

A -

A good job of assembling the pertinent facts from source material. Your English is in excellent shape - I envy your bi-lingual ability - and the foot note form, etc - is good.

The weakest part is your discussion of the motivation for interest in Puerto Rico - you make a couple of comments, but one would like to see them developed in more detail.

PUERTO RICO BECOMES AN AMERICAN COLONY

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A Study

Presented to the

Seminar in History 702

University of Pennsylvania

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by

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Map of

PUERTO RICO

## PUERTO RICO BECOMES AN AMERICAN COLONY

It is now over fifty years since Puerto Rico became a territory of the United States of America as a result of the Spanish-American War. During all this period an Anglo-Saxon people and their culture have come in direct contact with a people mainly of Iberic origin and a culture predominantly Spanish and especially Roman Catholic in tone. The impact of the foreign institutions and ways of life on the native social and economic framework has been well nigh revolutionary. Today the Puerto Rican people are not the same people that they were in 1898, not because there have been changes coming from within, but mainly because of the tremendous impact coming from the United States of America. That impact can appreciably be seen in education, public health, language, and in the economy of the island.

Looking back from 1951, it seems to us that what took place in 1898 in the military campaign against Puerto Rico, and in the diplomatic dealings between the American Republic and the Spanish Kingdom concerning the island, stands as a symbol of the great and revolutionary changes to come. The process by which Puerto Rico became a territory of the United States is important not only in its diplomatic and military phases, but

especially in its symbolic aspect. At that time Puerto Rico changed masters, and the change was significant.

In dealing with the process through which Puerto Rico became a dependency of the American Republic, we shall treat first with the military phase of said process, and second, with the diplomatic aspect. In the background of our thinking, we shall always keep in mind that what was taking place constituted a milestone in the history of Puerto Rico. At that time Puerto Rico stood, so to speak, at the parting of the ways.

PART I. The Military Phase

I.

The military preparations for a campaign against the island of Puerto Rico were closely connected with the movements of the Spanish fleet under Admiral Cervera. The fleet arrived at Santiago Bay on May 19, 1898, and from there on all the efforts of the American Army and Navy were directed toward the destruction of the said fleet. Major-General Nelson E. Miles, commanding officer of the Army, was entirely aware of the importance of destroying Cervera's fleet, but constantly kept Puerto Rico in mind. From the military point of view the island was very important. It was the easternmost of the Spanish possessions, and therefore the logical and ideal spot for the landing of any Spanish reinforcements. As we shall see, General Miles even dared to give priority to Puerto Rico over against the destruction of the Spanish fleet at Santiago.

It is our purpose here to deal first with the planning and preparations for the invasion of the island, and then to treat the actual military operations on Puerto Rican soil.

In a letter of May 26, 1898, to the Secretary of War, R. A. Alger, General Miles proposed that the available force of the Regular Army, 17,000 men, be used to assist the Navy in the destruction of the Spanish fleet at Santiago de Cuba by making a landing fifteen miles east of Santiago and proceeding thence against the Spanish garrison. The Army would then be in a position not only to capture the garrison

but also to help destroy the Spanish fleet by using field siege guns.

In case the above movement could not be accomplished before the Spanish fleet escaped or was destroyed by the Navy alone, the General proposed that "it would be ... well to capture the island of Porto Rico by a combined attack of the Army and Navy with the least possible delay." He thought that twenty-five thousand men of the Army with the assistance of the Navy would be sufficient to capture the island.<sup>1</sup>

The following day, May 27, General Miles informed Secretary Alger that he thought it advisable to load the transports at Tampa with a strong force of infantry and artillery and to proceed to Key West and thence to the northern coast of Cuba, where they would have the full protection of Admiral Sampson's fleet until they would reach Admiral Schley's fleet at Santiago. By a combined effort of the Army and Navy, the harbor and garrison would then be captured and possibly the Spanish fleet.

However, if before reaching Santiago it had been found that Admiral Schley's fleet had accomplished the above objective or that the Spanish fleet had escaped, he would urge then

the importance of a combined attack of the Army and Navy upon Porto Rico. We will be able to land a superior force, and I believe that a combined effort will result in capturing the island, with its garrison, provided it is done before it can be reinforced from Spain. The distance from Key West to Porto Rico is 1,040 miles, and from Cadiz, Spain, to Porto Rico it is 4,000 miles.

As to the value of such acquisition he added,

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<sup>1</sup> Correspondence Relating to the War with Spain and the Conditions Growing out of the Same (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1902), p. 261.



The possession of Porto Rico would be of great advantage to the military, as it would cripple the forces of Spain, giving us several thousand prisoners. It will be well fortified, the harbor mined, and would be a most excellent port for our Navy, which could be speedily relieved from any responsibility in the charge of that port San Juan, as we could leave a sufficient garrison to hold it against any force that might be sent against.

The General finished the letter by advising that after the capture of Santiago and Puerto Rico, the conquest of Cuba should be continued.<sup>2</sup>

On June 2 General Miles again wrote to the Secretary of War as follows:

Before this expedition sails I think it highly important that it should be definitely understood that position No. 2, Puerto Rico mentioned in my letter of May 27, is to be captured by a combined attack of the Army and Navy, provided neither shall have received serious injury in the first movement, Santiago and that Port Banes, or Nipe, be considered the place of rendezvous after Santiago de Cuba shall have been taken. If it meets the approval of the Government, as soon as this expedition sails another can be immediately organized to reenforce the first and make sure the capture of No. 2, and I request that transportation be immediately secured for at least 15,000 men.<sup>3</sup>

Two days later, on June 4, President McKinley sent a message to General Miles, asking him how soon he could have an expeditionary force ready for Puerto Rico, big enough to take and hold the island without the help of the force under General Shafter.<sup>4</sup>

To this General Miles replied on June 6, that such a force could be ready as soon as sufficient transports could be gathered for 30,000 volunteers. To this he added a very bold suggestion:

To leave No. 1 safely guarded. This corps the Fifth

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 262.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 263.

<sup>4</sup> Loc. cit.

Corps which was ordered the next day, June 7, to sail for Santiago under General Shafter with the combined assistance of the Navy, to take No. 2 before it can be reenforced. In order to make sure of this have it followed by 10,000 additional volunteers as quickly as transportation can be secured. Such a force ought to sail in ten days. Leaving sufficient force to hold No. 2, the capture of No. 1 can then be easily accomplished and the troops then landed at any point that might be thought advisable.

In plain English this plan envisaged the invasion and capture of Puerto Rico (No. 2), leaving Santiago (No. 1) "safely guarded," whatever that may mean.<sup>5</sup>

To the eyes of General Miles the island of Puerto Rico was of great strategic importance, and therefore he dared to give it precedence over the capture of Santiago and the destruction of the Spanish fleet. But his plan was opposed by the President and the Secretary of War. That same day the President replied with an emphatic no, urging instead the quick departure against No. 1 and also against No. 2, but that No. 1 should be taken first.<sup>6</sup> The President was just following the plan that had been suggested by General Miles up to this point, namely, the capture of Santiago and destruction of the Spanish fleet first, and then the invasion of Puerto Rico.

The next evening, June 7, General Miles received specific orders from the Adjutant-General at Washington. H.C. Corbin, to assemble an expeditionary force to go to Puerto Rico. Said the telegram: "As you report that an expedition to Porto Rico ... can be ready in ten days, you are directed to assemble such troops at once for the pur-

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 264.

