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# The American press and Latin American policy

Robert L. Leight  
*Lehigh University*

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THE AMERICAN PRESS AND LATIN AMERICAN POLICY, 1921 - 1928

by

Robert Lewis Leight

A Thesis

Presented to the Graduate Faculty

of Lehigh University

in Candidacy for the Degree of

Master of Arts

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This thesis is accepted and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

25 September 1961  
(Date)

Charles A. Hall  
(Professor in Charge)

George D. Harmon  
(Head of Department)

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## PREFACE

As we look backward in time and southward in space, there is a striking similarity in this, the decade following the Korean War, to another decade, that following the first World War. Now, as then, there are revolutions, but we are slow to recognize them unless they are violent.

In the 1960's, as in the 1920's the United States begins to realize that it has neglected its neighbors to the south, and that a distorted image of los Estados Unidos also exists in Hispanic America. However, most North Americans have been looking at South America through a distorted lens also.

This paper will attempt to define the type of image that the American press drew of America to the south during the administrations of presidents Harding and Coolidge.

Just as the ending of that period previewed the beginning of a period of friendship between the United States and Latin America, so it is hoped that the early 1960's will also provide a preview of a better relationship among the Americas.

It is difficult to find a proper term for reference to the republics south and southeast of the United States. Although the terms "Latin America" and "Hispanic America" are used somewhat inter-changeably in this paper, there is a realization that neither term is perfect. In addition, because of the factors of geography and trade, it was found that most of the interest in the journals consulted was directed toward those republics in Central America, the Caribbean, and the North American republic, Mexico.

Thus, when the terms Latin America or Hispanic America are used in the text, reference is generally being made to those republics which gained their independence from the French and Spanish, and which lay north of Colombia.

This paper is intended to be an intellectual history--a history of American thought, as reflected in the press, toward the Latin American republics other than those in South America during an eight year period. Further, there will be an attempt to define the effect of this press opinion upon the formulation of the Latin American policy of the times. The source of this thought was gleaned primarily from editorials in major daily newspapers and from periodical journals. It must be realized that the impressions noted present something of a cross-section of the American press, although those journals were selected that were thought to be most influential in guiding opinion.

There is a full realization that the method has many limitations, especially as a source of diplomatic history. Some important events are not even noted in this paper; some are treated sketchily. This is primarily because they were not, in the 1920's, considered to be newsworthy. Perhaps they were unnoticed because they were overshadowed by something more spectacular--a prize fight or a scandal. Perhaps they were not noted because there was no reporter on the scene. In some cases news was censored or suppressed. These shortcomings as well as any belonging to the author are acknowledged.

There is the further fact that press opinion is not necessarily public opinion. Many times the difference between propaganda and fact is so small as to be invisible to the naked eye. The opinions of editorial writers are clouded by external pressures. Different individuals gain

varying conclusions from the same information. If there is any thought that the newspapers and magazines may be used as a gauge of public opinion, let it be realized that they are an imperfect gauge.

Acknowledgement is made to the invaluable aid of Dr. Charles A. Hale, who acted as adviser for this thesis. The staff of Lehigh University, especially Mrs. Schaeffer, cheerfully guided and aided in the accumulation of materials. My wife, Mary Meier Leight, also aided (and suffered through) this undertaking. To those listed above, and to others who gave aid and comfort, thanks are extended. Full responsibility is accepted by the author for any errors.



## JOURNALISM IN THE 1920's

This paper is concerned with the relationship of the American press to the foreign policy of the United States toward Latin America during the Harding and Coolidge administrations. For the most part, the interpretations of the role of the press will be extracted from the pages of the journals of the period, with some aid from secondary material.

It would seem that the logical place for press opinion to be reflected would be upon the editorial pages. Although this is fundamentally true, there are some weaknesses in this approach.

Editorials may do one of two things. They may aid in the attempt to create public opinion or they may merely reflect opinion. Although it is possible for an editorial to attempt to do both, the emphasis must be on one or the other. In the period of the editor-owner, the emphasis was upon the creation of public opinion. Such men as Greeley and Godkin thundered forth their opinions with the frank intention of guiding as much of the public mind as possible. During the present century, possibly mainly through the pressure of advertising, with its demand for large circulations, the emphasis has turned to the type of editorials which reflect the opinion of their readers.

This reflective or "ivory tower" type of editorial, as exemplified by the New York Times in the period under consideration, is generally found in those journals which are rather well satisfied with conditions as they find them. They feel little need of crusading. Usually this type of editorial is a reflection, itself, of the publisher.

On the other hand, the editorial which tries to convert or create public opinion is not satisfied with the conditions it finds. As an advocate of change, this type of editorial is found in those journals which are considered liberal or radical. For these editorial writers, the interpretation of the events under consideration is secondary.

Only the very naïve believe all of the editorializing is done on that page set aside for editorials. In some papers, particularly the Hearst press, the news columns themselves may carry editorials. Newspapers may try to influence opinion by the omission of certain news. Columnists have taken upon themselves some of the editorial power. Even the writers of headlines exert influence, especially in the tabloid press.

There is a temptation to believe that public opinion is reflected faithfully through the press. Unfortunately, that is not always the case. Too many Americans confine their attention to the comic and sport pages, and pay little attention to those pages dealing with domestic and foreign news and opinion. While it is probably true that the majority of the people who read editorials agree with them, it is equally true that most people who purchase a newspaper with an editorial policy that they dislike will avoid reading the editorials and confine their attentions to the other features of the paper. In editorials as in novels, most people read what they want to read.

Thus far most of the comments have been directed toward the daily press. Among the periodicals there was a greater attempt by the weeklies to influence public opinion than in the monthly publications. Outstanding in this respect were the liberal magazines of opinion, such as the Nation and the New Republic. Among the newspapers the strongest loyalties were usually directed

to a political party. In the case of the liberal weeklies the strongest loyalty was directed to a particular policy, or group of policies. In so far as they gave support to a particular political leader, they gave the support because of a certain policy he was following at that time. On another issue, another man supporting a different viewpoint might be the recipient of editorial support from the liberals.

In the sense of long-time influence, these liberal journals imposed a greater impact upon policy and opinion than is realized from their small circulations. Their value was that they reached the influential people, those with ideas and ideals. Standing as they do, away from the center of power, the liberal journals had a certain air of detachment, of aloofness.

The liberals, in their attempt to influence opinion, expressed a temper of mind, rather than any organized movement. In that they are separated from the main course of events their attention was often directed toward similar movements in other countries. So, during the period following the World War, they found themselves in the situation of supporting the greatest isolationists, while they themselves were internationally minded. Although these journals were the target of a great deal of criticism from the more conservative press, they found that most of their aims were gradually achieved, although they received little credit for achievements.

Very different from the liberal weeklies of opinion were the mass circulation weeklies and monthlies. As they were in big business in a big way, they reflected another point of view. During the period under consideration, they exhibited an almost unbroken reflection of contentment. In their eyes, there was no need for change. Like the conservative dailies, these journals were the defenders of the status quo.

With their emphasis on mass circulation and income from advertising, most of those journals having great circulations (and, indeed, many of those having smaller circulations) found themselves, for one reason or another, following an editorial policy which reflected the viewpoint of the business interests. As the policy makers of the Republican administrations were also, in the main, those who had been successful in the accumulation of capital, they also felt a kinship to the interests of business.

The conservative interests--in journalism, in business, or in the government--tended to support those policies which would seek to support or extend the comparatively high standard of living existing in America at the time. To a certain extent, therefore, this rationalized the exploitation of smaller nations as suppliers of raw materials. If this exploitation by capitalistic methods could be accomplished by submerging it beneath humanitarian aims so much the better.

As the tropical nations of the Caribbean and Central America were the source of raw materials and were located in a strategic position relative to the Panama Canal, conservative interests supported the use of diplomacy or even of force to maintain inter-American trade. In the viewpoint of these interests, the Panama Canal had to be protected, primarily, as a protection for trade.

As exemplified by the business interests, and supported by the conservative journals, there was a great confidence in the system of capitalism as practiced by Americans. There was a great fear of any system of government which threatened their investments in oil wells, plantations, or mines. The conservative therefore suspected any system which smacked of confiscation or national ownership. Any such social and economic movement automatically became "Bolshevist". So did any movement which involved any control over their labor forces.

It would seem that there was a reaction in the 1920's to a war which the United States had helped to fight in Europe in 1917 and 1918. This expressed itself in a paradoxical combination of isolationism and attempts at international cooperation. As the United States turned its face away from Europe in the east, it turned toward the southeast, toward Latin America. This was not an actual departure from isolationism, for the smaller countries of Latin America were viewed as quasi-protectorates or dependencies of the United States.

In contrast to the daily newspapers, many of the liberal journals were not concerned with their circulation as a source of income, for they were maintained partly by subsidation. They thrived upon controversy. Their main target was the capitalistic system, and the inequalities which were part of it. Sympathetic to the small nations, they favored self-determination and opposed intervention. They were internationalists. As they were dissatisfied with the capitalistic system as found in the United States, they favored the socio-economic revolutions being carried on in the Soviet Union and Mexico. For this they were called "radical" or "Red".

The liberals of the 1920's were the heirs of the progressive ideas of the earlier decades. Indeed, they allied themselves politically with the LaFollette group in the election of 1924. This group, and a small but vocal and influential minority of midwesterners in Congress, maintained the designation of "Progressives". The term, "Progressive," then, was primarily a political distinction, while "liberal" generally was applied to a way of thinking. Because of the entrenched conservatism of both the Republican and Democratic parties in the 'twenties, the liberal press seldom supported any candidates from the major parties. They sometimes did support Progressives.

The liberal was more likely to be found in the urban areas and was generally more intellectualized, with a greater breadth of interests. As far as theories on international affairs were concerned the liberals were usually internationalists, while the progressives were isolationists. As the decade wore on, the term "liberal" came to be more general. In fact, it was only during the election of 1924 that the term "progressive" was used to a general degree during the decade.

Agreeing as they did with the Progressives on internal issues, the liberals found themselves supporting most of the Progressive dogma. In doing so, they found themselves supporting an insular America, pledged to the development of its own kind of civilization within its own borders. From such a viewpoint, American intervention in the Caribbean and Central America was anathema.

Journalism, like other industries in the 1920's, was undergoing great changes. Greatest of these were an increased mechanization and a growing use of business methods. The great increase in advertising, the increasing anonymity of the editor, and the phenomenal expansion of newspaper chains were all symptoms of a journalism that was adopting the methods of an age of business.

The editor, as an individual, was much less important than he had been in the years immediately following the Civil War, and even in the period before World War I. The personality of the editor was merged with his paper. This is a generality, it is true, but such men as William Allen White were the exceptions, rather than the rule, and they were more likely to be found in the small cities, such as Emporia, than in the great metropolises. Fifty years earlier it had been the general rule, even in the large cities, that the editor was also at least a part-owner. He wrote many of the editorials, edited the rest,

and had the responsibility for the policies of the journal. Advertising had been small in volume and had no part in shaping the editorial policy of the paper. But with the increased competition of the twentieth century, advertising came to be more important, and with it the drive for greater circulation.

A factor symptomatic of American journalism is that the newspapers and their audiences were so concerned with timeliness. This had helped to prevent the development of a truly national newspaper, such as the smaller European nations have. This meant that no one American newspaper was able to influence a large geographical area. Certainly such papers as the New York Times and the Christian Science Monitor enjoyed a wide circulation, but it was an "over-circulation," reaching an elite audience, while the local papers reached more of the population due to the appeal of local news. Perhaps the main value, so far as the shaping of public opinion was concerned, of such journals as the New York Times and the World, was in their appeal to the members of the staffs of the weekly and monthly periodicals published in that city. In the publication of magazines, New York was a national center. Save for a few journals of scholarly interest published in Boston, and for the Curtis publications in Philadelphia, few periodicals of national importance were published anywhere else than in New York. So if the vigorously liberal editorials of the New York World carried any national significance, it was primarily through the second-hand and hashed-over method of being carried in essence by other journals, the weekly and the monthly journals.

In the East, it was papers like the New York Times, which enjoyed an excellent reputation because of the completeness of its foreign and national news coverage, and the New York World, with its liberal editorials, which helped to shape public opinion. A journal which had a great deal of

influence, especially in the Middle-West, was the self-styled "World's Greatest Newspaper," the Chicago Tribune. That there was no newspaper of national stature in the West is demonstrated by the circulation pattern of periodicals. Although most magazines were published in the East, a higher percentage of the population read magazines in the western states. One commentator explained the appetite for magazines in the west to the lack of satisfactory newspapers.<sup>1</sup>

The three journals listed above--the New York World, the Times from the same city, and the Chicago Tribune--were selected for this analysis of press opinion on the Latin American policy of the United States. All had exceptionally good editorial pages, and were among the leaders in circulation. Part of the reason for their selection lies, of course, in their bias toward different points of view. Both the Times and the World were usually sympathetic to the Democratic Party. More important was the fact that the Times was conservative, while the World was the leading liberal newspaper. Someone once commented of the Chicago Tribune that, from the moment Joseph Medill entered the office of the Chicago Tribune in the nineteenth century, "The Tribune transcended the simple role of newspaper. It became a state of mind and has remained so to this day."<sup>2</sup> Certainly this is a fair statement of the Tribune's editorial policy. It liked to be considered the voice of the Mid-West, and it championed any measure that it thought would benefit that section of the nation. The Tribune, in addition to its sectionalism, favored the Republican administration and was conservative.

A short description of these newspapers as well of the magazines which were most useful in the development of this paper will follow.



A newspaper that wears well the mantle of the "foremost daily in the world" is the New York Times. During the period of the "Yellow Journalism" of Hearst and Pulitzer, Albert Ochs, publisher of the Times during a long period commencing in the 1890's decided to give it the motto, "All the news that's fit to print," to show that it was above printing sensational material merely for its value in gaining circulation. Certainly in the quarter century or so that Ochs published the journal leading up to the 'twenties, an effort was made to establish a record of impartiality, and to make the Times into a "paper of record". All in all, the Times had the greatest coverage of foreign and domestic news of any newspaper in the 1920's.

Some measure of the esteem felt for the conservative daily, with perhaps a legitimate criticism, is seen in an editorial in the liberal Nation, which praised the Times as the greatest newspaper in the world, although "the Times's editorial page is one of the dullest and most wabbling in America."<sup>3</sup> An even greater criticism for the Nation, was that, "it reflects the rule of America by Big Business, accurately, uncritically, unpenetratingly. There is still a place in journalism for something more."<sup>4</sup>

A factor in the success of the Times was in a certain snobbish appeal. As a member of the Times staff once stated, "probably no more than 10,000 people are capable of keeping up with the excellence of the Times".<sup>5</sup> The great majority read it because it was respectable, or to appear more intelligent than they really were. It was to the intelligent minority that the liberal journals of discussion also sought to attract, on the not unwise assumption that it is the intelligent minority which achieves the greatest results in public affairs.

The great publisher, Joseph Pulitzer, established in the New York World a paper that provided the curious paradox of an editorial page of

the first order submerged in a paper which from the outside had distinct tinges of journalistic "yellow." Pulitzer was more interested in the editorial page than any other part of the paper. For him and his son and his editors it was the heart of the paper--the reason for its existence. The crusades which were carried on in the news columns were brought to a head on the editorial page. During all of its existence the World was a leader in distributing liberal ideas in the United States. During the 'twenties the World was noted for the quality of its men. Frank Cobb was the editor until his death, when the erudite Walter Lippmann took the editorial chair. Perhaps Time magazine was jealous when it called attention to the duality of the World with the somewhat chromatic description, "ever tinged with yellow outside and intellectual blue-blood within."<sup>6</sup>

Possibly the journalistic enterprise which achieved the greatest financial success was the Chicago Tribune, controlled by a partnership of Robert McCormick and Joseph Patterson. During the 'twenties the Tribune showed a steady increase in circulation and advertising. By 1927 the journal showed the highest total agate line advertising in the country, and also led the morning and Sunday field in its total national advertising.<sup>7</sup>

With the unparalleled financial success of the Chicago paper, a sense of superiority and infallibility grew likewise. In January 1921 the Tribune was able to crow that it had tied for first honors in a poll taken by the Editor and Publisher magazine. At that time the papers placing as "the best edited newspapers in the United States"<sup>8</sup> were the Boston Transcript, the New York Times, and the Tribune.<sup>9</sup> In one way, the editorial page of the Tribune was used more effectively than that of the erudite Times and the liberal World. As Time magazine noted, "its editorial writers use the language of the street."<sup>10</sup> Because of its conservative position,

and because it championed what it considered to be the best interests of its part of the country, it was "often accepted by its rural subscribers as an authority second only to the Bible."<sup>11</sup>

With the decline in influence of the editorial (and editor) the task of directing opinion was largely defaulted to the magazines, especially the weeklies. As the prosperous, high-circulation magazines tended to steer clear of any controversial discussion, the reviews and the liberal journals of opinion attempted to lead opinion.

Although such magazines as the Nation and the New Republic were lightweights in circulation, they were heavyweights in that they appealed to the intelligent minority, which was an influential group. They were a voice of protest, surviving from the progressive reform period of the pre-war days. As one observer stated, "even if relatively few heard the articulated protest, its survival indicated that beneath the surface all was not well."<sup>12</sup> As a "minority report,"<sup>13</sup> the two liberal weeklies were often involved in controversy with their conservative competitors. Both of them were subsidized, the Nation by its editor, Oswald Garrison Villard, and the New Republic by Mr. and Mrs. Willard Straight, who were influenced by Herbert Croly's book, The Promise of American Life. As they did not have to worry about meeting their expenses by a large circulation or by advertising, they were free to be very critical, especially of Big Business.

The charge of radicalism was thrown at both the New Republic and the Nation, but they held firm to the principles of reform. Although they sharply criticized the policy of intervention as followed by the United States in the Caribbean and Central America and warmly supported Calles and Obregón, their main target was the capitalistic system.<sup>14</sup>

Another magazine of protest, which enjoyed a large popularity during the last part of the 'twenties, was the American Mercury, edited by the vindictive H. L. Mencken. Unlike the Nation and New Republic, though, the Mercury offered no suggestions for reform. Mencken might be compared, in those days of increased interest in biology (all kinds, from the Darwin theories of the Scopes trial, to the human biology of sex), to the expert pathologist, who dissected the vital organs of American institutions, but did not take the time to make a diagnosis which would help to cure the malady. He grew bored of his specimen after it was exposed, and moved on to another patient, to repeat the satire of dissection, ad infinitum.

The Nation and the New Republic were primarily interested in leading discussion and opinion. Another type of journal was the news summary type, which chronicled the current happenings. Although they were different in their approach, the Literary Digest and Time magazine both were helpful as a resource for this paper. The Digest dealt with editorial comment, primarily from daily journals, and provided a running account, with contemporary opinion, of the most important news of the times. Because of its technique, and because it gave approximately equal space to both sides of the questions it discussed, the Digest was an invaluable source for this paper, for it provided a more cosmopolitan viewpoint than could otherwise have been presented.<sup>15</sup>

Another journal which dealt in a summarization of the news, but did express some opinion, was Time magazine, which was founded in 1923 by Briton Hadden and Henry R. Luce. Closely departmentalized, perhaps the major value of Time for this study was in its department, "The Press," which provided much of the material for this chapter on journalism.

