amendment, the Cubans who fought for their independence from Spain never achieved true sovereignty with the threat or promise of U.S. military intervention always looming over them.<sup>10</sup>

John Lawrence Tone in his recent book, *War and Genocide in Cuba, 1895-1898*, provided a revisionist work to Cuba's third revolt against Spain from 1895 to 1898 and the Spanish-American War. Tone included facts from previously lost Spanish documents from Cuba during this time, which shed greater light on the insurrection and eventual U.S. occupation of Cuba. He relooked the contributions of Cuban insurgents and American military forces in defeating Spain, as well as the corruption and decadence of Spanish forces on the island. While previous authors usually credited one of these players with the decisive blow, Tone acknowledged all three contributing to the fall of the Spanish in Cuba.<sup>11</sup>

Finally, the literature from American historians on the Second Intervention tends to focus on the intervention in isolation of subsequent U.S. military operations in Cuba. These works highlight many of the accomplishments and some shortcomings of the provisional government,

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<sup>9</sup> José M. Hernández, *Cuba and the United States: Intervention and Militarism, 1868-1933* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1993), In addition to condemning Magoon's granting of sinecures and pardons, both of which were used more excessively by previous and subsequent administrations in Cuba, Hernández criticizes the provisional government's extensive improvements in public works by accusing Magoon's motives as being "not so much what was right as what was expedient." 144. *Ibid*, 150.

<sup>10</sup> Pérez also showed the interesting role the Cuban military played in political developments during the twentieth century in *Army Politics in Cuba, 1898-1958*. The author pointed to the immediate politicization of the armed forces by the newly elected Cuban administration in 1909 that named loyal insurgent leaders to all the forces' highest positions and used the armed forces' mission to achieve political objectives. With no strong history on which to fall back and after years of purging, the armed forces, which seized power in 1933, eventually became so weak that they were incapable of meeting the rebel threat in 1959. Louis A. Pérez Jr., *Cuba Under the Platt Amendment, 1902-1934* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1986), 57. Louis A. Pérez Jr., *Army Politics in Cuba, 1898-1902* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1976), 29.

<sup>11</sup> John Lawrence Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba, 1895-1898* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2006) 280.

but the authors writing on the subject do not look at how these actions affected relations and future engagement between the United States and Cuba. David Lockmiller provided the first significant work on the Second Intervention in his book, *Magoon in Cuba: A History of the Second Intervention: 1906-1909*. Lockmiller described the Platt Amendment's application, William Howard Taft's participation in mediation and establishment of the provisional government, and Charles Magoon's accomplishments and failures while provisional governor of Cuba.<sup>12</sup> Ralph Minger's works are also a good place to start for a reader wishing to understand the conditions that existed in Cuba in 1906; however, for anyone wishing to understand the conditions that led to the Second Intervention, the actions of American and Cuban leaders during the intervention, and the conditions existing at the time of the restoration of the Cuban government in 1909, Allen R. Millet's *The Politics of Intervention: The Military Occupation of Cuba, 1906-1909* is essential.<sup>13</sup> In his seminal work on the Second Intervention, Millet outlined the American plan to pacify Cuba during the twenty-seven month occupation, which was shaped by political and civil leaders but largely implemented by military officers. Unlike most other works of literature on the subject, *The Politics of Intervention* examined whether the appearance of stability and absence of violence without reform of political, social, and economic systems were effective in securing long-term peace in Cuba.<sup>14</sup>

Several authors have written extensively on Cuba, using both broad and narrow lenses and approaching Cuban, American, and European actions from different perspectives. This

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<sup>12</sup> David A. Lockmiller, *Magoon in Cuba: A History of the Second Intervention, 1906-1909* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1938), 3.

<sup>13</sup> Although Minger provided a useful overview of the conditions and events leading to the Second Intervention, William H. Taft turned over control of the provisional government to Charles Magoon two weeks after its creation, so the book and article did not describe any of the policies or actions of the Second Intervention and ended with Taft's transition of control to Magoon. Ralph E. Minger, "William H. Taft and the United States Intervention in Cuba in 1906," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 41, no. 1 (Feb 1961): 75.

<sup>14</sup> Allen R. Millet, *The Politics of Intervention: The Military Occupation of Cuba, 1906-1909* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1968), 267.

monograph will describe the different nature of American military actions conducted during stability operations in support of non-war policy objectives during the Second Intervention. The conditions and events that resulted in the intervention will be the first area examined. Additionally, the monograph will discuss the U.S. military's actions during the pacification of the country, as well as trace the evolution of U.S. foreign policy that led to the national political objectives in 1906. Finally, an analysis of the conditions in Cuba at the end of the occupation will lead to conclusions on the effectiveness of military objectives to meet political goals.

## **Conditions Existing in Cuba in 1906**

### **Spanish Colonial Rule**

Christopher Columbus discovered Cuba on October 28, 1492. His son, Don Diego Columbus, subsequently settled the island in 1511, leading to four centuries of colonial rule by Spain.<sup>15</sup> Throughout this time, Cuba remained largely insignificant in world politics. However, in the late eighteenth century, the King of Spain, Charles III, instituted reforms that led to a greater sharing of culture and intellectual thought to his colonies and led to Cuba's Golden Century in the 1800s. Large increases in population and agricultural production improved Cuban economic prosperity. The greater contact with Spanish ports also helped spread the ideas of the Enlightenment. During this time, a new Creole class of landowners formed. This class of white elites formed the Economic Society in Havana, influencing commerce and encouraging the study of art, science, and all cultural subjects.<sup>16</sup> Meanwhile, Spain fought wars against Morocco, Chile, Mexico, Peru, and Cochin China throughout the nineteenth century.<sup>17</sup> The Creoles negotiated favorable mercantile policies with Spain, which amassed a substantial debt from its wars. Among the

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<sup>15</sup> John W. Furlong, *Military Notes on Cuba, 1909* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1909), 15.

<sup>16</sup> Suchlicki, *Columbus to Castro*, 54.

<sup>17</sup> Furlong, *Notes on Cuba*, 17.

concessions by Spain were the sale of crown lands for sugar cane growing and the opening of Cuba's ports to neutral nations. These policies opened trade with the United States and England, introducing new economic, political, and social contacts to the island and reducing Cuba's reliance on Spain.

In 1867, Spain failed to adopt several reforms recommended by Cuba's Junta de Información, reduced personal rights of Cubans to meet and speak freely, and levied high taxes. As a result, the landowning class turned from reform to independence, and the Cubans conducted three revolts against Spain between 1868 and 1898.<sup>18</sup> The first of the revolts, referred to as the Ten Years' War, began on October 10, 1868, when Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, a young Cuban lawyer, declared Cuba independent and freed his slaves. He formed a more democratic provisional government that adopted a constitution the following year. Céspedes became president of the republic while Máximo Gómez, a Dominican, served as the head of the military. They successfully conducted guerrilla warfare but failed to achieve any decisive victories against the Spanish. The Spanish eventually killed Céspedes, and Gómez quit, frustrated by the internal fighting of the insurgents and the lack of support from the U.S. and Cuban exiles. The Ten Years' War ended with signing of the Peace of Zanjón on February 11, 1878. The following year, Antonio Maceo, a mulatto leader who fought in the Ten Years' War, joined with Major General Calixto García to fight the Little War from 1879 to 1880. Spain, however, maintained a steady flow of reinforcements, and this revolt quickly failed without recognition or support from the U.S. and other countries.<sup>19</sup> While small skirmishes persisted, the last insurrection began on February 24, 1895 with José Martí, Cuban poet and political activist, creating a partnership with Maceo and Gómez from the previous wars. Martí hoped to win a quick, decisive victory against Spain to keep the U.S. from intervening; however, he lost his life the first year of the insurgency

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<sup>18</sup> Suchlicki, *Columbus to Castro*, 63.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 71.

and the war continued for three more years, until the Spanish-American War finally ended the conflict.<sup>20</sup>

Following the Spanish-American War, the United States inherited a ravaged Cuba. Thirty years of revolts with Spain devastated the sugar cane industry in Cuba. Additionally, improved techniques around the world as well as new processes to extract sugar from sugar beets decreased Cuba's margin of profit on sugar and its share of international markets, leading to almost exclusive trade with the United States. Foreign investment to improve techniques in the sugar industry resulted in Cuban landowners becoming migrant workers, and high American tariffs further hindered profits of Cuban sugar exports. Additionally, a new class within Cuban society formed during this period of revolution, calling themselves 'politicos.' The politicos were not landowners, peasants, or workers, and they popularized guerrilla warfare in Cuba, becoming its most lasting political tradition.<sup>21</sup> During the war, 300,000 Cubans were killed, and before leaving, Spanish soldiers pillaged towns, killed livestock, and spoiled wells. Cuba also amassed a substantial debt of more than \$500 million. The Cuban people lacked education with a 60% illiteracy rate, and only 1% of the population held a college education.<sup>22</sup> These were the conditions in which the United States found Cuba as it began the First Intervention.