<sup>6</sup> Loc. cit.

pose. The transports will be ready for you in ten days or sooner, if you can be ready."<sup>7</sup>

On June 15, the General, who was in Tampa, was ordered to come to Washington as quickly as possible to confer with the President and Secretary of War concerning his plans. There were repeated conferences, after which he was furnished with detailed orders on June 26. He was ordered to organize as soon as possible an expedition under the immediate command of Major-General John R. Brooke, to be composed of three of the best equipped divisions in the First and Third Army Corps, and two divisions from the Fourth Army Corps. In keeping with the general strategy, this force was to operate first in Cuba, helping General Shafter, and then in Puerto Rico. The command under Major-General Shafter, or such part of it as could be spared from the work at hand, was to join this expedition, i.e. after the expedition had reached Cuba, helped General Shafter, and when it was found that the situation was well in hand; then it could secure the help of General Shafter's forces, but not till then. General Miles was to be in command of both forces.<sup>8</sup>

The next day, June 27, General Miles acknowledged receipt of this confidential order.<sup>9</sup>

On the same day General Miles directed General Brooke, then at Chickmauga Park, Georgia, to prepare three divisions taken from the best equipped troops in the First and Third Army Corps. One of these divisions was General Wilson's division, at Charleston, North Carolina, which already had received orders to prepare.<sup>10</sup> The latter division

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 264.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., pp. 268-9.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 269.

<sup>10</sup> Loc. cit.

had been scheduled to go to Santiago, but because yellow fever was making such inroads into the ranks of the Army there, it was diverted to form part of the Puerto Rican expedition.<sup>11</sup>

Major-General Coppinger, at Tampa, Florida, was ordered to fully arm and equip two divisions of his command.<sup>12</sup>

On hearing of the destruction of the Spanish fleet at Santiago on July 3, General Miles made the following proposition to the Secretary of War:

As the object for which the Army was sent to Santiago de Cuba has been accomplished, viz., the forcing of the Spanish fleet out of the harbor and its destruction by the Navy, I deem the present time most favorable for proceeding immediately to Porto Rico. I consider it of the highest importance that we should take and keep that island, which is the gateway to the Spanish possessions in the Western Hemisphere, and it is also important that our troops should be landed there as early as possible during this month. There are now about 4,000 men on transports at Key West, approximately 7,000 will soon be at Charleston, S.C., and there are already 20,000 at Santiago. If this force is not sufficient the transports can return for more if required.<sup>13</sup>

The General was proposing the withdrawal of General Shafter's army from the siege of the garrison and city of Santiago and its use in conjunction with other forces to invade Puerto Rico. Again we see General Miles giving preference to Puerto Rico.

The War Department, however, rejected his idea. Instead, the General was ordered to go to Santiago de Cuba with his troops. He left Washington on July 7, and sailed the next day from Charleston in the Yale and the Columbia with from 3,000 to 4,000 men as reinforcements

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 272.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 270

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 271

to General Shafter. Shafter and Miles agreed to send an ultimatum to General Toral, who defended the beleaguered city. The latter, knowing of the arrival of reinforcements under General Miles, surrendered on July 14. The men of the Yale and the Columbia were not used.<sup>14</sup>

The campaign of Santiago now over, General Miles was anxious to undertake the Puerto Rican expedition. On the morning of July 16 he wrote Admiral Sampson as follows:

I am ordered to equip an expedition of some 25,000 men immediately to occupy Porto Rico in conjunction with the Navy, and would be glad to consult you concerning the enterprise, and advise with you as to the best point of disembarkation and mode of accomplishing this object, in order that the army and navy may act in full concert.<sup>15</sup>

That same morning he visited Sampson aboard the flagship New York. The Admiral was of the opinion that the best place to rendezvous transports with troops would be Point Fajardo, under Cape San Juan, the easternmost point of Puerto Rico. The landing would also take place there. In informing the War Department of this conference, Miles pointed out that none of the Santiago troops were available for present use, due to yellow fever. This meant that he had only a little over 3,000 troops at his immediate command to undertake the invasion of Puerto Rico.<sup>16</sup>

In a telegram to Secretary Alger on July 17, Miles showed his anxiety about the undertaking. Said he: "We are within forty hours of Porto Rico ... and anxious to sail to-morrow to Point Fajardo, Cape de San Juan, Porto Rico. ..." Yet because the captain of the Yale re-

<sup>14</sup> María Cadilla de Martínez, Rememorando el pasado heroico (Arecibo, Puerto Rico, 1946), pp. 430-1.

<sup>15</sup> French Ensor Chadwick, The Relations of the United States and Spain: The Spanish American War, vol. 2 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911), p. 266.

<sup>16</sup> Correspondence Relating to the War with Spain, p. 276.

ported that the ship was nearly out of coal, he was forced to close the telegram thus: "Expect to leave within two days." <sup>17</sup>

However, Secretary Alger informed the General that same day that his proposition to go to Puerto Rico with 3,000 troops did not seem to be the best, in view of the fact that no reinforcements could be sent for a week or ten days. About 12,000 troops were to start that week to join him at such a point as he and Sampson would designate. Nipe was suggested by the Secretary of the Navy and his board as a place of rendezvous, and to this view the Secretary of War agreed. Until the question of the point of rendezvous was decided, Miles was ordered to remain where he was, namely Guantánamo.<sup>B</sup> The General had moved his troops from Santiago to Guantánamo Bay to get ready for the expedition.

In respect to this suggestion of the Secretaries of the Navy and War, it should be noted that General Miles had telegraphed the War Department on July 16 that Point Fajardo had been designated by him and Admiral Sampson as the place of rendezvous. Apparently Secretary Alger had not yet received such a telegram. At any rate, the suggestion was not carried out, for the War Department soon gave General Miles full discretion to meet the transports wherever he wanted.

Before General Miles received Secretary Alger's telegram of the seventeenth, he had sent another communication to the War Department early on the morning of July 18. He said:

I consider it of the highest importance that some officers of the Navy, with efficient force, should proceed with me immediately to Porto Rico, in order to seize wharfs and commanding positions at and in the vicinity of Point Fajardo, Cape San Juan. We

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 280.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 281.

can land and take position to cover the deployment of the troops as fast as they arrive. After consultation with Admiral Sampson, that place was considered the best.<sup>19</sup>

That same day the Adjutant-General answered this telegram.

General Miles was directed to land the troops on the Yale and his transports at any point in Puerto Rico that he should see fit. However, he was warned that the selection of the time and place for such a landing should be made with the recognition that reinforcements would not reach him until five to seven days from that date, i.e. July 18. He was also informed that Admiral Sampson was to be ordered to give him such assistance as they both should designate. Furthermore, he was to hoist the American flag immediately upon landing on Puerto Rico.<sup>20</sup>

With these instructions giving him full discretion as to the place and time of landing, General Miles was ready to sail that same day. However, a three day delay was caused by the difference of opinion between Miles and Sampson concerning the nature of the convoy. The former, being afraid of powerful shore batteries and of the gunboats in San Juan, wanted a powerful convoy. Sampson believed that the Cincinnati, which was at Key West, and the New Orleans, which was blockading the port of San Juan, besides the Yale and the Columbia which Miles already had, was ample protection for a landing. Miles disagreed with such a position and wrote to the Secretary of War asking for more convoy support. In the end the Secretary of the Navy ordered Admiral Sampson to give General Miles the requested support. Admiral Sampson readily complied by adding the Annapolis, Wasp, Leyden, and the Gloucester to

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 281.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 283.

Miles' convoy. Three monitors were to be added later.<sup>21</sup> The Massachusetts and the Dixie were also detailed to go along with the expedition.<sup>22</sup> These precautions were unnecessary. Experience proved that Admiral Sampson's supposition was correct.

