

PROTESTANT MISSIONS, CUBAN NATIONALISM AND THE MACHADATO

Before the Spanish-Cuban-American War of 1898, Protestantism and Cuban nationalism coexisted relatively comfortably and even naturally, the function of a Protestant movement under Spanish colonialism that, unlike the rest of Latin America, was run not by North American or English missionaries, but by Cuban ministers. After United States intervention in 1898, U.S. interests were imposed on virtually every sector of Cuban society, including organized Protestantism, influencing Cuba's development for at least the next half-century. Preempted by U.S. intervention, Cuban nationalism, in both its ecclesiastical and secular dimensions, endured and intensified with the deepening of Cubans' dependency on the U.S. Politically, Cuban nationalism was expressed in growing protests and demands for a more genuine independence by abrogating the Platt Amendment and otherwise ending U.S. interventionism. Ecclesiastically, Cubans pushed for a greater role in Protestant church affairs, and toward Cubanization of the Church.¹ Protestant missions thus confronted a rising nationalism within and outside the Church. By 1920, eastern Cuba, the cradle of Cuban independence, became the epicenter of this struggle.

By 1917, Cuba's eastern provinces had undergone socioeconomic upheaval. The traditional system of predominantly small, self-sufficient landowning farm communities had been transformed by the sugar *latifundia*. The Cuban sugar boom generated by the World War I destruction of European beet crops had, by 1920, facilitated North American expansion and control of sugar production in Cuba.² Most of the mills were in Cam-

¹ Kenton J. Clymer, *Protestant Missionaries in the Philippines, 1898-1916: An Inquiry into the American Colonial Mentality* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1986), pp. 114-115. Clymer's masterful analysis includes the important distinction between the ecclesiastical and political dimensions of nationalism which missionaries confronted in foreign fields. Clymer's work here has in no small way influenced my own.

² César J. Ayala, "Social and Economic Aspects of Sugar Production in Cuba, 1880-1930," *Latin American Research Review* 30:1 (1995), p. 110; see also Raymond Leslie Buell, et al., *Problems of the New Cuba: Report of the Commission on Cuban Affairs* (New York: Foreign Policy Association, Inc., 1935).

agüey and Oriente provinces, “on land untouched by sugar monoculture in the nineteenth century.”³ By the early 1920s, eastern Cuba produced more than half of all Cuban sugar, and U.S. capital controlled two-thirds of the country’s sugar production.⁴

Expansion also meant the further displacement and dispossession of Cuban farmers and peasants. As Louis Pérez, Jr. noted, formerly self-sufficient farmers were reorganized into a community consisting largely of dependent rural workers who worked for foreign companies, ate imported foods, lived in one of the many company towns, and bought their goods from company stores.⁵

After 1917, and even more intensely after the collapse of the 1920 “Dance of the Millions,” organized protests exploded into endemic rebellion in the eastern provinces, as U.S. military forces allied with the Cuban government to protect besieged U.S. properties and restore stability in eastern Cuba.⁶ As conditions for many Cubans worsened, U.S. interests in the country, including missionaries, encountered the realities of rising Cuban nationalism.

Protestant missionaries’ sentiment concerning Cuban nationalism, ecclesiastically and politically, appeared ambivalent at best. Missionaries’ exposure to the Cuban cycles of economic boom and bust since formal independence in 1902, along with the human toll of socioeconomic and political instability therein, had made them little more amenable to the violent armed protests that were part and parcel of a rising Cuban nationalism. The numerous more violent expressions of this nationalism, from the armed protest of the Independent Party of Color in 1912 to the perennial banditry and labor strikes of the late 1910s and 1920s, found missionaries largely unprepared to respond in any fashion beyond that of other North American interests in Cuba.⁷

Within the ecclesiastical dimension of Cuban nationalism, Cuban pastors and lay workers continued their long struggle with the U.S. mission boards for the indigenization of the Protestant Church. While both missionaries and Cubans were in agreement on the goal of Cubanization, each had different visions of the process and result—both of which became qualified by contradictions emanating from the Protestant missions and Cuban society. Ultimately, the issues of ecclesiastical and political nationalism were inseparable.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Louis A. Pérez, Jr., “La Chambelona: Political Protest, Sugar, and Social Banditry in Cuba, 1914-1917,” *Inter-American Economic Affairs* 31:4 (Spring 1978), pp. 27-28.

