

**REPUBLICAN IDEALS AND THE REALITY OF
PATRONAGE:
A STUDY OF THE VETERANS' MOVEMENT IN CUBA, 1900-24**

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Declaration

I declare that all the work presented in this thesis is my own. All quotations have been appropriately referenced.

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Abstract

This thesis analyses the emergence of Cuba as a sovereign nation, and the political corruption that plagued the republic. It investigates in detail, not only the independence movement that established this republic in its various wars against the Spanish empire, and its fracture and fission under the emerging power of the United States, but also the impact that this had on Cuban politics, and the consequences for Cuba's native would-be rulers. The aim is to develop an understanding of what became of the veterans of the wars of liberation, and further the somewhat neglected subject of the relationship of the official Veterans' organisations with the political parties and associations of the republican period. A short conclusion summarises the arguments and suggests further avenues of research.

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Introduction

Overview

Although the Cuban independence movement (1868-98) and the Cuban republican period have been documented by Cuban and non-Cuban historians alike, the role of veterans and their organisations has been somewhat neglected, with most historians only dedicating a few pages, at best, to the prominent and formal Veterans' organisations¹ and their protests of 1911-12 and 1923-24. However, if the history of other nations is any indication of the importance of a topic, especially if it is the history of their emergence from colonialism, then the study of 'veterans', particularly if they are the veterans of an explicitly nationalist, radically egalitarian, and abolitionist fighting force, has surely been overlooked in the case of the Cuban nation.

Moreover, studies of republican Cuban politics, while they have extensively focused on the political parties of the new nation, their notoriously corrupt nature, and their obstreperous, yet ultimately servile subordination to the interests of the United States, they have seldom, if ever, focused on their direct relationship with the personnel of the Liberation Army and the various organisations of the disbanded revolutionary movement and government. Likewise, they have not looked at the relationship of the Veterans' organisations to the political parties themselves, nor to the (in many ways successful) Liberal Party revolt of 1906.

¹ I will use the phrases 'Veterans' movement' and/or 'Veterans' organisations' in their capitalised forms, to refer collectively, to all the organisations claiming to be the authentic representatives of the military veterans of the independence struggles during the period from 1900 until 1924. Where there are explicitly named and short-lived organisations, these will be cited by name.

Cuba struggled against the old colonial power of Spain in order to enter the twentieth century as a modern republic. Beginning with the Ten Years War of 1868-78, continuing with the *Guerra Chiquita* [Little War]² of 1879-80, and culminating with the Spanish-American War (later named the Spanish-Cuban-American War) of 1895-8, the struggle by Cubans against the Spanish regime was long, protracted, and very bloody. Indeed, it was one of the first incidences of guerrilla³ warfare, with much of the support for the Cuban Liberation Army coming from the general population (farmers and black slaves), while the Spanish in turn implemented the *reconcentrado* policy: one of the first historical manifestations of the concentration camp. Clearly then, the Veterans' organisations are very important to the study of the history of Cuba.

The organisations and their ideology that emerged during this bloody struggle for independence were responsible for much of the nationalist feeling in Cuban society during the republican period, and it is therefore important to look at this in detail to understand the Veterans' organisations and the politics of the era. After three wars of independence, the last one creating a body of over 30,000 armed rebels fighting for a unified goal of a free Cuba, the question of what happened to those soldiers after the war was over and they were demobilised is a crucial one.

In Cuba, the familiar economic and social problems were complicated by the underlying political one: if tens of thousands of Cubans had fought a bitter war for liberation, and racial equality, i.e., for *political* reasons - then those motives needed to be accommodated in the post-war settlement. In such circumstances, any

² Henceforth, Spanish phrases and passages will be translated immediately afterwards in square brackets. Some English terms however, may also be italicised but this will simply be for emphasis.

³ The term *guerrillero*, however, refers to the volunteers who fought *for* the Spanish Army.

Veterans' organisations ought to have played some important role, (after all they made this liberation possible) - either they might have acted as a brake, to control any political unrest from the ex-fighters, or they might have had the opposite effect, as a radical rallying-point and platform for action.

Veterans' organisations in the years after 1901 were bound to be even more significant in Cuba, considering the problems besetting the new republic: US hegemony assured by the Platt Amendment, nationalist frustration at the outcome of the war, disillusion over corruption, political fraud, political instability, and so on. In 1898 the United States intervened in the struggle for Cuban independence, but it did so for its own economic and strategic interests in the region, setting its own interpretation of international law as doctrine: maintaining a military government and modelling a civil one for three years, and intervening militarily twice more (each time for three years again), before 1924. While the United States ostensibly sought to 'protect' Cuba's sovereignty, the veterans of the wars for independence, seldom if ever asked for this help, having their own interpretation of a sovereign constitutional republic and how it should be protected. This relationship with the United States, and its economic basis, was to deeply influence politics and government in the early republic. For this reason, it will be necessary also to look at Cuba-United States relations in depth to understand the problem of the research question.

While many Cuban veterans and politicians had been schooled in, and regularly visited, the United States, the United States itself consistently preferred members of the old colonial and 'autonomist' regime when suggesting or recommending candidates for public administration and political rule after independence was attained. Not surprisingly, then, the frustrated nationalism of the

revolutionary struggle was exacerbated by the ‘neo-colonial’ practices of the United States in the early republican period. Hence, in the early years of the republic, a more radical form of nationalism emerged, opposed to the politics-as-usual of the civilian *políticos*⁴ often inter-mixed with socialist ideas that had existed during the independence struggle, usually imported via Spanish immigrants to Cuba and Key West, Florida.

This radical nationalism grew out of the early years of Cuba’s struggle for independence. During the years of the various revolutionary wars, anarchism was at the height of its ‘propaganda-by-the-deed’ period in Italy, Spain, Russia, and elsewhere. Peculiarly, however, in Cuba anarchist organisations and individuals shared ideas and achieved intellectual cross-pollination, and indeed even mixed personally, with democratic socialists and even liberals. Not only did the issue of ‘political authority’ not viciously divide the socialist movement in Cuba, as it did in many parts of Europe during the revolutionary period of 1868-95, (though it did later under President Gerardo Machado with anarchist/Communist Party factional conflict), rather, Cuba was unique in that its national independence movement threw up an ideological formulation unheard of at the time or since: anarchists advocating participation in a national liberation struggle as a means to further socialist struggle in the future; a formulation pre-dating that proposed much later, elsewhere in the world, by Leninists.

It is important then to look at theories of ‘nationalism’ and the ideological forebears of this within the framework of the Cuban republic, in order to understand

⁴ This term simply means a politician but often in modern Cuba it holds the negative connotation of a corrupt politician, especially of the republican period, although this is perhaps because the republican period is seen as entirely corrupt until the formation of radical political groups, and of course, the Cuban Communist Party in 1925.

the political factionalism of the period studied, and the role of individual veterans and the Veterans' organisations within this. The Cuban republic, from its inception, was characterised by factionalism and discord. Revolution was regularly declared, threatened, or actually instigated throughout the period from the establishment of relations with the United States (with the Platt Amendment of 1901), until the emergence of the *Machadato* (the dictatorship of President Gerardo Machado) in 1925. After 1925, with the formation of the Federation of University Students and the Cuban Communist Party, and corporatist, and even proto-fascist organisations on the right, such as the ABC, Cuban politics was to usher in a new era of 'radicalism', dominated by the young.

While individual veterans were involved in some of these groups, it was during this period of outright warfare by many factions in Cuba with the Machado dictatorship that the Veterans' organisations declined as a potent form of nationalism, their influence eclipsed by the popularity of these new movements. Several historians have stressed the importance of the Veterans' protest in 1911-12, and many also emphasise the role of young radicals in the Association of Veterans and Patriots of 1923-24, but few have analysed this discernible break between the 'old' and 'new' politics.

In this context, it is perhaps useful to look at theoretical conceptions of the state and of civil society, for the Veterans' organisations were ostensibly 'civil' organisations. It is therefore proposed to investigate why they were they so closely connected to revolutionary organisations, manifestos, and declarations: of 1906, 1911-12, 1917, 1923-24, and even 1931. Why did the rhetoric of the Liberal Party's Central Revolutionary Committee of 1906 so closely resemble not only the 'Regulations of the Institution of the Veterans of Independence' in 1911, but also the

manifestos of the Cuban Socialist Party and Popular Party of Diego Vicente Tejera of 1899 and 1900, and also that of the Cuban Workers' Party founded by Carlos Baliño in 1905? Indeed, why were the latter socialist parties, not only, in the case of Tejera's, the first formed in the Cuban nation, but also, the first parties to explicitly draw out the fact that José Martí's ideal of 'absolute independence' had not been achieved in the republic?

Therefore the thesis will look at the revolutionary period as a whole, and the socialist and anarchist ideas that led to radical forms of nationalism in the republican period, as the the repeated calls for armed revolution in the republic can only be understood by doing so. The thesis will also look at the concept of hegemony to explain theoretically the role of the United States, and the way that its political domination of Cuba meant that the only sphere left for revolt was outside of civil society. This in turn, was the logically calculated result of social actors who had failed to gain patronage under the Cuban state. Therefore, forms of patron-client relationship and political patronage will also be analysed in order to explain Cuban politics and political revolt in the period under study.

Current Historiography and the Veterans' Organisations in Cuba

Despite the fact that the history of the Cuban independence movement and the republican period have been well documented by Cuban and non-Cuban historians alike, and the role of slavery, the Liberation Army, and later, political corruption have all been the subject of various studies, the part that the Veterans' organisations played during the period from the disbandment of the forces of

liberation until 1911-12 has mostly been ignored, some writers barely dignifying it with one or two sentences in an otherwise comprehensive historiography of the Cuban revolutionary movement. Likewise, the connections between members of the Liberal Party's Revolutionary Committee in 1906, and the official Veterans' organisations of 1911-12 and 1923-34, have likewise not been looked at, nor has the question of the activities in which the personnel of the 1911-12 National Council of Veterans were politically engaged in during the years before, or after, the famous protest.

The wealth of available information surrounding both the National Council of Veterans in 1911-12, and the Association of Veterans and Patriots of 1923-24, while it has been consulted, has largely not connected their personnel with the dominant ruling factions in the republican period, with whom they shared many notable figures, with many of the members of the Veterans' organisations in fact, being part of the government at various times.

The historiography on this period does admit the importance of the Veterans' organisations, but this is largely within a broader framework of explaining political corruption, the struggle for patronage, and the role of the United States in determining not only the structure of the Cuban political class, but also general political policy. Significantly, the 1923-24 Association is usually looked at in terms of the broader anti-imperialist organisations and activities that emerged in Cuba in the years after the economic crisis of 1921. Certainly, these are all crucial factors to this thesis, but what the thesis will also address is the Veterans' organisations unique role in the republican period as a kind of alternative patronage network, of high-ranking politicians and ex-military leaders, many Liberals of the 1906 revolt, but also many Conservatives, who used the organisations as a rhetorical and recruiting

device for the nationalism that was frustrated under the direct domination of the US state, and the indirect domination of the corrupt *políticos*.

What the historiography has also overlooked is *why* the Veterans' protests were merely that: why they were not successful revolutions. This may sound confusing; after all why *would* historians look at unsuccessful revolutions: history being written by the victors? In Cuba however, this question becomes more complicated, because there *were* successful revolutions, time and again, that have been looked at: in 1906, 1933, and of course, 1959. Similarly, there were aborted revolutions or partial revolutions that have been the subject of inquiry: 1917, and 1931.

The fact that the protest of the National Council of Veterans in 1911-12, and the aborted revolution of the Association of Veterans in 1923-24, were dominated by sections of the political class who had already held positions at the highest levels of government, and would later do so again, meant that they were largely seen precisely for what they were by the Cuban working class. Their view was that they were vehicles of patronage for a disenfranchised section of the Cuban political class under the regime of politics-as-usual, rather than the embodiment of authentic nationalism personified by the Liberation Army, and the ideals of José Martí, who had managed to unite liberal, bourgeois revolutionaries with the rank-and-file socialist and radical movement to crush the Spanish imperial forces in a cross-class alliance. Indeed, with regard to the movement of 1923-24, workers in Key West would outspokenly criticise the leaders of the Association for being corrupt *políticos* beholden to US domination, despite their rhetoric against it. Clearly, their vision of Cuban nationalism was more radical than that of the Association. Disillusionment with the standard bearers of this type of 'old-fashioned' nationalism such as the

Association, set in, as the emerging radical, nationalist and anti-imperialist groups of the years 1925-33 gained popularity.

The thesis will attempt to illuminate another aspect missing from the historiography: the fact that the Veterans' organisations represented the last gasp of what was essentially the 'old' politics of the years 1895-1920, and which was doomed to failure after the banking crisis of 1921 illustrated the effects that the radical re-structuring of the Cuban economy under the domination of US sugar interests now had on the society at large. In this context, the call for 'Cubanisation' of the political administration did not encompass anywhere near enough change that many of the emerging radical groups envisioned for a Cuban nationalism in opposition to US corporate imperialism, and in fact, issues such as payment of, and political patronage for, military veterans, was an issue of decreasing importance; given that most of these people were now dead or very elderly.

This of course throws up another interesting question that much of the historiography has ignored, which the thesis will address: why did young students and intellectuals, often of a politically radical persuasion (if not *de-facto* Communists), engage with the Association of Veterans in 1923-24? What was it about this organisation that made them think it would be an effective vehicle to oppose the things they also opposed, namely, US domination of the Cuban economy and hence, political structure, and why did these young radicals later become disillusioned with this same organisation as a means for doing this?

In recent and current historiography, the Veterans' movement usually only receives a few pages of attention, even when it was officially constituted as a political organisation that went on to threaten revolution. Pérez, regarding the National Council of 1911-12, states that this "was a movement of enormous popular

appeal, and difficult to resist. The government did not even try” (Pérez 1986: 147). However, in this commentary on the Council, which covers barely two pages, he merely describes the suspension of the Civil Service Law, and its re-implementation after threats of intervention from the United States. Although Pérez is useful in understanding the role of US hegemony as personified by this threat, it can be seen that all the points above are notable by their absence from the analysis: what happened to the personnel of the movement, why were they unsuccessful, and how did the Council relate to other political parties, organisations, and factions, both before and after 1911-12?

Thomas, regarding the organisation of 1911-12, states that:

veterans agreed to abandon their campaign against Spanish office holders and behave in future as a benevolent association; Gómez [the Cuban President] for his part sacked two cabinet members and a number of civil servants, suspending the Civil Service Law (Thomas 2001: 305).

This is in a section barely more than a paragraph long. Again, it is left to the imagination where this organisation came from, exactly what its relationship was to the Liberation Army and the independence leadership, to the radical socialist parties and movement, to the working class in general, to the political class at varying levels of government, and the numerous political parties in the republic. Whether looking at Cuba-United States relations from an economic viewpoint, or looking at the actions of the political class in Cuba, being concerned, as most historians are, with the ‘victors’, the Veterans’ organisations, and influential individuals within it, are very much on the periphery to this research, if they are mentioned at all.

Thomas's monumental work often mirrors Pérez in his grand scale. The protest of 1911-12 is seen in the context of the presidential repression of the press, without an analysis of the explicit demands and structure of the Institution of Veterans, while the Association of Veterans of 1923-24 is placed in the context of the 'new' politics of post- 1923 Cuba, with the young radical Rubén Martínez Villena held as the common link. This link, as well as that of Julio Antonio Mella (who would later be a founding member of the Communist Party), is likewise often overemphasised in the Cuban historiography.

Much has been written about the republican period in order to explain the events of 1933, or 1940 (Aguilar 1972, Whitney 2001). The crisis of 1923-24, however, largely marked the end of the 'old' politics, and Aguilar's and Whitney's studies, while very good, again analyse the 'victors': namely the new corporatist political factions, rather than what became of the *políticos* of the old regime. There is also a good deal written about the role of slavery in the Cuban economy and the transition to free labour in the context of a national liberation struggle in the Caribbean (Scott 1985, Stubbs 1985). These authors give insight into the tensions between military men and the civilian leadership of the independence movement that is bolstered by the Cuban historiography on this issue, which is closely analysed later in the thesis.

Again there is much written about the Cuban radical labour movement from its inception in the 1860s until it was subordinated to, or ultimately obliterated by, the Cuban Communist Party of 1925 (Alba 1969, Casanovas 1998, Fernández 2001, Liss 1984, Poyo 1985 & 1986, Shaffer 2000). As will be seen later, this research provides much explanation of the differing interpretations of nationalism and

‘absolute independence’ in the republican era, and helps to explain many of the questions around nationalism inherent in the thesis.

What is missing from much of the historiography is an understanding of Cuban politics and society ‘on the ground’: republican presidents and politicians are dealt with as if they emerged from nowhere, perhaps with a few biographical details, without discussion of their role in the wars of independence, or in the drafting of revolutionary manifestos, and in revolutionary organisations. There is little analysis of the *connections* between *políticos* in power and those on the periphery, and how, and why the abuse of power by some, understandably led to the call for revolution by others. Likewise, there is almost no analysis of the *connections* between radical and socialist groupings and liberal and ‘revolutionary’, politicians (i.e., those seeking revolution to overthrow the *current* state rather than states *per se*), despite Casanovas’s, and Shaffer’s rich detailing of the history of nineteenth century socialist and anarchist movements, and Poyo’s and Fernández’s detailing of the anarchists’ battles with Communists and Machado.

Cuban historians have likewise, often seen the Veterans’ organisations as peripheral to the study of the republican period. There are many works grand in scale only touching on the topic (Dominguez 1986, Ibarra 1992 & 1998, Le Riverend 1971, Pino-Santos 1984, Roig de Leuchsenring 1982). Roa’s work deals with events *preceding* 1923 (Roa 1982), with a view to elaborating his history of *post-* 1923 politics, in much the same way that Thomas references the Association of 1923-24. The journal *Cuban Studies* has no articles specifically on the Veterans’ organisations.

Some Cuban works document very well the politics of the period in which the Veterans’ organisations were active, giving some context to the political parties

at the time (Cairo Ballester 1976, Figarola 1974, Gaunaurd 1954), while the collection of the Instituto de Historia del Movimiento Comunista y la Revolución Socialista de Cuba [Institute for the History of the Communist Movement and the Socialist Revolution of Cuba] is a major and indispensable source on the history of the Cuban labour movement (IHMCRSC: 1981). While US scholars have generally concentrated on United States-Cuba political and economic relations, often within a broader analysis of United States-Latin American ties, Cuban historians have often seen the attempt to forge a sovereign Cuban nation as one long and steady path leading from José Martí, to Tomás Estrada Palma, to Julio Antonio Mella, to Fidel Castro. However, this phenomenon is perhaps not as simple as suggested by some of the teleological inferences of current historiography, leading inexorably to the shining path of the 26th of July, but rather, was subject to an inter-generational conflict and break, unique to the period 1923-25 itself, which can only be understood by a thorough analysis of the earlier republican period. The years 1923-25 very much represented a break with the 'old' politics of *caudillos*, *mambises*⁵, and *políticos* and therefore the focus will be on the Institution of the Veterans of Independence of 1911-12, and the Association of Veterans and Patriots of 1923-24, in order to see how their failure led to frustrations that gave rise to this new politics.

To return to the start: what is missing from current historiography regarding the Veterans' organisations and their role in the Cuban republic? Largely, what is missing is a coherent analysis of these organisations themselves, of their connections to political parties and government, and an examination of how they influenced other factions, parties and groupings within the Cuban republic. As noted previously, this can only be understood by seeing the period from 1868 until 1924 in

⁵ A *caudillo* is a strong military or political leader, while a *mambí* is a fighter in the wars of Cuban liberation, especially that of 1895-98.

a broader context of disillusioned nationalism, churned up by a heady mixture of revolutionary and socialist rhetoric: these ideologies at times mutually reinforcing, and at other times radically calling into question, the distribution of the spoils of revolutionary war, and political patronage and power, in the emerging republic.

Further, only by understanding the political and social linkages between individual veterans, the Veterans' organisations, members of the political parties and government, and all of the former's connections to military-revolutionary committees and factions, as well as more radical socialist parties and groupings, will light be shed on the focus of the thesis.

Looking at these problems is important for several reasons: it will help explain the break between the 'old' and the 'new politics' occurring in 1923-25, it will help to explain the frustrated nationalism of the older generation (of the independence period, and of 1895), and the appropriation of this by the generation of 1923 (though the latter will not be looked at in detail), it will help explain why the politics of the Cuban republic were so tumultuous (though this has already been greatly studied), and it will put the Veterans' organisations of 1911-12 and 1923-24 in the correct context.

Methodology

This thesis is not a comparative exercise. The thesis could, for example, have compared and contrasted the Veterans' movement in Cuba with that of another Latin American nation that successfully overthrew a colonial power. Similarly, the thesis is not simply a linear, historical account, nor does it consist exclusively of textual

analysis. It could, for example, simply have investigated and accounted for, the emergence of one particular political party in Cuba, which was prominent in the early republican period, perhaps the Conservatives, or the Liberal Party of 1906. It could have looked at the personnel of the said party, its manifestos and meetings, and connected them, where relevant, to the independence struggles, accounting also for those who did not fight.

The thesis is also not simply a study of the various ways in which Cuba was dominated by the United States. This phenomenon has been thoroughly explored, either explicitly (and almost exclusively in this way by Cuban historians), or, with the role of the United States being more positively appraised, though its dominant role is also apparent, by many US academics. Moreover, the thesis is not a work of political sociology, nor a sociological analysis of the Veterans' organisations; of their racial, and social-class structure. While work has been carried out in this area, and this issue could certainly be researched further, that is not the aim of the thesis.

In many ways, the aim of the thesis is both broader, and narrower than this. It is broader, because the thesis seeks to illuminate a number of lacunae, as highlighted above: what connections did the Veterans' organisations have to the liberation movement, to republican politics, and (if any) to the 'new politics' after 1923? It is narrower, because it closely analyses the movements of 1911-12 and 1923-24 and looks at the specific structure, personnel and ideology of these organisations, and also why they ultimately failed to institutionalise popular political change. Because of this, it will be necessary at times to incorporate a linear historical perspective (more or less), extensive textual analysis of primary and other materials, and at least some sociological and political analysis, in order to attempt to explain the role and function of the Veterans' organisations in the early republican period.

The thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter I looks at the Cuban independence movement and seeks to further an understanding of the role of slavery in pre-war Cuba, and how its abolition was instrumental, not only to the success of the Liberation Army, but also in shaping its radically, racially egalitarian structure. This chapter also looks at how the successive independence conflicts failed to explicitly formalise relations between the civilian and military arms of the revolutionary government, and how, with the formation of the Partido Revolucionario Cubano [Cuban Revolutionary Party – PRC], this phenomenon, while from then on recognised as a specific problem within the liberation movement, was still not officially resolved. Finally, the chapter examines the relationship between the workers’ movement and the independence struggle. More specifically, it focuses on the radical ideas of socialism and anarchism expounded under the Spanish colony, and how the PRC utilised and then ultimately eclipsed this radicalism and workers’ interests, and how this brand of nationalism was also eclipsed in the liberal, constitutional republic. This will go some way to explaining the disillusionment of many of the rank-and-file members of the independence movement with politicians under the republic.

Having fully analysed the conflicts and structure of the independence movement, Chapter II analyses the role of the United States in deliberately disarming this potentially radical force for social change, and in fostering a political culture which it preferred, in order to covertly control the Cuban state, and ultimately dominate the Cuban economy. The seeds of this dominance were sown by the nature of the destruction of the Cuban economy by warfare, but this was explicitly furthered by the terms of United States-Cuba international relations.

Cuban politics was further dominated ‘on the ground’ by US economic influence and patronage, and the ever present threat of military intervention.

Chapter III examines the logical outcomes of the factors presented in the preceding two. The conflict between civilian and military leaders in the independence movement, the eclipse of the movement’s seemingly radical content, and the emergence and consolidation of US economic hegemony, meant that the forces unleashed by this lengthy process of liberation were ultimately frustrated under the new and inherently compromised ‘republic’. This was something of which Cubans were aware from the outset, explicitly elaborated via one of the first post-war patriotic associations, ‘The Emiliano Núñez Club’, whose complaints also ran through the first Cuban Constitutional Convention, and they were to be a frequent complaint made by marginal Cuban political parties and groups, including the Veterans’ organisations.

Chapter III also investigates how, after the formation of the Cuban government, the United States further consolidated its hegemony with the Platt Amendment and the Reciprocity Treaty, the former dominating the Cuban state by threatening intervention, the latter the Cuban economy, by promoting specialisation in the production of sugar. In the light of this domination, prominent Cuban leaders who would otherwise have become the economically dominant class, were left to compete for the spoils of the state administration; from lucrative yet scarce government posts, to the possibility of access to wealth in the form of dubious business deals, and payments for serving in the Liberation Army, (usually rising according to rank). In this environment, it was perhaps not surprising that Cuban politics was defined by corruption, factionalism, and the pursuit of patronage; something also examined in this chapter.

Chapter IV looks at the Veterans' organisations from this point until 1913. While in the current historiography the analysis is usually restricted to the years 1911-12, there were Veterans' organisations both before and after this, which shared many personnel with the political parties, inside and outside of government, throughout this period. Only by understanding these connections can knowledge of the Veterans' organisation of 1911-12 be furthered. Specifically, the Liberal revolt of 1906, and the role of members of the Veterans' movement on either side of the conflict, has been much neglected in the historiography, and therefore it is analysed, not only to further knowledge in this area, but to further the aim of the thesis in explaining the disillusionment with the supposed representatives of Cuban nationalism at this point.

This disillusionment was to continue under the US-controlled administration of the years 1906-9, and hence, the calls for authentic Cuban nationhood continued. This culminated in the Veterans' protest of 1911-12, but again, this protest was only partially successful, and hence, there were to be many reasons for frustration with the government of Cuban after this.

Chapter V scrutinises these frustrations and why they did not reach breaking point again until after the economic crisis of 1921. It is only with a comprehension of the election of Mario García Menocal in 1913, and along with him, some of the Veterans' movement personnel in 1913, that the seeming inactivity of the latter, in the years 1913-22, can be understood. Factionalism, corruption, and political patronage dominated the regimes of presidents Menocal and Alfredo Zayas, much as they had with those of Tomás Estrada Palma and José Miguel Gómez during the years 1902-6. Therefore, the abortive rebellion by the Association of Veterans in 1923-24 was seen precisely for what it was by the younger and more radical

nationalist groups (as one more factional struggle among privileged *políticos*), and hence, these more radical groups eclipsed them after 1925.

Chapter I - The Cuban Independence Movement

This chapter will serve two purposes. The first part will look at the role of the independence movement in Cuba, and more closely, the composition and aims of the Cuban Revolutionary Party. The divisions between the civilian politicians and the military leaders (the *mambisado*) are important to address because these arguments and divisions continued under the political factionalism and persistent revolutions, and attempted revolutions, in the early republican period. The second aspect will look at the role of workers in the independence movement and how they were often influenced by radical, socialist, and anarchist ideas, and hence approaches to revolutionary strategy. Looking at this will be important to understanding the divisions between military and civilian leaders of the movement, and to a sense of betrayal in the minds of these radicals at the new Cuban nation, due to the conflict between the republican ideals of the predominantly white leadership of the independence movement, and the often more radically egalitarian vision of the non-white rank and file of the Liberation Army, and the workers' patriotic clubs.

The Liberation Army, Slavery, and the Ten Years War

The Liberation Army that was formed in 1868, and that reformed in 1895, to fight for a total of thirty years for national independence, played an important part in the political formations of the early Cuban state. As one observer notes:

Cuba's nineteenth-century revolution emerged from a society that seemed highly unrevolutionary—a society that in the political ferment of the Age of Revolution earned the designation “the ever-faithful isle” (Ferrer 1999: 1).

Cuba was a severely racially divided society at this time. In 1846, 36 per cent of the population were slaves. Enslaved and free people of colour constituted the majority of the population (Ferrer 1999: 2). According to one source, “[i]n 1862...Spaniards, who amounted to only 8 per cent of the island's population, appropriated over 90 per cent of its wealth” (Cantón Navarro 1998: 43). Clearly, these slaves had indeed nothing to lose but their chains. The remaining white population “looked to Haiti and clung to Spain in fear” (Ferrer 1999: 2), wary of the potential for a black republic such as the one founded there. It was the conflicting opinions about race and class that helped shape the divergent attitudes in the Liberation Army and the Partido Revolucionario Cubano [Cuban Revolutionary Party - PRC] during the revolutionary wars for independence towards what a new Cuban state and society should look like. These conflicts were to continue to be fought in the tumultuous politics of the early Cuban republic.

The Revolution beginning on 10 October 1868 “seemed to defy the fear and division that formed the society from which it emerged.” This initial insurrection led further to the *Guerra Chiquita* [Little War] of 1879-80 and the final War of Independence or ‘Spanish-American War’ of 1895-98. These insurrections were all fought by “an army unique in the history of the Atlantic world - the Liberation Army, a multiracial fighting force that was integrated at all ranks” (Ferrer 1999: 3).⁶

⁶ If any quotations appear without a reference at first, then this will be part of a series of quotations taken from the same page or a short section of the same source that will be cited in page numbers, at the end of that section, in brackets.

This factor within the army was to have a profound influence hereafter. The uprising in 1868 began what was to become the ‘Ten Years War’, when Carlos Manuel de Céspedes liberated his slaves, telling them: “[y]ou are as free,...as I am” (Ferrer 1999: 15). While the time for abolition may not have been perfectly ripe when Céspedes made his declaration, no doubt his seemingly progressive reasons for doing so were in fact, more pragmatic: to consolidate a white-led republic with blacks accepting their ‘place’ due to the former’s ‘benevolence’. Indeed, as Ferrer notes, “in the eastern regions that sustained the initial uprising, slavery had ceased to be a pivotal social or economic institution” (Ferrer 1999: 21). This act of Céspedes and men like him was, “important symbolically, [but] legally represented nothing more radical than the exercise of the right of a master to manumit his slaves” (Ferrer 1985: 46).

As the rebellion spread, it became a more untenable position to maintain gradual abolition through manumission, while reserving freedom for slaves only until after the national independence struggle was won. Many slaves and free coloured people saw the two struggles as intrinsically linked, joining the ranks of the Liberation Army, as they saw it, to achieve both. According to Ferrer, “[t]he same army that re-created privilege, however, then functioned to challenge that privilege” (Ferrer 1999: 159).

As more slaves joined the side of the rebellion, they pressed their demands on the insurrection leaders, leading to the Constitution of Guáimaro that declared, “all citizens of the republic [would be] considered soldiers of the Liberation Army.” If the slaves wanted their freedom then it would be on the condition set by white leaders that they fight. When the rebellion reached Camagüey, the Revolutionary Assembly of the Central Department called for abolition partly to gain US support

for the rebellion in light of the latter's Thirteenth Amendment. The Constitution of Guáimaro had proclaimed that, "all inhabitants of the Republic are entirely free." However, the subsequent *Reglamento de Libertos* [Regulation of Freemen] established by the Assembly at Camagüey began the control over *libertos* by *patronos*, the latter being ex-masters for whom the ex-slaves had to work, and whose property they were unable to leave without permission. Céspedes approved of the *Reglamento* but saw employing *libertos* in agriculture, rather than as soldiers, as the best policy (Scott 1985: 47-8). The Constitution of Guáimaro was the first instance of a form of genuine independent, constitutional government being established in Cuba. The Constitution recognised three powers, "legislative (House of Representatives, in permanent session until the end of the war), the executive (president named by the House...), and an independent judicial power" (Suchlicki 1988: 130).

While there was no doubt, even at these early stages, that Cuban revolutionaries wished, upon the establishment of independence, to form a constitutional government, this was to remain a problematic issue. The white leadership looked to their northern neighbour for the ideal constitutional form, while many involved in the later conventions looked to Europe and elsewhere. It was not so much the constitutional form that would be at issue, but rather, the designated powers of the three branches of government, as will be seen.

In many of the western provinces, insurgents attacked estates and confiscated slaves, forcing them to fight for the insurrection. This not unnaturally brought up questions about the individual freedoms of these slaves (or lack thereof). On 27 December 1868 the rebel leaders abandoned the notion of gradual abolition with indemnification when Céspedes, "decreed that all slaves belonging to known

enemies of their cause would be considered free and their owners not subject to compensation.” These ‘enemies’ were of course the *peninsulares* (Spanish-born) slave-owners, loyal to the ruling regime and this decree was intended to gain fighting strength by making the enemies’ captured slaves part of the Liberation Army in line with the Constitution of Guáimaro. Therefore *criollo*, (i.e., Cuban born) owners retained the right of manumission on a “case-by-case basis”: hence Céspedes’s declaration likewise, “by default, condoned slavery” (Ferrer 1999: 26).

In 1870 Céspedes formally ended the forced labour of *libertos*. Their time and labour was henceforth organised by an, “apprenticeship”, that “focused customarily on teaching slaves to sell their labor to others, for a wage”, hence, “freedom from slavery, did not imply the freedom not to work” (Ferrer 1999: 29-30). However, increasingly, ex-slave insurgents began to take their own initiative in the rebellion; slave women fled their assigned masters to follow their men to the front, and slaves used liberation as a call to arms. All this led to the Liberation Army having to establish a “disciplinary apparatus that mirrored the Spanish system of military tribunals...[which were] at least as strict as those imposed by their Spanish counterparts” (Ferrer 1999: 33). It seems then, that the rebellion was becoming increasingly reliant on the majority of the population, enslaved and free people of colour, for its success.

In the west, however, the slave insurgency never really took root, so these conflicts were largely confined to the east. As Scott puts it, “[i]n most of the western part of the island, the coercive discipline of a slave plantation regime combined with Spanish military force to create an environment inhospitable to effective insurgency” (Scott 1985: 62). All this of course, put pressure on Spain; as long as slavery existed, slaves had an incentive to join the rebellion, and theoretically at

least, the United States had a rationale for aiding the liberationists. Hence, the Spanish Cortes introduced the Moret Law in 1870, which was, “in a sense an effort by Spain to capture the apparent moral high ground from the insurgents and to win gratitude from freed slaves and free people of color, while stalling abolition itself” (Scott 1985: 65). The Moret Law freed all children born since 1868. However, all that this meant, was simply that, “[t]he epithet attached to their names in the slave lists changed from *párvulo* to *liberto*, but there is no indication that any alteration in their treatment followed” (Scott 1985: 68).

In 1873 Máximo Gómez took over as military leader in Puerto Príncipe from Ignacio Agramonte. Throughout the early part of the war:

the Spanish publicly emphasised the number of blacks and runaway slaves among the rebels as part of an attempt to portray the rebellion as a racial rather than a political struggle and thus dissuade whites from joining (Scott 1985: 58).

While there had been desertions on both sides, this issue became critical also to the white rebel leadership. Their vision of a national republic was one founded and led by white leaders, with gradual abolition of slavery planned only after this struggle was won. Céspedes wrote to separatist colleagues in the United States saying “annexation” was preferable to a “bitter war of the races” (Ferrer 1999: 54). Clearly, there was a conflict of interest between the predominantly white leadership of the revolutionary movement and the bulk of the Liberation Army, which was non-white. Moreover, prominent leaders, such as Máximo Gómez, continued to inspire recruitment to the new cause of *Cuba Libre* [Free Cuba] because of their

commitment to the total abolition of slavery. In fact, this abolition, due to the racial structure of the liberation forces, became very much a part of that same ideology of *Cuba Libre*. There was perhaps then, already a conflict about what this concept meant to the predominantly white leadership of the independence movement, and the largely non-white fighting force.

The preference of the white leadership for support from the United States was a crucial aspect of the future republic's political life, and in many ways the attitudes of the white leaders of the independence struggle were to continue to manifest themselves among the political and ex-military leaders in the years from 1900-24. Allegiance to the ideals of the United States and its founding fathers, who were very much an elite themselves, was preferable to the inherent radicalism of the racially egalitarian Liberation Army, or indeed, as will be seen, to the radical ideologies arriving on Cuban shores in the minds of Spanish immigrant workers. Similarly, the Veterans' organisations after independence were inherently, if not explicitly, dominated by their white leadership, much as the independence camp had been.

The Pact of Zanjón and the *Guerra Chiquita*

On February 10 1878, a Camagüeyan committee agreed to the Pact of Zanjón that gave:

concession of administrative and political rights equivalent to those earlier granted to Puerto Rico; political pardon for insurgents and deserters from the

Spanish Army; and legal freedom for slaves and Chinese contract workers currently in the insurrection...a peace that granted neither independence nor abolition (Ferrer 1999: 63).

The *mulato* general, Antonio Maceo, leading the rebels in Oriente, rejected this peace immediately, writing to Spanish authorities to ask what the rebels could hope to achieve from this pact (Ferrer 1999: 64). Maceo rejected the terms because they included neither the abolition of slavery, nor recognition of Cuban independence. His meeting with the Spanish General Martínez Campos led to the ‘Protest of Baraguá’: fighting resurfaced but was over by May and the rebels were forced to accept the Pact (Thomas 2001: 157-8). The issues of slavery and independence were fundamentally unresolved, despite the fact that the emancipation of both slaves and the nation had been the chief issues that had won supporters over to the Liberation Army. The treaty, “freed only those slaves who had rebelled against Spain...[which] rather than resolving the issue of emancipation, had only produced a new and greater incentive for slaves to mount acts of open rebellion and to ally with would-be insurgents” (Ferrer 1999: 71)

Not surprisingly, the *Guerra Chiquita* erupted on 26 August 1879, but lasted less than a year. Distinguishing between the Ten Years War and this uprising has been seen as an “arbitrary distinction” (Ferrer 1999: 72), however, there were significant differences between the two conflicts. The Liberal (Autonomist) Party declared the new conflict a “threat to liberty” (Ferrer 1999: 72). The Autonomists sought little more than “a system of local self-government patterned after the English colonial model” (Suchlicki 1988: 210), and they could not stop the radical egalitarian element that had been released by the conflict. The Autonomists’

opposition to the new uprising was no doubt because the Pact had given the “propertied element” (Foner 1977: 13) representation in the Spanish Cortes: the Autonomist Party was composed of the wealthier elements of both *criollo* and *peninsular* separatists who hoped for a gradualist political evolution to democracy.

As Ferrer sees it, during the *Guerra Chiquita*, “the practice and process of insurgency on the ground”, was to paint this rebellion as ‘blacker’ than the previous one (Ferrer 1999: 77). Spanish officials tried to depict the new conflict as a ‘race war’ and blacks as ‘savages’, sometimes going so far as to steal their clothes to make them fit this archetype (Ferrer 1999: 78). By 1880 however, most of the leaders of the movement were in exile, in New York, Santo Domingo, and Madrid. Only a minor outbreak of fighting in 1885 disrupted the peace that was to last until 1895 (Foner 1977: 12). While small numbers of separatists joined the ranks of the Autonomist Party, Pérez notes that, “[e]xcluded from the new political alignments in post-Zanjón Cuba were the irreconcilable veterans of the Ten Years’ War...Exile attracted the most intransigent elements of the separatist polity” (Pérez 1988: 140). This was to be a turning point in the history of the Cuban independence movement.

The Formation of the Cuban Revolutionary Party

On 17 April 1881 the Spanish constitution of 1876 was applied to Cuba and:

the island was to be ruled by laws enacted for it by the legislative body in Madrid. But here again, in practice little real change took place...The

possibility of criticising Spanish institutions and policies was severely limited (Foner 1977: 14).

In response José Martí, proposed the formation of a “revolutionary party” in a letter to Máximo Gómez, on 20 July 1882, (Turton 1986: 58), and the latter, along with Maceo, moved to New York to join him in 1884, to seek funds for the independence movement.

In 1890 Martí founded *La Liga* [the League], for the “education and advancement of Negro exiles”; this was no doubt in line with Martí’s opinion that the new struggle for independence would require a “people’s war” (Foner 1977: 17-18). Independence as an idea spread amongst the workers of Key West and Tampa as *lectores*, in tobacco factories promoted this doctrine as they read aloud to the often-illiterate workers as they laboured, including radical ideas hidden amongst their readings. On 26 and 27 November 1890 Martí gave two of his most important speeches: ‘With All, and for the Good of All’, and ‘The New Pines’. These speeches led to the formation of *La Liga de Instrucción* [The League of Instruction] in Tampa, modelled on the first league, and the adoption of the ‘Tampa Resolutions’ on 28 November (Foner 1977: 19-20). The resolutions had four aims: first, to unite all pro-independence groups; second, to wage war to form a popular government; third, to form a cross-class democratic republic; and fourth, to respect the constitutions of the emigrant groups (Foner 1977: 207). These resolutions were to become the ‘Platform of the Cuban Revolutionary Party’, founded by Martí on 5 January 1892. The socialist Carlos Baliño helped to found the Party and his radicalism was, according to Blas Roca, to have a profound influence upon it (IHMCRSC 1976: 13). Local clubs that supplied funds and recruits for the

revolution, which abided by the statutes of the Party, formed the Cuban Revolutionary Party. The local clubs' Presidents were to act as the executive for the regional Councils and they in turn were subordinate to the Delegate (the President of the Party), and the Treasurer (Foner 1977: 23). As a result a "great check on the Delegate and Treasurer was their obligation to present themselves each year for re-election", with some historians suggesting that this political formation was 'democratic centralism', and a forerunner of the present-day Cuban Communist Party organisation (Turton 1986: 35, referring to Jorge Ibarra).⁷

Patria was founded on 14 March 1892 as the official journal of the PRC as Martí recognised that one of the failures of the earlier rebellion was a lack of communication between forces within Cuba and those outside it (Foner 1977: 38-9). Martí had a minor disagreement with Brigadier-General Enrique Collazo, who claimed that Martí was not a man of action. Other military veterans were also insulted by what they saw as Martí's self-important attitude, including Fernando Figueredo, President of the Cuban Convention of Key West, and Guillermo Moncada, a distinguished veteran general (Turton 1986: 32). Martí however, received much written support, and was elected Delegate of the PRC on 10 April 1892 (Foner 1977: 35). On 3 January 1893 General Máximo Gómez was appointed military chief of the Liberation Army. Martí came into conflict with Máximo Gómez, who he felt seemed to treat the revolutionary movement as though it were

⁷ In a similar fashion, Cantón Navarro compares the PRC to Lenin's Social Democratic Party (Cantón Navarro 1998: 60). A note of caution must be made, however, when Cuban historians of a Communist allegiance portray the evolution from José Martí's PRC to Fidel Castro's socialist Cuba as a linear progression of radical, nationalist and anti-imperialist struggle. José Martí himself was by no means a Leninist, nor even a Marxist, having only fleeting sympathy with the latter, and vocally criticising both Marxism and anarchism at various points (ironically of course, Castro held approximately the same position early on in his career). The radical and socialist element in the PRC came from the workers' patriotic clubs, not the leadership, and hence, the structure was not self-consciously Marxist.

his exclusive property. Martí informed him that “[a] nation is not founded, General, the way one commands a military camp” (Foner 1977: 16). He henceforth remained committed to civilian control of the revolutionary movement. Enrique Trujillo, editor of the emigré newspaper, *El Porvenir*, “objected to the PRC’s revolutionary nature and what he characterised its dictatorial structure” (Poyo 1986: 24). After Martí was elected Delegate of the Party he ordered elections amongst the military veterans for a commander. While this election was to some extent, to appease military leaders hostile to Martí, this “represented a great step forward in the cause of Cuban democracy, since it meant the military had become, theoretically at least, an arm of the Party and not vice versa” (Turton 1986: 35). This was not to stop the civilian-military contest for the leadership of Cuban nationalism, however, as it will be seen that this continued throughout the period under investigation.

An early success for the PRC was its defeat of Key West tobacco manufacturers. Horatio S. Rubens, a New York lawyer and PRC supporter, successfully had Spanish strike breakers deported, after they had been sent from Havana in violation of the contract labour law of the US Congress, passed in 1885 (Foner 1977: 43-4). This importation of strike breakers was no doubt carried out by the Spanish authorities to attempt to stop the PRC gaining financial and other support from workers in Key West, but this plan clearly backfired, as Cuban workers could see that their employers cared little about national borders if these could be subordinated to the benefit of their own profits, serving to radicalise the PRC.

After a failed filibustering mission by the PRC on 10 January 1895,⁸ a new insurrection began on 24 February when the military leaders established that at least

⁸ The United States seized the three ships that were part of the ‘Fernandina plan’, full of arms and supplies, costing the rebels \$58, 000 and three years work.

four provinces would rise in rebellion (Foner 1977: 52-3). On 25 March 1895, Martí announced the 'Montecristi Manifesto', which declared Cuba's desire for independence, brought about by a just war, and the participation of blacks and ex-slaves in this struggle, no doubt to counter the charge of the Spanish regime that the, "[n]egro race is a threat" (Foner 1977: 394). Martí landed in Cuba on 10 April, and on 16 April he was informed that he had been unanimously elected as Major-General of the Liberation Army. In discussions with Máximo Gómez and Maceo on 4 May, Martí again explained his fear of military domination of the revolutionary process and the possibility of this factor creating a dictatorship (Foner 1977: 54-7). PRC leaders met again on 5 May at La Mejorana sugar mill and, "the most controversial issue was the organisation of the civilian government and the military command and the relationship between them" (Cantón Navarro 1998: 63). The issue of this relationship was to plague the independence movement.

During the Ten Years War the *prefecturas* [prefectures] had administered the territory under the control of the liberation forces, acting as a kind of civil government over their district, approving marriages, enforcing criminal laws, and educating children and the illiterate (Izquierdo Canosa 1998: 16-17). However, this was in the context of a guerrilla war, and this was no doubt not meant to be an embryonic form of the future society along 'democratic-centralist' lines, as Communist historians might like to think, but rather an ad-hoc structure best suited to keeping a large population supportive of the rebellion. The issue of how to structure a civil, constitutional government after 1902 was very much a conflict in its own right.

The War of Independence of 1895-8

From the outset, the PRC sought to unify a broad cross-class and cross-race nationalist alliance, collecting together, “army veterans of 1868 and the civilian separatists of the post- 1868 generation, Cubans from the provinces of the east and the west, Cubans who lived inside and outside Cuba, blacks and whites, women and men, Cubans of all classes” (Pérez 1988: 148). Not surprisingly, the new uprising “was...both a rebellion against Spanish political structures and a revolution against the Cuban social system” (Pérez 1988: 159). Perhaps also not surprisingly, the Liberal Autonomist Party declared this new uprising “criminal” (Pérez 1986: 20). The Ten Years War had been enough for the Autonomists, representing the wealthier *criollo* sector. The social-revolutionary nature of the new insurrection was reflected concretely in the practices of the Liberation Army. When the Army expanded into the west of the country, Máximo Gómez ordered all economic production to cease, and set about destroying sugar plantations and harvests. This could be seen as simply a means to cripple their enemies’ resources, but according to Pérez, the “western expansion of the insurrection was no less a threat to the sovereignty of the colonial administration than to the social system over which it presided. Cubans intended to overthrow the former by undermining the latter” (Pérez 1988: 153).

Further, the new rebellion again addressed the problem of civilian versus military control of the movement. According to Thomas, “Maceo wanted a military junta to control everything till victory. Martí disagreed” (Thomas 2001: 179). Maceo emphasised that the failure of a strong military leadership had led to the defeat of the Liberation Army in the Ten Years War; however, he also stated that he would not

take up any political leadership position, should they triumph. Martí was killed in his first encounter in the field on 19 May 1895, thus again leaving the issue unresolved. Thomas notes that although Salvador Cisneros Betancourt became the provisional President of the Republic after Martí's death, "[p]ower, such as it was, rested on a tacit understanding between the generals – Máximo Gómez, Maceo, and later, Calixto García" (Thomas 2001: 180-2). While these leaders seemingly controlled the rebellion from their high-ranking positions, it must not be forgotten that in many ways the civilian and political leadership used these soldiers for their own pragmatic ends. Wealthy white landowners and business-men continued to take up leadership positions based purely on their common cultural attributes, rather than proven abilities. An accord in November of 1895 by the rebel legislature specified that ranks would be assigned to incoming soldiers on the basis of their education (Ferrer 1999: 154). According to Ferrer again, "[r]igid social divisions existed within the rebel army, not only in the allocation of ranks but also in the exercise of military life" (Ferrer 1999: 155). Not surprisingly then, Martí's death "would dramatically weaken the Cuban Revolutionary Party from a political, ideological and organizational point of view and would help thwart the patriotic, democratic and socially advanced objectives of the Revolution" (Cantón Navarro 1998: 63).

After the enforced resignation of Martínez Campos, the Spanish general who had been in charge of the Spanish forces, the Spanish republic took a firmer stand toward crushing the rebellion when it appointed General Valeriano Weyler, who claimed: "I believe that war should be answered with war" (Pérez 1988: 165). Weyler's *reconcentrado* [reconcentration] decree began counter-insurgency against rebel guerrilla warfare; subsistence agriculture was burned, livestock was confiscated, and homes were razed by the *voluntarios*, Cuban 'volunteers' fighting

to preserve the Spanish empire. The rural population was herded into camps, and those remaining outside were held to be assisting the enemy. Not surprisingly, these “overcrowded reconcentration centres became breeding grounds for disease and sickness. The policy led eventually to mass deaths” (Pérez 1988: 167). The invasion of the west by the rebel army, which prompted these events, was not only a significant military victory, but was also a daring political accomplishment; the insurrection of 1868 had largely failed because a successful incursion into the rich west had evaded the rebels, indeed, the white leadership had prohibited it (Ferrer 1999: 143).