Time magazine and the American Mercury were initial entries in the "vital statistics" of the 'twenties. In a way, their births were counter-balanced by the passing of an ancient magazine, the Independent. It was merged in 1921 with the Weekly Review, an ultra-conservative publication which had been founded to combat such liberal magazines as the Nation and the New Republic. However, it was purchased in 1924 by Richard E. Danielson and Christian A. Herter. Herter, who had served in the Foreign Service and the Commerce Department, provided perceptive comments on foreign affairs. Under the leadership of Danielson and Herter, the Independent became a first-rate journal of current affairs. Although it referred to itself as a liberal magazine, its brand of "liberalism" was somewhat different from that of the Nation and New Republic. The sympathies of the journal leaned toward the Republican administration, although it differed with the administration's handling of the Nicaraguan and Mexican problems in late 1926 and early 1927. Although the magazine filled a real need, it was not destined to last, and in October 1928 it was merged with an old rival, the Outlook. The Outlook had a similar history to that of the Independent, making the transition from an ultra-conservative journal to a fairly liberal one.

Most of the comment which is recorded in this paper is gleaned from weekly journals and the daily newspapers. However, several other periodicals which appeared less often were also consulted. Most of them combined thoughtful articles with reviews and, in some cases, fiction. They were valuable in providing greater depth in their discussion of issues. Included in this group were Century, Forum, the North American Review, the Atlantic Monthly, Foreign Affairs, and Current History.

It is possible to divide the journals of opinion into two different camps. But the division was not along political lines. Rather, it was a division according to a type of thought. The definitions of "liberal" and "conservative" were rough ones, and meant different things to different people. The term "liberal" meant something different to the Independent of 1927 than to the Nation. "Conservative," as applied to the Republican Chicago Tribune, had a far different meaning than the same word to the Democratic New York Times. With this limitation in mind, a discussion of their stand on various phases of the Latin American policy of the United States will follow. But it should be remembered that the basic difference between "liberal" and "conservative," in relation to Latin American policy, is in their viewpoint toward the system of capitalism as practiced in the United States in the 1920's. In general, liberals were opposed to the manifestations of "dollar diplomacy" as exhibited toward the small republics of Central America and the Caribbean. They looked with favor upon experiments in socialistic government anywhere in the world, and particularly Mexico and the Soviet Union. The primary sympathy of the conservative journals was to favor American capitalism, with its financial system of loans, private enterprise, permanent ownership of land and resources.

## FOOTNOTES

- 1 "Who Reads?" Time, II (September 24, 1923), 21.
- 2 Kenneth Stewart and John Tebbell, Makers of Modern Journalism, (New York, 1952), p. 222.
- 3 "The Greatest Newspaper in the World," Nation, CXXIII (September 29, 1926), 287.
- 4 ibid.
- 5 Benjamin Stolberg, "The Man Behind the Times," Atlantic Monthly, CXXXVIII (December, 1926), 723.
- 6 Time, IX (February 7, 1927), 32.
- 7 ibid., XI (May 7, 1928), 24-25.
- 8 Chicago Tribune, January 14, 1921, p. 10.
- 9 ibid.
- 10 Time, XI (May 7, 1928), 25.
- 11 Stewart and Tebbell, op. cit., p. 234.
- 12 Merle E. Curti, The Growth of American Thought, 2nd ed., (New York, 1951), p. 694.
- 13 Foster R. Dulles, Twentieth Century America (Boston, 1945), p. 283.
- 14 See Bruce Bliven, "The First Forty Years," New Republic, CXXXI (November 22, 1954), 9.
- 15 Many of the quotations from newspapers included were excerpted from the Literary Digest. One characteristic of the Digest was the magazine's drive for simplified spelling. The past tense of some verbs quoted in the journal finds the "ed" omitted and replaced by a "t", i. e. "expressed" becomes "exprest" when quoted in the Literary Digest.

## THE PRESS AND SOCIAL REVOLUTION: MEXICO, 1921-1928

There was a basic division of sympathies in the attitude of the American press toward Mexico in the first six years of the 1920's. Liberal journals, especially the weekly journals of opinion, painted a picture of a subjugated people attempting to pull themselves up by their bootstraps. On the other hand, the conservative journals, especially those of the stripe of the Chicago Tribune, pictured a villainous Mexico, ready to attack any unsuspecting American businessman and denude him of his hard-earned property, while plotting a revolution in every café. Still, the conservative journals took pride in what they considered an objective approach to the problem of Mexico as a business associate of the United States.

Perhaps a typical outlook of the conservative journals was shown in the early 'twenties by the Chicago Tribune. That journal was interested in Mexico as an outlet for surplus American capital. Although the attitude of the Tribune toward Mexico will be examined later, it is presented here as an example of a general attitude, rather than a specific Chicago Tribune attitude. "The United States is Mexico's greatest opportunity,"<sup>1</sup> thought the Chicago daily at the beginning of the 1920's. Mexico was considered to be "perhaps the best and safest outlet"<sup>2</sup> for surplus American goods. The Tribune favored the gradual elevation of Mexico's standard of living as a possible way of increasing her purchasing power.

Such periodicals as the New Republic and the Nation were the outstanding defenders of the policies of the Obregon and Calles



administrations in the United States. They were the heirs to the policy of self-determination for small nations as defined by Woodrow Wilson, and in their minds Mexico was becoming a subject of Wall Street.

There was a deep suspicion, in many conservative journals, of the motives of the Obregon administration, and later, a greater suspicion of Calles. With a background in English common law, most people in the United States regarded the right to hold property as a basic right. The attempts at land reform and nationalization of fuel and mineral rights of the part of Mexico was regarded as an attempt to "bolshelize" the nation and relive the days of the Russian Revolution-- with American citizens in the role of the Tzar. Just as there was a kind of hysteria in the "Palmer raids" of a few years before, so there was a similar hysteria about Mexico which continued into the third decade.

Upon looking back over the mass of editorial words concerning Mexico in the 'twenties, one is struck by one basic theme. That is the fact of American ignorance. The majority of American editors had very little inkling of what was happening south of the Rio Grande River. There are several reasons for this. The language barrier was one. Few Americans other than those living in the Southwest could speak Spanish, and few reporters were qualified by language to comment from Mexico. The loathing for the social and economic revolution in government being carried on in Mexico was another bar to objective considerations to relations between the two North American republics.

As early as 1920 the New York Times commented upon the widespread ignorance of the Mexican people and of Mexico itself in the United States. The Times felt that "To the average American the

Mexican of today is an insurgent or a bandit, or...a conspirator against his own Government."<sup>3</sup> It was felt by the New York journal that perhaps only one per cent of the Mexicans were a bad sort.

This is not to say that the majority of American journalists were more ignorant of their southern neighbors than any other class of people. They were not. It would seem that, except for a small minority, there was little conception even in the Foreign Service of what was happening in Mexico.

With ignorance often comes fear, which itself was a bar to objectivity regarding Mexico. Mexico had the misfortune of having a political revolution develop into an economic revolution while a similar revolution was in motion in Russia. Such measures as the nationalization of oil wells and agrarian reforms, which threatened property owners from the United States, were defined in the minds of the owners with bolshevism. There was an equal misunderstanding on the part of Mexicans, for their experiences with the United States since the beginning of their revolution had not been happy ones. In a way, the revolution had resolved itself along nationalistic lines. Americans owned more than forty per cent of the Mexican national wealth,<sup>4</sup> and so came to be the target of the Mexicans who desired government ownership.

Interpretation of the Constitution of 1917 was the major source of contention between the United States and Mexico during this period. Article 27 dealt with land, labor, and the Church, and this was a constant source of irritation to Americans. The Wilson administration had used the pressure of non-recognition in an attempt to force the Mexican government into compliance with American wishes. Secretary

Hughes attempted to apply the same measures in forcing the Mexican government into compliance with American wishes. Secretary Hughes, within two months after taking control of the State Department, presented to the Mexican government the draft of a treaty which had as its intentions the security of American property rights acquired before the constitution was adopted.

As would have been expected, the conservative press defended the action of Hughes. There was a feeling that it would not be difficult for President Obregón to give the assurances for which Secretary Hughes asked. In Philadelphia, the Public Ledger, a conservative journal, considered that Obregón would have to make concessions or take the consequences. As the Ledger said, "If he cannot pay the price of elemental fairness for recognition then there should be no recognition."<sup>5</sup>

In the early years of the 1920's, the Independent was one of the most conservative of journals, and it joined in the discussion of Mexican recognition. Arguing against recognition unless the American terms were met, the Independent agreed that Obregón was stubborn.<sup>6</sup> The New York Times felt that Obregón was "badly advised if he believes that the United States would recognize his Government without requiring it to give positive guarantees that it would fulfil its obligation."<sup>7</sup> The Times also felt that no American administration could afford to neglect the interests of investors.<sup>8</sup>

A diametrically different attitude was taken by the liberal journals, which showed a distinctively sympathetic attitude to the de facto government of Mexico. The New Republic was especially cynical in probing the failure of the State Department to recognize

Obregón's government. In an editorial, which asked, "Mexico: Why Not Recognition?", the liberal journal admitted that some properties had been taken without adequate compensation.<sup>9</sup> Meanwhile, the Nation was also questioning the financial dealings which were being concluded in clearing up the problem of Mexican finances, particularly debts owed to American bond-holders.<sup>10</sup> Although the general financial attitude which was shown by American journals will be discussed in a later portion of this paper, it will be considered here as a purely Mexican-American problem.

The de la Huerta-Lamont agreement of mid-1922 was roundly criticized by the Nation as a virtual surrender on the part of Mexico to American financial interests. As the liberal weekly sardonically remarked in June 1922, "Mexico has received Wall Street's permission to carry on."<sup>11</sup> Even the conservative journals had the feeling that Mexico had to straighten out her finances as a step toward recognition. In New York, the Times was critical of the failure of the Mexican government to pay its debts, which the daily felt could have been paid out of revenue coming from taxes paid on petroleum. This was rationalized as an excuse for the failure of the State Department to recognize the Mexican government. As the Times announced, "...the only mystery in the situation is that those who are pledged to pay and have the means to pay should think negotiations necessary."<sup>12</sup>

The impartial Literary Digest, in an article with a partial title, discussed the problem of Mexican recognition from the standpoint of the necessity of a fulfillment in financial obligations. "Mexico Ready To Pay Up," announced the Digest, in an article which featured the New York Globe editorial which predicted the conquest

of Mexico by American capital.<sup>13</sup> David Lawrence, then writing for the New York Evening World, pointed out that American recognition would carry with it the recognition of the entire world.<sup>14</sup>

With the financial obstacle cleared away, the course was cleared for resolution of the difficulties. President Obregón made it clear that he would not sign the proposed treaty, and suggested that a commission composed of members from both countries could meet in order to iron out the difficulties. By this time, April 1923, the press was ready for action to resolve the difficulties. The New York Times commented upon an increase in business between Mexico and the United States. In general, the attitude of the conservative press was that of the Times, which suggested that if the Harding administration would recognize the Obregón government, there "will be a feeling of relief and satisfaction throughout the country."<sup>15</sup>

The Nation had adopted a strong line toward the recognition of Mexico. In April 1922 it had noted that "virtually no open and avowed opposition to this course (recognition) exists today...prevailing sentiment is overwhelmingly for it."<sup>16</sup> However, as recognition became a distinct probability, the Nation did an about face. By May 1923 it suggested that "It may be lucky for Mexico that it has so long escaped the contamination of recognition by Mr. Hughes."<sup>17</sup>

Probably the reason for the change in the viewpoint of the Nation was that one of its editors, Ernest Gruening, had changed his mind regarding Mexican recognition. One of the most authoritative writers on Mexico during the 1920's, Gruening had spent four months in Mexico in early 1923. In April, he came to the conclusion that "the Hughes

policy of non-recognition has to date been the best for both Mexico and the United States."<sup>18</sup>

This was not necessarily the viewpoint of the entire editorial staff of the Nation, but it was touched upon in unsigned editorials while Gruening was still in Mexico. Apparently it was the feeling of Gruening that since Mexico had established order and had improved its socio-economic position without recognition from the United States, this was an adequate proof of Mexico's stability. Probably Gruening was over-emphasizing his own opinion in placing an onus upon nations which were recognized by the conservative Republican administration. Gruening felt that recognition by Hughes would create opposition in Mexico itself to the Obregon administration, for Americans were cordially hated by the Mexican people.

Perhaps, also, the reason for the eleventh-hour opposition to recognition by the Nation was a feeling that, as a liberal journal, it should swim against the stream of Republican conservatism, no matter what course it would take. Assuming that sentiment was overwhelmingly in favor of recognition, it would seem that the Nation felt an obligation to point out what it felt would be dangers in American recognition. Non-recognition, felt Gruening, had established "a neighbor, brave, self-reliant, culturally different, and hence stimulating, working out new social forms..."<sup>19</sup> Possibly the key to the position of the Nation and the New Republic during the entire 1920's was found in the last phrase in the quotation above. There was the feeling that Mexico and other nations should be allowed to work out their own social forms, with no outside opposition nor interference.

From May to August the two Mexican and two American commissioners met quietly at Number 85 Bucareli, in Mexico City. Both sides conceded some points, and on August 31, 1923, a joint announcement was released from Mexico City and Washington proclaiming full recognition for the Obregón administration. The Nation was "thankful" that full recognition had been granted, but had misgivings about an agreement, "which so patently satisfies the State Department regarding the sanctity of private oil wells."<sup>20</sup>

Certainly the American press was instrumental in bringing about the recognition of the Obregón administration. For a period of perhaps a year the liberal and conservative presses were in agreement of the necessity of recognition, but for different reasons. For the Nation and the New Republic the impulse was ingrained in sympathy, a sympathy for new social and economic forms, as were being established in Mexico. For the conservative press, the reason was primarily the realization that it would be good business for the United States to have a friendly neighbor to the south. The same motives were apparent in a general campaign for good will in all of Latin America, four years later.

In the light of subsequent events, the North American Review was overly optimistic when it sighed in relief, following the recognition of Mexico in 1923, "the long-standing 'Mexican problem' is on a fair way towards (a)...happy solution."<sup>21</sup>

Soon after recognition for Obregón an unpleasant situation developed in Mexico. The army divided in loyalty between the two presidential aspirants, Adolfo de la Huerta and Plutarco Elias Calles. Obregón

supported Calles. When de la Huerta led a revolution the United States decided to aid the chief executive, in the form of the provision of arms for Calles and Obregón and an embargo upon the sale of arms to the insurgents. Although the majority of the journals had supported Obregón since his recognition, many of them questioned the wisdom of taking sides in a controversy in a foreign country.

Leadership in this critical attitude toward the latest action of the State Department was provided by the liberal weeklies, the Nation and the New Republic. The latter journal spoke of the embargo as the consequence of the Hughes interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine, which favored established governments. As the New Republic said, "it is not enough to help the party we favor. We must also handicap its enemies."<sup>22</sup>

The conservative press generally supported the position of the State Department, feeling that the need for a stable government in Mexico outweighed the possibilities of unfavorable comments from other Latin American republics. The Philadelphia Evening Public Ledger felt that the overthrow of the Obregón administration would be most unfortunate. The conservative paper hoped that Mr. Hughes would treat the Mexican case as an isolated incident, not as a precedent.<sup>23</sup> The New York Times supported the Hughes policy, although it had reservations over the precedent being established of backing one group over another in a nation which traditionally settled its affairs by gunpowder.<sup>24</sup>

The position taken by the liberal weeklies would seem to present an enigma. They were normally sympathetic supporters of Obregón and Calles. Yet when it came to the recognition of Obregón, the Nation had reservations as to the wisdom of American recognition. When the



Obregón administration was threatened by revolution, neither the New Republic nor the Nation endorsed the support being given to the Mexican chief executive. The answer to this paradox would seem to lay in the fact that though both journals were internationally minded, they had a deep aversion to what they considered meddling in the business of other nations. Here was the appeal of the liberal journals to the "Progressive" bloc in congress. This group, which was almost completely insular, saw in the liberal viewpoint one that was complementary to their own. And so, in the election of 1924, the liberals, an internationally minded group, found themselves in support of the isolationist Progressives.

After Frank Billings Kellogg assumed the office of Secretary of State, relations with Mexico deteriorated rapidly. Kellogg was not as well qualified as his predecessor to fill the office. Apparently his only experience in an office dealing with international affairs had been as Ambassador to the Court of Saint James. A recent observer commented caustically upon the qualifications of Kellogg, who directed the formation of policy toward foreign nations. Selig Adler wrote,

The new Secretary was a hard worker, but he was irascible...He was so worried, fretful, and apprehensive of senatorial power and rebuke that Washington reporters labeled him "Nervous Nellie..."<sup>25</sup>

In President Calles, Kellogg faced a man who was not so amicable as Obregón had been. A strong-willed man, Calles had the intention of an eventual nationalization of the oil industry. By December 1925 a new petroleum code was introduced in the Mexican Congress, limiting the possession of oil properties to a period of fifty years, after which the government would obtain ownership. Calles considered this

a first step toward eventual nationalization of the petroleum industry. This action was a contradiction of the promises of "perpetual ownership" which Obregón had extended before his recognition following the Bucareli Conferences.<sup>28</sup>

Kellogg had what seemed to be an almost pathological fear of "bolshevism" and the actions of Calles were to him sufficient proof of the intentions of Mexico to deal cavalierly with American-owned property. By this time the Ambassador to Mexico was James Sheffield and that New Yorker was inexperienced in diplomacy and ignorant of Spanish. Sheffield would do little to improve relations between the two nations.

Suspicion of the intentions of the Calles administration continued to grow in Kellogg's mind, and they appeared in the open in June 1925, when the Secretary delivered a speech declaring that things were not going well between Mexico and the United States. He reaffirmed the intention of the United States to protect American property in Mexico. In commenting upon the Kellogg statement, the New York Times predicted that, "it seems unhappily probable that our relations with Mexico are about to enter another troubled period."<sup>27</sup> The next eighteen months were to prove the statement as being correct.

On June 14 the Mexican president replied to Secretary Kellogg's statement in an equally bitter tone. The Mexican felt that America was attempting to interfere with Mexico's domestic affairs. Referring to a statement made by Kellogg, to the effect that Mexico was on trial before the world, Calles felt that Mexico was no more on trial than the United States.<sup>28</sup> The Times was unhappy about the turn of events, and hoped that the unfortunate remarks on both sides would

be forgiven and forgotten.<sup>29</sup>

At this time the liberal weeklies instituted a campaign against Secretary Kellogg that was to continue until he left office. The statement of Secretary Kellogg, felt the Nation, "lacks the niceties of diplomatic courtesy with which brutal international ultimatums are usually disguised. It is a naked club..."<sup>30</sup> The New Republic agreed that there had been "Blundering in Mexico". Much more could be accomplished by persuasion and courtesy than by bullying, thought the liberal journal, which felt that the Kellogg action was resulting in a unified opposition to the United States in Mexico and the rest of Latin America. "Indeed throughout all Central and South America the gesture of our Secretary of State is likely to have consequences undesirable from our point of view."<sup>31</sup> The New York World was unhappy about the threat of force implied by Kellogg. "The Secretary has confused strength with impoliteness."<sup>32</sup> said the liberal daily.