⁶ Hugh Thomas, *Cuba, the Pursuit of Freedom* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), p. 533.

⁷ See Louis A. Pérez, Jr., *Lords of the Mountain: Social Banditry and Peasant Protest in Cuba, 1878-1918* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1989).

Protestant mission supervisors were increasingly confronted by the Cuban membership over the matter of a greater administrative role for indigenous pastors. As will be seen below, this was partly a function of the period of rising Cuban nationalism. It also marked a process of gradually rising conflict with the missions begun since the U.S. boards' effective usurpation of Cuban Protestantism in 1898: "That year missionary boards which had previously limited themselves to cooperating economically with local efforts took over. The Cubans who had led the movement thus far were relegated to secondary positions."⁸ Relations between Cuban pastors and North American missionaries since that time, though by no means conflict-ridden, were not always harmonious. The question of Cuban participation in mission and church administration became a significant source of friction.

The grievances of Cuban pastors and *laicos* became manifest early on in a range of actions from individual acts of protest to petitions signed by the Cubans demanding changes in mission policy. As early as 1900, Cuban pastors like H.B. Someillán, Alberto Díaz, José Rodríguez Figueroa, Emilio Planos and others either defected or left to begin an independent church—at times taking their congregations with them—as a way of resolving their grievances with a particular denomination.⁹ Cuban teachers also numbered among the departing disaffected, some, like the pastors, taking students with them.

By 1910, the heart of these disputes emerged in a national petition and list of grievances (apparently coordinated in the east) served to the Southern Methodist administration by its Cuban pastors. The greatest concern in the "Letter of the Cuban Preachers to the Secretary of the Board of Missions" was the need for a greater Cuban role in administration. Such a grievance stemmed from the pastors' relationship to a foreign missionary authority that increasingly subordinated considerations of Cuban experience and conditions to the attitudes and policies of missions and missionaries who not infrequently were "without experience, without knowledge of the language, or of the character of the people."¹⁰ Missionaries responded defensively, and criticized Cubans formerly considered model pastors as "complainers" who

⁸ Marcos A. Ramos, *Protestantism and Revolution in Cuba* (Miami: University of Miami, 1989), p. 23.

⁹ George McDonell to David W. Carter, 14 May 1900; Warren A. Candler to H.B. Someillán, 6 May 1901; Warren A. Candler to H.W. Penny, 15 September 1903, Warren Aiken Candler Papers, Emory Special Collections Department, Robert Woodruff Library, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia (Hereafter, ESCD).

¹⁰ A Suárez, J.M. Hernandez, A. Alonso to W.R. Lambuth, "Letter of the Cuban Preachers to the Secretary of the Board of Missions," 1909, Warren Aiken Candler Papers, ESCD.

had gone beyond their province.¹¹ Decades later, the grievances remained, the conflict persisted, and the pattern continued, the function of an historical and cross-cultural relationship that, with some variation, remained fundamentally unchanged.

Despite a consensus on the necessity of a developed Cuban ministry, the question of a larger role for Cubans in church and mission affairs, and, ultimately, of the indigenization of the Protestant Church in Cuba, remained a delicate matter between missionaries and their Cuban colleagues. Although the latter was one of the primary goals of U.S. missions in eastern Cuba, missionaries tended to be more ambiguous about Cuban self-government than they were about Cubans managing local churches.

"The task," Baptist Howard Grose declared back in 1910, "is not that of a day or a generation . . . progress must be slow."¹² More than ten years later, this gradualist philosophy concerning the Cubanization of church administration still held sway. The missions, meanwhile, had grown substantially after three decades. The American Friends, the smallest of the principal eastern missions, had moved from an active church membership of less than 50 in 1905, to over 450 by the late 1930s. Friends schools had also grown in number by the 1930s, and claimed over 1800 students.¹³ Out of some 20 churches, the Methodist mission claimed a membership of over 1700, nearly ten times the number in 1905. Enrollment at Methodist schools (excluding numerous schools which did not report) totalled well over 2000 by 1935.¹⁴ During the same period, the American Baptists reported a membership of more than 3700 (from less than 200 in 1901) in over 150 congregations, and a student total of over 7500.¹⁵ The number of adherents, those like Tomás Estrada Palma and Fulgencio Batista who were graduates of Protestant schools, attended Protestant services of different denominations, and remained supportive of Protestant programs, was greater still.¹⁶

¹¹ B.F. Gilbert to Candler, 14 September 1907; Gilbert to Candler, 3 December 1907; Easton Clements to Candler, 4 October 1909; Hubert Baker to Candler, Santiago, 7 October 1909; Clements to Candler, 25 September 1911, Warren Aiken Candler Papers, ESCD. Missionaries reacted incredulously to Cuban protests, labelling some Cuban pastors "mercenaries" and suggesting that such reform initiatives were "more dangerous" than "open persecution."