This counter-revolutionary tactic, however, still proved ineffectual in turning back rebel success. According to Thomas, by winter 1897-8, “[i]t began to be appreciated that self-government would in the end be granted: It was a question of what sort” (Thomas 2001: 204). In August 1897 the assassination of the Spanish President brought down the Conservative government there and led to the retirement of Weyler (Ferrer 1999: 171). His successor, General Ramón Blanco, announced a change of policy stating that he had come to give Cubans self-government and amnesty, for those who lived ‘within the law’. On 22 November 1897 the new administration gave Cubans male suffrage (at least to the propertied classes), however, the Spanish Captain-General still retained his power over internal order and external affairs. José María Gálvez became the leader of the first home-rule government, composed of Autonomists and the Partido Reformista [Reformist Party] (Thomas 2001: 204-6). There were riots against autonomy and the USS *Maine* was sent to protect US property interests. On 15 February 1898 an explosion destroyed the ship. The Spanish authorities blamed an internal cause and faulty gunpowder supplies, while the United States blamed an external cause and Spanish

negligence; there was no evidence to link separatists (Thomas 2001: 207-12). The US President McKinley at first avoided war and made an unsuccessful offer of annexation (Thomas 2001: 212).

The war beginning in 1868 combined with the ideology of nationalism to give birth to the Cuban nation as a material institution. In turn, “the convergence of ‘independentismo’ and abolitionism”, meant that, “the war would make inevitable the formation of a national juridical structure”, which made a nation independent of the Spanish colony possible (Aguirre 1990: 128-9). This independence movement, however, due primarily to the social forces in Cuba generally, could not help but take on a radical hue, not only because of the role of ex-slaves and non-white soldiers, but also because of the importation of radical ideas amongst the working class.

The Role of Radical Politics in Cuba until the formation of the Cuban Revolutionary Party

Socialist and anarchist intellectuals and workers played an important part in the independence struggle, and in the formation and practices of the Cuban Revolutionary Party. It is therefore important to understand the influence of these intellectuals upon Cuban history. During the latter part of the nineteenth century, anarchism was the dominant revolutionary ideology in large parts of Europe, as both anarchist and academic historians agree. Anarchism was to influence the Cuban workers’ movement due to its colonial relationship with Spain. In 1857, “the first Proudhonian mutualist society was founded in Cuba”, according to Fernández

(Fernández 2001: 17); however, Foner claims that this was a society whose constitution would admit only “all *white* people of good education” (Foner 1963: 138, emphasis in original). Fernández’s reference to Proudhon is perhaps an attempt to imply that the anarchist movement was the first to establish itself in Cuba, but Foner fails to mention Proudhon’s name in the founding of this society, as does Casanovas, when he states that there was a “mutual-aid society directly attached to El Pilar...that attracted white artisans” (Casanovas 1998: 68).⁹ In 1858, “the free Negro, Antonio Mora” established a mutual aid society, the purpose of which, according to him, was to enable “the proletarian class to create a means capable of making its misfortunes less calamitous” (Foner 1963: 139). Whether or not they were radically racially egalitarian, mutualist and anarchist organisations were beginning to take root, and the substantial non-white composition of the Cuban working class meant they would have a tendency to develop racial egalitarianism.

In 1865 the Asociación de Tabaqueros de La Habana, [Association of Tobacco Workers of Havana], a mutual-aid society amongst one of the largest group of workers, was established (Stubbs 1985: 85). In 1866, the first strike took place at the ‘Hija de Cabañas y Carbajal’ and ‘El Fígaro’ tobacco factories in Havana (Fernández 2001: 17, Casanovas 1998: 79), in which workers were successful. In the same year Saturnino Martínez began publishing the weekly workers’ paper *La Aurora*, funded by artisans (Foner 1963: 140). Although Martínez was apparently

⁹ As an aside, Proudhon’s notorious anti-semitism, along with antagonism to women’s suffrage, democracy, strikes, and, in later life, his support for Napoleon, perhaps muddies the waters on whether this founder of ‘mutualism’ would be for racial equality or not. Suffice to say, anarchist connotations do not necessarily infer racial egalitarianism, despite what contemporary anarchist historians might say. Similarly ‘mutual aid’ was a phrase of the Russian anarchist Peter Kropotkin, with Proudhon’s use of the word ‘mutualism’ generally coming later, no doubt to disassociate himself from other anarchists, and generally referring to his ideas on non-profit banking.

“influenced by Poudhon’s ideas of federation and mutual aid, [he] was not an anarchist” (Fernández 2001: 18). Writers in *La Aurora* such as José de J. Márquez, preached the virtues of co-operatives and workers’ guilds or trade unions (Casanovas 1998: 81). Martínez was instrumental in the establishment of the *lectura*: the practice of a designated individual reading aloud on diverse topics such as history, politics, and often novels, to tobacco workers as they worked (Foner 1963: 143).¹⁰ These readings were outlawed by the authorities in 1866 when Florez Estrada’s *Political Economy* was read aloud, which advocated “the right of the worker to dispose of the fruit of his labor” (Foner 1963: 146).¹¹ Casanovas states that “[w]ith the war, [i.e., the Ten Years War] the labor movement collapsed”; however, in 1872 ‘el Sociedad Protectora del Gremio de Escogedores’, [the Cigar Selectors’ Protection Society], “the first trade union in Cuba”, was established (Casanovas 1998: 109). In 1873 there was an attempt at a general strike (Casanovas 1998: 119).

Fernández states that the “first openly anarchist presence” appeared in Cuba in the 1880s when J. C. Campos, a Cuban typographer, initiated contact with Spanish anarchists, perhaps qualifying his earlier comment on Proudhon. Anarchist author Sam Dolgoff states that the “forerunners and organizers of the Cuban labor movement were the Spanish anarcho-syndicalist exiles who in the 1880s came to Cuba...men like Enrique Messinier [sic], Enrique Roig San Martín, and Enrique Cresci [sic]” (Dolgoff 1976: 37). Spanish anarchists had founded the ‘Congress of the Federation of the Spanish Region of the International Working Mens’

¹⁰ Sheldon B. Liss refers to “anarchosyndicalist intellectuals Saturnino Martínez and José de Jesús Márquez” (Liss 1987: 7), but there seems little evidence elsewhere to suggest this was their ideological position, although they were certainly familiar with these ideas.

¹¹ Aguilar tells us they even included the promotion of the ideas of Proudhon and Mikhail Bakunin (Aguilar 1972: 78, n.22).

Association' in Barcelona in 1870. According to Dolgoff, this Federation had adopted the ideas put forward by the Russian anarchist Mikhail Bakunin in the 'Declaration of Principles of the International Alliance of Socialist Democracy' drafted in 1868 and the Resolution of the Basel Congress of the IWMA in 1869 (Dolgoff 1976: 31-2). Spanish radicals immigrating to Cuba were presumably influenced by this method of organising. Casanovas states that the Cuban anarchist movement of the 1880s was influenced by what he terms "[a]narcho-collectivism"; proposing a system of reward based on workers' contribution and following the rationale of the Federación Regional Española, [Regional Federation of Spain – FRE], and later the Federación de Trabajadores de la Región Española, [Federation of Workers of the Spanish Region – FTRE], who were influenced by Bakunin's ideas, and according to Casanovas, opposed violent methods. This is supposedly in contrast to the "anarcho-communism" of Errico Malatesta and Peter Kropotkin, which espoused violence, asserted a system of reward based on need, and "came to dominate European anarchism everywhere except in Spain" (Casanovas 1998: 147-51).¹² According to Casanovas, the Junta Central de Artesanos de la Habana, [Central Assembly of Artisans of Havana - JCA], was established in 1882 with the FTRE in mind.

Enrique Roig San Martín (1843-1889) became editor of *El Obrero* in 1883, a paper founded by republican democrats (Casanovas 1998: 150), which was, under his leadership, to become, "the first Cuban paper to espouse a specifically anarchist position to the Cuban working class" (Fernández 2001: 20). While Liss claims that Roig San Martín is, "often considered Cuba's first Marxist of note" (Liss 1987: 32),

¹² This interpretation is Casanovas's. While Bakunin certainly advocated collectivism, as opposed to full communism, it seems a little unusual to refer to anything under his notoriously inflammatory influence as 'non-violent'!

this is no doubt an erroneous description of his viewpoint, and he was merely familiar with Marxism, as Fernández points out, “like any other anarchist of his time...he would have felt obligated to be informed about everything relating to socialism” (Fernández 2001: 25). Liss cites Roig San Martín as influenced by Bakunin, Kropotkin, Marx and Engels, and claims that he “advocated replacing the state as it existed with worker control”, but still refers to him as, “Cuba’s first major Marxist social critic” (Liss 1987: 35-7). In 1885 the Junta Central de Trabajadores [Central Assembly of Workers], and the Círculo de Trabajadores [Workers’ Circle], an “anarchist-orientated” organisation, were founded (Fernández 2001: 20), the latter being “an attempt at rebuilding the JCA and giving it a stronger anarchist orientation” (Casanovas 1998: 161).¹³

In 1887 Roig San Martín replaced *El Obrero* with *El Productor*. Messonier, Manuel Fuentes and Enrique Creci also wrote for this paper. *El Productor* was instrumental in the creation of the Alianza Obrera [Worker Alliance] or the Asociación Benéfica y de Protección á los Trabajadores [Association for the Protection and Benefit of Workers] to give it its full title (Casanovas 1998: 190), which held its first Congress in Havana in 1887, supported by another recent creation, La Federación de Trabajadores de Cuba [The Federation of Workers of Cuba – FTC]. The Congress stressed opposition to “all vestiges of authority” and adopted the federative principle (Fernández 2001: 21).

In 1888, the *izquierdista* [leftist] dissidence emerged from within the Unión Constitucional [Constitutional Union]. It, “claimed to support some of labor’s demands”, even proposing modification of the electoral census in order to allow

¹³ According to Hernández, the Círculo changed its name to the Sociedad General de Trabajadores [General Society of Workers – SGT] in 1893 and was led by Sabino Muñiz and José González Aguirre (Fernández 2001: 43)

working-class suffrage, and *El Productor* went so far as to declare that “we must help the [izquierdista] dissidents to win” (Casanovas 1998: 191). In 1889, “the burial of Enrique Roig became the first massive socialist demonstration in Cuba”, with more than 4000 marching to celebrate the life of the late anarchist who died after imprisonment had worsened his health (Casanovas 1998: 199). In 1890, May Day celebrations took place for the first time in Cuba. In 1892 the first Regional Workers’ Congress was founded, negating the use of the word ‘national’ as anarchists stressed that the social problem would not be solved by independence. This coincided with the establishment of the Cuban Revolutionary Party and the emphasis by Martí on the social struggle. The authorities’ response was to prohibit free assembly, close *El Productor*, and to persecute the *Círculo* and the *Junta Central* (Fernández: 2001:28).

Anarchism in Cuba then, played much the same role as it did in Europe generally: acting often as a progressive force, and often in unity with democratic and radical socialists (despite some anarchists’, and anarchist historians’ claims to ideological purity). It was not entirely surprising then, that many within this movement would offer their support for an independence struggle, this nationalist sympathy only being formed on the grounds that a republic would be more just for workers than a colony. It is also not entirely surprising that these same supporters would radicalise this same independence movement.

The Cuban Revolutionary Party and the Workers' Movement

According to Poyo, “many of the popular anarchist leaders of the 1880s eventually found their way into the PRC as office-holders and publicists” (Poyo 1986: 22). It even appears that the murder of Antonio Cánovas del Castillo, “the architect of the constitutional restoration”, by the Italian anarchist and practitioner of ‘propaganda by the deed’, Miguel Angiolillo, was only made possible by the financial assistance of Cuban rebel Ramón Emeterio Betances (Thomas 2001: 203). Indeed, according to Casanovas, Betances was the “PRC’s agent in Paris”, and it was this act which led to the “establishment of an autonomous government in Cuba” (Thomas 2001: 228). Enrique Trujillo suggested that the PRC would be compromised by anarchist membership and contributions as “every gift creates a commitment”, while the annexationist José I Rodríguez labelled Martí, “eminently socialist and anarchist” (Abel 1986: 25), but this was clearly an exaggerated and erroneous depiction designed to smear Martí’s name and the PRC. More accurately, perhaps, according to Turton, Martí “had a special dislike for anarchists” (Turton 1986: 123).

In April 1884 Carlos Agüero, with the authorisation of separatists in Key West, had launched a guerrilla expedition to Cuba leading to kidnappings of planters in Matanzas and Santa Clara. Supposedly influenced by the Russian nihilist movement (at this time the phrase ‘nihilism’ was often associated with the anarchist Bakunin), and Irish nationalists, the guerrillas promoted “scientific war” of dynamite and property destruction claiming, “the best argument against oppression is and will be the explosion” (Casanovas 1998: 159). A similar uprising occurred in April 1893 in Holguín, when Manuel and Ricardo Sartorius led a rebellion outside of PRC

control that was quickly defeated by Spanish forces. As a result, in ‘The Revolutionary Party in Cuba’, the PRC declared itself, “a vigorous critic of every partial or inadequate rebellion” (Foner 1977: 327).

It was the Haymarket Affair in Chicago that was to alter Martí’s views towards anarchists and extra-parliamentary socialists. This led to a further influx of labour radicals into prominent PRC positions and a further cross-fertilisation of ideas between those who sought national independence and those who sought social revolution. Turton tells us that; “Martí’s faith in the United States had received a mortal blow in the Haymarket events” (Turton 1986: 143). Previously, Martí had seen anarchists as a dangerous rabble, especially German and European anarchists, being influenced by the ideas of Johann Möst (a strange mixture of Marxist doctrine and anarchist method), in the era of ‘propaganda by the deed’, in which barely a nation in Europe existed without an attempted assassination of some head of state by an anarchist of some description. The Chicago massacre made Martí realise that the US state was at least as prepared to use violence, even without due process, to protect capitalists’ interests (Turton 1986: 126-44).

It was under these conditions that “inside Cuba, the emigré working class communities began to move closer to the left wing of the separatist movement led by José Martí” (Casanovas 1998: 216). The anarchist fortnightly *El Despertar* even claimed that the separatist movement had failed because elite leaders had compromised working-class whites and blacks when they signed the Pact of Zanjón. The Spanish state’s repression following the attempted May Day general strike of 1892, “prompted prominent anarchists such as Enrique Messonier to emigrate to the United States to join the PRC.” An economic crisis caused by the McKinley Tarriff Act led many workers to leave Cuba for Key West, Tampa, and New York, and this,

along with the Spanish repression, caused “phenomenal growth in the number of working-class clubs associated with the PRC in the United States.” Carlos Baliño founded the ‘Enrique Roig’ club with the anarchist Joaquín Izaguirre, and socialist and anarchist journals such as *El Proletario*, *El Productor*, and *El Despertar* maintained close relations with *Patria*, the main periodical of the PRC (Casanovas 1998: 217).

In fact, Carlos Baliño was perhaps the other major radicalising influence on the PRC and the independence movement at this stage. On the other hand, if he was not in fact that influential at the time, he has certainly been held in high regard by Cuban historians, due to his importance within the PRC, his friendship with Martí, and his later friendship with the young intellectual (and later Cuban Communist Party member) Julio Antonio Mella (Suchlicki 1988: 20). Baliño was instrumental in founding the Cuban Communist Party with Mella, as he was earlier in founding the PRC with Martí, and this no doubt helps Cuban historians to portray the independence movement as radical from the outset. In fact, many agree that Baliño was more or less an anarchist before the 1890s, only turning to Marxism later on in his life. Further, as seen above, anarchists were perhaps a more important influence on the PRC, and certainly provided a lot of the rank-and-file recruits. In any case, there is no doubt, at least among non-Cuban historians of Cuba, that the Cuban Communist Party of 1925 underwent many changes of personnel and form before becoming the Cuban Communist Party consolidated after the triumph of the various forces of the 26th July Movement.¹⁴

¹⁴ In fact, some historians claim that not only did the Cuban Communist Party of 1925 go on to support the right-wing dictatorship of Gerardo Machado of 1925-33 (the *Machadato*), but it also made up much of the state bureaucracy that the coalition of forces of the 26th July movement was physically opposed to until 1959 (Thomas 2001: 344-382, and, 586-625).

In 1892 the Cuban regional labour Congress, “decided to support – or at least not to oppose – the overthrow of Spanish rule in Cuba as a necessary precondition for a future social revolution.” This was achieved by allowing, “workers...[to] join the separatist movement individually” (Casanovas 1998: 230). Many members of the anarchist-led labour movement joined the PRC in Tampa or Key West. This perhaps indicates the strength of the influence of the PRC, as the traditional anarchist view holds that any participation in ‘politics’ is counter-revolutionary and itself sanctions domination that is to be transcended by the social revolution. No doubt some of this conversion was due to the powerful arguments put forth by Martí in *Patria* that ‘political’ action was not always futile, if it was to combat the oppressing colonial nation. There was even a new ‘anarcho-separatist’ periodical begun in Florida, *El Esclavo*, when *El Despertar* distanced itself from the PRC. When war broke out in 1895 an anarchist pamphlet expressly called for unity between *criollo* and *peninsular* workers to fight for national liberation. The anarchist group that edited *El Corsario* in Galicia, Spain, likewise supported Cuban separatism (Casanovas 1998: 220-6). While workers may not have been the main fighting force during the War of Independence, they did “collect funds,...build information networks, and...channel supplies for the Liberating Army...[and were] undoubtedly essential to maintaining the separatist army throughout the war.” Anarchists also used their skills in manufacturing dynamite to aid the separatist military struggle and even made the bomb that was used to attempt to kill General Weyler, apparently with the full knowledge of the PRC (Casanovas 1998: 227-30).

The PRC and Socialist Ideology

Martí saw himself as a true ‘radical’. As he put it: “[t]he genuine man always goes to the roots. That is what it means to be a radical” (Kirk 1983: 108). Indeed, according to another author, “the moral indignation pervading Martí’s critique of the dehumanising power of monopoly capital is comparable only with that felt by Marx and Engels against the abuses of bourgeois society” (Turton 1986: 99). However, Martí sought both working-class, and employer’s support, for the PRC. According to Poyo, he had a “good relationship with the Cuban cigar manufacturers and other entrepreneurs and professionals in the Florida communities.” In turn, “they did not consider Martí’s social ideas a threat to their economic interests” (Poyo 1986: 23).

Martí was a great admirer of Marx; however, he thought he moved ‘too fast’. According to Turton:

for both Martí and Marx the goal was the same: a society where each individual would be able to cultivate his talent to the maximum of his desires...But for Cuba, at least in its immediate post-revolutionary stage, he wanted a free-enterprise system, albeit, as has been shown, with curbs against the grosser forms of exploitation (Turton 1986: 52).

Martí was influenced by Henry George’s *Progress and Poverty*, which suggested the nationalisation of land and its rental to those who wanted it, thus easing the surplus population of the cities. Turton asserts that “[w]hatever Martí’s exact ideas on George’s system, there is no doubt that he wanted for Cuba a society of small and medium producers” (Turton 1986: 53). According to Ibarra, the

difference was that George proffered his theories as a means to *preserve* industrial capitalism, while Martí saw his ideas as an alternative to it. Ibarra declares that in ‘Escenas norteamericanas’ Martí “delivered one of the most severe attacks of the nineteenth century against monopoly power” (Ibarra 1986: 100). As one writer has correctly noted, “his political programs...resembled quite closely many of the ideas of the French so-called utopian socialists in the early nineteenth century” (Kirk 1983: 47).¹⁵

Caution is needed, however, in resting on truth claims, and the multifarious interplay of dynamic social forces in Martí’s philosophy should be noted, and hence, the same interplay within the PRC: nationalism, ‘bourgeois’ socialism, and liberalism. While advocates of these varying doctrines may often be mutually opposed to each other, these ideas should be understood as ‘discursive formations’: all concerned primarily with man as a political subject to varying degrees, and with quantifying, qualifying, and observing his behaviour, a practice hitherto absent in the pre-industrial Cuba. The PRC wished to unite: “[d]octors and workers, factory owners and mechanics, tradesmen and generals,...to vote and elect their representatives.” Voting would be made compulsory in order to “educate the public and balance out classes” (Turton 1986: 49-50). Whether this form of political matrix was national or not, it seemed to serve the modernising influence of capitalism: the further division and specialisation of labour and the development of productive processes.

¹⁵ In point of fact, many of the North American anarchists at the other end of the scale, the Proudhon-inspired ‘individualists’ such as Benjamin Tucker, Josiah Warren, Ezra Heywood, and Lysander Spooner, were peripherally influenced also by Henry George’s nationalisation system, amongst a rather bizarre melting pot of ideas including Herbert Spencer, Max Stirner, and Charles Fourier. Martin, J.J. (1970), *Men Against the State*, Colorado Springs.

Turton states that Martí had a, “bias towards the poor, in a rather evangelical way...This is why he gave his support to the Knights of Labor,...which was against violent methods on the behalf of workers.” Of course, as Turton correctly points out, while Martí may have felt that Marx went ‘too fast’, this is not “to condemn him out of hand” (Turton 1986: 123-5). Martí did however, disapprove of the Knights of Labor’s later claim for workers’ control after “more extreme elements” had influenced it, and “Martí denounced [this] as absurd, since the workers, he said, constituted only one factor of production” (Turton 1986: 128). This was of course, the idea of the classical economists such as Ricardo and Smith, with land and capital serving as the other two ‘factors’, and the ‘right’ of some to own these as a given: the theory, of course, which Marx himself was to ruthlessly deconstruct. While radical politics could not help but influence the separatist movement, due to the very real need, on the part of the PRC leadership for working-class support, this same leadership, like Martí, was not in favour of the revolutionary abolition of capitalism.

The Influence of Radicalism on the Independence Movement

In 1887 *El Productor* had asserted that “[t]he fatherland is a prison, and the state its warden” (Casanovas 1998: 192). In 1889, Enrique Messonier led a strike in Key West in which he called for workers to leave for Havana. The Spanish authorities provided some of the steamers used to transport workers, leading the nationalist journal *El Yara* to declare that the anarchists were Spanish sympathisers. According to Poyo the Spanish, “were clearly taking advantage of the situation to undermine the...separatist community” (Poyo 1985: 38). These events in turn led

Martí to realise the, “necessity of broadening the nationalist ideology to include the concerns of the all-important working classes” (Poyo 1985: 39). With the formation of the PRC, “the majority of exiled anarchists began to support the independence cause...however, [they] continued to hold to the ideas of...revolutionary anarchism” (Fernández 2001: 31). Martí’s ‘With All, and for the Good of All’ speech had, however, won much of the labour movement over to the separatist cause, at least in their own pragmatic interests. With the anarchists this was largely with the qualification of seeing a Cuban republic as potentially less oppressive economically than a Spanish colony; however, they maintained that, unless capitalism was overthrown, this ‘independence’ would mean little politically.

Poyo claims that the presidents of Tampa’s, “two revolutionary clubs, Néstor Carbonell and Ramón Rivero” (i.e. revolution against Spain), were pro-labour and that, “Carbonell openly characterised himself as a socialist and Rivero had maintained close relations with the Havana anarchists in 1889” (Poyo 1986: 21). Kirwin Shaffer has attempted to understand anarchist support for a nationalist struggle by claiming that, “[a]narchists did not interpret the war as a ‘nationalist’ struggle, but as a legitimate struggle against imperialism and patriotic nationalism” (Shaffer 2000: 45). However, the relations between the PRC and the labour movement were not without conflict. According to Poyo, “*El Yara* the most important patriot newspaper in Key West...rejected the call for workers to abandon compromise in matters of labor-management relations and condemned the political propositions of anarchism” (Poyo 1985: 34). As Fernández puts it, “Martí dreamed of a republic as an end in itself; the anarchists regarded it only as a means” (Fernández 2001: 32).

As seen above, the independence leaders charged the anarchists with ‘compromising’ with the Spanish authorities, but the anarchists saw any negotiation with capitalists, regardless of their nationality, as ‘compromise’; thus highlighting how the two groups attempted to use each other for their mutual advantage, a situation perhaps unique to Cuba. Shaffer observed that *El Nuevo Ideal*, published by Adrián del Valle and Luis Barcia, “led the anarchist critique of the meaning of independence, challenging the elite class’s abandonment of the popular sentiment for broad social change” (Shaffer 2000: 54). The anarchists recognised that the United States used exactly the same justifications as the Spanish for not allowing the Cubans to run their own country: that they were not ready for self-rule, and “[f]rom an anarchist perspective, it was obvious that the Platt Amendment negated Cuba’s independence” (Shaffer 2000: 56).

Radical politics and radical praxis were then, undoubtedly of profound influence upon the PRC and the independence movement, both during the Ten Years War and the final struggle of 1895-98. This radicalism, however, was merely utilised by the leadership of the independence movement for their own pragmatic ends, rather than to achieve any social-revolutionary goals in the republic. As will be seen later, the Veterans’ organisations that emerged after the disbandment of the Liberation Army also shrewdly used the working class and working-class radicals to further their own ends.

Chapter II – The Relationship of the United States to the Emerging Cuban Nation and the Disarming of the Cuban Revolution

In this chapter, the role of the United States in disarming the Cuban revolutionary movement and in cementing a new form of economic and political dominance over the island will be looked at. Understanding this dominance is instrumental to understanding the rationale and aims of further US interventions into Cuban political life in the republican period. Understanding these interventions is, in turn, instrumental to understanding Cuban nationalism and the claims of varying political parties and organisations to be the authentic standard-bearer of this same nationalism. It is essential to understand the end of the War of Independence, and how the United States actively engaged in dissolving the forces of the revolutionary wars, perhaps because of the former's fear of the latter's inherently radical nature, or more than likely simply for the United States' own crude economic interests in the island. Only after this is understood, can an attempt be made to understand the forces of nationalism that had been released under the Ten Years War and the War of Independence, and how, in the Cuban republic, this nationalism was to be repeatedly frustrated by the role of the United States and by Cuban politicians.

The Impact of the Ten Years War and the Emergence of US Hegemony

In the 1880s, Cuban society was still reeling from the impact of the Ten Years War. The insurgent army's destruction of sugar estates had "encouraged the expansion of sugar elsewhere in the world" (Pérez 1997: 56), due to the fact that

sugar “production was subsidized by the governments of most of the great continental powers” (Healy 1963: 7). The economic situation was indeed desperate, and worse than under slavery, as the number of vagrants in Cuba increased (Pérez 1986: 9), and workers were paid in devalued script (Pérez 1995: 132).

In this context, plantation owners sold their product increasingly to US corporations, and, as wage labour was economically more profitable than slave labour (Thomas 2001: 166), due both to the resources saved during the dead season and to the higher productivity rates achieved by increasing technology and the division of labour, which in turn fostered further US capital investment.¹⁶ As a consequence, the, “[c]reole bourgeoisie...were obliged to exchange titles of property for ownership of stocks in U.S. corporations” (Pérez 1997: 57). The intensification of the division of labour meant “the extraction of sugar required an apparatus which grew in expense with advances in technique” (Jenks 1970: 24), and this, along with the collapse of sugar prices due to European beet competition, led to, “rising taxes, increased operating costs, falling prices, and deepening indebtedness [which] forced many planters into bankruptcy” (Pérez 1995: 131). Similarly, the Bessemer steel manufacturing technique meant that railways in the 1880s could be built for a “fifth of what they had cost ten years earlier” (Thomas 2001: 163), railways being instrumental in the development of the *central* system, whereby mills became larger and mechanised. As one commentator puts it:

This brought about three economic-social developments: the revival of the sharecropping system of cultivation, the anonymous stockholders’

¹⁶ This was the, “adolescence of the latifundia era that came to maturity in the twentieth century” (Ritter 1974: 15).

corporations, and the direct control of foreign capital over the management and ordering of centrals (Ortiz 1995: 63).

While one source asserts that this intensification of the division of labour, “saved the Cuban industry” (International Missionary Council 1942: 24), the Cuban independence movement was quick to see the consequences of these economic developments, with Martí declaring in 1883 that a “people that puts its trust in a single product in order to subsist is committing suicide” (Dumont 1970: 6). The impact of the war, the ending of slavery, and the expansion of European sugar all served to foster the development of Cuban mono-crop dependency.

These technological, and hence, economic, developments revolutionised Cuban society. The plantation-owning class (which in Cuba was largely made up of the *criollo* bourgeoisie), virtually disappeared, becoming *colonos* (mostly tenant farmers), raising cane for US owned *centrales*, massive complexes two to three times more efficient in extracting cane than the previous methods (Foreign Policy Association Inc. 1935: 219). Of course, this process carried out the logic of capitalism, as “U.S. refiners sought to increase their capacity and thus reduce their operating expenses” (Benjamin 1977: 5), but, as Thomas notes, the “essential mark of this system of economic organization was,...less its size, its origin, its high capital costs or its technological efficiency than the fact that,...sugar grinding was no longer carried out by the person who grew it” (Thomas 2001: 163). All this meant increased economic alienation, and a further displacement of the control of the productive process into the hands of US specialists, administrators and technicians.

This, “process of *denationalization...and...decapitalization*” (Ibarra 1998: 14, emphasis in original), put an end to a native Cuban bourgeoisie, meaning that “Cuba would no longer possess a wealthy class independent of U.S. capital” (Benjamin 1977: 4). This US capital then took control by “way of secured loans to planters in distress”, or, “direct ownership through foreclosures” (Pérez 1986: 13). By the late 1880s, “94 percent of Cuba’s total sugar production was exported to the United States”, and in 1891 the Foster-Cánovas agreement gave Cuba preferential tariff access to US markets in exchange for Spanish concessions to American imports (Pérez 1997: 61).¹⁷ In 1890 the American Sugar Refining Company was formed with investments in Cuba which supplied 70-90% of the refined sugar of the United States (Jenks 197: 29), and, by 1894 sugar production reached 1 million tons (Pérez 1997: 61).

On the other hand, US protectionist measures on tobacco meant much of this industry had already re-located to Key West and Tampa in Florida by 1898, and thus, a decline of the industry in Cuba and subsequent unemployment (Pérez 1997: 64). Indeed, the Foster-Cánovas treaty of 1891 was largely a response by Spain to McKinley’s tariff, the latter leading almost to the destruction of the Cuban tobacco industry, the former to the expansion of sugar (Jenks 1970: 39). This led to the specialisation of the Cuban market in producing increasingly the leaf raw material rather than cigars, and the founding of the Havana Commercial Company which “facilitated the later absorption of Havana’s tobacco industry into the American Tobacco Company” (Stubbs 1985: 22-3).

In 1894 the United States removed its preferential access and, with the Wilson-Gorman Tariff Act, imposed a duty of 40 per cent on sugar entering the

¹⁷ Ritter says the treaty gave Cuban sugar “free entry” into the United States (Ritter 1974: 16).

nation, which, along with a world drop in sugar prices, paralysed the Cuban economy (Pérez 1997: 74). In effect the tariff, “did what the 1890 tariff threatened to do—that is, it reduced U.S. raw sugar purchases” (Ritter 1974: 16). These economic events led to political disillusionment with the reformism of the Autonomist Party. The Autonomist Party largely represented the interests of the *criollo* bourgeoisie, as opposed to the *peninsular* bourgeoisie, a conflict of interests superseded by an alliance of working and middle-classes represented by the independent polity (Ibarra 1998: 33, Pérez 1995: 161).

The conflict of 1895 was again disastrous for the economy with sugar falling from 1 million tons to 225,000 in 1896 (Pérez 1997: 82). In this renewed war, “sugar fields became the battlefields”, again, and the independence army declared a “moratorium on all economic activity” and a redistribution of property amongst those who defended *Cuba Libre*. The Spanish reaction, in the form of General Weyler’s *reconcentrado* policy caused further devastation, but also served to drive support towards the Liberation Army, with the *criollo* bourgeoisie crushed between the two (Pérez 1995: 162-75). As a result, “[m]embers of the beleaguered bourgeoisie contemplated their impending extinction with despair...they were now prepared to sacrifice traditional colonial relationships for an alternative source of protection and patronage” (Pérez 1997: 83), namely, the United States.

The US role in the War of Independence

In April 1898, US President McKinley requested Congressional authority to intervene militarily in the Spanish-Cuban War, with:

no mention of Cuban independence, not a hint of sympathy with *Cuba Libre*, nowhere even an allusion to the renunciation of territorial aggrandizement-only a request for congressional authorization to take measures to secure a full and final termination of hostilities between the Government of Spain and the people of Cuba, and to secure in the island the establishment of a stable government, capable of maintaining order and observing its international obligations.

Article IV of a Congressional resolution, the Teller Amendment, was added, which:

hereby disclaims any disposition or intention to exercise sovereignty, jurisdiction, or control over said island except for the pacification thereof, and asserts its determination, when that is accomplished, to leave the government and control of the island to its people (Pérez 1988: 177-8).

This was to be the arrangement for some time to come, and the US justification for intervention, or at least its threat, many times. On 19 April these resolutions were passed and McKinley sent an ultimatum to Spain. On 22 April Spanish General Blanco even suggested an alliance between Spanish and Cuban forces to the independence leader Máximo Gómez, but this was rejected (Thomas 2001: 217-8).

When the US occupation commenced, there was a great contrast between the US forces and the rebels. The US Army was mostly white and “felt more drawn

towards their chivalrous enemy than to their Cuban allies” (Thomas 2001: 232). The rebels lost further support when they failed to help the US forces in Santiago. After victory the United States dictated their terms on 30 July: guidance in the establishment of an ‘independent’ Cuban government. Military administration began on 1 January 1899, after nearly a century of US desires for annexation of the island. This was a crushing blow for the rebel forces and for the outcome for which they had hoped for. Ferrer notes that:

the victors could not celebrate their victory, or bear arms, or exercise authority. The vanquished (for the moment) remained in positions of power, and the strange transition was supervised by emissaries of a foreign government newly arrived (Ferrer 1999: 187).

In many ways, this was a betrayal of the rebellion by the white leadership, just as the Pact of Zanjón had been, as the anarchists claimed. Further, it seems the anarchist support for separatism may well have been ‘counter-revolutionary’ as anarchism usually insists on opposition to any nationalist war, seeing them as struggles between competing factions of the capitalist class, in this case an apt analysis. Pérez states that the change from a colonial regime to a republic had meant “a descent into destitution” for working-class Cubans (Pérez 1986: 177). This desperation was no doubt the cause of increasing divisions between *criollos* and *peninsulares*, and led the anarchist leader Mirandita to the more traditional anarchist conclusions that this had fed support for the Spanish regime amongst the latter group (Casanovas 1998: 230). Martí and the leaders of the rebel army, Maceo and Máximo Gómez, were genuine in their egalitarian rhetoric. However, many *peninsular*

bureaucrats stayed in place and negotiated a compromised settlement with the Americans. Ferrer observes that:

Juan Gualberto Gómez and Antonio Maceo had defined civilization as the elimination of slavery and racism; José Martí and Ricardo Batrell as the transcendence of race and the perfection of humanity. But it was not these versions of civilization that prominent white leaders opted to perform before American audiences in 1898. Rather, they chose to define civilization as refinement, civility, and whiteness (Ferrer 1999: 191).

The United States “followed a policy that was shrewd, purposeful and calculated” (Pérez 1983: xviii), because they recognised that *Cuba Libre* demanded “more than independence, for it subsumed a social imperative into its vision of a free Cuba” (Pérez 1983: xvii). Even at this early stage of US capital investment in Cuba, the intervention was designed to protect US property interests, or at least, the potential for Cuba to be a source of investment and cheap labour for the United States. As US Secretary of State Olney put it, there would be, “tremendous pecuniary loss” (Jenks 1970: 43) if the United States did not intervene, and Senator Thurston noted that, “[w]ar with Spain would increase the business and the earnings of every American railroad” (Jenks 1970: 54).

The United States intervened, “[o]stensibly...against Spain, but in fact...against Cubans” (Pérez 1983: 94). The intervention was in effect, according to Pérez, designed, “to neutralize the two competing claims of sovereignty and establish by superior force of arms a third”, by imposing, “hostile constraint” upon the competing parties (Pérez 1997: 95). Horatio S. Rubens, now the lawyer for the

Cuban Council of Government in New York, warned that this was an attempt to initiate annexation at a later date, that the Cuban revolutionists would consider such withholding of independence as a declaration of war, and that the US forces would be met with total non-compliance (Pérez 1983: 184-5). The US Senate authorised the President to use force to end Spain's control of Cuba, but went on to claim that Cubans "are, and of right ought to be, free and independent" and recognised the Cuban republic as the, "true and lawful government of that island". These injunctions were incorporated into the Turpie Amendment, to which the Teller Amendment, discussed earlier, was to be an addition (Healy 1963: 22-4).

Tomás Estrada Palma, the President of the civilian arm of the liberation forces, placed the Liberation Army under the command of the United States, without consulting the Provisional Government (Pérez 1983: 188). This caused dismay among the military leaders, as they no doubt resented their new role, with the Army subordinate to the civilian power. Máximo Gómez told Domingo Méndez Capote, the Vice-president of the Cuban Council of Government (the civilian arm of the independence leadership), that, "[t]his Government is not the work of an assembly of the people, but one of the army" (Pérez 1983: 190).

As a result of the intervention, a "Cuban war of liberation was transformed into a North American war of conquest" (Pérez 1986: 30). Certainly, this was a shrewd move, for, "in appropriating responsibility for ending Spanish colonial government, the United States claimed the right to supervise Cuban national government" (Pérez 1986: 31). Indeed, Hernández claims that Cubans in "positions of leadership" had only ever wanted arms and supplies from the United States and, "[n]o one...ever thought that U.S. armed intervention was a requisite for victory" (Hernández 1993: 32).

The US intervention “upset the fragile separatist political equilibrium” (Pérez 1983: 188) and Hernández agrees that Washington’s decisions “tended either directly or indirectly to weaken or destroy the tenuous bonds that held together the insurgent polity. The most crucial...[of which] was...McKinley’s steadfast refusal to recognize the rebel government” (Hernández 1993: 30). Cubans were excluded from the negotiations for the surrender of Santiago in July, the terms of the peace protocol in August¹⁸ and the agreement between US and Spanish commissions that met in Paris on 1 October, in which Spain pledged to leave Cuba by 1 January 1899 (Thomas 2001: 236). Spain reached a decision on 10 December 1898 when it was apparently ready to accept “absolute independence, or independence under an American protectorate, or annexation to the United States, preferring annexation” which was rejected in favour of the United States becoming a, “trustee of the island” (Chapman 1927: 94).

Immediately following the war, Cuba was devastated by its consequences. There were now “only a few more than 200 sugar mills in any state worth reviving, compared with 1,110 in 1894” (Thomas 2001: 247), only one sixth of the horses, and one eighth of the cattle there had been in 1899 (Thomas 2001: 250), while the total “indebtedness was about two-thirds of the total declared value of all property” (Thomas 2001: 253, see also, Pérez 1997: 118). One commentator put this debt in dollars as \$500 million (Jenks 1970: 60), and another slightly lower at \$400 million (Healy 1963: 40). The consequence of the war meant there was, “a new and decisive phase in North American economic penetration of the island” (Pérez 1997: 117). Thus, a, “second army, almost as large” (Jenks 1970: 67), “swarmed to Cuba” (Pérez 1997: 118). A US company gained the franchise for Havana Street Railway,

¹⁸ The war formally ended on 12 August 1898 (Pérez 1983: 210).

and the expansion of William Van Horne's railway and 'Jai Alai' gambling licenses were granted by the provisional US Governor General Wood (Jenks 1970: 66-70).

As can be seen, the US intervention in the War of Independence was primarily to enhance further economic investment, and hence a similar economic return from the island. This factor in turn led to greater mono-crop dependency, and this revolutionary change in society, along with the erasure of the power of the *criollo* bourgeoisie due to the structure and ideology of the PRC and the influence of radicals on this movement, meant that the potentially radical nationalism of these forces was to be frustrated by the United States from this point on.

The End of the 'Spanish-American War'

In May 1898, in New York, exile members of the PRC had accepted the Joint Resolution which gave the United States the right to rule Cuba militarily. The actions of the civilian PRC President, Estrada Palma, which submitted the Cuban Army to US forces "deepened existing tensions within the separatist polity and created new ones" (Pérez 1983: 188-9). The Provisional Government in Cuba then "grudgingly accepted the *fait accompli*", but sent Méndez Capote to the United States to replace Estrada Palma (Pérez 1983: 190). However, the "schism between civilian leaders and military chieftains" was then further deepened when the Cuban Council of Government (this was not the 'Provisional Government' of Cuba, but rather, the Cuban exile leadership in the United States) likewise ordered the military to submit to the authority of the United States (Pérez 1983: 190).

Clearly then, the civilian-military conflict within the Cuban independence leadership flowed hierarchically downwards from the most pro-US sentiments at the top, (within the exile community of civilian PRC leaders), towards a guarded attitude, but ultimately realistic recognition of the United States as a player that had to be granted concessions for helping Cuba against Spain, (by the native Cuban civilian leadership of the amorphous ‘Provisional Government’), to the high-ranking military leaders in Cuba, who had always held that Cubans could have won the war against Spain without outside help. It was the final group that was in many ways to retain the support of many rank-and-file veterans of the Liberation Army, and led to more frustration with the official organisations of the Veterans’ movement that claimed to represent them.

This third group represented the most incendiary brand of the independence movement, and was no doubt to fuel much of the violent turmoil of the early Republic. Máximo Gómez had challenged the claimed authority of the two civilian camps when he claimed that the government was in fact nothing more than “the government of the revolution, and not the government of the Republic.” This state of affairs led him to ask, “to whom were military chieftains now responsible?”¹⁹ Similarly, as General Calixto García put it to Estrada Palma; “[i]f we accept the intervention...we accept also that...the Council of Government is incapable of fulfilling the most elementary duties”. A member of the commission that had been sent to Washington by the Cuban Assembly of Representatives noted that even banditry on the part of ex-soldiers was understandable, given the devastation wrought upon the Cuban economy and society by the war (Pérez 1983: 191).

¹⁹ His correspondence to Méndez Capote and Estrada Palma respectively (Pérez 1983: 190).

For their part, the expatriates also had problems with the Provisional Government in Cuba. Emilio Núñez denounced Méndez Capote's mission and told Gonzalo de Quesada to "use all the means at your disposal to prevent this man from placing himself in contact with the official element in Washington" (Pérez 1983: 191). The culmination of these events was that:

The decision to place the Liberation Army under American command,...blurred [the] lines of separatist authority. In relinquishing its authority over the insurgent armed forces the Council of Government added to the conditions that allowed the United States to continue to ignore the provisional government and deal directly with individual military chieftains...the expatriate leadership and the army command had arrived at similar conclusions-the provisional government represented an obstacle to the resolution of the Cuban question. This, too, was the central assumption of American policy in 1898 (Pérez 1983: 192).

Méndez Capote spoke unofficially with President McKinley, receiving assurances of intent to honour the Joint Resolution (Pérez 1983: 192), however, McKinley, "continued to ignore scrupulously the official agencies of the separatist movement" (Pérez 1983: 196).

When the US General William R Shafter had agreed the terms of Spanish surrender on 17 July 1898 he had entered Santiago and excluded the Liberation Army from doing so, proclaiming the territory "part of the Union" (Pérez 1997: 97), and flying the US flag (Thomas 2001: 233). Although the Spanish-American War was formally ended on 12 August 1898, Cubans continued to fight until 3 days later,

when Estrada Palma accepted the peace protocol (Pérez 1983: 210). In fact, protests continued further, and:

national feelings were expressed in different ways including patriotic rallies organized against the US authorities' will:...and above all, the establishment of patriotic clubs and other organizations in many parts of the country which brought together members of the dissolved *Mambí* Army and all independence fighters (Cantón Navarro 1998: 77).

This situation had produced a strong dichotomy in Cuban nationalism. The expatriate leadership of the PRC in New York was the most pro-US faction of the revolutionary movement; they sought a modern constitutional republic and they saw nothing hypocritical in this being established under US tutelage, as long, of course, as they were guaranteed political patronage. At the other end of the scale, the military, largely non-white even in its prominent leadership positions, sought welfare and dignity for veterans physically and mentally scarred by warfare, and did not concern itself with political patronage. Between these two poles, the Provisional Government in Cuba spoke of a nation occupied by a foreign power (Pichardo 1973: 29), hoping for a native democracy, free of US interference. Despite the Provisional Government's attempt to assert itself against the military leadership, they were to be eclipsed in turn, by the United States. The eclipse of the most militant and egalitarian nationalism represented by the military leadership and the largely non-white rank-and-file veterans, meant that these ex-soldiers would remain a force for political patronage, and the various political parties and factions would often appeal

to this in the new republic. The patriotic clubs that Cantón Navarro mentions were the backbone of support for the Veterans' organisations.

The US disbands the Liberation Army

Cuban historian Planos Viñalis states that the Constitution of La Yaya of 1895, had stipulated that the 'Council of Government of the Republic in Arms' (to give it its full title), must subordinate itself to the 'Assembly of Representatives of the Liberation Army', so that the latter could establish a Constitutional Assembly to go about framing a Constitution for the nascent Republic (Viñalis 1998: 7-8). The Assembly of Representatives of the Liberation Army met on 24 October 1898 in Santa Cruz del Sur in Camagüey, with President Bartolomé Masó, and Vice-President Méndez Capote, of the Council of Government of the Republic in Arms,²⁰ underlining the necessity for official US recognition of the Cuban administration. The members of the Assembly of Representatives were directly elected by the regiments of the Army (Roig de Leuchsenring 1974: 79). On 10 November 1898 the Assembly decided to send a commission to Washington to meet McKinley in December 1898, and again in 1899 (consisting of Calixto García Iñiguez, Manuel Sanguily, José Antonio González Lanuza, José Ramón Villalón and José Miguel

²⁰ The Assembly of Representatives of the Liberation Army and the Council of Government of the Republic in Arms forming collectively, the 'Provisional Government of Cuba' referred to earlier by Pérez.

Gómez).²¹ The commission sought a loan from the United States (Roig de Leuchsenring 1982: 11).

On 10 December 1898 the Treaty of Paris was signed with no Cuban delegates present, with the United States assuming the powers of Spain, and the latter acquiescing, as the Spanish delegates, “erroneously preferred to stimulate the possibility of annexation rather than to accept defeat and the establishment of a sovereign state”, in order to “conserve a good part of the predominance it had in Cuba” (Le Riverend 1971: 2).

As mentioned earlier, the United States no doubt saw the Cuban exile community and PRC leadership as the most pro-US element of the independence movement, in some cases as even in favour of annexation. In order to cement US economic interests in the region, US politicians engaged in a further case of ‘divide and rule’ in Cuba. When the commission of Cuban leaders was sent to the United States in December 1898, and again in January 1899, McKinley at the same time sent Gonzalo de Quesada and his own personal representative, Robert Porter, to meet Máximo Gómez in Cuba. The commission rejected a \$3 million offer of payment to the Liberation Army on the basis that it would disarm the Cuban people without having achieved their aim of independence. At the same time, Porter assured Máximo Gómez that the United States would honour the Joint Resolution, and that US troops would remain only until internal order was guaranteed, which helped to sow doubt in Máximo Gómez’s mind that the commission had preferred to indebt Cuba rather than accept the \$3 million donation. At the same time, Calixto García had died on 11 December in Washington on this trip (Thomas 2001: 239), and, with

²¹ Cosme de la Torriente attended as Calixto García’s secretary, the former becoming a member of the National Council of Veterans in 1911-12 (Roig de Leuchsenring 1982: 4).

him, “the support of an ally possessed of impeccable patriotic credentials and universally venerated within armed separatist ranks” (Pérez 1983: 261).

In fact, as a member of the commission to Washington notes, they themselves had asked for exactly \$3 million (Pichardo 1973: 30). However, McKinley had refused on the grounds that not only might it be unconstitutional for the President to assign that much funding to a foreign army, but it would also imply recognition of the validity of the revolutionary government, which would contradict the position the United States had held up until that point. McKinley had proposed the alternative of incorporation of the Cuban forces into a ‘colonial army’, of perhaps 10,000 men. He also assured the commission “categorically and emphatically” that Cubans would occupy public posts (Pichardo 1973: 21).

While the Cuban commission sought payment of \$10 million, the bill addressed to the US Senate only asked for \$3 million, where each soldier would receive \$100, on the supposition that the Cuban Army contained no more than 30,000 men (Pichardo 1973: 22). The commission again appealed for \$10 million, but the US administration explained that Congress would not authorise more funds for the same end, and that only Cubans who handed in their arms and returned to work would be paid (Pichardo 1973: 23). The civilian *políticos* Juan Gualberto Gómez and Manuel Sanguily had been influential in the commission, and they accepted not only the figure of \$3 million, but the suggestion of a public debt, rather than an outright payment for the Liberation Army. Roig de Leuchsenring confirms that José Antonio González indicated that the commission was prepared to accept indebtedness (Roig de Leuchsenring 1982: 13). This no doubt led to further division between the *políticos* and the military leaders and just as predictably, an increase in

the suspicion of the authenticity of the former's patriotism by the rank-and-file military veterans.

The exile community in New York was even more pro-US. On 21 December 1898 Estrada Palma set forth the proposition in *Patria* that the object for which the PRC had been founded had come to an end, and, as a consequence, the revolutionary clubs and associations should dissolve themselves. With this dissolution of the revolution's "principal instrument of mobilisation and of combat", the wheels were set in motion so that "the reactionary orientation led by Estrada Palma prepared the path to remove all possible political resistance to the forces of annexation" (Le Riverend 1971: 42).