From a surprising source came words requesting sympathy toward Mexico. William Randolph Hearst, who was the owner of large properties in Mexico, and who had openly asked for intervention in Mexico in 1916, published a signed statement for the readers of the New York American. In it he stated that he felt there were two ways of protecting American property and lives in Mexico. "One is by force and the other is by friendliness, and I do not think that the well disposed American people have the slightest intention of employing force, there remains only the policy of friendliness."<sup>33</sup>

Conservative journals joined together in supporting the Secretary of State as a series of crises arose, at least as long as Kellogg appeared to be supporting American property rights. "Mexico is still

on trial,"<sup>34</sup> declared the Times in September 1925, as it emphasized the difficulty that Calles was having with the agrarian element in Mexico itself. As the dispute continued, it grew more heated, and by the beginning of 1926 the Times complained bitterly of a proposed Alien Land Bill which would have required an American to go through the Mexican courts for redress of property confiscations. According to the conservative New York daily, "To attempt to bind an alien to deny himself an appeal to his own Government would appear to be unreasonable."<sup>35</sup>

The liberal counterpart of the New York Times, the World, took an opposite attitude to that of the conservative daily. While the Times continually hammered away on the theme of protection of property,<sup>36</sup> the World declared that Mexican courts should at least be tested to see if they would protect American-owned property from unfair seizure. The liberal journal deplored the practice of the conservative press of assuming that with American disapproval should come implied threats. In speaking of the proposed land bill, the World called for temperance in outlook upon the part of Americans.

There is no occasion for heat or threats till our ox is actually gored. Neither measure is yet effective; if ever effective, they may not be enforced, if enforced they can be held up by injunction proceedings; and (in) a final court test they will certainly be annulled if they violate a treaty.<sup>37</sup>

The liberal weeklies became more and more militant as the controversy continued, and sharply criticized the actions of the State Department as well as the tone of the warnings to Mexico. "Is the Washington Administration trying to pick a quarrel with Mexico?"<sup>38</sup> asked the Nation belligerently in January 1926, as it criticized

what it supposed to be an effort "to stir public hostility through newspaper propaganda rather than to adjust a possible grievance by diplomatic procedure."<sup>39</sup> A much more objective viewpoint was taken by the New Republic, which examined the claims of Americans to question Mexican laws which they considered to be confiscatory as opposed to Mexican insistence upon their rights to make any laws which they considered satisfactory within their own boundaries. The New Republic suggested that the State Department was attempting to carry out a policy of extra-territoriality. As stated by the liberal weekly, the doctrine proposed by the Department of State was that "...American capital must carry with it to any part of the world the same unusual degree of protection it enjoys within the boundaries of the United States."<sup>40</sup>

Here was the crux of the entire situation between the United States and Mexico. An "unusual degree of protection" was being given to capital or property-holders in the United States; this and the viewpoint of the liberal and conservative press toward the financial interests will be examined later. In Mexico, the administration felt the necessity of consolidating the resources under the jurisdiction of the government. Two paternalistic attitudes--the one of the United States toward financial protection, that of Mexico toward its resources--were bound to result in some type of clash.

And, during the semi-critical period of 1926, the specter of an armed clash between the two nations became far more sinister and distinct. Probably the threat was first conceived by the liberal journals as a type of propaganda offensive. It is doubtful that there

was an authentic feeling that the two countries would come to actual hostilities, at least not until the critical period of early 1927. But the New Republic asked, in March 1926, "Who wants war with Mexico? That somebody does is evident."<sup>41</sup> The journal felt that statements made by the New York Tribune approached a threat of annexation by the United States.<sup>42</sup>

The ultra-conservatives in the press, like Secretary Kellogg, felt that the Mexican moves in the direction of nationalization of land and mineral resources were controlled by communists. Perhaps the strongest indictment of Mexican policy was carried in the pages of the Philadelphia Public Ledger, which stated, "Mexico's radicals are profest disciples of Russia's Soviets. Until they are ready to keep their obligations to the rest of the world Mexican-American relations will be filled with tribulations and irritations."<sup>43</sup>

An appeal for reason appeared in the Independent, which now in 1926 followed what it called a "liberal" policy. But the description of liberal from the viewpoint of the Independent stood for an objective and timely view of events, rather than carping criticism in the manner of the Nation and New Republic. Both of these journals had originally started with the intention of following a policy of objective discussion, but both had drifted into the role of perpetual critics during the last part of the 1920's. The Independent actually was freer from prejudices in 1926 and 1927 than the other more ancient journals.

Until 1927 the Independent tended to steer clear of discussions of relations with Mexico, emphasizing relations with Europe on its editorial pages. But in March 1926 the now-liberal Independent

felt the necessity of discussion of the controversy with Mexico. At that time the weekly journal felt that there was an influence of socialism in Mexico's attempts to eliminate alien ownership of property, although the major problem with Mexico was the denial, on the part of the Mexican government, of the right of appeal to the United States government if American owners had their property confiscated. The right of appeal, "not the confiscatory, retroactive feature of Mexico's program, is the meat in the Mexican coconut at the moment..."<sup>44</sup> said the Independent. The journal also protested that "jingo talk"<sup>45</sup> that was given in some American papers.

Mexican internal affairs had a way of appearing in American newspapers, and the crisis which evolved from the controversy between the Calles administration and the Roman Catholic Church was the subject of a great deal of criticism from north of the Rio Grande. The intention of Calles to enforce the religious provisions of the 1917 Constitution was announced in February 1926. Included in the measures which were undertaken were: deportation of priests not born in Mexico, the closing of schools where religious instruction was given, and a quota upon the number of priests.<sup>46</sup> These were harsh measures in Catholic Mexico, and they provoked a storm of protest in the United States. On March 9, Ambassador Sheffield presented a note to the Mexican Foreign Minister expressing the hope that American citizens would not be forced to undergo hardship or injury in Mexico because of their religious beliefs and practices. The Sheffield note, however, was as far as the United States would go in this Mexican internal matter.

The attitudes of the two major New York dailies, the Times and the World, found an agreement in their opinions toward the controversy. Most of the responsible journals urged the United States to modify its opinions so as to not antagonize Mexican nationalism. The World felt that, "We shall gain more if we exhibit an attitude of neighborliness and conciliation than if we attempt a brusque assertion of our 'rights'".<sup>47</sup> The Times also felt that this was an internal affair, and that the President and Secretary of State could not intervene "so long as our treaty rights are preserved and there is no discrimination against Americans living under Mexican jurisdiction."<sup>48</sup>

A resolution of the Knights of Columbus, meeting in convention in Philadelphia in late summer, urged that the United States intervene in Mexico for the benefit of the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>49</sup> The conservative journals generally followed the lead of the administration and side-stepped the question of Church and state in Mexico, other than stating their belief that this was a purely domestic problem.

While conceding that the policy which the Calles administration followed was severe, the liberal journals tended to defend his action. Even the World, which had a large percentage of Roman Catholic readers, was lenient toward the Mexican chief executive. Pressure from within in Mexico would force modification of the stand taken by the Calles government, felt the World. "But," cautioned the liberal daily, "it will not be modified so long as President Calles can claim that Mexico is once more being threatened by the United States."<sup>50</sup> Both the New Republic and the Nation also echoed the conception that American pressure would tend to solidify the Mexicans in defense of



their president, to the disadvantage of the Roman Church.<sup>51</sup> Perhaps the attitude of the Independent was most typical of the liberal press, as it dismissed the problems of Church and government as a "Mexican growing pain."<sup>52</sup>

Although there were some charges that some newspapers with large Roman Catholic audiences may have called for intervention after early 1926, although they had counseled against it before, this did not seem to be the case in the journals included in this study. There seemed to be a tacit agreement that the religious problem was one in which the United States should not interfere. Those journals which had suggested intervention continued to do so until late 1926, but on the grounds that American property rights were threatened. On the other hand, those liberal journals which had cautioned against intervention to protect property, also counseled against intervention in Mexico upon religious grounds. Most of them sympathized with the Roman Catholics, but felt that a compromise could best be consummated if the United States did not interfere in Mexico. They seemed to agree that action by the American administration would only cause Calles to intensify his efforts against the Church.

Foreign policy is generally dictated by internal pressures, and this was especially true in the relations between the United States and Mexico going into 1927. President Calles needed the support of his nation, and in part this support was achieved in a negative way-- by using the United States as a kind of bully meddling in the affairs of a sovereign nation. The Coolidge administration, under the influence of financial interests, geared its policies to a protection

of American-owned property and mineral rights. Both administrations attempted to use public opinion to support their moves.

By late 1926 both sides advanced very deeply into divergent attitudes. And because internal public opinion turned against them, both the Coolidge and Calles administrations emerged from 1927 with modified policies.

During the period from 1921 to 1926 the administration in Washington could count upon the support of the conservative journals. Those newspapers and magazines felt a close affinity to the State Department, and found very little to criticize in the motives of the administration, although conservative journals occasionally questioned the methods by which the motives were achieved.

The liberals played down the confiscatory nature of the Mexican social revolution in their editorials. There was a deep suspicion, by these journals, of the methods of big business and of the State Department. This was especially true of the oil companies following the Teapot Dome controversy. Most liberals appeared to believe that the nature of the Mexican laws would not work great hardships upon American owners, for they generally provided for long waiting periods. They also allowed for compensation for confiscated land or property. A major contention of liberal journals such as the World, which did not take the extreme position of the Nation, was that the Mexican system of justice should be tried before the American government took any action. Even the Nation never advocated that Mexico had the right to confiscate property without warning and compensation, unless the American owner had obtained his property by fraudulent methods.

Liberal journals, such as the New Republic and the Nation, had

a basic sympathy for the rights of small nations to carry out their own affairs without meddling from larger nations. Therefore the general tenor of their editorials was a criticism of the motives as well as the methods of the State Department. By late 1926 the critical policy of the liberal press toward American intervention in Mexico as well as Central America had reached its zenith.

## FOOTNOTES

- 1 "Mexico and the United States," Chicago Tribune, January 9, 1921, p. 8.
- 2 ibid.
- 3 "The Mexican People," New York Times, May 30, 1929, section E, p. 2.
- 4 Frank Tannenbaum, Mexico: the Struggle for Peace and Bread. (New York, 1950), p. 266.
- 5 "Recognition's Price," Philadelphia Public Ledger, June 9, 1921, p. 10.
- 6 "Mexico and the War Cloud," Independent, CVI (August 6, 1921), 48.
- 7 "Recognition for Obregon," New York Times, February 1, 1921, p. 10.
- 8 ibid.
- 9 "Mexico: Why Not Recognition?" New Republic, XXX (May 24, 1922), 358.
- 10 "Mexico's Never Ending Task," Nation, CXV (July 5, 1922), 5.
- 11 "Wall Street and Mexico," Nation, CXIV (June 28, 1922), 764.
- 12 "Mysterious Mexico," New York Times, May 24, 1922, p. 18.
- 13 Quoted in Literary Digest, LXXIV (July 1, 1922), 16.
- 14 ibid.
- 15 "Relations with Mexico," New York Times, April 25, 1923, p. 20.
- 16 Nation, CXIV (April 12, 1922), 412.
- 17 ibid., CXVI (May 23, 1923), 589.
- 18 Ernest Gruening, "Will Mexico Be Recognized?" Nation, CXVI (May 23, 1923), 589.

- <sup>19</sup> ibid., 590.
- <sup>20</sup> ibid., CXVII (September 12, 1923), 253-254.
- <sup>21</sup> George C. Thorpe, "The Mexican Problem Solved," North American Review, CCXX (September, 1924), 52.
- <sup>22</sup> New Republic, XXXVII (January 16, 1924), 185. See also "Mexico's Never-Ending Task," Nation, CXV (July 5, 1922), 5.
- <sup>23</sup> Quoted in Literary Digest, LXXX (January 12, 1924), 11.
- <sup>24</sup> "Arms for Mexico," New York Times, December 31, 1923, p. 12, and "The Civil War in Mexico," ibid., February 14, 1924, p. 16.
- <sup>25</sup> Selig Adler, The Isolationist Impulse. (London and New York, 1957), pp. 163-164.
- <sup>26</sup> Howard F. Cline, The United States and Mexico (Cambridge, 1953), p. 210.
- <sup>27</sup> "The Warning to Mexico," New York Times, June 13, 1925, p. 14.
- <sup>28</sup> Cline, op. cit., pp. 268-269.
- <sup>29</sup> "Proud and Sensitive Mexico," New York Times, June 16, 1925, p. 20.
- <sup>30</sup> "Our Threat to Mexico," Nation, CXX (June 24, 1925), 706.
- <sup>31</sup> "Blundering in Mexico," New Republic, XLIII (July 1, 1925), 139-140.
- <sup>32</sup> Quoted in Literary Digest, LXXXV (June 27, 1925), 9.
- <sup>33</sup> ibid.
- <sup>34</sup> "Mexico Still on Trial," New York Times, September 8, 1925, p. 20.
- <sup>35</sup> "The Mexican Land Bill," New York Times, January 7, 1926, p. 24.
- <sup>36</sup> cf. Times, ibid.
- <sup>37</sup> Quoted in Literary Digest, LXXXVIII (January 23, 1926), 14.
- <sup>38</sup> Nation, CXXII (January 20, 1926), 226.

39 ibid.

40 New Republic, XLV (January 20, 1926), 226.

41 ibid., XLVI (March 3, 1926), 27.

42 ibid.

43 Quoted in Literary Digest, LXXXVIII (January 23, 1926), 14. Note the simplified spelling ("profest" for "professed").

44 Independent, CXVI (March 13, 1926), 285-286.

45 ibid.

46 J. Lloyd Meham, Church and State in Latin America (Chapel Hill, 1934), pp. 482-483.

47 Quoted from Literary Digest, LXXXVIII (March 13, 1926), 13.

48 "The Troubles in Mexico," New York Times, August 7, 1926, section 2, p. 4.

49 See Time, VIII (August 16, 1926), 14.

50 Quoted in Literary Digest, XC (August 21, 1926), 11.

51 See Nation, CXXIII (August 4, 1926), 99, and ibid., (August 11, 1926), 116. See also the New Republic, XLVII (August 18, 1926), 347. The philosopher John Dewey also contributed an article called "Church and State in Mexico," New Republic, XLVIII (August 25, 1926), 10.

52 "Church and State," Independent, CXVII (August 14, 1926), 171.

## THE PRESS AND INTERVENTION: 1921-1926

Most Americans paid little heed to the problem of relations between their nation and the republics around the "American Lake" until a series of crises arose in that area and in neighboring Mexico in early 1927. This crisis period will be examined in a later chapter. The main point here is that the United States began to examine the motives of its State Department toward Latin America by 1927. Some of the best minds in America turned their attention toward the problem of Latin American policy in an attempt to trace the steps which had led the United States into a difficult position by 1927. The opinions of two of the most able Americans will be considered for an insight into the background of American policy in the Caribbean and Central America in the early 1920's.

The learned John Dewey, writing for the New Republic, came to the conclusion that "Imperialism Is Easy." Dr. Dewey confessed that he had "entertained in a vague way the notion that imperialism is a more or less consciously adopted policy."<sup>1</sup> However, upon examination he found that it seemed to be a very natural thing for the highly industrialized United States to be involved in imperialistic practices with those nations which had the happy combination of surplus raw materials and unstable governments. Dewey felt that public opinion was not a great obstacle to the type of imperialism in which the United States was involved. Dewey, the philosopher, explained the course of this unconscious imperialism as follows:

...The natural movement of business enterprise, combined with Anglo-American legalistic notions of contracts and their sancity, and the international custom which obtains as to the duty of a nation to protect the property of its nationals, suffices to bring about imperialistic undertakings.

Imperialism is a result, not a purchase or plan...<sup>2</sup>

Walter Lippmann, writing for Foreign Affairs magazine, examined the conflict that was resolving itself in the republics of Latin America. This was the conflict between what Lippmann referred as "Vested Rights and Nationalism."<sup>3</sup> By "vested rights", the World editor meant the ownership of natural resources by American citizens in the small nations of Latin America. The policy of the United States, as developed by the State Department, and culminating in the Coolidge administration, provided for the defense of these property rights. As nationalistic feeling developed in Mexico and other Latin nations, vocal opposition to the United States grew more vocal and also more antagonistic. Lippmann discounted it, but with the growth of this vocal opposition in Latin America there was a somewhat parallel growth of criticism of American policy in the liberal press within the United States.

Although this liberal criticism had begun earlier than 1920, the first case to be examined will be that of Haiti, which had been occupied since 1915. The Nation had begun a campaign to end the American intervention as early as October 1920. In an editorial titled "Murder Will Out," the Nation had revealed what it called a "festering canker"<sup>4</sup> in the Negro republic. Senator Harding had used the ammunition supplied by the Nation as a basis for a campaign issue against the Wilson administration. Harking back as far as the original occupation in 1915,



the Nation made a scathing indictment of the American press for not exposing the conditions which were found in Haiti. "The silence of our American newspapers regarding the news in Haiti and Santo Domingo has been one of the proofs of the low estate to which the press has fallen."<sup>5</sup> So thundered the Nation, as it referred to the inaction of the big newspapers in reporting upon conditions in Haiti.

The New York Times, mindful of the sympathetic treatment being given to the communist experiment being carried out in Russia, had countered the charges of the Nation, describing that journal as a "weekly paper in this city which if not actually Bolshevist is so near to it that the distinction is not visible to the naked eye..."<sup>6</sup>

The American occupations of Haiti and the Dominican Republic had been a campaign issue, and the Times, which favored the Democratic candidates, was in a position where it felt the necessity of defending the American occupation, which had begun in the Wilson administration. The Times was to continue to support American intervention in the small countries of the Caribbean and Central America even after the Republicans took office, for a time out of loyalty to the former Democratic administration, and later because this seemed to be in the best interests of the American financial group. Also, in the eyes of the Times, the American occupation was looked upon as a humanitarian mission. And so, in October 1920, the Times undertook to defend American intervention as a "humane and honorable occupation."<sup>7</sup>

Although the Chicago Tribune also supported intervention in the Caribbean and Central America, its primary reason seemed to be a desire for protection of the Panama Canal. The specific reasons for this Panama-phobia in the minds of the editors of the Tribune are

somewhat obscure, but it would seem that the Panama Canal must have been combined in the minds of the mid-western journalists with the Tribune's campaign for water transportation from the Great Lakes to the Atlantic. In Haiti especially, and in the Caribbean in general, there was a justification for American intervention, felt the Chicago paper. There "our moral responsibility and national interests run parallel..."<sup>8</sup>

True to its traditional support of Wilsonian idealism--although it had broken with Wilson himself over the Treaty of Versailles--the New Republic joined the Nation in its verbal assault on American imperialism. Herbert Croly and his associates on the staff of the liberal weekly had a deep and constant aversion to what it felt was a "military occupation and dictation...of a pitifully weak neighbor."<sup>9</sup> In the same way the New Republic had opposed any dictation by large nations in the affairs of small nations in Europe during and after the "Great War". Walter Lippmann at this time was one of the editors of the New Republic and he helped to lead the intellectual onslaught upon what he felt to be a circumvention of the "Fourteen Points" in the Western Hemisphere. By December 1920 the exceptionally able Felix Frankfurter was turning his legalistic brain to a suggestion that a "Pan-American Council should determine the necessity for intervention... and supervise its administration."<sup>10</sup> Frankfurter suggested that this type of trusteeship in the "government of non-adult people"<sup>11</sup> could serve as a model for European nations in their supervision of trusts and protectorates following the World War. This suggestion for multi-lateral action on the part of Frankfurter was not in line

with the attitude of the New Republic, which later criticized any intervention into the affairs of smaller nations.