¹² Howard E. Grose, *Advance in the Antilles* (New York: Eaton and Maine, 1910), pp. 130-131.

¹³ See American Friends Board of Foreign Missions (AFBFM) *Annual Report*.

¹⁴ See annual reports from Methodist Episcopal Church, South (MECS), *Anuario Cubano*: Registro oficial de la Conferencia Anual de Cuba de la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal del Sur.

¹⁵ See reports from the *American Baptist Home Mission Society (ABHMS) Annual Report of the Board*, and *Actas de la Convención Bautista de Cuba Oriental (CBCO)*.

¹⁶ Ramos, pp. 24-25. Mission schools characteristically attracted much greater numbers of Cuban students than the churches did converts, at times by as much as several hundred percentage points. The principal missions in eastern Cuba accounted for well over 10,000 students by the late 1930s. Mission

Despite the substantial progress of the Protestant missions in eastern Cuba, missionary attitudes toward Cuban administration of a Cuban Protestantism remained ambivalent. The position taken by Methodist missionary Sterling Neblett was characteristic of North American ambivalence toward indigenization. Neblett acknowledged that, after two decades of mission work, “the Cuban ministry had grown in experience, poise and spirit,” but went on to suggest that Cuban pastors had yet to make the “transition from administrative childhood into adolescent experiment and preparation for man’s estate.”¹⁷ By the 1920s, all American Baptist churches in eastern Cuba were pastored by Cuban ministers. Baptist schools and national administration in general, however, remained under the charge of the mission board in the United States.¹⁸ After three decades of mission development, Cuban pastors dominated numerically and even qualitatively, but, along with the needs of local conditions, continued to be subordinated to standards set by religious and educational programs sanctioned by the U.S. churches, and administered by a foreign missionary minority.

Southern Methodists and American Baptists boasted about the Cubanization of their churches. Yet by 1930, both missions still lacked a Cuban administration. At the same time, many of these churches’ Cuban pastors were hard-pressed to maintain a congregation and funding, a function of contradictory mission policy and dependent Cuba’s socioeconomic reality. Many Protestant schools and churches, therefore, located on or near the mills and factories of North American companies. Captive congregations, the populations of company towns, were only as stable as the *tiempo muerte* or “dead season” allowed. Protestant missions also became susceptible to the vicissitudes of regional and international labor migration.¹⁹

Cuban pastors and their congregations, furthermore, were expected by their U.S. administrators to progress toward self-support (if not self-government) by implanting the concepts and infrastructure of a North American, middle class Protestantism in a region that, like the rest of Cuba, was unevenly-developed, socioeconomically impoverished, and vulnerable to

reports and correspondence strongly suggest that Cuban graduates of these schools, most of whom did not become Protestants, nonetheless lent their support in numerous ways, from financial aid for Protestant buildings to presidential endorsement of Protestant schools and programs. For a more comprehensive discussion of the above, see Jason Yaremko, “United States Protestant Missions in Eastern Cuba, 1898-1935: Salvation and Conflict in the Cradle of Independence” (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Manitoba, Manitoba, 1996).

¹⁷ Sterling A. Neblett, *Methodism’s First Fifty Years in Cuba* (Wilmore: Asbury College, 1976), p. 112.

¹⁸ Charles S. Detweiler, *The Waiting Isles: Baptist Missions in the Caribbean* (Philadelphia: Judson Press, 1930), pp. 84 and 88-89.