## **First Intervention**

The first U.S. intervention in Cuba began on April 22, 1898 when President McKinley issued a blockade proclamation. The following day the president requested 125,000 troops, later increasing the number to 200,000 troops, to be used for war against Spain. Acting quickly, Congress approved the declaration of war on April 25, 1898, announcing that war with Spain

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 79.

<sup>21</sup> Richard H. Collin, *Theodore Roosevelt's Caribbean: The Panama Canal, the Monroe Doctrine, and the Latin American Context* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1990), 505.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 510.

existed since April 21, 1898. The U.S. Navy captured or destroyed all Spanish ships in Manila Bay the next day. The U.S. mobilized the army for an invasion with American troops setting sail for Cuba on June 14 where they defeated Spanish troops at San Juan, Lawton, and El Caney on July 1 and 2. The U.S. destroyed the Spanish fleet on July 3 as it tried to leave Santiago harbor, effectively ending the war with Spain.<sup>23</sup> The two-month naval blockade effectively starved the Spanish forces on the island who after fighting Cuban guerrillas for three years pulled back to fortify cities instead of take the offensive on the small, disorganized American expeditionary force. The Cuban guerrillas assisted in cutting off communication from the Spanish garrisons but contributed little to the battles between the American and Spanish troops. The Spanish Army commanders' lack of imagination and decision to stronghold cities allowed the U.S. troops to achieve numerical superiority against the isolated garrisons, despite overall small American numbers.<sup>24</sup>

Upon agreement of the cease fire, the Americans had too few forces to adequately control Cuba, so they relied on the existing Spanish bureaucracy to continue to run the country. After the many years of fighting for their independence from Spain, the Cubans deeply resented the new American occupiers and their decision to leave their old occupiers in charge.<sup>25</sup> General John Brooke became the military governor of Cuba on January 1, 1899 and quickly pacified insurgent forces by striking a deal with the commander of the Cuban Liberation Army, General Gómez. Brooke immediately implemented a plan to improve Cuban governance, infrastructure, economics, and health to establish a stable government. General Leonard Wood, Brooke's subordinate in the Oriente Province, became military governor on December 20, 1899 and continued to make progress. Wood, in particular, enhanced infrastructure throughout the country,

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<sup>23</sup> David F. Trask, *The War with Spain in 1898* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1981), 269.

<sup>24</sup> Tone, *Savage Wars of Peace*, 274.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 283.

created systems of government within three branches, implemented public works and sanitation improvements, and modernized cities.<sup>26</sup> An American congressman described him as the man “who found Cuba a den of filth and disease and left it a sewer system.”<sup>27</sup> Despite the significant progress in Cuba, General Wood did not break the country’s reliance on the sugar crop and did not adequately train the leaders on self-government. While these two factors would surface as failures in all future governments of Cuba, the signing of the Platt Amendment to the military appropriations bill for 1901-1902 by President McKinley on March 2, 1901 contributed to U.S. intervention in 1906 more than any other single factor. The Platt Amendment forbid Cuba from entering into any treaties or alliances that impaired its independence, gave the U.S. the right to intervene in order to preserve Cuban independence and maintain the government, and allowed the U.S. to purchase or lease two naval bases.<sup>28</sup> General Wood turned over control of the government to its newly elected president, Tomás Estrada Palma, on May 20, 1902, beginning a new era of Cuban sovereignty under the shadow of the United States.<sup>29</sup>

### **President Palma Administration**

Tomás Estrada Palma served as the first president of Cuba. Born in Bayamo, Cuba, he studied law in Spain and lived in France for a number of years before returning to Cuba in 1868. He played a significant role in Cuba’s Ten Years’ War and became president of the Cuban congress in 1877. For his part in the war, the Spanish imprisoned him and sent him to Spain, eventually releasing him in 1878. Following his release, Palma fled to Honduras where he became the Postmaster General and married the daughter of the president of Honduras. Subsequently, he moved to the United States where he lived for twenty years, raising money for

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<sup>26</sup> Lockmiller, *Magoon in Cuba*, 8.

<sup>27</sup> Collin, *Theodore Roosevelt’s Caribbean*, 513.

<sup>28</sup> Samuel F. A. Bemis, *A Diplomatic History of the United States*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York, NY: Henry Holt and Company, 1955), 504.

the insurgency against Spain. After the death of the Cuban patriot, José Martí, Palma became his logical successor.<sup>30</sup> Palma's previous political background in Cuba, coupled with his ties to the United States and other Latin American countries ideally suited him for the new Cuban office. At the time of his inauguration, conditions seemed favorable for Palma's administration. No obvious racial unrest existed, despite a large black minority. Additionally, the country did not possess a large indigenous population or a strong church to question the government. Lastly, Cuba did not have any regional conflicts, and liberals and conservatives worked toward a common aim.<sup>31</sup>

While president, Palma primarily dealt with the reciprocity treaty between the U.S. and Cuba, the dispute over the Isle of Pines, and American insistence to improve health and sanitary conditions on the island.<sup>32</sup> During his first term, he served as a shining example of integrity and nonpartisanship. Unfortunately, he neglected to reconcile inconsistencies with the Cuban Constitution and the laws enacted by Spain over the centuries. His inability to modernize the judicial system, particularly the electoral laws, played a critical role in the election of 1905.<sup>33</sup>

Although Palma remained nonpartisan during his first term, the Moderate and Liberal political parties, as well as Nationalists who usually sided with the Moderates, dominated the legislative branch. Bipartisan politics blocked favorable legislation for improvements in government, infrastructure, and public works. Hoping to push legislation into law more effectively, Palma sided with Moderates in the spring of 1905, disbanding his nonpartisan cabinet

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<sup>29</sup> Lockmiller, *Magoon in Cuba*, 12.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>31</sup> Suchlicki, *Columbus to Castro*, 87.

<sup>32</sup> The reciprocity treaty reduced tariffs on American exports to Cuba by 25-40% and reduced tariffs on Cuban exports to the U.S. by 20%. This initially helped both countries but eventually led to demise of Cuban economy. Cuba also had administered the Isle of Pines for over 400 years, but after the Treaty of Paris that settled the Spanish-American War, American speculators believed that the U.S. owned rights to the island. Palma negotiated a treaty in 1904, but it was not ratified for another twenty-one years by President Coolidge. Lockmiller, *Magoon in Cuba*, 19.

and naming the Moderate, General Fernando Freyre de Andrade, as the Secretary of Government, the most influential cabinet position. Moderates denied Liberals access to polls during the selection of election boards and violence between the two sides increased through the election in the fall of 1906. Not surprisingly, Palma won the election by a huge margin, and no Liberal candidate won an election throughout the entire country. Following the fraudulent elections of 1905 and consolidation of power by the Moderate party within Cuba, General Faustino “Pino” Guerra, began an insurrection in the Pinar del Rio province on August 16, 1906. After unsuccessful attempts to quell the insurgency militarily and politically, Palma requested military assistance from the U.S. In fact, both Palma and the insurgents wanted U.S. intervention which they believed would back their own causes.<sup>34</sup>

President Roosevelt sent Secretary of War William H. Taft and Assistant Secretary of State Robert Bacon to Cuba to serve as intermediaries. Taft quickly realized that Palma’s government lacked popular support, as well as military power to continue to govern without giving concessions to the Liberal party. The Liberals accepted the terms of Taft’s proposal but Palma did not. Unwilling to compromise, President Palma and his entire cabinet resigned on September 28, 1906. Moderate members of congress refused to attend the congressional session, however. Unable to obtain a quorum, the Cuban congress could not select a successor to Palma, leaving Cuba without a government. As a result, Palma directed a letter to the American commissioners,

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<sup>33</sup> David A. Lockmiller, *Enoch H. Crowder: Soldier, Lawyer, and Statesman* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Studies, 1955), 115.