Gradually the criticism of the American occupation shifted to the Naval Department, which had exercised control over Haitian affairs since 1915, with some proven cruelty to the natives. This "militaristic dictatorship"<sup>12</sup> on the part of the United States was looked upon by the Nation as part of a "renewed American policy of aggressive imperialism... the determination to control politically and economically the destinies of nearly a dozen small but...independent nations."<sup>13</sup> The Nation felt that this was a part of a kind of American imperialism, "dictated by the great business forces that hold the leading strings of our national destiny."<sup>14</sup>

The liberal Nation here struck what was to be the key-note of liberal thought toward intervention in Central America and the Caribbean during the next eight years. The Department of State was considered to be dominated by financial interests; and indeed its actions tended to prove this to be true. Although later commentators minimized the efforts of American financial interests in the initial occupation of these small nations,<sup>15</sup> there is no doubt that financial interests helped keep them there. This was "economic imperialism" to the liberals. This was not a policy which placed Americans in political office, but which put them in key positions of finance and supervision, with the implied threat of American military force to back the policies of the State Department in its support of American financial interests.

Pressure exerted by the liberals, combined with a desire upon the part of President as much as possible from the stigma of intervention left by Wilson, forced a minor change in the supervision of Haiti in 1922.

Instead of supervision by the Naval Department, as had been the case since 1915, control was centralized in the Department of State with the office of "High Commissioner" established to co-ordinate the services in Haiti. Brigadier General John H. Russell received the first appointment as High Commissioner. While this change did not change American policy, it did quiet the critics for a time, and at this point the subject of American intervention will be discontinued, to be resumed later in this chapter.

In Santo Domingo the Harding administration actually began a withdrawal of American troops, which was completed under the Coolidge administration. This was accomplished by Sumner Welles, who later became a leader in the "good neighbor policy" of the Roosevelt administration. By July 1921 provision was made for the gradual withdrawal of American forces from the country and the gradual relinquishment of American control over the administration of the nation. The New Republic applauded this action, calling it a "hopeful sign."<sup>16</sup> More pessimistic was the Nation, which felt that the method of withdrawal was a backhanded method of getting out of Santo Domingo, which did not atone for past actions.<sup>17</sup>

By the middle of 1924 the last troops were removed. But this was a conditional retirement, based upon an agreement that United States representatives continue to collect the customs and administer the finances of the Dominican Republic. As the Independent pointed out in July 1924, the United States was then in control of the financial policies of ten Latin American republics. Continued the Independent, which was assuming a more liberal attitude due to changes in ownership:

Whether the penetration of Latin America be called "dollar diplomacy" or "manifest destiny," the truth is that it is an evolution still far from complete. In retreating from Santo Domingo, we leave the Dominicans free merely to police their territory; if they fail, the marines are likely to return for another visit, bringing the blessings of civilization at bayonet point.<sup>18</sup>

The Independent cautioned that the United States was giving the impression that the collection of debts was more important than the principle of self-determination, and there was a possibility of a coalition of Europe and Latin America against a "North American Croesus to whom both owe money."<sup>19</sup>

Some indication of the attitude of the State Department toward smaller nations under Secretary Hughes was provided in the handling of a border controversy by the Department of State in 1921. This dispute was an ancient one, which had been arbitrated by Chief Justice White. Possession had been awarded to Costa Rica, but Panama had refused to honor the award and had maintained possession. Suddenly, in early 1921, the Costa Ricans decided to use force to seize the territory. When the Panamanians tried to reply in a like manner, Secretary Hughes first ordered Panama to honor the original award, and later used a threat of force to remove the troops from Panama from the territory.

As could have been expected, the conservative journals complimented Secretary Hughes for his action in the isthmus. The New York Times was emphatic, "if Panama offers resistance, the marines will have to be directed to put Costa Ricans in possession."<sup>20</sup> In an editorial titled "Panama Must Learn,"<sup>21</sup> the Philadelphia Public Ledger voiced its opinion that the small Central American republics were a dangerous potential source of trouble, a "Balkans of the Isthmus, dangerous to themselves and their neighbors."<sup>22</sup> The North American Review thought that "the action of Secretary Hughes was "an admirable beginning..."<sup>23</sup>

Even the Nation agreed that it was necessary to avoid war between the two tiny nations of the isthmus. However, the liberal weekly felt that a multi-lateral action, using the services of a commission in

which Latin American nations would be represented would have been more effective. Reminding its readers of the need for a favorable Latin-American opinion, the Nation warned, "Not without cause Latin Americans regard the protective affections of the United States very much as the little frogs came to regard King Stork..."<sup>24</sup>

The comments of the Nation as well as of the conservative journals points up the primary reason for the original intervention in the area around the Caribbean--the protection of the United States and its territories. The war with Spain had demonstrated, just before the turn of the century, the necessity for a connecting link between the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans, while the conflict with Germany had shown the ease with which submarines could bottle up and destroy shipping. Therefore, in those days soon after the first world war, the danger of an enemy attack upon the Panama Canal was a threat which was not taken lightly by the American press, liberal or conservative.

The two groups differed, however, in their conception of how this security was to be achieved. For the conservative press, the protection could be secured through enforcing a somewhat nebulous document, the Monroe Doctrine. When the year 1923 brought the centennial of the Doctrine, there was a remarkable divergence of opinion as to what was promised by the document. But to the minds of almost all Americans, it stood for some type of protection from Europe. The basic difference in opinion was how this protection was to be achieved. Conservatives, and the policy of the State Department was dictated by conservatives, harkened back to the days of T. R. They felt an implied threat to American security in any nation which was so financially insecure that it could not meet its debts. Therefore, the original interventions in Santo Domingo, in Haiti,

in Nicaragua, and in the other small nations around the Caribbean. Therefore, also, the financial protectorates over these nations even after American troops were removed. Now the financial protection grew to be more important as the 'twenties advanced, until the State Department appeared to conceive its primary duty in the Caribbean and Central America to be protection; but as the period of time since actual hostilities in Europe grew longer, the State Department more and more appeared to consider that the most important form of protection was not of American lives, but of property rights. This role of the financial interests in the formulation of Latin American policy will be continued in a later chapter.

In the four or five years immediately following the "Great War," the liberal press was also troubled by an appearance of near-hostilities in the Caribbean and Central America. They, also, were concerned over the necessity of protection for the United States. But they differed from the conservatives in their conception of how this protection was to be achieved. While the type of insulation favored by the conservatives was a sound financial system in each of the small republics to prevent European interference and internal disturbances, the liberals recommended that the State Department strive to offer another type of insulation--that of a favorable public opinion in all of Latin America, including not only the impotent republics close to the Panama Canal, but also the stronger nations of South America. In a way, however, they tended to defeat this purpose by playing up the most unfavorable aspect of American policy--the apparent domination by financial interests of the Department of State.

Another image was presented by the conservative press, that of

a humanitarian Uncle Sam. A leader in this attempt was the New York Times. This journal emphasized the role of the United States played in the creation of stable governments in those republics in which the United States had intervened. The New York daily continued also to point out the efforts being made by the American forces of occupation to improve the means of communication and trade and in the development of sanitation projects to improve the health of the natives of backward nations.

This was no mere rationalization or excuse for occupation on the part of the Times and its sister members of the responsible conservative press. There is an obvious note of sincerity in many of the editorials which denotes a sympathy for backward peoples, and a desire that America, rich in the material benefits of civilization, would aid those nations which were less fortunate than the United States.

Again, the liberal press was also sympathetic toward these smaller nations, but had a conviction that their needs could best be served by allowing them to work out their own problems in their own ways. Journals such as the Nation and the New Republic seemed to feel that the signs of progress in those nations in which America had intervened were external signs, and that these apparent gains would be lost unless they were the result of some internal chemistry of social evolution within the republics themselves.

One country toward which the United States had an especially paternalistic attitude was the island nation of Cuba. Early in 1921, President Wilson had sent General Enoch Crowder to Cuba as an advisor to help Cuba solve its economic and political problems. Conservative journals such as the Philadelphia Public Ledger approved this appoint-



ment as a "wise selection."<sup>25</sup> A year later the New York Times agreed that General Crowder was "Cuba's good angel."<sup>26</sup>

The Nation sarcastically remarked upon the efforts of General Crowder in securing "that indispensable passport to salvation--a Wall Street loan."<sup>27</sup> Here again was the identification of financial interests with diplomacy which the liberal journals emphasized during the 1920's. Both liberal and conservative journals tended to regard efforts to abolish corruption in the Cuban government with favor; the Nation suggested, however, that the place to seek "political hangers-on"<sup>28</sup> would be at home in the United States. With more sensational happenings in Haiti, Mexico, and Nicaragua, the mere issue of corruption in Cuba was not enough to hold the interest of journalists, who tended to disregard Cuba after the election of 1924.

Haiti, it will be remembered, had been placed under the control of the State Department rather than the Naval Department after 1922. Brigadier General John Russell had been established in authority and was co-operating closely with Haitian President Borno. Little notice was taken of Haiti in the interim between 1922 and early 1925, when Haitian nationalists attempted to take advantage of hard feelings between the United States and France over the payment of war debts.

A "League for the Rights of Man" was organized in France, and it included in its membership the French Premier, the French President, and three-quarters of the French parliament. This group suggested that the question of American supervision in Haiti be submitted to the League of Nations.<sup>29</sup> The conservative journals looked upon this as a meddling upon the part of France, and the anti-League Chicago Tribune commented that this action was "a convincing proof that we

were wise in refusing to join the League of Nations."<sup>30</sup>

Liberal journals, such as the Nation and the New Republic, seized upon the issue of American intervention with the same fervor they had shown in 1920-1922. Their main contention was with what appeared to be a circumvention of the constitution established in Haiti in 1918. No election had been held since that time, although the constitution had stipulated an election in even-numbered years. In the absence of an elected assembly, the affairs were controlled by President Borno and an appointed council of state. This arrangement was regarded by the liberal journals as a form of imperialism, for Borno and Russell co-operated closely. The New Republic, in July 1925, called for an immediate election: "The sooner the Haitians begin, under the beneficent influence of our paternalistic bayonets, to practice the self-government to which we have agreed to restore them, the better for all concerned."<sup>31</sup>

By April 1926, the Nation complained of what it considered an illegal attempt by Louis Borno to re-elect himself as president. The liberal weekly also began a campaign to free journalists who had been imprisoned by the Haitian president with the aid of American forces. According to the Nation, "twenty-seven journalists have been imprisoned in the last three years in the effort to reconcile the Haitian press to our rule of freedom and benevolence."<sup>32</sup>

Similar charges were again brought by the Nation a year later, when eight editors were sent to prison for criticizing Borno. The Nation continued its cynical attack upon Russell and the Haitian president, as it commented, "Under the benign protection of the United States Marine Corps, President Borno can play the Mussolini role..."<sup>33</sup>

It would seem that the Nation had a legitimate case in that there existed a very strict press censorship in Haiti. As most newspapers did not have correspondents in Haiti, they depended upon the press services for their news from that island republic. However, the correspondents for both the United Press and the Associated Press during the 1920's were officers in the marines, and therefore answerable to their supervisors for any news they transmitted. This helped to explain the scarcity of news coming from Haiti, and of the favorable press notices which appeared from the Negro republic from time to time.

However, this situation was discovered by accident when Colonel Charles Lindbergh was sent upon a good will mission in late 1927 and early 1928. His flight took him to Mexico, Central America, and to the Caribbean and Haiti. It happened that Lindbergh had agreed to publish the details of his flight in the New York Times and a reporter was assigned to act as ghost writer for the aviator. When the newsman arrived in Haiti he discovered that the press services had not been receiving a true picture of conditions there and so he proceeded to write a series of articles which placed the American intervention in a harsh light.<sup>34</sup>

Liberal criticism, combined with opposition in the Central American nation itself, helped to force the withdrawal of American forces for a time in Nicaragua. Plans were announced for the establishment of a native constabulary to be trained by American officers as a substitute for the marines. The departure of the marines in August 1925 was to prove to be an abortive one, but it seemed to meet the approval of both conservative and liberal journals. By January

1925, the New York Times felt that the time had come to allow Nicaragua to be "allowed to attend to her own affairs and live in amity with her neighbors..."<sup>35</sup> Here the Times batted exactly zero, for its predictions were not to come true for Nicaragua on either count.

It was apparent by July 1926 that there were unexpected difficulties in Nicaragua. A revolt in early 1926 had deposed President Solorzano and General Chamorro unsuccessfully sought American recognition. Failure of the United States to recognize the de facto Chamorro government drew a violent criticism of American recognition policy in the pages of the Nation, which asked if the United States was to be a "Big Brother or Big Bully?"<sup>36</sup> "We are playing either the big bully or the big brother," cautioned the Nation, "...a policy that permits us to play the big brother allows us also to play the big bully..."<sup>37</sup> Again the Nation was true to the liberal tradition of advocacy of self-determination of small nations as it stated its opinion that the United States had not the right to be either a big bully or the big brother to any small nation in Latin America or anywhere else.

There was some difference of opinion within the liberal camp as to their attitude toward American intervention in the affairs of smaller republics. According to such journals as the Nation, all intervention was dangerous, even if it had humanitarian motives, for it was liable to lead to a supervision which would be unfortunate for the United States as well as the smaller republics. More temperate were liberals such as the World's Walter Lippmann. He was also opposed to any new intervention, but he seemed to realize that a

sudden withdrawal of American supervision would bring chaos, as it was to do in Nicaragua. It would appear that the argument proposed by the conservative press that the United States was intervening for humanitarian motives did not appeal to the liberals, for they assumed the position that all intervention had as its basic motive the protection of financial interests in America.

The Nation stated in 1926, "We are rapidly becoming the world's worst muddler..."<sup>38</sup> And an observer looking around the Caribbean in late 1926 would have to conclude that the conclusion of the Nation had a great deal of merit. The best of American intentions for self-protection and humanitarian motives had produced almost completely negative results. There was a revolution in progress in Nicaragua. Americans were doing business with a corrupt administration in Cuba. Panama was miffed by what it felt was coercion in its dispute with Costa Rica and in the annexation of several islands for military bases, and so held in limbo a proposed treaty which would have tied Panama and the United States in a mutual security pact. American marines were helping to maintain an unpopular president in office and helping him to perpetuate an authoritarian administration in the island nation of Haiti. Throughout the Caribbean area there were rumblings of discontent by late in the summer of 1926.

In Mexico, also, a debate over land and mineral rights was coming to a head. The United States was reaching new heights of unpopularity in Europe and Latin America. Perhaps the United States, in 1926, was the "world's worst muddler."

## FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> John Dewey, "Imperialism Is Easy," New Republic, L (March 23, 1927), 133.
- <sup>2</sup> ibid.
- <sup>3</sup> Walter Lippmann, "Vested Rights and Nationalism," Foreign Affairs, V (April, 1927), 359.
- <sup>4</sup> "Murder Will Out," Nation, CXI (October 27, 1920), 467.
- <sup>5</sup> ibid.
- <sup>6</sup> Quoted by ibid.
- <sup>7</sup> "General Lejeune's Report," New York Times, October 7, 1920, p. 14.  
See also "The Americans in Haiti," ibid., September 22, 1920, p. 14.
- <sup>8</sup> "Stay in Haiti, Get Out of the Philippines," Chicago Tribune, January 7, 1921, p. 8.
- <sup>9</sup> New Republic, XXIV (October 27, 1920), 201-202.
- <sup>10</sup> Felix Frankfurter, "Haiti and Intervention," ibid., XXV (December 15, 1920), 71-72.
- <sup>11</sup> ibid.
- <sup>12</sup> "Imperialism in Haiti," New Republic, XXVII (June 29, 1921), 128.
- <sup>13</sup> "Mittel-Amerika," Nation, CXIII (July 27, 1921), 87.
- <sup>14</sup> ibid.
- <sup>15</sup> See Dexter Perkins, The American Approach to Foreign Policy, (Cambridge, 1952), pp. 50-51.

- <sup>16</sup>New Republic, XXVI, (sic)(July 26, 1922), 238. For a time in 1922 there was an error in the volume number of the New Republic. The actual number of this volume was XXXI.
- <sup>17</sup>"The Retreat from Santo Domingo," Nation, CXV (July 26, 1922), 85.
- <sup>18</sup>"The Retreat from Santo Domingo," Independent, CXIII (July 19, 1924), 32-33. Note that the title of this editorial is the same as the one from the Nation as listed directly above.
- <sup>19</sup>ibid.
- <sup>20</sup>"An Ultimatum to Panama," New York Times, August 23, 1921, p. 14.
- <sup>21</sup>"Panama Must Learn," Philadelphia Public Ledger, August 23, 1921, p. 10.
- <sup>22</sup>ibid.
- <sup>23</sup>North American Review, CCXII (May, 1921), 705.
- <sup>24</sup>Nation, CXIII (September 7, 1921), 252.
- <sup>25</sup>"A Helping Hand to Cuba," Philadelphia Public Ledger, January 5, 1921, p. 8.
- <sup>26</sup>"Crowder's Cuban Task," New York Times, June 14, 1922, p. 18.
- <sup>27</sup>Nation, CXV (July 12, 1922), 31
- <sup>28</sup>ibid.
- <sup>29</sup>"To Drive Us Out of Haiti," Literary Digest, LXXXV (April 11, 1925), 13.
- <sup>30</sup>Quoted by ibid.
- <sup>31</sup>New Republic, XLIII (July 1, 1925), 137.
- <sup>32</sup>Nation, CXXII (April 7, 1926), 356.
- <sup>33</sup>"Poor Haiti," Nation, CXXV (July 20, 1927), 51.
- <sup>34</sup>See Silas Bent, "International Window Smashing," Harpers, CLVII (September, 1928), 427.
- <sup>35</sup>"Our Marines in Nicaragua," New York Times, January 15, 1925, p. 20.
- <sup>36</sup>"Big Brother or Big Bully," Nation, CXXIII (June 14, 1926), 25.
- <sup>37</sup>ibid.
- <sup>38</sup>ibid.

## DOLLARS AND DIPLOMACY

If, throughout the period from 1921 to 1928, there is one thread woven through the discussions in the newspapers and magazines in regard to the foreign policy of the United States in Latin America, that one thread is that of the dollar. This interest in financial matters and worship of the businessman was just a part of a larger pattern of dollar-worship during the period. The United States in the 1920's was a businessman's civilization. As one historian stated, "Perhaps the generalization had been valid since Appomattox..."<sup>1</sup> Perhaps it was, but never was the dollar sign worshipped in such a public fashion as it was in the decade following World War I. Even those who understood the caricature of Sinclair Lewis' famous novel decided that perhaps it was not a bad idea to be a "Babbitt." And, had not Babbitt informed his friends, "What we need first, last and all the time is a good, sound business administration!"<sup>2</sup> During the 1920's, a business administration is what they got.