This affair being settled, General Miles started to move from Guantánamo toward Point Fajardo, Cape San Juan, on July 21 at 3 P.M. The senior officer in charge of the naval contingent was Captain Higginson of the Massachusetts. The fleet consisted of seven transports carrying troops and the Massachusetts, Dixie, Gloucester, Yale, and Columbia as convoy, the last, carrying troops also. The Annapolis, Wasp, Leyden, and Cincinnati had not arrived yet, while the New Orleans was to be picked up off the coast of San Juan.<sup>23</sup>

Before sailing, General Miles had indicated the strength of the forces accompanying him through this telegram to the War Department:

The following troops are with me aboard transports, Guantánamo Bay, en route to Porto Rico: Four light batteries of Third and Fourth Corps; Lomia's Battery (B), Fifth Artillery; Sixth Illinois; Sixth Massachusetts; 275 recruits for regiments Fifth Corps; 60 Signal Corps; Seventh Hospital Corps; 3,415 all told; others expected daily.<sup>24</sup>

Not an imposing force, but as shall be seen, enough to land in Puerto Rico against any opposition and hold its own.

Picking up the thread of our story, it should not be forgotten that while General Miles was making plans for the expedition, about 30,000 troops were being assembled at different ports of the East under Generals Brooke, Wilson, and Schwan. Major-General James H. Wilson

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., pp. 297-300.

<sup>22</sup> Chadwick, p. 280.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., pp. 280, 284.

<sup>24</sup> Correspondence Relating to the War with Spain, p. 304.



sailed from Charleston a day before Miles left Guantánamo with a force of 164 and 3,407 men in the transports Obdam , La Grande Duchesse, and Mobile. Brigadier-General Theodore Schwan left Tampa on July 24 with a force of 73 officers and 2,823 men in six transports. Major-General John R. Brooke sailed from Newport News on July 28. The force under his command was composed of 5,317 officers and men. With the 3,415 officers and men that General Miles had under his immediate command, the new additions would give him a total of 15,199 officers and men.<sup>25</sup> Not all the troops in Eastern ports available for the Puerto Rican expedition were sent to the island. The number of troops that sailed was restricted by transportation facilities. Also on arriving on the island and proving the Spanish defenses, General Miles informed the War Department that no more troops were needed except those already there.

## II

For the invasion of the island three plans had been made by the experts of the Army and the military authorities in Washington. The first plan we have already mentioned. It was devised by General Miles and Admiral Sampson and approved by the Secretary of War and the President. The point of disembarkment on the island was to be Fajardo. The fleet would protect the landing of the Army, and when already on land the troops would move from east to west in parallel columns, having as their main objective San Juan, capital of the island and most fortified city.

<sup>25</sup> R. A. Alger, The Spanish American War (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1901), p. 308.

The second plan of invasion was the product of Captain Davis of the Dixie. It called for a direct attack on San Juan. An army of infantry and another of artillery would land in Palo Seco, to the west of San Juan, while the fleet attacked the city proper. This plan did not receive a favorable consideration.

The third plan was a modification of the first one. In either case, the attack was to be indirect. Once in Puerto Rican waters, General Miles decided that it would be best to attack from the south rather than from the northeast. In a dispatch dated July 30 he gave the reasons for the change in plans. He explained that the choice of Point Fajardo for the initial landing had been based on the representation of one of the naval officers. However, the point was found to be more of an open roadstead than a safe harbour. Besides, it was well-known throughout the island that the Americans were to land at Point Fajardo and without a doubt the Spaniards were thus enabled to concentrate their forces in that vicinity before the landing. Furthermore, the road leading to San Juan from Point Fajardo was not suitable for wagons and artillery. Thus Point Fajardo was rejected and the harbors of Guánica and Ponce on the southern coast chosen as the points for landing. Guánica was chosen for the first landing. The port was of deep water and had no defenses. The harbor of Ponce was still better, and what was most important, the only good road on the island connected Ponce and San Juan. Ponce also had a good number of lighters. The expedition was expecting lighters on Windward Passage, but failing to receive them, the best alternative was to capture those that the Spaniards had in Ponce and use them for

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landing purposes.

All told, the change in plans proved to be a happy one, for the Spaniards lacked any defenses on the southern coast and were completely taken by surprise. However, had the Spaniards had sufficient artillery and infantry to make a stand in the range of mountains running from east to west through the center of the island, the American invaders would probably have been thrown back with heavy losses. As it was, the Spanish forces, in spite of their gallant stand in certain sectors, were few in number and ill-equipped. A final showdown for the mountain positions did not come because of the news of the cessation of hostilities, but under the circumstances, there can be no doubt that the American forces were destined to overcome their enemies.

This complete change in plans was opposed by Captain Higginson of the Massachusetts, senior officer of the naval contingent. He objected to it on the ground that at Guánica he could not get in with his heavy ships to support the troops. In turn he proposed that the landing be made at Point Fajardo according to plans and that Guánica be left in reserve in case insurmountable obstacles were found in the former place. However, General Miles, a man of firm resolutions, was not too easily swayed, and on July 24 ordered the expedition to proceed to Guánica. The Dixie, under Commander Davis, was sent to San Juan to

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<sup>26</sup>Correspondence Relating to the War with Spain, pp. 337-8. The information concerning the state of affairs inside the island, that General Miles' dispatch of July 30 reveals, was given to him by Captain Whitney of the Army, who in June had travelled through the island in disguise. He had found that the southern part of the island was in disaffection with Spain, and actually proposed that the first landing be made in Guánica. See Chadwick, op. cit., pp. 285-6. For a fuller treatment of the plans of invasion, see Cadilla, op. cit., pp. 432-433.

pick up the New Orleans, that had been blockading that part, and the transports that were supposed to be under way to the original point of attack. The remainder of the expedition went on direct to Guánica.<sup>27</sup>

### III

The expedition arrived at Port Guánica on the morning of July 25 at 5:20 A.M. At 8:45 A.M. the whole fleet came to an anchor. Finding no batteries at the entrance of the port, Lieutenant-Commander Wainwright of the Gloucester asked permission to enter. Captain Higginson acquiesced, but not without some misgivings, not knowing for certain what mines or torpedoes might be in the harbor or how many batteries might be concealed from their sight. Such misgivings proved to be unfounded. The Gloucester entered the harbor and fired several shots, but no answer was heard from shore batteries. A company of sailors under the command of Lieutenants Huse and Wood was put ashore. This group hauled down the Spanish flag and drove back a small force of Spanish who had fired on them. At eleven o'clock that day the American flag was raised at the port.

While the landing party of the Gloucester was ashore, Captain Higginson, being now convinced that there were no hidden batteries, ordered the transports to go into the harbor. All the boats and launches of the Massachusetts were lowered and sent in charge of Cadet Evans to carry the troops from the transports to the shore. The troops in the Yale and the Columbia were also landed. By 12 noon the process of

<sup>27</sup>

Chadwick, op. cit., pp. 286-7.

disembarkation was over.<sup>28</sup>

The first landing of American troops in Puerto Rico was successfully accomplished. The Gloucester captured the port of Guánica single-handed. The American forces suffered no casualties. The Spaniards had in town 11 cavalrymen and 19 infantrymen under the command of Lieutenant Enrique Méndez López. These men hid themselves behind bushes and fired on some of the men of Garretson's Brigade, but they were quickly dispersed, retreating toward Yauco. Lieutenant Méndez and one of his men were wounded in the exchange of shots.<sup>29</sup>

The following day, July 26, Brigadier-General Garretson with six companies of the Sixth Massachusetts and one of the Sixth Illinois Volunteer Infantry made an attack upon a strong force of Spaniards near Yauco. After a spirited engagement on a skirmish line, the Spaniards were defeated and driven back, having suffered 16 casualties. The American forces had 4 wounded. Yauco, to the northeast of Guánica, was occupied the next day. This victory gave the invading forces the railway and highway leading to the town of Ponce, the next objective of the campaign. General Henry's division, which had landed in Guánica, moved to Yauco on July 28.<sup>30</sup>

On the afternoon of July 27 General Wilson, on the transport Obdam, and General Ernst, on the Grande Duchesse, arrived at the port of Guánica. With this new force, Captain Higginson felt strong enough to detach a force against Ponce, and thus carry out the desires of General

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<sup>28</sup> Correspondence Relating to the War with Spain, p. 322; see also Chadwick, op. cit., p. 288, and Cadilla, op. cit., p. 436.