<sup>34</sup> Lockmiller, *Magoon in Cuba*, 34. Millet, *Politics of Intervention*, 70-74. The American Consul General of Cuba, Frank Steinhart, sent cables to Roosevelt on September 5, 8, and 12, 1906, describing a dire situation and requesting ships and a few thousand troops to avoid a massacre in Havana. Steinhart’s cables painted a dismal picture which convinced Roosevelt that he had to send some force to Cuba to try and prevent an overthrow of Palma’s government.

transferring his authority and the national treasury to them. The following day, September 29, Taft established a provisional government.<sup>35</sup>

## U.S. Second Intervention

### Initial Stages of Intervention

Despite Roosevelt's disinclination to intervene in Cuba in 1906, the Platt Amendment and the U.S. Navy's actions virtually ensured intervention. As a former Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Theodore Roosevelt played an active role in the service, replacing its leadership often. However, as president, he had less time to devote to it. Many American naval officers believed that the world required the U.S. Navy to educate and civilize it to prevent total chaos. In their minds, diplomacy played a supporting role to the threat or application of military power.<sup>36</sup> Commander William F. Fullam, commander of the *U.S.S. Marietta*, and Commander James Colwell, commander of the *U.S.S. Denver*, both shared these views. Fullam in particular was a highly regarded naval officer and prolific writer who pushed to have marines removed from ships and sailors given the mission to project military power ashore. After several requests by President Palma for U.S. military assistance, President Roosevelt assisted, sending the *Denver* to Havana and the *Marietta* to Cienfuegos to protect American interests in Cuba. Roosevelt wanted the ships present as a show of force but did not want the cruiser and gunboat to intervene. Unfortunately, neither commander received the orders nor was aware of U.S. policy in regard to Cuba.<sup>37</sup>

The *Denver* was the first to arrive, entering the Port of Havana on September 12, 1906. Hoping to receive guidance from the U.S. delegation in Havana, Commander Colwell went ashore with 124 sailors and 3 artillery pieces. He met with business leaders and reporters, and he

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<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

<sup>36</sup> Christopher A. Abel, "Controlling the Big Stick: Theodore Roosevelt and the Cuban Crisis of 1906," *Naval War College Review* 40 (summer 1987), 89.

secured the Presidential palace on September 13.<sup>38</sup> Believing that the U.S. backed Palma, insurgent leaders planned to negotiate peace terms with Colwell that evening. However, Colwell received orders from Washington to reboard the *Denver* to which he begrudgingly complied. The American actions sent a mixed message to the insurgents, who believed that the U.S. would willingly intervene on their behalf instead of Palma's. At this point, neither the insurgents nor the Cuban president were willing to compromise. Meanwhile, Commander Fullam arrived in Cienfuegos and emboldened by the news of Colwell's landing, landed sailors himself. By the time William Howard Taft arrived in Cuba with the Peace Commission on September 19, the U.S. military had sewn the seeds of intervention.<sup>39</sup>

### **U.S. Military Action in Cuba**

The U.S. military played a prominent role in the Second Intervention, not only as the occupying force but in key positions throughout the provisional government. Although Taft established the provisional government in Cuba, he needed to return to Washington to fulfill his larger duties as the Secretary of War. Since the military situation was well in hand, Roosevelt decided to appoint a civilian leader more sensitive to his political interests. Roosevelt chose Charles Magoon, a member of Panama Canal Commission, minister to Panama, and governor of the Panama Canal Zone, instead of General Leonard Wood, who was commanding U.S. forces in the Philippines at the time. Magoon assumed responsibilities as provisional governor on October 13, 1906.<sup>40</sup> Officers held posts throughout Magoon's administration and at the provincial and municipal levels. The officers and Cuban politicians disagreed on most issues concerning the

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 90.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 93.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 95.

<sup>40</sup> Lockmiller, *Magoon in Cuba*, 72.

execution of governmental duties, but the officers ran the day to day provisional government.<sup>41</sup> In all, 58 U.S. Army officers served in the provisional government. The strong military presence in the government assisted in unifying the efforts of the Cuban Army of Pacification and the civilian leadership. The American officers were mostly veterans in Cuba under Wood's government, and some had fought the counterinsurgency in the Philippines. Cuban secretaries sat in actual positions but acted as puppets to their American advisors.<sup>42</sup> When governors' and councilmen's terms of office expired in 1908, Magoon appointed officers in their places. Since the military leaders commanded troops throughout the country, they stood in a good position to keep the peace during elections.<sup>43</sup>

General Frederick Funston assumed command of the Army in Cuba on October 2, 1906, but Taft replaced him quickly with General J. Franklin Bell, the Chief of Staff of the Army.<sup>44</sup> General Theodore J. Wint assumed command from Bell at the beginning of 1907 until February 27, 1907, when for health reasons, General Thomas H. Barry replaced him. Initially called the First Expeditionary brigade, the command became known as the Army of Cuban Intervention, before finally being named the Army of Cuban Pacification.<sup>45</sup> The changing names of the Army unit indicated the confusion of American intentions in Cuba at the onset of intervention. Nonetheless, the Army of Cuban Pacification created a campaign plan, focused along six lines of effort: physical occupation of the population centers to control lines of communication, such as

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<sup>41</sup> Millet, *Politics of Intervention*, 191.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 152.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 192.

<sup>44</sup> Taft relieved Funston after he issued certificates of ownership of horses to Cubans. The certificates were translated incorrectly and instead of giving them temporary ownership until the matter could be settled, the certificates gave the Cubans actual ownership. This mistake was seen by Cubans as legitimizing horse stealing and infuriated Taft. *Ibid.*, 106.

<sup>45</sup> The final expeditionary force structure was decided on September 29 with 5 two-battalion infantry regiments, 2 two-squadron cavalry regiments, one light artillery battery, two mountain batteries, the Second Battalion of Engineers, the Signal Corps' Company I, and the Hospital Corps' Companies A and B. *Ibid.*, 120.

railroads, ports, and communication facilities; conduct of road marches and military exercises to explore the country and be seen by the Cuban people to give them a sense of security and serve as a deterrence to any rebels; establishment of an intelligence network throughout the country; improvement of infrastructure primarily by helping with building and improving roads; preparation of a tactical map of Cuba that served to get the army out in the country, give them greater knowledge of the country, and provide a useful map for many years; and transition of authority and legitimacy to the Cuban government and security forces. The army, supporting the policies of the provisional government, was careful not to provoke violence from potential insurgents, avoiding confrontations and potentially controversial social reform.<sup>46</sup>

For its first action, the Army of Cuban Pacification physically occupied Cuba's population centers and communications network. Initially, the army stationed soldiers where major disarmament occurred and where sugar plantations and mills were located. Soldiers established posts in the largest cities, as well as along key railways, ports, and infrastructure.<sup>47</sup> By September 21, three battleships, *Louisiana*, *New Jersey*, and *Virginia*, and two cruisers, *Denver* and *Des Moines*, occupied the Havana harbor, and on the September 22, two more cruisers arrived with 800 marines. By October 1, three more battleships and two more cruisers arrived, bringing the total number of marines in Cuba to 2,000. Additionally, the *Marietta* had placed the Cuban Central Railway under U.S. protection, putting sailors and marines aboard trains.<sup>48</sup> The hastily formed Provisional Marine Brigade under Colonel L.W.T. Waller consisted of 2,000 marines and moved throughout the countryside, securing properties and facilities.<sup>49</sup> The Army's and Marine Corps' establishment of positions of dominance in the cities and along key infrastructure helped

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 125.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 127.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 91.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 104.

dissuade former insurgents from violence and effectively pacified the country. Disarmament of the insurgent forces, known as the Constitutional Army, proceeded quickly, and after two weeks, the American troops had mostly completed the process. The last of the rebels remained in Santa Clara where they hesitated to give up arms for fear that the Moderates in the area would mistreat them. American soldiers escorted rebels home and provided rations for rebels and horses. The rations given to insurgents prevented the rebels from taking food from people along the way by force. According to disarmament reports, rebel forces included 24,479 rebels who turned in 3,153 weapons. In addition, the Army of Cuban Pacification issued 8,312 horse certificates and distributed \$44,080.55 of rations to rebels and horses during this period.<sup>50</sup> Major Ladd, a veteran of the first and second intervention of Cuba, estimated that only 12% of arms had been surrendered. Rebel leaders tried to get away with as much as possible, since they knew that the U.S. did not want to fire shots in Cuba.<sup>51</sup> Although incomplete, disarmament proceeded peacefully and without incident. Discharging the militia proved to be a more difficult task for the U.S. forces, since the militia possessed poor discipline and in many cases posed a bigger problem than the insurgents.<sup>52</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Robert Bullard, a special assistant of the provisional governor, emphasized the delicate and reversible peace after the initial intervention when he stated, “If the Army can but get past the term of pacification without firing one hostile shot. It is probable that we shall thereby have already accomplished the conquest of future revolution.”<sup>53</sup>

The use of marches to intimidate criminal groups and earn the trust and confidence of the rural population proved to be an effective practice by the Army of Cuban Pacification during the

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<sup>50</sup> Lockmiller, *Magoon in Cuba*, 67.

<sup>51</sup> Millet, *Politics of Intervention*, 105.

<sup>52</sup> Lockmiller, *Magoon in Cuba*, 68.