The absence of Cubans at the signing of the Treaty of Paris and the continued occupation by the US Army, led Máximo Gómez to make his 'Proclamation of Narcisa' on 29 December 1898. In it he stated that the Liberation Army would disband only when both Spanish and US forces had entirely left the island (Pichardo 1977: 536). Later he made another proclamation, which was directed at the Executive Commission of the Assembly of Representatives, in which he called on it to establish a Cuban constitution, as, according to him, continued occupation by the United States "constitutes a serious danger to the absolute independence of Cuba" (Pichardo 1977: 537). He did, however, recognise that the military withdrawal of the United States could not succeed unless a Cuban government was properly formed. Máximo Gómez's sentiments were widely shared among the Cuban people, and according to Pichardo, only those with vested economic interests would have been interested in further ties to the United States (Pichardo 1977: 538). While Máximo Gómez agreed to accept a \$3 million payment from McKinley if it did not mean indebtedness, the *políticos*, while they had initially

sought a much higher figure than \$3 million, had no problem with receiving a loan as payment.

This division between Máximo Gómez and the Assembly of Representatives, which had now re-aligned itself as the Asamblea del Cerro,²² deepened, when the latter agreed to payment of Liberation Army veterans by a private US bank represented by C. M. Cohen. The Asamblea del Cerro thought that this would mean that the US government would have to authorise the negotiations for the loan, hence tacitly recognising the authority of this same body (which McKinley did not want to do), while Máximo Gómez wished to avoid indebtedness at all costs (Viñalis 1998: 9). The Asamblea del Cerro sent five of its members to ask Máximo Gómez to publicly support their position, which he declined to do, and as a result the former group, as “Supreme Power of the Revolution”, removed the latter from his position as Chief of the Liberation Army on 12 March 1899 (Pichardo 1973: 29).

This caused a rift in public opinion, as Máximo Gómez had always been the popular figurehead of Cuban independence and the military veterans supported his opposition to compromising Cuban nationalism by indebtedness. With his removal, McKinley then claimed that he had no recognised authority with whom to negotiate the disarmament of the Army, and the Asamblea del Cerro, discredited by the popular protest in favour of Máximo Gómez, had failed to establish itself as such an authority, and then agreed to dissolve itself thus the Army was effectively disarmed on 4 April 1899 (Le Riverend 1971: 9). Eventually, the United States did pay \$3 million to the Army, which was broken down into \$75 to each soldier that had served in the Liberation Army on or before 17 July 1898, on condition that he hand in equipment and arms (Pichardo 1973: 30). A total of 33,390 personnel were

²² The same Assembly, but this time meeting in Cerro in Havana.

eventually paid, with payment beginning at the end of May 1899 (Thomas 2001: 256). This was a crushing blow for the cause of *Cuba Libre*, as the Liberation Army:

would contain the most radical potential, and would come to constitute a real obstacle both to the activities of American intervention and to the reform and perfection of imperialist penetration in Cuba (Chang 1981: 4).

In international matters the US Congress refused to recognise any Cuban authority, including either a republic or that of the previously ruling Autonomist government; however, the note of US Senator Morgan stated that it did declare that the people of Cuba “are, and by right must be, free and independent”. This was not however a law or decree, but simply a *moral* obligation on the part of the United States which it would carry out in “a manner and time which would be determined by the authorities of the US”. The US Military Government would remain until “a permanent Civil Government had been established” and the Cuban Army “will subordinate itself to the military power of the US”, while sovereignty would be granted when the people of Cuba “had established a permanent Government, in Republican form”. The same note also declared that “peace between Spain and the United States does not establish peace in Cuba, if there are organisations there that refuse to accept the military authority of the United States” (Pichardo 1973: 26-7).

The US attitude to disarmament was indicated in the words of the US Military Governor of Havana, William Ludlow, when he declared that there were arms and munitions distributed among the population which were “in excess of that which is necessary...now that the city is in a state of profound peace in which no member of the community has the need to use arms” (Roig de Leuchsenring 1982:

16). However, from the outset, militant military leaders were inclined to be sceptical of US ambitions in the region, up to and including secretly maintaining hidden caches of arms. Roig de Leuchsenring cites Oswaldo Morales Patiño's *El Capitán Chino*, which claims that Lieutenant Colonel Quirino Zamora told Rafael Cárdenas (the latter at this point second in command of the Havana Police), that for the time being arms would remain under US authority. However, Zamora went on to say that it may be necessary to take up arms in the future, so that it would be convenient to maintain a reserve of arms, and, indeed, Morales Patiño states that Zamora indicated to Rafael Cárdenas that he keep the best arms. With great secrecy, Zamora sought out the most trusted of his men, in order to secure a safe place to conceal weapons. Interestingly, Morales Patiño notes that Ernesto Asbert and Mario García Menocal were also in the 5th corps of the North Brigade; they were prominent veterans, later leaders of military revolt (Roig de Leuchsenring 1982: 18), and would also be members of the Veterans' movement. The US role in the dissolution of the forces of Cuban independence is instrumental to understanding the persistent sense of a frustrated patriotism in Cuba, and how political parties and organisations, including the Veterans' movement, would use this fact to further their own agendas.

Consequences of the dissolution of the forces of *Cuba Libre*

While Cuban historians often openly suggest that disarmament of the Cuban revolutionary forces could not be achieved by the United States unless some division were sown amongst the ranks, Pérez is perhaps closer to the truth when he highlights the civilian-military conflict of authority that had persisted throughout the period of

revolutionary war. According to him, exiles in New York, the Provisional Government in Cuba, and the Liberation Army, all held different views over who held authority, or should hold authority, in the newly liberated Cuba. As he put it:

The institutional entities around which the forces of Cuba Libre had organised between 1892 and 1895 existed in an unstable coalition, united only by a common but vague commitment to Cuba's independence from Spain. The PRC abroad, on one hand, and the Liberation Army and the provisional government on the other, had not resolved the disparate and contradictory versions of Cuba Libre. Nor had the civil-military agencies in Cuba reconciled their outstanding differences. In 1898, only the most tenuous consensus, held intact by the exigencies of the war, had prevented discord from openly shattering the separatist polity (Pérez 1983: 188).

By 1899 this polity was shattered. Cuban historiography makes much more of the disbandment of the Army and McKinley's failure to recognise a Cuban authority than English-language sources. While Pérez claims that "McKinley's intentions were clear: a declaration of war on both parties...and the assertion of a third claim to rule Cuba", he also notes that this logically meant that the United States would have to turn to the "conservative expatriate representation" (Pérez 1983: 188). Le Riverend likewise notes that the division of the revolutionary forces served not only to isolate Máximo Gómez from the Assembly of Representatives, but also led the United States to co-operate with the conservative forces of the country and those who had collaborated with Spain (Le Riverend: 1971: 9-10).

Figarola notes that the conflict between Máximo Gómez and the Assembly was sad, as “in reality...both pursued essentially the same thing: recognition of independence,...and payment of the Liberation Army” (Figarola 1974: 23). He notes that the Assembly was polarised between veteran *caudillos* (prominent leaders) like Emilio Núñez who supported Máximo Gómez, and civilians like Juan Gualberto Gómez who had only been a part of the final struggle of 1895-8. Figarola sees this as “the old conflict” (Figarola 1974: 25), between the civilian and military factions of the revolutionary movement, and the dismissal of Máximo Gómez as symptomatic of this conflict as the Army leader was, according to Núñez, “the incarnation of a noble and elevated ideal: the idea of the union and agreement between all the elements of this unfortunate land” (Martínez Ortiz 1964: 54-5).

According to Figarola, the conflict between Gómez and the Assembly led to the development of two tendencies in Cuban politics between 1898 and 1902: federalist and centralist. The former were the civilian political enemies of Máximo Gómez, while the latter were led by his party, the Partido Nacional [National Party] (Figarola 1974: 31). The United States’ tactic of negotiating with individuals directly meant that no corporative body took up the vacuum of power left after the dissolution of the “triangle of authorities” (Figarola 1974: 27), of the exile’s leadership, the Assembly of civilian *políticos* in Cuba, and the military leadership.

Clearly then, rather than being resolved by the transition to a nascent republic, the civilian-military conflict that had plagued the Ten Years War, the *Guerra Chiquita*, and the War of Independence was to characterise the politics of the new era. Perhaps this conflict was endemic to the structure of the PRC and only came to the fore of the revolutionary movement after its formation in 1892. Perhaps it was an inherent aspect of Cuban society. Perhaps, however, it was related to issues

of race and social class; the rank-and-file membership of the Army were largely black or of mixed race and poor, and sought tangible material rewards for having physically fought for independence, while the civilian *políticos* were white and middle-class, and hence found it easier to control the more social-revolutionary aspects of the ‘revolutionary’ movement, ultimately subordinating the local ‘patriotic clubs’ more easily to the nationalist interests of those at the top, than the leadership of the Army could manage, or indeed wished to.

Cuba under US Military Government

US actions during the transfer of power were again indicative of US racism. The Liberation Army was excluded from formal ceremonies marking the end of Spanish rule,²³ which led to public protest, the removal of US flags and the landing of four battleships in Cuban waters by the United States (Pérez 1983: 257). Many Spanish bureaucrats remained in their positions; hence “Cuba's liberators lost rather than gained control of the country that they had fought to liberate” (Hernández 1993: 59). When a state funeral was held for Calixto García, Cuban army officers refused to march behind US military authorities in the position designated to them by the United States (Thomas 2001: 245), causing some ill feeling.

²³ Hernández claims that this was on the order of General Brooke, for fear that insurgents would attack departing Spaniards at the Havana waterfront (Hernández 1993: 74). Similarly, General William R. Shafter excluded Army members from celebrations in Santiago (Benjamin 1990: 53).

In March 1899, to appease members of Congress who opposed US expansion in Cuba, the US Congress passed the Foraker Amendment to the Military Appropriation Bill. This stated that:

No franchises of any kind whatever shall be granted by the United States, or by any military or other authority whatever in the island of Cuba during the occupation thereof by the United States (Jenks 1970: 68).²⁴

General Brooke was the first Military Governor of Cuba. He established a civil administration consisting of four departments, each headed by a Cuban: Justice and Public Instruction, under José Antonio Gonzáles Lanuza, Commerce, Industries and Public Works, under Adolfo Sáenz Yanez, Finance, under Pablo Desvernine (though customs duties were actually collected by the United States), and the Department of State and Government under Méndez Capote. The Military Governor appointed all officers of government (Healy 1963: 56-7). There was apparently a “wholesale redistribution” of places in the higher levels of civil administration designed to “placate the leaders of the Cuban revolutionary movement” (Healy 1963: 59). Brooke also began the restoration of public buildings, the cleaning up of the cities, and the distribution of food rations to the poor (Healy 1963: 63-4).

In September 1898 Leonard Wood had become Governor of Oriente. Within this province he had appointed judges, issued a Bill of Rights, imposed taxes on trade licences, ordered the building of limestone highways and a waterfront wall,

²⁴ According to Healy, a second section, which recommended the withdrawing of troops after pacification, had been removed when the Senate committee looked at it (Healy 1963: 83). Also, Foraker did actually favour annexation, but felt that this could only come about “on her [i.e., Cuba's] own voluntary application” (Healy 1963: 95).

renovated the gaol and slaughterhouses, banned bull fighting and gambling, and planned the building of a new water system (Thomas 2001: 238-9). Spaniards had looted public buildings before leaving and it had been left to the United States to restore them (Chapman 1927: 97). Wood had, in his own words, “prescribed liberal doses of the US Constitution” to Cubans (Thomas 2001: 239), and in December 1899, Wood took over from General Brooke as Governor of Cuba, with instructions from McKinley to “go down there to get the people ready for a Republican form of government” (Thomas 2001: 258).

Wood began a system of salaries for judges, replacing the corrupt system of fees, and he also enacted a law providing lawyers for the poor. The establishment of juries was attempted but replaced by tribunals because, according to Chapman, of “[h]ispanic peoples...little willingness to pass judgement on one another” (Chapman 1927: 108). Wood also established a local tax system, replacing a general treasury, and set up a school system with teachers receiving training in the United States (Chapman 1927: 112-3), and outlawed the employment of those under fourteen (Thomas 2001: 259). However, school textbooks were translated straight from English, with “no attempt to make them comprehensible in Cuban terms” (Thomas 2001: 259), and the “only permanent governmental institutions” established were “[a]n industrial school for boys”, as well as one for girls (Chapman 1927: 33-4). Wood established a General Inspector of Prisons, appointing a Cuban to the task, and created a board of pardons (Fitzgibbon 1935: 33). The system of pardons and the license given for criminal activity on the part of Cuban politicians would become a constant concern of political parties, and of the Veterans’ movement.

General Brooke had introduced a marriage law recognising only civil partnerships, which the Catholic Church, much disliked by many Cubans, had

opposed. Wood changed the law in 1900 to recognise both religious and civil marriages (Fitzgibbon 1935: 35-6). Fitzgibbon states that “the most spectacular achievement of the entire period of the military occupation” (Fitzgibbon 1935: 37) was the eradication of yellow fever, after it was discovered that it was transmitted by mosquito bite. Wood also developed a telephone and telegraphs service, and ended graft in the post office (Chapman 1927: 118). The Cuban Railway Company began construction under Wood (Chapman 1927: 123), but faced some difficulty because of the Foraker Amendment. The Customs Service was under the direction of Tasker H. Bliss, who abolished the Havana lottery, as it was a persistent source of corruption (Fitzgibbon 1935: 59).

As can be seen, not only did the United States play an active, and in fact, instrumental, part in the disarming of the forces of the Cuban revolution, but it also went about constructing a particular political and social framework beneficial to it. This framework was to form the background of a continued sense of a frustrated nationalism on the part of Cubans. This frustration was constantly utilised by Cuban politicians and leaders for rhetorical and ideological ends in the new republic. In order to understand this framework, it will be necessary to look at the structure of this republic, and the continued role of the United States in this formation. However, it will be necessary, first, to look at the views of prominent Cuban political and military leaders at the turn of the century, to see how these men voiced their frustrations at the role of the United States in Cuban affairs at the time. This is important not only because many of these people were important veterans who would go on to play crucial roles in the official organisations of the Veterans’ movement, but also because this analysis will show how the complaints of this

movement were prevalent across the political culture of the Cuban republican period.

Chapter III – The Frustration of Cuban Nationalism and the Foundation of US Hegemony

This chapter will serve two purposes. The first part will look at the response of Cuban *políticos* and *mabises* to the emerging political issues they saw as important. Often, they had a different view of ‘constitutional’ government to that of the United States. Many times, the United States wished to either impose its own values on Cuba directly, or have candidates favourable to it in power. This will also be looked at. From the Cuban Constitutional Convention, it was clear there were going to be problems that would plague the republic, and indeed, it was the very problems cited here that went on to be the focus of *político* factions like the Veterans’ movement and the political parties more generally.

It is difficult to establish exactly when the first Veterans’ organisation was established. Secondary sources such as Secades Japón, and the biographies of Emilio Núñez (Secades Japón 1912, de Arce 1943, Rodríguez Altunaga 1958), only pay attention to when the national organ, the ‘Institution of Veterans of Independence’ formally established itself in 1911. This is no doubt due to the fact that to Cuban historiography, Emilio Núñez’s Veterans’ organisation of 1911-12, and the ‘Association of Veterans’ of 1923-24 are important for very different reasons. Indeed, these organisations were very different from each other, and this will be a central point of the thesis’s argument. Likewise, prominent leadership positions seem to change as friends of Emilio Núñez and his faction enter the government, or alternatively they are frustrated at not doing so.

In many ways, the frustrations of Cuban leaders from 1900-12 were expressed through a large number of periodicals, political party manifestos and

decrees, into which the Veterans' organisations fit, often citing the same problems. The Constitutional Convention addressed problems that were the focus of these periodicals and manifestos throughout the early republican period, and it is therefore important to look at this in detail and the specific complaints. Also interesting was the manifesto of 'The Emiliano Núñez Club', which not only contained personnel that crossed the divergent spectrum of the independence movement, but also which mirrored the structure of the later Institution of Veterans of Independence of 1911-12, as well as being, apparently, the first body to suggest a commission to visit the US government to establish international relations (as opposed to them being a constitutional issue). It is important to look at these issues, before investigating the aforementioned US hegemony.

The Emiliano Núñez Club

At the turn of the century, Cuban periodicals such as *El Mundo* and *La Discusión* highlighted the existence of 'Patriotic Clubs' across the length and breadth of Cuba, though these had no formal national structure with continuity to the PRC. The press published the opinions of these clubs, as well as of respected voices of *independentismo* like Manuel Sanguily, Juan Gualberto Gómez and others. These opinions included the right to celebrate acts of patriotism, brought attention to the lack of working-class members of the public administration, called on the US government to recognise the authority of the Asamblea del Cerro, and also expressed their anger at the indebtedness of the Cuban government in order to pay the Army (Viñalis 1998: 20). Proclamations that the revolution had been betrayed came

thick and fast after the signing of the Treaty of Paris. The ‘Manifesto of the Club Emiliano Núñez’ declared that the United States had succeeded in warfare against Spain “because of us, and only because of us” (Gaunaurd 1954: 79), and the same manifesto called for “absolute independence” (Gaunaurd 1954: 81).

Most interestingly however, the club claimed to be an, “institution composed of Spaniards and Cubans”, and called upon the *Ayuntamientos* as “administrative corporations of eminently popular character”, to convoke a public assembly of the people to elect municipal delegates. If they failed to do so then men of “greater prestige and popularity”, would have to convoke an assembly to do so. These municipal delegates would then in turn elect representatives to the national convention, consisting of five per province, hence 30 in total (Gaunaurd 1954: 82). When the National Convention was formed it would send an Executive Committee from its ranks to Washington to inform the United States of the establishment of said Convention. The city of Santa Clara would be the site of the National Convention, and the Executive Committee would return to Havana after its visit to the United States, in order to meet its obligations to the latter in the organisation of the government of the country.

Surprisingly the 10th declaration of the Manifesto called for the United States to cover the costs of the actions of the Executive Committee, without obligations on the part of Cubans. They were very precise on this issue, stating that, if the United States denied this necessary protection, the Cuban people would know “if it was convenient or not to abandon its representatives”, therefore implicitly suggesting the possibility of revolution. They proposed to convoke the National Convention on 30 January 1900.

Signatories of the Manifesto include Máximo Gómez and Enrique Mesonier. As was seen earlier, the latter had initially been an anarchist and founded the journal *El Productor*. He had argued for national liberation from the perspective of establishing socialism under a republic, as many anarchists active in the PRC had done. Later he was active in the Liberal faction allied to Máximo Gómez. Perhaps Mesonier genuinely altered his political outlook throughout this period, perhaps he compromised his anarchist principles to political expediency, or perhaps he realistically thought the establishment of a republic would further anarchist ends. What is certain is the influence of anarchist and socialist agitators on the Liberation Army leaders.

While the name of this organisation was the ‘Emiliano Núñez Club’, Núñez himself is not listed as a signatory. The name does confirm the point made by Figarola, however, that Núñez and Máximo Gómez supported each other. There can also be little doubt of the deepening of the civilian (*político*) – military conflict in the Cuban republic, and that the latter group was more likely to call for violent revolt, having both the experience, and the capacity to do so. Nor can there be much doubt that this was the faction anarchist and socialist leaders, and workers generally sympathetic to these ideologies, were more likely to be active in, hence giving this group its more radical form of nationalist ideology.

With its stress on the power of the *Ayuntamientos* as organs of local political power, the Emiliano Núñez Club outwardly appeared Federalist in nature. Military leaders of 1895 at other times were often allied to conservative politicians and members of the Nationalist Party. This issue will be looked at more closely in the section on political parties and political factionalism. What is important to note at this stage is the hope of this wing of military and radical leaders for ‘absolute

independence’; by which they meant free reign in establishing the entire *structure* of their government, taking it as a given that the Assembly of Representatives of the Republic in Arms and its progeny was the only legitimate body in deciding this issue.

The issue of ‘absolute independence’ had been important also to Máximo Gómez. This is no doubt why he had refused indebtedness when negotiating with the United States over disarmament, recognising how the latter would manipulate this factor. For their part, the Assembly of Representatives of the Republic in Arms seems to have seen a loan for payment of the Army, or for the financing of the visit of the Executive Committee to the United States, as all that was required of them, with immediate military withdrawal being assumed. As will be seen later, the concept of ‘absolute independence’ as the most authentic expression of nationalism, was to be the foundation for the formation of various political parties and factions in the new republic.

The Proceedings of the Cuban Constitutional Convention

The principal recurring point of contention in the republican period, not only between the Veterans’ organisations and the Cuban President, but also between the main political parties and the President, was the interpretation and implementation of a constitutional form of government. The legacy of the War of Independence, the republican ideology of the PRC, and the struggle against Spanish imperialism, had fostered a radical milieu across Cuba. Many of the *políticos* and veterans believed that a constitutional government was guaranteed by a people armed and vigilant,

much as the United States had defeated a colonial power. That is often the place to which they attributed these values, and they sought to practise these values themselves.

It is therefore important to look at the objections of Convention members to aspects of the Constitution, in order to see their resonance in the demands of the Liberal Party revolt of 1906, but also again, of the Institution of the Veterans of Independence of 1911. Only by understanding this continuity and context will it be seen how, later on, political factions and parties based around charismatic authority and allegiance to the ideals of ‘absolute independence’ coalesced and came into conflict with each other.

On 25 July 1900 the new US Military Governor issued order number 301 demanding the Cuban people convoke a Constitutional Convention. On 15 September the 31 delegates had been selected, and on 5 November they met (Viñalis 1998: 24, Pichardo 1973: 70-72). In the current historiography, much is made of the issue of forming official relations with the United States being a constitutional issue, and many Cubans’ objections to this. Certainly, this is the background of the events being looked at. However, with regard to the complaints of the Veterans’ organisations, it will be necessary to look more closely at a wider set of constitutional questions.

From the notes on the proceedings of the Constitutional Convention collected in Gaunard, it can be seen that many of the complaints and disagreements brought up at this stage were left unresolved. Not surprisingly then, similar complaints were to form parts of the manifestos of the Liberal Revolutionary Committee of 1906, and of the Institution of Veterans of 1911. Civil organisations repeatedly pressured the Cuban administration to attend to these faults, and when

this failed, these civil organisations were likely to take on a more revolutionary role. In fact it could be argued that much of the membership of these groupings was so accustomed to warfare, and so inexperienced in governing, that this was their only means of redress against being sidelined in the new regime. The major points of contention in the proceedings of the Constitutional Convention will now be explored.

Constitutional Guarantees

The Constitutional Convention addressed a letter to the Cuban people, declaring their opposition to Article 40, which allowed the suspension of Constitutional guarantees, and which was thus to them, “inadmissible in a Democratic Republic”, and “reminiscent of Absolutism”. The suspension of constitutional guarantees is one of the crucial factors in the 1906 revolt, the Veterans’ threatened protest in 1911-12, and the aborted uprising in 1923-24. The Convention then went on to stress that “the provision of public positions, principally, must constitute a constitutional precept” (Gaunard 1954: 88), invoking the US system, (and indeed many European ones), whereby public employees are not appointed according to political favouritism, but all government positions are open to any citizens who can prove their aptitude for these.

The Convention further went on to say, that there must be delegates to examine public expenses, again invoking the US system of elected County Commissioners. The Convention emphasised that, without a system whereby public expenses are examined, and future payments refused unless approved by this

delegation of the people, then Cuba's "sovereignty is fictitious" (Gaunaurd 1954: 89). There were objections to the reference in the preamble to the Constitution invoking the favour of God, delegates preferring that of a 'universal moral law' (Gaunaurd 1954: 90).

There was objection to Article 28; in addition to the right to associate, a suggestion was the addition of the right to keep arms in one's house, for means of self-defence (Gaunaurd 1954: 92), as some felt the need to restate that the Cuban people must reserve the right to resist their own government by force of arms, again influenced by US constitutionalism. This would be a crucial factor in the aborted 1923-24 revolt, as the Cuban President invaded the homes of members of the Association of Veterans. Delegates also proposed an additional Article 116 to Section 13, requiring a plebiscite for any proposed reforms to the Constitution (Gaunaurd 1954: 100).

There were objections at the outset to the five proposed amendments to the Constitution outlined by Elihu Root, namely those regarding Cuba's international obligations, the US right to intervene, the refusal to allow Cuba to contract debts, the upholding of the laws established by the US Military Government, and the maintenance of naval bases; what was essentially to become the Platt Amendment. All of these clauses were held to be a flagrant violation of the internationally recognised right to self-determination.

As noted earlier, the Commission that went to Washington to object to the articles on intervention and naval bases featured prominent members of the Liberation Army: Méndez Capote, Rafael Portuondo Tamayo, and Pedro Betancourt (Gaunaurd 1954: 109). They compared the role of the United States to that of the empires of Europe, and suggested not a Constitutional Convention vote on the issue

of Cuba-United States relations, but, again, a plebiscite of the Cuban people as a whole. This was not to be, and in the end, prominent veterans and *políticos* voted both for and against the Platt Amendment. The aforementioned Rafael Portuondo and José Fernández de Castro, along with future Cuban President Alfredo Zayas voted “no”. Voting “yes” was future Cuban President José Miguel Gómez as well as President of the Institution of the Veterans of Independence and future Vice-president of the Republic, Emilio Núñez (Gaunard 1954: 112).

Judiciary

The Convention called for a compulsory jury service, finding this omission seemingly incomprehensible when countries such as England, Spain and Italy had recognised their efficacy. Further, they proposed amending Article 12 to include a right to public trial before a judge. While Article 27 of the Constitution upheld the right to petition the government, the Constitutional delegates proposed the right of any citizen to dispute any disposition, resolution, or agreement before the Supreme Court of Justice, and if necessary, subject it to majority vote (Gaunard 1954: 91).

An extra clause was also proposed in Article 81 insisting upon the absolute independence of the Judiciary and that judges and magistrates should be assigned by direct electoral suffrage (Gaunard 1954: 98). There were also objections to Article 87 that protected public functionaries, on the basis that this contravened equality before the law. These were again issues crucial to the Veterans’ organisations.

Another object of contention that was suggested at this early stage concerned Article 68, Paragraph 9, which granted the President the power to appoint

magistrates of the Supreme Court of Justice, diplomatic representatives, and consular agents, with delegates objecting that this paragraph must exclude members of the Court, as they must be voted in by popular suffrage in order to assure the complete independence of the judiciary. Again, this issue was to be of vital importance to the Veterans' movement.

The Armed Forces

Delegates asserted that the Penal Code and Military Law must only apply to members of the Army and the Navy, not civilians within these institutions, and spelt out that all members of the armed forces must be held responsible for civil and criminal offences only before ordinary courts, for offences committed outside the military zone (Gaunard 1954: 99).

There was also a proposed alteration to Paragraph 11, to include a National Militia which would be a civic-military institution and would support the police in the maintenance of order, and the army and naval forces in the case of national self-defence. This was perhaps a very realistic proposal on how to accommodate the thousands of veterans of the Liberation Army into an important position in the Cuban republic, but it was one that the United States did not accept then, later having to grant some of these proposals in the re-structuring of the army in 1909. In fact, the organisation of a regular standing army capable of defending a constituted Cuban government was one of the main problems to plague the early years of the republic and leave the incumbent administrations open to revolt.

Senate and Congress

With regard to public representatives, delegates proposed that Senators hold their seats for four years, instead of the eight stated in Article 45, and also that no one could be elected to a third term of office. They also proposed an alteration to Article 47, to include the right of the Senate's Court of Justice to try members of the House, and also the need for a Grand Jury in the case of allegations of crimes by the Court itself.

There were proposed alterations to Article 53 which would hold Congressmen accountable civilly and criminally to the Courts of Justice in the case of common crimes as, without this addition, Article 53 would contravene Article 11, which held all Cubans to be equal before the law. Likewise, a proposed alteration to Article 59, Paragraph 10, was to include a clause for political crimes so that amnesties could not be granted through political patronage. This was an important political issue in the early republic, as *opposition to amnesty for políticos* was a concern of the Liberal Committee of 1906, as was *hope for amnesty* for their own members after 1906 when they felt were being illegitimately imprisoned. The use of amnesty as a tool of political patronage was a constant complaint of the Veterans' organisations, and of the wider political culture.

Presidential Powers

To limit presidential power, the delegates suggested that the President be elected by direct suffrage rather than the second grade suffrage mentioned in the

proposed Constitution. It was also argued that no one should be allowed to hold presidential office more than once, and that the President must execute laws, but could never contravene them (Gaunard 1954: 96). The passage which cited the President's duty to dictate regulations for the better execution of the law, was held to be superfluous, as it would give to this paragraph a dangerous elasticity. There was proposed an addition to his powers elaborated in Article 68 Paragraph 8, namely to appoint and remove his cabinet.

Another object of contention at this early stage was that of presidential power in relation to the judiciary. While Article 68, Paragraph 9, granted the President the power to appoint Magistrates of the Supreme Court of Justice, and delegates stressed that this paragraph must exclude members of the Court as they must be elected by popular suffrage in order to assure the complete independence of the judiciary, something they had affirmed in their objections about the judiciary.

Of particular importance for the future republic was the objection to Article 68, Paragraph 10. This granted the President the power to appoint, with the approval of the Senate, any remaining public positions and designate their functions, if this was not stipulated by any other authority (Pichardo 1973: 90). Delegates demanded the removal of this paragraph, because they felt that it established appointment by influence rather than merit, and that it would entrench despotism and injustice. As with their objection to the presidential appointment of the judiciary, this was to prove a prominent complaint of the Institution of the Veterans of Independence, and a main demand stated during the threatened uprising of 1911-12.

Article 68, Paragraph 11, gave the President the power to suspend constitutional guarantees named in Article 40, in accordance with procedures described in Articles 41 and 42. Delegates felt that this was an unacceptable

designation of power in a democracy. Article 40 allowed the suspension of Articles 15, 16, 17, 19, 22, 23, 24, and 27, in the case of ‘invasion of the territory or a grave disturbance which threatens the public peace’. These articles dealt mainly with legally permissible lengths of detention, the right to trial by jury, the right to privacy in personal correspondence, and the right to petition the government for redress. Article 41 set out the procedures for carrying out the suspension of guarantees; including the Law of Public Order, and Article 42 stipulated that the President could only do so when Congress had not convened, and that this suspension could not last more than 30 days, without convoking Congress (Pichardo 1973: 78-82). All this, delegates felt to be impermissible in a democracy, and the presidential suspension of constitutional guarantees was the major issue of contention when fighting broke out in 1906, and was indeed to be the cause of the threatened uprising again in 1911-12.

Delegates also proposed an addition to Article 68, Paragraph 17, seeking assurances that petitioning the government would not be seen as ‘rebellion’. This was of critical importance in the meetings of the Institution of the Veterans of Independence in 1911-12. Similarly, the Convention objected to the clause in Article 70 that required the Senate to authorise the Supreme Court of Justice to try the President for common crimes, as this contravened equality before the law guaranteed by Article 11.

Public Positions

There were numerous complaints about public expenditures. Article 93 of the Constitution deals with the Provincial Councils, and much of this is to do with

institutions for public works and the funding thereof. In the view of delegates, these councils should simply be dissolved. Article 99 established the powers of the Provincial Governors, including the right to appoint and remove state employees. Delegates proposed that this right, elaborated in Article 99, Paragraph 7, must refer back to Article 4, namely that these employees must be Cubans by birth or naturalisation. They proposed the same with regard to the *Ayuntamientos* [Town Councils] and also with Mayors.

Regarding the National Treasury and the Tribunal of Public Funds, delegates proposed that the latter would be composed of those elected by direct suffrage for 4 years in national elections, and 3 years at the provincial level, and that delegates must again be Cubans by birth or naturalisation of 40 years. This Tribunal should examine the use of public funds and publish the results quarterly.

The conflict between the President and the judiciary, the issue of public positions, the abuse of constitutional guarantees, the powers, structure and payment of a national army; all these issues were central to both the rebellion caused by the factional revolt of 1906, and the protest by the Institution of the Veterans of Independence in 1911-12.

Clearly, these issues were unresolved by political actors throughout the period, even after the wholesale redistribution of administrative positions under US tutelage in 1906-9. In order to understand why *políticos* failed to accommodate the demands of veterans it will be necessary to look, in the next chapter, at political parties and factionalism in the republic. Now, however, it is important to understand the role of US hegemony.

A note on US Hegemony

Before looking at the establishment of US hegemony over Cuba, it must be clarified what this term means. According to the Italian Marxist, Antonio Gramsci:

What we can do, for the moment is to fix two major superstructural ‘levels’: the one that can be called ‘civil society’, that is the ensemble of organisms commonly called ‘private’, and that of ‘political society’ or ‘the State’. These two levels correspond on the one hand to the function of ‘hegemony’...to that of ‘direct domination’...through the state and ‘juridical’ government (Gramsci 1986: 12).

While we can see that ‘civil society’ is functionally the same in Gramsci as in his ideological forefather, Marx (i.e. the ‘private economy’), it is schematically relocated: from the base to the superstructure. It is the ‘hegemony’ achieved in civil society that achieves the domination of classes (Gramsci 1986: 253).²⁵

In Gramsci’s political thought the “key concept...is that of *civil society*...which differs significantly from that of not only Hegel but also Marx and Engels” (Bobbio 1988: 77). Apparently, in Gramsci there is a “profound innovation with respect to the whole Marxist tradition”, namely that “[c]ivil society does not

²⁵ This means, “the base is no longer the subordinating moment of history, but becomes the subordinate one” (Bobbio’s interpretation of Gramsci, Bobbio: 1988: 87). The supposed aim of Gramsci was to “formulate an interpretation of historical materialism which would relocate it as a mode of intervention in the course of the historical political process” (Mouffe 1979: 6).

belong to the structural sphere, but to the superstructural sphere” (Bobbio 1988: 82).²⁶

While contemporary Marxism is not the subject of the thesis, Gramsci’s concept of hegemony will certainly be useful in an historical analysis of the role of the United States towards Cuba in the republican period, albeit in terms of a ‘neo-imperial’ relationship, rather than simply understanding the role of the native Cuban ‘civil society’. In fact, as shown earlier on, it was the fact that Cuba’s *criollo* bourgeoisie was crushed between the two forces of the radically egalitarian independence movement and the Spanish empire, that led to its dissolution. This meant Cuba effectively had no civil society in either the traditional Liberal sense, or in Gramsci’s: the economy was virtually destroyed by the tactics of both the Liberation Army and the *reconcentrado* policy of Spain; hence, the United States stepped in to take over the role of the economic element of civil society. In this sense, the international obligation the United States stressed, and was to go on to embellish with the Platt Amendment of 1901, meant that this ‘superstructural sphere’ was to a large extent taken up by US corporate interests. The US state then acted much as Gramsci would posit: using the legal relations between the two states to aggrandise its economic dominance.²⁷

Later in the thesis, Gramsci’s concept will be useful for explaining why ostensibly civil society institutions like the Veterans’ organisations, were so likely to turn to armed revolution: because they represented elements of the Cuban ruling class in waiting, whose factional interests had been frustrated, both by the increasing

²⁶ Perhaps it would be less confusing simply to say it is not Marxism any more. It is ‘Gramsci-ism’. Indeed, as Bobbio notes “Gramsci does not derive his concept of civil society from Marx but is openly indebted to Hegel for it” (Bobbio: 1988: 83).

²⁷ Although this dominance was largely at the expense of other foreign economic interests in Cuba, as well as against any potential Cuban bourgeoisie.

dominance of this US hegemony, and by the complicity of the existing Cuban leaders with this, in seeking US patronage.²⁸ Given that the Cuban state would come to be dominated by the patronage network of US hegemony, itself dominated by US corporations, the only recourse to the Cuban faction not in power, to seek economic interests, (i.e., the traditional civil society ones), was revolt.

Cuba begins Self-Government

After defeating the Spanish, the United States stressed its perennial fear that the ‘right people’ would not be able to assume power in Cuba. According to Pérez, an:

electoral system based on popular suffrage threatened to overwhelm the ‘better classes,’ and all but guaranteed the triumph of the representatives of the revolutionary polity...Leonard Wood warned that liberal suffrage posed a ‘menace to Cuba’ (Pérez 1986: 36).

Military Governor Wood had been appointed without the consultation of the provisional Cuban authorities (Chapman 1927: 127). In early 1900 the United States conducted a census of the island to secure requirements for voting in the municipal elections scheduled for June that year. Elihu Root, the US Secretary of War,

²⁸ Alex Weingrod states that, “[p]atronage in the anthropological usage...is meant to designate a particular kind of interpersonal relationship...[it] could be classed with terms such as...’kinship behaviour’”, and, “patronage in the vocabulary of political science...refers to the ways in which party politicians distribute public jobs or special favors in exchange for electoral support” (Weingrod 1967-8: 378-9). This concept will be looked at more closely later on.

immediately wished to exclude the “mass of ignorant and incompetent” (Pérez 1986: 37), from exercising suffrage rights. However, he did recognise how important an issue male suffrage had been in the separatist cause, and that; similarly, any literacy clause would likewise exclude the majority of veterans. Governor Wood proposed a ‘soldier clause’, waiving literacy demands for officers and NCOs, which was finally expanded to include all veterans. All voters had to be over 21, free of convictions and, if they were illiterate or did not own at least \$250 of property, then they could only vote if they had served honourably in the Liberation Army prior to 18 July 1898.²⁹ Even then, the voting population was effectively limited to 5 per cent of the total population (Pérez 1986: 38). This disenfranchisement of a large segment of the population who had actually fought for independence was to prove a constant source of conflict with the demands of US hegemony. Increasingly, it would also mean disillusionment and factional splitting within the political parties claiming to represent authentic Cuban nationalism as they lost the support of the constituency who had made up the independence movement.

On 16 June 1900 the municipal elections took place with three parties contesting: “the Republicans,...[whose] leader was General José Miguel Gómez,...[the] Nationalists of Havana,...the party of Máximo...[and] the Unión Democrática, a conservative grouping” (Thomas 2001: 260). Hernández states there were four parties; “the Cuban Nationals,...the Federal Republicans,...the Republicans of Havana,...and the Union Democrats” (Hernández 1993: 98).

²⁹ This was the date that US General William R. Shafter had negotiated the surrender of the Spanish forces, as noted earlier. Cuban forces did not agree to stop fighting until 12 August, and some continued until three days later. Presumably, these were not ‘honourable’ soldiers, and it is interesting to wonder who else may have been included.

In any case, Unión Democrática [Democratic Union] ceased to be of importance early on, the conservatives of this group representing ex-Autonomists, so the competition for the first elections was largely between three parties. Apparently, the elections “were peaceful enough. There were some claims of fraud, but, on the whole, the result was reasonably fair” (Chapman 1927: 131).

When Wood called for the election of delegates there was much debate over presidential qualifications, the use of the word ‘God’ in the preamble, and the suggested maintenance of US naval bases. Root informed Wood of US President McKinley’s determination to retain the right to intervene to prevent Cuba from contracting debts or making treaties with a foreign power, to hold US naval stations to maintain Cuba’s independence, and to preserve the military statutes of the US government already implemented. The Constitution was signed by the delegates on 21 February 1901 (Chapman 1927: 134), despite the numerous reservations noted earlier. The delegates, of course, had very little choice.

As a result, Cubans “could not transform the ideology of the colonial revolution into a program of national regeneration” (Pérez 1986: 57). What all this meant was that:

separation from Spain did not signify independence for Cuba or control over the state apparatus. Rather, it precipitated U.S. intervention...[as a result] The revolutionary polity lost institutional cohesion and ideological unity (Pérez 1986: 56).

Perhaps this is why there continued to be armed conspiracies against the Estrada Palma government: in July 1903, at both Guanabacoa and Vicana, as well as

a plan to abduct the president in Sevilla, near Santiago on 13 September, and an attempt to blow up the President's train near Palmarito in the same year (Chapman 1927: 179).

The Platt Amendment – The Foundation for US Intervention

The quality of Cuban political leaders and their inability to establish the kind of regime the United States sought was again an issue. Orville Platt argued that the Constitutional Convention was dominated by “the absolutely irresponsible and unreliable element” (Pérez 1986: 40). In the Treaty of Paris of 1898 the United States had contracted to, “assume and discharge the obligations that may under international law result from the fact of its occupation, for the protection of life and property”, which would be “limited to the time of its occupancy” (Fitzgibbon 1935: 67). Throughout June and July the United States' supervision of the elections, faced a crucial problem, as one observer notes, “[t]he basic weakness, of course, lay in the attempt to engraft the Anglo-Saxon principle of local self-government on an Iberian system to which it was wholly foreign” (Fitzgibbon 1935: 62). Further, Cubans objected to one provision of Wood's order for a Constitutional Convention because it stated that the purpose was to “provide for and agree with the government of the United States upon the relations to exist between that government and the government of Cuba”, as they considered this a diplomatic, not a constitutional question. When the Convention met again in November 1900, Wood told the delegates that, “it will be your duty, first, to frame and adopt a constitution for Cuba,

and...to formulate what, in your opinion, ought to be the relations between Cuba and the United States” (Fitzgibbon 1935: 72).

It is not difficult to understand the undercurrent of resentment that was to persist through the early years of the republic, which led to the continual recurrences of nationalist feelings, and the increasingly radical nature of this phenomenon, among Cubans. Indeed, Pérez argues that it was the success of what he calls the *independentista* coalition in the 1900 elections which led Root to see this as a, “great danger”, which could mean the United States was in the same position as when Cuba was under Spanish control, having to deal with a sovereign nation (Pérez 1986: 46-7). This clearly indicates again the US desire for commercial expansion in the region, and its perturbation that the right ‘element’ had not gained political power: its pursuit of hegemony.

In this context, the United States sought to ensure hegemony over Cuba through direct domination of international agreements. An, “unofficial Cuban proposal” for United States-Cuba relations in 1901, suggested naval and coaling stations for the United States. A later unofficial Cuban proposal even proposed US troops occupy Cuban forts with both flags flying (Fitzgibbon 1935: 74). Following this, Root was to send Wood a communication that “contained the well-developed germ of the Platt Amendment”,³⁰ and listed five provisions stating that:

[firstly] the Cuban government should not conclude treaties impairing its independence nor grant foreign powers any special privileges...[secondly] public debts should be only of such size that interest payments could be made from ordinary revenues after meeting current governmental

³⁰ According to one writer, Root was the “true author” of the Amendment (Roig de Leuchsenring 1974: 113).

expenses...[thirdly] the United States reserved the right of intervention for the preservation of Cuban independence and the maintenance of stable government...[fourthly] all acts of the military government be ratified and maintained by Cuba...[fifthly] the right of the United States to operate naval stations on Cuban soil (Fitzgibbon 1935: 75).³¹

Wood reported that there was no serious objection to the provisions except for those on naval bases and intervention.³² The Cuban Constitutional Convention's committee on relations with the United States made five propositions; firstly no limitation of independence by treaty nor to give any foreign power control over military affairs, secondly; prohibition of the use of the island as a military base for foreign nations, thirdly; Cuban acceptance of the treaty obligations of the United States, fourthly; acceptance of the Foraker Amendment and the acts of the US Military Government, and finally suggestion of a reciprocal commercial treaty (Fitzgibbon 1935: 77). It is worthy of note at this point that members of the Convention specifically opposed the intervention Article, and were more interested in reciprocal trade than the Article prohibiting debts. It was these two proposed clauses that were to form Articles Two and Three of the Platt Amendment: the most often used justification for the United States to intervene.

Because the Cuban Constitution had already been defined and issued, the United States saw the need for a new pact. Chairman of the Senate Committee on

³¹ Pérez claims that Root sent Secretary of State John Hay “four provisions” (Pérez 1986: 45), and that the clause concerning debt was introduced during a meeting of Republican Senators because they feared indebtedness to a European power (Pérez 1986: 47). Thomas quotes the letter of 9 February from Root to Wood at length, which has five provisions, including that on debt (Thomas 2001: 262-3).

³² According to Munro, Estrada Palma was later to make a “futile effort” to have the wording of article three changed (Munro 1964: 36).

Relations with Cuba, Senator Platt, introduced an Amendment, “which far overshadowed the parent bill to which it was attached”, namely, the Army Appropriations Act for 1901 (Fitzgibbon 1935: 78). The Amendment included all five of the provisions of Root, additionally an article for the safeguarding of sanitation as proposed by Wood, another declaring the “Isle of Pines shall be omitted from the proposed constitutional boundaries of Cuba, the title thereto being left to future adjustment by treaty”,³³ and also a clause stating that all these provisions would be incorporated into a Permanent Treaty with the United States (Healy 1963: 163-4). The US Senate passed the Act on 27 February 1901 and the House on 1 March, with McKinley signing the bill on 2 March (Fitzgibbon 1935: 79). Immediately, the journal that would become the publisher of the Veterans’ manifestos, *La Discusión*, condemned the agreement, stating that it would infringe “absolute independence”, and, “complete sovereignty” (Gómez 1974: 118-19). During the Senate debate, Foraker pointed out that the Amendment could simply mean that the losing Cuban political party would complain and make “trouble”, thus forcing intervention (Thomas 2001: 264), a prophetic point.

As early as 1899 General James H. Wilson had authored a report suggesting that a Cuban Constitutional Convention should be formed, that the United States should guarantee Cuba a peaceable, republican government, that the United States should oversee the customs and sanitary services of Cuba, that there should be a postal union between the two, and also naval stations (Healy 1963: 96). However, regarding the final Amendment, the “major share of the credit of authorship should

³³ In November 1905 there was a “revolution” on the Isle of Pines in which the US residents “proclaimed their adherence to the American Union” but a later US Supreme Court decision held that the Isle was Cuban territory (Jenks 1970: 149). The Borah Amendment was eventually ratified in March 1925, conceding the Isle to Cuba (Smith 1960: 111).

go to Root” (Fitzgibbon 1935: 81), as the eight articles contained five of his provisions and Wood’s suggestion, as well as two others.

Fitzgibbon states that, “Cuban sentiment was deeply stirred by this alleged invasion of Cuban rights”, particularly the suggestions for naval bases, intervention, and regarding the Isle of Pines (Fitzgibbon 1935: 81). Méndez Capote quite correctly prophesied that if the Cubans were to concede Article three, referring to intervention, “there will be born a government resting upon a supposition of incapacity” (Pérez 1983: 315). The Cubans again felt the issue should be left until a Cuban government was established, but Root insisted that this would leave Cuba temporarily without the ‘protection’ of the United States, and hence other nations could deny the United States’ rights, and the only defence the latter would have was the Monroe Doctrine, which was not recognised in international law as readily as the Permanent Treaty was.³⁴ When Manuel Sanguily later called for the dissolution of the Cuban Convention after McKinley had signed the Act, the Secretary of War spelt out what was to become the Root interpretation of the Platt Amendment: suggesting it was no more than the Monroe Doctrine and was not “synonymous with intermeddling or interference with the affairs of the Cuban government” (Fitzgibbon 1935: 82).

The Cuban Convention voted to reject the Amendment. On 24 April 1901 a committee of Convention members met Root with the latter claiming that the intervention provision would only follow a state of “anarchy” in the island, that the right of the United States to intervene without Cuban consent was “unquestionable”, and that Cuban submission to the Amendment was conditional for US withdrawal (Fitzgibbon 1935: 83-4). McKinley told the delegation that met him that it did not

³⁴ Root's commentary is quoted at length by Pérez 1986: 45.

signify “intermeddling or intervention” (Pérez 1986: 54). Senator Platt sent a letter to the Convention emphasising that the Amendment did not mean a protectorate; however, later US policy would contravene Root and Platt’s assurances. The Cuban Convention passed an altered amendment on 28 May, McKinley disapproved of this, and so the original Amendment was passed without qualification on 12 June and adopted as an appendix to the Cuban Constitution, was ratified on 25 June 1901 by Roosevelt and eventually declared in effect on 1 July 1902 (Fitzgibbon 1935: 84-5).

The last order of the US Military Government declared the Constitution of the Republic on 20 May, and all US troops were finally withdrawn by 4 February 1904. There was some protest at the Military Government’s final orders infringing on civil law and overstepping the Teller Amendment (Fitzgibbon 88-9). The Permanent Treaty enforcing the Platt Amendment was made law on 22 May 1903 (Pérez 1986: 135). Some international law experts now felt Cuba was ‘sovereign’, while others felt it was a “protectorate” (Fitzgibbon 1935: 90). Máximo Gómez felt that this was “not the absolute independence we dreamed about” (Pérez 1983: xv), an indication of the earlier attitude of many Cubans that they could have won the battle against Spain without foreign interference, and a portent that the stirrings of nationalism were to remain a potent political force for some time to come.

During the same period, elections for the Cuban presidency were ordered by Governor Wood for 31 December 1901. Máximo Gómez was popular among Cubans but declined to run, preferring to support Estrada Palma’s nomination. Estrada Palma had been President of the Provisional Government in 1876, he had also served as a minister of the Provisional Republic in 1895 and 1898, was at one time an advocate of annexation, and was a supporter of the Platt Amendment and the proposed Reciprocity Treaty (Pérez 1986: 89), as well as being a US citizen.

Bartolomé Masó opposed Estrada Palma, and he was joined by politically unaffiliated independents who published a manifesto on 2 June 1901, before competing in the local elections (Hernández 1993: 99). Bartolomé Masó withdrew when the Central Board of Scrutiny created to supervise the elections failed to include any members of his party, and after his appeals to Governor Wood to ensure it did were unsuccessful (Hernández 1993: 101), leaving Estrada Palma to be elected without opposition. The Cuban flag was hoisted, and Estrada Palma took formal power on 20 May 1902 (Thomas 2001: 267).