¹⁹ H.R. Moseley, “A Call for Help,” *Missions* (August 1910), p. 537.

the violent swings of a sugar monoculture. Genuine self-support among Cuban-pastored churches became a daunting task, even for some of the larger centers like Santiago de Cuba. Typically, Baptist Robert Routledge observed in 1925 that, because sugar was “on the rocks,” many pastors were “finding difficulty in closing the year free of debt.”²⁰ Methodist bishop Warren Candler also sounded similar alarms in his appeals to private donors for aid to Methodist churches in the field.²¹ “Most of them being poor people,” the bishop conceded, Cuban pastors and their congregations were highly vulnerable to volatile sugar prices and general depression.²² Consequently, pastors’ earnings and local church funds became so significantly reduced that financial self-support became nearly impossible to achieve, let alone the payment of debts.

U.S. missions rationalized the overall low salaries and funding of Cuban pastors compared to North American missionaries based on the necessity of learning self-support. However, the models for pastoral self-support, the missionaries, relied not on congregations or local communities, but on mission boards in the U.S. for their salaries and expense accounts. Seemingly oblivious to the apparent double-standard at work, missionaries like Sterling Neblett chastened Cuban pastors for their dependency on the board and insisted that they rely on the example set by the missionaries who were not expected to rely at all on local congregations, and for whom increases by the board for missionary expense accounts continued, even amidst funding cuts to the Cuban field.²³

Though the problem of support was fundamentally one of mission policy (and a degree of cultural chauvinism), it was exacerbated by regionalism. Both North American and Cuban mission workers had long complained of their mission boards’ apparent bias against missions in the eastern provinces. East-west divisions appeared sharpest among the Southern Methodists. Appropriations for Cuban pastors’ salaries became one bone of contention as early as 1906. “I doubt not our Cuban men could use more money,” bishop Candler had insisted, “and I wish I had it for them.”²⁴ The bishop was able, however, to pool all the required resources for his namesake college in Havana, a commodious institution which, decades later, remained a focus of

²⁰ Routledge to Detweiler, 13 April 1925, ABHMS Correspondence, Cuba, American Baptist Historical Society, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania (Hereafter, ABHS).

²¹ Candler to H.H. White, 11 January 1929, Warren Aiken Candler Papers, ESCD.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Sterling Neblett to Lavens M. Thomas, 24 January 1929, Warren Aiken Candler Papers, ESCD.

²⁴ Candler to Hubert W. Baker, 8 June 1906, Warren Aiken Candler Papers, ESCD.

long-standing friction between Methodist missions in the east and west.²⁵

For Cuban churches, self-support remained deeply problematic even after several decades of mission activity. Denominational self-government, therefore, continued to be denied to the Cuban pastors and laicos of the principle Protestant missions in eastern Cuba. Not only did national administration continue to be dominated by North American missionaries, Cuban participation in mission conferences remained severely limited. By 1920, Methodist mission administrators made allowances for limited indigenous participation in the Cuban conference. The Methodist mission board granted Cuban pastors certain rights and responsibilities, one missionary remarked, without “going all the way and putting the mission in their hands.”²⁶ At about the same time, the Baptist mission also gave their Cuban workers certain rights and functions in the form of fiscal administration of local churches. Missionaries equated the push for financial self-support—which effectively collapsed after the “Dance of the Millions”—with self-government. Privately, however, the immediate goal was more limited: “It has been a great relief to the Secretary and to other representatives of the Society in New York not to have to deal with the salary problem.”²⁷ Even “financial independence” was frequently qualified by mission boards’ intervention into the business of Cubans attempting to manage their own churches. Cuban pastors who resisted interference in the limited administrative responsibilities of their pastoral labors, strived to keep their local churches self-supporting. Others, either weaned on mission board dependency or working against enormous odds (as many who found themselves in war zones during a rebellion did), accepted the mission administration’s contradictory conception of self-support and the financial aid that accompanied it. Financial self-support, even without the contradiction of mission intervention, did not translate into the broader powers of self-government by Cubans.

This was most pointedly evident in the case of the American Friends mission. By 1919 Cuban Friends were allowed limited participation in annual conferences, prior to which Cuban pastors typically had no voice in policy and were not considered members of the “mission.”²⁸ This policy endured even after 1925 when, faced with massive cuts to mission funding, Friends missionaries were forced to contemplate an autonomous Cuban Friends Church, a prospect energetically supported by the Cubans who opposed ini-

²⁵ O.E. Goddard to Easton E. Clements, 29 May 1931; O.K. Hopkins, Sterling Neblett to O.E. Goddard, 22 June 1931, Warren Aiken Candler Papers, ESCD.

²⁶ H.B. Bardwell to Candler, 11 March 1919, Warren Aiken Candler Papers, ESCD.