<sup>53</sup> Robert Bullard earned the rank of lieutenant general during World War I, commanding the Second Army at the end of the war. Ibid, 197. During the Second Intervention, President Roosevelt and other political leaders considered Bullard one of the leading experts on Cuba. Millet, *Politics of Intervention*,

intervention.<sup>54</sup> This action served several purposes for the army in addition to keeping contact with the population. The army gained a better understanding of the terrain and surrounding areas, as well as contributed to the army's high state of training while in Cuba. These activities conducted each month lasted between three and six days, served as field training exercises to accomplish assigned tasks, and worked on competency in marksmanship and other soldier skills. The soldiers also conducted patrols at night. Furthermore, each unit conducted extended marches for at least twenty-one consecutive days between October and March. Units trained more complicated tasks during the longer exercises. Marksmanship improved greatly with the army qualifying twice as many experts and three times as many sharpshooters towards the end of the occupation compared to the beginning. From August 31, 1907 to August 31, 1908, the Army of Cuban Pacification conducted 156 marches, covering over 7,193 miles.<sup>55</sup> F and G Troops of the 11<sup>th</sup> Cavalry actually marched 110 miles in under 30 hours from the target range at Pinar del Rio to Camp Columbia.<sup>56</sup>

The establishment of a nationwide network to collect, to analyze, and to distribute military and political intelligence became one of the primary methods of the American Army to pacify Cuba during the Second Intervention. Major D.D. Gaillard, Captain John W. Furlong, and Captain Dwight E. Aultman established the Army of Cuban Pacification's Military Information Division on October 11, 1906 in Havana. They broke the division into 26 intelligence districts. Each district had an intelligence officer who reported to it, except in Santa Clara who reported to a provincial supervisor. In order to gather information, they hired sources, spending \$1,000 monthly. Taft and Magoon used the Military Information Division extensively to understand

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132. Allan R. Millet, *The General: Robert L. Bullard and Officership in the United States Army, 1881-1925* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1975), 417.

<sup>54</sup> Millet, *Politics of Intervention*, 128.

<sup>55</sup> War Department, *War Department Annual Reports, 1908: Report of Army of Cuban Pacification*, by General Thomas Barry, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1908), 321.

political developments.<sup>57</sup> In addition to intelligence to be used for targeting, the Military Information Division sought information on the Cuban culture and identity. Captain Furlong's *Military Notes on Cuba, 1909* includes historical information on the development of the island and covers political and economic data, as well as demographics of the provinces. The comprehensive data helped military officers better understand the Cuban people to help pacify the country.

The preparation of a detailed topographic map to aid future counter-guerrilla and bandit operations was another primary action of the Army of Cuban Pacification. Mapping of Cuba, led to an accurate map for military operations, effective reconnaissance by units, the ability of Cuban citizens to see soldiers, and the discovery of areas previously unexplored by the military.<sup>58</sup> The army began to map Cuba and identify railroad crossings which could become vulnerable if insurrection emerged again. In order to seem less threatening the soldiers conducting the mapping wore civilian clothes and did not carry weapons. The group also spoke broken Spanish during the five months required to complete the task.<sup>59</sup>

The Army of Cuban Pacification and the provisional government actively supported a road-building and infrastructure improvement program during the Second Intervention. The provisional government made huge strides in transportation, communication, public works, health, sanitation, and other similar issues affecting the people's livelihood. At the beginning of the Second Intervention, Cuba had less than 500 miles of macadamized road, which hindered getting agriculture to market, particularly for small landowners, since large landowners had railway lines that connected them to cities and ports. To get an idea of the magnitude of the road

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 324.

<sup>57</sup> Millet, *Politics of Intervention*, 130.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 131.

<sup>59</sup> Lockmiller, *Magoon in Cuba*, 85.

improvement program during the Second Intervention, the Spanish constructed 256 km of road during 386 years of rule. The U.S. military under Wood constructed 98 km in 3 years. Cuba under the Palma administration constructed 382 km in 4 years, and during the Second Intervention, the provisional government and army constructed 570 km of road in 2 years.<sup>60</sup> Additionally, the provisional government created maintenance teams every 25 km to keep roads in high state of repair.<sup>61</sup> The extensive public works improvement program not only improved infrastructure but also solved the problem of unemployed agriculture workers during the rainy season, May to December, known as the dead time. The jobs provided money to workers that in turn hindered recruiting of lackeys for political parties.<sup>62</sup> Projects also dredged harbors; expanded railways; and built bridges, schools, asylums, hospitals, jails, slaughter houses, post offices, and military barracks. The projects succeeded in keeping Cuba quiet and in bringing money to the island at a time when the people would have been penniless.<sup>63</sup> Total expenditures by the provisional government on public works from October 1, 1906 to September 30, 1908 were \$23,965,280.67.<sup>64</sup> Although the infrastructure projects provided significant benefits to the Cuban population, the \$13.5 million surplus in the treasury left by Palma quickly turned to a \$4 million deficit by the end of 1906. The deficit can mostly be attributed to the cost of the August Revolution and the enactment of the public works program approved by Palma's administration.<sup>65</sup> However, to this day, most Cubans blame many of the economic problems of the island on Charles Magoon's policies that drained the treasury.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Lockmiller, *Magoon in Cuba*, 100.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 103.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 90.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 110.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 91.

<sup>65</sup> Millet, *Politics of Intervention*, 195.

<sup>66</sup> Magoon has been criticized for raising taxes and wasting the surplus created by Palma, but in reality the treasury consisted of \$13,625,539.65 with part of this being in bonds that had been carried as assets.

Finally, the Army of Cuban Pacification placed a high priority on the transition of legitimacy and authority to Cuban security forces. The initial plan to reform the military in Cuba called for enlarging the Rural Guard and embedding U.S. advisors in it. By the end of the occupation, the provisional government approved creation of a permanent army, too, which further divided the officers from Magoon and the Cuban politicians.<sup>67</sup> The Rural Guard did a good job of securing peace under the advice of Major Herbert J. Slocum, who also organized the Rural Guard after the Spanish-American War. He and eight other U.S. officers reorganized the Rural Guard during the Second Intervention, prohibiting it from participating in political activity and gaining promotion not from influence but by merit. In a short time, the Cuban people saw the Rural Guard as a legitimate force, consisting of three regiments of 1,700 men each posted throughout the country primarily near sugar mills.<sup>68</sup> By September of 1907, the Rural Guard doubled its stations. During this time, the morale also increased as evidenced by fewer desertions in 1907 than 1906, which American officers attributed to the Cuban leaders caring for their soldiers better and to the example set by the Army of Cuban Pacification. Furthermore, the standardization of weapons made logistics easier and better, and improved weapons and communications distributed to the Rural Guard contributed to their professionalization. Telephone lines to each garrison and improved roads also lengthened their coverage. As a result of these changes, the advisors effectively professionalized the Cuban Rural Guard, making it a nonpartisan organization that improved security throughout the country. This caused the Liberals to push for an army that they could create to serve their will.<sup>69</sup> Under the direction of the provisional government, the medical

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Total liabilities for the year were estimated to be \$31 million with an estimated income for remainder of the year of \$16 million, leaving a deficit of \$4 million. Suchlicki, *Columbus to Castro*, 90. Lockmiller, *Magoon in Cuba*, 88.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 221.

<sup>68</sup> Charles E. Magoon, *Republic of Cuba: Report of the Provisional Administration, October 13, 1906 – December 1, 1907* (Havana, Cuba: Rambla & Bouza, 1908), 19.

<sup>69</sup> Millet, *Politics of Intervention*, 227.

corps commenced to eradicate yellow fever and to improve sanitation conditions which degraded under President Palma and worsened after the August Revolution. To accomplish this task, the government allocated money to improve conditions, and an American medical officer served in each garrison of American troops in addition to the medical inspectors, nurses, detention camps, and fumigating brigades. Cuban Army, Police, and Rural Guard also assisted in improving sanitary conditions. Because the Cuban people did not make sanitation a primary concern, Magoon established the National Board of Sanitation which appointed officers for each municipality and consolidated sanitation efforts. Because of the tremendous effort put forth by the American Army officers during the Second Intervention, health and sanitation improved in Cuba.<sup>70</sup> With the exception of the creation of the Cuban Army, the Army of Cuban Pacification and provisional government created several organizations and capabilities within Cuba to help transition authority from the U.S. to Cuba.

In order to understand the success of U.S. actions in Cuba during the Second Intervention, the context by which those actions were executed remains critical. Focusing solely on the conduct of actors and states during the Second Intervention provides a narrow view of its significance and hinders drawing accurate conclusions about its achievements. The foreign policy of the U.S. defined the objectives in Cuba and the manner in which they were achieved. Likewise, Cuban objectives shaped American policy and actions on the island. Both sides' policies should be examined to gain a greater understanding of the Second Intervention.

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<sup>70</sup> Lockmiller, *Magoon in Cuba*, 86.