The Reciprocity Treaty – Tool of US Economic Tutelage

With the destruction of the *criollo* bourgeoisie, and hence without the possibility of native capital formation, Cuba was forced to depend on the US market for sugar, and the large amounts of investment needed for its increasingly technical production. Indeed, the US Military Government had twice prohibited the establishment of banks under the Foraker Amendment (Pérez 1986: 67), despite the allowances mentioned above, given to US corporations. In fact, the National Bank of Cuba established in 1901 had nothing national about it, being in fact a US financial enterprise (Le Riverend 1967: 220). As well as virtually controlling sugar and tobacco production, the US corporations now also furthered their attempts to monopolise mining,³⁵ transportation, and public utilities (Pérez 1997: 119-20). The Hawley Company took over the Chaparra *central*, symbolically, the largest in the country, and the Cuba Company (in fact a US corporation) was formed to build a nation-wide railroad. By 1902, the US Tobacco Trust controlled 90 per cent of the

³⁵ Of which they apparently controlled 80 per cent in 1901 (Le Riverend 1967: 220).

export trade of Havana cigars (Pérez 1997: 119). In this year, “U.S. investment in Cuba was more than double what it had been before the Independence War” (Benjamin 1977: 9). The United States also gave its first loan of \$35,000,000, significantly, to pay army veterans and \$16,500,000 for the Treasury (Le Riverend 1967: 221).³⁶

It seemed that little could save Cuba except dependency upon the United States. Cuban acceptance of the Platt Amendment was based on the United States’ promise of granting reciprocity (Healy 1963: 194), but this was consistently opposed by US beet sugar interests. The United States debated over the Payne Bill, modified to become the Platt Bill, both unsuccessful when it became known that the US Military Government of Cuba had spent thousands promoting the Reciprocity Bill. Annexation to the United States was again discussed in the Senate in November of 1903 (Viñalis 2002: 16). The United States was also in fear of losing Cuban markets to Great Britain (Viñalis 2002: 18). To the Cubans:

The central point of discrepancy related to whether or not the President had the power to grant customs concessions to a foreign power (Viñalis 2002: 20).

A new proposal was made that looked hopeful when government export bounties on European beet were abolished which would thus lead to a decline in its production and increased demand for Cuban sugar. In any case, the American Sugar Refining Company invested in beet sugar, thus eliminating the competition between the two producers.

³⁶ This loan for veterans was 10 times the \$3 million payment, but as will be seen, rank-and-file veterans saw little of it.

The Reciprocity Treaty then passed the US House and Senate, giving Cuba a 20 percent tariff reduction in return for 20, 25, 30, and 40 per cent on US products entering Cuba and both were bound not to give such rates to any other nation. This meant that:

By tying Cuba's principal export crop to the American market, and by keeping the marketing conditions subject to its control, the United States government gained an influence in Cuba more enduring than that based on the terms of the Platt Amendment (Healy 1963: 206).

Or put another way, “[d]isguised under the name of ‘reciprocity’, this treaty represented the basis of the North American endeavour to undermine Cuban sovereignty through economic control of sugar” (Ruffin 1990: 57).³⁷ Cubans were also to be the losers in another way; as, under the Treaty “U.S. goods saturated the market and hindered local competition...[which] deterred new industry,...[and] had a deleterious effect on existing enterprises” (Pérez 1986: 77). Reciprocity also “discouraged diversification and perpetuated local reliance on imported foodstuffs” (Pérez 1997: 122).

When the US Military Government withdrew “US capital in Cuba totalled \$100m, of which \$45m was in tobacco, \$25m in sugar” (Thomas 2001: 271). The Reciprocity Treaty had almost immediate consequences. In 1901 sugar production was at 1.5 million tons, rising to 4 million by 1920 (Dumont 1970: 8), while cigar

³⁷ There is little to support the comment that, “[n]either the official record nor their private correspondence give any support to the idea that Roosevelt and Root had ulterior motives in pressing for reciprocity” (Munro 1964: 33). Indeed, the increase in sugar production of US firms in Cuba and the expansion of US exports was an *unwritten* given of policy.

exports to the United States rose from 50 to 80 million from 1902-05 (Stubbs 1985: 31). This of course reflected the phenomenon cited earlier: the intensification of the specialisation of production, the division of labour, and mono-crop production on an international scale. Cuba turned to primary products: refined sugar and leaf tobacco (the latter to export to Key West and Tampa to be made into cigars). Sugar was of course processed to some extent, but as the sugar industry was more highly mechanised and the final product was subject ultimately to the skills of US technicians and administrators, rather than skilled workers (as in the case of cigars), it made sense to refine sugar as part of the same production process, there being little chance of class unity between US technicians and unskilled Cuban cane cutters.

Cuban sugar exports increased from \$52 million in 1902-6 to \$426 million in 1917-21. The US share of this fluctuated slightly from 83 per cent at the highest level and 76 per cent at the lowest, during the same period (Seers 1964: 8). Cuba had supplied 12 to 14 per cent of the world supply of sugar before the war, dropping to 3.5 per cent in 1900, but again reaching 14 per cent by 1914 as a result of both reciprocity and the decline of beet mentioned earlier (Jenks 1970: 129-39). Total Cuban exports rose from \$64.3 million in 1902 to \$174 million in 1914, while total imports rose from \$60.5 million to \$140.1 million in 1913, declining slightly to \$118.2 million in 1914 (Foreign Policy Association Inc. 1935: 44). US capital invested in railways increased from 0.246 million pesos in 1900 to 1.14 million pesos in 1911 (British capital remained powerful in this area, increasing from 0.926 to 1.926 for the same dates, Ibarra 1998: 9), and US imports made up 62.8 per cent of the Cuban market throughout 1900-34 (Ibarra 1998: 18). In 1904 “60 percent of all rural property in Cuba was owned by foreign companies”. The Banco Nacional

de Cuba and the Banco de La Habana “were formed with U.S. capital” (Pérez 1986: 72-4). US investments had increased from \$50 million in 1894 to \$160 million in 1906 (Ruffin 1990: 58).

Of course, what all this increased capital needed was more labour, this time in the economically cheaper (due to technological developments), form of wage labour. Between 1902 and 1919, 700,000 immigrants came to Cuba; from Spain, Puerto Rico, China, North America and after 1910, Haiti and Jamaica. They were “disposed to work hard at almost any job, at almost any wage”, which not surprisingly, “served to depress wages” (Pérez 1995: 202-4). This “[i]mmigration served primarily the interests of foreign capital” not the working class, as illustrated by the fact that prices increased steadily between 1904 and 1912 on basic foodstuffs (Pérez 1986: 79-81).

The Platt Amendment and the Reciprocity Treaty were to serve as the hegemonic backdrop to Cuban society. By setting the political agenda in terms of international obligations and economic agreement, the United States gained a form of direct domination, through the state, over the economic sphere of Cuba. Hence, any form of resistance to US hegemony was likely to take the form of attacking the economic structure of US interests, in order to bring about political change. However, as the United States also, in turn, dominated the Cuban state by favouring its preferred candidates through economic and political patronage, Cuban nationalist feeling was to continue to be frustrated for some time. It is now necessary to look at the nature of Cuban politics in detail, in order to understand how these constant frustrations led to constant factionalism.

Political Parties and Political Factionalism in the Republic

The objections of the Cuban Constitutional Convention were to form the basis of repeated complaints against those in power. The threatened uprising of the Veterans' organisation of 1911-12 again raised all of the major issues and objections that had been raised at the time of the Constitutional Convention. Some of the most radical elements within the Convention had sought universal suffrage, including women, as the latter had "participated arm-in-arm with men in the war of national liberation" (Viñalis 1998: 27). However, the United States had been opposed even to universal male suffrage, before the municipal elections to elect constitutional delegates held on June 16 1900. Secretary of War Elihu Root feared the "perpetual revolutions of Central America and other West India islands" (Pérez 1986: 37), if this was allowed. Unfortunately for the United States, Pérez notes that, "universal manhood suffrage had been centrally important in the separatist program". More immediately, a literacy requirement threatened to "disenfranchise the majority of army veterans". In the end restrictions were as strict as the United States had hoped, as according to Pérez:

Final suffrage requirements balanced immediate political obligations with long-term policy objectives. Voters for the June 1900 municipal elections were required to be Cuban-born males or sons of Cuban parents born while in temporary residence abroad or Spaniards who had renounced their citizenship. All voting males were to be twenty-one years of age, free of felony conviction, and residents of the municipality in which they intended to vote at least thirty days preceding the first day of registration. In addition,

voters were required either to be able to read and write, or to own real or personal property worth \$250, or to have served honourably in the Liberation Army prior to July 18, 1898...Suffrage restrictions reduced the electorate...to some 5 percent of the total population (Pérez 1986: 38)

While this granting of electoral rights to soldiers was a reality the United States had to accept, it also left out vast sectors of Cuban society who were susceptible to radical ideas and radical notions of democracy; not only women of course, but those hundreds of thousands of ordinary working-class Cubans without whom the Liberation Army's victory wouldn't have been possible, as they had provided the essential infrastructure to achieving that victory. This group were to remain a coherent political constituency for parties proposing the enlargement of suffrage, and more importantly, a basis for material support for threatened rebellions. More significant, especially with regard to the discussion of the acceptance of the Platt Amendment from the US standpoint, was the possibility of insurrection, as most of the army veterans chose not to hand in their weapons for the payment of \$75 awarded to them. According to Figarola, only 8967 out of 38,156 soldiers did so (Figarola 1974: 49).

It was in the above context that the first political parties were formed in Cuba, after the PRC. Indeed, the PRC was an organisation of national unity designed simply to win the independence struggle. There was in this sense, some truth to the claim of exile leader of the PRC in New York, Estrada Palma, that since the struggle had been won, then it should disband. However, this was simply Estrada Palma's pro-US sentiment. Many felt that the presence of US troops meant the struggle had not been won, and parties formed around interpretations about what a new

constitution and government should look like. In fact the presence of such large numbers of army veterans meant it was inevitable they would have an impact and influence upon the foundation and structure of government, and, if they did not, or were not allowed to, then they would remain a persistent military threat.

It was the structure of the PRC, and the issue of civilian or military control, exacerbated by the claim of radicals that they represented the true heirs to the ideals of José Martí, that led to different conceptions of ‘absolute independence’ in the new republic, as will be seen. As one commentator states:

reconstruction of the country did not resolve the situation of unemployment, nor stabilise wages or fix the length of the working day. In fact, the US administration promoted nationalist tensions between Cuban and Spanish workers

But this backfired for the United States, as:

these same socio-economic conditions caused the reappearance of workers’ organisations that had been eliminated by the persecution of the Spanish colonial government (Viñalis 1998: 21).

Not surprisingly then, one of the first political parties of the republic was that founded by the poet Diego Vicente Tejera, namely the Partido Socialista Cubano, [Cuban Socialist Party – PSC]. Both Pichardo and Viñalis agree that Tejera was a ‘utopian socialist’ while the manifesto of his party claimed to be, “the heir of the ideology of Martí expressed in the Manifesto of Montecristi and in the statutes of the

Cuban Revolutionary Party” (Viñalis 1998: 22). Published on March 29 1899, in the manifesto, Tejera stated that his organisation was a, “party of peace, of evolution”, which would only use the means of, “propaganda, discussion and the moral force of the immense masses which it will motivate and lead”. Perhaps the party’s real ‘utopianism’ however, was in its claim that “we do not want, and shall not incite the war of classes, as we are convinced that violence will not bring a victory as complete and durable as that of reason and love” (Pichardo 1973: 35).

This brand of utopian socialism, while in the case of Tejera’s party essentially *parliamentary*, had not been popular in Cuba since the importation of socialist ideas into Cuba from the 1860s onwards. As shown earlier, the mutualist socialism influenced by Proudhon had been eclipsed by that of thinkers like Bakunin. While it was noted earlier that it was not entirely clear whether anarchists joined the PRC as a matter of expediency, or as a matter of abandonment of their principles, perhaps the two were not entirely separate.

The belief in class struggle was confirmed by immediate events. A strike by bricklayers on 20 August for higher salaries and an eight-hour working day, led to a general assembly of all workers being established on 16 September 1899 when demands were not met, with a unanimous vote for a general strike on 29 September. Preparations were not successful, however, due to tactical and ideological differences within the workers’ movement, and threatened intervention on the part of the United States. This no doubt influenced the US goal of providing a permanent state of hegemony in the form of the Platt Amendment. When a new meeting was held on 24 September in “solidarity with the strike of those workers whose leaders were still vacillating”, the US Governor of Havana, William Ludlow, imprisoned the leaders of the strike committee, and the police and army patrolled the streets

breaking up workers' meetings.

However, this merely consolidated workers' sense of internationalism, as militants stressed that their cause and that of the Haymarket martyrs was the same. According to one source, the agitation had been led by Juan Tenorio, Francisco de Armas y López, Sarafín Busto, Evaristo E. Estenoz, Simón Camacho, José Fraga and Juan Ayer (Le Riverend 1971: 52). Estenoz was to go on to found the Partido Independiente de Color [Independent Party of Colour – PIC] in 1912. While some workplaces implemented an eight-hour day, the struggle was not a complete success, with workers' in the Liga General de Trabajadores [General League of Workers – LGT] blaming, principally, the political attitude of its President Enrique Messonier. Despite Ludlow's claims that the strikers were, demagogues, supported by a larger group that prefers idleness to work (IHMRSC 1981: 171-2), Tejera's Party and Messonier's league were both discredited by their failure to take action and broaden the strike.

Ludlow accused the strikers of prolonging the occupation by the United States, but when Military Governor of the island, General Wood, met leaders of the Liberation Army, future member of the Institution of the Veterans of Independence, José Miró Argenter, accused Wood of being annexationist (Viñalis 1998: 23). What is important is that after the failure of the supposedly 'radical' parties in 1899, workers became more likely to support a *liberal* political faction than a supposedly socialist one, if the latter's ideas were not based on the hard material realities of Cuban national life, while the formers' were: that workers' rights could only be gained through violent conflict. This was cemented by the membership of many army veterans in liberal factions; men acquainted with, and prepared to continue fighting for 'absolute independence'. Viñalis claims that when the General League

of Cuban Workers opposed Wood's attempts to recruit strike breakers to send to Tampa in 1901, another future member of the Institution of the Veterans of Independence (and the President of the Association of Veterans in 1923), Carlos García Vélez, openly supported the stance of workers not to break the strike. Perhaps by now, a military leader (and member of both the 1911 and 1923 Veterans' organisations), such as himself was becoming more popular among workers than socialist *políticos* like Tejera and Messonier (Viñalis 1998: 44, n.56).

In a wider sense, in order to understand the politics of the Cuban Republic, and to fully understand the emergence of a sense of betrayal of Cuban nationalism by *políticos*, the formation of the government and political parties in the era studied must be looked at in depth. However, as a preliminary measure, the advice of another historian regarding the concept of a 'party' in the Cuban republic must be heeded. As he put it:

It is necessary to clarify that the concept of 'party' is accepted with reservations; in reality there is not a sufficiently stable and deep cohesion to affirm that there are strictly political parties. They did not meet the requirements of political membership; rather those men with some respect and political influence would share in supporting similar positions and express an identity of interest during a determined electoral campaign. This reality means that the process under study has a certain peculiarity, on account that these associations did not come about as a result of class interests, but rather from ideas about how to organise the Republic and about proper attitudes to adopt towards Man, which was the most obvious factor for national cohesion (Figarola 1975: 32).

Figarola posits that there were two political tendencies, that of *federalism*; largely of the party of the Federal Republicans, and that of *centralism*, largely that of the National Party, Máximo Gómez's party. As noted earlier, those in the Emiliano Núñez Club were much more in favour of federal accountability (as were many of the constitutional delegates), when they highlighted the power of the already existing *Ayuntamientos* or Town Councils. The practical differences between provincial autonomy and central sovereignty were eclipsed however, by the issue of charisma. Máximo Gómez was still seen as the legitimate expression of the independence ideal. According to Figarola, Máximo Gómez was most closely supported by the members of the revolutionary elite: by future President of the Institution of Veterans, Emilio Núñez, and by the future first President of the Cuban Republic, Estrada Palma. Those most opposed to Máximo Gómez were Manuel Sanguily, Juan Gualberto Gómez, Salvador Cisneros Betancourt and the coalition around Bartolomé Masó (Figarola 1974: 33-6). According to Figarola, Sanguily, while a Lieutenant Colonel, was, representative of "the petit-bourgeoisie and middle class" (Figarola 1974: 35). Juan Gualberto Gómez was entirely a civilian leader, Cisneros Betancourt had asserted the primacy of the civil power, and while he had served as President of the Republic in Arms, his influence was not as strong as that of military men like Máximo Gómez.

Viñalis concurs with Figarola's assessment of political 'parties' when he points out that, "assembly delegates did not act in agreement with the principles of the party they represented, but with their personal opinions" (Viñalis 1998: 24). Three parties were officially formed on a local level to elect delegates to the Constitutional Convention; the National Party of Havana, the Federal Republicans of Las Villas, and the Democratic Union. The third of these was composed of many

members of the old Autonomist government and members of the Asamblea del Cerro, joining forces, largely because they feared the charismatic authority of Máximo Gómez and his party (Pichardo 1973: 70).

There was a division over whether the Constitution should only allow native Cubans to stand as President, largely a concern of the supporters of Máximo Gómez (he was Dominican); the men of 1895, who were to fill the ranks of the 1906 rebellion and the Institution of the Veterans of Independence in 1911. Cisneros Betancourt attempted to resolve the civilian-military conflict that had plagued all the independence struggles by simply proposing that, “no citizen who has obtained the grade of Brigadier or above, in the army or militias of the Cuban republic will be allowed to be President or Vice-president”. As Figarola notes however, this was not only, “to marginalise Máximo Gómez but to destroy constitutionally the possibility of his substitution by some other exceptional insurrectionary leader” (Figarola 1974: 63). In any case, Máximo Gómez himself refused to run, placing his support behind Estrada Palma, who was very much a *político* (as seen above he had been President of the Republic in Arms but was later the exile leader of the PRC in New York).

An alliance between ex-Autonomists and the ‘left-independents’ of Bartolomé Masó was unpopular because of its perceived connections with Spanish collaboration (Figarola 1974: 80). Similarly for his part, Bartolomé Masó was a *político* and he was unable to form a successful ‘national coalition’ for his followers: many members of his group, likewise, being tainted by collaborationist connections (Figarola 1974: 82).

It is difficult to say exactly why this political factionalism occurred in the early years of the republic. Perhaps, it was because of the role of the United States in consolidating political hegemony over the Cuban state. Perhaps it was because, in

the absence of war, this may have happened anyway, Cubans being unused to democratic systems at the time. Perhaps it was a combination of both, with the limited resources of state revenues proving a prize too rare to share with many others, with each faction seeking out a patronage network. In any case, this phenomenon was to continue, for many reasons, during the coming years, and this was to be a continual source of material for the rhetorical denunciation of corrupt politicians and a betrayed republic, by various political actors. This, along with the role the Liberation Army had played, and their now humble place in the new nation was a further source of feelings of frustration, and hence, a fertile ground for political capital to be made.

Factionalism and Patronage

Central to understanding the political factionalism in the early Cuban republic, is an understanding of patronage. As one observer notes, political clientelism is, “central...to basic theoretical problems and controversies in all the social sciences” (Eisenstadt and Roniger 1980: 49). Alex Weingrod states that “patronage in the vocabulary of political science...refers to the ways in which party politicians distribute public jobs or special favors in exchange for electoral support” (Weingrod 1967-8: 378-9).

This gives rise to ‘patronage networks’, which, “are built around asymmetric but mutually beneficial and open-ended transactions and predicated on the differential control by social actors over the access and flow of resources in stratified societies. In some cases they produce a social order of their own”

(Roniger 1994: 3-4). The 'reciprocity' of patron-client relations must be contrasted with the more openly forceful relations of the pre-capitalist era. Powell notes that patron-client relations, do not include "relationships based on coercion, authority, manipulation, and so forth" (Powell 1970: 412), and Scott likewise observes that "the power imbalance is not so great as to permit a pure command relationship" (Scott 1977: 125).

Of course, no social relationship of 'reciprocity' between two individuals takes place within a vacuum. Social relations, and the perceptions of the social actors within them, take place inside the wider socio-economic system, and accompanying cultural forms of behaviour. Clientelism, "flourishes where markets are no longer controlled through primordial units, where social interaction is based on nonascriptive criteria, and where emphasis is placed on the open flow of resources and opportunities for mobility" (Roniger 1994: 11). Powell declares that "state centralization and market expansion" (Powell 1970: 413) leads to the need for brokers: mediators between several patrons at the local level and those superordinate to them in the national structure. These "regional brokers are often used to expand the control of the central government and to increase its political integration" (Kettering 1988: 432), whose "significance...increases in proportion to the expansion of state structures,...providing in effect the linkages necessary for bureaucratic action to reach into the periphery" (Legg and Lemarchand 1972: 154).

This results in a pyramidal structure in which one patron may himself be a client, and hence, a broker between someone further up the national hierarchy than himself and someone else further down. A multi-tiered national system is formed in which patrons are, "party officials and functionaries, bureaucrats and economic managers" (Tarkowski 1981: 178). This in turn means that, "patrons...compete for

client support...altering the psychological character of the patron-client relationship” which now rests, “upon an implicit element of bargaining” (Belloni 1981: 40) among the rival patrons. This change usually accompanies “rapid urbanization, the shift of the work force from agricultural to other economic activity, and widespread exposure to mass media” (Belloni 1981: 36).

Viewing Cuban party politics in this way is often useful. Members of the *mambisado* and influential *políticos* established networks of patronage based on their old military or civilian ties, held over from the independence struggle. Factions in the new republic were then based upon allegiance to centralism (the ex-military influence), and that of federalism (of the civilian arms of the Provisional Cuban Government). This in turn, filtered down as patronage networks were established at the local level, with this often resulting in a political corruption which is very significant for the early republican period in Cuba: that of manipulatively controlling local elections by controlling the electoral boards for that municipality via a system of patronage.

Corruption in the early Republic

The United States realised early on that a “way had to be found to accommodate the urgent requirement for livelihood among the 50,000 army veterans. Employment for soldiers was the minimum condition for social peace” (Pérez 1986: 86).³⁸ Veteran General Julio Sanguily (brother of Manuel Sanguily) even threatened to go to war with the United States unless all public office posts

³⁸ Note the much larger figure than that offered payment by the United States.

were given to veterans. Not surprisingly; “[t]housands of ex-soldiers joined the public roll as day laborers in public works programs” (Pérez 1986: 87). The United States feared Estrada Palma’s Rural Guard and Artillery force were not sufficient to protect his government, and at one stage Robert Squiers proposed annexation because of this (Yglesia Martínez 1976: 144).

Despite the support for Estrada Palma by veteran General Máximo Gómez, in many ways, the former’s regime represented what the United States wanted: the government of the ‘better classes’. Hernández states that:

his cabinet,...[were] known for their conservatism. One of them, Carlos de Zaldo Beurman, belonged to a family of bankers; another, Emilio Terry Dorticós, was one of the wealthiest planters on the island. Half of the secretaries were erstwhile autonomists-Zaldo, Terry and José María García Montes. Two were Cuban Nationals-Diego Tamayo and Manuel Luciano Díaz; two were Republicans-Zaldo and García Montes; and two were the president's personal friends-Terry and Eduardo Yero. None of them was a high ranking liberator (Hernández 1993: 104).

They were also, clearly, a very tight patronage network. Scandal immediately followed the beginnings of Cuban independence. The Cuban Congress awarded itself lavish salaries and pay outs for veterans (often going to the same people). Hernández states that Alfredo Zayas (who had been the rebels’ chief representative in Havana during part of the war), and others, had diverted funds from illiterate veterans, and even some money found its way to US investors (Hernández 1993: 107). Zayas went to prison for this (Thomas 2002: 275). The

United States' attempt to forge a constitutional regime from without was clearly a limited idea, failing to address the need for internal civil structures, which could avoid patronage.

The first national elections for Congress in February 1904 were fraudulent. In Pinar del Río two electoral boards flourished separately, Juan Gualberto Gómez received more votes than were cast (a phenomenon repeated in all the elections in the early republic), and, when the Congress opened, the newly formed 'National Liberals' did not attend, preventing the majority needed for a quorum (Thomas 2002: 276). According to Chapman, at this time the two main parties were, firstly, the same National Liberal Party that Thomas mentions, and secondly, that of Senator Ricardo Dolz in Havana and the Governor of Santa Clara, José Miguel Gómez: the Conservative Republicans (Chapman 1927: 169). Emilio Terry, of Estrada Palma's cabinet, claimed the elections were a, "farce represented with less shame than in the times of the colony" (Chapman 1927: 170), with each party attempting to eliminate its minority, a method known as *el copo*.³⁹

It was because of this that "some of the Liberals and the Republicans...jointly reformed themselves as the Moderate Party" (Thomas 2002: 277). Hernández states that, "one-third of the senators and congressmen were former officers of the liberating army,...these men and their colleagues proved to be the stumbling block of the administration." They were little interested in addressing any political issues that did not immediately affect them, often failing to attend Congress, and also giving themselves various political immunities, including, in the

³⁹ Chapman says, "...in politics the '*copo*' is applicable only where the law calls for representation of minorities, as is the case in Cuba. By means of the '*copo*' the majority not only elects its own candidates but also elects others as if of the majority, thus falsely gaining unanimous representation accorded by law to a majority party" (Chapman 1927: 170, n.26)

case of Mariano Carona, immunity for murder (Hernández 1993: 105). All of these aspects of political corruption were to continue to plague the nascent Republic.

This chapter has shown that the Cuban ideal of absolute independence and the desire of the United States for hegemonic political control were clearly not compatible. The result of this conflict of forces produced, in Cuba, factionalism, patronage and corruption. This was due to the forces of Cuban liberation being demobilised and differing views among Cubans themselves about how their government should function. While the Veterans' organisations of 1911-12 and 1923-24 have been mentioned by other commentators, it will be necessary to look at how the personnel of these organisations fit into the political factionalism and patronage of the period studied. This will go some way towards developing an argument that these organisations were very much a part of the 'old' politics, and hence, were unlikely to remain popular after the emergence of radical nationalism in the years 1923-25.

Chapter IV - The Veterans' Campaign 1902-12

As can be seen from the preceding chapters, politics in the early Cuban republic was framed by three realities: the role of US hegemony, the disbandment of the forces of Cuban nationalism (which were in many ways inherently radical forces) and the corrupt nature of Cuban patronage politics. The central focus of the thesis is the form and content of Cuban nationalism in the republican period and the concomitant dissatisfaction with the realities of Cuban nationhood, with emphasis on such factors as the reorganisation of the army in 1909, the nature of the Veterans' organisations as supposedly civil society associations, and their role in political patronage networks. As will be seen regarding the 1906 revolt, the Veterans' movement was split, with many prominent military leaders of 1895 being leaders of the Liberals' Central Revolutionary Committee, while many of the usually older Veterans who often held positions of power locally, sought a peaceful compromise.

By 1902 many prominent military veterans, as well as members of the Council of Government in New York, and at the same time the Provisional Government and Constituent Assembly in Cuba, had not attained positions of power in the new regime, under the two major political parties. The Veterans' organisations in some ways represented this disaffected part of the political class. They felt that the Republic had been 'betrayed'. The Veterans' organisational programme from 1902 until 1924 included some or all of the following demands:

- i) The payment of pensions. Compensation was sought for having fought the war for national liberation. Compensation was also sought for the orphaned offspring of soldiers.

- ii) Suspension of the Civil Service Law. This was one of the explicitly political demands of the organisations. The organisations demanded the removal from public office of all those who had supported Spain during the struggle for independence.
- iii) Amnesty. For the veterans still imprisoned as a consequence of the general strikes of 1899 and 1902, and the rebellion of 1906 which the Liberals, and hence many of the Veterans, felt was justified and constitutional. As will be seen, the actions of the United States partly justified the revolt, by re-structuring the administration with many Liberals in positions of power, and by politicising the Army as a Liberal force.
- iv) The Veterans sought an end to what they saw as the unconstitutional practice of the President appointing the judiciary and a fundamental reassessment of the structure of the judicial power.

The major conflict within the Veterans' movement, according to the historiography, was the conflict between 'radicals' such as the future Communist intellectuals Julio Antonio Mella, Rubén Martínez Villena and others, along with working-class militants, and on the other hand the *políticos*: those who may have been members of the movement or closely tied to it, who represented what would have perhaps been the natural 'ruling class' of Cuba, but who were frustrated by US hegemony in their attempts to gain economic ascendancy in Cuba. This view,

however, ignores the conflict within the movement between the older and the younger members that pre-dated the involvement of Marxists and intellectuals in the Association of 1923-24, which perhaps only exacerbated this tension. As was seen from the chapter on the independence movement, this was a conflict occurring in most institutions and political parties of the early Cuban republic. As a division between civil and military leadership had never been properly institutionalised during the various wars of independence, there was a tendency for civil organisations to take on revolutionary or radical ends: ‘revolutionary’ and ‘radical’ in the sense of ousting the current regime and replacing it with another by force, rather than a conception of social revolution.

More importantly, it is difficult to see any consistent institutional organisation of ‘Veterans’ that had coherence from the break up of the Cuban Liberation Army to the protests of 1911-12 and 1923-24. While there is much that will be explained and analysed in the following chapters, from the ‘Centre of Veterans’ that intervened as a mediator in the 1902 strike in Havana, to letters in the press by the ‘Veterans of Independence’ commenting upon the revolt of 1906 and the reorganisation of the army in 1909, to the protests of the Institution of the Veterans of Independence in 1911-12 and the Association of Veterans of 1923-24, there is no record of a civil society Veterans’ organisation that met frequently or even annually in the intervening years. Rather, these amorphous organisations acted as a repository of nationalism throughout the period, when this was felt to have been betrayed by governmental or presidential abuses of the Constitution, by those in revolt or on strike, or by anyone else otherwise disrupting what they felt to be the good exercise of republican government.

While these supposedly civil society organisations acted in many ways not normally expected of such groups, they were not explicitly revolutionary. The protests of 1911-12 and 1923-24 were just that, protests, and while the Institution of 1911-12 and the Association of 1923-24 may have shared many personnel with those in revolt in 1906, 1917, and even 1931, in these instances of actual revolt they usually acted as a conservative force, calling for an end to both violence on the part of those in revolt, and abuses by the government. Additionally, while the various Veterans' organisations may have been a repository of an implicit radicalism in the sense that they were dedicated to Martí's and the PRC's vision of racial equality, this was largely because so many of the veterans of the struggle for independence, and, hence, some of the personnel of the various Veterans' organisations were black. A certain caveat should be noted, however, at this point: that nationalist entities such as the Veterans' organisations were implicitly 'radical' in one sense: the prominence of blacks and *mulatos* in the movement and their call for an authentic republic of racial equality, as originally envisioned by Martí, was still very much a radical proposition in the early 1900s.

This radical position was not social-revolutionary, in the sense that it was compatible, as the Veterans correctly pointed out, with good republican government. Similarly, it will be seen that the Veterans' organisations did not share the desires of the more radical elements of the Cuban working-class movement. The Veterans called for an end to strikes on the basis that they could cause US intervention under the auspices of the Platt Amendment, as, perhaps surprisingly, so did many of the political parties and groupings that claimed to represent the working class. The capitulation of the latter organisations may have led to rank-and-file members of these supposedly working-class entities, and also the black working class, to see the

Veterans' organisations as more authentic expressions of Cuban nationalism. The Veterans' organisations, however, often simply utilised this support and potential for armed revolution as a threat to make the government accede to their own political demands.

The inauguration of the Republic

In the debate in the Cuban legislature in 1903 over the acceptance of the Reciprocity Treaty, Alfredo Zayas (ex-Autonomist and PRC member) supported Manuel Sanguily's position that the Constitution did not grant power to the President to allow customs concessions to a foreign power. Salvador Cisneros Betancourt argued against the Treaty as an instrument of 'americanisation' and Tomás A. Recio argued that the supposed benefits that would come with the Treaty would in fact go to US sugar refinery trusts (Viñalis 2002: 22). All of these men were prominent in the Liberation movement (though not seasoned military fighters), and their recognition that US economic dominance would necessarily imply political dominance was prophetic. They were not social-revolutionaries of course, and the alternative they wished for was their own hegemony over that of the United States.

On 11 March 1903 the Cubans had rejected the Reciprocity Treaty by 16 votes to 5. Voting to approve the Treaty were such prominent future members of the Veterans' organisations as; Alfredo Zayas, Pedro Betancourt, Francisco Carrillo, José de J. Monteagudo, Manuel Lazo, Antonio Sánchez de Bustamante, and Domingo Méndez Capote. Voting against the Treaty were Veterans' organisation members; Tomas A. Recio, Manuel Sanguily, Eudaldo Tamayo, and Salvador

Cisneros Betancourt (Viñalis 2002: 89, n.28). On 19 March the US Senate introduced amendments to the Treaty that were detrimental to Cuba. On 26 March Eduardo Tamayo suggested voting against the recommendations of the Commission of Foreign Relations that had supported the Treaty with amendments, and was supported by Tomás Recio and others as this time it was rejected by the Cuban Senate by a vote of 13 to 7. There were more discussions and a Treaty decided, on 28 March, was approved by only 11 votes to 9 on 27 December 1903. Many of those who had long been in favour of the Treaty would later be Moderate Party members and supporters of Estrada Palma's re-election.

The Platt Amendment and the Reciprocity Treaty are seen by many Cuban historians as beginning a system of 'neo-colonial' rule by US financial corporations (though they do not all see things this way), which thus established Cuba as a subordinate neo-colony providing sugar and tobacco for the United States to sell on the international market. This, it is argued, prevented the emergence of a native bourgeoisie that could diversify agricultural production to enable Cuba to become self-sufficient and establish its own export markets. It was this chain of events that provided the background to the Veterans' organisations, and it was the failure of this type of nationalism to which they frequently alluded. It was the Liberals (both the official parties and their factions) that most closely expressed the nationalist ideals of ordinary Cubans and the petit bourgeoisie at least until 1909-11 (Viñalis 2002: 102-3). Only after the ascension to power of the Liberal factions in 1906, and the continuation of political corruption under them, was this brand of nationalism seen to have failed, and, hence, the Veterans' organisation of 1911-12 was established to create popular support for its protest.

The ‘Centre of Veterans’ and the 1902 strike

The Veterans’ organisations were somewhat amorphous institutions. It is difficult to tell how many local patriotic clubs there were and when they became subordinate to a national leadership. What is clear, however, is that this national leadership, principally based in Havana, dominated the Veterans’ organisations’ interventions in national life. Perhaps the first example of this is during the 1902 strike. This is important because, as was seen during the general strike in Havana of 1899, many supposedly radical organisations failed to act as a vanguard of the working class, encourage militancy, or even satisfy workers’ demands. Diego Vicente Tejera’s Cuban Socialist Party failed to convince workers either that its ideology was the true heir to Martí’s Manifesto of Montecristi, or that socialism could be brought about without conflict, whether that was between classes or through political violence more generally. Similarly, Enrique Messonier was actually blamed by members of his own General League of Cuban Workers for the failure of the struggle for the eight-hour day. Members of the Veterans’ organisations, specifically the younger men of the generation of 1895 like Carlos García Vélez, could then invoke either themselves and their patronage networks, or the various Veterans’ organisations, as the true heirs of Cuban nationalism. Here it can be seen again how a supposedly civil society organisation would take on a political role for specific purposes: by implicitly supporting workers (though perhaps not their exact demands or tactics), and political reforms that would gain their allegiance to the Veterans’ organisations through nationalist sympathies.

As has been illustrated earlier, the wars for independence had taken their toll on the Cuban economy and society. According to Pérez, for both rural and urban Cuban workers:

the transition from colony to republic had meant a descent into destitution...The problem for workers, however, was not primarily a depressed postwar economy, but competition from cheap labor in the form of immigration (Pérez 1986: 77).

These immigrants were predominantly Spanish but also Chinese, largely unskilled and illiterate. The Spaniards arriving would “work...for almost any number of hours...and they overwhelmed the local labor market”. Pérez quotes contemporary commentator Victor S. Clark, from the US Department of Labour, to the effect that Spaniards:

[u]nlike the Cuban,...are frugal, seldom gamble, and often allow their savings to accumulate in the hands of their employers. They are not quarrelsome, and do not usually carry concealed weapons (Pérez 1986: 78).

Pérez quotes a US Colonel who noted in 1900 that “[t]he Cubans learn early the power of combination and when they believe that their labor is indispensable, strikes are very likely to follow”. Trade unions at the time showed their protectionist colours, no matter which nationality, as “plumbers contracted in the United States organized a local trade union in Havana, and proceeded to exclude Cubans”. As Pérez notes, this “[i]mmigration served primarily the interests of foreign capital” and

there was no trade free of this phenomenon as “workers competed with Cuban labor in all occupations in the fields and factories, in mines and manufacturing, as artisans and apprentices” (Pérez 1986: 79). Cubans dominated the skilled trades as carpenters, masons, cigar workers, mechanics, tailors and barbers, while they proved almost totally averse to mining and less dominant as servants or railroad workers (Pérez 1986: 81). Apprenticeships were almost totally dominated by Cubans, and, perhaps not surprisingly, they were to lead the strike of 1902.

A general strike was voted for on 17 November 1902 (Viñalis 2002: 36), and the strike began with cigar workers in Havana on 25 November, gaining widespread support in the city and becoming known as the ‘apprentices’ strike’. It began with workers at the Cabañas plant, that was part of the American Trust, and the purpose was to seek free and equal entry, between white and black Cubans, into these apprenticeships, when strikers felt that employers were beginning to favour foreign workers (presumably because Cubans at this point so dominated the trade). The strike was supported by doctors, dentists, students and intellectuals, and in Cienfuegos, Cruces and Lajas (Viñalis 2002: 35).

The strike was again supported by the General League of Cuban Workers (as the bricklayers’ strike of 1899 had been). The League, however, displayed its reformist tone when it stated that the aim of the strike was merely to gain, the right to earn bread by means of work (IHMCRSC 1981: 193-4). As was seen earlier, the leadership of the General League of Cuban Workers failed to take a militant position in the bricklayers’ strike of 1899 and in 1902 their position had not changed.

The Cuban Secretary of State, Diego Tamayo, and the Mayor of Havana, Juan Ramón O’Farril, implicitly supported the strike, as they were annexationists and the United States had earlier suggested that it might have to intervene to end the

strike under the terms of the third Article of the Platt Amendment, regarding the protection of life and property. Estrada Palma relieved the two of power, and ordered the Chief of Police in Havana, Rafael de Cárdenas, and the head of the Rural Guard, Alejandro Rodríguez, to crush the strike. An ad hoc committee of veterans, led by Máximo Gómez, and Manuel Sanguily, urged workers to return to work to avoid intervention, and this they did over the course of 27 and 28 November, with their demands not being met and with many strikers having lost their jobs or been imprisoned (Viñalis 2002: 37).

The position of the Centre of Veterans, while equally reformist, tied the issue of the 1902 strike to its self-styled role as the authentic repository of Cuban nationalism, as will be seen. The role of the Centre of Veterans in the strike of 1902 in fact appears to be one of the first interventions of a Veterans' organisation into national life after the establishment of the Cuban republic.

The Centre of Veterans, while no doubt supported by workers, was not an explicitly social-revolutionary institution. During the apprentices' strike, the organisation negotiated with the government and described its role in its 'Question of Principles' in the following terms:

The Centre of Veterans, which keeps within its heart, as something sacred, the doctrine of revolution in its entirety, does not as a collective body form, nor can it form, part of any of the present political groupings, nor will it form part of any that might be constituted in the future, because it understands that the mission which it is called on to fulfil within the Republic is higher than that; and that if, in the recent sad events that disturbed the normality of our life, it intervened in politics, it did so - authorised by the government - in

order to maintain public order and defend the Republic, defending justice and acting as an intermediary between social classes that were, accidentally separated by a secondary question of interests. In this intervention, there was no question of anything but principles and no question of acting in party politics (*El Mundo* 27 December 1902).

This was principally the role which various Veterans' organisations sought to play throughout the period 1902-12: as 'intermediary' between a corrupt government and a population still beholden to the *mambí* ideal. While US unions may have seen their interests as opposed to Cuban workers and Spanish workers may have seen any quality of life in the new republic as preferable to their homeland, the Centre of Veterans sought to bring the potentially internationalist and revolutionary interests of Cuban workers in line with their own nationalist interests and with their own claim to an heroic past. Their claim that Cuba was 'accidentally separated by a secondary question of interests' illustrates the kind of republic they hoped to inaugurate: one with a Cubanised administration, where the middle-class leaders who had led the independence movement would be guaranteed a secure economic position. Indeed, the aforementioned Chief of Havana Police, Rafael de Cárdenas, was at the time responsible for harsh repressions against strikers (Le Riverend 1971: 56), yet he was to go on to become active in the Veterans' organisations. While it is doubtful that supporters of annexation had led the strike, some Cuban companies took advantage of the strike to suggest that the Cuban government could not guarantee the protection of life and property (Le Riverend 1971: 58).

The Veterans' role as 'intermediary' meant that the commission designated by the 'General Assembly of Veterans', named in the same *El Mundo* article, claimed that when strikers:

return to their work they will not be persecuted in any way, and this is the condition under which the workers will concede and the strike will end.

Despite claiming to be acting over a 'Question of Principles' the Centre of Veterans did not miss an opportunity to again emphasise some of their main concerns in the same article: that of judicial power and amnesty, although they tried to tie this in with the question of the strike. When the government moved to repress the strike, the Centre of Veterans asserted that:

The Centre, is so obligated to demand immediate compliance with the process that the commission, in the name of the general assembly of veterans, has formulated, and by this means, it must demand an amnesty, without occupying itself with whom will be given amnesty,...[as] they were dedicated, in the majority of cases, before the defence of the sacred interests of the nation. The affirmation that the Centre of Veterans must not continue intervening in the definitive course of the strike, because its statutes prohibit political activity, is a true sophism neither the acts realised by this Commission, nor those which are now realised by the commission or by the Centre, are antithetical to the article which is invoked...The Centre of Veterans recognises the indisputable right of those sons of labour, and in order for the conflict to end,...[the] Executive Power...has contracted to

oppose itself to the liberty of action which MUST be recognised by the Tribunals of Justice.

It is of course, very interesting to see a Centre of Veterans, claiming to be an explicitly 'non-political' association, acting in such ways. It is difficult to establish whether the General Assembly of Veterans was a Commission acting as intermediary, and had been appointed as a delegation by the Centre of Veterans, or whether this was the other way round. What is clear is that this is very much like the delegation the Cuban Constitutional Convention sent to the United States in 1901, and, as will be seen later, the delegation of the Veterans of Independence negotiating over the Liberal Party uprising of 1906 with the United States and the Cuban President. What it certainly highlights is that these organisations were by no means a mugwump, for what kind of act after all, if not a political one, is acting as an intermediary with the executive power?

This then was one of the first manifestations of the Veterans' organisation seeking to portray itself as the authentic voice of Cuban nationalism in a corrupt republic betrayed by the traditional patronage networks of party politics. Usually veterans' organisations are thought of as inherently conservative institutions, averse to intervening in either political life or workers' struggles. Yet this supposedly civil organisation chose to on the verge of a general strike, seeking to gain the allegiance of the working-class constituency while at the same time expressing itself as the true heir of the Cuban nationalist heritage of the years 1868-98.

What is also clearly interesting is that the Centre of Veterans, while claiming to be a 'non-political' association acting merely as 'intermediary', even at this early stage sought to promote one of its own, openly political, goals: the reorganisation of

the judiciary. Moreover, they sought to connect this to the arbitrary imprisonments of political enemies and working-class militants by the President and his patronage network of judicial appointees. Of course amnesty, the abuse of judicial power, and the imprisonment of working-class militants are not issues naturally connected. Indeed, the latter was just as likely to happen under a republic as under a colony, as the Haymarket affair with which the earlier strike in Cuba of 1899 was intimately connected, graphically illustrated. What the various issues did allow the Centre of Veterans to do, however, was to capitalise on the struggles of workers and ally themselves to these, as the true voice of Cuban nationalism. This is perhaps why Marxist students in the Federacion Estudiantil Universitaria [Federation of University Students – FEU] would later see the Veterans’ association of 1923-24 as a potentially radical force, though it clearly also failed to fulfil this role at that later date.

At the root of this problem regarding the Courts, according to the Centre of Veterans, was that they were not constitutionally organised (i.e., subject to suffrage as many had proposed at the Constitutional Convention in 1901), and therefore in the same *El Mundo* article they noted:

It is not a secret to anyone – the major role of the Judicial Power, which still is not constitutionally organised, is to impose proceedings of dismissal to the Tribunals, we understand - and we continue to understand - that the concession of an amnesty will be the complete and definitive solution to all of these problems.

The Senators who were members of the Centre of Veterans recognised that the proposal suggested by the Commission of the General Assembly of Veterans about the 1902 strike must be presented to the Senate to pass a law in order to resolve the fundamental problem of the judiciary.

Therefore, with their role in the strike of 1902, the Veterans' organisations (in this instance the Centre of Veterans and the General Assembly of Veterans) had constructed themselves as the true heir to authentic Cuban nationalism. They sought to conserve the republic, unite the interests of native Cuban classes against Spanish and US domination, while at the same time connecting this with their specific aims for a general amnesty and the reorganisation of judiciary.

Continuity between the Liberal revolt of 1906 and the Veterans' protest of 1911-12

An understanding of the Liberal uprising of 1906 is instrumental to furthering an understanding of the role and place of the Veterans' organisations in the Cuban republic. Many members of the Central Revolutionary Committee of the Liberal Party of 1906 were among the membership of the Veterans of Independence of 1911-12. Likewise, many of their concerns were the same. These included the suspension of constitutional guarantees by presidential decree, presidential appointment of the judiciary, presidential appointment and designation of the powers of public administration appointees, and amnesty for common crimes. In fact as will be seen, the concerns of the Liberal revolutionaries in 1906 were due to a

vast and open manipulation of political power by the whole incumbent administration.

In many ways the demands of the Central Revolutionary Committee of the Liberals represented the feelings, grievances and hopes of the generation of 1895: military men who had been deprived of political power (which they had perhaps hoped for under the Republic) by *políticos* wary of them gaining such, and likewise, prevented from doing so by the United States. They had a large body of support for their revolt: the rank-and-file, working-class soldiers, who, with the repeated delay in the payment of the Liberation Army, were economically destitute.

Estrada Palma's rule of three and a half years was generally perceived to have fallen short of what was seen in the period as 'national rehabilitation'. Much of Cuba's agriculture lay in ruins, not much better than immediately after the war, and 60,000 veterans sought payment or employment by the state, turning to banditry when this demand was not met (Yglesia Martínez 1988: 46).⁴⁰ As was seen, 'parties' were somewhat amorphous entities coalescing around people as much as principles. Gaunaud states that there were three political parties: Republican, Democratic, and Populist. According to him, the first was protectionist, the second for free-enterprise, and the third frankly socialist (Gaunaud 1954: 136). While, until then, Estrada Palma had observed strict neutrality between these factions, with the end of his first term there appeared a radical change in his conduct (Gaunaud 1954: 137).

Admittedly attempts at direct military revolt against Estrada Palma's government had begun after barely a year in power. There were plots in July 1903 at Guanabacoa, and later at Manzanillo on an "immediate pay of the army" platform, as well as one in September at Sevilla, again on the grounds of payment for the

⁴⁰ Note the even higher figure of 60,000, as opposed to the 33,390 who had been offered payment, most of whom, as was seen, refused.

Liberation Army (Chapman 1927: 179). In order to better understand the protest of the Institution of the Veterans of Independence in 1911, it will be useful to look at the continuity between their organisation and that of the rebels of 1906. While there is some scholarship on both the 1906 uprising and the 1911 protest, there is no sustained analysis of the connections between the two. Upon closer inspection there are many such connections which will be looked at in turn in terms of the following: personnel, structure, and finally specific demands.

Personnel

According to Pichardo:

in the cabinet of Estrada Palma there has not been a single veteran of the war, nor a single one of the revolutionaries in exile, nor a single one of the men who had suffered incarceration or deportation for defending Cuba (Pichardo 1973: 357).

It was not surprising, then, that just these men would dominate the uprising. Often, they were also members of the Veterans' National Council in 1911-12 and/or the Association of 1923-24.

Carlos García Vélez is perhaps the most significant example of continuity between 1906 and 1911. He was a member of the Institution of the Veterans of Independence in 1911, and was later an Ambassador in Mexico, Argentina, the United States, England and Spain (Figarola 1974: 326-7). He helped form the

Central Revolutionary Committee in 1906, being the, “titular head of the movement in the province of Havana” (Chapman 1927: 195). Later, he was on the committee which US Governor Charles Magoon set up to advise him on the allocation of governmental positions in the new administration (Hernández 1993: 149). He would go on to be President of the Veterans and Patriots Association in 1923-24. His father was Calixto García, who had been Chief of the Eastern Forces during the Ten Years War of 1868-78, founder of the Cuban Revolutionary Committee in New York, and Military Chief of Oriente Province in the uprising of 1895 (Suchlicki 1988: 114).