²⁷ Detweiler, *The Waiting Isles*, pp. 74-75.

²⁸ Hiram Hilty, *Friends in Cuba* (Richmond: Friends United Press, 1977), p. 103.

tial board proposals to transfer the work to the Methodists.²⁹

The board had decided in favor of its Havana mission, and formally relinquished the eastern field to its Cuban members.³⁰ A combination of reduced U.S. funding, the board decision to favor Africa over Cuba, and the catastrophic aftermath of the Cuban "Dance of the Millions," forced the realization of a Cuban Friends Church in Oriente.³¹ In 1927, the Cuba Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends was established. Yet the ostensibly autonomous Cuban Conference's first chairman was Zenas Martin, a North American missionary. And as Friends historian Hiram Hilty concluded, relative to most other national conferences, the Cuban Church's autonomy and independence were more theoretical than real: "The Yearly Meeting . . . was nothing more than a glorified Christian Endeavor Society, not a mature organization to be taken seriously."³²

The Cuban Friends church had gained a formal autonomy not unlike the Cuban republic in 1902, and remained dependent on the American Friends board in the U.S. on several levels. "Far from going native," Hilty notes, "Cuba Yearly meeting equated being Protestant with perpetuating the forms and attitudes received from the pioneers."³³ The Cubanization of the Friends church was thus severely qualified.

As for the largest Protestant missions, for which no such separation was contemplated, Cubanization was even further away from realization. Partly a function of contradictions in mission policy and between policy and practice, it was also a matter of North American missionaries' preemptive paternalism. These churches likewise proved susceptible to a type of possessiveness which mixed optimism about future Cuban autonomy with doubt about the Cuban capacity for self-government: "Our young men and women are the hope of Cuba, but they must be helped to grow strong morally and become capable to fill responsible places in Church and State."³⁴

Paternalistic missionary attitudes and practices persisted well into the third decade of mission development. Missions could no more relinquish control of education and administration to Cubans, a Friends missionary

²⁹ Zenas Martin to Eva Haworth, 17 November 1924; Martin to Haworth, 22 March 1925, Martin and Haworth Papers, Friends Historical Collection, Guilford College, Greensboro, North Carolina (Hereafter, FHC).

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Hilty, *Friends in Cuba*, p. 100.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 104-105.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 106.

³⁴ Susan Martin to Eva and Samuel Haworth, 23 January 1926, Martin and Haworth Papers, FHC.

remarked, than they could "abandon a child that lies at their door and needs a mother's care."³⁵ From the Methodist perspective, Sterling Neblett suggested that any movement toward an independent Cuban church "would be unwise and even dangerous."³⁶ Overall, however, the missionary reaction to Cubanization of the Protestant Church was more complex.

Illustrative of the ambivalence among missionary ranks over indigenization, some like Baptist Robert Routledge complained about continued U.S. dominance in areas of mission administration like education. Baptist George R. Hovey also questioned the lack of Cuban participation in mission administration: "We have done practically nothing for the training of Christian workers other than preachers."³⁷ By 1926, furthermore, missionaries from Methodist and Baptist ranks acknowledged the growing Cuban call for indigenization. As Routledge observed: "Many evangelical Cubans are already thinking in terms of a National Church as something entirely distinct from our present denominational groups."³⁸ As the social and economic crises of the 1920s depression persisted, however, the optimism of missionaries like Routledge appeared to degenerate into a mixture of pessimism and ethnocentrism: "A tropical climate is not conducive to intensified religious culture any more than it is to intensified farming."³⁹

Among Methodist missionaries also, a minority opposed sending more missionaries from the U.S. to Cuba. Easton Clements asserted that "so long as we have missionaries to fall back on, we will not be as much concerned as we should . . . for the building up of a Latin ministry. . . . Our hope lies in a strong Latin leadership."⁴⁰ Yet Clements qualified his support for Cubanization: "We should of course maintain a missionary force in Cuba sufficient to hold things together."⁴¹ Such ambivalence, even among the missionary minority who criticized the vague mission program for indigenization, continued to plague Protestant missions well beyond the third decade of mission activity.

Missions' perceived need to "hold things together" continued to take

³⁵ Emma P. Martínez to B. Willis Beede, Puerto Padre, 6 July 1930, Wider Ministries of Friends United Meeting Papers, Lilly Library, Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana (Hereafter, WMFUMP).