<sup>29</sup> Cadilla, op. cit., p. 435.

<sup>30</sup> Correspondence Relating to the War with Spain, p. 330

Miles to transfer the port of disembarkation to the harbor of Ponce. Commander Davis, having returned from the eastern end of the island, was ordered with the Dixie, Annapolis, Wasp, and Gloucester to reconnoitre the harbor of Ponce, capture all the lighters available, and occupy such position as he considered necessary to hold the port until the coming of the Army. At 5:30 P.M. that same day all the ships anchored in the harbor of Ponce without meeting any resistance. The Wasp was ordered to anchor in such a way that her broadside would command the main street of La Playa, a suburb of Ponce, the town itself being two miles away.

Lieutenant Merriam of the Dixie was sent to demand the surrender of the town. He went ashore but was unable to establish communication with the commander of the Spanish troops. He returned about 6 P.M. and was closely followed by the British and German consuls, and several gentlemen representing the commercial interests. This group called on Captain Davis aboard the Dixie and informed him that they had authority from the military commander to negotiate for surrender. They asked for a delay to await instructions from the headquarters at San Juan, but being denied such request, they returned to the town. However, they were back by 12:30 A.M., July 28. This time a surrender was arranged which allowed for the withdrawal of the Spanish garrison and permitted the municipal government to remain in power until the arrival of the American Army. The harbor master, the only remaining Spanish official at La Playa, was not to be taken as a prisoner of war.<sup>31</sup>

On July 28 at five o'clock in the morning, the Spanish troops left Ponce. Half an hour later Lieutenant Merriam, Lieutenant Haines,

<sup>31</sup> Cadilla, op. cit., pp. 444-8.

and the Naval Cadet G.C. Lodge, and a group of marines landed at La Playa. They took possession of the custom house and thence went to the cable house and the captain of the port building. In the latter place the American flag was hoisted at 6 A.M. Several posts were established to guard the place until the arrival of the Army. At 6:40 A.M. the Massachusetts arrived with General Miles and General Wilson's command. At seven o'clock General Miles went ashore. General Wilson followed suit at seven thirty. Lieutenant Haines now turned his sentry posts over to the Army. General Miles established his headquarters in Calle Mayor No. 6. The custom house served temporarily as General Wilson's headquarters. He later moved to the town.

Just after the flag had been hoisted over the captain of the port building, Surgeon Heiskel, Lieutenant Murdock, and Naval Cadet Lodge asked permission to reconnoitre. The permission was granted and they visited Ponce proper, receiving a warm welcome from the inhabitants. Having found everything ~~in~~ calm, the party returned at 8:15 A.M. but went back immediately, taking along Lieutenant Haines, who had been relieved of his responsibilities at La Playa. They found some political prisoners at the city hall, and after receiving permission by telephone from the headquarters at the custom house, put them at liberty. About 10 P.M. Naval Cadet Lodge hoisted the flag over city hall. This took place in the presence of the mayor, who formally turned over the town to Cadet Lodge. About this time, Major Flagger of the Army arrived with troops and took formal possession.<sup>32</sup>

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That same day General Miles issued a proclamation to the Puerto

<sup>32</sup> Chadwick, pp. 293-4.

Rican people that deserves full quotation because of its importance to the people of Puerto Rico as an expression of American intentions. Some Puerto Rican historians claim that this statement of Miles produced confusion in the minds of the Puerto Rican leaders. It promised what the United States was not ready to fulfill. Yet some Puerto Rican leaders took the proclamation as a statement of fact. Such a phrase as, we come to "bestow upon you the immunities and blessings of the liberal institutions of our government," had little meaning in a context of military government and of an organic law much inferior in self-government to the autonomic charter of 1897 granted by the Spanish government.<sup>33</sup> Be that as it may, General Miles was undoubtedly sincere in his motives. He said:

In the prosecution of the war against the kingdom of Spain by the people of the United States in the cause of liberty, justice, and humanity, its military forces have come to occupy the island of Puerto Rico. They come bearing the banner of freedom inspired by a noble purpose to seek the enemies of our country and yours, and to destroy or capture all who are in armed resistance. They bring you the fostering arm of a nation of free people, whose greatest power is in its justice and humanity to all those living within its fold. Hence, the first effect of this occupation will be the immediate release from your former political relations, and it is hoped a cheerful acceptance of the government of the United States. The chief object of the American military forces will be to overthrow the armed authority of Spain and to give the people of your beautiful island the largest measure of liberty consistent with this military occupation. We have not come to make war upon the people of a country that for centuries has been oppressed but, on the contrary, to bring you protection, not only to yourselves but to your property, to promote your prosperity, and bestow upon you the blessings and immunities of the liberal

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<sup>33</sup> Tomás Blanco, Prontuario histórico de Puerto Rico (San Juan de Puerto Rico: Biblioteca de Autores Puertorriqueños, 1946), pp. 101-139. In these pages Mr. Blanco deals with the implications of the American occupation and touches on General Miles' proclamation.



institutions of our government. It is not our purpose to interfere with any existing laws and customs that are wholesome and beneficial to your people so long as they conform to the rules of military administration of order and justice. This is not a war of devastation, but one to give to all within the control of its military and naval forces the advantages and blessings of enlightened civilization.<sup>34</sup>

During July 28 General Wilson was able to disembark all his troops and to camp in the vicinity of Ponce. He then proceeded to organize his command which was composed of General Ernst's Brigade -- consisting of the First and Second regiments of Wisconsin and the Sixteenth of Pennsylvania, all volunteers -- and two field batteries and a company of Signal Corps. On August 3, the brigade exchanged its black-powder Springfields for the smokeless-powder Kray-Jogersons, an important step for the protection of the troops.

On August 7, the troops, rested and well-supplied with food, ammunition, and arms, started to move northward along the Central Road. Through spies and dissenters, General Wilson had learned that a force of Spaniards numbering about 2,000 had taken position near Aibonito, about thirty-five miles from Ponce. The Spaniards were entrenched in a place of great natural strength. Wilson's objective was, of course, to move toward San Juan. To do this, he had to face an enemy who was advantageously deployed. Having defeated the Spaniards, he was to meet the forces of General Brooke coming from Guayama, and both armies would then proceed toward the capital. Between Aibonito and the advancing troop was the town of Coamo, a naturally strong position, held by 250 men.

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<sup>34</sup> Annual Report of the War Department for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1900. Part 13. Report of the Military Governor of Porto Rico on Civil Affairs, pp. 19-20.

The town was also protected by a block-house on the Baños road, going from Coamo to Santa Isabel on the southern coast. The block-house was a menace to the right flank of any troops advancing along the main road from the south. In the face of these obstacles, General Wilson decided to turn the position. On the evening of August 8, the Sixteenth of Pennsylvania under the command of Colonel Haulings and guided by Colonel Biddle and Captain Gardner, both of General Wilson's staff, was ordered to approach the town from the rear. The next morning General Ernst with the two other regiments of his brigade and supported by artillery and cavalry made a direct attack on the town. First the Baños road block-house was silenced, and then the troops proceeded against Coamo. While General Ernst was making the frontal attack, the regiment under Captain Haulings was charging the enemy from the rear. Under the circumstances, the Spaniards had no choice but to flee, and those unable to do so had to surrender. As a result of this action, the Americans had six men wounded. Of the Spaniards two officers and four men were killed and from thirty to forty wounded. The Americans captured 167 prisoners, 5 officers and 162 men. The remainder of the Spanish force escaped to Heights of Asomante and El Peñón, near Aibonito.