Another important person linking the revolt of 1906 to the Veterans’ organisations was Mario García Menocal. The lack of a quorum during the Congress of 1904 had meant that, “the veterans were clamouring for legislation to enable them to get their bonus, of which some details had still to be arranged” (Chapman 1927: 171). According to the same source, during the revolt “[t]he veterans of the War of Independence had retained their organization intact, and they now authorized some of their leaders to take steps to effect a compromise between the two parties” (Chapman 1927: 198). While Chapman’s claim that the Veterans’ organisations had remained intact since 1898 is somewhat dubious, in the light of observations about the disbandment of the Liberation Army, their role in the events of 1906 is confirmed by others (Figarola 1974: 141). Standing between the pole represented by the revolutionaries who sought the annulment of the 1905 elections, and that represented by the government which refused any compromise, Menocal had suggested to Estrada Palma the retention of the President and Vice-president, while re-staging the 1905 municipal vote. Menocal invoked the authority of the veterans, as they were “neither in revolt nor in power” and hence represented the true heir of separatism if their suggested compromise was to save the nation from a second

intervention (Figarola 1974: 140). According to the same source, Menocal controlled the Veterans' organisations from this point until just before 1920 (Figarola 1974: 141). No less a figure than Salvador Cisneros Betancourt apparently confirms the fact that Menocal had formed a 'veterans' society', when he stated that the title of its journal would be *La Estrella Solitaria*, the same as that of Rafael Morales's journal during the Ten Years War (Secades Japón 1912: 18).

Menocal was educated in the United States. He fought in the War of 1895 under Máximo Gómez, Maceo and Calixto García, achieving the rank of Major General. He was Chief of Police in Havana during the US Military Government of 1899-1901, would be president of the republic for two terms (1913-1921), including during the First World War, the uprising of 1917 and the 'Dance of the Millions'. He then stood for the presidency in 1924 and 1936 but was defeated both times, and participated in the attempted uprising against Machado's extension of his presidential term in August 1931. He later helped draft the 1940 Constitution (Suchlicki 1988: 116-7).

General Demetrio Castillo Duany was among the first group of rebel leaders arrested after 16 August 1906 (Thomas 2001: 278). He was a signatory to the letter of 'The Veterans of Independence to the people of Cuba' on 28 October 1911 (Pichardo 1973: 361), and was Chief of Prisons under President Menocal and Secretary of War under President Zayas (Figarola 1974: 321).

Manuel Lazo was a member of the Central Revolutionary Committee of 1906 and was also a Vice-president of the Institution of Veterans in 1911 (Hernández 1993: 124, Pichardo 1973: 361). He was also one of the Senators for the Liberal Party who resigned in September 1906 (for Pinar del Río, Gaunaud 1954: 165), one of the few veterans in revolt who had a position of power in the

patronage networks. This was possibly due, however, to the fact that constitutional guarantees were only suspended in Havana, Santa Clara and Pinar del Río by Decree 380, the places of Liberal strength and also resignations.

Enrique Loynaz del Castillo was likewise a signatory to the letter of the Veterans and also a participant in the rebellion of 1906, as he had launched an attack in Havana (Hernández 124-5). He is a figure who could appear to represent some continuity not only between the revolt of 1906 and the protest of 1911, but also with the Association of Veterans and Patriots in 1923, and indeed the 'new' politics of the Machado era and beyond. He was an Honorary President in the Veterans and Patriots Association of 1923 (Cairo Ballester 1976: 100). He was a member of the opposition, Unión Nacionalista [Nationalist Union], during the government of Machado, and later a participant in the rebellion against his regime on 12 August 1933. Later still he was Ambassador for Mexico and Venezuela (Figarola 1974: 327-8).

A fellow rebel, and also a fellow signatory of the declaration in 1911 was Manuel Alfonso Seijas, who interestingly was also the founder of the Moderate Party and later active in the formation of *Joven Cuba* [Young Cuba] (Figarola 1974: 325).

When the Liberals partially achieved some of their demands following the 1906 rebellion, Agustín Cebreco was one of the spokesmen for the Liberals' peace plan (Hernández 1993: 128). He was a general in the Institution of the Veterans of Independence in 1911-12 and a member of the Association of Veterans and Patriots in 1923-24.

Finally, José J. Sánchez was a participant in the rebellion of 1906, was a general of the Association of Veterans and Patriots in 1923-24, and he was also involved in the uprising of 1917 (Figarola: 331).

Structure

The revolt of 1906 grew out of the fissiparous nature of Cuban politics. The elections of February 1904 for a National Congress resulted in a realignment of political tendencies. The two principal parties were the Conservative Republican Party, of Senator Ricardo Dolz of Havana and José Miguel Gómez (at the time the governor of Santa Clara), while the National Party reformed as the National Liberal Party (Chapman 1927: 169). Figarola notes that, likewise, the alliance between ‘left independents’ (the *masoístas*) and the ex-autonomists of the Democratic Union was opposed to the attempt by Estrada Palma at re-election and they split, with members joining either the Conservative Republicans or the National Liberals as they saw fit.

Both factions attempted to exclude the minority from representation at the local level through fraud, specifically the situation of more votes being cast than registered voters, and often dual electoral boards functioning together, with neither recognising the other. When the Conservative Republicans appeared to be winning, the National Liberals refused to attend Congress when it opened in April, making it unable to gain a quorum as the presence of two-thirds of the membership was required by the Constitution (Chapman 1927: 169-70, Thomas 2001: 276-7). Given that one of most important matters for Congress was passing a bill to increase payment to veterans, this led to a compromise, as “neither party wished to offend

this powerful electoral element” (Chapman 1927: 171). The compromise consisted of the House being constituted purely for the purpose of approving the bonus, with half the membership from the previous elections (not those of 1904), together with as many new elected members as were veterans, even though these positions had not been approved, as the aforementioned fraud had disrupted this process. Still, this strange political event indicated the influence of veterans and the urgent requirement to pay them. In September the suggestion of Ricardo Dolz was adopted, namely that since:

the constitutional requirement meant two-thirds attendance at the *beginning* of a legislative term...thereafter regular meetings might be held, with or without two-thirds of the membership. Over the protest of the National Liberals this view was adopted for the time being, and as two-thirds of the members had been present for the bonus legislation, Congress for a brief time resumed its sessions, until the recess in October (Chapman 1927: 171).

With the appeasement of the veterans, “the dominant question in Cuban politics was the next presidential elections of 1905” (Thomas 2001: 277), given that the majority agreed with Máximo Gómez that presidential “reelección es un crimen” [re-election is a crime] (Figarola 1974: 133).

Factions formed around the three groups: those in favour of Estrada Palma and the Moderate Party, those who sought compromise - the Conservative Republicans-, and those who sought to physically oust the government, the National Liberals. The division among these factions however, was complex. Those who had been young, rank-and-file soldiers in 1895 and had supported Máximo Gómez for

president were likely to be directly involved in the revolt. Those who were old generals or major-generals by 1895 and may also have supported Máximo Gómez in 1898 sought most of all to avoid US intervention, and so joined either the Moderates or the Conservative Republicans and supported the compromise. The Central Revolutionary Committee of the Liberals consisted of: José Miguel Gómez, José de Jesús Monteagudo, Demetrio Castillo Duany, Carlos García Vélez, Juan Gualberto Gómez, Pelayo García, Alfredo Zayas and Manuel Lazo. The first rising was that on 17 August by Faustino (Pino) Guerra followed by Orestes Ferrara and Eduardo Guzmán in Las Villas (Viñalis 2002: 48-49).

There was also a further incidence of the civilian-military split in forming factions. Many of the old generals and major-generals, though they may not have been in government by 1906, were powerful local governors, and did not wish to upset what they hoped to be their progression to the top, whether that hindrance came from the United States or from young veterans.

Among those in rebellion, Demetrio Castillo Duany was the Provisional Governor of Oriente (Figarola 1974: 321), while Agustín Cebreco was a representative in Oriente (Figarola 1974: 319). As mentioned earlier, Menocal was Havana's Chief of Police and he proposed the peace plan. Emilio Núñez was at the time Governor of Havana and aspired to a future presidency of the republic, a role for which he had, "the favor of General Máximo Gómez, who had become somewhat cool in his relations with Estrada Palma and was in any event opposed to his plans for reelection" (Chapman 1927: 172). He was a member of the Conservative Republicans and supported Menocal's suggestions. Clearly then, veterans were divided at the highest level over the question of revolt or compromise.

The Role of the Veterans of Independence in the 1906 Revolt

As was seen earlier, Mario García Menocal mediated between the Liberal Revolutionary Committee, the US government, Estrada Palma's Moderates, and the Veterans of Independence. According to one source Bartolomé Masó and Agustín Cebreco were leaders of the Veterans of Independence in Oriente and the latter met Estrada Palma on 1 September, though Palma refused to cede to revolutionary demands. Then the Junta de Veteranos [Assembly of Veterans] composed of Menocal, as well as Eugenio Sánchez Agramonte, Agustín Cebreco, Tomás Padro Griñán, Lope Recio Loynaz, Alberto Nodarse, Eugenio Molinet and Manuel Lazo, united so that:

For the first time since the dissolution of the Cuban Revolutionary Party the veterans of independence organised themselves and combined forces around the struggle for a common objective (Yglesia Martínez 1988: 72).

On 8 September Menocal and Sánchez Agramonte met Estrada Palma, who at first seemed to agree to the pact, but then said he would have to consult his secretaries and Méndez Capote (Collazo 1910: 60-4). A tone of conciliatory nationalism was expressed on 10 September, when tobacco workers in Santiago de Cuba, who had been on strike for four months, "inspired by patriotic feelings...adhered to the calls of the veterans to maintain order with the aim of avoiding a second intervention" and decided to return to work (Yglesia Martínez 1988: 72). The peace proposal which the Veterans suggested, that the Liberals also supported, included retaining the presidential and vice-presidential positions and re-

staging the municipal vote of 1905, but the Moderate leaders refused to accede to these terms. The Veterans of Independence then submitted their proclamation, 'To Cubans in Arms', which exhorted, in the words of that "great citizen of the 20th Century" Theodore Roosevelt, who had stated days before that intervention would be necessary to "to rescue the Isle from anarchy and civil war" (Gaunaurd 1954: 173), it was in Cuban hands to make peace and preserve the independence of the republic. The Veterans pointed out that the incumbent regime had ceased hostilities and called on the revolutionaries to respond honourably (Gaunaurd 1954: 174).

In response Estrada Palma and his Moderate-dominated Congress sanctioned an increase in the numbers of Rural Guard and Artillery, using the funds of the Treasury and postponing other public spending for this purpose. This was because at the time the police "were in sympathy with the revolution, [and] the government had only some six hundred artillery men and three thousand rural guards with which to combat its enemy" while the rebels totalled "eight or ten thousand in the province of Havana, [and]...six or eight thousand more in Santa Clara" (Chapman 1927: 197). One author puts the total number of rebels at 25,000 and states that, as during the war of 1895, they were "overwhelmingly Afro-Cuban" (Helg 1995: 137-8). On the governmental side, members of the armed forces totalled only 2,856, and when Estrada Palma attempted to recruit volunteers, many switched sides to the Liberals in order to guarantee arms (Viñalis 2002: 49-50).

By September 1906 General Montalvo had reiterated the demands of Menocal for new elections, while the Moderate Party President and the Vice-president of the republic, Méndez Capote, again called on the Liberals to first lay down arms. After this, the Liberals' same demands were reiterated for a third time by Alfredo Zayas, President of the Revolutionary Committee (Pichardo 1973: 301),

who called for a revision of “electoral, municipal, and judiciary laws and a civil service law covering government employees in general” (Chapman 1927: 207). Estrada Palma and Méndez Capote refused to go along with the peace plans, resigning their positions, while their Moderate supporters refused to attend Congress and elect successors, thus instigating the establishment of another US Provisional Government. The Liberals then dealt directly with the US Secretary of War, William H. Taft, as their letter to him shows, calling for amnesty for political crimes, signed as it was by those who in 1911 would become prominent members of the Veterans’ organisations’ leadership: Carlos García Veléz, General Demetrio Castillo Duany and Manuel Lazo (Gaurnaud 1954: 183).

Consequences of the Revolt and issues left unresolved

On 10 October 1906 ‘Provisional Governor’ Taft issued a proclamation that decreed:

a complete amnesty...for all persons who directly or indirectly participated in the recent insurrection in Cuba or who supported or helped to sustain persons who did participate, for crimes of a political nature, committed during the course of said insurrection and before the dissolution of these forces (Gaurnaud 1954: 201).

The proclamation went on to say that the amnesty did not include ‘common crimes’ and that anyone found after this date with arms or disturbing the public

peace would be held “as if they had been committed in normal conditions of the country” (Gaunard 1954: 202-3). However, this was later to result in the release of what many felt were ‘common criminals’.

In its negotiations with Taft, the ‘Commission of Peace’ of the Liberals also proposed:

A Municipal Law, in agreement with the precepts of the Constitution.

An Electoral Law, which would guarantee the representation of the minority and stipulate that the work of the election would be verified under the direction of a *neutral* Electoral Board that would have at its service the Police who would regulate registration, scrutinise and declare the result of the elections.

A Law of Employees, that would be regulated by the civil service law, and

A Law reorganising and granting total independence to the Judicial Power (Gaunard 1954: 206).

As has been seen, these issues had plagued Cuban political culture since the Constitutional Convention of 1900. They were a constant source of civil strife in 1904-6, and were later the central concerns of the Institution of Veterans of Independence of 1911-12, as will be shown. Interestingly, the proposals of Emilio Núñez’s newly founded National Party included all of the above, but also suggested that those who had taken part in the rebellion should be replaced, with the exception of those in the armed forces (de Arce 1943: 314).

In many ways, the personnel of the 1906 revolt represented generally the younger, and more militant members of the 1895-98 struggle and hence this

indicates a split in the Veterans' organisation: many of the older veterans, Emilio Núñez, Manuel Sanguily etc., though they may have had many problems with the actions of Estrada Palma and electoral fraud, did not actively engage in physical revolt (apart from being too old of course). As mentioned, Manuel Alfonso Seijas was a member of the Institution of 1911-12, and yet he was founder of the Moderate Party that coalesced around Estrada Palma. Likewise, while Manuel Despaigne was a member of Estrada Palma's 'Fighting Cabinet' at the time of the revolt and though he is not listed as a member of the Institution of 1911-12, he was Treasurer of the Association in 1923 (Cairo Ballester 1976: 102). Despaigne was one of those interviewed in March of 1924 by the *New York Times* as a representative of the Association. Later he was Assistant Secretary of State and Government under US occupation and headed the Cuban economic mission in Washington during the First World War (Pérez 1986: 210). He had also been Treasurer in US Ambassador Crowder's 'Honest Cabinet' of 1922, as he was again under Ramón Grau San Martín in 1933 (Thomas 2001: 407). The revolt of 1906 was inspired by the younger group's desire for patronage while the older veterans sought compromise and peace.

One commentator observes:

Taft thought that the stability of the neo-colonial system would depend upon the connections that must be established between property owners and politicians (Ibarra 1992: 69).

However, a more important factor was probably how to occupy the veterans of the Liberation Army. US Governor Magoon's public works programmes eased

some of this, but as has been seen, in many ways his actions legitimated and gave birth to new corruptions. Hence, all the major concerns of the revolutionaries of 1906 remained unresolved, being reiterated again by the Institution of the Veterans of Independence of 1911-12.

The Role of the Veterans' organisations under the US Provisional Government

Despite the feeling of the Moderates that the US government was recognising the legitimacy of armed rebellion, in fact, Taft had expressed his feelings earlier that “nobody in the Liberals is fit to be President”, and, in a letter to US President Roosevelt, that the idea of recognising the Liberal revolutionaries as a government “makes me shiver...it is not a government...only an undisciplined horde of men under partisan leaders” (Thomas 2001: 280). The United States had little option but to grant the Liberals patronage, however, for fear more property would be destroyed, and this they did with the Liberal-dominated committee on governmental allocations and the placing of Pino Guerra as head of the new army.

On 3 December 1906 US Governor Magoon issued Decree 206, which removed those Cubans elected to the Congress on 1 December 1905, and Senators elected on 16 March 1906, while those elected to the Senate on 24 February 1902 and those elected to the Congress in 1904 would stay in their posts. Hence, it was only the actions of the Moderates and the President during 1905-06 that were deemed illegal. New elections to replace these politicians were set for 29 September 1906 (Gaunaud 1954: 212-13).

On 24 December 1906 Magoon issued Decree 284, which established the Consultative Commission (Viñalis 2002: 58). For the next two years from 3 January 1907, the Consultative Commission would cooperate with the US Provisional Government in formulating laws prescribing the powers of the Executive, the judiciary, municipalities and provinces as well as a Civil Service Law, an Electoral Code and a Military Penal Code (Pichardo 1973: 294). It was presided over by US Colonel Enoch H. Crowder, and featured the Cubans Juan Gualberto Gómez, Erasmo Regüieiferos Boudet, Manuel García Kohly, Rafael Montoro Valdés, Felipe González Serrain, Alfredo Zayas, Manuel F. Viondi and the Americans Blanton P. Winship and Otto Schoenrich (Yglesia Martínez 1988: 81). A census was begun on 29 April 1907 with Victor H. Olmstead as director (Gaunaurd 1954: 221). The main problem for the Commission however was that:

the law of Cuba consisted of an immense rabbit warren of Spanish statutes and customs, modified by various royal decrees in the nineteenth century, by various acts of the first US occupation and by some of Estrada Palma's (Thomas 2001: 287).

Also confusing was the 'quotient' that they proposed to adopt, whereby:

[v]oters chose several candidates, numbering them in order of preference. The total of all valid votes cast would be divided by the number of places to be filled...Candidates with votes equal to or above the quotient were declared elected (Thomas 2001: 288).

According to Thomas, “Magoon did attempt in 1908 to establish a permanent civil service, though he could not create any tradition of behaviour for it.” However, a Civil Service Law was founded giving security of tenure, though it did apparently give preference to veterans. This law was promulgated on 11 January 1909 (Thomas 2001: 285).

Magoon’s Provisional Government is generally held to have been extremely corrupt and the initiator of new corruptions. According to Le Riverend, in Cuba “it is said that this regime began the *botella*”, (that is the allocation of public sinecure), because of the Provisional Government’s acceptance of the nominations of the Liberal Committee, but he points out, as does Thomas, that this practice existed under the Spanish colonial government (Le Riverend 1971: 93, Thomas 2001: 284-5).

In April 1908 there were arguments over recommendations for Civil Governorships, because they would have electoral control at the local level against the Executive power. The newly formed Conservative Party and the two Liberal factions each had their own favourites, selected from magistrates of local courts. Magoon assured the Cubans that all three parties were equally respected (Gaunaud 1954: 243-4).

There were other sources of discord in the years of the Provisional Government. In January 1907 leading Liberals were arrested over funds made from illegal cock-fighting, namely: José Miguel Gómez, Pino Guerra, and the veterans José de J. Monteagudo and Carlos Mendieta (Ibarra 1992: 307). In 1907 there was the ‘money strike’ by cigarworkers. Oddly, the US Provisional Governor Magoon declared his support for the strike when he stated that their refusal to work was “a right which every free man possesses” (Thomas 2001: 290),

though this support no doubt came because the workers sought payment in US dollars, and the United States wished to see the dominance of this over the Spanish and French currencies then circulating (IHMCRSC 1981: 267). Indeed, the ‘Presidents and Secretaries of the associations of workers in the whole island’, including those in construction, bakers, restaurant workers and metal workers wrote to Magoon during a strike by railroad workers calling on him to remedy:

the anomalies which warn of, and which disturb the path of the good life and the relations of men in society.

The letter went on to refer to precisely, the “legitimate right of free men” of the cigar workers for whom Magoon had proclaimed support, and further called for the amnesty of 33 workers illegally detained for meeting peacefully in the Workers’ Centre. An exorbitant bail of 2,000 Cuban pesos had been demanded for each incarcerated worker, which had been borrowed from the Cuban Bail Company. The authors of the letter felt that this set a dangerous precedent, as it meant that the courts did not give workers a fair hearing, as they were illegally imprisoning anybody against whom any accusations were made (IHMCRSC 1981: 275). As will be seen, the Veterans’ organisations were again to make political capital, for their own aim to reform the judiciary, out of the workers’ struggles against the courts. The United States’ authorities showed their true colours when, only a few months later in early 1908, strike breakers were employed against those seeking an eight-hour day (Viñalis 2002: 62-63).

On 2 August 1907 Salvador Cisneros Betancourt called a public meeting for all those interested in the destinies of the Cuban nation to discuss the fate of Cuba,

and on 10 October founded Junta Patriótica [Patriotic Assembly] and its journal *La Estrella Solitaria*, - the latter being the name of the journal of the liberation forces during the Ten Years War (Viñalis 2002: 63). Political factionalism continued in 1907 with the formation of the Conservative Party, led by Menocal, that, “insisted it had no relation with the old Moderates” (Thomas 2001: 288). Others state that, while there was a small ‘Palmista’ element:

those in favour of the replacement of the president in turn gathered themselves around Enrique José Varona, a figure little tainted by political activities, and with the element that had acted as mediator between the government and the liberals in 1906, largely that of Menocal, in order to form a party capable of rescuing what appeared to have been lost with the revolt of August: the capacity for a peaceful and respectful dialogue (Figarola 1974: 147).

Varona had been Secretary of Finance under the US Provisional Governor Wood, and would later become Vice-president under Menocal and a fundamental influence upon Julio Antonio Mella at the University of Havana (Suchlicki 1988: 290). The founders of the Conservative Party also included Rafael Montoro, an old Autonomist, Cuba’s foremost Hegelian philosopher, and a member of the Consultative Commission, as well as Emilio Núñez, who, until the Liberal revolt, had been Governor of Havana, merging his National Independent Party with the new Conservative Party (Gaunard 1954: 217). Núñez would be President of the Institution of Veterans of Independence in 1911-12. The Party also featured José

Antonio González Lanuza (de Arce 1943: 323) who had been Secretary of Justice and Education under US General Brooke (Thomas 2001: 245). The Party was:

drawing together reactionaries, annexationists, pro-americans, old autonomists, integrationists, right-wing intellectuals, etc.,...whose roots were buried in the disintegration of the Moderates, converting itself into an oppositional party to the Liberals projecting itself as the party of order and culture (Viñalis 2002: 82).

For their part, the Liberals had split again, between the followers of José Miguel Gómez, and those of Alfredo Zayas. The *miguelista* faction coalesced around a new Republican Party (Gaunard 1954: 217). In this context:

The principal obstacle with which the administration battled, was the distribution of public positions; because, for each place, there were a hundred hopefuls, who each put forward an identical right to claim them (Gaunard 1954: 221).

The Liberal factions of José Miguel Gómez and Alfredo Zayas fared poorly in the elections of August 1908, so they united before the elections proposed for 14 November that year. Gómez was to win the leadership battle, because he had the support of the military veterans Piedra, Loynaz and Guerra (Figarola 1974: 155). A third faction led by Eusebio Hernández represented the old *masoísta* radicalism and had support amongst the working class because of his anarchist sympathies but less among the urban middle class (Ibarra 1992: 301). The *miguelistas* and *zayistas*

triumphed when their factions united with Gómez as President and Zayas as Vice-president respectively, and power was granted to them on 28 January 1909. The Liberals had 51 Senators elected while the Conservatives had only 32.

During the period 1909-11, it was the Conservative Party and its associates who were most closely linked to the Veterans' organisations. This was largely because, while Gómez and Zayas had both been de facto veterans, they had taken their patronage networks with them to form the Republican Party and the Historical National Liberals respectively. According to Gaunaurd the *zayista* party called itself Liberal Nacional Histórico [Historic National Liberal] (Gaunaurd 1954: 243) while the *miguelistas* were the Partido Republicano [Republican Party] (Gaunaurd 1954: 217). Strangely, Viñalis asserts that the *miguelistas* were known as Partido Liberal Histórico [Historic Liberal Party] and the *zayistas* were the Partido Liberal Nacional [National Liberal Party] (Viñalis 2002: 84). What seems most likely is, that the *miguelistas* represented the federalist faction of Las Villas, while the network behind Zayas represented a more centralist tendency, perhaps many of them the old followers of Máximo Gómez. Not surprisingly, both factions sought to portray themselves as the 'historic' Liberal tendency.

Patrimonial practices plagued Cuban politics, as these factions, once they united and took power, were to award places in both the national government and to public positions at the local level to their own clients, thus denying the Conservative faction power. Not surprisingly, with the triumph of Menocal's Conservative Party, in 1913, many of the prominent Conservatives in the Veterans' organisations, such as Emilio Núñez were temporarily appeased, and hence the movement declined as a force until the crisis of 1921 gave resurgence to nationalist ideals. Likewise, it is not surprising that prominent Liberals such as Ernesto Asbert, denied power due to

patrimonial networks after 1913 were to become involved with the Veterans' organisations. In this way it appears that the Veterans' organisations acted as a kind of dual patronage network and pressure group. While ostensibly 'non-political' the organisations were composed of personnel denied power in one way or another by incumbent administrations and represented an alternative patronage network offering hope to these individuals.

It was in this context of continued political factionalism and patrimonial practices that:

A truly important meeting,...has taken place in the halls of the periodical *La Discusión*. Those present are trying to bring about the consolidation of the nascent and already strong Association of Veterans, established at the initiative of Mario Menocal and supported by the most honourable elements in Cienfuegos, Oriente and the capital. A great number of veterans, already organised and arriving from different areas of the Island, came to this place with the object of exchanging ideas and to try to bring about the realisation of this patriotic project (Secades Japón 1912: 26).

Present at this meeting, amongst others, were:

Generals Carlos García Vélez, Rafael de Cárdenas, Manuel Alfonso, Colonels Antolín Martínez, Orencio Nodarse, Ignacio Almagro, Mario Díaz, Aurelio Hevia, Manuel María Coronado, José Clemente Vivanco, Luis de Cárdenas, Eulogio Sardiñas y Roig, and also "other numerous chiefs, officials,...and soldiers", such as Alberto de Cárdenas, Colonel Manuel Piedra, Captain Antonio Bolet, General

Armando Sánchez Agramonte, Colonel Lucás Alvarez Cerice, Commander Cruz Muñoz, and Manuel Secades Japón. Those in attendance then democratically appointed a provisional committee composed of Carlos García Vélez, Rafael de Cárdenas and Orencio Nodarse (Secades Japón 1912: 27). During the War of Independence Rafael de Cárdenas was a Division General while Armando Sánchez Agramonte and García Vélez himself had been Brigadier Generals (www.cubagenweb.org/mil/mambi/corps.htm).

This then, was the first instance of the ‘Association of Veterans’. It declared itself to be a direct descendant of both the Junta de Veteranos of Menocal, which acted as a mediator during the 1906 revolt, as well as of local veterans’ clubs. The most interesting aspect, however, is the personnel. Clearly García Vélez and Menocal were the most prominent *políticos* of the movement (though also themselves authentic military veterans). Sánchez Agramonte was present with Menocal during the mediation with Estrada Palma and he would later become Chief of Police in Havana. Manuel María Coronado was later to be the director of the periodical *La Discusión* (Roig de Leuchsenring 1974: 104), which would be a mouthpiece for the Veterans’ movement, and he was also a member of the Institution of 1911-12, as were Aurelio Hevia, Eulogio Sardiñas and Manuel Secades Japón. Hevia was to become a Conservative politician, and his son Carlos participated in the Gibara uprising of 1931 (Thomas 2001: 415), and was briefly president in 1934. Orencio Nodarse had been a member of the Council of Government (Ibarra 1992: 423).

In terms of personnel what is more conspicuous was those who were absent: General Demetrio Castillo Duany, Manuel Lazo, Enrique Loynaz del Castillo, Manuel Alfonso Seijas, Agustín Cebreco and José J. Sánchez. These were all

prominent military rebels in 1906 and also of the members of the Institution of 1911-12. Clearly however, these men were happy enough with their positions after the revolt not to attend this meeting. Manuel Alfonso Seijas was the founder of the Moderates, who supported Estrada Palma, and no doubt returned to politics as usual. Castillo Duany was to achieve prominence in the Liberal Party under Menocal and Zayas and was perhaps busy working towards this goal, while Manuel Lazo had been a Liberal who had resigned in 1906 and returned to his post.

What is clear is that those personnel present at the meeting were veterans who had failed to achieve patronage in the new regime. García Vélez and Castillo Duany obviously consolidated their Liberal careers with the intervention of 1906-9, when they became part of the Committee advising Magoon on the allocation of governmental positions, which also featured other *políticos* who flirted with the Veterans' organisations: notably Zayas and Ernesto Asbert. While *políticos* such as García Vélez and Menocal maintained their connections with the Veterans' organisations even while they exercised real positions of power (though this was no doubt to maintain their own patronage networks), others obviously felt no need to be active in the movement when they were given a place in the administration somewhere. This perhaps explains why many of the personnel present at this foundational meeting of the Association of Veterans are largely unknown to Cuban historiography. It is clear that access to political power usually flowed hierarchically downward in line with past military rank, and those with a higher rank were more likely to have participated in the rebellion, or had been granted patronage in the Liberal Party, or the administration established by Magoon. Also clear is that this Association of Veterans did not successfully achieve the hoped for consolidation into a 'patriotic project' at this time.

The Veterans' organisations in the years 1909-11

The inauguration of the *miguelista-zayista* coalition did not put an end to the role of the Veterans' organisations as a patriotic pressure group and patronage network. In early 1909, the Association of Cuban Revolutionary Emigrés published a pamphlet calling for Cubans to fight political corruption, and adherence to the platform of the Cuban Revolutionary Party and the Manifesto of Montecristi (Viñalis 2002: 65). On 14 February 1909 at the Hotel Telégrafo in Havana, a “unión de los Veteranos en toda la isla, como Institución Patriótica y Benéfica” [union of the Veterans in all of the island as a Patriotic and Benevolent Institution], was proposed with the following present: Generals Salvador Cisneros, Enrique Collazo and Enrique Loynaz del Castillo, Colonels Cosme de la Torriente, Manuel Aranda, José D'Estrampes and Nazario R. Feo, Lieutenant Colonels Miguel Zaldivar, and Avelino Sanjenís, Commanders Benjamín Sánchez Agramonte, Caspar N. Betancourt and Ramón Cordovés and Captain Felipe Alberty (Secades Japón 1912: 33). Also present were Lieutenant Colonel Alfredo Nodarse and Sublieutenant José M. Carbonell (de Arce 1943: 338).

Manuel Aranda presented a motion that suggested:

First: That an opportunity has arisen to bring together various comrades in this place in order that they may exchange ideas.

Second: That those gathered here will discuss firstly if it will be convenient to establish a formal nationwide union of all the Veterans.

Third: Given that political life is divided between those veterans who are content and those who are not, we will search for a means to reconcile their differences so that a union will be possible.

Fourth: We present the warm welcome that we have always offered previous governments, asking of the new President that he does not commit the same errors as them, and hope that he will offer us his support, that he will recognise the constitution of the Centres of Veterans as a necessary patriotic institution.

Fifth: That a commission will be named to ask President Gómez if it will be possible that those Veterans who have been removed will be returned to their posts or to similar positions.

...Seventh: While it is a certain that the Constitution does not establish personal privileges, no one can deny the necessity of the Government to support those men who knew how to make this country free, because they will know how to sustain peace and defend the Republic (de Arce 1943: 338-9).

Here then, in 1909, was another attempt to establish a national Veterans' body. Also alluded to was a 'division' between veterans who are 'content' and those who are not. More interesting is the change in personnel. Salvador Cisneros Betancourt (the Marquis de Santa Lucía) was linked to the rebellion of 1851 and had been imprisoned in Spain for this. He was a leader of the 1868 rebellion in Yara, becoming President of the Chamber of Representatives during the War and succeeding Carlos Manuel de Céspedes as President of the rebel government in 1873-5. After José Martí's death he was voted President of the same body until the

end of the independence struggle. After 1898 he was in the Constitutional Assembly at Guaímaro and participated in the national Constitutional Convention of 1901 (Suchlicki 1988: 62). His government during the Ten Years War was, “composed exclusively of planters” (Thomas 2001: 155) and he was very much a *político*, not a military man.

Enrique Collazo fought in the Ten Years War as an aide to Máximo Gómez and in the War of Independence with Calixto García. After 1902 he was elected to the House of Representatives (Suchlicki 1988: 66). He was also the founder of the Democratic Union (Figarola 1974: 325-6).

As mentioned earlier Enrique Loynaz del Castillo was a rebel of 1906 and a member of the Institution of 1911-12 and the Association of 1923-24.

Cosme de la Torriente was perhaps the most significant member of the movement. During the War of Independence he served under Calixto García and Máximo Gómez. During the US occupation he was Magistrate of the Provincial Courts, and later a diplomat in Spain. He held the positions of General Secretary, Vice-president, and eventually President of the Conservative Party. In 1918 he became a Senator and, under President Menocal, he was the first Cuban Secretary of State. He was, along with Carlos Mendieta, a founder member of the Unión Nacionalista [Nationalist Union] that opposed Machado’s monopoly of political power. He was later to go on to oppose Batista (Pérez 1991: 294, Suchlicki 1988: 276).

While Sánchez Agramonte had been a Brigade General, Aranda, D’Estrampes, Feo, Zaldivar, Sanjenís, Caspar N. Betancourt, Cordovés and Alberty are largely absent from the historiography mentioning the Veterans’ movement as

they were below the Division General or Brigade General level.⁴¹ No doubt they were the veterans who felt discontent. It can be seen that the *políticos* of the higher levels were beginning to manipulate this nationalist discontent of the rank-and-file veterans as a means of gaining a political following for those otherwise, or temporarily, unaligned in the patronage networks of the political parties after 1906. While the main concern of the veterans in 1906, as with all complainants, had been re-election, in 1909 the veterans began to concern themselves with public administration appointees.

In 1909 the Junta Patriótica [Patriotic Assembly] of Havana was formed by Salvador Cisneros Betancourt. He declared the organisation to be in search of ‘absolute independence or death’ and sought to resurrect the content of the PRC programme of the years 1895-98, as the Junta Patriótica felt that none of the political parties represented the principles of the institution created by Martí. The other major concern of the Junta Patriótica was US economic penetration of Cuba (Viñalis 2002: 121). At the same time, the veteran Manuel Piedra criticised the corruption of the Arsenal lands and Cuban Ports Company contracts, (which involved lucrative contracts being awarded to private firms with members of the government as shareholders), in *La Discusión* (Viñalis 2002: 122). The Junta Patriótica proposed a “Great Cuban Revolutionary Party”, which would inaugurate a “vast plan of reform”, claiming that the government of Gómez had resulted in a “circle with the same problems” (Secades Japón 1912: 42). At this time however, these reforms were not forthcoming.

⁴¹ For Liberation Army ranks, see www.cubagenweb.org/mil/mambi/corps.htm

On 29 January 1910, Salvador Cisneros Betancourt and Cosme de la Torriente addressed a letter from ‘The Veterans of Independence to the People of Cuba’. This stated that:

It is true that the Constitution establishes that all Cubans are equal before the Law and that the Republic does not recognise personal privileges or positions, but equally subject to the law is the fact that Congress cannot be prevented from its power to legislate with a sense of exclusion certain Cubans from the exercise of certain rights or that the Government and the Courts can recognise some rights and privileges that they will not be able to grant to other Cubans (Secades Japón 1912: 52).

This was the first example of the Veterans of Independence explicitly expressing the desire that the government use its power as a vehicle of ‘Cubanisation’: to grant patronage to native Cubans by privileging them over Spanish public employees. Or at least, over those Cubans who had sympathised, sided with, or fought for the Spanish during the War of Independence. In any case, there is no doubt that these people were the ‘certain Cubans’ alluded to.⁴²

On 2 July 1910 a statement from the Veterans of Independence signed by Salvador Cisneros Betancourt and Cosme de la Torriente criticised the government over the Arsenal lands and Villanueva railway projects for giving these contracts to US interests (Secades Japón 1912b: 85). On 25 July 1910 Manuel Aranda addressed an open letter to President Gómez rhetorically asking:

⁴² Apparently many native Cubans had served as “irregular gangs” and “guerrillas” for the Spanish Army (Collazo 1967: vi).

How can you govern well, if in your government, the majority of those employed are traitors to the nation? How can you govern well, if the only Cuban newspaper that defends and applauds you is directed and administered by traitors? How can you govern well, if there is not a single guerrilla in this Republic who is not content...? (Secades Japón 1912b: 86).

By the middle of 1910 then, with continued political corruption under the new regime, calls for Cubanisation of the administration were growing. Clearly associations, institutions, and groupings of veterans consisted of different factions themselves. Salvador Cisneros Betancourt had always been a *político*: very much involved in the civil aspects of the revolutionary struggle and revolutionary government. Enrique José Varona, Mario García Menocal, and even Emilio Núñez were all Conservatives and held important positions of power in the national government, at least would do after Menocal's election as president in 1913. On the other hand, Enrique Loynaz Castillo, José J. Monteagudo, Carlos García Vález himself, Manual Aranda, Manual Lazo and others were not only military veterans, but also 1906 revolutionaries. Others, few in number, such as Demetrio Castillo Duany (Chief of Prisons under Menocal), were veterans, revolutionaries and *políticos* at the same time.

The Veterans' organisations openly sought to portray themselves as the authentic voice of Cuban nationalism, highlighting grievances and political corruptions in the republic and acting as a supposedly politically neutral mediator. However, the various organisations were dominated by different individuals and leaders (despite their assertions to the contrary), sometimes *políticos*, sometimes military men, sometimes Conservatives, sometimes Liberals, sometimes those who

already held important positions in local or national government, sometimes those who did not. These groupings at times played on workers' grievances also, but purely for their own ends, as a means of pressing their political agenda.

These aims revolved chiefly around the Cubanisation of public positions, with the hope of establishing a civil service that was permanently selective in nominations of veterans. While this element of their nationalism was certainly authentic (the organisations were composed, after all, of native or naturalised Cubans who had served honourably in the Liberation Army), their vision of a politically ideal republic was biased very much in favour of certain political goals: the reform of the judiciary (specifically the ending of presidential appointments), amnesty for the rebels of 1906, and the establishment of the aforementioned bias in public appointees. The Veterans' organisations, however, were dominated by the Cuban-born bourgeoisie, those who had lost property and holdings with the end of slavery and the destruction of large parts of the economy during war-time, and they therefore sought positions of wealth in the only institution left open to them: the Cuban state.

Clearly each new crisis in Cuban affairs brought the Veterans further disillusionment, whether that was the strikes in 1902 and 1907, the revolt of 1906, the US Provisional Government, or the continuing corruptions under José Miguel Gómez. Indeed, apart from Zayas himself, no important members of the Veterans' organisations gained patronage at the level of national government.⁴³

⁴³ The cabinet under José Miguel Gómez consisted of: Marcelino Díaz de Villegas, Luis Octavio Diviñó, Matías Duque Perdomo, Nicolás Alberdi Golzarri, Benito Lagueruela Rubio, Justo García Vélez, Ortelio Foyo Portal, Ramón Meza and Suárez Inclán (Viñalis 2002: 102). None of these names appear in the Veterans' organisations.

In 1913, with the election of Menocal, many members of the Veterans' organisations achieved real power and patronage as the faction that coalesced around him contained many of the same individuals. However, even this was not to satisfy many of the personnel involved in the Veterans' organisations who carried on using the movement as a vehicle of nationalism and patronage. This will be looked at in the next chapter. For now, the protest of 1911-12 must be looked at in detail, both to see how the Veterans' organisations were partly appeased in the years 1911-13, but also the continuity of their protest and the grievances left unresolved.

The Institution of Veterans of Independence of 1911-12

Clearly, the various Veterans' organisations remained closely tied to political parties at both the local and national level throughout the republican period. It is also clear that these organisations were very much a kind of 'front', utilised, and even manipulated, to pressurise those in power to grant power to those without it. However, many of the personnel were in fact previously members of, or later to gain positions of prominence in, both regional and national government. Moreover it is clear that within the Veterans' organisations themselves there were varying factions: those close to Menocal, Núñez and the Conservatives, those close to the Liberal revolutionaries of 1906, and those close to Salvador Cisneros Betancourt and his followers.

Two factors gave rise to the prominence of the Institution of Veterans in 1911-12. The failure of the Gómez government to either end political corruption or Cubanise the civil service meant that the aims of the various Veterans' organisations (as well as a large percentage of the Cuban population) continued to be frustrated.

Two years after the end of the US occupation nationalist feelings ran as high as they did in 1906, as the second republic established after US interventions failed to deliver. Frustration with the Liberals' brand of nationalism meant that the Veterans' organisations were again to acquire, and indeed change, personnel based on who achieved patronage and who did not.

Linked to this political corruption, but in truth a factor in the resurgence of nationalism itself, was the continued neo-colonial role of US corporate interests in the Cuban economy. The scandals of the Arsenal lands and the Cuban Ports Company, the muzzling of the press by Orestes Ferrara's 'national defence' law, the death of Rural Guard Captain Manuel Lavastida and the planned rebellion by General Vicente Miniet all played a part in the resurgence of nationalist revolt.

In their opening statement 'To the people of Cuba', the Veterans spoke of a "great movement of national consciousness agitating Cuban society" (Pichardo 1973: 358). In the light of the corrupt politics of the era, and the failure of a real independence to emerge under the tutelage of the United States and the Platt Amendment, the Veterans claimed to be the legitimate heirs of this consciousness. They invoked José Martí's promise of a 'Republic with all and for the good of all'.

In this context, from the inauguration of the Republic in 1902, until the beginnings of dictatorship with the election of Machado in 1924, there was a considerable convergence of anti-US feeling between *políticos*, students, radicals, militant workers, and Liberation Army veterans, which coalesced around the Veterans' organisations. All had united around the banner of national liberation, and so all wished to benefit, much as Martí's slogan implied.

Structure

The National Council of Veterans was a democratic, constitutional organisation, structured much like a political party. Chapter 1, Article 1, of the Regulations of the Institution of Veterans of Independence declared that:

The object of this institution, to be called, The Veterans of Independence, will be to work in peace for the realisation and consolidation of the Republic of Cuba, to preserve the memory of the glorious martyrs and great achievements of the Independence movement, to ensure help for those who personally took part in the struggle, and for their widows and orphans, and to promote the instruction and progress of the Cuban people (Secades Japón 1912: 2).

The term 'realisation' perhaps hints at the disgruntlement of the Veterans with the contemporary political background.

The Council consisted of a General Assembly which met on 12 August every three years, a Territorial Assembly which met every two years on 24 February, and a Local Assembly that came together once a year on 10 October.⁴⁴ Its avowed aim, according to Article 5, was to protect all those who had taken part in the Revolution, with emphasis upon the families who had lost lives and their orphans (Secades Japón 1912: 1-12)

⁴⁴ The dates are significant: the first being the date of the official ceasefire in 1898, the second being the launching by Martí of the final successful campaign against Spanish rule, and the last being the anniversary of the Grita de Baire which began the independence struggle.

The Council had a top-down, hierarchical structure. The “supreme authority of the Institution” resided in the General Assembly, whose agreements would be executed by the General Council. Below the General Assembly, the, “superior authority in the territory will reside in a Territorial Assembly” whose Territorial Council “will resolve with executive force all issues related to the Institution in the territory”. Below the Territorial Assembly was the Local Council which “will also resolve with executive force, all issues which effect the Institution in the locality and its jurisdiction”.

The General Assembly was composed of a delegate from each Local Council, and, if the membership of a local assembly exceeded 500, then it would be split and each half would vote upon a delegate to the council. The Territorial Assembly was formed in the same way. The Assemblies were presided over by the Presidents of the Councils. If these individuals were also delegates, they would have the right to vote in both Assemblies. The Secretaries of the Assemblies however, could only vote as delegates. In order for the General Assembly to enact an agreement, it would be necessary for more than half of the delegates or ‘long-standing and honourable members’ to be present. If they were not, the President would convoke a second meeting that would deliberate for 60 days in the case of a General meeting, 30 for a Territorial one and 15 for a local one.

The ‘long-standing and honourable members’ could only vote in the local assemblies, but they were eligible to be Honorary President of the Local Councils, directors of Territorial Assemblies and delegates of the General Assembly. Although they need not have been members of the Veterans’ organisation, they had to have fought for the revolutionary camp. The General Council would reside in the same city as the national government, and it would be composed of delegates elected by

each Territorial Council. The General Council would direct the Institution and the positions of delegate would last for three years, from 15 December. The Council would be responsible for the Territorial elections. The President, Secretary and Treasurer of the General Council would be designated by secret ballot. Councillors would be replaced upon death, resignation, absence, or disagreement with the judgements of the Council. Replacements would come from the appropriate Territorial or Local Councils, but those empowered in this way would serve only briefly until new elections could be held (Articles 10-24, Secades Japón 1912: 2-17).

The Presidents of the Council would sign and authorise documents given by the Council, and lead the discussions and execute the resolutions of the Council. The Secretaries kept the minutes book during the meetings of the Councillors in session, recorded the votes that they made, as well as keeping a record of all the payments made by the President. The Local Council Secretaries kept a record of all members of the organisation and the military or civilian status they had held in the revolutionary camp.

After the General and provincial Councils were formed, only they could vote for the delegates to the Assemblies corresponding to these Councils, with the exception of the Local Assemblies, where the Local Council had more than one year of office. When voting for more than one Councillor or more than one delegate of a Council, in an Assembly, each elector would vote for both in the same ballot. Until the election of Territorial Councils, the Local Council based in the capital of that territory would carry out territorial functions, and when there was sufficient number the Territorial Councils would be elected. When the majority of the Territorial Councils were formed they would elect the General Council. The first meeting of the Local Councils was on 10 October 1899, the first meeting of the Territorial Councils

on 10 April 1900, and the first meeting of the General Council was on 15 December 1901 (Secades Japón 1912: 10-12).

Personnel

The most concise list of the personnel of the National Council of Veterans is given in *La Última Hora* on 7 December 1911 (Appendix I). Núñez had been Governor of Havana, and founder of the Conservative Party by merging his National Independent Party with it as noted previously. He became Secretary of Agriculture during Menocal's first presidency and Vice-president during his second. His relative success politically, was mainly because of his position within the Conservative Party.

Manuel Lazo was a revolutionary in 1906. Manuel Secades Japón had been present at the meeting in the halls of *La Discusión* when an 'association' of veterans had been proposed. Manuel Aranda had been present at the meeting of 14 February 1909 at the Hotel Telégrafo, and it was he who had dictated the proposal to Cubanise the administration.

As noted earlier, Enrique Loynaz del Castillo was likewise a participant in the rebellion of 1906 and during the government of Machado a participant in the rebellion against his regime on 12 August 1933. As noted earlier he was present at the meeting at the Hotel Telégrafo in 1909.

Juan E. Ducassi attempted a minor uprising during 1907 (Chapman 1927: 257). José Miró Argenter was Antonio Maceo's Chief of Staff during the War of Independence, and afterwards the Director of the Archives of the Army of

Liberation. He founded the periodicals *La Doctrina*, *El Liberal* and *Vida Militar* (Suchlicki 1988: 190). Agustín Cebreco was a rebel of 1906, and was a founder of the Partido Nacional Cubano [Cuban National Party] a representative for Oriente, and a prominent Conservative (Figarola 1974: 319).⁴⁵

Pedro Díaz Molina was a delegate for Pinar del Río (Figarola 1974: 319). Hugo Robert was Chief of Sanitation for the Rural Guard (Figarola 1974: 330). Francisco Carrilo Morales was a provincial Governor of Oriente and would go on to become Vice-president of the republic in 1921 and 1925 (Figarola 1974: 319). José Fernández de Castro was three times representative for Oriente, twice Vice-president of the House and also Mayor of Bayamo (Figarola 1974: 326). Francisco de P. Valienete was Official of the Rural Guard and later President of the National Council of Veterans (Figarola 1974: 331). Carlos González Clavel was a Congressman and Senator (Figarola 1974: 327). José Manuel Capote was Mayor of Las Villas (Figarola 1974: 319). Javier de la Vega was President of the Council of Veterans in Camgüey (Figarola 1974: 324). Pedro E. Betancourt was a physician trained in the United States and was imprisoned in Spain for his part in the 1895 uprising in Manatanzas. He escaped and joined another expedition to Cuba in 1896. He represented Mantanzas in the Santa Cruz Assembly and in the Constituent Assembly of 1901 and was later a Senator and Minister of Agriculture (Suchlicki 1988: 27). General Remigio Marrero was a representative and inspector of woodlands and mines (Figarola 1974: 328). Alejandro Rodríguez was a Mayor of Havana and Head of the Rural Guard (Figarola 1974: 323). Clearly all of these men were powerful *políticos* who already held positions of power in the regime, or would go on to do so.

⁴⁵ He was one of the few non-white Conservatives.

Lopez Recio Loynaz was Governor of Camagüey and a businessman (Figarola 1974: 323), Marianao Torres was a land owner (Figarola 1974: 324), Pedro A. Pérez was a Mayor of Guantánamo and a land owner (Figarola 1974: 320). Francisco Estrada was a Customs Inspector for Manzanillo and a farm owner (Figarola 1974: 322), Luis de Feria was an inspector of woodlands and mines and a farm owner (Figarola 1974: 322), José Rogelio Castillo was to become Inspector General of prisons (Figarola 1974: 321), Maximiliano Ramos was an inspector of woodlands and mines, and a co-founder of three parties: the Republican Party, the Moderates, and the Conservatives (Figarola 1974: 329), Vicente Miniet was an administrator of the postal service in Santiago de Cuba and a shrewd businessman (Figarola 1974: 328), as well as leader of a potential conspiracy in July 1912 (Thomas 2001: 305). Pedro Vásquez was a representative of the House and on a commission as inspector of the countryside (Figarola 1974: 324), Francisco Leyte Vidal was a Mayor of Marianao and President of the House of Representatives (Figarola 1974: 322), Víctor Ramos was a landowner (Figarola 1974: 329), Tomás Padró Griñán was a mayor of Santiago de Cuba and director of the National Laboratory (Figarola: 329), Pedro Ivonet was active with Evaristo Estenoz in the foundation of the Independent Party of Colour and was arrested for this in April 1910 (Thomas 2001: 308). Alberto Nodarse was a Representative and a Senator and was a tobacco and agricultural business owner (Figarola 1974: 323); Daniel Gispert was a doctor and became Secretary of Health (Figarola 1974: 327). Clearly then, the Institution of Veterans also included many members of the *criollo* bourgeoisie, who no doubt hoped to use the movement as a means to ensure economic dominance for native born Cubans by utilising the state as a means of Cubanisation.