# U.S. Foreign Policy

## Background

The actions of the U.S. during the Second Intervention cannot be adequately summarized by applying such notions as Manifest Destiny or the White Man's Burden. Reviewing the previous traditions in American foreign relations that build on each other provides a greater understanding of the foreign policy of the United States of America in 1906. The nation's founders did not advocate a foreign policy to export reforms in self-determination, human rights, or free trade. They saw the young nation as a beacon of light for the rest of the world to see and perhaps emulate. As a result of inadequate military power, George Washington and subsequent presidents in the early nineteenth century avoided alliances and treaties that would entangle the U.S. with European powers and instead emphasized economic trade.<sup>71</sup> As the U.S. sought greater resources and increased security on the continent, the country's foreign policy evolved. Aiming to increase U.S. liberty and prosperity by securing potentially hostile and ungoverned portions of the continent, the government signed agreements to expand the national borders and to control these anarchic lands, to include Louisiana and Florida.<sup>72</sup> In the 1820s, after three decades of war, peace settled across Europe. President James Monroe and his secretary of state, John Quincy Adams, identified the imminent dangers of a unified Europe searching for new resources and anxious to continue colonization in Asia, the Pacific, and the Western Hemisphere, where Spain continued to lose control over its colonies. In an address to Congress in 1823, President Monroe asserted that the U.S. would not tolerate European states meddling in the affairs of nations in the Western

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<sup>71</sup> Walter McDougall refers to this inward-focused foreign policy as exceptionalism. Walter A. McDougall, *Promised Land, Crusader State: The American Encounter with the World Since 1776* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1997), 37.

<sup>72</sup> The Louisiana Purchase with France and the Transcontinental Treaty with Spain, which ceded Florida and all Spanish territory above 42 degrees north latitude, both reflect the new American policy, unilateralism. *Ibid.*, 67.

Hemisphere. This declaration would become known as the Monroe Doctrine.<sup>73</sup> The 1800s also saw the growth of expansionism in the United States. Possessing seemingly limitless space on the continent and populated by enterprising immigrants who had braved unknown dangers to seek liberty in a new land, the young nation continued to push its borders all the way to the Pacific Ocean. Americans saw any limits on boundaries or on opportunities to trade as assaults on their liberty. Therefore, expansion became a manifestation of protecting freedom. During this period, the only adversaries of expansionism were those who feared that the growth would be too much for the federal government to control.<sup>74</sup>

The U.S. enjoyed tremendous growth during the last half of the nineteenth century, contributing to the development of progressive imperialism at the turn of the century. Between the end of the Civil War and 1900, the population doubled to 71 million, and the U.S. became the leading producer of coal and steel in the world. Increased production of agricultural products and manufactured goods during the Industrial Revolution, developments in electricity and internal combustion, as well as improved railways and shipping all created favorable economic conditions for the United States. As American capitalism thrived, European powers in the 1870s began dividing up Africa and Asia, and they replaced free trade in favor of tariffs.<sup>75</sup> Furthermore, Britain and Venezuela came into a dispute in 1895 over the boundary between British Guiana and Venezuela. President Grover Cleveland asserted authority on behalf of Venezuela, citing the Monroe Doctrine. Distracted by the Boer War, Britain ceased military actions and settled its dispute in an international court, which encouraged American politicians.<sup>76</sup> Also in 1895, Cuban rebels renewed their fight for independence against Spain. Spain acted harshly to squash the insurgency, and 170,000 Cubans are believed to have died in Spanish concentration camps,

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 59.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 85.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 103.

approximately 10% of the population.<sup>77</sup> Secretary of State Olney encouraged Spain to give some autonomy to Cuba, but Spain's concessions failed to meet American expectations. After continued insults from Spain and the sinking of the U.S. battleship *Maine* on February 18, 1898, war with Spain and annexation of Cuba to the United States seemed inevitable. In response, Congress passed the Teller Amendment on April 19, 1898. Drafted by Senator Henry Teller of Colorado, the Teller Amendment ensured that Cuba would not be annexed and thus would protect Colorado's sugar beet crops against competition by ensuring that Cuba's sugar continued to be hampered by high tariffs.<sup>78</sup> Six days later President McKinley requested authorization to use force from Congress to protect U.S. interests and end the war for the "cause of humanity."<sup>79</sup>

The Spanish-American War that resulted from the standoff served as a catalyst for progressive imperialism. The war also signified the introduction of ideals becoming incorporated in foreign relations, which the founders spent considerable effort to avoid. After a swift victory and the signing of the Treaty of Paris, the United States found itself in possession of Cuba, Puerto Rico, islands in the West Indies, Guam, and the Philippines. The U.S. had long seen Cuba as important to American security and interests as shown in Thomas Jefferson's comments, "I candidly confess, that I have ever looked on Cuba as the most interesting addition which could be made to our system of states."<sup>80</sup> However, the addition of the Philippines, as well as Hawaii from the previous year, created a new dilemma for McKinley who needed to develop a plan to secure the more far reaching possessions. He and Theodore Roosevelt recognized the need for a canal in

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 109.

<sup>77</sup> Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba*, 8.

<sup>78</sup> Collin, *Theodore Roosevelt's Caribbean*, 509.

<sup>79</sup> McDougall, *Promised Land, Crusader State*, 110.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 68.

Latin America to secure the growing U.S. interests, when naval ships took over 60 days to circumnavigate Cape Horn during the Spanish-American War.<sup>81</sup>

Construction of the canal would draw Panama closer to the United States in the next century, while protection of it would inextricably link the U.S. and Cuba. During this time, the U.S. approved the Platt Amendment, making Cuba a virtual protectorate of America to keep European powers from interfering in Cuban affairs. The complexity of foreign policy regarding Cuba can begin to be seen by examining the Teller and Platt Amendments that seem to contradict each other. Domestically, Americans were not interested in annexing Cuba because of financial competition in the sugar industry, anti-imperialist sentiment, and the ongoing insurrection in the Philippines which cost \$160 million and resulted in the loss of 5,000 American soldiers and 100,000 Filipinos.<sup>82</sup> Strategically, though, Cuba's naval bases allowed the U.S. to secure a Latin American canal, protect American shores along the Gulf of Mexico, protect U.S. and foreign investment in Cuba, and ensure that another European nation did not try to assert itself in the Western Hemisphere. The conflicts between domestic and international goals would become more apparent and shape American relations with Cuba under President Theodore Roosevelt.

### **Foreign Policy of President Theodore Roosevelt**

Theodore Roosevelt championed many successful programs internal to the country, such as the conservation movement, the breaking up of monopolistic corporations, and the "Square Deal" for all Americans. He also developed a foreign policy for the time, which would be characterized by some historians as progressive imperialism. In fact, the goals of American foreign policy between the Spanish-American War and World War I focused on consolidating control of the Caribbean and Central America, making arrangements for building and running the canal, and

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<sup>81</sup> Musicant, *Banana Wars*, 2.

<sup>82</sup> McDougall, *Promised Land, Crusader State*, 113.

securing the approaches to the canal from both the Pacific and Atlantic coasts.<sup>83</sup> The ability to project military power, especially naval forces, from Cuba played a critical role in the U.S. plan to secure its southern states along the Gulf of Mexico, control the Caribbean, and protect the canal.

Securing the rights and location for the canal became the primary goal of Roosevelt in 1901. The second Hay-Pauncefote Treaty approved by Congress gave greater autonomy to the U.S. in its running of the canal, to include denying access to warring nations' ships and the ability to build fortifications to protect the canal and American interests.<sup>84</sup> Having settled all European diplomatic obstacles for building the canal, President Roosevelt began negotiations for a canal in Nicaragua or Panama, when Panama was part of Colombia. After an apparent accord, the Colombian Senate disapproved the agreement, believing the U.S. would pay more for the rights to build the canal. Roosevelt responded by encouraging an insurgency in Panama and by using American troops to prevent the Colombian army from landing on November 3, 1903. The U.S. recognized the new government on November 6 and signed a treaty on November 18 to go forward with the canal. European countries recognized Panama quickly, too, followed by most of Latin America, since they all benefited from the canal.<sup>85</sup>

The Panama Canal provided a strategic advantage for shipping and moving of military forces between the Atlantic and Pacific. Guantanamo Bay, Puerto Rico, and the Panama Canal Zone

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<sup>83</sup> Bemis, *Diplomatic History of U.S.*, 503.

<sup>84</sup> The original 1856 Clayton-Bulwar Treaty declared that the U.S. and Britain would share control and U.S. could not fortify a canal. This meant that U.S. would bear full expense and risk involved with the construction and maintenance of the canal, while not benefiting any more than another country using the canal. *Ibid.*, 510.