To make a frontal attack on the Spanish positions on the Heights of Asomante would involve a heavy loss in lives, a loss that General Wilson was not in a position to incur, in view of the limited number of troops at his disposal. He therefore, on August 12, decided to flank the enemy and ordered General Ernst to prepare to move his troops on the Barranquitas trail at daylight on the morning of the thirteenth. But in order to divert the attention of the Spaniards from any flanking

movement, he ordered an artillery reconnaissance to be made at 1 P.M. on the twelfth. The artillery attack was made and the Spanish batteries answered the fire and for a time seemed to have been silenced, but broke fire again when the Americans stopped firing. The American batteries were handicapped by the black powder which furnished a perfect target to the enemy. The American losses were two men killed and two officers and three men wounded. The engagement demonstrated the strength of the Spanish positions.

This ended the fighting in this sector. Just as General Ernst was getting the flanking movement under way, news of the peace protocol and the cessation of hostilities reached General Wilson.<sup>35</sup>

The military movements in the other sectors of the island had the same objective as the central campaign, namely, the liquidation of the Spanish troops outside San Juan and then a final push against the city proper.

General Brooke, who had left Newport News on July 28 with the brigade commanded by General Hains and other troops, reached Guánica on July 31 and proceeded to Ponce. There he was ordered to go to Arroyo, a town about thirty-six miles east of Ponce. The town surrendered without firing a shot. The only shots were fired by the Saint Louis and the Gloucester, which were protecting the transports. On August 2 at 11:28 A.M. the American flag was hoisted. Lieutenant Wood of the Gloucester and a guard of seamen were left in charge of the town until the Army could take over. In the following two days the infantry and

<sup>35</sup> Chadwick, pp. 300-6. In these pages Chadwick gives the verbatim report of the central campaign as given by General Wilson himself.

artillery were disembarked.

On August 4 General Hains with his brigade advanced toward Guayama, a town west of Arroyo. Half a mile from Guayama the Spaniards attacked the advancing troops but were forced to retreat under the pressure of numbers and fire power. The Americans had four wounded. The town of Guayama was captured and on August 5 the flag was hoisted. On August 8, Captain Coit and 110 men made a reconnaissance along the road running north from Guayama. The party advanced five miles and ran into Spanish opposition, being forced to fall back until reinforcements came. The Spaniards were driven back, but the reconnaissance showed that they had a good number of troops available and held a naturally strong position. Five American soldiers were wounded. Basing his strategy on the strength of the Spanish positions, General Brooke decided to flank the position. For this purpose he had to wait until August 13 to get the help of the cavalry and artillery. General Hains with his troops was to move to the enemy's rear while General Brooke was to make a frontal attack with artillery. The attack was ready to start when orders were received to suspend hostilities.<sup>36</sup>

The campaign in the western part of the island was in charge of General Schwan. He had left Tampa on July 24 and arrived at Guánica on July 31 and immediately moved to Ponce. There, on August 6, he received orders from General Miles to proceed to the western part of the island to disperse or capture all Spanish troops found in the area. He was to follow the route of Yauco, Sábana Grande, San Germán, Mayagüez, and from there to Lares and Arecibo. The latter town is on the northern coast

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<sup>36</sup> For the campaign under Brooke, see Correspondence Relating to the War with Spain, pp. 377-8; also Cadilla, op. cit., pp. 453-8.

of the island and not too far from San Juan. There he was supposed to meet General Henry, who was coming with troops from Adjuntas and Utuado. Having thus cleared the western part of the island of Spanish troops, the generals could then move with their troops against San Juan. In the meantime Generals Wilson and Brooke would advance from the south through the Central Road toward the capital. It was a well-planned strategy that might very well have failed, had the Spaniards had enough troops and arms to offer resistance in the central range. A determined opposition in naturally strong positions would have cost the Americans innumerable casualties. It was because of this possibility that General Miles might have made a mistake in shifting the point of attack from the eastern to the southern coast. By following the latter course, he was interposing a natural barrier between his troops and the main body of Spanish troops. Fortunately for him, the Spaniards lacked not only men but especially equipment.

General Schwan and his infantry and artillery left Yauco on August 9, without waiting for the cavalry under Captain Macomb. They travelled twelve miles and spent the night in the town of Sábana Grande. The next morning, they started on their way to San Germán. A group of Puerto Rican scouts led the group, then followed the cavalry, which had joined the party, the infantry, and the artillery. That same day San Germán was reached. While there General Schwan received news that Spanish troops had left Mayagüez and were moving toward San Germán. Immediately he ordered his troops to move toward Mayagüez. The Spaniards were deployed in the hills near Hormigueros and occupied a command-

ing position. Upon the arrival of the Americans, there ensued a fight of two hours, at the end of which the Spanish troops were forced to retreat because of lack of ammunition and reinforcements. The American losses were one killed and fifteen wounded; the Spanish, fifteen killed and thirty-five wounded.

As a result of this skirmish, the Spanish forces abandoned Mayagüez and on August 11 General Schwan and his troops entered the town. A column of American soldiers pursued the Spaniards and met them on August 13 in the pass of the Prieto River near Las Marías. After a heavy fight, Colonel Soto of the Spanish troops surrendered with 162 men. The Americans continued to pursue the Spaniards who fled, and more were taken prisoner. The Americans had six wounded; of the Spaniards, five were buried by the Americans and many more were wounded. Thus ended the campaign in the western part of the island.<sup>37</sup>

The other movement of importance was undertaken by Brigadier-Generals Guy V. Henry and Ray Stone. They were ordered by General Miles to cross the island from south to north, capturing all the intermediary towns between Ponce and Arecibo. They left Ponce on August 6. By August 10, General Stone and his troops reached Adjuntas and proceeded to Utuado, which town they occupied on August 12. There they waited for General Henry and his troops, who joined them the following day. The news of the armistice found them in Utuado. No enemy opposition was met in this sector.

Thus ended the active military phase of the occupation of Puerto

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<sup>37</sup> For the western campaign, see Correspondence Relating to the War with Spain, pp. 380-1, 390, 393; also Cadilla, pp. 467-78.

Rico. In twenty days General Miles and his troops had succeeded in conquering almost half of the island with a minimum of casualties. Only 3 enlisted men were killed, and of the wounded 4 were officers and 36, enlisted men. However, no major blow was dealt against the Spanish forces. The latter's strength was in the northern part of the island, principally in San Juan. But because of the armistice, no decisive battle took place.

#### IV

To us the military campaign against Puerto Rico was just one phase of the acquisition of the island by the American government. It was started for obvious military reasons, but also for political considerations. The authorities in Washington were of the opinion that Puerto Rico should be ceded to the United States as a spoil of war, and there is no reason to doubt that the occupation of the island was intended to give the American government a strong bargaining position. In order to have a firm claim to the island, it was better to have troops on it. As we shall see later, at negotiations preceding the peace protocol of August 12, the American government was adamant to any Spanish suggestion that would keep Puerto Rico out of their hands.

Two instances will show that some important figures in American political life were deeply interested that Puerto Rico should become an American possession. A few days after the battle of Manila Bay, Theodore Roosevelt made an appeal to Henry Cabot Lodge in which he said: "You must get Manila and Hawaii; you must prevent any talk of peace

until we get Porto Rico and the Philippines as well as secure the independence of Cuba..."<sup>38</sup> Lodge answered the Colonel that an expeditionary force would be sent to the Philippines and that Puerto Rico would most certainly not be forgotten. Furthermore, he pointed out that the administration was fully committed to the large policy that both of them desired. Puerto Rico figured here in a larger framework, but nevertheless, it was in the picture.<sup>39</sup>

From the correspondence of Secretary of State Day with Ambassador Hay in London, we also get a glimpse of the future that awaited Puerto Rico as a result of the war. On June 3, 1898, Secretary Day sent a strictly confidential telegram to Mr. Hay. The telegram contained four propositions on the basis of which the President was inclined to make peace. The first part of the second of these propositions read thus:

"United States not demanding any money indemnity for the war, Spain to cede Porto Rico to the United States in lieu thereof..."<sup>40</sup>

In a letter to the President, Hay expressed his approval of the four propositions, including, of course, the one about Puerto Rico. In a telegram on July 26, Secretary Day asked Ambassador Hay if he had any reason for reviewing his views about the terms of peace which were submitted to him on June 3.<sup>41</sup> In his reply on July 28, Mr. Hay said

<sup>38</sup> Quoted by Julius W. Pratt in Expansionists of 1898 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1936), p. 231, from Henry Cabot Lodge, editor, Selections from the Correspondence of Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge (New York & London, 1925), I, p. 299.