The policies of the Coolidge Administration, especially, were flavored by a constant desire to please the interests of business. As one journal noted of the President, "He is always thinking of big business with tender concern because deep in his being is nothing less than a dogma that is as Puritan as the doctrine of elevation was to his Calvinistic ancestors."<sup>3</sup>

As long as prosperity existed, the defects in domestic and foreign policy were shunted to the background. Save for the strident dissenting voices of the liberal press, little criticism was made of the government, at least until late in 1925.



To call a man a good businessman was the highest compliment of that materialistic period. Small wonder that a man such as Secretary Kellogg lived in a constant fear of antagonizing the business interests which helped to support the administration. Calvin Coolidge felt that the business of the government was to help business, and help it they did.

A conclusion may be drawn, at this point, in reference to the Latin American policy of the United States during the Harding and Coolidge administrations. That is, that the policy of the United States toward the countries of the Caribbean, Central America, and Mexico followed what was thought to be the best interests of the businessmen in the United States. In other words, American-owned property and American interests were protected in the Caribbean and Central America by force and threats as long as possible; American-held oil wells and property were likewise protected by threats or by the withholding of recognition. When these policies were found to be working against the best interest of the business group--when the Europeans were making inroads into the trade with Hispanic America, when the rising nationalism of the areas created pressures against American business--then the trend in American foreign policy changed. To Mexico went Morrow, charged with placating the Mexican Government. To Nicaragua went Stimson, charged with the abolishment of friction in that country. To Havana went Coolidge and Hughes, to present a smiling face to the south. To Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean went that authentic hero, Charles Augustus Lindbergh, on a mission of friendship and good will.

Here it would seem that the liberal journals had won their point. They had called for recognition of the Obregon Government in Mexico. Obregon had been recognized. They had called for the removal of American

forces from the small republics of Central America and the Caribbean. These were on the way to removal. But still the liberals were not satisfied. Realizing the push of finance in these moves, they turned their guns on big business itself. They sought to identify business with diplomacy.

Liberal journals such as the Nation, New Republic, and the New York World developed a stereotype of diplomacy dominated by Wall Street. Constantly exposed were the high-interest loans being floated in the vicinity of the "American lake." The quest for dollars was seen in American intervention in Central America and the Caribbean. Sympathetic as they were to the socio-economic revolution being carried out in Mexico, they cared little for the fact that American-held property ran a risk of confiscation on the agrarian program envisioned by Calles, Obregón, and their followers. With the odoriferous scandals arising from the outpouring of oil from Teapot Dome, the liberals associated the oil interests threatened in Mexico with the discredited Fall and Doheney. In the offense against entrenched capital, the weekly journals, such as the Nation, took a much stronger line than the newspapers, which were somewhat hampered by a larger circulation.

On the other hand, such newspapers as the Chicago Tribune and the New York Times, with their great revenues from advertising and large circulations, were a part of big business. They turned naturally to a defense of any American policy which they felt favored business interests. So, as long as intervention seemed to serve the interests of big business these journals defended intervention. While the Obregón Government was being considered for recognition, a guarantee of protection for American interests was insisted upon. Later, when it was felt that financial

interests were threatened by Europe, the Times discovered that it was possible to put a price tag upon good will, and expressed the sentiment that the United States should attempt to come to friendly terms with the Latin nations, as this would improve trade. In a way the New York Times was a bell-wether for the kind of policy that was later called the "Good-neighbor policy."

The thesis that diplomacy followed the dictates of business is, of course, an oversimplification of an entwined and complicated question. There were pressures other than that of business working upon the State Department. The liberal press of the United States; the French press, miffed at Uncle Shylock for his pressure over the war debts; the remnants of the Progressive bloc in the Senate; the "loyal opposition" of the Democratic Party; even some enlightened members of the State Department--all of these cried out to the Administration for a change in basic policy. But we submit that none of these pressures would have been effective in changing the policy had it not been that this was felt to be in the best interests of the business interests of the United States.

Samuel Guy Inman was one of the most articulate of the opponents to the American policy of economic imperialism in Latin America. By 1924, in the Atlantic Monthly, he was able to state that there were but six of the countries of Central and South America, the Caribbean, and North America which were not in some way under the financial domination of the United States. Inman listed only the following as being "outside the circle of American control": Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Venezuela.<sup>4</sup> Inman was also concerned with the fact that the financial domination in many cases also brought political domination. In the

Caribbean area, especially, the American minister had a most important voice in what was done in internal affairs. All this was done under the guise of protecting American lives and property. "Since American lives seldom are in danger," said Inman, "American property naturally gets first place. In fact it is only in countries where American property interests are paramount that this tutelage is employed."<sup>5</sup>

Antedating by six years the mission of Dwight Morrow was an observation by Glenn Frank, editor of Century magazine, who later served as President of the University of Wisconsin. A man of genuine vision and a liberal outlook, Frank stated what came to be a basic argument of the revisionists. He refuted the theory that it was necessary to fight against the coming of a liberal government in Mexico. As he said, "liberal politics in Mexico is the best guaranty to foreign business, in general, and in particular to the foreign investor."<sup>6</sup> Frank decried the "muddled thinking" that had dictated business opposition to "sacrifice the permanent advantages of a long future to the quick profits of the immediate hour."<sup>7</sup> Continuing, he stated what later came to be the dogma of those who argued for a change in the policy toward Mexico under the rationalization of business success. "Any Mexican policy...that does not make for a permanent settlement of the Mexican muddle is not only poor statesmanship, but 'bad business', regardless of the immediate concessions it may secure..."<sup>8</sup>

As early as 1921, the New York Times called for a kind of "dollar diplomacy" in Hispanic America. This editorial called for the kind that had been practiced by the British Foreign Office. Calling for the combination of diplomacy and trade, the Times states that there is a "community of self-interest in the investment of American capital in Latin America, in the...advantages accruing to that region by that investment." The daily

concluded, "North American and thus Latin-American diplomacy has a great lasting duty and opportunity of common benefit."<sup>9</sup> The metropolitan journal was pointing out what was already a truism, for trade and diplomacy were already intertwined in Central America and the Caribbean.

Save for the laudatory comments in the conservative journals, little was said of trade in the early 'twenties, except for the occasional out-crys coming from the liberal press. These journals had a genuine dislike for the economic imperialism of protection of business interests by American diplomacy, being practiced in the small and weak republics to the south. Typical of these editorials were two which appeared in the Nation in October 1923. The first of these complained bitterly of the fact that a New York business house had negotiated a loan for \$6,000,000 for twenty-five years at an interest rate of eight per cent. Commenting also upon the fact that Nicaragua and Guatemala were also negotiating for a loan, the Nation said, "...every man and doubtless every nation has a right to choose its own kind of bondage."<sup>10</sup> However, the Nation felt that the bondage was being selected by the "leaders" for the "followers". Throughout the years, the Nation and the New Republic made much of the high interest rate charged to the nations of Central and South America, and the Caribbean. Because of the risk involved, an interest rate of eight per cent or more was not unusual.

A fortnight after the editorial commented upon above, the Nation again criticized the Salvador loan, this time on the grounds that the State Department had pledged the services of a Federal judge to act as arbitrator for the loan. One of the vulnerable points in the policy of the State Department was the part played by its officials in negotiating loans.

This was to be criticized on a much greater scale later, by financial interests, when many of the loans were defaulted. Villard's journal, in this case, recommended that "One of the first duties of our new Congress should be to investigate this shameless transaction by an administration whose motto is 'less government in business.'"11

At the time of the recognition of the Obregón Administration that move was seen by the conservative Birmingham News as an aid to trade, while pointing out that the southern republic was already one of the best customers of the United States, and that the United States was the best customer for Mexico. Pointing, as the New York Times had, to the value of reciprocal trade, the southern journal stated that "no country can maintain commercial relations on a permanent basis without an approximately equal flow of commodities; the more we buy from Mexico, the more she will be able to buy from us,..."12

One of the characteristics of the New Republic was in the fact that, although in general it opposed the policies of the State Department, it was willing to give credit to any move upon the part of that agency which showed evidence of liberal thinking. One such move received editorial notice late in 1923. At that time the liberal weekly commented upon an action of the State Department in regard to the exchange of "most favored nation" treatment regarding tariffs with any nation in the Western Hemisphere. Here was a forerunner of the reciprocal treaties of the 1939's. This was an evidence of a shifting in the policies of the State Department in order to improve trade. As the New Republic said of this move,

The action...is the result of business acumen as well as diplomatic amiability. We export to these countries as well as import from them, and they are as able to impose drastic duties as we are. Nevertheless, the State Department's proposal is fair-minded, and based on justice...13

As the unsavory Teapot Dome and Elk Hill scandals began to break, incriminating Secretary of the Interior Fall, there was an attempt to delve into his part in other petroleum dealings. In an article in the New Republic, Edward Earle discussed the treaty which had indemnified Colombia for the loss of Panama in 1903. This treaty had been opposed by Republican Senators during the Wilson Administration on the grounds that it would be an insult to ex-President Theodore Roosevelt. With the death of T. R. the way was cleared for the passage of the treaty. Former Senator Fall found himself in the position of supporting the bill.

The Secretary of the Interior had sent a letter to the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate which, the Nation felt, was "one of the most astounding of our recent apologia for naked economic imperialism..."<sup>14</sup> Fall had set his appeal for the ratification of the treaty upon the grounds that "American oil interests are much interested in the friendly settlement of all outstanding difficulties with Colombia..."<sup>15</sup> Of course, in commenting upon the oil controversy with Mexico, the Nation and the New Republic, and later the New York World, also tried to identify Edward Doheny with the American oil interests in Mexico.

Possibly the opening shot fired by the conservative press which was growing dissatisfied with the Latin American policy of the United States was a New York Times editorial in 1925. This salvo appeared in an editorial which commented upon the speech of President Coolidge at the dedication of a monument in honor of General San Martin. The Times faced the problems of the "big brotherly" approach by the United States toward the smaller Latin American nations. Calling its editorial "Pan-American Realities," the daily suggested that the United States, "With the best intentions in the world, and conscious of its own good will,"<sup>16</sup> had seriously alienated

its relationships with Hispanic America. In the eyes of the Times the most serious problem was in the fact that the United States had not made its policies clear, nor put them into the proper light. As the editor stated, "Without in the least intending to give offense, we have given it. Sure of our own virtuous purposes, we have taken it for granted that they must be apparent to all men."<sup>17</sup> Continuing, the editorial pointed out the need for a new awareness on the part of the American people of the problems faced by our southern neighbors. Here was a theme that the Times was to follow, with variations, over a period of years.

In line with this theory, the New York daily commented a few months later upon an increase in the study of Spanish in New York City. One of the reasons advanced for this increase was the prospect of "commercial and political relations with Spanish Americans."<sup>18</sup>

More and more, the public was informed of an increase in the flow of capital southward. As an after-effect of the first World War, the United States was transformed from a debtor nation to the greatest creditor nation in the world. In 1914 American citizens owed foreign investors three billion dollars; by 1919 foreigners owed the United States nearly three billion. Taken together with the fact that the United States held war-debts of over ten billion dollars, this "represents one of those great shifts in power that occurs but rarely in the history of a nation."<sup>19</sup> At the turn of the century, American investors had holdings of approximately \$390,000,000 in Latin America, mainly in Mexico, Cuba, and the Caribbean.<sup>20</sup>

A quarter of a century later, the Department of Commerce estimated that the total investments in Latin America by Americans amounted to four and one quarter billion dollars.<sup>21</sup> At that time Cuba led in the amount of American investment, with Mexico a close second. Further south, the United States had invested approximately one and one-fourth billion in the South American Continent.<sup>22</sup>



With the demand for capital the State Department burdened increased responsibilities. In an attempt at supervision of the loans, a requirement was made that the State Department be informed of any large loans made in Latin America. Later, this came to be a sort of negative approval, in that the State Department would inform investors if it had no objection to a loan. However, the State Department did not undertake to guarantee that a loan would be paid. The tacit approval of the Department of State toward a loan carried a great deal of weight, however, for there was a feeling upon the part of investors that the United States was in some way guaranteeing the loan. A vigorous objection to this practice was made by the liberal weeklies, such as the Nation, which called such agreements "secret alliances."<sup>23</sup> State Department advice on foreign loans had the effect of bringing the executive department and the large investment firms into a close association, and with this association came the criticism that the State Department was dominated by Wall Street.

By 1925, the Nation was arousing its readers to the fact that the United States had attained a new position as world banker. Here was a keynote that the liberal press was to strike throughout the next three years. Raising the cry of "imperialism," the Nation stated that the United States had taken control of many small republics, by force, while Europe was engaged in war. With the end of the war, "we have not been quite so crude; but our bankers, ... have secured an increasing area of control without the use of armed force."<sup>24</sup>

The liberal weekly decried the fact that the increased trade in the Caribbean and Central America also brought increased responsibilities in the area. Here again was the idealistic hope for self-determination for small nations, which was a heritage from the Wilson-Lippmann Fourteen Points

of a decade before. When the subjugation of a small nation like Haiti and Santo Domingo was combined with motives of financial gain on the part of Americans, this was particularly reprehensible. As the Nation said, "We are becoming, in the interest of Wall Street, the policeman of the world..."<sup>25</sup>

With the increased stress on trade development, men such as Walter Lippmann saw clearly, by 1927, the conflict which was resolving itself in the Caribbean, Mexico, and Central America. This was the conflict between the vested rights to property in those republics by American interests as opposed to a developing feeling of nationalism. This is a similar struggle, in many ways, to that now going on in Africa, Asia, and Oceania. Indeed, somewhat of this problem exists for the United States, three and one-half decades later, in an especially virulent form in Cuba.

"This is not a simple problem," cautioned Lippmann.

We have become exporters of capital, and we are called upon to decide what is to be the attitude of the United States Government to wards that exported capital when a foreign government subjects the property of American citizens to new and drastic social regulation.<sup>26</sup>

According to the editor of the New York World, speaking through the pages of Foreign Affairs, both Secretary Kellogg and President Coolidge contended that a title to a property "once acquired must be left intact in letter, in spirit, and in substance for all time to come."<sup>27</sup> President Coolidge took the further extreme position that the rights of a vested interest held an unchangeable title, even against the actions of a sovereign; and that this was clear under international law. The Kellogg Doctrine came to a head in a situation such as in Mexico, where the Constitution of 1917 reserved the rights to mineral deposits. There the problem resolved itself to one of acquired property versus national sovereignty.<sup>28</sup>

In this debate the Chicago Tribune became the champion of acquired rights. The United States had bought the rights for a canal in Nicaragua, therefore an administration must serve in that country which would defend American rights. The Calles regime threatened the interests of the oil companies in Mexico, therefore the Calles Administration must be put in its place, reasoned the Tribune.

In an editorial in December 1926, the Tribune commented on the subject of "Mexican Policy and Foreign Investment." The ever-alert editor had heard rumblings of a disposition on the part of the Calles government to make the land and petroleum laws retroactive. Said the Tribune, "...it is up to our government to see that it is not completed in defiance of American rights."<sup>29</sup>

A few days later the Tribune asked, "Is it To Be Confiscation or Not?". In this editorial it was suggested that those who were not opposed to the doctrine of confiscation in Mexico were those who owned no property there. Said the Chicago daily, "If the American critics of our government were willing to have their property taken without compensation by retroactive laws, we should hear their protests with less contempt."<sup>30</sup> A standard question of the Tribune about liberals was, "Whose property are they being liberal with?".

As American marines intervened in Nicaragua and attempted to set up "neutral zones" to protect the Diaz Administration, the Chicago paper set out to condone the right of intervention in that country. In editorials in late December 1926 and in early 1927, it was pointed out that the United States had invested \$3,000,000 for "...the exclusive right to build an interoceanic canal across Nicaraguan territory whenever we wish to do so."<sup>31</sup>

It was felt strongly, by the Tribune, that the United States could not allow a junta which would repudiate the treaty rights of the United States to gain control.

Following the crisis of early 1927, the New Republic commented upon the fact that the Calles Administration had authorized the payment of \$12,000,000 for the meeting of the interest, due in January 1 of that year, upon its public debt. Referring to the fervor of that period, the liberal journal commented that, "When a government is dealing with an adversary which, in substance, is accusing it of dishonesty, it would be only human if it lived up to the accusation."<sup>32</sup> With its friendly competitor, the Nation, the New Republic was a sympathetic supporter of the Calles Administration, as well as other experiments in socio-economic refolution in other parts of the world.

During this same period the New York Times was also turning its attention to the subject of trade with the nations to the south, and noting the increased competition from Europe in trade with the countries of Hispanic America. While acknowledging the fact that mere geography dictated that there would be a continuation of trade between the northern republic and the southern nations, "even if they dislike us,"<sup>33</sup> the Times felt that sentiment counted for something in trade. The loss of good will might tip the balance of trade toward Europe rather than North America. Said the Times editor,

...we have to deal diplomatically with the republics to the south of us. Even if we cannot escape feeling in our own hearts vastly superior to them, it is neither wise nor profitable to treat them as if they were acknowledged inferiors.<sup>34</sup>

Here, in the last sentence of the statement above, is the gist of what was to be the growing sentiment toward Latin American policy among the business and conservative interests. They began to realize, when they received the pressure of the purse, that a show of friendliness was necessary to achieve financial rapport with the countries in Hispanic America. Still there remained the feeling of superiority which endangered any outward show of equality.

Journals overseas were noting the same feeling of hostility toward the United States among the southern republics. In London, the Saturday Review felt that this would be of benefit to Great Britain, as it concluded, "It is perhaps no exaggeration to say that the attitude of the State Department has done more than anything else...to unite South America against the United States..."<sup>35</sup>

With the easing of the tension which had been built up between the United States and Mexico in early 1927, came a desire upon the part of businessmen on both sides of the Rio Grande to improve business relationships between the two republics. The New York Times, which had been among the leaders in calling for a conciliatory policy toward Mexico during the threatened hostilities of early 1927, continued to call for a resumption of friendly relations between the two countries.<sup>36</sup>

It had become clear, by this time, that the State Department was influenced by the business interests to an unusually great degree. Bruce Bliven, who had recently returned from Havana, asked the question, "Who Makes Our Foreign Policy?" and proceeded to answer it himself. Bliven felt that the State Department considered itself to be the defender for the American trader and investor; maintaining in behalf of these groups a tacit doctrine of extra-territoriality, especially in Latin America. The journalist commented upon the temperamental unity between the wealthy, conservative men in the State Department and their counterparts in the financial world. There was, felt

Bliven, "a common cynical contempt for 'inferior races' and an impatient disdain for those 'unpractical idealists' who would like to see our relations with weaker countries mutualized."<sup>37</sup> The fact that the administration favored business interests increased the co-operation between the foreign policy makers and the businessmen.