<sup>85</sup> Private enterprises had failed to build a canal in both places. Panama seemed to be cheaper with an estimated cost of \$189,864,062. The U.S. had to buy rights from the French company and after initial demand of \$109,141,000, they settled on \$40,000,000. The old French company became the Panama Company. The treaty recognizing Panama as an independent state was signed by Philippe Bunau-Varilla, president of the Panama Company. *Ibid.*, 512.

served as American strategic linchpins to protect its interests.<sup>86</sup> Roosevelt believed that he had acted appropriately by assisting Panama gain independence and thus securing a site for the canal. However, this action had negative effects on Latin American public opinion of the U.S.<sup>87</sup> Domestic economics and politics also prevented outright annexation of Cuba by the U.S., and the American people's lack of will to fight another insurgency, like in the Philippines, shaped the U.S. administration's views on intervention. Roosevelt saw the U.S. policy in Cuba as the model of American Caribbean policy, although he understood that Cuban independence under the Platt Amendment was limited.<sup>88</sup> American control of Cuba prevented further German influence in the Western Hemisphere and supported the larger goal of projecting naval forces to the Pacific to counter the rising Japanese threat.<sup>89</sup>

### **U.S. Political and Strategic Objectives in Cuba**

The U. S. political objectives in Cuba shaped the manner by which the U.S. conducted the Second Intervention. Protection of American and foreign property always stood as the primary American objective. Taft believed that American citizens and property abroad were entitled to the same protection as in the United States, similar to the Roman Empire's claim for Roman

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<sup>86</sup> Musicant, *Banana Wars*, 2.

<sup>87</sup> Some compensation was given and agreements made with Colombia years later that compensated Colombia for the loss. Bemis, *Diplomatic History of U.S.*, 517. Cooper highlights the meticulous and overlooked diplomacy that Theodore Roosevelt conducted outside the public eye. The one exception to this appears to be Roosevelt's handling of the Panama Canal. His excessive defenses of his actions seem to indicate that Roosevelt would have preferred to handle that situation differently, although none of his writings prove this stance. John Milton Cooper Jr., "Whose League of Nations? Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, and World Order," in *Artists of Power: Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, and Their Enduring Impact on U.S. Foreign Policy*, ed. William N. Tilchin and Charles E. Neu (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2006), 165.

<sup>88</sup> Collin, *Theodore Roosevelt's Caribbean*, 509.

<sup>89</sup> H.W. Brands, "Theodore Roosevelt: America's First Strategic Thinker," in *Artists of Power: Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, and Their Enduring Impact on U.S. Foreign Policy*, ed. William N. Tilchin and Charles E. Neu (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2006), 36.

citizens.<sup>90</sup> In addition to the threat on American rights and liberty abroad, at the time of the intervention, American and foreign investors owned \$75-100 million worth of sugar mills and cane fields.<sup>91</sup> Beyond protecting life, liberty, and property, the U.S. also sought to promote capitalism and democracy in Cuba. In his address at the opening ceremonies of the Havana University in 1906, Taft encouraged young Cubans to embrace capitalism. He aimed to convince them that the key to a democratic government is the presence of a land owning majority of the population, too. Taft and Roosevelt believed that Cuba could eventually govern itself after help from the United States to get it on course.<sup>92</sup> Another American objective of the Second Intervention was the peaceful resolution of the insurgency. As the first provisional governor, Taft set an agenda to restore order and to disband and disarm the insurgents. Roosevelt did not wish to become decisively engaged in another unpopular and costly counterinsurgency like the Philippines. Roosevelt, Taft, General Bell, and General Funston all agreed that supporting Palma's government would lead to guerilla warfare, costing many American lives and property.<sup>93</sup> This view shaped the actions of the provisional government and Army of Cuban Pacification which aimed to keep the peace rather than make lasting reforms or attack the conditions that led to instability within Cuba before the intervention. Finally, the U.S. saw Cuba as the strategic linchpin for its security of states along the Gulf of Mexico and to protect the Panama Canal. The ability of the U.S. to project military power from the two ports was critical and instability in Cuba could compromise American security interests.

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<sup>90</sup> Boot, *Savage Wars of Peace*, 139.

<sup>91</sup> Ralph E. Minger, *William Howard Taft and United States Foreign Policy: The Apprenticeship Years, 1900-1908* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1975), 123.

<sup>92</sup> David H. Burton, *William Howard Taft: Confident Peacemaker* (Philadelphia, PA: St. Joseph's University Press, 2004), 128.

<sup>93</sup> Millet, *Politics of Intervention*, 80.

## Cuban Political and Strategic Objectives

While Cubans have criticized the actions of the United States during the Second Intervention throughout the twentieth century, in 1906, Cubans on almost all sides favored American military intervention. The Liberals wanted the U.S. to intervene to correct the fraudulent elections of 1905 and to help put them in power, which came to fruition. The Liberals recognized American intentions to protect American and foreign property and leveraged their support, although they likely would have come to power eventually without intervention.<sup>94</sup> The insurgents, led by veterans of the war of independence and aligned with the Liberals, exaggerated destruction of property in order to pressure the U.S. to act. In fact, the insurgents only destroyed a few bridges and culverts owned by the British owned Western Railway to prevent more soldiers from being transported to Pinar del Rio.<sup>95</sup> The Moderates looked to the United States to intervene on their behalf as well, in order to keep their party in power. Similarly, President Palma pleaded with the United States to intervene in order to help end the brewing insurgency. The Cuban armed forces were incapable of dealing with the insurrection. At the time of the rebellion, security forces consisted of 600 artillerymen and 3,000 rural guards who were spread in small detachments throughout the island. Palma expanded the Rural Guard by 2,000 on August 20, 1906 to improve security, but the forces remained inadequate in numbers and training. Additionally, dissention within the ranks and poor logistical support hindered the Rural Guard's capabilities and morale.<sup>96</sup> Palma, along with another large group of elites, favored annexation to the United States. He understood the difficulty that Cubans had in self-government and actually believed that the people would be better under American control. Annexationists tried to pass information that would encourage the U.S. to make Cuba a protectorate or annex it. The annexationists also

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<sup>94</sup> U.S. Britain, Germany, and Spain had invested millions of dollars in sugar plantations, tobacco farms and factories, railroads, and the mining industry. Hernández, *Cuba and the U.S.*, 139.

<sup>95</sup> Millet, *Politics of Intervention*, 70.

<sup>96</sup> Lockmiller, *Magoon in Cuba*, 35.

thought of creating some revolts to stir up U.S. sentiment to remain in Cuba.<sup>97</sup> While all the groups succeeded in instigating U.S. intervention in Cuba, only the Liberals who came to power after the intervention achieved their ultimate goal.

## Results of the Second Intervention

William Howard Taft created the provisional government on September 29, 1906. During his address to the people of Cuba he proclaimed,

The provisional government hereby established by direction and in the name of the President of the United States will be maintained only long enough to restore order and peace and public confidence, and then hold elections as may be necessary to determine those persons upon whom the permanent Government of the Republic should be devolved.<sup>98</sup>

Taft's goals for the provisional government appear benign and even altruistic. The goals indicate that the U.S. did not intend to occupy Cuba with troops or to administer its government any longer than necessary. However, Taft's comments also indicate that the U.S. had no plans for long term investment in the people of Cuba, and the lack of significant social reform probably led to future issues with the Cuban government. The policies kept the peace but were superficial, since the same social, financial, security, and governmental problems that existed before the Second Intervention continued to exist under the new Cuban administration established by the Liberals. The Cuban government maintained a tendency toward authoritarian rule which they had lived under since the Spanish colonized the country in 1511; therefore, the potential for democratic self-government without assistance was low.

Roosevelt chose a civilian provisional governor who understood Hispanic law, responded to civilian authority well, possessed an aptitude in compromise and diplomacy, and knew the

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<sup>97</sup> Millet, *Politics of Intervention*, 172.

relationship of Cuba's administration with U.S. politics. Charles Magoon was ideally suited for this role.<sup>99</sup> Magoon also understood the magnitude of the problems in Cuba. While governor, he presented a list of issues to Taft and Roosevelt that needed to be addressed. The list included: public health; employment during the dead time; lack of roads and harbor facilities; the high cost of transportation; the high cost of living: food, clothing, and shelter; the small margin of profit on sugar and tobacco; high interest rates; low wages for labor; extortion of wage earners by lenders; unjust restrictions upon commerce and shipping imposed by customs regulations; the need for a banking law to protect savers; and the need for a national currency.<sup>100</sup> Magoon's issues proved to be more comprehensive than Taft's. His concerns addressed social inequality within Cuban culture which needed to be fixed for long term stability, but Magoon lacked a plan to educate the people and encourage entrepreneurial behavior. In 1907 Taft visited Cuba and decided that in order to withdraw troops and the provisional government from Cuba the following conditions must be met: declaration of new electoral law, completion of an accurate census, administration of municipal and provincial elections, and execution of a national election six months after the provincial elections.<sup>101</sup> The provisional government and Army of Cuban Pacification accomplished Taft's objectives and turned control of the government over to the newly elected Cuban administration, but the American leaders of the day possessed mixed feelings on the success of the Second Intervention.

Theodore Roosevelt had many reasons to feel that the Second Intervention was a resounding success. Through the actions of the provisional government and Army of Cuban Pacification, the Second Intervention achieved the American political objectives established for Cuba in 1906.