<sup>39</sup> Pratt, op. cit., p. 231.

<sup>40</sup> Hay Papers, Day to Hay, Washington, June 3, 1898. Given by Alfred L.P. Dennis in his Adventures in American Diplomacy (E.P. Dutton & Company, 1928) in Appendix D in the chapter on the Spanish American War, p. 99.

<sup>41</sup> Hay Papers, Day to Hay, July 26. Given by Dennis, op. cit., p. 100.



about Puerto Rico: "...Puerto Rico should be ceded to us unencumbered and without conditions."<sup>42</sup>

Pratt points out that business interests, also, insisted that the United States needed Puerto Rico for strategic and commercial reasons. And he quotes the New York Journal of Commerce as asserting on May 11, 1898: "We want no acquisitions other than those needful for strategic purposes, but whatever territory of that nature falls into our hands must never be parted with."<sup>43</sup> Of course Puerto Rico was very strategically located.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Hay Papers, Hay to Day, July 28. Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Pratt, op. cit., pp. 274-5.

<sup>44</sup> Alfred T. Mahan, in a book written after the war was over, pointed out the strategic importance of the island, and had views similar to those of General Miles. He declared that the character and direction of the first movements of the United States in the war were determined by "the occasion and professed object of the hostilities." That object was to enforce the departure of Spain from Cuba. This being the case, the island became the objective of our military movements. Had our aim been appreciated against the background of the "undeniable injury to the United States, from the then existing conditions, and the general iniquitous character of Spanish rule in the colonies, and had war for these reasons been declared, the objective of our operations might have been differently chosen for strategic reasons." In such a case, Puerto Rico would have been the primary objective of the war. The island would have been invaluable to the mother country as an "intermediate naval station and as a base of supplies and reenforcements for both her fleet and army." If the island were then left undisturbed, Spain would have enjoyed the same advantage of proximity to the theater of operations that the United States had by virtue of her geographical situation. Mahan then proceeds to emphasize the continued importance of the strategic position of Puerto Rico. "This estimate of the military importance of Puerto Rico should never be lost sight of by us as long as we have any responsibility, direct or indirect, for the safety or independence of Cuba. Puerto Rico, considered militarily, is to Cuba, to the future Isthmian Canal, and to our Pacific coast, what Malta is, or may be, to Egypt and the beyond... . It would be very difficult for a transatlantic state to maintain operations in the western Caribbean with a United States fleet based upon Puerto Rico and adjacent islands." Lessons of the War with Spain and other Articles (Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1899), pp. 26-29.

The above examples are indeed a revelation of the intentions of the American government and of the business interest concerning Puerto Rico. Keeping this in mind, we shall proceed to deal with the treatment that Puerto Rico received at the preliminary peace talks.

## PART II. The Diplomatic Phase

In presenting the part that Puerto Rico played at the negotiations that culminated in the peace protocol of August 12, we shall be forced to extend ourselves beyond the facts concerning the island. This has to be done for the simple reason that Puerto Rico was only a small item in the negotiations, and in order to get a clear view of what went on in them, it is necessary to bring into the picture other aspects of the negotiations besides those concerned particularly with Puerto Rico.

On July 18, 1898, the Spanish minister of state, the Duke of Almodóvar del Río, telegraphed the Spanish ambassador at Paris, León y Castillo, asking that he request the good offices of the French government to enable M. Jules Cambon, French ambassador in Washington, to present a message to President McKinley "in which he was invited to put an end to the painful situation in Cuba, Spain showing herself disposed to agree upon means of pacification of that island, if it is possible to concert upon acceptable bases."<sup>45</sup>

Señor Castillo replied on July 20, that since such an important affair required the approbation of the president of the council of ministers and of the president of the republic, he would not be able to receive a definite answer until the 22nd, due to the fact that the president of the republic was in Rambouillet.

To this note Madrid answered immediately that its request was

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<sup>45</sup> Spanish Diplomatic Correspondence and Documents, 1896-1900 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1905), p. 200.

such as to admit no delay. The Spanish authorities were becoming increasingly aware that a prolongation of the conflict would give greater advantage to the enemy. Thus the Duke of Almodóvar said to Señor Castillo:

The loss of hours, not to speak of days, might be of grave consequence in the negociation of peace. The capitulation of Manila, which may come at any time; the occupation of other points in the Philippines; the attack upon Puerto Rico, and perhaps a landing upon that island, are contingencies which counsel haste.<sup>46</sup>

The French government finally consented that M. Cambon be allowed to present a message from Spain to the President of the United States, looking toward the cessation of hostilities.<sup>47</sup>

The message sent to the President was issued on July 22 and submitted to the ambassadors of the great powers in Madrid. It was sent by post to Paris and thence telegraphed to Washington. However, it was not presented to the President until July 26, due to the fact that the Austrian minister, who was in charge of the archives of the Spanish legation in Washington, was away, and the key for deciphering, which was kept in the archives, was not found. Fighting against time, the Spanish government ordered its consul-general in Montreal to send a copy of key No. 74 to M. Cambon in Washington, and at the same time forwarded another copy of the message to its ambassador in Paris to have it translated into English by persons of confidence and forwarded to M. Cambon by the French Minister of Foreign Affairs.<sup>48</sup>

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In a dispatch to the French Minister of Foreign Affairs con-

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 201.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 202.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., pp. 203-5.

cerning the Spanish key, M. Cambon said: "Ask Señor León y Castillo to put your excellency in a position to telegraph in French the Spanish text of the message. Moments are precious. The expedition has sailed for Porto Rico." Apparently M. Cambon is referring to the expedition under General Wilson that had left Charleston on July 20.<sup>49</sup>

In the message to the President, Spain made it clear that she considered the question of the independence of Cuba as the main issue of the war. She speaks of the Cuban question as the one that has to be settled, although here and there there is a hint that a larger basis for peace negotiations would be admitted. Said the message:

To end the calamities already so great, and to avert evils still greater, our countries might mutually endeavor to find upon which conditions the present struggle could be terminated otherwise than by force of arms.

Spain believes this understanding possible and hopes that this view is also harbored by the government of the United States.

The above statement leaves the door open for the United States to propose their own terms, yet Spain is most emphatic in what she considers the question to be settled. The message continued:

Spain is prepared to spare Cuba from the continuation of the horrors of the war if the United States are on their part likewise disposed.

The President of the United States and the American people may now learn from this message the true thought, desire, and intention of the Spanish nation.

And so do we wish to learn from the President of the United States upon which basis might be established a political status in Cuba, and might be terminated a strife which would continue without reason should both

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 204

governments agree upon the means of pacifying the island.<sup>50</sup>

On July 27, the Duke of Almodóvar sent the following telegram to Señor Castillo in Paris:

The landing of Americans in Porto Rico causes surprise to this Government inasmuch as it occurred after the President of the United States had in its [sic.] hands the message of the Spanish Government offering means for an understanding outside the employment of arms. The occupation of Porto Rico at this time shows that the United States is unwarrantably attempting military aggression, without doubt with the object of making more onerous the conditions of peace.<sup>51</sup>

In point of fact, the accusation of the Duke of Almodóvar proved to be false. As already indicated, the Spanish message did not reach the President until July 26. On the other hand, the invasion of Puerto Rico took place on July 25, and the expedition had been at sea for several days. The element of surprise that the Duke claims seems to be unwarranted by the facts. The Spanish authorities in Puerto Rico knew that the American invasion was coming and knew exactly the point where the Americans were to land. Undoubtedly this information was passed on to the authorities in Madrid.<sup>52</sup>

On that same day Mr. León y Castillo forwarded to the Duke of Almodóvar a communication from M. Cambon concerning the impressions that the French ambassador had received in presenting Spain's message to the President.