Manuel María Coronado and Aurelio Hevia had both been present at the meeting in the halls of *La Discusión* that announced the emergence of the Association of Veterans. Manuel Sanguily fought in the Ten Years War, and he later wrote for Varona's magazine *Revista Cubana*. He was a General with his brother Julio in the Western provinces in the War of Independence (Thomas 2001: 173). Later he became a member of the Assembly of Santa Cruz, a member of the Constitutional Convention for Havana in 1901, Director of the Institute of Havana, President of the Senate, Secretary of State under José Miguel Gómez and Inspector-General of the Armed Forces under Menocal (Suchlicki 1988: 254-5).

Carlos Mendieta was Inspector of Health under the Provisional Government of 1902. He was a representative in the House of Congress in 1908, 1912 and 1916. He was Zayas's Vice-president in 1916 (Thomas 2001: 418), participated in the rebellion of 1917 (Thomas 2001: 318), in 1927 he helped found the Nationalist Union (Pérez: 269), and in 1931 he was Menocal's second in command in his uprising against Machado (Thomas 2001: 360). In 1934 he became Batista's first 'puppet' President, suspending constitutional guarantees (Thomas 2001: 427), and resigned in 1936 "an honest man among thieves" (Thomas 2001: 435).

José Clemente Vivanco and Manuel Piedra had been present at the meeting at *La Discusión*. Ernesto Asbert was a Governor of Havana at one time a *miguellista* and later a follower of Menocal (Thomas 2001: 305). Captain Oscar Soto y Calderón was to become Secretary General of the Association of Veterans in 1923.

In some sense, then, the Veterans' claims to be 'non-political' were true. Featuring Conservatives, Liberals and Moderates, it is easy to accept this claim on the surface, that the Institution was simply a 'benevolent' and 'patriotic' association. Clearly, however, any organisation that contained such a broad cross-section of the

upper-echelons of the Cuban political class, provincial governors and economic advisors, figures close to actual and future presidents, is unlikely, in fact, to be ‘non-political’. Internally, the Veterans’ organisations, like the political parties mentioned, were mired in factionalism, and, as discussed earlier, these factions could easily re-emerge: that of the young men of 1895 and the Liberal revolutionaries of 1906, those of Menocal, Núñez and the Conservatives, and those of civilian *políticos* seeking to utilise the organisation as a constituency of political support (though figures such as Salvador Cisneros are absent from this list of 1911).

Locally and nationally these factions may have sub-divided and merged, based on the patronage networks linked to, or even formally elaborated in, the political parties. In the background however, the Veterans’ organisations retained the claim to a detached and non-political expression of authentic nationalism periodically ‘betrayed’ by these political parties, and hence, individuals could return to these organisations and reject their party connections as they saw fit, if new allegiances were necessary to gain patronage in the administrative networks.

The Veterans’ protest of 1911-12

The most notable of the Veterans’ protests contained in current historiography is that of late 1911. On 5 September “the veterans launched a full-scale attack on the Spanish sympathizers and Spaniards who had remained in the civil service since before 1895” (Thomas 2001: 305). On 10 October the Association of Veterans and the Junta Patriótica joined forces, writing to the press to criticise the

administration (Viñalis 2002: 129). On 28 October they submitted their letter ‘To the People of Cuba’ (Pichardo 1973: 358).

On 11 November the Government complied with the Veterans’ demands, at least on the issue of the Civil Service Law. The ‘presentations of the Government and of the Veterans’ declared the following:

FIRST When it is accepted that it is convenient, there will be an immediate and effective purge of personnel who serve in the public positions of the Nation, in order to assure, once and for all, that these same posts are occupied by Cubans of honest history.

SECOND In order to attain this end, all legal means will be employed to remove from important positions in the Central Administration, those functionaries whom, it can demonstrated took up arms against the cause of Independence, in whichever of the separatist wars, who would not have been reinstated if the revolution had triumphed...

SIXTH Wage-earning and day-labourer public employees will be excluded from the previous clauses, as will be those employees of the National Executive whose salary does not exceeded \$1,000-00 per annum in Havana or \$6,00-00 in the provinces; instead, preference will be given, in order to cover these posts, in equality of circumstances, to those Cubans referred to in the first clause (Secades Japón 1912: 71).

The signatories to these presentations were F. López Leúva, Ignacio Ramirez, Jesús M. Barraqué, Manuel Sanguily, and Gerardo Machado.

What is most interesting is the sixth clause: while the Institution of Veterans declared themselves ‘non-political’ and were supposedly a democratic organisation, responsible to its rank and file, clearly there was a firm control for definite aims at the top of the organisation, the number of veterans earning \$1,000 per annum in Havana or \$600 in the provinces, no doubt being a very small fraction. It must have been purely coincidental that ‘Cubans of honest history’ were those on the higher end of the public payroll. In fact this is symptomatic of the personnel and purpose of the Institution of Veterans: a patronage network of high-level *políticos*, provincial governors, even shadow cabinet ministers and presidents and vice-presidents of the parties in opposition.

While the government did comply with the Veterans’ demands, the major concern of those who questioned this was the ‘retroactive’ effect of suspension of the Civil Service Law and of any new law that would take its place. The Civil Service Law itself related to the protection of public appointees and guaranteed their ‘immovability’ (presumably excepting gross misconduct and corruption, at least theoretically). Many did not oppose the principle of Cubanisation of the civil service when the demand for it inevitably came, though they hoped that the temporary suspension of the Civil Service Law that protected these workers would only apply to new appointees to public positions.

This was not the hope of the Veterans however. For them the Republic had been corrupt since its inception because of the US intervention that had protected Spaniards due to the liquidation of the forces of *Cuba Libre*. They sought to oust those who had remained in power since before 1895, attempting a wholesale redistribution of public positions to Cubans of ‘honest history’, which would be made possible by the removal of all Spanish or pro-Spanish sympathisers. Indeed,

this was the explicit aim of their campaign. The problem here was that Article 12 of the Cuban Constitution stated that ‘no law shall have retroactive effect’, with the certain exception of creating amnesty laws for prisoners.

The first Civil Service Law had been implemented in 1909 as a product of Magoon’s attempts to establish stable government. According to this:

The Civil Service Law, in the second of its provisional regulations establishes that, the functionaries and employees at that date, the first of July 1909 who find themselves in possession of these posts, will be considered immovable and they can only be removed from these same positions by the methods and in the form established in said law (Administrative Gazette 15 December 1911, Secades Japón 1912: 145).

This law applied to public employees who had been in place since before 1895, including those who had fought for or collaborated with Spanish forces and volunteers. Not only did the Veterans seek the suspension of this law, but they also wanted this suspension to have retroactive effect, i.e., in order to enable the removal of those who had been in their positions since before 1895.

When the demands of the Veterans were debated in the House of Representatives, Orestes Ferrara and the Conservatives suggested suspending the Civil Service Law for only six months in a proposed amendment. For their part, ‘the amendment of the zayistas’ including Cuellar del Rio and Campos Marquetti also proposed a suspension for only six months. Suspension of the Civil Service Law was approved, by a vote of 36 to 22. However, the Senate modified it so that Article I declared:

For a period of 18 months, all the laws which guarantee the immovability of public functionaries and employees will be suspended, with reference to the part of said law which guarantees this immovability (Regulation for the execution of the Law of 13 December 1911, Secades Japón 1912: 145).

The implementation of this process of Cubanisation was granted to the President of Cuba with Article II that stated:

The Executive will dictate the regulations necessary for compliance with this Law (Secades Japón 1912: 145).

The same Regulation recognised the partisan nature of Cuban politics and the potential for patrimonial abuses when it went on to state:

It is not the wish of the Executive that this Law will allow itself to be used in its hands as a weapon against the political parties, authorised as it is in order to remove liberally from public positions, those employees to whom the Law today offers no protection. It is hoped that, on the contrary, it will assure the most absolute guarantee to the political parties and give the functionaries of all classes the most complete security, whose posts will be respected (Secades Japón 1912: 145).

It is not surprising, in light of the practices of patronage and patrimonialism in the political parties studied in the preceding chapters, that the President felt the need to give these assurances to the parties. After all, this was an historic moment: the government and the Veterans' organisation collaborating to inaugurate an authentic Cubanisation of the state. Given the failure of the first four years of Cuban government (of 1902-6), itself pre-dated by a compromised independence, any governmental proposals had to be held up to the light for fear of corruption. All those public appointees, to whom the new Law did not refer, namely those who had not fought against independence and who did not earn the salaries stated, would remain in place.

Article IV of the new legislation proposed:

A Commission will be named that will be composed of an individual from the Conservative Party, another from the Liberal Party, and two members of the Council of Veterans, with a President assigned by the Executive, and this Commission will familiarise itself with charges, investigate all the evidence, and definitively resolve these cases (Secades Japón 1912: 145)

This then, was a significant grant of power to the Veterans' organisation that previously had evaded them. Moreover, it was an eminently political role: acting as lawyer, judge and juror over those accused of not being faithful to *Cuba Libre*. While a member of each political party had a place in this Commission, there was an equal number of veterans, and hence due to the nature of partisan politics in Cuba, perhaps an unequal balance of interest in favour of the veterans as they investigated

these cases as they would no doubt steer the investigation into the direction they saw fit, if in fact they were not actively supported by the party members.

It was not long however, before the President began to withdraw the scope of these concessions granted to the Veterans. In January 1912 the President announced in the press that:

First: All those individuals belonging to the forces of sea and land of the Republic, regardless of their rank, remain prohibited from assisting the meetings of the Centre of Veterans, or taking part in their deliberations, and they must limit their activities with respect to the same to taking part as simple partners or members,...

Second: All the individuals serving in the various police bodies of the Republic are likewise prohibited, as well as from making propaganda or engaging in activities of any kind that could be deemed political, they must absolutely abstain from taking part in the struggles of militant parties, as they must from assisting the Centre of Veterans in their meetings or taking part in their deliberations, rightly limiting their action in the first instance to casting freely their votes in an opportune moment, and taking part only as simple partners or affiliates, if they so desire (*La Discusión*, 11 January 1912).

There is nothing unusual about a president exercising his right to prohibit his armed forces and police from participating in the activities of political organisations. However, this statement illustrates two things: firstly, that the Centre of Veterans *was* seen by the President (and no doubt others), as a distinctly *political* organisation, but also he clearly feared the threat that participation in the ranks of

this organisation by members of the armed forces and the police posed. While Pino Guerra had been replaced by José J. Monteagudo as head of the armed forces, this represented no change in influence, as both were rebels of 1906 and military veterans of 1895. The ‘men of 1895’ (and indeed 1906), were still clearly dominating the armed apparatus of the state and represented an ever present threat of revolt. No doubt the personnel of the police, the armed forces and indeed the Centre of Veterans, were closely aligned patronage networks.

Also on 11 January 1912, a correspondence from Senator Ambrosio Borges to the Editor of *El Triunfo*, Senator Modesto Morales Díaz, was reported in its pages, in which Borges stated that:

I opposed, and continue to oppose the constitution of new political committees, even if they are termed “patriotic” because I believe that these organisations will contribute to an alarming rise in the deep and evident political turmoil in the country, and will disrupt even more the moral peace which we need so much for the preservation and stability of republican institutions and for the development of our commercial and proletarian agricultural property (*El Triunfo* 11 January 1912).

The Veterans’ protest solicits threat of US intervention

Of course, as usual in nationalist politics, this struggle for self-interest was clothed in the most noble of moral overtones. The government declared with a rhetorical flourish that they could not support the role of those hostile to the

revolutionary idea and spirit of 1895-8. However, the President was clearly in fear of the influence of the Centre of Veterans. His prohibition of activity in the Centre by the armed forces and the police was to lead to further protest. General Díaz of the Centre of Veterans for Oriente defended the army and police stating that:

The Veterans of Oriente know that we have not engaged in politics; that we do not wish to bring ourselves to constitute the veterans as a political party...They have as much right as we do to frequent the Centre of Veterans; they may help to constitute the Republic as we do, and inside of this Republic they have the same patriotic rights as we do (Secades Japón 1912: 177).

The Veterans felt that it was the President himself who was ‘politicising’ their organisation by claiming they were active in politics and seeking political ends (though he did have a point). The President’s prohibitions regarding the armed forces had further potentially upheld the precedent of revolt, as the veterans felt they were “exercising the right of petition recognised by Article twenty seven of the Constitution”, and, that it was in fact the government which “put in danger the Cuban Nation” if it did not comply with this Article. The Veterans addressed to the President their claim that:

There is not a single precept, neither in the Legal Codes, nor in jurisprudence, which prohibits members of the military from assisting – as active members or as simple spectators – to patriotic meetings, nor from

forming part of lawful associations of whatever nature, independent of political activity (Secades Japón: 189).

Indeed, the presidential decree prohibiting the ‘activity’ of members of the military in a centre of ‘veterans’ does seem a bit unusual: after all, veterans and military men tend to mix in the same circles. It seems likely that the President’s aim was to curtail the political *influence* of the Veterans’ organisations, even if they were not a formally constituted political party. The Centre of Veterans no doubt brought up memories of the ‘Committee’ of 1906, though it must be stated that the former was in fact of much wider and diverse political support, featuring even more prominent Conservatives than Liberals.

This disagreement over the role of civil society institutions and the state was complicated by Cuba’s international position. Increasingly, Cuba was dependent upon the sale of sugar and tobacco on international markets, and hence, on loans from US banks to provide the capital for this increasingly mechanised production. In reaction to the President’s suspension of the Civil Service Law, and hence his partly complying with the Institution of Veterans’ demands, the United States government sent its note of ‘grave concern’, on 16 January 1912, which pointed out the necessity for “maintaining the legality, order and stability” of the “national life of the Republic of Cuba” which meant that the:

President and Government of Cuba have provoked a situation that would oblige the government of the US to consider very seriously the actions it must take in order to comply with its obligations imposed by its relation with Cuba (Chapman 1927: 306-8).

Emilio Núñez, President of the National Council of Veterans, outlined the position of his organisation when he declared that:

without a perfect and moral political system, in a country such as ours, ...nationality is a myth because the Republic does not have the power to combat future eventualities (Declaration of Emilio Núñez to *La Discusión*, Secades Japón 1912: 252).

This nationalism was to take the form of “moralisation and Cubanisation” (Secades Japón 1912: 254), phrases and themes that were to constantly recur in the debate between civil society institutions and the state in the Cuban press. However, the Cuban President submitted to the threats of US intervention, and with Decree 20, he revoked the resolution of 11 November 1911 (Secades Japón 1912b: 194).

With this the Veterans’ agreed to act only as a non-political association, stating:

the Association of Veterans of Independence, without intervening in the organs of political parties will offer its support in general elections to those candidates who are unarguably patriotic and who meet the requirements of honourability and aptitude, trying to prevent by all means which the law allows, the election to public posts of those who have profited from their official positions, by selling out the interests of the Nation.

Second: That it agrees also to make public the intentions of the Association and not to constitute itself as a Political Party, endeavouring to realise the

patriotic aims which it will pursue in agreement with its own statutes and with strict subjection to the existing Laws (*La Discusión* 14 March 1912).

This was somewhat of a fall from grace for the Veterans' organisations then: from acting as judge and jury of traitors in collaboration with the President, to a firm assurance that it would act only as a benevolent association. Again this curtailment of protest came about as a direct result of US hegemony, and hence, hardly constituted a series of events likely to quell Cuban nationalist feeling. After 1912 various members of the Veterans' organisation would go on to support any candidate with a truly independent stance, while many like Núñez would seek to exploit their role in the movement to gain political capital on their road to power (Viñalis 2002: 132). With the elections of 1913 Menocal's Conservative faction took power, and hence, some of the Veterans' desire for power was achieved on an individual and patrimonial basis. However, corruption continued, as did that perpetual instigator of revolt: planned presidential re-election. Ultimately however, the Veterans' organisations were not active on the scene until after the economic crisis of 1921 and the resurgence of nationalist feeling in 1923, which will be looked at in detail in the next chapter.

The Veterans' organisations and the Independent Party of Colour

The first association addressing directly the political problem of black and *mulato* Cubans was established in alliance with the veterans Campos Marquetti and Bartolomé Masó on 25 May 1902, calling itself the Comité de Acción de los

Veteranos y Asociaciones de Color [Committee of Action of the Veterans and Associations of Colour] (Helg 1995: 125). Indeed, the role of blacks and *mulatos* in the struggle for independence was so important that it was no doubt natural at this time for societies combining white and black veterans to be formed. After all, it was Céspedes's manumission of his slaves that had begun the independence struggle in 1868 and the Liberation Army had always been intrinsically radical because of the prominent position of black leaders within it. On 29 June 1902 the Veteranos de Color [Veterans of Colour] had demanded that José Martí's ideal of racial equality be enforced in the new Republic. They ultimately failed to be a continuing influence in the Republic, however, because of the "sectoral narrowness of their demands - more jobs for black veterans in the security forces-and on their political sectarianism-almost all were pro- Masó" (Helg 1995: 127).

In 1910 Evaristo Estenoz, a rebel of 1906, and Pedro Ivonet, a member of the Institution of Veterans of 1911, were arrested for disturbing the peace (Thomas 2001: 308). On 11 February 1910 the *mulato* leader Martín Morúa Delgado proposed Amendment 17 to the Electoral Law, banning political parties being formed along racial lines, though admittedly it also prohibited association exclusively by birth or with relation to profession (Viñalis 2002: 133). This was a calculated move on Morúa Delgado's part as the majority of the supporters of Estenoz belonged to the Liberal Party and they did not wish to lose this support (Ferrer 2002: 210). Moreover, "it was applied conveniently to repress the anarchists" (Dumoulin 1981: 44).

On 20 May 1912, the tenth anniversary of the republic, the PIC launched an initially successful revolt.⁴⁶ On 25 May the United States warned that they would land marines to protect US property interests, and this they did six days later, with Gómez's 'consent' which was never officially requested by the United States, despite his calls for this (Chapman 1927: 311).⁴⁷

Vasconcelos had suggested that the uprising was a conspiracy between Gómez and the PIC leader Evaristo Estenoz⁴⁸ to guarantee the former's re-election when he crushed the rebellion: however, it seems that the black rebel Isidoro Santos Carrera burned La Maya mill on 2 June, unaware of the plot.⁴⁹ Helg claims that "by targeting the Partido Independiente de Color as a racist black movement, *miguelista* Liberals secured cross-party support for its elimination" (Helg 1995: 182). What is abundantly clear is that surviving black and *mulato* veterans of the independence struggle, and blacks and non-whites generally, were very unlikely to be members of the Conservative Party.⁵⁰ If there was to be an 'independent' party representing this group, it would forever hinder the Liberals' struggle for political power.

General Monteagudo suspended constitutional guarantees on 4 June and martial law was declared the next day (Chapman 1927: 312). On 8 June the 'Association of Veterans of Independence' published an article in the press claiming:

⁴⁶ In March some of the leaders had invoked Article Three of the Platt Amendment on the basis that the government was repressing their movement (Munro 1964: 477-8).

⁴⁷ The United States insisted however, that this was not 'intervention' (Munro 1964: 478).

⁴⁸ Evaristo Estenoz had been a leading working-class militant, as well as a veteran of the Liberation Army and the revolt of 1906 (Viñalis 2002: 96, n. 125).

⁴⁹ Viñalis suggests Gómez's deputy Zayas, had conspired, hoping for US intervention to support his faction (Viñalis 200: 133).

⁵⁰ With certain exceptions, such as José J. Monteagudo, and as mentioned earlier, Agustín Cebreco.

all those associates who, in violation of its statutes, gravely disrupt public peace and put in danger the Cuban republic, have provoked with Evaristo Estenoz and Pedro Ivonet the wretched rebellion that now threatens the foundations of the social order and the nation, they are traitors to the aims of the association and to the principles that it defended in armed struggle (*La Discusión* 8 June 1912).

The 'association' put its members at the President's disposal and described the movement as racist (Helg 1995: 203). The black colonel José Gálvez proposed that the National Council demand the repeal of the Morúa amendment (Helg 1995: 206). José Gálvez was arrested, along with a black general of the Veterans' organisations, Juan E. Ducasse, for allegedly amassing arms (Helf 1995: 226). Clearly then, there was to be no common cause between the *políticos* of the Veterans' organisations and the black and *mulato* veterans. After all, as noted, the Veterans' organisations were dominated by mainstream politicians temporarily disgruntled, and not by those seeking to implement the radical goal of racial equality, even if some of their aims had initially coincided in 1902.

By 18 July the rebels were defeated with Monteagudo claiming 3000 of them had been killed (Thomas 2002: 314). These events had shown that:

the independentes would not be permitted to use the same tactics as the veterans...Whereas the Consejo Nacional de Veteranos had members in every faction of the mainstream parties and represented an important

constituency that congressmen could not ignore, the Partido...was a threat to established politicians (Helg 1995: 200).

While they may have been a constituency of support then, blacks and *mulatos* were also considered a threat by the Veterans' movement, representing, as they did, one *político* faction.

The Veterans' organisations as a repository of Cuban nationalism

Throughout the period from US intervention in the War of Independence until the protest of the Association of Veterans in 1923-24, various Veterans' organisations claimed to represent the authentic voice of Cuban nationalism. As has been seen however, while they may have been an implicitly radical organisation by calling for racial equality and featuring many black and *mulato* Cubans in their ranks, with regard to radical socialist ideology generally, and the demands of Cuban workers in particular, they were not social-revolutionary. Indeed, they sought to divert the potentially internationalist current of Cuban radical thought into more conservative nationalist ends.

How did the various Veterans' organisations aim to represent themselves as the authentic repository of Cuban nationalism then? According to one member of the Veterans of Independence, their role was the logical extension of the:

modest cry of protest of the year 1823, until the attempts of 1851; from the great uprising of 1868, until the outbreak of 1895 that culminated in our independence (Letter of 'M. Brindis', Secades Japón 1912: 22)

The dates chosen by Brindis are interesting. Those of 1868 and 1895 are obvious: the struggles of the multi-racial Liberation Army for national independence. The conspiracy led by José Francisco Lemus in 1823, according to Thomas, featured a lieutenant from Haiti, was inspired by Bolivar and organised by Masons, "appealing primarily to students and to the poorer white Cubans, urging them to unite with the Negroes, slave and free." According to its proclamations the group sought to "get rid of ridiculous ranks and hierarchies that foster ignorance and stultify the virtuous character of free men. We do not acknowledge any distinction other than that owed to true merit" (Thomas 2001: 66).

If an appeal to racial equality was the prerequisite for the Veterans' organisations to identify with a previous Cuban national liberation movement, then why did they not identify with the "[n]egro conspiracy of 1795, led by...Nicolás Morales" (Thomas 2001: 53), or the "first movement for outright independence in Cuba – led by Román de la Luz" (Thomas 2001: 57) in 1809? No doubt this was because the conspiracy of 1795 sought not only "equality between black and white", but also, "the abolition of taxes and the distribution of plantations to slaves: that is a radical agrarian revolution" (Thomas 2001: 53), the latter being something Cubans had to wait for until after the revolution of 1959, and the former being something for which the whole world unfortunately still awaits. Likewise, the uprising of 1809 might have been supported by the Cuban upper class "had it not been for anxiety about their slaves, and the spectre of Haiti" (Thomas 2001: 58).

It was not until the conspiracy of 1823 that “the leaders of the lower middle class,...were attempting radical, even multi-racial policies, to gather support of the slave masses” (Thomas 2001: 67). Perhaps the identification was because this conspiracy was thwarted by bribery and treachery and it was felt that an authentic voice of Cuban nationhood had been crushed at this point. More likely it is because the white leaders of the Veterans’ organisations had much the same attitude towards blacks and *mulatos* as that of the white leaders of the Liberation Army and the PRC: they were seen as an instrumental constituency of potential armed support, rather than genuine equals. However, because of the role they had played in the independence struggles, they could clearly influence these organisations in some way.

No doubt the reference to 1851 was not that of Joaquín Agüero who had founded a free school, freed his slaves and “became president of the Liberation Society in Camagüey, working closely with exiles in new York” (Suchlicki 1988: 9-10), but rather, the rising by Francisco de Frías whose father held a title and who was the brother-in-law of the filibusterer Narciso López (Thomas 2001: 133).

Throughout the period the Veterans’ organisations acted as a repository of Cuban nationalism and attempted to define what this should consist of. They acted as a pressure group, and at times themselves as a patronage network. Clearly, as can be seen from their structure and personnel, they were closely related to all the political parties and factions of the early republican period, certainly until 1911. This is clearly the case despite their claims that:

we had to unite in a neutral camp, and we are motivated only by a single idea: the love of Cuba...without distinction nor allegiance to differing

political parties – conservatives or liberals...only aiming to represent the Cuban Nation (Secades Japón 1912: 40).

Despite this colourful rhetoric, in other places the Veterans' organisations made statements that more clearly elaborated their *raison d'être*. In their 'Indispensable Explanations' the Veterans put it thus:

One of the causes of general disorder, which motivated the veterans' movement, was the division of the Liberal Party, to which it belonged, into three or four factions, and not because of differences in opinion,...rather because of personal antagonisms and aggressive ambitions which, disgracefully, have been put above the sacred interests of the Nation (Secades Japón 1912: III).

Here the spokesman for the Veterans had been more honest than usual. As seen above, many of the personnel of the Veterans' organisations were prominent and influential Conservatives. However, they coalesced around the Veterans' organisations perhaps for the same reason as they had around the Conservative Party itself: not because of genuine unchanging political convictions, but because of the failure of nationalist politics. If the Liberals had not been so riven with factionalism, then they would easily have dominated the politics of the post-1902 period. However, the revolt of 1906, and the corruption of 1909-11, illustrated that the Liberal faction in power failed in its nationalist efforts. This failure was the main motivation of the Veterans and also of their supporters.

The Veterans' attempts to Cubanise the civil service were similarly held to be authentically nationalistic in intent. As has been noted, they highlighted the history of other revolutionary wars that formed a national republic. Sometimes they compared their patriotism explicitly with the Spanish, such as with the following:

The Penal Code of Cuba, formulated in the revolutionary epoch, understands the crime of treason, punishable by death, to be applicable to spies, guerrillas, and to all Cubans that, under the Spanish flag, fight against Cuba...or directly support the armed struggle of the enemy. And even the same Spanish Penal Code, already existent in Cuba, defines the traitor as, with admirable conciseness: "He who will take up arms against the nation under an enemy flag." And if the Penal Code already existing here determines the universal concept of treason to the Nation, as a crime so horrendous that all the people of the earth will imprison without mercy and raise the gallows for it, How can we allow ourselves to tolerate these traitors cautiously taking control of the administration of the Republic, so that they can continue to betray it, and bring down their sword on the neck of Cuba? (Secades Japon 1912b: 113).

Here then, the Veterans' organisation held the concept of treason to be universally a heinous crime, and it was not unusual, in this context, that it should be quite normal and proper to remove these traitors from office.

After the United States sent its letter of 'grave concern', appeals to US patriotism were made. In 'The Declarations of Carlos García Vález' the author:

Asks the North Americans to treat Cuba with benevolence, and to recognise that after its war of liberation the ‘guerrillas’ and ‘traitors’ over there were the object of cruel reprisals (*La Discusión*, 18 January 1912).

Here García Vález used the same technique as in the preceding quotation: by emphasising the ‘universal’ role of vengeance, and indeed executions, in a situation of revolutionary war, he sought to portray the Veterans’ desires for Cubanisation as an eminently just one, and his organisation as the authentic voice of Cuban nationalism.

Chapter V – The role of the Veterans’ movement until the emergence of radical nationalism in Cuba

The role of Veterans organisations after 1913

As has been noted elsewhere, the Association of Veterans and Patriots of 1923-24 has been the subject of historical enquiry. This is usually in relation to the movements of civic opposition in the years 1923-25, culminating in the formation of the Confederación Nacional Obrera de Cuba [National Confederation of Cuban Workers - CNOC] and the Partido Comunista de Cuba [Cuban Communist Party – PCC] in 1925. With the establishment of these groups, political opposition in the republic was dominated by youth organisations, and women’s and workers’ struggles, opposed to the dictatorship of President Gerardo Machado. While Julio Antonio Mella and Juan Marinello had been members of the Association of Veterans and Patriots in 1923-24, and went on to be founders of the PCC, in fact they probably joined the former group simply as they did many other groups at the time: as a pragmatic move typical of Marxist tactics, and hence, when they realised that the Association represented little but the ‘old-guard’ of veteran *políticos* (albeit clothed in the most noble nationalist rhetoric), they abandoned this movement in favour of more radical forms of opposition to the *Machadato*.

Young radicals, students, and women’s groups were no doubt attracted to the Association in 1923-24 because they thought that it represented a radical nationalist challenge to US hegemony. However, the Association, as has been seen, and will be seen in this chapter, was little more than a collection of disaffected *políticos*, often of the populist Liberal variety, yet also including many Conservatives (mainly

menocalistas), and anyone else contingently deprived of political power, depending on the year under study. The year 1911 was of particular importance: two years after the end of US occupation and after frustration with the ascension to power of Gómez's Liberal faction as they had shown themselves no less corrupt than the *palmistas*. Further dissatisfaction was shown with the unpopularity of the Civil Service Law of 1908 and the reorganisation of the army in 1909 that failed to provide jobs for many veterans.

This likewise explains why the movement was resurrected after 1920: the chaos brought about by the banking crisis, the ensuing scandals over government contracts, the Crowder intervention and the imposition and subsequent dismissal of the 'honest cabinet'. The Association of Veterans and Patriots, however, was not an explicitly radical organisation, rather it was implicitly radical in representing one of the final calls for adherence to the principles of the Montecristi Manifesto and the ideals of the Liberation Army. However, not only was the Association of 1923-24 supported by Enoch Crowder, there were already many even within the student groups pointing out that adherence to the Montecristi Manifesto meant government of Cubans by Cubans.

By this time however, many of the veterans of the independence struggles were dead, and more important factors influenced Cuban political life by this point: US corporate control of a large part of the economy from banking interests to the sugar industry, and the blatant collaboration of the Cuban political class with the interests of this US hegemony. In this context the Association of 1923-24 was to decline as a nationalist force, giving way to the younger radical movements. This chapter will only touch upon this radicalism, however, as its main concern is to explain this decline and hence, that of the Veterans' movement. In order to elucidate

this more fully it will be again necessary to look at the specifics of Cuban political factionalism, as well as the economic background to events. A lot had changed since the National Council of Veterans had been active in 1911-12, and it is necessary to look at these changes to see how this would impact upon the Association of 1923-24.

Factionalism under the Menocal administration

On 20 May 1913 Menocal, the Conservative candidate, became president of the Republic. Menocal had been educated in the United States, for a time was the Havana Chief of Police, and had also managed the largest sugar plantation of its kind in Cuba at Chaparra (Chapman 1927: 320-1). His election to the executive meant the aggrandisement not only of the Conservative Party, but also of a powerful and influential faction of the Veterans' organisation of 1911-12. Indeed, the military stature of candidates was a decisive element in the 1913 election. According to Ibarra, one of the main reasons Menocal's main rival, Zayas, was defeated was because the Veterans' organisations accused him of being one of the:

principal promoters of administrative corruption and to have unleashed a fervent struggle for positions inside the Government. On the other hand the most conservative sectors of the country and the officers of the Army, thought that a 'doctor' was not the most suitable person to oversee the military element of the revolution (Ibarra: 1992: 337).

Menocal was also seen to be above political corruption because of his relationship with the Veterans and because of his role as mediator for them in 1906. Núñez had written an open letter to Francisco Cabrera stating that:

the Dr.,...does not have sufficient authority to impose the great rectifications that are indispensable for the salvation of the Republic,...Zayas and General José Miguel Gómez are the same political entity...In my opinion a vote for Zayas is for the reelection of General Gómez...Menocal is not the candidate of a party: he is, in these important times for Cuba, a national candidate (Rodríguez Altunaga 1958: 384-85).

Here it can be seen that the Menocal-Núñez faction sought to portray its assumption of power as in the best interests of the 'nation', being led by men untainted by political corruption, unlike Zayas and the civilian element of the Cuban political class. Another commentator noted the same point about Menocal's role in the mediation between Liberals and Moderates and also stated that he had sympathies:

among the ranks of the army, due to his position as general of the Liberation Army – in comparison to the civilian figure embodied by Alfredo Zayas (García Alvarez 1998: 102).

Although Zayas had been a member of the Autonomist Party, he did join the Cuban Revolutionary Party and he was imprisoned in 1896 and exiled in 1897. He had been acting Mayor of Havana in 1901, a Senator for Havana in 1905 and later

President of the Senate (Suchlicki 1988: 303). As seen earlier, he was a member of the Liberal Revolutionary Committee in 1906 that had called for revision of electoral, municipal and civil service laws and was part of the Consultative Commission under Magoon assigned to do so. While no doubt a powerful man in politics, Zayas was seen as a civilian *político*, while many within the voting population no doubt felt that the *mambí* ideal of the Liberation Army must be implemented by members of the *mabisado*: military leaders such as Menocal.

Menocal had achieved the rank of Major General in the Liberation Army serving under Máximo Gómez, Maceo and Calixto García. While Menocal was certainly more respected by the military than Zayas, no doubt by both the officers and the rank and file, in fact the issue more than likely came down to political patronage. As seen earlier, the suffrage requirements of the Cuban Constitution had narrowed the total electorate down to a small minority of the population, even if it did include veterans. It is not surprising, therefore, that given the choice of a rich civilian or a rich Major General, they would vote for the latter, as he would perhaps be more likely to assure the payment of pensions to them. Critically, Menocal was also popular amongst US politicians: he had been educated in the United States, and he was one of the most important figures in the sugar industry, something that was to become increasingly important economically in the period 1913-20, as will be seen.

According to Ibarra, while the defeat of the *miguelistas* had been due to a combination of forces between the land-owning bourgeoisie and leaders of the Veterans' organisations, within the latter group "the Plattist element prevailed over the patriotic forces by two to one" (Ibarra 1992: 340). While the followers of Menocal were indeed military men then, they were often favourable also with the

United States, and this no doubt made them the ideal candidates for both them and Cuban veterans.

Menocal's Vice-president was Enrique José Varona. Varona had been associated formally with Menocal's politics at least since 1907 with the foundation of the Conservative Party. Cosme de la Torriente was Foreign Secretary. According to Ibarra, Torriente was the Cuban agent for various English and American companies and worth \$40 million (Ibarra 1992: 341). As seen earlier, he was present at the meeting of Veterans in the Hotel Telégrafo in February 1909, and in 1910 he had authored the letter of the 'Veterans of Independence to the People of Cuba', that called for a selective interpretation of the Constitution in favour of Cubanisation of the Civil Service. He was clearly an important representative of the Veterans' political ambitions, and the aggrandisement of these with the election of Menocal.

Leopoldo Cancio was Finance Minister. He had been a member of the Autonomist party, Secretary of the Treasury during the first US intervention and also present in Estrada Palma's cabinet (García Alvarez 1998: 103). José Ramón Villalón was Secretary of Public Works, administrator of the Spanish-American Iron Company, chief engineer of the railroad from Nuevitas to Camagüey, head of the Railway Commission of Cuba and a "known Plattist element" (Ibarra 1992: 341). Cancio and Ramón Villalón represented little more than friendly US-Cuban business interests within the administration of Menocal, something the man himself was no doubt keen to foster.

Rafael Montoro was Secretary to the President and, as seen earlier, was a founder of the Conservative Party. He had also been a member of the Consultative Commission along with Zayas, though presumably he was untainted by this.

Aurelio Hevia was Interior Minister as well as being a representative of the Cuban American Sugar Company (Ibarra 1992: 341). He had been present at the meeting at the offices of the periodical *La Discusión* that had attempted to establish an 'Association' of veterans, and he had been a Colonel in the Institution of 1911.

Pablo Desvernine was another secretary to the President and a representative of the Van Horne railroad, Raimundo García Menocal and Ezequiel García Enseñat were Education Ministers, the latter having opposed the sale of land to foreigners in Congress, while Emilio Núñez was Minister for Agriculture (García Alvarez 1998: 103, Ibarra 1992: 341 and 398, n. 106).

As can be seen again then, the *menocalistas* represented Conservatives, businessmen favourable to the United States, and even *políticos*, however; they also represented men popular among veteran soldiers and prominent in the Veterans' organisations up until 1913. It was still necessary to claim some connection with the *mambisado* in order to play an important role in Cuban politics, due to the constituency empowered by the veterans' clause in voting rights. As will be seen however, these leaders were to prove themselves no more 'nationalist' in power than the Liberals and no more so even within the formal Veterans movement of 1923-24.

Some prominent Liberals remained in the administration, including Demetrio Castillo Duany, Juan Gualberto Gómez, and Zayas himself, as the State Historian of Cuba, on a salary of \$6000 (Ibarra 1992: 342). As soon as he was in office, Menocal vetoed the proposed new Civil Service Law, in order to maintain the same level of control over political patronage as Estrada Palma and Gómez, showing himself little better than them (Ibarra 1992: 339).

On 7 July 1913 three men in public affairs, Governor of Havana Ernesto Asbert, Representative Eugenio Arias, and Senator Vidal Morales, in a dispute over

the group's running of illegal gambling halls, killed the Chief of Police of Havana, General Armando de la Riva. There were various theories in the press over the causes of this affair, from the fact that Asbert was a rival for presidential leadership, suggesting that Menocal had ordered the initial police harassment. However, Riva was himself a Liberal. On the other hand, Asbert had temporarily switched his allegiance from the Liberals to Menocal during the latter's election campaign. The United States expressed their concern that this incident signalled the inability of the regime to protect life and property. On 12 July Menocal suspended Asbert's Governorship. When Menocal ordered Congress to address congressional immunity, representatives refused to attend, meaning that no quorum could be formed (Chapman 1927: 340-43). Menocal then vetoed the new Amnesty Law in order to try to protect Asbert, for earlier helping his campaign; however, Congress ratified it (Gaunaud 1954: 330).

In June 1914 the lottery was a topic of debate. The Senate sought to re-establish a legal lottery, but Menocal wrote an open letter to the same body deploring the corruption of this institution and its connections to the *botella*. In response, Senator Maza y Artola pointed out that while they argued over this the government failed to approve a more pressing law: that of payment of pensions. Maza y Artola suggested that if a lottery was established the sellers should be distributed among the families of veterans (Gaunaud 1954: 335).

In 1914 another major event was to affect Cuba: World War I. Although Cuba played no direct part in the hostilities, it was to have an enormous impact upon Cuba, due to the latter's supply of sugar to an increasingly large part of the world. This in turn revolutionised Cuban society and politics. Again, the factionalist struggles within the Cuban political class re-emerged in 1917 when the Liberals

incited another rebellion against presidential re-election. It is necessary look at these events to understand the political scene after 1920.

World War I and the Liberal Revolt of 1917

Even by the outbreak of the First World War, Britain still had greater capital investment in Cuba than the United States (Pino Santos 1984: 338), but this conflict led to massive profits for sugar interests and a vastly increased expansion of US capital in this sector, as Cuba became the greatest source of sugar for the United States while its old trading partners were temporarily hostile. The establishment of an official Cuban currency in 1914, and the suppression of all currency except the Cuban peso and the US dollar, further consolidated US financial control (Wallich 1960: 32-4). In 1914 the Cuban sugar harvest was worth \$163m, in 1915 \$202m and in 1916 \$308m (Thomas 2001: 317). In a sense, however, reciprocity was in conflict with this vast increase as the:

closer Cuba got to satisfying the entire sugar demand in the US, the more it had to accept what were in effect world prices, since the world price with the Cuban duty added became the usual New York price (Thomas 2001: 323).

Thus, the preference set the conditions for the increase in production, but the increase led to world competition and thus a general lowering of that price. According to Thomas the war delayed and made worse an inevitable crisis. An international committee had been set up in 1918 to sell sugar to the Allies at the fixed price of 4.6 cents per pound (Thomas 2001: 324) and, during the war, any

labour militancy had been deemed as “hostile acts” against the war effort by the United States (Jenks 1970: 193). The Sugar Equalisation Board had used the fixed price to compensate for previous losses (Jenks 1970: 203).

The economic changes brought about by the war predictably led to a radical change within the social structure in Cuba. As Pérez puts it, the:

war years stimulated economic development and released new social forces that changed the character of Cuban society, revealing...more clearly defined class structures, and more distinctly articulated social conflict. New social groups emerged as aggressive political contenders,...they...challenged the premises of North American hegemony and denounced U.S. influence over the political system and the national economy (Pérez 1997: 171).

To put it more simply:

the First World War defined the characteristics of an increasing subordination, which determined the definitive degeneration of the Cuban economy towards forms of more concrete exploitation and dependency (Alavez 1979: 86).

With the end of the war, the United States emerged as the new global power, and, as it's US National Bank of Commerce noted, “[w]e have surplus to sell.” The logic of this was that “finance capital, in the form of credit, foreign loans, and investments abroad, occupied a strategic place in promoting foreign trade and facilitating U.S. economic expansion” and this expansion was “necessary for U.S.

industry and manufacturing and markets for surplus production, whether in the form of capital or goods themselves” (Pérez 1986: 182-83).

This change in the international structure of capitalism affected the Cuban working class in immediate ways, mainly by raising the prices of commodities in real terms, and hence labour agitation grew. In 1914 “anarcho-sindicalism was on the rise, and calls for revolutionary violence escalated” (Shaffer 1985: 59), and in the same year the government launched a Secretariat of Labour (Stubbs 1985: 118). According to Fuller, “striking dock workers in Havana demanded an end to the draft” (Fuller 1987: 246). In the United States the president of the American Federation of Labour, Samuel Gompers, referred to the conflict as “a glorious and righteous one” (Foner 1988: 21), perhaps indicating an early instance of union collaboration with the US political elite, while in Cuba the working class was generally more internationalist and revolutionary in its views, being the heir to Spanish anarchism.

In 1915 there was an “islandwide crackdown aimed particularly at anarchists” (Shaffer 1985: 59), and Juan Tenorio, Vicente Lípiz, and Román Delgado were all deported under new laws instituted by the Menocal administration (Fernández 2001: 50). On 14 September 1915 Menocal prohibited the circulation of any money except the Cuban peso or the US dollar. Despite this, however, Cuban inflation levels remained high and it was only the United States that benefited from the emerging domination of the US dollar (Ibarra 1992: 344, García Alvarez 1998: 118).

Also in 1915, Menocal reorganised the armed forces, uniting the Permanent Army and the Rural Guard into the single institution of the National Army, directly responsible to the President, as well as establishing an Air Force (García Alvarez

1998: 117). This was not the first time that the armed forces had been reorganised. In 1908 the US Provisional Government had established the Permanent Army, the Rural Guard and the militias (Chang 1981: 91). However, this reorganisation had meant that these institutions became increasingly professional and had as their primary role, according to one commentator, the protection of private property and maintenance of the capitalist political order (Chang 1981: 9). Also in 1915, Menocal introduced compulsory workers' insurance and provision for state mediation in labour disputes, increasing the role of corporatist solutions to labour disputes in the economy (Thomas 2002: 316).

Menocal had shown early on in his presidency that he was no friend of the Cuban working class and indeed their members among the Veterans' organisations. While marginally privileged by their voting rights, voting was not popular as a means of social change among the organisations of the working class in Cuba in any case, and increasingly the Veterans' organisations represented little more than a faction of the political class. This political class continued with its corruptions and internal divisions and re-alignments.

With Menocal's attempt at re-election, new problems emerged. Menocal had at first backed Emilio Núñez to succeed himself (Chapman 1927: 346). The Liberals were divided into several factions: those of Zayas and his Vice-president Carlos Mendieta, the Unionist wing of General Gerardo Machado, the followers of Ernesto Asbert, and finally the faction of Eusebio Hernández (Ferrer 2002: 215). On the eve of his attempt at re-election, Menocal sent military supervisors to secure a Conservative victory through a "combination of fraud, coercion, and violence" (Pérez 1986: 167). On 1 November 1916, 800,000 people voted even though only 500,000 were registered, and three Conservative presidents of electoral boards were

shot (Thomas 2003: 317). As a result, Raimundo Cabrera, founder of the Liberal Autonomist Party (of 1878), wrote to Menocal claiming that he was overriding the judicial power of the courts by ordering the police to abandon their positions protecting the Electoral Board of Las Villas, the traditional Liberal stronghold (Gaunaurd 1954: 345). By the end of January 1917, Cosme de la Torriente, Enrique Jose Varona, and Freyre Andrade had all written letters to the Conservative paper *Heraldo de Cuba*, criticising Menocal and, as a result, the President's re-electionist clique dismissed them all from the Party as traitors, despite all three being prominent long-time Conservatives (Gaunaurd 1954: 348-60).

The Liberals knew that the United States favoured Menocal, he was educated there, and significantly he was a large property owner, more specifically in sugar interests, owning the largest mill in Cuba. The Liberals, however, felt as in 1906, that they were democratically the most popular party. They felt that they could use the threat of destroying property once again to ensure US intervention in their favour. On 4 February 1917 Orestes Ferrara and Raimundo Cabrera went to the United States to put their case before rebellion broke out (Thomas 2002: 318).⁵¹ On 10 February insurrection began when José Miguel Gómez pretended to embark on a fishing expedition, instead leading the rebellion. Ferrara and Raimundo Cabrera asked for intervention from the United States and wrote to Menocal demanding his resignation (Thomas 2002: 318-9).

New elections took place in Santa Clara on 14 February, but the Liberals made no attempt to participate (Chapman 1927: 372). On 16 February the Las Villas Electoral Board declared the Conservatives victorious and the Liberals refused to accept this. The United States came out in support of "the constitutional government

⁵¹ Chapman says they left on 5 February (Chapman 1927: 363).

of the Republic of Cuba” (Pérez 1986: 169) on 19 February (Thomas 2002: 319), and distributed thousands of copies of this message throughout the island. On 5 March the Senate attempted to implement Menocal’s suspension of constitutional guarantees but Liberals refused to attend, making the necessary two-thirds quorum impossible (Gaunaurd 1954: 371). On 8 March the temporary Liberal Governor of Oriente, García Muñoz, asked for US soldiers to land, which they later did, protecting mines, sugar plantations, and railways (Thomas 2001: 319).

On 6 April 1917 the United States declared war against Germany and the following day Cuba followed suit (Fitzgibbon 1935: 162). By August the Liberals were being blamed for disrupting the peace when this was necessary for the conduct of war. Cuba could have done little else except support the United States during war-time. The United States depended on Cuba for the increased need for sugar due to the loss of trade with enemy nations. As a result, the United States was to set price controls for Cuban sugar in 1918 (Smith 1960: 20-1).

On 21 April Liberal rebel Gustavo Caballero was captured (Chapman 1927: 376), and this, along with US rifles, machine guns, and cartridges, allowed the Menocal administration to survive. According to Ferrer, Menocal recruited militias from the organisations of the Veterans of Independence (Ferrer 2002: 226), so clearly again, members of the Veterans’ organisations were represented on both sides of the struggle. On 7 May Congress proclaimed Menocal elected, and Núñez had returned to his position as Vice-president (Gaunaurd 1954: 375). On 9 May there was apparently an attempt on Menocal’s life, but on 20 May he began his second term (Chapman 1927: 384).

Constitutional guarantees were suspended on 13 July based on the legal precedent of the Law of Public Order, that oppressive Spanish law of 1870. The

articles suspended were 15, 16, 19, 22, 23, 24, and 27 (Gaunard 1954: 376). These articles stated that no one could be imprisoned other than in accordance with the law, that they may not be held for more than 24 hours without being put before a judge or tribunal, that correspondence could not be confiscated, that houses could not be searched, that persons could not be forced from their homes except in accordance with the laws, and that all had freedom of thought, speech and written word, even if this went against social order, or public peace (Pichardo 1973: 78-9).

Pérez notes that by warning the Liberals to uphold constitutional authority but not similarly:

exhorting constituted authority to uphold the constitution, the United States may...well have relieved Havana of the need to concern itself with the diplomatic consequences of a fraudulent election protested by arms (Pérez 1997: 19).

Menocal then “reigned for another four years, more or less as a dictator, governing largely by decree, drawing huge private profits for himself and his family” (Thomas 2001: 320), resulting in Enoch Crowder coming to the island again as early as March 1919 to revise the Electoral Code and supervise the elections. Cuban Secretary of State Pablo Desvernine protested, but a pledge from Menocal to maintain honest elections was made (Pérez 1986: 172). Núñez had led the Supreme Council of the National Association of Veterans to approve new statutes and regulations in February of 1917, and in July of 1918 the veterans were somewhat appeased again when a new law regulating the payment of their pensions was passed (Cairo Ballester 1976: 84).

The US threatened intervention not only in the case of armed insurrection, but also in the case of labour unrest, as “Havana was held directly responsible for the actions of Cuban workers” (Pérez 1997: 161). Strikes began again in 1917 and in 1918-19 these were “on an unprecedented scale” (Stubbs 1985: 120), when “four general strikes broke out in Havana alone” and leading anarchist organisers were condemned to death: Marcelo Salinas, Antonio Penichet, Alfredo López, Alejandro Barreiro, and Pablo Guerra. Robustiano Fernández and Luis Díaz Blanco were killed in confrontations with police. Washington sent three cruisers to Havana and the Cuban government suspended constitutional guarantees, closed the Centro Obrero [Worker Centre], and prohibited anarchist publications (Fernández 2001: 51).