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<sup>98</sup> Magoon, *Report of Provisional Administration*, 5.

<sup>99</sup> Millet, *Politics of Intervention*, 148.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 192.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 163.

One of the primary reasons for U.S. intervention in Cuba was its concern for U.S. and foreign property, and the American policies in Cuba protected these interests as well as improved economic conditions in Cuba during the period. As a result of the intervention, the U.S. and Cuba enjoyed favorable economic ties for the next fifty years. In addition to this success, the U.S. returned control of the government to the Cubans through a legitimate electoral process. While the troops secured property, the Advisory Commission of Agriculturalists advised the provisional government on matters of sugar and tobacco.<sup>102</sup> The sugar cane crop of 1906-1907 yielded more than previous years and produced 214,573 more tons. Although the tobacco crop was less plentiful, it was of a better quality and was valued higher than ever before as a result.<sup>103</sup> Additionally, Cuba mined more iron, copper, and gold during the Second Intervention than ever before.<sup>104</sup> Provincial and municipal elections occurred in August 1908. The Conservative Party won a majority of seats because the Liberals were split, but the Liberals learned their lesson, united, and won the presidency and a majority of senate seats in the national election.<sup>105</sup> In another success, the Army of Cuban Pacification executed plans that pacified the island. The only factor that could have led the U.S. to become a clear protectorate over Cuba would have been an insurrection, but the army prevented any violence from occurring and avoided such an occurrence. The \$4 million in pay to soldiers was dispersed during the Second Intervention; much of it went into Cubans pockets and bolstered the economy.<sup>106</sup> The army also built and repaired infrastructure and advanced health care on the island. Based on improved sanitation and health programs, the death rate in 1909 in Cuba dropped to twelve per thousand people, one of the

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<sup>102</sup> Lockmiller, *Magoon in Cuba*, 87.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 124.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.

<sup>105</sup> Millet, *Politics of Intervention*, 254.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 138.

lowest death rates in the world.<sup>107</sup> Finally, the U.S. maintained Cuba as a strategic base to protect its interests in the Caribbean and Latin America without annexing the island. The naval base at Guantanamo Bay continues to serve the United States as a projection platform to secure American interests in the Caribbean and Latin America. Although a source of contention with the current Cuban government, the U.S. has maintained the base and avoided the pitfalls of annexation.

Many of the American actions and policies fell short of the expectations of the U.S. officers serving in Cuba. These officers felt that more time was needed to transition the government to Cubans who were unfit to self-govern until they learned the American ways, which included “individual moral responsibility, private enterprise in economic matters, fair play in all private and public associations, truthfulness, tolerance for others and discipline for one’s self, and obedience to the law and to the constituted government.”<sup>108</sup> Because of the lack of reform, Major Kernan, head of the Cuban Claims Commission, concluded, “We might as well count on Cuba as a field for tropical service indefinitely.”<sup>109</sup> Kernan’s frustrations describe the lack of progress in many areas. Taft, himself, understood the difficulty the U.S. would have in making any political reforms in Cuba. Before handing over the provisional government to Charles Magoon, Taft reviewed the situation in Cuba and identified many of the problems that would be future issues for the U.S. in Cuba:

bitterness of political rancor, the absence of patriotism and moral courage, the ‘aloofness and lack of political influence of the conservative and property-holding classes,’ the overtones of racial and class difference, the ‘tendency toward socialism on the part of some of the leaders,’ and the venality and corruption that permeated the legislatures of

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<sup>107</sup> Lockmiller, *Magoon in Cuba*, 113.

<sup>108</sup> Millet, *Politics of Intervention*, 133.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 134.

the municipal and national governments.<sup>110</sup>

American officers overwhelmingly agreed that the Liberals, who now held the presidency and a majority of the congress, were corrupt and not trustworthy. However, the U.S. government blamed Moderates for creating the conditions that led to the Second Intervention. Furthermore, as positions held by Moderates became available, Magoon filled them with Liberals in an attempt to correct the fraudulent elections of 1905.<sup>111</sup>

Magoon was well qualified to be provisional governor and was probably more knowledgeable about law than anyone else, but he had never served in Cuba before and had difficulty assigning Liberals to the new jobs as they came open. Because he did not have a cabinet, he relied on chief clerks as cabinet officers.<sup>112</sup> Furthermore, his only Cuban counsels were Liberal politicians more interested in their own well being than that of their nation. Onlookers saw favoritism toward the Liberals, despite Magoon's and others' efforts to avoid this. As a result, Cubans voted for the Liberals who were perceived to be backed by the provisional government and therefore destined to win the election.<sup>113</sup> Knowing that Cubans had such a tendency and possessing a greater understanding of the Cuban culture would have helped the U.S. create better circumstances for the administration who inherited the Cuban government. Major Slocum and Lieutenant Colonel Greble, who led the Department of Government that oversaw the public works, disagreed with Magoon for pushing party politics. The two officers did not think that Cubans were capable of self-government at this point, largely because of the institutional corruption that existed. Greble wrote General Leonard Wood about his concerns of the U.S.

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<sup>110</sup> Minger, "William H. Taft and the United States Intervention in Cuba in 1906," 88.

<sup>111</sup> Millet, *Politics of Intervention*, 160.

<sup>112</sup> Magoon, *Report of Provisional Administration*, 16.

<sup>113</sup> The Moderate Party disbanded in November 1906 came back later as the Conservative Party. Millet, *Politics of Intervention*, 160.

wanting a democratic government in Cuba without curing the social problems that plagued it.<sup>114</sup>

Greble and other officers, like Lieutenant Colonel Bullard, believed that the United States should either help teach the Cubans how to self-govern, not interfere at all, or let Cuba continue with an autocratic rule.<sup>115</sup>

Despite the systemic corruption within Cuban society as well as devastation caused by two hurricanes, the economy performed adequately from 1906 to 1909. However, the success resulted from government spending that paid employees to work during the dead time and foreign investment because of the American occupation. Speculation in foreign investment declined, though, after Roosevelt promised to turn over sovereignty to Cuba and remove troops by February 1909. This announcement caused alarm to many foreigners with investments in Cuba, since they did not know how the U.S. would turn over government, remove troops, and still be able to ensure security of interests.<sup>116</sup> Furthermore, the provisional government, although recognizing the downside of reliance on the sugar crop as the only source of income, failed to implement policies to diversify jobs or to reduce dependence on a single crop.<sup>117</sup>

Public health improved during the intervention, but it still required much work. Typhoid, malaria, cholera, and tuberculosis remained serious threats, and diarrhea and enteritis were the major causes of death for children on the island. The Army of Cuban Pacification concentrated efforts on yellow fever, though, which mainly effected Americans and foreigners. The army appeared to focus on yellow fever because of U.S. fear of a downturn in investments and spread

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 154.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., 156. According to Cuban historian, Herminio Portell Vilá, Magoon mistook Cuban apathy in politics for a lack of national character. In fact, Magoon's choice of the politicians as his closest advisors probably discouraged the most educated and promising members of the upper class from participating in politics. Ibid., 260.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 244.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., 204.

of the disease to the southern states.<sup>118</sup> American forces were aware of the toll that disease paid on the Spanish troops during their occupation of Cuba. Spain lost 41,288 soldiers to disease, accounting for 93% of its casualties between 1895 and 1898.<sup>119</sup> Major Jefferson Kean, M.D., the head of health and sanitation on the island pushed for a nationalized Department of Sanitation to address the shortcomings in Cuba. Magoon created the department but emplaced appointees nominated by the politicians. The appointees were competent but were aligned with their parties and acted in a partisan manner.<sup>120</sup>

Everything Magoon did was party aligned and politically based to try to get Cubans involved. This policy only succeeded in assisting those in power to use it for their own benefit and further disenfranchise those not represented. The \$13.5 million surplus in treasury quickly turned to \$4 million deficit when trying to enact the public works program approved by Palma's administration.<sup>121</sup> Even with the huge expenditures on public works, the U.S. did little to help education administered by the Department of Public Instruction, first established under General Wood during the First Intervention. Sinecures and corruption were commonplace and hindered any true reform in education, but the provisional government chose to ignore these transgressions for the sake of pacification.<sup>122</sup> Magoon did not alter any institutions other than the government itself. As the provisional governor, he appointed the Advisory Law Commission on December 24, 1906, which called for the enactment of municipal laws, electoral law, law increasing independence of judiciary, and civil service law.<sup>123</sup> Colonel Enoch Crowder, Supervisor to the

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 209.

<sup>119</sup> General Pareja's brigade of 7,086 men stationed at Guantánamo lost 16% to starvation and disease, and he had thousands who were combat ineffective due to sickness. Tone, *War and Genocide in Cuba*, 9. Ibid., 276.

<sup>120</sup> Millet, *Politics of Intervention*, 212.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 195.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 208.

<sup>123</sup> Magoon, 21.