When President Coolidge attended the Havana Conference of the Pan-American Union early in 1928, there was a renewed interest in Latin America. The New York Times printed three editorials during that period which carried out the theme of increased trade with Latin America. One of them, on January 14, was impressed with the Lindbergh flight which had taken "Lindy" on a hop from the United States through Mexico, Central America, and finally to the Caribbean. The Times thought that this proved the feasibility of air mail service to Latin America. As it commented, "If we don't look out, the Germans and French, and perhaps the Spanish, will anticipate the United States in South America... Our rivals are not neglecting their opportunity."<sup>38</sup> A year earlier, the Chicago Tribune had suggested that an American-owned railroad be built to South America, with a temporary air route until the railroad was finished.<sup>39</sup>

The Times also commented upon the fact that there was a decline in trade with Europe while the amount of goods sold to Latin America was increasing.<sup>40</sup> This was a part of the pseudo-isolation of the period, which saw the United States ignoring Europe and turning southward.

"The root of the union...is economic."<sup>41</sup> So felt the New York Times in an editorial dealing with the Pan-American Union. The conservative daily continued optimistically to conclude that there was a "kind of Pan-American solidarity"<sup>42</sup> which was based upon economic necessity.

Lewis S. Gannett, no admirer of the administration, commented upon the need for capital in Latin America. As he stated the paradox existing in the

south, "There is not a Yankee-hater in South America who does not want American capital for his country...Increasingly Yankee capital dominates Latin America...And everywhere the governments are begging for more."<sup>43</sup>

Perhaps it was significant that the American people, in 1928, elected as President the man who had been the best friend to business in America. When President-elect Hoover announced his intention of making a tour of the republics to the south, there was a wide-spread approval of this move. Almost without exception, the journalists noted the Hoover trip as a bid for trade, which most of them favored. The Nation realized that its primary mission was to improve relations for the purpose of trade, but felt that this was "an unusual gesture of recognition" and trade."<sup>44</sup> "It will be within the power of Mr. Hoover to sweep away much of the lingering misunderstanding, ..."<sup>45</sup> added the New York Times.

And so it would seem, on the eve of the Hoover administration, that everyone was contented. The conservative press was happy that the new administration was making an effort to improve relations with Latin America, as this would improve the climate for business. On the other hand, the liberal press could see the results of their efforts in the recognition of Mexico, and in the apparently friendly relations with that nation. Now the liberal press turned its guns on the financial interests, rather than upon the State Department.

Such journals as the Nation and the New Republic took what appeared to be a distainful and critical note of American business dealings with Latin America. But it should be noted that their criticism was not of trade itself, but what they considered a one-waystreet in profits--with Uncle Sam's State Department as the policeman. They favored trade, but they did not condone what they considered to be unfair profits on the part of American capitalists.

Of course, the years of the Hoover Administration were not to be happy ones, in spite of the auspicious start. But a beginning had been made toward better relations among the Americas. In November 1928, the United States wanted good will with its neighbors to the south. For, as the Nation noted, "'Good will' and 'trade' are increasingly synonymous."<sup>46</sup>



#### FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup>Henry S. Commager, The American Mind (New Haven, 1950), p. 260.
- <sup>2</sup>Sinclair Lewis, Babbitt (New York, 1922), p. 29.
- <sup>3</sup>"Prosperity as a Religion," Independent, CXVII (November 20, 1926, 572-573).
- <sup>4</sup>Samuel Guy Inman, "Imperialistic America," Atlantic Monthly, CXXXIV (July, 1924), 109.
- <sup>5</sup>ibid., pp. 109-110.
- <sup>6</sup>Glenn Frank, "Profits and Politics in Mexico," Century, CII (July, 1921) 472-474.
- <sup>7</sup>ibid.
- <sup>8</sup>ibid.
- <sup>9</sup>"Dollar Diplomacy Needed," New York Times, December 12, 1921, p. 14.
- <sup>10</sup>Nation, CXVII (October 10, 1923), 365.
- <sup>11</sup>"Mr. Hughes Makes a Secret Alliance," Nation, CXVII (October 24, 1923), 452.
- <sup>12</sup>Quoted from Literary Digest, LXXVIII (September 15, 1923), 13.
- <sup>13</sup>New Republic, XXXVII (December 5, 1923), 30.
- <sup>14</sup>Edward M. Earle, "Oil and American Foreign Policy," New Republic, XXXIX (August 20, 1924), 507.
- <sup>15</sup>ibid.
- <sup>16</sup>"Pan-American Realities," New York Times, October 29, 1925, p. 24.
- <sup>17</sup>ibid.
- <sup>18</sup>"Spanish Studies Here," New York Times, July 6, 1926, p. 20.
- <sup>19</sup>William E. Leuchtenburg, The Perils of Prosperity: 1914-1932 (Chicago, 1958), p. 108.
- <sup>20</sup>Harry T. Collings, "Billions of Our Capital Invested in Latin America," Current History, XXVI (September, 1927), 848.

- 21 ibid.
- 22 ibid.
- 23 cf. "Mr. Hughes Makes a Secret Alliance," Nation, op. cit.
- 24 "America, the World's Banker and Policeman," Nation, CXX (May 27, 1925), 588.
- 25 ibid.
- 26 Walter Lippmann, "Vested Rights and Nationalism," Foreign Affairs, V (April, 1927), 353.
- 27 ibid., p. 359.
- 28 ibid.
- 29 "Mexican Policy and Foreign Investment," Chicago Tribune, December 1, 1926, p. 10.
- 30 "Is It To Be Confiscation or Not?" Chicago Tribune, December 6, 1926, p. 10.
- 31 "Right or Wrong in Nicaragua," Chicago Tribune, December 29, 1926, p. 10.
- 32 New Republic, XLIX (February 16, 1927), 340.
- 33 "Diplomacy and Trade," New York Times, January 26, 1927, p. 18.
- 34 ibid.
- 35 Quoted in the Literary Digest, XCII (February 12, 1927), 18.
- 36 "Easing the Mexican Tension," New York Times, March 23, 1927, p. 24.
- 37 "Who Makes Our Foreign Policy?" New Republic, L (April 6, 1927), 190.
- 38 "Air Services to Latin America," New York Times, January 14, 1928, p. 16.
- 39 "By Air to South America," Chicago Tribune, September 8, 1926, p. 10.
- 40 "Latin America's Shifting Trade," New York Times, January 18, 1928, p. 24.
- 41 "Pan American Realities," New York Times, January 27, 1928, p. 20.
- 42 ibid.
- 43 Lewis S. Gannett, "The Love Feast at Havana," Nation, CXXVI (February 1, 1928), 117.
- 44 Nation, CXXVII (November 21, 1928), 533.
- 45 "Rediscovering South America," New York Times, November 12, 1928, p. 22.
- 46 "Mr. Hoover's Trip," Nation, CXXVII (November 28, 1928), 565.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CRITICAL PERIOD: 1927

Policy makers in the State Department were caught in a triple cross-fire in late 1926 and early 1927. The United States was blocked by determined (and vocal) opposition in Nicaragua, Mexico, and even in the miniature republic, Panama. For a period of perhaps three months, the United States found its Latin American policy subjected to a merciless glare of unfavorable publicity. And, as usually happens in a democracy, the administration was forced into action to lessen the hostile criticism. Able men were sent to Mexico and Nicaragua to help correct the conditions in those troubled nations, and there were signs of a new attitude toward all of Latin America by late 1927. This is not to say that the aims of the foreign policy of the United States changed. These aims, including protection of the Panama Canal and of American property in Central America and the Caribbean, received little, if any, modification. The change, as far as the administration was concerned, was in the methods to be used to affect the constant goals.

But the changes in the method of the State Department are not the only changes found in the pages of the editorials in early 1927. There is a definite change in the tenor of the direction pointed by the editorial writers of the journals, as compared with previous years. In addition, there is a more or less definite pattern in the evolution of the editorials. The conservative journals which had defended the

policy of the administration found themselves calling for modification of the Latin American policy in order to bring increased friendship with Hispanic America. The liberal journals which had criticized the government's policy no matter what course it pursued as being merciless economic imperialism--a subjugation of smaller nations by financial methods, backed by force--found that there were mitigating circumstances which had led the government policy makers into the courses they had taken. In other words, it would seem that the editorials in the liberal and conservative journals were approaching a similarity in tone by mid-January 1927.

Leadership in this journalistic metamorphosis was provided by the editorial page of the New York World. Many of the comments which appeared in the New York daily were digested and regurgitated upon the pages of other journals, both liberal and conservative. The leadership of the World was not in its influence over its own subscribers, but in its appeal to other papers. Of course, those journals had their own reasons for their criticism of the State Department's policy, but they based many of their arguments upon those which were first devised by the World.

Of course, the World was a liberal journal, and by 1926 the editorial page was edited by the erudite Walter Lippmann. As a liberal paper the World had followed somewhat the same critical policy as had the liberal weeklies, such as the Nation and the New Republic. But the criticisms of the policy toward Central America and Mexico which appeared in the World were tempered by the intellectual Lippmann, who could trace the development of the policy and define the pressures which had helped to shape it. Not that the editor of the

World necessarily agreed with the steps that had been taken, but at least he understood why they had been taken. This gave the editorials, as written by Lippmann, something of an attitude of incompleteness. In other words, the issues were not seen in shades of black and white, but rather in shades of gray, and it was up to the reader to lighten or brighten them as desired, according to his own point of view.

As the largest of the newspapers which were dedicated to the liberal viewpoint, the World became the source of many of the ideas followed by the liberal weeklies, and helped to give their editorials a more objective line. This objectivity also appealed to the conservative journals, for they also could find proof for their convictions in the World's editorials. Thus the World became the leader of one of the few national newspaper crusades of the twentieth century, the drive for a policy of friendliness toward Latin America.

This is not to say that the World's editorials were the only reason for the changes that appeared in the newspaper and magazine editorials of the time. The mere fact of an implied threat of war with Mexico was sufficient to make editors delve more deeply into the issues, and this was bound to bring about more objectivity in the editorials. The pressure of increasing business competition from Europe helped to awaken the conservative journals to the dangers in the Latin America then being carried out. War with Mexico was threatened, and the basic pacificism of a nation which had concluded a war to insure self-determination for smaller nations was aroused. But it would seem that the drives which motivated the other journals were pointed up in the pages of the World, especially in the critical weeks of early 1927.

The catalyst for the outpouring of editorial comment was the re-entry of American marines into Nicaragua in the summer of 1926. This move was heartily endorsed by such journals as the Chicago Tribune, which had little use for those whom it felt would give up American rights to property in Central America, Mexico, and the Caribbean. Alternation of intervention and withdrawal of American troops would have the result, felt the Tribune, of "convincing Latin American opinion of our hypocrisy and ulterior motivation..."<sup>1</sup> The Chicago daily felt that a body of opinion ought to be developed which would counteract the "tosh that is put forth by so-called liberals and anti-imperialists."<sup>2</sup>

A week later the Tribune lashed out again against the liberal viewpoint. Commented the editorial,

Morally its flavor is self-righteous and it palpitates with a vigorous altruism. Intellectually it rests confidently on certain assumptions and if the facts do not happen to jibe with the assumptions so much the worse for the facts.<sup>3</sup>

In the mind of the Tribune editor the terms "liberal" and "anti-imperialist" were synonymous. Thus the paper at this point ridiculed liberals as starry-eyed idealists, with impractical ideals.

Carrying out the same theme, which preached the self-interest of the United States as a gospel, the Tribune boosted "For More Imperialism", in an editorial in mid-November. American fighting men had brought what "looks like peace in Nicaragua,"<sup>4</sup> and had forestalled threatened revolutions in Guatemala and Honduras. "If this be imperialism, let us have more of it,"<sup>5</sup> bragged the Chicago daily.

When the marines entered Nicaragua the Outlook began a campaign for a multi-lateral approach to the problems of the Caribbean. Even though the weekly had been sympathetic to the administration it did not favor this new intervention. "The policy of intervening in Central American affairs and backing out and going in again is leading no-where," asserted the Outlook, as it reiterated its desire for co-operation with other American nations in the settlement of the affairs of the smaller republics.

During the short period when American troops had been removed from Nicaragua the Conservative leader, Emiliano Chamorro, forced the elected President, Carlos Solórzano, out of office and installed himself in the presidential chair. The United States withheld recognition of Chamorro, and the Nicaraguan Congress elected another Conservative, Adolfo Diaz, as President.

Secretary of State Kellogg "assumedly heaved a sigh of relief,"<sup>7</sup> and immediately extended recognition to the Diaz government. Diaz announced his sanction to the sale of 51 per cent of the Nicaraguan National Bank to the Guarantee Trust Company of New York, presumably to cement his position as President.<sup>8</sup>

At this point the exiled Liberal Vice President, Sacasa, returned and raised an army in revolt against Diaz. That worthy immediately called to Washington for troops to maintain his position, while complaining that his Liberal adversary was receiving aid from Mexico. The Calles administration countered by recognizing the Liberal, Sacasa, as the legitimate president of Nicaragua.

Secretary Kellogg had discontinued his controversy with Mexico for several months, possibly because of the touchy situation between

the Calles administration and the Roman Catholic Church. But the accusation by Diaz that Mexico was aiding Sacasa struck a sore spot with Kellogg. As the Nation remarked, "Now that the religious issue has subsided Mr. Kellogg leaps at the chance of resuming his attack on the ground that Mexico is trying to bolshevize the republic to the south."<sup>9</sup> Then the liberal weekly raised the question that was to be asked many times at home and abroad in the next months as it asked, "...who gave Uncle Sam any more right to interfere in Central America than Mexico has?"<sup>10</sup>

Even the Independent, which had earlier been one of the most conservative of conservative journals, jumped to the attack against the Secretary of State. Referring to the large "Mexican bogey"<sup>11</sup> which it said was flaunted by Secretary Kellogg, the Independent traced the relationship between the United States and Central America for the previous ten years. Calling for the protection of American property rights only so far as possible without endangering American security in the Panama Canal, the now-liberal magazine cautioned the State Department to "resist the temptation to make mountains out of molehills."<sup>12</sup>

Even the conservative New York Times felt that there was no justification under international law for the kind of intervention suggested by President Diaz. However, the Times did condone the use of American troops, if United States citizens were threatened.<sup>13</sup> Two days later, in the dying days of 1926, the New York daily compared the statements made by Admiral Latimer's command that American troops had landed for the protection of resident Americans with the outcry of the Liberal forces that this amounted political intervention by



force. "The truth," surmised the daily, "probably lies somewhere between the two statements."<sup>14</sup> As the Times saw it, the greatest trouble had been the lack of a "clear-cut and definitely announced policy."<sup>15</sup>

On the other hand, the liberal New York counterpart of the Times, the World, felt that there was an established American policy which went back as far as the war with Spain. Security was the most important factor in the policy. Therefore the World considered the protection of the Panama Canal to be of foremost importance. Said the World, "Nicaragua, unfortunately for itself, happens to contain the site of what might be another interoceanic canal."<sup>16</sup> During this period the liberal daily was adopting a more critical attitude toward the administration. As late as August 21, 1926, the World had complimented the Secretary of State and the President for their management of the last crisis with Mexico.<sup>17</sup> But with intervention in Nicaragua and a resumption of the controversy with Mexico the complexion of the World's editorials changed.

By mid-November, the World had commented upon the establishment of the Diaz administration in Nicaragua, calling that worthy an "American pet,"<sup>18</sup> and questioning if the United States had any more right to intervene in Nicaragua than Mexico had. Mexico's right to defend the Sacasa faction was defended in early December.<sup>19</sup> Commenting upon the outcry coming from Europe, it was felt that this was due to the lectures that the United States had applied to the nations of Europe about imperialism while the United States appeared to be following a similar policy itself.<sup>20</sup>

In the period which followed the World continued its leadership

in the discussion of Latin American policy. Convinced of the basic correctness of its position, the World lashed out at the vacillating policy of Secretary of State Kellogg. This indecision, more than anything else, was the root of the problem of Latin American relations. Because of the intellectual manner in which Lippmann and his associates on the staff of the World diagnosed the pressures and policies which had shaped the problem in late 1926 and early 1927, it was possible for both liberal and conservative journals to find guidance for their own editorials.

The World had discovered what seemed to it to be a plot to discredit Mexico on the part of Under-Secretary of State Olds. Olds had called in the representatives of several wire services to enlist their aid in giving unfavorable publicity to the intentions of the Mexican administration.<sup>21</sup> The Nation added its venomous comments to those of the World. After calling President Coolidge and Secretary Kellogg "two exceptionally weak men,"<sup>22</sup> the Nation continued to fire upon what it called a "deliberate propaganda to get us into war with Mexico."<sup>23</sup> The leaders in this drive, felt the Nation, were the owners of the Chicago Tribune and Liberty magazine, Patterson and McCormick.

In Chicago, the Tribune had followed a vigorous policy against Mexico up to this time. In late November it had published an editorial called "Coming to Another Break with Mexico" in which the withdrawal of recognition to the Calles government was suggested.<sup>24</sup> It had followed the same line in another editorial early in December, which it called, "Mexico, the Failure in Civilization". Said the Tribune in the latter editorial:

There hasn't been any imperialism in the conduct of the United States. There has been bewilderment, weakness, some bluster followed by backdown, and this country has generally submitted to what was done on the other side of the border.

In consequence, Mexican governments do not think it necessary to play square...<sup>25</sup>

The arrival of the new year of 1927 was expected to bring a crisis in Mexican-American relations, as Secretary Kellogg had threatened to lift an arms embargo at that time; while January 1 was also set as the date for the Mexican oil and land laws to come into effect. However, the "crisis" date came and went, as the State Department announced that it would wait until a "concrete case" was filed to test the new laws.<sup>26</sup> The World felt that this was good sense, and suggested that the Mexican courts should be used to decide the merits of individual cases.<sup>27</sup>

By this time the Nation was openly declaring, "We are at war in Nicaragua."<sup>28</sup> Here the Nation was on familiar grounds, for it had carried out a pacifist policy during the first world war. During the next year it employed all of the tricks it had developed a decade before to build up opposition to this new "war". It included in its pages letters from parents of soldiers killed in Nicaragua and pleas for a stream of telegrams to Congressmen to protest the American part in the hostilities in Nicaragua.

With the arrival of 1927 the Chicago Tribune had tempered its editorials and was now bemoaning the ill luck that had gotten the United States involved in a controversy for which it could not plead humanitarian motives. Adding to the bad luck of the United States, in the eyes of the Tribune, was the fact that the man they opposed was classified as a Liberal. The Tribune had a low opinion of liberals,

in speaking of Sacasa, the Tribune commented caustically, "It is likely he desires to be liberal with other people's property."<sup>29</sup>

The first three weeks of 1927 were confused ones. It seemed to some journals that there was a pronounced threat of war with Mexico; there is no acceptable explanation of who or what propagated this implied threat. But it would seem that the specter of hostilities with Mexico was more a part of the liberal press than the conservative. The Nation, especially, pushed hard upon the theory that the United States was actually at war in Nicaragua, and close to war with Mexico. Even the conservative journals such as the New York Times seemed to have the feeling that the danger of war with Mexico was imminent.