Workers knew, like the Liberals, that threats to US property were a key weapon in their battles against the government and employers. In early 1919 the United States landed gunboats when a strike broke out in Havana (Smith 1960: 83), and later in the same year 6000 marines landed when a general strike began (Pérez 1997: 163). Elsewhere Pérez states that in 1919 the marines’ ‘practice marches’ were redirected to areas of labour unrest (Pérez 1978: 101), and it would seem that the United States intervened to end worker agitation as much as the Liberal rebellion. The United States opposed not only direct threats to US property, but also pro-labour legislation, including a minimum wage increase proposed in 1910 (Pérez 1997: 164).

The war and the revolt were to have widespread consequences for the whole of Cuban society. These events had shown that the *menocalistas* were no friend of the Cuban working class, or the radical aims of its organisations. While individual working-class members of the Veterans’ organisations may have seen these institutions initially as a useful patronage network towards the goal of the prompt

payment of pensions, they were clearly linked with both the Conservative and Liberal factions of the Cuban political elite, and hence, inextricably tied up with their internecine struggles for power and their shifting political allegiances.

The Economic Crisis of 1920-21

In 1918-1919 Cuba was supplying 25 per cent of the world's sugar (Jenks 1970: 204). The value of total sugar production increased from \$455 million in 1919 to \$1 billion in 1920 (Pérez 1986: 186-7); indeed 1920 had been the most tumultuous year in Cuban financial history. Sugar rose from 9.125 cents per pound on 18 February 1920 to the peak of 22.5 cents on 19 May and then dramatically, back to only 3.75 on 13 December (Jenks 1970: 218-9). Similarly, US beet production had expanded due to price rises, from 700,000 tons in 1919 to over one million in 1920 and 1921. US protection, however, merely stimulated international competition from Puerto Rico, Hawaii and the Philippines (Pollitt 1984: 9). The United States saw its chance to ensure "integration", that is "[a]t every stage in the process of sugar manufacture...an attempt to secure control of other stages" (Pollitt 1984: 219) the result being "a new form of American political tutelage...[which] vested in Wall Street effective economic control over the island" (Pollitt 1984: 229).

Problems arose however, because, at the end of World War I, the banks "operated practically without legal controls...Cuba was also without effective banking legislation", and in any case 'Cuban' banks were usually actually foreign institutions in fact controlled by the United States or Britain (Wallich 1960: 50-1). During this increase in sugar prices "an orgy of prosperity and speculation" took

over as banks gave credit and “established branches without regard to permanent profitability and lent money with more enthusiasm than discretion”, with the consequence that “each class of assets was dependent upon the sugar boom which could last only as long as the price of the commodity remained at previously unheard-of levels” (Wallich 1960: 53-4).

The inevitable collapse of Cuban credit institutions meant further US investment. With the dramatic drop in price of sugar, produce remained unsold congesting Havana docks (Thomas 2001: 328). This situation “threatened all aspects of American business interests in Cuba” (Smith 1960: 85). President Menocal declared a moratorium on 11 October (Wallich 1960: 55, Pérez 1986: 188),⁵² but this, by “permitting the traffic in certified checks, helped holders of large accounts legally to loot the banks to the disadvantage of small depositors” (Jenks 1970: 232). Similarly, the “clause permitting withdrawals for payments of dues to the government” meant that clients “immediately took advantage of this clause to salvage part of their balances” (Wallich 1960: 59).

These abuses, along with the failure of sugar prices to recover, meant the extension of the moratorium until 1921. Proposals were made to solve the crisis: the establishment of a central bank, the issue of legal tender certificates, a US loan to the banks, or a new control of sugar prices by the United States. In the end the Cuban Congress enacted the Torriente Laws, which planned to lift the moratorium, reorganise or liquidate the banks, and create proposals for a banking law. Gradually debts were paid, but again certified checks meant further losses (Wallich 1960: 61-3). Shortly thereafter, there was established “a central bank, a banking law, and the framework for agricultural banks” and the Cuban banks quickly collapsed which

⁵² Thomas gives the date 10 October (Thomas 2001: 328).

“left the foreign banks in a dominant position” (Wallich 1960: 68). The US was quick to exploit its opportunities as the crisis came. US investments increased “536 percent between 1913 and 1928, from \$220 million to \$1.5 billion” (Pérez 1986: 188). This was the era of finance capital as the “National City Bank and the Chase National Bank received the titles of many mills in return for settlement of debts” (Thomas 2001: 332).

While the United States did not take up the plan of bailing out the banks, without healthy sugar prices, the Cuban government had no means of taxation, and had itself become insolvent. The Treasury had been operating on the basis that there was \$120 million a year to spend, when in fact taxes only brought in about \$70 million (Jenks 1970: 249), as a result, salaries went unpaid and public works programmes ceased. Again, by linking Articles Two and Three of the Platt Amendment, on intervention and indebtedness, the United States “held the Cuban government to the brink of insolvency in exchange for reform” (Pérez 1986: 198). Enoch Crowder arrived as ‘special representative’ of the President. The US financiers J. P. Morgan and company worked with the US government to demand fiscal reform before granting a \$5 million loan (Pérez 1986: 203-5), and it was only with Crowder’s ‘fifteen memoranda’ and President Zayas’s ‘honest cabinet’ that a further \$50 million loan was approved (Jenks 1970: 253). Of course, this further increased US hegemony, as “supervision over revenues was effectively supervision over virtually every aspect of Cuban administration” (Pérez 1986: 199). Indeed, Crowder “recommended that an ultimatum threatening intervention accompany the two memoranda on budget reform” and this was a “clear statement...that the protection of American investments in Cuba was a part of the foreign policy of the United States” (Smith 1960: 92-4). It seems odd then that the United States, “sought

to assist in their solution through a man entirely without business experience and otherwise untrained in the processes of economic analysis” (Jenks 1970: 264), but in any case:

[b]y appropriating control over the state apparatus and asserting authority over the principal levers of resource allocation, the State Department exacted Cuban acquiescence to the reorganization of national administration in conformity with U.S. needs (Pérez 1986: 225).

The crisis of 1920-1 also bolstered Cuban dependency on state revenues. In 1907 there were only 25,599 public employees (Ibarra 1998: 54), by 1914-15 the public payroll carried 32,000 employees and in 1924 42,000, which at this point “functioned like a social welfare system” (Pérez 1995: 220). The crisis also “served to accelerate labor organizing” with the formation of the National Labor Congress in 1920 (Pérez 1995: 242).

This all took place within the context of Cuba's changing social structure: a native bureaucratic governmental class divided into factions with no means of existence except public office, a proletariat and its leaders who increasingly took on a radical internationalist analysis, and a rising petit bourgeoisie who sought protectionism for Cuban businesses, often collaborating with the proletarian organisations in order to achieve social democratic concessions from the government. Similarly, US financial investment in Cuba increased as the government sought capital for its grand public works programmes, roads, and railways. This economic dominance by the United States furthered its concomitant imperative to intervene, whilst simultaneously nurturing the remnants of Cuban

nationalism left over from the independence conflict that became a more radical phenomenon challenging not just US dominance in international affairs, but also the dominance of employers, and the corruption of politicians, subservient to US power.

The increasing dominance of the United States as a world power after World War I, the transition to finance capital and hence, the dependency of Third World nations on the production of primary products for export to the First World, meant that Cuban nationalism was to have to struggle against this need for forms of neo-imperial rule demanded by the changing structure of capitalism. The leaders of the Veterans' organisations, however, showed themselves aloof from the struggles of the working class and the petit bourgeoisie, remaining simply a faction of the Cuban political elite, unable to detach itself from factional struggles for power in order to authentically support the emerging radical forms of nationalism of 1923-25. This factionalism continued under Zayas.

Factionalism and corruption under the Zayas administration

Party reorganisation resulted in the formation of a new Republican Party in July 1919 under the leadership of Guillermo López Roviroso. Their programme called for reform of existing laws and an end to the use of the Platt Amendment for interventionist purposes. Perhaps most interestingly, they called for the incorporation into the Constitution of 'Delegates of the People' who would be elected, one for each municipality, during regular elections, and would form a national body that would inspect public services. The party also had such radical proposals as implementing the eight-hour day, special protection for women and

children in work, recognition of the right to strike, the establishment of night-time schools for workers, and suffrage for women. The party called for the financing of monuments in the capital of each province to veterans of the War for Independence, the appointing of a commission to reform the Civil Service Law, and the establishment of juries: all concerns of the Veterans' organisations and Cuban society at large (Gaunaurd 1954: 390-96). Although none of the prominent leaders of the Veterans' organisations featured in the party, their programme received the endorsement of Enrique José Varona (Gaunaurd 1954: 398-99). Shortly thereafter, the party's official mouthpiece, *Cuba Nueva*, had their post interfered with and one Party member was expelled from the civil service in violation of the Civil Service Law (Gaunaurd 1954: 402).

In 1920 the Partido Socialista Radical [Radical Socialist Party] was formed but they were "collaborationist...they had supported Zayas" (Thomas 2001: 348). In March 1920 Núñez broke with Menocal, founding a new independent Partido Demócrata Nacionalista [Democratic Nationalist Party], with the support of Rafael Montalvo. Menocal was not happy with the prospect of Núñez or Montalvo succeeding him as President, while Zayas was expelled from the Liberal Party by Gómez and the latter formed the Partido Popular Nacional [Popular National Party]. Conservative *menocalistas* joined forces with Liberal *zayistas* to create the Liga Nacional [National League] (Gaunaurd 1954: 389). The National League initially proposed Montalvo, who had now joined them, for President and Zayas for Vice-president (Cairo Ballester 1976: 148). Menocal then suspended the part of the electoral code prohibiting presidential nominees on a two-party ticket so that Zayas could run on both, much to the annoyance of the United States (Pérez 1986: 175).

Menocal's National League planned to appoint Zayas in 1920 and as a result Gómez's Liberals were considering property destruction and attacks on US citizens. In August they withdrew from the elections, signalling rebellion, but later agreed to remain, after the United States pledged to observe the process (Pérez 1986: 177-9). When the elections took place there were *menocalista* 'military advisors' intimidating voters and the burning of Liberal votes, and in many places where a Liberal victory was suspected, voting booths remained closed (Thomas 2001: 329). Liberals made accusations of fraud, and, when both parties claimed victory on 1 November 1920 (Pérez 1986: 189), the United States again invoked the Platt Amendment to send Crowder back to the region, in January 1921, symbolically aboard the battleship *Minnesota* (Thomas 2001: 330). On 9 March 1921 sporadic fighting broke out and the Liberals refused to take part in the local elections on 15 March, meaning that Zayas was declared, or at least proclaimed himself, victorious (Thomas 2001: 330).

In June 1921 Gómez died in the United States, leaving a power vacuum (Cairo Ballester 1976: 154). In September 1921 a 'Pro-Zayas' club was formed, including, as a President of Honor, Carlos González Clavel, who it was seen in the previous chapter was a member of the National Council of Veterans.

At the beginning of 1922 the Republican Party split, leaving it under the leadership of Aurelio Hevia, while Senator Maza y Artola founded another group: Partido Oriental Nacionalista [Nationalist Party of Oriente]. The Party's programme included abolition of the Platt Amendment, a plan for administrative decentralisation, extension of the independence of the judiciary, limiting of parliamentary immunity and constitutional control over the use of amnesty (Gaunard 1954: 431). Clearly, then, it was not only the various Veterans'

organisations who had these issues as part of their central platform during these years; the Nationalist Party of Oriente also included several progressive proposals in their programme, including the reform of prisons to give them an educational character aimed at moral regeneration, reform of educational boards so that teachers could elect their directors, and the obligatory teaching of the history of Cuba and its republican constitution in all schools, public and private.

They also proposed the establishment of consultative boards in the headquarters of the Boards of Public Works, so that representatives of professional, economic and employment associations would supervise these programmes, propose the budgets and make sure they complied with all laws and regulations (Gaunaurd 1954: 432-33). This was a radical proposal to completely revise a system that had allowed political graft under Gómez. Although similar complaints were always a platform of all of the Veterans' organisations they seldom offered such all-encompassing solutions. While the National Party of Oriente was seemingly almost as progressive as the early socialist parties when it claimed that it wanted tribunals "for the resolution of the conflicts that arise between capital and labour", the Party's call for selective immigration showed that it was by no means an internationalist organisation (Gaunaurd 1954: 433).

The labour movement was also increasingly organising during the Zayas period. In 1920 the National Labour Congress called for public housing, an eight-hour day, and price controls, and denounced US imperialism. Later that year eighteen unions formed the anarcho-syndicalist Federación Obrera de La Habana [Worker Federation of Havana – FOH], and in 1924 railroad workers formed the Hermandad Ferroviaria de Cuba [Brotherhood of Railroad Workers of Cuba]. This led to the formation of a national union, the Confederación Nacional Obrera de Cuba

[National Confederation of Cuban Workers – CNOC] and the Partido Comunista de Cuba [Cuban Communist Party - PCC] in 1925. The founding members of the PCC were Pena Vilabod, Alejandro Barreiro, Venancio Rodríguez, Alfredo López, Emilio Rodríguez, Carlos Baliño and Mella, after the last two of this group had formed the Agrupación Comunista de La Habana [Communist Group of Havana] (Pérez 1986 239-40).

In February 1922 ‘la Asociación Nacional de Emigrados Revolucionarios Cubanos’ [the National Association of Cuban Revolutionary Emigrés] petitioned Zayas to veto the ‘Pensión Especial’ [Special Pension] that had just been passed by the House and was due before the Senate. This law established pensions of 6000 pesos annually for the following people: Emilio Núñez, Fernando Freyre Andrade, Fernando Méndez Capote, Juan I. Guiteras and Rafael Montoro. While the Cuban exiles did not doubt the patriotism of figures like Núñez, the problem for them was that the law fell foul of Article 11 of the Cuban Constitution that did not allow special privileges (Gaunard 1954: 437).

In March 1922 Crowder dictated his fifteen memoranda to the Cuban Congress – key reforms in virtually every aspect of national, provincial, and municipal administration, and the dismissal of corrupt members of Zayas’s cabinet. In May of 1922 the army and naval forces were reorganised and the much-hated Rural Guard was re-established. In June the Veterans made protests in the press over the failure of pension payments (Cairo Ballester 1976: 158).

On 10 June 1922 leading members of the National Association of Veterans met Zayas namely, Enrique Jose Varona, Manuel Sanguily and Pedro Betancourt, the last having replaced Núñez as President of the Association upon his death (Cairo Ballester 1976: 89). On 14 June Sanguily informed the National Assembly of

Veterans of the memoranda of Crowder and of the proposals which they had presented to Zayas, that had included: revision of the Reciprocity Treaty, the reduction of public expenses, constitutional reforms in relation to municipal government, reform of the electoral registry, condemnation of the scandals of the Minister of Public Works, reduction of the budget, denunciation of administrative frauds and reform of the national lottery law so that the funds it raises would be used for the treasury (Cairo Ballester 1976: 90). This was not 1911 however. As Cairo Ballester notes, the factions calling for total abrogation of the Platt Amendment of 1902 had lost their strength, as had the Conservatives who had called for ‘domestic virtue’ to avoid US intervention: now all were prepared to compromise internally to avoid the new US policy machinations of ‘preventive intervention’. Zayas also partly appeased the Veterans with the offer of the position of Minister of Agriculture being given to Pedro Betancourt (Cairo Ballester 1976: 93).

Zayas and Crowder disagreed over who should succeed those dismissed until it was settled, and they were appointed on 15 June: Secretary of State Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, Secretary of Public Works Demetrio Castillo, Secretary of the Treasury Manuel Despaigne, along with Arístides Agramonte (Pérez 1986: 210), and Ricardo Lancís Castillo (Thomas 2002: 334). The United States sought to thoroughly destroy Cuban corruption: *botellas*, the lottery, and the funnelling of public works program money and government loans into private accounts. However they failed to realise that “[i]n depriving Zayas of the power of patronage, the United States undermined his power to govern” as the suppression of *collecturías* and *botellas* led to large increases in unemployment. This, along with the imposition of the ‘honest cabinet’ meant Zayas lost power of patronage over the judiciary, Congress, the military and the press (Pérez 1986: 223-5).

At the end of 1922 there were violent demonstrations amongst students in Havana. The Federación de Estudiantil de la Habana [Federation of University Students' of Havana - FEU] was formed on 10 January 1923 (Thomas 2001: 340), with Julio Antonio Mella as Secretary. They demanded student participation in university governance, professional standards for academic staff, as well as the abrogation of the Platt Amendment, and the ending of US interventions and Cuban political corruption (Pérez 1986: 236, Thomas 2001: 340-1). Anthropology professor, Liberal Party member and historian Fernando Ortiz, prepared a draft law for university autonomy. Ortiz also directed the Junta Cubana de Renovación Nacional [Cuban Assembly of National Renovation], which denounced the current government on 2 March 1923 (Chapman 1927: 466). Mella later organised a Revolutionary Students' Congress (Thomas 2001: 342), as well as the Anti-Imperialist League and the Anti-Clerical League. He also became a member of the Mexican Communist Party's Central Committee while in exile (Whitney 2001: 42). Similarly, Rubén Martínez Villena led a protest of writers known as the 'Protest of the Thirteen' in March 1923 against the government, when one of Zayas's cabinet ministers participated in a literary function. Martínez Villena was later to organise the Falange de Acción Cubana. Also in 1923 the Grupo Minorista [Minority Group] united intellectuals around educational reform and university autonomy (Pérez 1986: 236).

In March 1923 the Veterans' protests were rising as payment of pensions had fallen behind with the last trimester of 1922 remaining unpaid. On 3 April 1923 Zayas caused further dismay by dismissing Agramonte, Castillo, Despaigne, and Ricardo Lancís from his cabinet, for "high reasons of state", claiming this was part of a Cubanisation measure, as they had been the United States' recommendations

(Chapman 1927: 443). This was clearly however, a shrewd move on Zayas's part to remove 'honest' members. While initially members of the Veterans' organisations had been in support of Zayas's 'honest cabinet', it featuring one of their members Pedro Betancourt, their dismissal led to growing protest. The fact that Pedro Betancourt was one of those that Zayas retained meant that he was deposed as President of the National Association of Veterans. The National Association held a banquet in solidarity with those dismissed, and this led to the first steps towards unification with the student protest movement, when the Falange de Acción de Cubana and other intellectuals held a mass meeting in the Teatro Nacional [National Theatre], which was the "first meeting of opposition organised outside of the activities of legal political parties" (Cairo Ballester 1976: 94).

The organisational strategies of these groups were to challenge much more of the values of the Cuban republic than the Association of Veterans and Patriots, however. The former groups were concerned not only with US hegemony, but also with imperialism, economic dependency, and much broader participation on the political scene than the patronage networks of power of the Veterans' Association, and its membership of disaffected Liberals and Conservatives. While this thesis will not be focussing on the youth and radical movements of 1923-25, it is a salient point that must be noted before moving onto an analysis of the Association of 1923-24 itself.

Formation of the Association of Veterans and Patriots of 1923-24

The central focus of the thesis is the forms of nationalism within the Veterans' organisations of 1911-12 and 1923-4. In Cuban historiography, these Veterans' movements are normally seen, in the case of the 1911-12 Council, as a somewhat marginal organisation of disaffected members of the old *político* class (and hence often tarred with the same brush over 'corruption'), or in the case of the 1923-24 Association, a potentially revolutionary group which was abandoned by the emerging radical leaders of the new generation of 1925-33 politics, namely the Communist Party intellectuals Mella and Martínez Villena.

While such a viewpoint may be useful for Cuban Communist historians, it does not give us the full picture of the relevance of the Veterans' organisations to this period, and the then marginal role of these radicals. It was only after 1925 and the formation of the CNOC, the PCC and the struggle against Machado (and later alliance with him against the anarchists), that these leaders took on a role of historical importance for Cuba. While Communist historians may argue that Mella and Martínez Villena left the Veterans' organisation because they felt it to be an ineffective means of socialist transformation, in fact the leadership of the 1923-24 Association may have marginalised them because their politics did not agree with that of the bulk of the membership.

In many ways, the conflicts and dilemmas of the 1923-24 organisation were a repeat of those of the 1911-12 Council, namely a debate with elements of the government over the interpretation and implementation of constitutional, liberal, political praxis, and not over broader social and economic matters. Certainly, social and economic issues were more pronounced in the discourse of the 1923-24

organisation (most notably over race and sex rather than class, something not inconsistent with Liberal ideology), no doubt in part due to the impact of the failed uprising of the Party of Colour in 1912 and the economic crisis of 1921, but the dominating matter of contention was still access to, and exercise of, *political* power. The *políticos* of the movement were so situated in the class structure that they saw political positions as a means to gain economic power rather than their economic position as a means to political power. This was due to the consequences of the Ten Years War and the War of Independence, which had prevented the emergence of a strong native capitalist class, and hence, the reliance on the state as a form of patronage, something that the Marxist intellectuals perhaps should have realised more rapidly.

As early as 18 June 1923, in the offices of the periodical *La Discusión*, there was established a ‘Conjunción Nacional de Veteranos de la República de Cuba’ [National Convention of the Veterans of the Republic of Cuba] (Caja 61, p.19). On 12 August 1923 the Veterans’ and Patriots’ Association met in Havana (Thomas 2001: 342). They declared themselves in permanent session until the Zayas government ended political corruption. Leaders included Carlos García Vález and Manuel Despaigne, the latter previously a member of Zayas’s ‘honest cabinet’. The Supreme Council of the National Association met again and set about establishing regulations to govern the organisation as a national movement and elect leaders (Cairo Ballester 1976: 96-98). They then met on 31 August and established a twelve-point resolution calling for, amongst other things: repeal of the lottery law, the abolition of *botellas*, honest elections, free competition for government contracts, an independent judiciary, limitations of congressional immunity, laws

favouring domestic over foreign labour, the abolition of presidential re-election, and the defence of national industry (Chapman 1927: 470).

Structure

The National Association was an organisation with an ‘indefinite end’, namely, to be an:

authorised organ of national sentiment and a contributing factor in the ordered development of its democratic government, and having as its main aim to attain compliance with the programme of legislative reforms and rectifications agreed to in Martí’s Assembly, contained in the petitions directed at the Public Powers of the Republic...and to all those other means of legislation and administration, so that they might contribute to the moral and material regeneration of the Republic of Cuba (Statutes of the National Association of Veterans and Patriots, Article 1, Caja 61, p.14).

Unlike the organisation of 1911-12, that of 1923-24 was composed of four levels rather than three. Each of these four levels consisted of a three-tier structure. At the top was the National Assembly that elected a Supreme Council and issued its orders through the Executive of the Supreme Council. Below this was the Provincial Assembly that also elected a Supreme Council and issued its orders through the Executive of the Supreme Council for the provincial level. Below this was the Municipal Assembly that also elected a Supreme Council and issued its orders

through the Executive of the Supreme Council for the municipal level. Below this was the Neighbourhood Assembly that also elected a Supreme Council and issued its orders through the Executive of the Supreme Council for the neighbourhood level. Each Council was made up of a President, six Vice-presidents, a General Secretary, a Secretary of Records, a Treasurer, Vice-treasurer, and twelve 'Spokesmen'.

Article five of the statues, not surprisingly called for:

a law that reforms the organ of the Judicial Power, defining the absolute independence of that power in the form established by the constitution...and that the naming of its functionaries will not be dependent on the President of the Republic (Statues of the National Association of Veterans and Patriots, Article 1, Caja 61, p.17).

Personnel

On 14 October 1923 the Supreme Council of the National Association of Veterans was constituted. President of the Supreme Council at the national level in 1923-24 was Carlos García Vélez. As seen earlier, his father had been Calixto García, who had been Chief of the Eastern Forces during the Ten Years War of 1868-78, founder of the Cuban Revolutionary Committee in New York and Military Chief of Oriente Province in the uprising of 1895 (Suchlicki 1988: 114). As also seen earlier, García Vélez had been part of the Liberal Party's Central Revolutionary Committee in 1906 and also part of the committee set up by US civilian judge

Charles Magoon to advise him on the allocation of governmental positions (Hernández 1993: 148). He was later in his career to become Ambassador to Mexico, Argentina, the United States, England and Spain (Figarola 1974: 326-7).

There were six Vice-presidents of the Association: Enrique José Varona, Manuel Sanguily, General Miguel A. Varona, Carlos Pérez Díaz, Lorenzo Nieto and Alejo Carreño.

First Vice-president of the Association was Enrique José Varona. As seen earlier he was a founder of the Conservative party in 1907. He had been an Autonomist Party member before the War for Independence (Helg 1995: 46), and a founder of the Society of Juridical and Economic Studies in 1896 that had looked at socio-economic and political solutions for an independent Cuba (Helg 1995: 87). He had been Secretary of Finance under the US Governorship of Leonard Wood and later Secretary of Public Instruction. In 1912 he was Vice-president under Menocal and this prominent position of power was no doubt the reason for his absence from the National Council of Veterans in 1911-12. Later he held chairs in Psychology and Sociology at the University of Havana where he influenced Mella (Suchlicki 1988: 290).

Second Vice-president of the Association was Manuel Sanguily. He had been a long-time collaborator with Varona. He had been President of the Senate, Secretary of State under José Miguel Gómez and Inspector General of the Armed Forces under Menocal (Suchlicki 1988: 254-5). These positions under Gómez and Menocal had no doubt appeased Sanguily's desire for political status, as, although he is listed as a Colonel in the Institution of Veterans in 1911, he had not previously been a prominent spokesman for the movement.

Third Vice-president General Miguel A. Varona had been a member of the Council in 1911-12 (Rodríguez Altunaga: 145), although again not a prominent one. Fourth and fifth Vice-presidents of the Association were Carlos Pérez Díaz and Lorenzo Nieto respectively (Cairo Ballester 1976: 102). Sixth Vice-president Alejo Carreño was president of the Asociación de Hacendados y Colonos [Association of Land owners and Settlers] (Pérez 1986: 242).

Secretary General was Oscar Soto and his Vice-secretary was Juan M. Iznaga. The Treasurer, Manuel Despaigne was Assistant Secretary of State under the US occupation and headed the Cuban economic mission in Washington during World War I (Pérez 1986: 210).

Secretary of Minutes was Gustavo Gutiérrez and the Vice-secretary of minutes was Martínez Villena. As noted earlier, the latter had led the Grupo Minorista, composed of, amongst others: Juan Marinello, Jorge Mañach, Francisco Ichaso, Félix Lizaso, Emilio Roig de Leuchsenring, José Antonio Fernández de Castro, José Tallet, and Alejo Carpentier. They later published the journal *Social* (Liss 1987: 66).

Secretary of Correspondence, Carlos Alzugaray, was head of the Asociación de Comerciantes de La Habana [Association of Traders of Havana] (Pérez 1986: 242). Vice-secretary of Correspondence, Juan Marinello, was part of the Protest of the Thirteen and also Vice-president of the Falange de Acción Cubana. He was Deputy of the School of Lawyers and a member of the National Code Commission, as well as founder of the Hispanic-American Cultural Institute.

The Major Generals of the Association consisted of: Agustín Cebreco, José M. Capote, Salvador H. Ríos, Lope Recio Loinaz, and Javier de la Vega. Cebreco had been one of the spokesmen for the Liberals' following the 1906 rebellion also a

General in the 1911 Council. He was probably the most prominent black veteran in the Veterans' organisations. Lope Recio Loynaz was an officer in the Liberation Army of 1895 (Pérez 1986: 25), and later Governor of Camagüey (Figarola 1974: 323). He had also been a General in the National Council of 1911-12.

Listed as Generals of the Association are: Mariano Torres, Tomás Padró, Griñán, Enrique Loynaz del Castillo, Víctor Ramos, Francisco Estrada, José Reyes, Carlos Agüero, José J. Sánchez, Raimundo Sánchez and Florencio Salcedo. Torres was a land owner and had been a member of the National Council of 1911-12.

Enrique Loynaz del Castillo had been a participant in the rebellion of 1906 and a General of the Council of 1911. As noted earlier, was later a member of the Unión Nacionalista during the government of Machado and a participant in the rebellion against his regime on 12 August 1933. Later he was Ambassador for Mexico and Venezuela (Figarola 1974: 327-8). Tomás Padró Griñán had been a Mayor of Santiago de Cuba and director of the National Laboratory (Figarola 1974: 329). Estrada was Customs Administrator of Manzanillo. José Reyeshad was Mayor of Jiguaní (Figarola 1974: 330) and Carlos Agüero was a Civil Inspector (Figarola 1974: 325). José J. Sánchez participated in the rebellions of 1906 and 1917 (Figarola 1974: 331).

Listed as Colonels of the Association are: Ciriaco Cargía, Elpidio Cossío, Luis Yero Miniet, Alberto Bez Peña, Amador Cervantes Miquelín, Roberto Méndez Peñate, Federico Laredo Bru and Carlos Mendieta.

Laredo Bru was a Colonel in the Army of 1895-8. He led an unsuccessful military rising in 1923 in Las Villas (Thomas 2001: 343), and later organised opposition to the re-election of Machado in 1928 (Pérez 1986: 276). He was in Céspedes's cabinet of 1933 (Thomas 2001: 385), was Vice-president under Miguel

Mariano Gómez in 1936 and later one of Batista's puppet Presidents (Thomas 2001: 445). Although not listed, as a member of the National Council in 1911-12, he was to be a very prominent member of the Veterans' uprising in 1923-24, as will be seen later.

Mendieta was likewise a Colonel of the War of Independence. He was Inspector of Health of the Republic under the Provisional Government of 1902. He was a representative in the House of Congress in 1908, 1912 and 1916. He was Zayas's Vice-President in 1916 (Thomas 2001: 418), and participated in the rebellion of 1917 (Thomas 2001: 318). Like Laredo Bru, he was not listed among the Veterans' personnel of 1911-12, but is also very important in 1923-24. In 1927 he helped found the Unión Nacionalista [Nationalist Union] (Pérez 1986: 269) and in 1931 he was Menocal's second in command in his uprising against Machado (Thomas 2001: 360). In 1934 he became Batista's first 'puppet' President, suspending constitutional guarantees (Thomas 2001: 427), and resigned in 1936 "an honest man among thieves" (Thomas 2001: 435).

Listed as Commanders of the Association are: Alberto Barreras and Rogelio Zayas Bazán. The former was Governor of Havana in 1917 (Thomas 2001: 319). The latter was Interior Minister in the Machado government of 1924 (Pérez 1986: 258) and later Minister of the Interior, closing jai-alai halls, bars, and gambling dens (Thomas 2001: 346).

Listed as Doctors of the Association are: Leopoldo Cancio Luna, Enrique Hernández Cartya, Juan J. de Maza y Artola, and Luis Felipe Bolaños. As noted above, Maza y Artola had pressed for payment of veterans.

Also listed as members are: Antonio G. de Mendoza, Vicente Soler, Fernando González, Porfirio Franca, Manuel Enrique Gómez, Carlos Zaldís and

Julio A. Mella. Mendoza was a lawyer later designated to represent the *menocalistas* during Sumner Welles's visit in September 1933 (Thomas 2001: 402). Franca led the Committee of One Hundred in 1922 which "demanded an end to political misconduct and the adoption of a merit system in government" (Pérez 1986: 233), had in 1920 been the Manager of the National City Bank (Thomas 2001: 394), and was the member most favoured by the United States in the Pentarchy of 1933 (Pérez 1986: 320).

Antonio Mella was clearly an important figure in the nationalism emerging in 1923-25. In addition to that described above, he founded the José Martí University. According to Fernández, the anarchist Alfredo López managed to persuade Mella to work with students in the Escuela Racionalista Nocturna [Rationalist Night-school] a free school ran under the anarchist, Francisco Ferrer's principles, and Mella apparently referred to López as "my teacher" (Fernández 2001: 53-4).⁵³ The José Martí University was apparently "modelled after Peruvian Victor Raúl Haya de la Torre's Popular University González Prada" (Liss 1984: 84-5). The university functioned from 1923 to 1927 (Whitney 2001: 4).

Listed as Spokesmen are: Colonel Rafael Manduley del Río, General Miguel Llaneras, Commander Campos Marquetti, Doctor Max Henríquez Ureña, Commander Mario Boza, Colonel Luis Landa, Captain Alberto Acosta, Miss Hortensia Lamar, Doctor Horacio Martínez Fraga, Doctor Orosmán Viamontes, and Colonel Enrique Thomas.

Hortensia Lamar was the most prominent female member of the movement, she founded and edited *La Mujer Moderna* and was the Cuban delegate at the first

⁵³ Fernández cites no source for this comment.

International Feminist Congress in Chile in 1929 where she introduced a proposal on female suffrage that was approved unanimously (Suchlicki 1988: 154).

Most notable by their absence are Manuel Lazo, Manuel Aranda and Cosme de la Torriente. These had been prominent spokespeople of the movement at the meeting at the Hotel Telégrafo in 1909 and in the call for an Association to be formed in 1911. Manuel Lazo had also been one of the rebels of 1906 and many of these also were no longer present in the movement, most notably Demetrio Castillo Duany. However, as noted earlier Duany had been Chief of Prisons under President Menocal and Secretary of War under Zayas (Figarola 1974: 321) and so no longer sought patronage through the movement. What this also showed was that no doubt many of the rebels of 1906 now held positions of power that they did not wish to compromise by joining the Association of Veterans or supporting any uprising. This is illustrative of the Association as a parallel vehicle of patronage not committed to the more social-revolutionary aims of many of the groups of civic opposition.

The Twelve Demands of the Association of Veterans

The Twelve demands of the Association consisted of:

- 1) Repeal of the lottery law.
- 2) That the Government prevent the emergence of a railway monopoly.
- 3) The prompt payment of veterans' pensions.

- 4) A law to guarantee the absolute independence of the judiciary.
- 5) Abolition of the parts of the Electoral Code that give automatic voting rights in the assemblies of the political parties to all Congressmen, Governors etc., which makes it impossible to reform or renew those bodies.
- 6) An accounting law to prevent the expenditure of public funds without attendant responsibilities.
- 7) To fix the limits of parliamentary immunity to prevent this being used to protect those responsible for common crimes.
- 8) To establish a law to harmonise the relationship between capital and labour, and to guarantee the preferred status of Cuban workers over foreign workers in the industries of the country.
- 9) A constitutional amendment to prevent presidential re-election when the opportunity arises to amend the Constitution
- 10) Another constitutional amendment to give women the vote, and to allow them to stand as representatives.
- 11) An end to amnesty for common crimes.

12) The government must not approve legislation (the Tarafa bill) which would concede to the railways of the north of Cuba, exemption from their status as protected industries, because this would be prejudicial to the Treasury and the industry and commerce of Cuba ('Proclamation to the Country', in Gaunard 1954: 493-96, Appendix II).

These were the demands of the meeting on 31 August. At the earlier meeting on 30 August, their demands had included abolition of the Law of Tourism, but had not included women's political rights (Gaunard 1954: 480-89). Many of these demands had been made by the veterans' groups throughout the republican period, by politicians in and of power and by political parties. They were all chiefly practices of corruption that were usually carried out by the incumbent administration. The lottery had been a matter of debate before: being officially reinstated as it was held as popular among the people. However, the same problems plagued its re-establishment as it was used a tool of patronage. Moreover, the fact that Zayas himself had earlier been imprisoned for lottery-related corruption was not lost on Cubans. No doubt due to this fact, Campos Marquetti had invited President Zayas to the meetings of the Veterans' and Patriots' Association on 29 August, according to a correspondence from the *Policía Secreta Nacional* [National Secret Police], (Caja 63, p.91).

There were also two letters by Carlos García Vélez and Oscar Soto specifically addressed to the judiciary, highlighting the continued importance of this issue to the Veterans' organisations (Gaunard 1954: 489-92). A statement of a Judicial Police correspondent (presumably a spy) to Zayas states that it was Hortensia Lamar who proposed reforming the constitution to give women's suffrage

(Memorandum XIX, Caja 61, Part 1, p.136). In response to the demands of 31 August, Zayas insisted that his administration was not corrupt and called for concrete facts rather than insinuations (Gaunard 1954: 501-2).

The Veterans' movement attempts to achieve its demands

The Association received the support of the Federación Nacional de Corporaciones Económicas [National Federation of Economic Corporations], the Asociación de Industriales [Industrial Association], the Asociación de Buen Gobierno [Association of Good Government], the FEU, the Falange de Acción Cubana, and the Federación de Asociaciones Femeninas [Federation of Women's Associations]. Signatories to their subsequent pronouncements included Hortensia Lamar, Laredo Bru, Aníbal Escalante and Marinello. Municipal committees and local councils were established, and there was talk of consolidating the movement as a political party (Pérez 1986: 242).

The Veterans' platform also opposed illiteracy and the Tarafa Law, in the case of the latter no doubt because they resented high freight costs for transporting sugar to mills and ports, as many of the Association were planters. A main concern of the group was also the payment of pensions to Veterans. In August 1923 Celso Cuéllar, Zayas's son-in-law, visited Washington and urged the State Department to condemn the Veterans. In Havana, Machado, the soon-to-be president, urged the same, arguing that, if they refused to do so, a "revolution is inevitable" and, in September, Despaigne visited the US Embassy representing the movement and urged them not to interfere with the Association (Pérez 1986: 246).

As current historiography suggests, the Veterans' and Patriots' Association of 1923-24 was connected to other groups of opposition to the government in these years. As early as 29 August, a (presumably under-cover), member of the Havana Judicial Police reported that during a meeting:

a black veteran, protested because not a single black person appeared in the commission; and it was explained that here there were neither blacks nor whites, but that all were Veterans and Patriots...Miss Hortensia Lamar, President of the Feminist Club of Cuba, wished also to protest that not a single woman appeared in the Commission, forgetting no less than the Club which she represented, as she had been the first to put herself on the side of the Veterans and Patriots. Mr Alzugaray put his post of Vice-President at the disposal of this lady; and it was definitively recorded that a woman appeared in the Commission and that the Executive Committee of the Veterans and Patriots would give admission to another woman, as third Vice-President of the same (Judicial Police of Havana, Memorandum XVII, 29 August 1923, Caja 63, p.96).

Here the Veterans' and Patriots' Association attempted to portray themselves as such an equitable institution that they were effectively blind to race, though this seems somewhat unconvincing, and indeed, very few blacks did feature in prominent roles in the organisation. Likewise, while Hortensia Lamar was no doubt instrumental in the Association adopting the demand for women's suffrage, the fact that two women featured within the movement hardly made it a radical body as far as women's rights were concerned.

Zayas irritated the Association by harassing the movement's meetings and then ordering the arrest of the leaders on 20 September 1923 (Chapman 1927: 472). Campos Marquetti then replaced García Vélez as president of the Association (*El Universal* 20 September 1923). A female member of the movement listed as Mari Blanca Sabas Alomás was one of those incarcerated (Gaunard 1954: 511-12). In response to this harassment, Oscar Soto declared in the press that the Veterans:

are not preparing any revolution, nor do they want to prepare one for the good of government but of the Republic and its institutions (*La Lucha* 20 September 1923).

On 21 September 1923, *Diario de la Marina* reported on the detentions. This periodical was a Conservative mouthpiece, so not surprisingly it did not criticise the incarcerations, stating:

The Court must examine whether the statements made by the Veterans and Patriots in their assemblies were insulting to the national authorities or incitements to the people to act against the constituted powers. (*Diario de la Marina* 21 September 1923).

The same issue went on to state that:

To questions from reporters about the motives for the detentions carried out...the Under-secretary of the Interior declared that the secret agents had

proceeded in compliance with the orders of Doctor Casanova, Public Prosecutor, who is pursuing the indictment for sedition against the assembly.

Clearly this involved the most serious of political crimes. The same article also reported how the US Chargé d'Affaires, Williamson S. Howell, had come to visit the Cuban Secretary of State, Carlos Manuel de Céspedes to discuss their detention.

On 24 September, *Heraldo de Cuba* reported that Ricardo Dolz, leader of the Republican Party, suggested consolidating the Veterans' and Patriots' Association as a political party, but they claimed that this allegiance would only "destroy the legitimate aspirations of the Liberal Party". The same issue of the periodical reported that some veterans refused to enter their organisation's meeting that day as a woman, namely Lamar, was chairing it. Obviously the Veterans' Association was not as progressive as some of the groups of civic opposition in this period.

By 29 September, the National Secret Police informer present in the Veterans' and Patriots' Association's meetings was telling Zayas that they were intending to continue the state of alarm until US intervention was brought about, as they believed that this would be in their favour (National Secret Police to Zayas, Caja 61, Part III, p.30). The next day this plan was revealed to the press, with the Supreme Council of the Association accusing the judiciary of violating the Constitution by imprisoning its members and preventing their meetings, making the government no longer able to comply with its international obligation under the Platt Amendment and guarantee the protection of order, liberty and justice. The same piece spelt out exactly which articles of the Constitution the government had breached and how: Article 15 by imprisoning its members without charge, Article

22 by interfering with members' correspondence, and Article 28 by disrupting their meetings (*Heraldo de Cuba* 30 September 1923).

The Association addressed their appeal 'For the Regeneration of Cuba...to the People and to the Press of the United States' on 31 September. This complained of:

a system of detention and vice even more grave than that which existed before such reforms were advised...the National Association of Veterans and Patriots, composed of...two hundred thousand followers from all classes of our society (Caja 61, Part III, p.67-76).

It then went on to condemn:

The Presidential Decree relative to the exchange and purchase of land and the concession of monopolies, to enrich the government officials at the expense of the National Treasury, the famous Decree which imposed a Moratorium on the country during the conflict of the banking situation; a thing without precedent in any civilized country...the Decree ordering the purchase of the Convent of Santa Clara...which...would have placed in the hands of the President more than one million dollars (Caja 61, Part III, p.67-76).

The appeal also condemned the presidential use of pardons for common criminals, the Law of Tourism, the law of 'Non-Reorganisation of Political Parties' which would have made life-long congressional members, the *collecturías*, as they

were simply distributed among legislators, all levels of the judiciary as an ‘instrument of the executive’ and the delayed payment of pensions. The appeal then listed the twelve points of 30 August and ominously asserted that this dispute must be resolved “either by right or by force” (Caja 61, Part III, p.67-76).

A correspondence of the Judicial Police to Zayas on 5 October informed him that the Association made it clear that if the President did not accede to their demands they would initiate revolution (Caja 61, Part III, p.100). By this time groups were forming under the name ‘Milicia Patriótica Gubernamental’ [Patriotic Government Militia] to support Zayas in the event of an insurrection (Caja 61, Part III, p.123).

An ‘open letter’ to the Veterans’ movement on 10 October 1923 by José R. Pascual pointed out that many members of the Veterans’ organisations had in fact previously been in government, and that “none of them when they had in their hands the reins of the government had tried to work for regeneration” (Caja 62, part IV, p.12). Indeed, the author no doubt had a point. In any case, correspondence from the Judicial Police to Zayas on 11 October indicated that the Veterans were planning a ‘golpe de Estado’ showing that they, for their part, knew of this, perhaps indicating it was already doomed (Judicial Police to Zayas, 11 October 1923, Caja 62, part IV, p.18).

In response to the formation of the Supreme Council of the National Association on 14 October 1923 and Oscar Soto’s claim that they were a “revolutionary assembly” (Chapman 1927: 474-5), Zayas inaugurated Decree 1572 that prohibited the Veterans’ meetings (Cairo Ballester 1976: 103). The movement lost the support of farmers and land owners when the latter groups successfully bribed Zayas into dropping the Tarafa Bill (Cairo Ballester 1976: 109). In response

to Zayas's prohibitions under Decree 1572, the Veterans claimed that their right to peaceful association guaranteed by Article 28 of the Constitution was being violated (Caja 62, Part VI, p.98).

On 30 October 1923 members of the House of Representatives who had also been part of the Association of Veterans were dismissed (*Heraldo de Cuba*, 30 October 23). Not surprisingly, the Council of Veterans of Santiago de las Vegas claimed this was "as reprisals for the campaign sustained by them principally against those members of Congress" (Gaunard 1954: 531).

At this point, long-standing member of the Veterans' various bodies, Cosme de la Torriente, came into immediate conflict with the Association of 1923-24. A correspondence from the Chargé d'Affaires, Williamson S. Howell, Sr., to the US Secretary of State, dated 3 December 1923, summarises events up to the week ending 1 December. Howell refers to:

the accusation contained in Special Bulletin No. 6 (Nov.26th) of the Veterans and Patriots that President Zayas and Torriente had "knowingly violated the Constitution of the Republic" because Torriente had not resigned his seat in the Senate upon being appointed ambassador and was consequently holding two offices at the same time.

According to Howell, Torriente responded to this with his 'Proclamation to the Cuban People'. Howell documents this thus:

in his manifesto- the propriety of which may well be questioned – [he] thought it necessary to explain that so long as he failed to see a way out of

the difficulties in which Cuba found herself he would not take his oath of office as Ambassador, and that until he did take his oath he was entitled to his seat in the Senate.

However, according to Howell:

it looks as if another diplomat were to be the cause of some embarrassment to the Veterans themselves: their leader, General García Vélez, not only never resigned his post of Cuban Minister in London but it has transpired that he has just been granted an extension of his leave of absence by the very President whom he proposes to overthrow (Williamson S. Howell, Sr., to the US Secretary of State, 3 December 1923).

The loss of support from Torriente was in many ways symptomatic of the nature of the Veterans' protest. He was a long-time Conservative Party leader and an authentic military veteran of 1895. However, the Veterans' and Patriots' movement of 1923-24 clearly represented nothing more radical than a disaffected faction of the Cuban political class. This faction, as in 1911-12, contained Conservatives, Liberals and independents, as well as both supporters and denigrators of the revolt of 1906. Their calls for an authentic nationalism were, however, little more than vaguely disguised pleas for the granting of positions of power to themselves. The fact that Torriente and García Vélez were guilty of exactly the same corruption, and that this very corruption meant that Torriente no longer needed the Veterans' organisation for patrimonial support, likewise meant García Vélez was seen as on a par with governmental corruption among potential supporters of the Veterans' movement in

1923. It was the fact that the movement of 1923 could not entirely disassociate itself from the practices of corruption that meant it that it was ultimately to be superseded by more radically nationalist groups in the years after this.

On 11 December 1923 Chargé d’Affairs C. Van H. Engert again wrote to the US Secretary of State informing him of “the three reforms considered indispensable by the Veterans, viz. the suppression of the lottery, the repeal of the Tarafa Law, and the amendment of the Electoral Code” (C. Van H. Engert to Secretary of State, 11 December 1923, p.4). No doubt these reforms were important to the Veterans, but as has been seen, reformation of the judiciary and the laws regarding amnesty were also long-standing complaints. Days later the Chargé d’Affairs went on to state that the:

[L]iberal elements in Congress,...incorporated three of the principal demands of the Veterans and Patriots in a Bill that they introduced in the House on December 10th. The Bill provides for the abolition of the Lottery, the repeal of the Tarafa Law, and the amendment of the Electoral Code. The repeal of the Lottery Laws of 1909 and 1923 is also provided for in a separate Bill (C. Van H. Engert to Secretary of State, 17 December 1923, p.2).

Perhaps more important even than these three demands however, was the Decree of 12 December which “provides for the prompt payment of ‘gratifications’ or bonuses, which in practice amount to increases of salary, to most Government employees” (C. Van H. Engert to Secretary of State, 17 December 1923, p.2). Engert sheds light on the role of Torriente at this point as he states he was “Acting

Secretary of the Treasury” and he “informed the President that he has sufficient funds at his disposal to pay these bonuses in full and that their payment would put a stop to a traffic in bonus certificates which speculators have been indulging in” (C. Van H. Engert to Secretary of State, 17 December 1923, p.3). This no doubt indicates that Torriente was seen as one more corrupt *político* by the rank and file within the Veterans’ organisation of 1923-24. He had been the author of the law to end the moratorium and had clearly used this to acquire economic clients. However, García Vélez’s similar public malfeasance no doubt detracted support from the organisation as an authentic harbinger of Cuban nationalism.

The Veterans’ planned rebellion of 1924

As a result of the repression at the end of 1923, the Veterans developed an insurrectionary plan. Perhaps not surprisingly, it was almost exactly the same as the plans of 1906 and 1917, consisting of an armed expedition, simultaneous revolts in various provinces, along with bombardment of the presidential palace and various military targets in Havana. For his part, Zayas justified searching Veterans’ homes on evidence provided by his spies that they were in fact accumulating arms in certain people’s houses (in this case ‘Quinton Pino’), (Judicial Police to Zayas, 28 January 1924, Caja 62, part IV, p.106). The fact that these ‘homes’ were in fact *fincas* (farms) indicates the bourgeois composition of the Association’s leadership.⁵⁴

This is the most glaring evidence that the movement was unlike much of the civic opposition and organisations such as the CNOC and the PCC. These tactics

⁵⁴ Judicial Police to the Secretary of Justice lists the farms ‘San Pedro’ and ‘Suazo’, Caja 62, part IV, p.18

would have been completely futile for the latter, as they sought not to install their own small political faction after ousting the ruling one, but rather: popular participation at all levels of political and economic life.