Department of Justice and Chairman of the Advisory Law Commission, called for social changes by revising Hispanic civil and criminal codes but made little progress with the commission which consisted of three American officers, five Liberals, and four Conservatives.<sup>124</sup>

Finally, social disorder occurred during 1907. Racial unrest grew during this time, probably because blacks thought they would be treated more fairly than before. Liberals condemned the racially motivated parties because it endangered their patronage. The provisional government did not understand these groups' motives, so it avoided engaging them, also. As a result, many of the racial and social conditions that existed in 1906 were ignored during the intervention.<sup>125</sup> U.S. officers believed that internal reform of Cuba was imperative to long term stability in the country.<sup>126</sup> The provisional government tried to balance what it believed to be right for Cuba and the reality of U.S. foreign policy; however, Cuba's need for social and economic reform appeared incompatible with Roosevelt's Caribbean foreign policy.<sup>127</sup>

## **Political and Strategic Lessons Learned**

The military officers of today, who plan and conduct operations throughout the world in support of the War on Terror, can learn considerably from the U.S. intervention in Cuba in 1906. While there are more differences than similarities between Cuba in the beginning of the twentieth century and Afghanistan and Iraq at the beginning of the twenty-first century, officers can apply some of the lessons learned from their predecessors in pacifying an insurgency and gain a greater understanding of their role in achieving their nation's goals. U.S. actions during the Second Intervention have been debated for the last century, and as conditions changed in the world, particularly after the Bay of Pigs, history has judged the American intervention harshly. Robert

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<sup>124</sup> Lockmiller, *Enoch Crowder*, 115.

<sup>125</sup> Millet, *Politics of Intervention*, 177.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 215.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, 190.

Bacon, himself, disagreed with American intervention in 1906, believing that the U.S. should have backed President Palma's administration instead of allowing the insurgency to decide whether the 1905 election was fraudulent or just. In fact, Bacon supported the Cuban judicial branch to decide the issue.<sup>128</sup>

Far from perfect, American leaders made some mistakes during the intervention of 1906. Among the miscues, President Theodore Roosevelt sent U.S. naval forces to Cuba in hopes that a show of force would help President Palma. Roosevelt ordered the ships not to send any troops ashore to avoid direct intervention. However, unaware of Roosevelt's intentions, the commanders of the *Denver* and *Marietta* deployed sailors ashore upon arrival. When doing this, the two officers committed the United States to intervention. If Commanders Fullam and Colwell understood the purpose of their mission and its link to Roosevelt's political objectives, they likely would have acted differently. Roosevelt sent the *Denver* and *Marietta* to project support of Palma's administration and to help him suppress the insurgency. Putting sailors ashore created the opposite effect, and demonstrates how tactical decisions can create strategic effects. The chance of these mishaps occurring is even greater during initial actions in an immature theater, when smaller units often act more autonomously. Although contrary to his orders, Roosevelt may have accomplished his goals at less of a cost and spared Palma from resigning had he left the sailors ashore. The insurgents initially prepared themselves to accept terms of surrender from the commander of the *Denver*, but after he reboarded his cruiser, the Liberals understood that the U.S. would not support Palma's administration.<sup>129</sup>

Taft could have made different decisions upon arrival in Cuba, too, most notably to support the current administration against the insurgency. Taft, as the Secretary of War, probably was not the ideal diplomat to send to Cuba to determine its fate. Elihu Root, the Secretary of State,

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<sup>128</sup> Lockmiller, *Magoon in Cuba*, 60.

possessed a better grasp of the situation in Cuba and would have been a better choice, as Taft himself admitted, but Root was attending a Latin American conference in Rio de Janeiro at the time. Upon Taft's arrival, he noted that the Cuban government only controlled the towns along the coast and insurgents controlled everything in the interior.<sup>130</sup> Taft saw intervention as the only option. He believed that U.S. support of Palma's government would have led to years of destruction. Likewise, he believed that no action by the U.S. also would have led to mass destruction.<sup>131</sup> Taft seems to have been predisposed to this idea, though. Before departing for Cuba, he sent a cable to Root stating, "The Cuban government has proved to be a house of cards. It has almost collapsed, and we have to take action at once."<sup>132</sup>

In addition to the different actions that may have prevented the intervention, American leaders could have taken different steps to shape Cuba after the intervention. Among the different options, the U.S. could have left military forces to secure interests and to support legitimate government policy, avoiding future deployments of troops to Cuba until Castro seized control. Steinhart, as the Consul General, recommended the creation of a base near Havana to garrison 3,000 American soldiers and the assignment of Army officers to serve as mentors to the Cuban Army and Rural Guard. Magoon opposed leaving troops, however, because he did not think that Cubans respected their authority and the site of the soldiers would be more damaging than helpful. He thought that any damaged property should be indemnified with funds from the Cuban treasury and that should deter Cubans from more violence.<sup>133</sup> In the end, many American leaders can be blamed for inadvertently forcing U.S. involvement in Cuba and for subsequent conditions that led to instability. However, Cubans must accept much of the culpability as well, because of

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<sup>129</sup> Abel, "Controlling the Big Stick," 95.

<sup>130</sup> Minger, "Taft and U.S. Intervention in Cuba," 80.

<sup>131</sup> Minger, *Taft and U.S. Foreign Policy*, 138.

<sup>132</sup> Musicant, *Banana Wars*, 61.

their political maneuvering that purposely instigated American intervention and their subsequent actions that encouraged corruption and hindered social reform.

## Conclusion

Despite the strong sentiment of the American officers of the day who believed that they had fallen short of accomplishing the mission, the Second Intervention in Cuba should be considered a success both politically and militarily for the United States. Military objectives met the narrow national, political objectives of the day. The military actions of the Army of Cuban Pacification and the provisional government led to a peaceful occupation and pacification of the island. As a result, the U.S. achieved its objectives in Cuba: protecting American and foreign property, promoting capitalism and democracy, peacefully resolving the Cuban insurgency, and maintaining a forward base to project military forces in the Caribbean and Latin America to protect its southern states and the Panama Canal without annexing Cuba. Additionally, the successful accomplishment of the objectives in Cuba helped attain the U.S. political goals of the time. During Roosevelt's presidency, completion of the Panama Canal remained paramount to the nation's new standing in the world, since the canal provided a strategic advantage for shipping and moving of military forces between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Roosevelt saw Cuba as one of the strategic linchpins for securing the canal. Peaceful resolution of the insurgency in Cuba appeased American constituents who did not want to see another violent insurrection like the Philippines. This ensured the protection of American and foreign investors' property and benefited the American economy. Similarly, by not annexing Cuba, the U.S. maintained a beneficial trade relationship with the island, selling products to its people, while receiving large tariffs on Cuban exports to ensure that the sugar cane plantations did not provide serious competition with the sugar beet crops within the U.S. Lastly, by avoiding annexation of Cuba, the

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<sup>133</sup> Millet, *Politics of Intervention*, 247.

U.S. also avoided a costly commitment of military forces to secure the island and appealed to Latin America's concerns over American imperialism in the Western Hemisphere.

When Palma's administration resigned, the conditions in Cuba changed and led to the disarmament of the insurgents who had achieved their primary goal. This new situation, created by a combination of Palma's actions and U.S. policy, affected the military actions in support of those political objectives. The frustration of the officers of the Second Intervention may have developed from their duties to enact policies, not strategy. Counterinsurgency warfare combines offensive, defensive, and stability operations. The disarming of insurgents early caused the military to place greater emphasis on stability operations in Cuba.

While the U.S. military serves as an instrument of national policy, it does not make national policy. The U.S. military's objectives remain subordinate to those of its nation, in times of war and peace. When called upon to support policy outside of war, the military must conduct operations other than war and leave policy-making to the politicians. The officers' dislike of the pacification policies in Cuba stemmed from disagreement on the conduct and nature of the techniques not from disagreement in American intervention itself. They were not given the autonomy to implement the reforms, which they believed would address Cuba's problems. The officers seem to be correct in their conclusion that long-term stability required reform, but they neglected to account for the will of the American people who would not have supported a long and possible violent counterinsurgency, resulting in the destruction of property and costing American lives and resources. The military failed to see the potential cost of such actions and the substantial energy required to instill democratic values. Similarly, international opinion of the intervention was already skeptical, so the quicker the U.S. could turn over sovereignty to the Cubans, the better for the American relations abroad.

In the end, the campaign plan adopted by the Army of Cuban Pacification, as well as the policies of the provisional government, supported the nation's goals and was appropriate for the time. In this respect, the Second Intervention in Cuba in 1906 stands as an example to be

emulated by the U.S. military in future stability operations conducted outside of war. Knowing the role of the military and its subordination to civilian, political authority and understanding that victory is rarely achieved through military means alone, U.S. military leaders should account for the nation's limits of tolerance and be content with conducting operations that support national goals.

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