Said M. Cambon:

After having read it, the President answered that he

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<sup>also</sup>  
50 Foreign Relations, 1898, p. 820; Senate Document No. 62, Part II, 55th Congress, 3rd Session, pp. 272-3.

51 Spanish Diplomatic Correspondence, p. 206.

52 Correspondence Relating to the War with Spain, p. 306.

was pleased to receive the message which I had just presented to him in the name of Spain; that he would consult with his Cabinet, and begged that I return to the White House for the purpose of receiving his answer and of talking with him of said message.

Asked by the President for any observations of his own, M.

Cambon answered that he hoped the President would "feel inclined, influenced by highest motives, to be humanely Christian and generous."

Proceeded M. Cambon:

Answering a question of the Secretary of State, who took part in the conversation, I said that if the message of the Government of His Majesty referred particularly to the pacification of Cuba, it is because the state of affairs existing in the island was the initial cause of the war; that if this cause of the conflict were suppressed, under conditions acceptable to both countries, the war would then cease to have reason for being. "If I understand you well," said Mr. Day, "Spain, while she limits herself to asking that we seek by common understanding a method of resolving the Cuban question, desires to know under what conditions it would be possible to terminate hostilities in all the points where they now exist." I answered that it seemed to me the commencement of negotiations appear to imply the termination of the war on account of the unhappy conditions of the population which suffers its ravages.<sup>53</sup>

The issue raised by Mr. Day was of utmost importance. To us it is significant because on its clarification depended the fate of Puerto Rico. The Secretary wanted to know specifically if Spain was willing to deal with the Cuban question exclusively or whether she would be willing to reach an understanding to terminate hostilities at all points where they existed. As we shall see, it was this larger aspect of the peace preliminaries that delayed the reaching of an agreement for the cessation of hostilities. The United States, aware of its strength, had one point of view concerning the future of Puerto Rico and other

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<sup>53</sup> Spanish Diplomatic Correspondence, pp. 206-7.

island possessions, while Spain, on the other hand, wanting to keep as much of her empire as possible, followed another line of thought.

In response to M. Cambon's request for instructions for taking part in the conversation to which President McKinley had invited him, the Duke of Almodóvar on July 28 forwarded to León y Castillo the following instructions to be sent to M. Cambon by the French Minister of Foreign Affairs:

The Government of Spain would be disposed to accept not only the procedure which would assure pacifically to Cuba the destiny which the majority of its inhabitants desire to reach, but any other solution that may conduce to the pacification of the Great Antilles. This Government will gratefully listen to a reply from the President of the Republic which will permit it to discuss with dignity this solution, or any other which may be required as a consequence of the war ...<sup>54</sup>

The key phrase in this message is "any other solution which may be required as a consequence of the war..." Spain has no questions about Cuba; the "any other solution" refers to the other Spanish dependencies. The message is broad and liable to various interpretations. However, the Duke of Almodóvar, realizing the broadness of these instructions, forwarded that same day a new set of very confidential instructions, elaborating on those sent previous in the day. Said the new message:

In the war with the United States, there is need to distinguish its object and the means to carry it on. The object was the separation of Cuba from the dominion of Spain. The means have been, and are, attacks upon the colonial dependencies of the Spanish nation. Regarding the first, Spain is disposed to accept the solution which may please the United States... . In regard to the second, which I allude to in my former telegram as "any other solution which may be required as a consequence of war," your excellency will under-

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 208.



stand that reference is made to the claims which the Americans may have outside the territory of Cuba; whether by military operations, which constitute temporary occupation, or, possibly, from expenditures for the campaign. As with regard to Cuba this Government makes no reserve, it should maintain reserve regarding the second. It certainly admits the principle of indemnification in reasonable proportion and measure, but desires that it should not be responsible for unnecessary expenditures, considering also unnecessary certain military operations as a foundation for a right in the territory where they took place. There is also no reason to forget that the Spanish nation did not provoke the war, and although fortune has been adverse to us, this Government understands that the conqueror should not be the arbiter of territories foreign to Cuba which have been attacked by the United States. I will feel much obliged to your excellency if on this point you investigate the disposition of Mr. McKinley regarding Porto Rico and the Philippines.<sup>55</sup>

Spain was obviously trying to salvage as much as she could of her possessions. She was trying to set the basis for the cessation of hostilities. This included the giving up of Cuba and the payment of an indemnity to the United States for war expenditures. But she refused to admit "unnecessary expenditures, considering also unnecessary certain military operations as a foundation for a right in the territory where they took place." This refers specifically to Puerto Rico and the Philippines. As it turned out, Spain was forced to change her approach in the face of uncompromising American demands.

On July 30 Secretary Day replied to the Spanish message of the twenty-second. After expressing the President's satisfaction at the possibility of ending the war, and after reviewing the steps that had led to such a war, the Secretary stated what President McKinley considered to be acceptable terms of peace at that time. The second proposition reads thus:

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., pp. 208-9.

The President, desirous of exhibiting signal generosity, will not put forward any demand for pecuniary indemnity. Nevertheless, he cannot be insensible to the losses and expenses of the United States incident to the war or to the claims of our citizens for injuries to their person and property during the late insurrection of Cuba. He must, therefore, require the cession of the island of Porto Rico and other islands now under the sovereignty of Spain in the West Indies, and also the cession of an island in the Ladrões, to be selected by the United States.<sup>56</sup>

It is obvious that the United States took a view contrary to that held by Spain. The American government refused to impose a cash indemnity, but asked for territorial compensation. This was the very thing that Spain was trying to avoid. As we shall see later, the United States kept pushing their demands until Spain had no choice but to accept them. Thus the fate of Puerto Rico was, as far as the United States was concerned, decided from the beginning. It is to be observed that Article 2 as it is related to Puerto Rico, is the same in content as Article 2 of the propositions submitted for consideration by Secretary Day to Ambassador Hay on June 3. The United States had their mind already made up.

Before sending the message to Spain, President McKinley invited M. Cambon to make any observations on the text of the same. The French ambassador immediately pointed out the inconsistency between the declaration of disinterestedness made by the United States at the beginning of the war and the spirit of conquest showing in the terms presented him for consideration. And he added: "In making claim for the cession of Puerto Rico and one of the Ladrões, it seems ... that you concede to the opinion recently formed which considers as a definite conquest all terri-

<sup>56</sup> Foreign Relations, 1898, pp. 820-1; also Senate Document No. 62, Part II, 55th Congress, 3rd Session, pp. 273-4.

tories upon which the fortune of arms has permitted an American soldier to put his foot." To this the Secretary of State, who was present, replied that the United States was not making any pecuniary indemnification, which action he considered very altruistic for a victor. The President added that his demands as set forth in the first two articles did not admit discussion and that only the question of the Philippines was left to be decided at the peace table.<sup>57</sup> The first article dealt with the question of Cuba.

The French ambassador understood what Spain was after, but none of his arguments availed against the established opinion of the President and his Secretary of State. Spain, so the American government had decreed, must give up Puerto Rico, other islands in the West Indies, and one of the Ladrões.

Perhaps it should be noted that in the first part of this paper we argued that one of the reasons for the military invasion of Puerto Rico was to have a better bargaining position at the peace negotiations. Here we have M. Cambon charging the United States with following the policy that any territory occupied by the American forces must be ceded to the American Republic. This charge neither the President nor the Secretary cared to answer. Apparently they assumed or knew that what M. Cambon was saying was true to fact. At any rate, their behaviour showed that to be the case.