By January 13, the New York World had joined with the Nation in a belief that the situation was dangerous. "The extreme gravity of the Latin-American crisis can no longer be doubted..."<sup>30</sup> commented the World. Coming to the conclusion that the State Department was looking for trouble, the New York paper raised a battle cry with a paradoxical statement, "...if the American people want peace they will have to fight for it now."<sup>31</sup> The following day the liberal journal stated its belief that Secretary Kellogg had gone over to the war party which was felt to be powerful in the State Department. The World had formed an unfavorable opinion of the Secretary of State by this time: "Mr. Kellogg is an amiable, nervous, ill-informed and in-adequate old gentleman who has not the strength of mind or the strength of character to resist the terrific pressure now being exerted to bring about a rupture with Mexico..."<sup>32</sup> A few days later the World asked the State Department, through an editorial, to "Sheathe the Sword." The paper continued to explain that there was

a united opposition developing in the United States against American participation in a war with Mexico. The World felt that this was a general feeling, in which liberals, financial, and labor groups were all opposed to the use of force in Mexico and Nicaragua.<sup>33</sup>

Apparently the World felt that its leadership had borne fruit, for by January 18 it was able to state that the American people were sincerely opposed to a policy of violence. When they were shown that a small intervention in Nicaragua could lead to a large intervention in Mexico, "there was a revulsion of feeling against the war party in Washington that was swift, dramatic and profound."<sup>34</sup>

Probably because of the widespread prosperity in the nation during the years of his administration, President Coolidge had enjoyed an excellent press--until late in 1926. Even then, most of the criticism was directed toward the foreign policy, rather than the President himself. Coolidge conceived the theory that criticism of the administration could and should be confined to matters of domestic affairs and that it was the patriotic duty of the press to refrain from any criticism of foreign policy. He lectured the press at least four times in this vein, with exactly an opposite reaction to that which he wished.<sup>35</sup> Another idiosyncrasy which put the President in an awkward position had the reporters covering the press conferences quote Coolidge not by name, but as the "Official Spokesman". In this way, the President could change his opinions between press conferences without being charged with conflicting statements. The illusion was criticized by the press, especially the liberals, which felt that the President of the United States should stand by his statements.

An interesting comment, which reflects somewhat the attitude of

the press, was made by the Independent. One of its editors was Christian A. Herter, who had served in the foreign service and also in the Department of Commerce under Secretary Hoover. Referring to the President's message to Congress in early 1927, in which he defended American intervention in Nicaragua, the Independent criticized American policy as "dollar diplomacy in its crudest and bleakest form."<sup>36</sup> The weekly felt that it would lose many subscribers by its criticism of the President, but that,

We no more believe that the President is entitled to the support of his countrymen in this instance than we believe he is entitled to the highest average in the National League...<sup>37</sup>

As the crisis began to run its course, the liberal weeklies, now joined by the Independent, instituted a campaign for the removal of Secretary of State Kellogg. The opening gun was fired by the New Republic in late January 1927.<sup>38</sup> Then the Nation continued the assault two months later.<sup>39</sup> The Independent went so far as to infer that the Secretary was ready to resign by early spring.<sup>40</sup> Editor Herter was much luckier when he became Secretary of State some thirty years later, for he enjoyed a much more favorable press.

Mention was made above of the editorial policy of the New York Times, which during this period began to call for increased cooperation with the Latin American nations as an aid to trade. Two matters were discussed by the Times as effecting the foreign policy of the United States. One was the increased competition from Europe in trade and commerce with Hispanic America; the other was the variations in culture between Latin and North America. A rather serene course was charted by the Times, and this was exceptionally effective. On

January 9 the journal called for "Patience and Reason."<sup>41</sup> Five days later the Times called out again, this time for a public relations program to make the rest of the world realize that the United States had good intentions in Latin America even though it did not make its intentions understood.<sup>42</sup> The need of treating the republics to the south of us in a neighborly fashion was the topic of an editorial a few days later.<sup>43</sup>

By this time the Chicago Tribune had modified its belligerent position, although it was still concerned with the protection of American-owned property. By January had the following attitude:

...as far as Mexico is concerned, the talk of war has no justification in anything the President or Secretary Kellogg has said or done. If there is any prospect of punitive action it must be predicated on the theory that Mr. Calles purposes confiscation without compensation of American rights...<sup>44</sup>

In late January it was apparent that the United States had backed down in its attitude toward Nicaragua and Mexico. There were many reasons for this, but the primary one was public opinion. Now this was not entirely a domestic or internal pressure. Possibly just as vital was the picture painted by European journals of "Uncle Shylock" as a "swash-buckling, saber-rattling bully and imperialist."<sup>45</sup> A similar position was taken by the press of Latin America, which spoke of the expression of American sentiment which caused President Coolidge to recede from his warlike attitude toward Mexico,<sup>45</sup> as the nationalistic Mexican journal, Excelsior, stated. Although the primary cause of the new policy was probably dictation by financial interests, the New Republic was willing to give the credit to the more

general category of public opinion. In the eyes of that liberal journal, this public opinion was fashioned by the daily press, especially the New York World and the New York Times, which "spoke with a vigor which was doubly effective because so unusual in its rather placid editorial columns."<sup>47</sup> Senator Borah, Chairman of the Foreign Relations committee of the Senate, and William Green, of the American Federation of Labor were also credited as being effective in creating a spirit of opposition to war with Mexico.

A kind of anti-climax was provided to the Mexican-Nicaraguan affair in an unexpected place, little Panama. In the closing days of 1926 a new treaty, which would have tied Panama to the United States in case of war, was presented to the Panama Assembly. Since Panama was a member of the League of Nations, there was some criticism of the proposed treaty as being in conflict with the provisions of the League. However, the pending treaty was almost forgotten in the controversy over Nicaragua and Mexico.

The proposed treaty was kept in limbo until shortly after the crisis between the United States and Mexico, when, in February 1927, the Panamanian Assembly, by a vote of thirty-nine out of forty-six, voted to table the treaty. Although this was a surprise to almost all observers, and considered to be an affront by some, the Independent felt that it was the result of the strong line taken toward Nicaragua.<sup>48</sup>

Although it had become apparent that the United States was being forced into a new approach to the problems of Latin America by the events of Nicaragua, Mexico, and now Panama, it was a short time until this new policy took concrete form. The first outward step was the appointment of a former Secretary of War, Colonel Henry L. Stimson,



as a special envoy to Nicaragua, an appointment which the New York Times called "both admirable and timely."<sup>49</sup>

Colonel Stimson was successful in meeting with the rival groups with a program of mediation which included the stoppage of hostilities, disarmament for both sides, general amnesty, Cabinet representation for the insurgent Sacasa group, and a promised fair election in 1928. By and large the newspapers of the United States were well pleased with the terms of the settlement; the only major objection being that Stimson had used a threat of force to disarm the Liberal faction. Even the the liberal World had no great objection to the methods which Stimson used. As the liberal daily said, "...it is far better to intervene...than to prolong the Civil War..."<sup>50</sup>

However, the settlement was clouded by the opposition of one rebel leader who refused to surrender his arms. Probably General Augusto Sandino was more of a bandit than a patriot. But his opposition forced American action, and as the Outlook surmised, "His reasons are not stated, but if they are political they are obviously to make it appear that the motives of the United States...are imperialistic."<sup>51</sup>

Although most of the American press accepted the description of General Sandino as a bandit, the liberal weeklies, especially the Nation, supported the Nicaraguan as a Liberal patriot. With its customary reaction to the shedding of blood, the Nation led a campaign for the recall of the American troops. "Is there no way of stopping this butchery?"<sup>52</sup> wailed the Nation following several engagements in which five or six hundred Nicaraguans were "murdered-- by United States troops fighting, without a shadow of constitutional justification..."<sup>53</sup>

Probably because of its opposition to the use of American troops in Nicaragua, the Nation was able to have one of its correspondents, the doughty Carleton Beals, join the Sandino forces for a short period. Beals sent home dispatches and even a warning to the United States Senate, demanding the withdrawal of American troops, from General Sandino. For this endeavor, Time magazine sardonically remarked, "observers heaped all praise upon the Nation for its success in interpreting to U. S. citizens the only Commander with whom they are now at war."<sup>54</sup>

Despite the opposition of the Nation to the continued American supervision in Nicaragua, it is probable that most journals followed fairly closely the position taken by the Independent regarding American policies toward Nicaragua. After pointing out that it had been disappointed in the amount of interference that had been exhibited in Nicaraguan affairs, the weekly continued to trace the developments up to May 1927 as smacking of dollar diplomacy. Yet as the Independent stated,

...If they were not that, they were carried on with a poverty of diplomatic finesse...The INDEPENDENT opposed them, ...joined in protest against them...however, American policy has taken a new turn, ...there is no course but to follow it through to a finish...<sup>55</sup>

Another manifestation of a revised American policy came in the appointment of a distinguished American to smooth the troubled situation in Mexico. Although there is no doubt that Ambassador Sheffield was an honest and perhaps an able man, he had been discredited in Mexico and had been unable to make any progress toward negotiations in the oil controversy.

Although most editors were not surprised when Ambassador Sheffield

resigned, they were amazed when they received the announcement that Dwight Morrow assumed the office of Ambassador to Mexico. However, despite his ties with the financial House of Morgan, the journals were almost unanimous in their approval of the Morrow appointment. The Independent called it "An Appointment of Merit",<sup>56</sup> while even the Nation felt that the appointment was "an act of courage on the President's part and his acceptance an act of courage for Mr. Morrow... Mr. Morrow is a real chief."<sup>57</sup> There was a note of caution, however, in the New York Times, which heartily approved of the Morrow appointment, but felt that some journals expected too much. In some of the congratulations "there is a note of enthusiasm which is more kind than well founded."<sup>58</sup> said the Times.

In spite of the warnings of the Times, the appointment of Morrow marked a real turning point in the relations between the United States and Mexico. Early in November, Calles and Morrow sat down to breakfasts of ham and eggs to discuss face to face how the outstanding problems between Mexico and the United States could best be solved. It was therefore no great surprise to Morrow when the Mexican Supreme Court handed down a decision ruling in favor of a subsidiary of an American oil company. The court held that articles 14 and 15 of the petroleum law were unconstitutional, at least in their application to that one company.<sup>59</sup>

Liberal papers such as the Baltimore Sun were frankly enthusiastic over the apparent success of the Morrow mission. The Sun commented that the same results might have been achieved by strong-arm methods, but that the success of the Morrow diplomacy was achieved "at infinitely less cost to both nations."<sup>60</sup> However, the Wall Street

Journal warned that court decisions in Mexico were probably determined by what the President wanted.<sup>61</sup>

An important help to Ambassador Morrow was the aid received from two unofficial ambassadors of good-will, Will Rogers and Charles A. Lindbergh. Certainly the two were effective in presenting a new type of American to the Mexicans, who were used to a stereotype of an American as a bragging money-grabber. The Mexicans appreciated both Rogers and Lindbergh, who appeared at the psychologically correct time to do the greatest good. The journals were again practically unanimous in their approval of the Lindbergh mission. Correct in its assumption was the New York World, which felt that the changed atmosphere was more than just a surface change. "The flight of Lindbergh follows a series of events which indicate a real shift in sentiment and a thorough-going change of policy."<sup>62</sup>

And so it seems that the year 1927 was a year of decision for the United States in Latin America. Deep in pessimism in January, the journals showed a bright optimism in December. They saw the changes which were being wrought by Morrow, Lindbergh, Rogers, and Stimson. Since the press had called for some such changes, journalists had the impression that they were responsible for the new aura of good-will. In a way they were, for the United States had become mired in an indefensible position. The American press helped to draw diplomacy out of the mire, and deserves the greatest credit for making the public aware that American diplomacy was not infallible. With the realization that the American people desired good-will and friendship with its neighbors, the Coolidge Administration acted to achieve friendly terms with Latin America, for good-will was translated in the minds of the administration into "good business".

## FOOTNOTES

- 1 "What They Need Is Imperialism," Chicago Tribune, September 7, 1926, p. 10.
- 2 ibid.
- 3 "Anti-Imperialism," ibid., September 12, 1926, p. 10.
- 4 "For More Imperialism," ibid., November 16, 1926, p. 10.
- 5 ibid.
- 6 "Our Marines In Nicaragua Again," Outlook, CXLIV (September 8, 1926), 38.
- 7 Time, VIII (November 29, 1926), 16.
- 8 ibid.
- 9 Nation, CXXIII (December 1, 1926), 548.
- 10 ibid.
- 11 "Checking Up on Mr. Kellogg," Independent, CXVII (December 25, 1926), 725.
- 12 ibid.
- 13 "Intervention in Nicaragua," New York Times, December 25, 1926, p. 12.
- 14 "Disguised Intervention," ibid., December 27, 1926, p. 14.
- 15 ibid.
- 16 Quoted in Literary Digest, XCII (January 8, 1927), 6.
- 17 "Another 'Crisis' Passes," New York World, August 21, 1926, p. 10.
- 18 "Running Nicaragua from Washington," ibid., November 19, 1926, p. 14.

- <sup>19</sup> ibid., December 9, 1926, p. 16.
- <sup>20</sup> "An Unconscious Empire," ibid., December 29, 1926, p. 14.
- <sup>21</sup> "State Department Propaganda," ibid., December 1, 1926, p. 16.  
See also "Parlor Diplomats," ibid., December 2, 1926, p. 14.
- <sup>22</sup> "Storm Signals in Mexico," Nation, CXXIII (December 8, 1926), 576.
- <sup>23</sup> ibid.
- <sup>24</sup> "Coming to Another Break with Mexico," Chicago Tribune, November 25, 1926, p. 10.
- <sup>25</sup> "Mexico, the Failure in Civilization," ibid., December 9, 1926, p. 10.
- <sup>26</sup> "No Break with Mexico," New York World, January 1, 1927, p. 10.
- <sup>27</sup> ibid.
- <sup>28</sup> Nation, CXXIV (January 5, 1927), 1.
- <sup>29</sup> "Uncle Sam Can't Find His Harp," Chicago Tribune, January 1, 1927, p. 8.
- <sup>30</sup> "If You Want Peace," New York World, January 13, 1927, p. 14.
- <sup>31</sup> ibid.
- <sup>32</sup> "A Crime Against Peace," ibid., January 14, 1927, p. 14.
- <sup>33</sup> "Sheathe the Sword," ibid., January 17, 1927, p. 12.
- <sup>34</sup> "Toward a Peace in Latin America," ibid., January 18, 1927, p. 10.
- <sup>35</sup> See Willis Sharp, "President and Press," Atlantic Monthly, CXL (August, 1927), 239-245. Three of the rebukes were given at press conferences. On September 18, 1925, he spoke in connection with foreign debts; in April 1925 on the same topic; and on December 31, 1926, his comments were on Mexico and Nicaragua. He also criticized the press for its stand on foreign affairs at a United Press dinner in New York in April 1927.
- <sup>36</sup> Independent, CXVIII (January 22, 1927), 85-86.

- 37 ibid., 86.
- 38 "Two Years of Mr. Kellogg," New Republic, XLIX (January 26, 1927), 264. See also "Watch the State Department," ibid., L (March 9, 1927), 60.
- 39 "Kellogg Must Go," Nation, CXXIV (March 2, 1927), 224.
- 40 Independent, CXVIII (March 26, 1927), 325. See also ibid., (March 19, 1927), 301.
- 41 "Patience and Reason," New York Times, January 9, 1927, p. 12, section 2.
- 42 "Excellent Intentions," New York Times, January 14, 1927, p. 18.
- 43 "At Least Changed Manners," ibid., January 18, 1927, p. 24.
- 44 "Uncle Sam and His Neighbors," Chicago Tribune, January 19, 1927, p. 10.
- 45 "Our 'Imperialism' in Latin America Under Fire," Literary Digest, XCII (January 29, 1927), 5.
- 46 Quoted in New York Times, January 23, 1927, section 2, p. 10.
- 47 New Republic, XLIX (January 26, 1927), 258.
- 48 "What Price Diaz?" Independent, CXVIII (February 12, 1927), 173.
- 49 "Light on Nicaragua," New York Times, April 9, 1927, p. 18.
- 50 Quoted in Literary Digest, XCIII (May 21, 1927), 7.
- 51 "More Trouble in Nicaragua," Outlook, CXLV (July 27, 1927), 399.
- 52 Nation, CXXV (November 2, 1927), 463.
- 53 ibid.
- 54 "Jungle Journalism," Time, XI (March 26, 1928), 18.
- 55 "Our Duties in Nicaragua," Independent, CXX (March 17, 1928), 245.

56 "An Appointment of Merit," Independent, CXIX (October 1, 1927),  
323-324.

57 "From Morgan's Up," Nation, CXXV (October 5, 1927), 327.

58 "Expecting Too Much," New York Times, September 24, 1927, p. 16.

59 New Republic, LIII (November 30, 1927), 27.

60 Quoted in Literary Digest, XCV (December 10, 1927), 7.

61 ibid.

62 ibid., 4.



## THE HAVANA CONFERENCE OF 1928

The Sixth Pan-American Conference, scheduled to open at Havana, Cuba, on January 16, 1928, was viewed with an air of foreboding both in the United States and in foreign countries. At the 1923 conference at Santiago, the United States had been openly challenged with proposals for a multi-lateral interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine; Mexico had been denied a place at the conference table because the Obregon government had not been recognized by the United States; and it had been decided in 1923 that the American Secretary of State would no longer serve as presiding officer. Many journals had the impression that the United States would be confronted by a solid opposition from the nations of South and Central America. Coupled to this was the memory that Mexico and the United States had appeared close to actual hostilities just one year before the conference was to start. The Americans had every expectation, also, for the marines who were fighting out a war with the insurgent Sandino in Nicaragua.

Two themes were played upon by the journals leading up the conference. One was emphasized by the liberal press. This was that the United States was distrusted and disliked by the southern republics. The conservative papers were more concerned with the economic revival in Europe, which threatened the American near-monopoly in the Caribbean area, as well as a comfortable trade with South America.

In view of the problems that the Americans would be facing, elaborate plans were made to achieve harmony at the meetings. As the Nation commented two months before the opening of the conference,

Obviously the administration intends to make an impression...President Coolidge will go...in the whole history of American diplomacy we do not recall any list of delegates to a diplomatic conference so imposing...<sup>1</sup>

The New York Times also commented upon the quality of the American delegation and stated that "Latin-American countries will appreciate the compliment to them implied in the selection of men like former Secretary Hughes, Ambassador Morrow and ex-Senator Underwood."<sup>2</sup> The North American Review pointed out the fortunate selection of Havana as the site of the meetings, a circumstance which "will not only be gratifying to the legitimate pride of the Cuban nation, but also will finely vindicate its status as an independent sovereignty."<sup>3</sup>

America had intervened in the Caribbean and Central America for three reasons, felt the New York World. First in importance to the United States was the protection of the Panama Canal. "The second great cause of the American entanglement is the political immaturity and weakness of many of the peoples in the region...it is weakness which invites aggression or compels intervention."<sup>4</sup> The third of these causes of American intervention was that of protection for American financial investments in the region. As the World stated, these had created powerful interests in the United States, "which sometimes demand legitimate security for their investments and sometimes demand the protection of highly speculative concessions obtained from corrupt governments by indefensible methods."<sup>5</sup>

However, in Mexico, the United States was beginning to enjoy improved relations. Two months before the conference was to open the Mexican Supreme Court had ruled in favor of an American oil company against the retroactive feature of the Mexican Land Laws. Shortly before the end of 1927, President

Calles had recommended to the Mexican Congress that a bill be passed modifying the clauses in the petroleum laws to which the United States objected.