³⁶ Neblett, *Methodism's First Fifty Years in Cuba*, p. 184.

³⁷ *ABHMS Annual Report*, 87th Sess., 1919 (New York, 1919), 56; *ABHMS Annual Report*, 89th Sess., 1921 (New York, 1921), p. 61.

³⁸ *ABHMS Annual Report*, 93rd Sess., 1926 (New York, 1926), pp. 64-65.

³⁹ *ABHMS Annual Report*, 94th Sess., 1927 (New York, 1927), pp. 43-44.

⁴⁰ Clements to Goddard, 27 July 1926, Cuban Conference Correspondence, United Methodist Church Archives, General Commission on Archives and History, Drew University, Madison, New Jersey (Hereafter, UMCA).

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

precedence more unambiguously than any semblance of a policy for fostering a more substantial Cuban role in administration, rhetoric included. It became the mandate of the Southern Methodist mission's "Committee on Nationalism in Cuba." Formed in 1928, ostensibly to monitor and address Cuban mission workers' views on the ecclesiastical dimension of rising Cuban nationalism, the Committee's survey ultimately served to reinforce missionary reluctance to contemplate seriously the implementation of a policy for Cubanization.

Although inconclusive, the survey's results apparently confirmed for the Committee the "erroneous conception" Cuban pastors and laicos had of their role in mission administration.⁴² At the center of Cuban Methodist demands was a more substantive move toward Cubanization than the Methodist mission had yet made.⁴³ Even Sterling Neblett conceded that "practically all declare for a larger participation of Cuban leaders in the administration of the Church."⁴⁴ Neblett and the Committee, however, effectively marginalized such issues, focusing instead on other aspects of the survey's results for their own conclusions.

The conclusions of the Methodist committee on nationalism in Cuba impeded any significant change in favor of a Cuban-controlled Methodist Church. The Cuba Committee's 1929 report to the General Committee on Nationalism wielded a North American bias that implied more about the apparent weakness of the Church in Cuba than of its potential. Neblett and the Committee defended the centralization of mission fund allocation in the U.S., and questioned the Cuban request for parity with missionaries in distributive powers.⁴⁵ Neblett's earlier reassurance to the bishop that there would be "no serious demand at this time for a Cuban National Church . . . but for continued adherence to the Mother Church," with adjustments that allowed for some voice in the administration, was borne out a year later in the Committee's report.⁴⁶

The report insisted that the Cuban Church remain "an integral part of the Mother Church" in the U.S.⁴⁷ Expanded Cuban participation in national

⁴² Neblett to Candler, 14 September 1928, Warren Aiken Candler Papers, ESCD.

⁴³ Neblett to Candler, 5 July 1928; Neblett to Candler, 14 September 1928; Neblett, "Committee on Nationalism—Cuba to the General Committee on Nationalism, Summary of Answers to the Questionnaire," 3 October 1928, Warren Aiken Candler Papers, ESCD.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Neblett to Candler, 5 July 1928, Warren Aiken Candler Papers, ESCD.

⁴⁷ Neblett, Representative of the Committee on Nationalism in Cuba, to the General Committee on Nationalism, report, April 16, 1929, Warren Aiken Candler Papers, ESCD.

church administration ultimately translated into slightly augmented but still significantly limited Cuban participation in their own mission and church administration.⁴⁸ Neblett and other missionaries insisted that Cubans, “exercised the same functions, rights and responsibilities in the Mission Annual Conference as did preachers in the homeland in the Annual Conference.”⁴⁹ Yet in both cases, mission administration derived from the U.S. church, and was dominated by the U.S. church board. Neblett seemed to imply that Cuba was, after all, a real home mission, and should be treated as such. This verged on imperialism, and was reminiscent of a chauvinism popular in the heyday of U.S. expansionism, albeit in a new form.