However, the Spanish government was not disposed to be easily deprived of its non-Cuban territories and was particularly concerned about the disposition of Puerto Rico. On August 1, M. Cambon received

<sup>57</sup> Spanish Diplomatic Correspondence, pp. 213-4.

in the form of a telegram some observations, set forth by the Spanish government as suggestions to be used by the French ambassador with full discretion. The part of this message that concerns us has to do with the question of indemnity as related to Puerto Rico. As pointed out before, the United States demanded the cession of Puerto Rico on the grounds that the government of the Republic could not be insensible to the losses and expenses caused to the nation by the war.

In the telegram Spain suggested to M. Cambon the possibility of shoving the expenses of the war on Cuba, taking as precedent the example of Austria and Prussia in the war against the Danish duchies. The treaty of peace stipulated that the liberated duchies should pay the war expenses. In like manner, Cuba should pay for the expenses of war, for she was the one that received liberation. Had Spain been able to convince the American government of the feasibility of her scheme, she might have been able to keep her colonial possessions, including Puerto Rico. But the President and Secretary Day completely rejected such a scheme.

Spain, however, recognizing the weakness of her argument and of her bargaining position, suggested that perhaps the United States would be willing to substitute for Puerto Rico some other form of territorial compensation, having apparently in mind the Philippines. Spain was proceeding on the assumption that the American republic wanted Puerto Rico only as an indemnity for war, in which case any other kind of territorial compensation would probably be accepted. It seems to us that Spain failed to realize the climate of opinion of the times in the United States. Puerto Rico was wanted both for economic and strategic reasons, as well as an indemnity of war. Of course, we must not forget

that Spain was trying to make the best she could out of her predicament.

At any rate, the Spanish minister of state suggested that

it is deemed necessary for the government to know ... if there would not be means of substituting for Puerto Rico another form of territorial compensation for such losses and expenditures. The government of His Majesty hopes that, as we are treating merely of a cession for payment, the United States will not insist on imposing what they may consider their due -- the severe step of alienating that which, never having been in contention, has a special value of affection. I would desire, therefore, to know if, the just reasons alleged by your excellency...not being listened to regarding the manner of satisfying at Cuba's expense the expenditures of her liberation, the President of the Republic would accept the proposition of admitting in substitution for Porto Rico some other form of territorial compensation.<sup>58</sup>

The French ambassador, faced with this new set of suggestions, was obliged to see the President again. The results of the interview were telegraphed to the Spanish government on August 4. Said M. Cambon:

I did not conceal from the President that the Government of His Majesty considered excessively rigorous the conditions offered and that the necessity of ceding Porto Rico as an indemnification for the war was regarded as particularly severe. This island, I said to him, has not for a moment been an element of conflict between Spain and the United States; its inhabitants have remained loyal to the crown, ...would desire in consequence that the President would consent to accept other territorial compensation in place of Porto Rico ...

To this the President replied that the question of the Philippines was the only one that was not settled in his mind. The answer to Spain's suggestions was unequivocal. No concessions were to be expected from the victor. In concluding his remarks, M. Cambon warned Spain of the danger of procrastination.<sup>59</sup>

On August 7, the Duke of Almodóvar formally replied to the

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., pp. 214-5.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., pp. 216-7.

demands made on July 30 by the American government. On the whole the message lacked definiteness, although in substance the American terms were accepted. Regarding the demand for the cession of Puerto Rico, other islands in the West Indies, and one of the Ladrões, the Duke said:

This demand strips us of the very last memory of a glorious past, and expels us at once from the prosperous Island of Porto Rico and from the Western Hemisphere, which became peopled and civilized through the proud deeds of our ancestors. It might, perhaps, have been possible to compensate by some other cession for the injuries sustained by the United States. However, the inflexibility of the demand obliges us to cede, and we shall cede, the Island of Porto Rico and other islands belonging to the Crown of Spain in the West Indies, together with one of the islands of the Ladrões...<sup>60</sup>

It is interesting to note the emotional value attached to Puerto Rico. In the instructions to M. Cambon on August first, the Duke of Almodóvar spoke of Puerto Rico as having "a special value of affection." In the present message the Duke points out the the demand to cede Puerto Rico and other islands "strips us of the very last memory of a glorious past, and expels us at once from the prosperous Island of Porto Rico and from the Western Hemisphere, which became peopled and civilized through the proud deeds of our ancestors." The emotional undertone of this statement is inescapable and is an indication of the fact that the honor of Spain had been deeply wounded. Had she been able to keep Puerto Rico, that at least would have been a symbol of a "glorious past." It seems safe to say that one of the reasons for procrastination in the negotiations was just the fact that Spain was terribly upset by the turn of events and that she desired above everything to have a foothold in the

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<sup>60</sup> Foreign Relations, 1898, p. 822. Senate Document No. 62, Part II, pp. 275-6.

Western Hemisphere.

The message of August 7 brought the negotiations almost to a breaking point. President McKinley was terribly annoyed by the Spanish indefiniteness and especially by the Duke's remark that the terms were acceptable to Spain but were subject to the approval of the Cortes. He suggested that there was only one means of putting an end to all quibbles. "We can," he said, "draft a project of protocol which will set forth the conditions proposed to Spain on the same terms in which I have already formulated them; and which will fix the period in which, on the one hand, the plenipotentiaries charged to negotiate in Paris the treaty of peace will be appointed, and, on the other, the special commissioners charged with the duty of determining the details of the evacuation of Cuba and Porto Rico."<sup>61</sup>

Spain had no other choice but to accept the suggestions of Mr. McKinley. A protocol was drawn up and signed by Secretary Hay and M. Cambon at Washington on Friday, August 12, at 4:30 P.M. Article two of this protocol sealed the future of Puerto Rico. It read: "Spain will cede to the United States the island of Porto Rico..."<sup>62</sup> That day and that hour marked a turning point in Puerto Rican history. For more than four hundred years the island had been under the government of Spain. Its whole life was Spanish, and now it was to come in contact with another people entirely different in culture, language, traditions, customs, ideas, ways of thinking and doing things.

This same article was incorporated in the Treaty of Paris, signed at Paris on December 10, 1898. Puerto Rico hardly formed part of the agenda at the peace conference.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Spanish Diplomatic Correspondence, pp. 219-20.

<sup>62</sup> Senate Document No. 62, Part II, p. 282

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 264

After the cessation of hostilities, the American forces proceeded to occupy the part of the island still under the Spanish rule. By October 18, the evacuation of the Spanish troops was completed and on that date the military control of the island and its adjacent islets passed from Spain to the United States. Thus ended the Spanish sovereignty over Puerto Rico. Properly speaking, Spain did not give up her rights over Puerto Rico until she had formally acquiesced at the Paris conference to cede the island to the United States, but for all practical purposes Puerto Rico was securely in American hands long before December 10, when the peace conference ended, and before the American Senate approved the treaty on April 11, 1899.



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Foreign Relations of the United States, 1898.

All the documents that appear in this volume relating to the preliminary peace negotiations are given either in the Spanish Diplomatic Correspondence and Documents, 1896-1900, or in the Senate Document No. 62, Part 2, 55th Congress, 3rd Session.

Report of the War Department, 1898, I.

The Secretary of War in this report devotes several sections to

Puerto Rico. The Puerto Rican campaign is summarized briefly; nine pages are devoted to telegrams relating to the campaign, all of which appear in Correspondence Relating to the War with Spain; other sections deal with the part played by the Signal Corps in the campaign and with the strength of the army dispatched to the island.

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Wherein are contained the Treaty of Peace of December 10, 1892, the protocols of the conferences of Paris (1-22), and the peace protocol of August 12, 1898 and correspondence relating to it. Many of these documents appear in Foreign Relations of the United States, 1898.

Spanish Diplomatic Correspondence and Documents, 1896-1900. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1905.

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