García Vélez and Despaigne travelled to the United States to arrange the purchase of six aeroplanes as well as seeking out wealthy American firms to bankroll them if they successfully assumed power. By this time, Zayas was aware of these plans (Cairo Ballester 1976: 109). A correspondence by the Judicial Police as early as 16 October 1923 reported to Zayas that the Association was planning an uprising. Interestingly the plan also included calling on workers to strike throughout the island and solicit US intervention (Caja 62, part IV, p.42). While this was no doubt prompted by the role of the Veterans in the 1902 strike, clearly workers had called strikes at that time for their own particular interests, that had only incidentally coincided with those of the United States and their aim to impose the dollar as the dominant currency, and likewise only incidentally coincided with the aims of the Veterans. No doubt the workers' movement felt that they owed the Veterans nothing, as this plan was never discussed again and it never went further. In fact, the Cajas on the Association of Veterans include a correspondence from Judicial Police to the Secretary of Justice discussing the 'Hermandad de Ferrocarrileros' [Brotherhood of Railroad Workers] and their strike in February 1924, but there is no mention of the names of any of the Veterans' leadership as being involved (Caja 62, part IV, p.102-5).

On Sunday, 23 March, 1924, the *New York Times* contained an interview with "General García [Carlos García Vélez], Colonel Manuel Despaigne,...and a

third Cuban, internationally known, whose name cannot be given”,⁵⁵ in which the Association set out their ideas. They asserted that:

[W]e would not say now that we are planning a revolution...we are working for the overthrow of the Zayas Government in order to save the country. We do not know whether that can be accomplished without revolution, which we do not believe in if it can be avoided...it will not be the kind of revolution that is generally associated with Latin American countries. Property will be protected...it will be an orderly revolution and, so great will be public support, that it will be a bloodless revolution...The planters want a revolution. Commerce and business want a revolution...there can be no legal or moral right by which the country can be bound to continue prostituting the resources that belong to all the people for the benefit of private enterprises...From the standpoint of social life and morals...Cuba is going to the wall under the present administration. There is graft and thievery of all kinds...The courts are practically non-existent. They are appointed and controlled by the Executive, and exist only as an adjunct for pardoning criminals the Administration wants pardoned...An election in Cuba nowadays is a farce...Representatives got from \$500 to \$50,000 for their votes and influence to pass the Tarafa bill (Caja 63: p.1-2)

Their notion of an ‘orderly revolution’ portrayed the liberal, constitutional heritage that they claimed, in contrast with the more radical members of the Association. Again the emphasis is that of a unified cultural, economic and social

⁵⁵ This was probably José Fernández de Castro.

unit, temporarily betrayed by its political leadership. While they talked of the ‘prostituting of resources’, they did not mean by capitalists or even US corporations, but rather practices of political corruption, peculiarly Cuban.

Later on in the same article García Vélez states:

The Veterans’ and Patriots’ Association...issued our manifesto on Aug. 30, 1923, what you might call the Cuban Declaration of Independence... It embodies twelve points...Those are the reforms we demand. Until we get them the reign of graft will go on. It cannot be stopped except by reform or revolution.

It seems somewhat unusual to speak of ‘overthrowing’ a government *without* a revolution, or revolting, even when one does not believe in doing so. The paragraph is symptomatic, however, of the reasoning of the Veterans. They felt themselves to be the legitimate heirs to political power in Cuba, and the thinly veiled threat emphasised their nationalist rhetoric of ‘saving’ the country. In this speech, García Vélez also made clear the opposition to the Law of Tourism, which according to him was “really an official subsidy for gambling places under the guise of encouraging tourist travel”. As elsewhere, Zayas’s practice of nepotism was again a subject of criticism. According to García Vélez:

[t]he administrator of the lottery is a son, he won the grand prize mentioned above,...The Collector of Customs at Havana,...is held by another nephew. The major-domo of the palace, who controls the executive expenditures, is a

son of the President's wife by a former marriage. The chief engineer of the City of Havana is a brother of the President's son-in-law.

On 24 March, *El Sol* stated that Oscar Soto and Gustavo Gutiérrez had been responsible for acquiring machine guns and hand grenades in the United States. The correspondence of the Secretary of State for Cuba claims that 'Mr Green', a pilot, acted as the agent of Salvador Martínez Ibor in St. Petersburg, Florida, the latter being the brother-in-law of García Vélez (Caja 63, p.9). Another correspondence from the Consulate of the Republic of Cuba to Carlos Manuel Céspedes, the Cuban Secretary of State, states that H. Hollingsworth, Special Agent of the Department of Justice of the US government revealed to him that Mexican revolutionaries had sold the Veterans arms in St. Petersburg (Consulate of the Republic of Cuba, p.1 in Caja 63). Later, the same Consul states that the same agent Hollingsworth had informed him that Gustavo Gutiérrez had used the false identity of a judge, 'Jaime Traumont' to travel to Tampa to acquire arms (Consulate of the Republic of Cuba, p.3 in Caja 63).

On 27 March García Vélez stated with some duplicity that "[t]here will be a revolution...but not a revolution of canons and machetes, but a revolution of the public consciousness". Later in the same article, García Vélez and Manuel Despaigne claimed that "there are six hundred professors,...but the majority are political agents without teaching obligations with which they must comply" (*Heraldo de Cuba* 27 March 1924). Although this was clearly an objection to an instance of graft, the Veterans' statements had not raised this issue prior to this. No doubt this was due to the formation of the civic opposition groups and the influence of the FEU.

Upon being dismissed as Minister for Cuba in London, García Vález ironically accepted this as “the most grand honour that I have received in my life”. García Vález went on to warn of those who “want to make of this Association a partisan instrument serving petty personal interests” (*El Sol* 25 March 1924).

In response to García Vález’s published speeches, Zayas closed *El Sol* and wrote to the President of the Press Association, justifying his actions on the basis of the “open and agitated revolutionary propaganda, aiming at the realisation of an armed movement that disturbs public order” (*Diario de la Marina* 29 March 1924). Zayas founded his actions on the powers granted to him by Paragraph 17 of Article 68 of the Constitution that made him head of the armed forces: a role that empowered him not only to defend the national territory but also to conserve ‘interior order’ (Pichardo 1973: 90).

Here again the extent of the contest between the Veterans and the government is shown: both claimed to be the legitimate expression of Cuban nationalism, and both claimed the other was illegally abusing the Constitution. Hence, neither were radical in the social-revolutionary sense, nor even as radical as the Liberation Army had been through its practice of racial equality; rather, a political ‘revolution’ in the sense of a change in power brought about by force was called for, along with the denigration of the other party as the malfeasant one, and the hailing of their own faction as above such partisan political venality.

It can be seen however, that the Cuban government did try to remain within constitutional precepts, or at least wished to display itself as doing this to the United States. In response to Zayas’s censorship of the press, a statement by Oscar Soto, Gustavo Gutiérrez and Miguel Llaneras appeared in *Heraldo de Cuba* claiming that there was no legal precept for press censorship, and that in fact Article 25 of the

Constitution specifically protected the right to free expression (Caja 63, p.13). Meanwhile, Zayas continued his covert observation of the Veterans' activities in collaboration with the US government. A correspondence of 28 March from the Consul for the Republic of Cuba to the Cuban Secretary of State claims that the pilot the Veterans were using was a 'John Greene'. The Consul had been informed by the US agent Hollingsworth, and a 'Federal Marshall' in Tampa ('Mr Y. O. Price'), that the purchase of six machine guns had been orchestrated. They had been bought from a place in Hartford, Connecticut and shipped to John Greene in St. Petersburg. The 'American Bank & Trust Company' had funded this. The US President however, felt that this was related to supplying revolutionaries in Mexico, against which activity there were explicit prohibitions. Hollingsworth had discovered that the American Bank & Trust Company had itself received funds from the 'Bank of Columbia in Tampa' on the order of Salvador Martínez Ibor. Hollingsworth also discovered that a Havana judge, Jaime Traumont, had deposited \$21,500 in the Bank of Columbia in November 1923, placing it at the disposal of Salvador Martínez Ibor. Greene had suspected that he was being investigated, when he bought six aeroplanes in San Antonio, Texas, and had them flown to Houston (Caja 63, p.16-19).

On 31 March 1924, the Cuban Ambassador in Washington, Cosme de la Torriente, wrote to the Cuban Secretary of State Carlos Manuel de Céspedes asking him if he thought that a revolution was being prepared there. He asked Céspedes if the Cuban President thought that a statement by the US President that there was a danger of revolution in Cuba would do more damage than good, and would also hinder investigation into the potential connection to Mexican revolutionaries. Céspedes responded by stating that he was not aware of an uprising in Cuba, save for arms discovered in Santa Clara (Caja 63, p.21-23).

Later Torriente explained to Céspedes that Joint Resolution No. 37 of the 67th Congress of the United States of 31 January 1922 prohibited the export of arms and munitions. However, Torriente went on to explain that an American ‘Mr. Hughes’ had clarified to him that this was not a ‘dictatorial’ right on the part of the US President, but rather:

it must be founded in certain facts, because if this is not the case the Tribunals of Justice⁵⁶ can declare the embargo without effect. As an example, he said to me that if the President dictated today a decree prohibiting the shipment of munitions of War to Canada without having proof of the existence of a state of violence, that is, of a disruption of the public peace, or of a possible disruption of the same in the said country, then the commerce of munitions is as legitimate as in normal times (Caja 63, p.34-36).

Torriente told Céspedes that the federal agent in Tampa, Angel Solano, stated that he was continuing his investigations and that this would proceed better without a declaration on the part of the Cuban president of a state of disorder, in order to better make a case later on (Caja 63, p.24). For his part, agent Solano wrote to Céspedes that special agent Hollingsworth had informed him that Salvador Martínez Ibor had been in Miami and had paid the pilot and ordered the aeroplanes to be taken

⁵⁶ This is Torriente’s phrase. Presumably by ‘Tribunals of Justice’ he meant the US Federal Courts, or the Supreme Court, or both in unison. Cubans themselves often used the phrase ‘Tribunals of Justice’ to describe the Cuban court system at varying levels. The fact that Cuba’s judicial system was not, however, the same, or even as explicitly clear, as the US system, is perhaps indicative not only of Torriente’s confusing term here, but also as has been seen, of the issue of judicial power in Cuba as a whole.

to Ocala. Hollingsworth had insisted on the need for photographic evidence of cheques signed in the name of Jaime Traumont by Salvador Martínez Ibor in order to link him to Gustavo Gutiérrez (Caja 63, p.25). The US federal police were active in New York hoping to gain evidence to present to a Grand Jury, and Torriente informed Céspedes that they had proof of a planned aerial attack, but that it was necessary for further investigations to establish a link to members of the Veterans' and Patriots' movement in both the United States and Cuba.

In another correspondence, Torriente informed Céspedes that the Consul General of New York thought the Mexican revolutionaries and the Veterans' and Patriots' movement were working together. According to the Consul, the financial agent of the Mexican revolutionaries in Havana, Dr. Alfredo Ferrer, had paid the Veterans \$24,000 for 325,000 7 millimetre mauser cartridges which they had given to the Committee of Mexican Revolutionaries in Havana. The Mexicans realised they were now being covertly observed in the United States and they were no doubt aware of the aforementioned prohibitions against the export of materials of war and the potential criminal consequences. The same correspondence goes on to say that Antonio Manero, the agent for Huerta in New York,⁵⁷ had visited Havana, taking with him three letters for bonds issued from the house of Mendoza, two of them for \$50,000 and one for \$25,000. The Mexican revolutionaries and the Veterans and Patriots had apparently issued bonds of \$10,000 that they invested in the banks of New York (Caja 63, p.27)

Covert observation by both the US and Cuban authorities, and the Veterans' cognisance of this, meant the Veterans now had to raise money for their revolution elsewhere. A correspondence by Alberto Treviño states that he had watched García

⁵⁷ Huerta was a Mexican politician briefly to assume power in Mexico by force of arms.

Vélez and Manuel Despaigne visit two Cuban companies in New York, being unsuccessful at raising funds both times. These companies were the García Sugar Corporation and the Pocahontas Coal Company (Caja 63, p.51). A report from the Consul in Key West to Torriente states that:

the Veterans' movement has never had great sympathy among the Cubans of Key West, who if they did have very little, this completely disappeared after the view of General García Vélez was revealed during his journey to this country, whose opinion has been considered here as antipatriotic and prejudicial to the interests of our Republic...the declarations made by General García in the North, to the American press,...were listened to with interruptions and outcries of...'send them to prison for ten years' (Consulate of the Republic of Cuba, 20 April 1924, Caja 63, p.52).

With support from neither wealthy Cubans in the United States, nor among the workers of Key West (who had made up a great constituency of support for all the Cuban struggles for independence), it is little wonder that the Veterans' planned rebellion was seemingly doomed. In fact, the workers of Key West had a point: Carlos García Vélez and Manuel Despaigne had been powerful *políticos* since the inauguration of Menocal, if not before, Despaigne having been the Secretary of the Treasury in the 'Honest Cabinet'.

There was an outbreak of insurrection on 30 April 1924 in Las Villas under Laredo Bru without the authorisation of García Vélez (Chapman 1927: 476). On 3 May 1924 the Chief of the Judicial Police of Cuba wrote to the Cuban Secretary of Justice telling him that 'prominent members' of the Veterans' and Patriots'

Association had been detained on 29 April, including Oscar Soto. Soto carried a letter with him that contained references to 'Wheeling', 'Molk' or 'Wolk' and 'Standard'. It appeared that 'Wheeling' was Soto, 'Molk' or 'Wolk' was Despaigne, and 'Standard' was García Vélez (Caja 63, p.66).

On 5 May Céspedes wrote to Washington that "people in general condemn the uprising" and that "Laredo Bru's party is composed of some one hundred and thirty men, and forces of the Government are situated conveniently around its front and flanks" (Caja 63, p.73). Also on 5 May, Torriente wrote to Céspedes telling him that a 'J. Fernández García' and a 'Roberto Martínez' had been detained in Ocala, Florida, and six aeroplanes confiscated (Caja 63, p.79).

Two days later, Céspedes wrote to the Cuban delegation in Germany, stating that the US press claimed that the same delegation affirmed to the German newspaper *Deutsche Allegmeine Zeitung* that it was of the opinion that "the present revolt is being stimulated by American sugar interests in order to provoke an American intervention" (Caja 63, p.91). A week later, Torriente told Céspedes that the Consul General had informed him that Despaigne, García Vélez and Gustavo Gutiérrez were still trying to send the arms they had acquired to Cuba via Haiti or Santo Domingo (Caja 63, p.98).

For their part, the United States incarcerated Fernández de Castro, Martínez Villena and García Velez, who were in Florida training to fly aeroplanes (Cairo Ballester 1976: 111). Zayas released Despaigne and García Velez on condition that they ceased political agitation and he also paid Laredo Bru's forces to disband (Cairo Ballester 1976: 111). On 16 May, Vicente Soler, President of the Veterans and Patriots of Santa Clara, wrote to the Cuban President claiming that his actions were "in disgraceful disagreement with the methods that until this day, were

practised by the Judicial power”, and that those imprisoned had been were there on, “false charges” (Caja 63, p.100).

Shortly after this, Céspedes gave a letter to the Cuban press that had earlier been given to him by Torriente. It described a US agent who:

spoke with Gustavo Gutiérrez who was sailing for Cuba for the purpose of attempting to help reorganize the threads of the late revolution. The subject talked as if he had some feelings against the General [Vélez]⁵⁸ He further stated that he believed President Coolidge made a mistake in declaring the embargo on arms to Cuba as the Cuban Revolutionists had the sympathy of the American Ambassador, General Enoch Crowder. He stated that the principles General Crowder urged were rejected by President Zayas and his cohorts and that General Crowder knew the Revolutionists were right...He stated that...in the event the United States placed another embargo on arms to Cuba he believed that resources and capital could be obtained in Europe and the necessary supplies secured from abroad...he stated...the Revolutionists had 17,000 men in the field (Case no: 328, Agent: 11, Report: 5, 24 May, 1924, Caja 63, p.109-10).

From this it is clear in many ways why the Veterans’ revolt fell apart so easily. Divided at the highest levels among its leadership, not supported among the nationalist and potentially revolutionary element of workers in Cuba or Key West, (and indeed with no authentic attempt to garner this support), unable to raise enough resources and arms, and in fact tacitly supported by the United States, and with that,

⁵⁸ The square brackets and Vélez’s name are contained in the original source.

the support of Enoch Crowder, the diplomat responsible for much interference in the Cuban state of affairs in 1921. The latter point was no doubt crucial at this juncture. Cubans had long resented the role of the United States in the struggle against Spanish imperialism and what came to be seen as the neo-colonial role of the United States under the Platt Amendment. The 1906 revolt, while popular and felt to be justified, had been ultimately vindicated by this same US hegemony. The role of *políticos* after 1906, and more crucially, under Gómez and later Menocal, many of whom had only managed to launch their political careers due initially to the role of the United States, and later their attendant corruptions, meant that this tactic of soliciting US intervention was not in accord with much of the patriotic feeling present in Cuba in 1923-24.

Crowder had been a supporter of the Veterans' and Patriots' movement since 11 November 1923 when he had drawn the attention of US Secretary of State Hughes to their "twelve point program and to the fact they are advocating many of the reforms that have been suggested by the United States in the diplomatic correspondence of the last two years" (Pérez 1986: 246). Popularity among members of the US political class was not however, a guarantee of power in the turbulent political ferment beginning in Cuba after the 1920s.

The Decline of the Veterans' movement as a nationalist force after 1924

The *políticos* of all factions had been in various positions of power throughout the period 1906-24: aged leaders of 1895, revolutionaries of 1906, Liberal followers of Gómez, and later *menocalistas* and *zayistas*. They were all

tainted by corruption. Nothing could have more aptly summarised the situation than that comment mentioned earlier by the workers of Key West: 'send them to prison for ten years'. Not surprisingly then, workers of Cuba and Key West, the student radicals involved in the FEU, as well as the civic opposition groups more generally, saw the Veterans' movement for precisely what it was: one more internecine factional struggle among the corrupt political class.

The Chargé d'Affairs had reported to the US Secretary of State, communicating his feelings about the Federation of Students of the University of Havana. He stated that this body:

(1)...voiced essentially anti-American sentiments. This is accounted for by an intense feeling of nationalism, impatient alike of weakness in the Government and of American intervention. If reforms be necessary they must be made by Cubans and not by "foreigners"...

(2) Being intensely ignorant of American aims and ideals, the students naturally advocate the Latin-american brotherhood as against the "danger" of becoming submerged by Anglo-Saxon dominance...

...(4) An unmistakable tendency to flirt with Bolshevism is apparent in the founding of the so-called "Popular University". (C Van H. Engert, Chargé d'Affairs, to the US Secretary of State, 10 December 1923).

It was precisely this new "intense feeling of nationalism", that was beginning to insist that reforms "must be made by Cubans", that led not only to the growing popularity of new groups like the FEU and the PCC, but also that held the Veterans' and Patriots' movement of 1923-24 as incapable of carrying out these very reforms.

The Veterans were seen as complicit with, not only the corruptions of the entire post-independence era, but with prominent Conservatives and Liberals, with the role of the United States and its hegemonic practices, with the tacit endorsement of Enoch Crowder. Incapable of purging the Cuban state of corruption alone, complicit in many ways with these same corruptions, the Veterans represented the final gasp of the nationalism of 1895.

With the crisis of 1923-24 new social actors, inherently more radical, were to take centre stage in the arena of nationalist feeling in Cuba. They were to define the new politics leading from the formation of the Cuban Communist Party in 1925, to the *Machadato*. While some of their more radical views on society may not have been ultimately enshrined in Cuban political culture, this period was to produce a definitive test of nationalist allegiance that groups like the Veterans' movement were largely incapable of (due to their appeal to US interests): commitment to the abrogation of the Platt Amendment. Machado's power coalesced around this issue, and while it was to take a struggle of another ten years before Batista removed the Amendment in 1934, even in 1924, the Veterans' movement was not seen as 'intensely' nationalist enough.

The Veterans' organisation then debated whether to constitute itself as a political entity, possibly in support of Menocal in the November presidential elections, with many arguing against participation in party politics, while many of the new members of the movement were strongly against Menocal (Cairo Ballester 1976: 112). Others favoured involvement in politics but instead coalesced around support for Carlos Mendieta to be president of the movement and hence the nation. At this time the movement lost support among the young intellectuals like Martínez

Villena, who had sought a wide-ranging 'regeneration' and not simply reform of the political system (Cairo Ballester 1976: 113).

This caused the young intellectuals to believe that profound changes, rather than partial remedies were needed, and that these could not be achieved through entities like the Veterans' movement, and that full implementation of the Manifesto of Montecristi would require a revolutionary consciousness (Cairo Ballester 1976: 114). Martínez Villena called the defeat of the Veterans in 1924 "revenge of the bourgeoisie" (Nuñez Machín 1974: 165). Discussing his compatriot, the writer Juan Marinello stated that Martínez Villena "discovered then that the rule of imperialism, was the fundamental cause of our problems. His path towards Marxism and the class struggle was opened" (Nuñez Machín 1974: 166).

Further, the failure of the Veterans' planned rebellion showed that in many ways, the conflict between the Cuban President and the Veterans movement of 1923-24 had its own internal dynamic. It was driven more by the goal of patronage than a genuine 'anti-Americanism' of the newer groups alluded to above. The issue of presidential re-election, for example, while important to the Veterans, was not the chief cause of their revolt. Rather, it was because he was not 'their' president, and he used the powers granted to him against them, legally according to his office, and unconstitutionally according to the Veterans. The Popular Party had opposed re-election in December 1923 and had posited obstructing the House of Representatives on the issue (C Van H. Engert to the US Secretary of State, 11 December 1923). The Veterans however, while they may have supported this obstruction as individual Senators, did not form an allegiance with the Popular Party on this issue. This once again illustrated their narrow, factional interests, not in accord with the emerging radical nationalism. The young radicals were very much

aware of this. Like Martínez Villena, Mella was explicit about his experiences with the Association of Veterans. As he put it:

We are taking a different path. We are revolutionaries, yes, but sincerely revolutionary. We do not aspire to power. We do not want to change some men for others...We hope to realise our ideals. Our ideals that are not the elevation of a few, but the liberation of enslaved people. History has shown us that in order for a real and just transformation the economic system must be destroyed (IHMCRSC 1975: 97).

Indeed, the same source claims that:

It is the participation of the young which led to a more radical path: the armed insurrection in which Rubén Martínez Villena and José Antonio Fernández de Castro took part (IHMCRSC 1975: 97, n.21).

It had been Martínez Villena's group that had risen in rebellion, and while they might theoretically have gained the support of the working class of Cuba and Key West, this rising was not to be, for the patronage network represented by the Association of Veterans again compromised with a government with which, it was in many ways, complicit.

The Association of Veterans and Patriots of 1923-24 represented the last gasp of Cuban nationalism directly descended from the years 1895-98 with authentic relation to the revolts of 1906 and 1917. Even by this stage, however, many of the personnel were lesser-known veterans. The attempt at unity with the civic opposition

and radical movements was flawed from the start: by the inherent conservatism of veterans as such, by their male chauvinism, and by their corruption and factionalism. Further, despite their flowery rhetoric, the Veterans' organisations themselves included many who were not untainted by political corruption. In fact the movement usually represented a vehicle of patronage operating sometimes against, sometimes with, political parties. Personnel included Conservatives and Liberals, and those from these factions not currently in power. However, that was exactly as far as their politics reached: from Liberalism to Conservatism and no further.

While to many of the young radicals the Veterans' organisation of 1923-24 was seemingly a potentially revolutionary organisation, the Association was only revolutionary in the old sense: in terms of a 'golpe de Estado', bombardment of the presidential palace, destruction of US property – i.e., petit-bourgeois, nationalist opposition to large-scale US economic interests and political corruptions. In fact, however, many of the personnel were just as keen to seek US help under the Platt Amendment itself, and hence were in fact shrewd *políticos*, afraid of, or willingly complicit, with the reality of emerging US world hegemony. Not surprisingly, the movement was eclipsed by those more representative of the young and the working class – the CNOC, the PCC, women's movements, and even the corporatist associations to later appear under the *Machadato*.

This chapter has illuminated some of the questions intrinsic to the thesis: the question of a civil society organisation engaging in armed politics, and the question of what happened to 30,000 or more demobilised *mambises* and their role in the politics of the Cuban republic. However, by the 1920s the genuine 'veterans' were very old men, and their ideas equally as dated by this time. The Soviet revolution and World War I, while seemingly distant events, were to have an impact on Cuba

in a world increasingly inter-related in forms of commercial exchange, and as an inevitable consequence, with the flow of ideas. In any case, the Veterans' protest had been accommodated by 1924 in similar ways to earlier revolutionary movements: by partial compromise and oaths of good government on the part of the administration, by the granting of patronage to some of the leadership, and by an insight on the part of those protesting into the futility of continuing the bloodshed characteristic of the years 1906 and 1917. However, in order to fully understand the decline of the Veterans' organisations after the years 1923-25, it will be necessary to look at events after this, to see why such organisations were not resurrected.

The radicalisation of politics under the *Machadato*

In 1925, Gerardo Machado was elected President of Cuba, very much on the basis that he would be the candidate for Cuban nationalism, long required. However, his rule was to be more dictatorial than any previous Cuban President, and, hence, Cuban political culture was to become more radical in opposition. In many ways, the Veterans' organisations were not radical enough for the 'new' politics, although their personnel did play some parts in events.

On 15 August 1925 the third Congreso Nacional Obrero [National Workers' Congress] formed the Confederación Nacional Obrera de Cuba [National Confederation of Cuban Workers – CNOC], which was “strongly influenced by anarchosindicalist ideas”, the most important part being, its “collective refusal of electoral politics” (Thomas 2001: 347). Juana María Acosta was elected provisional president, the first time a woman held such a position (Fernández 2001: 54-5), and

the first Secretary-general was Alfredo López (Thomas 2001: 348). The CNOC was “affiliated with the Profintern, Moscow's ‘Red Union’...[but] was not necessarily controlled by the Soviet Union” (Liss 1987: 67). It was apparently founded because the “anarcho-syndicalist leadership, realiz[ed] the regional and class limitations of the FOH” (Aguilar 1972: 82). A few days later, the Partido Comunista Cubano [Cuban Communist Party – PCC] was founded in Havana by Mella, Carlos Baliño (Fernández 2001: 55), and Juan Marinello (Liss 1987: 91), when the existing six Agrupaciones Comunistas [Communist Groupings] formed an alliance (Thomas 2001: 349). Mella also helped found the Cuban section of the Anti-Imperialist League in 1925 with Baliño and Marinello, and edited its journal *Lucha de Clases*.⁵⁹

In 1926 in Mexico Mella spoke out against the murder of anarchists Sacco and Vanzetti in the United States (Liss 1987: 88-9). The formation of the PCC was carried out with the help of Mexico's Enrique Flores Magón, one of the ideologues of the Mexican revolution, who was sent by Moscow to Cuba (Liss 1987: 67). The first Secretary-general was José Miguel Pérez, who was almost immediately replaced by José Peña Vilaboa, and the publication *Justicia* replaced *La Lucha de Clases* (Thomas 2001: 350). Mella was imprisoned by Machado on a trumped-up murder charge the month following the formation of the PCC.

Gerardo Machado had succeeded Zayas as president, and, as Shaffer puts it, his “election...signalled the beginning of the end for anarchist control of the Cuban labor movement” (Shaffer 2000: 61). Machado's repression of the anarchist movement was harsh. He closed the Sindicato de la Industria Fabril [Syndicate of Industrial Artisans], arresting its leader Margarito Iglesias, and jailed anarchist leader Enrique Varona, who was later murdered. López was offered a government

⁵⁹ Thomas mentions the journal *El Comunista* (Thomas 2001: 350).

post to stop his activities, which he refused and he was later kidnapped and disappeared (Fernández 2001: 56). César Vilar, a Communist, then took over as Secretary-general of the CNOC (Thomas 2001: 352). Machado banned the publications of the Havana Federation of Labour (FOH), and created a pro-government union, La Federación Cubana de Trabajo [The Cuban Federation of Work] (Whitney 2001: 53).

Also in 1927, the anarchist Margarito Iglesias disappeared and Communists gradually usurped the CNOC, taking over positions previously held by anarcho-syndicalists. In 1927 Machado murdered four students, Claudio Brouzón, Noske Yalob, Puerto Reyes, and Manuel Cotoño, after accusing them of being Communists (Thomas 2001: 358). Machado had also reinstated all the teachers ousted by the 1923 student rebellion of the FEU (Aguilar 1972: 76). Militant anarchist self-defence groups such as Espártaco, Los Solidarios and the Federación de Grupos Anarquistas de Cuba [Federation of Anarchist Groups of Cuba – FGAC], allied with university students in a violent campaign against Machado's repression. Other armed opposition groups such as the Directorio Estudiantil Revolucionario [Revolutionary Student Directorate] likewise began armed resistance (Fernández 2001: 57). The student group which Fernández cites confuses the issue over what Liss and other sources term the Directorio Estudiantil Universitario [University Student Directorate - DEU], who allied with the Communist Party. The DEU was formed by Aureliano Arango, Eduardo Chibás and Antonio Guiteras in 1927 (Aguilar 1972: 77, 116).

In 1927, out of the Grupo Minorista, Alejo Carpentier, Juan Marinello, Jorge Mañach, Francisco Ichaso, Félix Lizaso, and Medardo Vitier created *Revista de Avance* (Liss 1987: 67). The Grupo Minorista organised a tribute to Serafín Delmar

and was accused of plotting to overthrow the government, resulting in the ‘Communist trial of 1927’. Although there were no convictions, the Communist Party was at this point outlawed (Aguilar 1972: 85-6). In 1928 Mella and the DEU became antagonistic to the ‘Third Period’ of the Comintern (Aguilar 1968: 15-20), and, “attempted to formulate Marxist strategies based on specific national realities and not primarily on the precepts of the Comintern’s ‘orthodox’ Marxism” (Whitney 2001: 75).

All these events, of course, signalled that many of the political concerns of the Veterans’ organisations were a thing of the past: the payment of veterans, the control of civil service positions, and the role of the Cuban President in appointing the judiciary. Much as the economic crisis of 1921 had radically changed Cuban political culture, so too, did the Crash of 1929. In 1930 a streetcar strike became a general one, the first of its kind in Cuba under a dictatorship. According to Fernández, the PCC collaborated with Machado in attempting to remove all anarchist elements from the CNOC, as testified by the anarchist members of the FGAC, Casto Moscu, Manuel González, Agustín Castro, and Eusebio Mujal (Fernández 2001: 57). Also, in 1930, a protest by the DEU led Machado to suspend constitutional guarantees (Aguilar 1972: 102-3). In January the following year the Ala Izquierda Estudiantil [Student Left Wing] split from the DEU, claiming that the latter was only anti-Machado, rather than anti-imperialist, and they founded the journal *Línea* (Aguilar 1972: 116-7). During this period “the Communists successfully broke the anarchist control of CNOC...even by betraying them to Machado’s police” (Thomas 2001: 362).⁶⁰ At this time the Secretary-General was

⁶⁰ Dolgoff states that “the communists, in league with the Machado government, connived by the foulest means to seize control of the CNOC and the labor movement” (Dolgoff 1976: 47), and Fernández tells us the “PCC then gave the order

Jorge Antonio Vivó, and others joining the party included Francisco Calderío, later known as Blas Roca, and the ex-anarchist Joaquín Ordoqui (Thomas 2001: 363).

Clearly, the consolidation of the Communist Party after 1925, and the resurgence of the role of anarchism in Cuba, along with a dictatorship much more severe than anything before 1924, meant that the Veterans' organisations were no longer a potent force of nationalism. In 1931 the last attempt at armed insurrection by the old leaders of 1895 was made under ex-President Menocal and Colonel Carlos Mendieta, at Gibara.⁶¹ This uprising, known as the "Rebellion of Río Verde...was...similar to the Veterans' and Patriots' Movement: it was intended to provoke the United States to intervene politically and remove Machado from power" (Whitney 2001: 71). However, this rebellion was quickly crushed, with the "immediate consequence" of this "political bankruptcy" being, "the foundation...of...a secret society, the so-called ABC" (Thomas 2001: 361). This movement was led by lawyers Joaquín Martínez Sáenz and Carlos Saladrigas. Others included the bomb expert López Rubio and the student Ignacio Mendoza. The group adopted a corporatist ideology with its terrorist cellular structure preventing the authorities from stopping it (Thomas 2001: 361). The ABC did support unions, an eight-hour workday, female suffrage, rural cooperative societies and a national bank (Whitney 2001: 85).

On April 29 1933 rebels, led by Antonio Guiteras attacked the military barracks at San Luis (Whitney 2001: 96). On 15 May 1933 there was a "minor revolution in Santa Clara" (Thomas 2001: 373). The Conservatives under Menocal,

that the striking workers return to their jobs,...with the help of...Machado's secret police, the sinister 'porra'" (Fernández 2001: 58). However, both works have rather poor bibliographical references

⁶¹ Tabares del Real notes that "the mambí General Francisco Peraza rose up in Pinar del Rio, with a handful of co-conspirators" (Tabares del Real 1998: 292).

the Liberals under Gómez, the Unión Nacionalista under Mendieta, the DEU, the ABC and the Association of Veterans formed a Junta to discuss the replacement of Machado (Whitney 2001: 82-3). The PCC and the Ala Izquierda rejected mediation with the US (Thomas 2001: 376), and likewise the ABC Radical formed by Dr. Oscar de la Torre split from the main group because of this collaboration (Whitney 2001: 91).

The years 1925-33 were definitive, then, in the eclipse of the Veterans' organisations and their means of protest. The Cuban Communist Party and the ABC both took on more clandestine means of opposition to the government, and in any case, held neither the same political principles, nor the material concerns of the Veterans' organisations. As Thomas observes:

The failure caused general disillusion with the men of 1895 and with all the old leaders surviving from the war of independence; after this date, it was impossible for well-intentioned members of the Cuban liberal professions to believe in anything, much less any survivor from the war of independence (Thomas 2001: 360-61).

Conclusion

At the outset, the thesis argued that the topic was significant firstly because current historiography has not looked in detail at what happened to the forces of Cuban liberation, but secondly because these forces were potentially radical (due to their racial composition), and indeed, potentially social-revolutionary. The Veterans' organisations were ostensibly successors to the Liberation Army, but, as has been seen, not only have they not been greatly studied, but they also were in fact clearly not social-revolutionary, nor indeed, inherently radical in their racial composition.

Analogously, the relationship of the personnel of the Veterans' organisations to the various political parties and organisations in Cuba at the time, both mainstream and marginal, and to the Liberal revolt of 1906 and abortive rebellion of 1917, has also been largely overlooked. While the revolts of 1906 and 1917 have been looked at in detail by several historians, this thesis has produced much new evidence on the role of the Veterans' organisations as a mediator in 1906, and on the issue of its sharing many of the same personnel and grievances as the revolt in 1917.

The significance of these findings is increased by the light it throws on the historiography that does exist concerning the Veterans' organisations of 1911-12 and 1923-24. The thesis has shown that the evidence illuminating the relations between the Veterans' organisations and the more widespread political culture has shown them to be very much a part of this same culture. While most historiography looks at the movement of 1911-12 briefly, there is usually no mention thereafter of the patronage gained by many of its personnel in Menocal's government or of how this affected either national politics or the Veterans' organisations.

On a similar note, the historiography on the movement of 1923-24 tends to see the Association as a precursor to the radical politics of the years 1922-25, as a means of showing where Martínez Villena and Mella cut their political teeth. However, while Martínez Villena was important to the movement, both as the head of propaganda and in acquiring fire-power for the revolt of 1924, he was by no means representative of the personnel of the Association. While the United States claimed that the prospect of reforms being carried out by Cubans themselves was “essentially anti-American”, and were no doubt very interested in the actions of Marxists like Martínez Villena and Mella, in fact the United States supported the demands of the Association of 1923-24, or at least Enoch Crowder did, though much hated by many Cubans. It has been seen that, by and large, Cubans themselves *did* want to carry out the necessary reforms, but, it was because the Veterans’ organisations did not represent them, or at least no longer represented them, that they declined as a force. The complicity of the Association with Crowder meant a loss of support not only from the scant number of young radicals who had supported them, but also of that essential constituency (at least of economic support) for an armed rebellion: the workers of Cuba and Key West.

However, to assume that the eclipse of the Veterans’ movement by the more radically nationalist organisations, formed in the early 1920s, was part of a teleological process is too simplistic. As the thesis has demonstrated, the Veterans’ organisations declined as a force for authentic nationalism as a logical process of their own internal dynamic, because of the conflicts among the social forces they represented. Moreover, they declined, much as did other groups of a similar political ideology, during the period, because of social changes deliberately engineered by the direct domination of the US state over Cuban political and economic life.

The role of the United States has, of course, been a recurring theme in the thesis. The thesis has not disputed the existing historiography on the role of the United States in Cuban affairs nor looked at where these commentators might disagree in order to further knowledge of this issue. Whether the United States sought to turn Cuba into a modern colony, or, whether the US political class merely sought a Cuban political class capable of protecting, 'life, liberty and property', they both meant essentially the same thing. Both conformed to the process of solidifying political hegemony: the domination of the economy by dominating this political class. Significantly, however, what the thesis has illuminated are the *consequences* that the policies and actions of the United States had on Cuban political parties and organisations, both ruling and marginal: the creation of factions and the struggle for patronage.

As illustrated in the first chapter, the failure to establish an indigenous form of military subordination to a civilian government led to military revolt as a means of expressing what was thought to be a legitimate grievance by Cuban *mambises* in the republican period. This ever-present threat underlying Cuban political life was exacerbated, if not in fact inaugurated, by the United States, as, from the very climax of the war against Spain, military leaders had felt that they had not achieved 'absolute independence', but rather had merely exchanged domination by Spain for domination by the United States.

The role of US hegemony, in turn, created internecine struggles for the scarce resource of political power among the leadership of the Cuban independence movement. Having consolidated indirect domination, via control of the economy, achieved as a direct consequence of the destruction of the independence struggles,

United States' interests then attained political domination by means of expressions of preference, threats of intervention, economic sanction, and patronage awarded to Cuban leaders through the US-controlled sugar and finance industries. The wealthier Cuban independence leaders had become economically destitute, not only by liberating their slaves, but also by the strategy of attrition that had characterised the property destruction of large industries during the wars for liberation. US domination of the economy had meant that Cuba's ostensibly 'bourgeois' revolution did not in fact consolidate the power of its native bourgeoisie, but rather destroyed its nascent capacity. With little access to property ownership, due to the increasing domination of the United States in this sphere, Cuban independence leaders were to turn to the only resources left to them: the public payroll. The reality was, however, that there simply were not enough jobs to go round: hence, they would inevitably turn to a second resource, armed revolt. The thesis has shown, therefore, through a study of US actions and an analysis of the actions of Cuban political actors responding to this, that much of the factionalism and corruption of the period was a direct response to, and product of, US hegemony. Not only this, but that the Veterans' organisations were themselves very much a product of this same hegemony.

The Veterans' movement fitted neatly into this context. Consisting of civilians as well as military men, Liberals as well as Conservatives, *miguelistas* as well as *zayistas*, revolutionaries of 1906 as well as members of government at the highest levels, the movement boasted an ideology and a practice that were as pragmatic and opportunistic as those of most other mainstream political parties and associations in the republican period. While seemingly being an expression of authentic Cuban nationalism, seeking harmony among the conflicting factions

within Cuban politics and calling for social peace, it has been shown how the Veterans' movement was just as likely to share personnel with revolutionaries of 1906 as it was with future members of Menocal's administration. It was not the authentic expression of nationalism which it rhetorically claimed to be, but rather an alternative vehicle of patronage, and potentially a future guarantee of power, by those currently devoid of it.

During the years 1906-9, many were to become disillusioned with the futile attempt at military revolt, given the new realities of US economic and political dominance. The thesis has demonstrated that the Veterans' movement, like all the mainstream political parties during this period, was simply not prepared to be (and in fact could not, and probably did not) want to be a radically nationalist and anti-imperialist challenge to this US hegemony. With the election of Menocal, many of the members of the Veterans' movement achieved the positions of power which they no doubt thought they had earned. The *menocalistas*, however, once in power, showed themselves to be little other than another faction struggling for power, and, not surprisingly, the Veterans' movement organised at this point virtually disappeared from Cuban public life. This is another significant finding of the thesis, for while it neither merely glances at the Veterans' organisation of 1911-12, neither does it view the threatened protest as something unusual. Significantly, it examines the personnel and ideology of the *menocalistas* in order to show how, while the protest of these years was partially appeased by their triumph, it also explains how further protest was likely; for after all the *menocalistas* were but one faction among many, sharing personnel with the Veterans' organisations, but also with many with little in common with them.

After 1914, Cuba's dependency on one crop for sale on the international market, and the scale of borrowing way beyond the nation's capacity to repay, meant financial crisis when the price of this one crop dramatically fell. The resulting destitution, not surprisingly, brought into being a radically different kind of Cuban nationalism: one that sought to end this mono-crop dependency, at the very least, and in some quarters, sought a full-scale Cubanisation, not only of the political culture, as the Veterans' movement had sought, but of economic life in its entirety. While this radicalism was not exactly in opposition to the nationalism of the Veterans' movement, it simply did not share many of the movement's personnel (now often very old men), ideals (such as enhancing workers' and women's rights), strategy, or interests. Again, the thesis has sought to explain why the Veterans' organisations had more in common with the politics preceding 1914 than that after 1921, by an analysis of the personnel and ideology of the various factions involved.

The Veterans' movement seemed almost to portray its enemies as if they were Spanish collaborators, which, by 1923, 25 years after the end of colonialism, was no longer very convincing. The Veterans' movement of 1923-24 was seen by the other pressure groups gaining ground in Cuba precisely for what it was: the internecine struggle of Zayas, against the hopeful revolutionary, Carlos García Vélez. Indeed, this is perhaps the thesis's most significant argument, as it has consistently shown that this was main role of the Veterans' organisations throughout the period: to create and sustain a network of patronage for those currently deprived of power.

Bombardment of the presidential palace no doubt seemed a futile proposition to those struggling for electoral suffrage or an eight-hour day. As has been seen

workers openly condemned the Veterans' movement of 1923-24, saying that they should be imprisoned for ten years, likewise, the young intellectual revolutionaries who saw themselves as the leaders of this cross-class force for radically nationalist social change saw no potential in the movement. Hence, after 1924, the movement was no longer a potent force of nationalism in the republic.

In order to conclude the thesis, it will also be necessary to mention the events of 1931. Although the *Machadato* has not been discussed in detail in the thesis, there is no shortage of work on the topic. However, this in many ways represents a new political era in itself, which gave rise to many social forces that had, before 1925, been of little influence. After this date, the Cuban Communist Party was to engage in protracted struggles against the dictatorship, although many of its personnel were also collaborationist.

The thesis has explained the phenomenon outlined at the beginning: how the ideology of nationalism attained through 30 years of struggle did not result in an 'absolutely independent' Cuba, of what happened to the leaders of the demobilised Liberation Army, and how demobilisation of the Army, structurally, likewise demobilised the potential for a radically egalitarian republic. Also, the thesis has explained the relationship of the Veterans' movement to the rest of Cuban political life in the period, a subject not really addressed in the historiography in any detail. This analysis also perhaps goes some way to explaining the decline of the nationalist forces which the Veterans' movement represented, and explains its eclipse by more radically anti-imperialist organisations in the years of the *Machadato*.

Finally, the thesis has opened up significant new lines of enquiry for research. Other scholars of Latin American history and politics, of the colonial and

republican eras, can utilise some of the findings, arguments and insights, to illuminate their own efforts. The thesis has shown that significantly more research into the disbandment of the Liberation Army and the role of 'patriotic clubs' at the local level across Cuba needs to be done. Finally, the thesis has enhanced understanding of the early years of the Cuban republic until 1924. While the Platt Amendment of 1901, the revolution of 1906, and the economic crisis of 1921, have all been the subject of much study, due to their role in explaining Cuba's international role, and the causes of grievance which would not be fully resolved until the years 1933-40, the politics of Cuba during the years 1900-24 is interesting in its own right, as a means of understanding the consequences at a lower level, of international relations. This is where the contribution of the thesis lies, and it is a useful and significant one.

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Appendix I

President: General Emilio Núñez Rodríguez,

Vicepresident: Colonel Manuel Lazo,

Secretary of Acts: Commander Manuel Secades Japón,

Treasurer: Colonel Manuel Aranda,

Vicesecretaries: Colonel José Gálvez, Colonel Eulogio Sardiñas, Sublieutenant Edmundo Estrada, Commanders Miguel A. Varona and Miguel Coyula.

Generals: Silverio Sánchez Figueras, Enrique Loynaz del Castillo, Juan E. Ducassi, Alfonso Seijas, José Miró Argenter, Augustín Cebreco, Carlos García Vélez, Pedro Díaz Molina, Hugo Robert, Francisco Carrilo Morales, José Fernández de Castro, Francisco de P. Valiente, Carlos González Clavel, Demetrio Castillo Duany, José Manuel Capote, Salvador H. Ríos, Javier de la Vega, Manuel Suárez Delgado, Pedro E. Betancourt, General Remigio Marrero, Alejandro Rodríguez, Lopez Recio Loynaz, Marianao Torres, Pedro A. Pérez, Francisco Estrada, Luis de Feria, José Rogelio Castillo, Juan Pablo Cebreco, Maximiliano Ramos, Vicente Miniet, Cornelio Rojas, Joaquín Sánchez, Francisco J. Pérez, Pedro Vásquez, Francisco Leyte Vidal, Antonio Varona, Víctor Ramos, Tomás Padró Griñán, Pedro Delgado, Alfredo Rego, Pedro Ivonet, Alberto Nodarse, Julián Santana, Prudencio Martínez, Daniel Gispert.

Colonels: Cosme de la Torriente, Manuel María Coronado, Augustín Cruz González, Aurelio Hevia, José Nicolás Jané, Lucas Alvarez Cerice, Fernando Figueredo, Charles Aguirre, Francisco López Leiva, Gustavo Pérez Abreu, Manuel

Saumell, Roberto Méndez Peñate, Luis Pérez, José Clemente Vivanco, Benito Barceló, Vicente Suárez, Andrés Hernández, Manuel Sanguily, Enrique Molina, Matías Duque, Juan M. Galdós, Carlos Mendieta, Rosendo Collazo, Alfredo Lima, Carlos Masó, Francisco Díaz Silvera, Emilio Collazo, Tomás Olivera, Miguel Hernández, Manuel Piedra, Santiago García Cañizares, José D'Estrampes, Modesto Gómez Rubio, Ernesto Asbert Díaz, Manuel de Cárdenas, Alberto Nodarse, Julián Betancourt, José Dolares Asanza, José Lara Miret.

Lieutenant Colonels: Casimiro Naya Serrano, Justo Carillo Morales, Avelino Sanjenis, Rafael Izquierdo, Manuel Velazco, Pompeyo Viada, F. Milanés, Luis Deymier, Raimundo Sánchez, Eligio Griñán, Manuel de la Torriente, Ibrahim Consuegra, Miguel Zaldívar, Justo Carrillo, Julián Valdés Sierra, Guillermo López Rovirsa.

Sublieutenants: Primitivo Laza, Juan Porta Ravelo.

Commanders: Eduardo Guzmán García, Manuel Lores, Alberto Villalón, Placido Hernandez, José Martí, Félix V. Preval, Edmund Frederick, Alberto Barrera, José V. Alonso, Ramón Vidal, Octavio Argudín, Arturo Primelles, Miguel Iribarren, Marianao Corona, Armando André, Ramiro Cuesta, Domingo Herrera, José Playiery, Gerardo Forrets, Miguel A. Duque Estrada, José Llorens, José Cardoso.

Captains: Armando Cartaya, José García Fevia, Baldomero Pimienta, Antonio M. Calzada, Mariano Chapellí, Oscar Soto y Calderón, Pedro Viera Carrillo, Fernandez

González Luna, Gustavo Alfonso, Enrique P. Valdés, Victoriano La Calle, Pablo J. Trujillo, Bernardo Córdova.

Appendix II

Primero. – Derogación de la Ley Lotería.

Segundo. – Evitar que llegue a adoptarse lo que crea en nuestro país el monopolio ferrocarrilero.

Tercero. – Promulgar una que fija el cobro puntual de las pensiones de los veteranos de la independencia.

Cuarto. – Legislación que garantice, con procedimientos prácticos, la absoluta independencia del Poder Judicial.

Quinto. – Derogación de los preceptos del Código Electoral que dan voz y voto en las asambleas de los partidos políticos, como miembros natos, a los congresistas, gobernadores, etc., con lo que se hace imposible la renovación de dichos organismos.

Sexto. – Votar una Ley de Contabilidad que impida disponer los fondos públicos sin responsabilidades efectivas.

Séptimo. – Fijación de los límites de la inmunidad parlamentaria para evitar que se amparen en ella los autores de delitos comunes.

Octavo. – Promulgación de una Ley que armonice el esfuerzo del capital y el trabajo, garantizando los derechos preferentes del obrero cubano contra el extranjero, en las industrias y trabajos del país.

Noveno. – Abolición de las reelecciones presidenciales en la oportunidad de hacer modificaciones a la Constitución de la República.

Decimo. – Que la Constitución de la República se reforme también en el sentido de conceder a la mujer cubana igualdad de derechos políticos para estas dos finalidades: ser electoras y elegibles.

Unodécimo. – La no promulgación de leyes de amnistías por delitos comunes.

Duodécimo. – Que se desista de la aprobación de la Ley por la cual se le concede al Ferrocarril del Norte de Cuba, franquicia arancelaria, porque perjudica grandemente al Erario Público y a los industriales y comerciantes de Cuba.