Even though Dwight Morrow had worked wonders in smoothing the troubled situation between the United States and Mexico, there was still an indication of ill-feeling toward the United States in the southern republic. The nationalistic Mexico City Liberator was vindictive in its criticism of the American president. After calling the Coolidge trip a farce, the Mexican paper went on to accuse the American of insulting Nicaragua. It concluded, "Pan-Americanism is dead. Mr. Coolidge killed it..."<sup>6</sup>

In Buenos Aires La Nacion pointed out the importance of the presence of Mr. Coolidge at the conference, in that it would demonstrate the return to a policy of sincere co-operation and good will. The Argentine journal commented that perhaps the idea of Coolidge's attendance was not his own. Senator Borah, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, was credited with the suggestion.<sup>7</sup>

Croly's New Republic, which had planned to hang crepe around the harbor at Havana in November, found it necessary to take notice of the changed atmosphere in the climate of Latin America in an editorial a fortnight before the scheduled opening of the conference. It noted the "new spirit of good will between Mexico and the United States..."<sup>8</sup> However, the journal also commented upon the tide of resentment rising against the United States, and the importance of Mexico as a leader of the Latin States. As it commented, "It is from Mexico that the rest of Latin America takes its cue, as regards the United States, and if Mexico is not in the mood to poke holes in the hornet's nest, the

likelihood of such action is greatly diminished."<sup>9</sup>

Following up its comments a week later, the New Republic took cognizance of the lack of unity among the Latin American countries. Credited as a major cause for this was the reliance of those countries upon the United States for capital. Another reason for the failure to present a united front toward the United States was a basic disunity; "...the Latin American countries, however much they may agree in their opposition to the United States, have their own quarrels,"<sup>10</sup> stated the New Republic.

It would have been impossible to divorce the proceedings of the Pan-American Conference from the rest of the happenings of the world, just as it is now impossible to isolate Havana from the rest of the Western Hemisphere, much as the United States would like to. And so it was in 1928 that two events were taking place that directly affected the attitude of the Pan-American Conference. One was the efforts of American marines in attempting to eradicate the insurgent Sandino from the tropical forests of Nicaragua. More fortunate, in that the United States was able to control this event, was the arrival of the hero-aviator, Charles A. Lindbergh, at Havana on the concluding leg of a good will mission that had taken him through Mexico, Central America, and now the Caribbean. The Independent pointed out the contradiction of the two events, and noted that Lindbergh had made his flight of good will through the troubled Caribbean area "as harbringer of a new kind of American diplomacy, a diplomacy in which indifference and bluntness give way to consideration and tact."<sup>11</sup> Next the journal pointed out that the battle with Sandino was a result of the old type of diplomacy, the diplomacy of intervention. Secure in its new found liberalism,

the Independent suggested that the United States continue in the new type of diplomacy shown by Morrow and Lindbergh. The journal also suggested that the Pan-American Union should be converted into an instrument to deal with political problems.<sup>12</sup>

Although the Literary Digest usually did not give its own opinions, it reached the same conclusion as the Independent as it stated, "Lindbergh's good-will flight, taken together with President Coolidge's presence at the Pan American Conference in Havana, is heralded as the sign of a new Latin-American policy."<sup>13</sup> The North American Review agreed, feeling that the visit of Calvin Coolidge to the Cuban capital marked an "epoch in Pan-American relations..."<sup>14</sup>

Lewis Gannett, the representative of the Nation at the conference, critically suggested that there might have been some ulterior motive on the part of the United States in the selection of the battleship "Texas", named after the state we stole from Mexico, to bring Calvin Coolidge to Cuba..."<sup>15</sup>

Mr. Coolidge, in his opening address, stressed the economic side of Pan-American friendship. He suggested the building of railroad lines in both continents. American engineers would be sent to assist in the building of the roads, promised the President. Recalling the Lindbergh flight a few days before, Coolidge predicted the establishment of aviation routes throughout the Americas.<sup>16</sup>

Unkind to the President in its criticism was the Nation, which compared Mr. Coolidge to Uriah Heep, and continued, "With all the meaningless words squeezed out of it, Mr. Coolidge's speech boils down to nothing...No, Mr. Coolidge's smooth words at Havana will butter no parsnips."<sup>17</sup> Contrary to the expectations of the Nation,

Mr. Coolidge was very successful, perhaps not in buttering parsnips, but certainly in buttering up at least a portion of the delegation. Even though his speech had little meaning, the prestige of the office of President, and his presence at the conference was a great aid in buttering up the delegations. Another factor which placed the American group in a favorable position was in their refusal to assume any position that was influential. As the New York Times commented, "...there could hardly have been a more deliberate and consistent choice of second place by the United States delegation."<sup>18</sup>

Thus, early in the conference, the Times saw clearly the strategy to be followed by the Americans. To create a sense of importance in the minds of the Latin delegations, while developing, without any outward signs of bullying, an attitude of co-operation among the other nations. Here was a departure in actual policy, at least in its apparent form. Henceforth the United States would lead by following.

Public interest in the Havana Conference, as demonstrated by the large press corps in attendance, seemed to create a desire upon the part of those occupying the editorial chairs in the United States to interpret what American imperialism meant. One of the most talented of these was Walter Lippmann, who presented to the "facts of life", as far as the adolescent American imperialism was concerned. "Our delegation at Havana," he said, "expresses a new phase in our diplomacy."<sup>19</sup> But the delegation had to deal with unresolved problems remaining from before.

There was a realization, on the part of Lippmann and other editors, that the United States had begun to appear in the eyes of the world as

as a heartless money-grabber. Both the conservative and liberal journals agreed that America had to live down this minimum of opinion. For the conservatives there was a realization that Uncle Sam would lose business if he continued to appear as "Uncle Shylock". More idealistic were the liberals, who wanted the United States to have as spotless an image as possible before the rest of the world.

True to the prediction made by the New Republic before the beginning of the conference, the concerted Latin American opposition to American policy that had been expected failed to materialize. At the end of the first week, Bruce Bliven, who later was to serve as editor of the New Republic, pointed out to the readers of that journal that two things were apparent in the conference; that there was no organized opposition to the United States, and that the United States was in a conciliatory mood. Commenting on the first of these, Bliven noted that "it seems most unlikely that they will, or can, unite on any definite program which would oppose the general economic policy of the United States."<sup>20</sup>

Outstanding among the figures at the conference was the former Secretary of State, Charles Evans Hughes, who served as head of the American delegation. Gannett, covering the conference for the Nation, was impressed by the beard and the voice of Mr. Hughes. He felt that Hughes was liked by the delegates, "they are impressed and flattered by him; they do as he suggests."<sup>21</sup>

One of the reasons for the success of the ex-Secretary of State was that he had some understanding of what was spoken in Spanish.

In addition, he had an interpreter who aided him so that it was not necessary to have the proceedings translated into English. Just one

of the American reporters who were attending the conference could understand Spanish; the rest (fortunately for Mr. Hughes) had to depend upon the head of the American delegation for his comments upon the proceedings. In this way Hughes could interpret the events before he commented upon them for the benefit of the American newsmen. As Gannett said, "The North American press is incompetent; it cannot understand."<sup>22</sup> He commented further, stating that the United States had just one reporter at the conference, and that was Chairman Hughes. Concluding, the Nation reporter remarked, "Before the next Pan-American conference we should take a course at the Berlitz School of Languages."<sup>23</sup>

Here are factors of major importance. Mr. Hughes was a charming man; more important, he was an extremely able man, head and shoulders above any Secretary of State since Root. In that he could charm Gannett he showed a major accomplishment, for it was he who had referred to the American president as "Uriah Heep". Certainly his charm and prestige awed the southern delegates. More important was his accidental control of the press dispatches coming from Havana. Because so few of the American reporters could speak and understand Spanish, Mr. Hughes could assume a one-man censorship that would have been unthinkable had it not been accidental. Certainly the American representatives enjoyed a very favorable press. Apparently Hughes was principally responsible for this.

A dispatch to the Outlook, entitled "All Quiet in Havana," demonstrated the control assumed by Hughes over the conference, as it said, "If the Pan-American Conference is making no great stir in the news, it is because Charles E. Hughes...has done much to allay Latin-American



fears of the Colossus of the North..."<sup>24</sup>

Among the most able observers among the journalists attending the Havana conference was the associate editor of the New Republic, Bruce Bliven. In spite of the ultra-left-wing leanings of his journal, Bliven published objective articles which have stood the test of time. In an article printed in the edition of February 8, Bliven pointed out that the conference had disappointed many people, for

The Pan-American Conference is a flop, the newspaper men have so decreed it. The knights of the portable typewriter are sad because they want prize-fights between the delegations and aren't getting them. They sit about sadly, their ears cocked for pistol shots which they do not hear...<sup>25</sup>

By the next week, Bliven was able to point to a more conciliatory attitude among the delegates at the conference. This was explained as being based primarily upon the economics of trade. He surmised that the United States was uneasy about the recovering European industry, more powerful in 1928 than anytime before 1914. "Our investments are large, more than five billions, but for every American dollar of investment Europeans still have \$1.40," explained Bliven, who continued, "Latin America has its own reason for an increased friendliness toward us. The majority of the countries below the Rio Grande need outside capital...our country is the world's greatest storehouse of money."<sup>26</sup>

The New Republic also pointed out that public opinion in the United States and elsewhere was also having an influence toward the new amiable policy practiced by the United States delegation toward Latin America.

So complete was the firm, but courteous and polite control exercised by the United States that the reporters seized upon the few events

that ruffled the calm of the meetings. A dispatch for Time magazine, entitled "Outpoppings," told of an unplanned event at the meeting of the plenary session.

...Dr. Guerrero (of Salvador) suddenly leaped to his feet and moved a resolution as follows: "Resolved: That no state shall intervene in the internal affairs of another."

So unexpected was this move that the galleries, packed with Latin spectators, first gasped, then cheered...Chief U. S. Delegate Charles Evans Hughes rose...A gentleman's agreement, arrived at in committee, had been broken! Mr. Hughes is a gentleman...<sup>27</sup>

Hughes delivered an excellent defense of the American policy, forcing Dr. Guerrero into withdrawal of the resolution. Adopting the tone of most of the press, Time concluded, "...almost non-existent were the accomplishments of the conference."<sup>28</sup>

Upon the closing of the conference, newspapers in the United States commented upon the accomplishments of the proceedings. Possibly the strangest coincidence was an apparent agreement between the ultra-conservative Chicago Tribune and the ultra-liberal New Republic, as far as the fact of no organized opposition in Latin American countries to the United States. The Tribune explained the lack of unity among Hispanic America in

...the distrust of the Latin-American States for each other, a feeling that surmounts any mutual distrust of the United States...a self-constituted policeman who works for nothing is no target at which to throw stones.<sup>29</sup>

The classic statement regarding the accomplishments of the Havana conference was made by Walter Lippmann, in the quarterly journal, Foreign Affairs. Speaking from a vantage point of a few months in time, Mr. Lippmann said, in an article, "Second Thoughts on Havana," that "it is easy to see why it has been described both as a great diplomatic

triumph and as a great disappointment. What happened was that except on minor matters the Conference did nothing."<sup>30</sup>

About the same time, Lewis S. Gannett also discussed the accomplishments of the Pan-American Conference. He felt that the main accomplishment was the passing of resolutions, "which provided beautiful texts for the closing anthems of friendship, are not likely to mean much in the world of international affairs."<sup>31</sup>

Gannett, throughout his article, runs the same issues that his magazine had pursued for the past eight years--a criticism of American intervention, a belief in self-determination, and an aversion to domination by business interests. Some later-day observers suggested that the Nation and the New Republic carried on their crusade against American intervention in the Caribbean and Central America for the purpose of building up circulation. But upon looking back over their pages, it seems that the crusade was a genuine protest, and that they had the conception that the United States should improve internal conditions before attempting to make changes by coercion in foreign (and weaker) lands. On the other side of the fence, the conservative papers and journals were able, as Lippmann suggested, to point to the Pan-American Conference at Havana in 1928 as a success for the United States. Although the United States made many mistakes in method, there was merit in the idea that some degree of supervision was needed in Latin America to defend American interests, especially the Canal. A primary point which seemed to escape all of the observers, save a few of the wiser, was that the countries of the Caribbean and the lands bordering it were on the beginning edge of a type of revolution, such as the socio-economic one that the country of Mexico was undergoing. Latin Americans could seize upon

the idealistic pronouncements made by President Wilson during and after the first World War, and the protestations of peace and friendship coming from the United States. They failed, however, in realizing that increased freedom also meant increased responsibilities. Perhaps part of the blame was correctly assigned by those journalists who pointed out the differences in culture between Anglo-America and Hispanic America.

Greatest of the accomplishments of the Havana Conference was in the fact that it was news; the mere presence of an American president made it so. As the relations of the United States and Latin America became newsworthy, a considerable portion of the public turned their attention southward, and helped to mold by its approval the new policy of co-operation that the United States was showing to Latin America through Morrow in Mexico, and Hughes and Coolidge in Havana.

Just as the United States had attempted to create a new era of friendly relations in Nicaragua and Mexico, so did it attempt to create the same friendly relations among the other nations of the Caribbean. It was not yet ready to give up the hold which it had established over the small nations of the Caribbean and Central America, but it was open to suggestions of change. And, through the new spirit of co-operation shown at the conference, the United States was able to present its case to the countries of Hispanic America.

Something of the same spirit was shown in the journals, also. Such papers and magazines as the New Republic and the New York World, which had previously shown very little sympathy to the State Department, printed very objective editorials. Although they did not agree with the actions that the United States had taken, they could see the pressures

that had dictated those actions. Their attentions now turned to a criticism of the business interests. On the other hand, the conservative press remained basically sympathetic to financial interests, and stressed the value of good will to trade.

The Havana conference was a disappointment to journals, such as the Nation, which expected the United States to be crucified by the delegations from Latin America. As a source of sensational news it was a failure. But as a means of awakening the American press and the American people to an awareness of the problems of Latin American policy and of the nations themselves it was extremely successful. In the long run, this was much more important.

## FOOTNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Nation, CXXV (November 16, 1927), 532.
- <sup>2</sup> "Our Pan-American Delegation," New York Times, November 3, 1927, p. 26.
- <sup>3</sup> "Affairs of the World: Pan-America in Cuba," North American Review, CCXXV (January, 1928), 771.
- <sup>4</sup> Quoted in Literary Digest, XCVI (January 21, 1928), 5.
- <sup>5</sup> ibid.
- <sup>6</sup> ibid., XCV (October 22, 1927), 16.
- <sup>7</sup> ibid.
- <sup>8</sup> New Republic, LIII (January 4, 1928), 176.
- <sup>9</sup> ibid.
- <sup>10</sup> "While Latin America Waits," New Republic, LIII (January 11, 1928), 207-208.
- <sup>11</sup> Independent, CXX (January 14, 1928), 25-26.
- <sup>12</sup> ibid.
- <sup>13</sup> "Lindbergh Uniting the Americas," Literary Digest, XCVI (January 21, 1928), 5.
- <sup>14</sup> "The President and Pan-America," North American Review, CCXXV (March, 1928), 362.
- <sup>15</sup> Lewis S. Gannett, "The Love Feast at Havana," Nation, CXXVI (February 1, 1928), 117.
- <sup>16</sup> "Can Coolidge Win Latin America?" Literary Digest, XCVI (January 28, 1928), 7-8.

- 17 "Mr. Coolidge at Havana," Nation, CXXVI (January 25, 1928), 86.
- 18 "Stooping to Conquer," New York Times, January 22, 1928, section 3, p. 4.
- 19 Quoted in Literary Digest, XCVI (January 28, 1928), 9.
- 20 Bruce Bliven, New Republic, LXXX (February 1, 1928), 280-281.
- 21 "Hughes at Havana," Nation, CXXVI (February 8, 1928), 143-145.
- 22 Lewis S. Gannett, "The Indispensible Mr. Hughes," Nation, CXXVI (February 15, 1928), 182-183.
- 23 ibid., 183.
- 24 Outlook, CXLVIII (February 8, 1928), 218.
- 25 Bruce Bliven, "Havana, the Mill of the Gods," New Republic, LIII (February 8, 1928), 314.
- 26 "Unspoken Words from Havana," New Republic, LIII (February 27, 1928), 343.
- 27 "Outpoppings," Time, XI (February 27, 1928), 13. Italics by Time.
- 28 ibid.
- 29 Quoted in Literary Digest, XCVI (March 3, 1928), 6.
- 30 Walter Lippmann, "Second Thoughts on Havana," Foreign Affairs, VI (July, 1928), 541-543.
- 31 Lewis S. Gannett, "Pan-Americanism in Action," Nation, CXXVI (March 7, 1928), 262-263.

## SUMMARY

So, out of a welter of words, a pattern emerges in the attitude of the journalists of America toward the policy of their nation toward the nations to the south. First of all, the press had divided itself roughly into two general lines--not according to political thought--but according to another viewpoint. The liberal journals generally found themselves in opposition to the policies of the conservative Republican administrations of Harding and Coolidge, while the conservatives generally saw fit to support the administration, at least until late in 1926 and early 1927.

During this period there was a growing appreciation, on the part of both segments of journalism, of the increasing importance of the countries south of the United States. Most of the conservative journalists saw this change as one of dollars and cents. They began to realize that their government was carrying out a policy detrimental to the permanent interests of the United States in its efforts to browbeat the small and weak nations of Latin America. For, by 1926 and 1927, European industry had recovered to a point where it was competing successfully with the United States. And, even while they maintained an air of patronizing superiority, the conservatives began to call for less visible supervision in the affairs of the small nations around the Caribbean, while maintaining the protection of American interests.

The liberal press also sensed the growing importance of trade, but realized also the impotence of an American policy which had the ear-marks of interference in the affairs of small nations. This was



especially true since the financial interests seemed to play a prominent part in the determination of foreign policy. The liberals disliked any attitude of paternalism on the part of the United States toward the nations around the Caribbean. Though they may have sounded extreme to the conservatives in their pleas for an end to interference in the affairs of minor nations and for the recognition of de facto governments, they generally did not call for these things to be done in a disorderly manner. They were able to see most of their goals accomplished, over a long period of time.

Time brings many things, and the end of the Coolidge administration brought the beginnings of a new era between the republics of the south and the "Colossus of the North". The press, it would seem, saw and chronicled the arrival of the new relationship, but as it was a gradual development, there were no startling pronouncements of the new policy between the United States and its Western Hemisphere neighbors.

Perhaps to an even greater extent than government policy, press opinion showed itself to be a fluid thing. But there did not seem to be any conscious effort upon the part of the press to provide a great deal of leadership in the molding of public opinion. Instead, a characteristic of both sides, liberal and conservative, was a general attitude of criticism toward the segment of the press which did not agree with it. Divided as it was into hostile camps, the press did not distinguish itself by looking very far into the future. However, the administrations of Harding and Coolidge did not look very far into the future either.

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BIOGRAPHY

PLACE OF BIRTH . . . . . Quakertown, Pennsylvania

DATE OF BIRTH . . . . . July 27, 1932

INSTITUTIONS ATTENDED . . . . . Richland Township Public Schools  
Quakertown High School  
Pennsylvania State University  
Kutztown State College

TEACHING EXPERIENCE . . . . . Palisades High School, 1959  
Pennridge Junior High School,  
1959-1961