Probably the most important gain made by Methodist Cuban pastors after the mission survey on nationalism was the mission’s recognition that the Cubans’ primary grievance continued to be “discrimination against them in the matter of responsible appointments,” not salaries.⁵⁰ Such recognition was more formal than substantive. By the 1940s, the Methodist mission still maintained the highest proportion of missionaries in Cuba. Regardless, however, of missionary-pastor ratios, the enduring predominance of U.S. mission boards and missionaries as executives and administrators perpetuated the relegation of Cuban pastors to secondary roles in the administration of the national churches.⁵¹

How accurate an indicator of mission worker sentiment the Methodist mission survey was remains unclear. What is clear is that Cuban nationalism in the ecclesiastical realm long predated the Methodist mission’s formal attempt to address it. These were not, as missionaries later conceded, radical demands. They were in fact logical requests which tested the weight of Protestant mission policy and rhetoric espousing the development of a Cuban leadership and a genuinely Cuban Church.

Many Cubans within the Church, and even a few missionaries, felt that the North American missions had addressed the question inadequately. Several years after the Methodist survey, the board’s Secretary, O.E. Goddard, confirmed the gap between mission theory and practice. In an inspection of the mission in 1931, Goddard received “the very definite conviction that the discovery and training of a native ministry,” the “only hope” of an autonomous church, “had not been the major concern of our work in

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ Neblett, *Methodism’s First Fifty Years*, p. 114.

⁵⁰ Neblett, Representative of the Committee on Nationalism in Cuba, to the General Committee on Nationalism, 16 April 1929, Warren Aiken Candler Papers, ESCD.

⁵¹ Ramos, pp. 29-34.

Cuba.”⁵² The consequences of North American mission praxis were also apparent a decade later in the observations of other missionaries. “A large part” of Cubans within and outside the Protestant Church, noted Methodist Maurice Daily, still “consider it the ‘American system’ of religion . . . they do not consider it as theirs yet.”⁵³

Cuban protest against Americocentric mission policy continued throughout the early decades of mission penetration. By the 1930s, disputes over authority increased as numerous Cuban pastors, mission workers, and teachers challenged mission policy. While some missionaries conceded growing Cuban opposition to the dominance of the U.S. churches, others dismissed it as “not serious.”⁵⁴ “Elements of discord,” as some missionaries had dubbed recalcitrant Cuban pastors, emerged at several levels. Some had challenged the authority of North American superintendents; others attempted to circumvent board-designated administrative bodies and “take matters into their own hands.”⁵⁵ Still others simply left. Baptist and Methodist mission reports suggest that defections and departures averaged one pastor and/or teacher annually, at times over periods of several years. In the case of the American Friends, the departure of José Reyes Almaguer and his establishment of an independent church in 1929-1930 made the formerly model pastor suspect in the eyes of some Friends missionaries.⁵⁶

Mission reports also lamented the loss of Cuban mission school teachers who protested by striking out independently. Missionaries complained that a number of these former mission teachers were “doing everything possible” to disrupt mission schools by drawing students away.⁵⁷ Mission schools recovered, but the problems of an abortive Cubanization remained.

Even those Cuban mission workers who remained loyal to their churches did not do so uncritically. Some Cubans, unable to vote in earlier mission conferences, later voted with their feet; others carried out their protest within the mission. This was most dramatically the case among Cuban pastors of the Southern Methodist mission in 1909-1910, and was repeated during the 1920s and 1930s.⁵⁸ Nor were the American Baptists immune to Cuban sub-

⁵² Goddard to Hopkins, Neblett, 13 August 1931, Warren Aiken Candler Papers, ESCD.

⁵³ Maurice Daily to Alfred W. Wasson, 31 October 1939, Cuban Conference Correspondence, UMCA.

⁵⁴ Emma P. Martínez to B. Willis Beede, Puerto Padre, 15 April 1928, WMFUMP.

⁵⁵ Martínez to Beede, Puerto Padre, 23 November 1930; Martínez to Beede, Puerto Padre, 24 December 1930; Martínez to Beede, Puerto Padre, 31 August 1931, WMFUMP.

⁵⁶ Emma P. Martínez to B. Willis Beede, Puerto Padre, 23 November 1930, FHC.

⁵⁷ Evans to W.G. Gram, Camagüey, 22 May 1929, Warren Aiken Candler Papers, ESCD.

⁵⁸ A. Suárez, J.M. Hernandez, A. Alonso, to W.R. Lambuch, “Letter of the Cuban Preachers,” 2 October 1909, ESCD; Robert Routledge to Charles S. Detweiler, 17 October 1924, ABHMS Correspondence, Cuba, ABHS.

terfuge. Cirilo DeRoux was expelled in 1932 for an evangelizing approach that included “telling the brethren that he depends on them and that the other pastors are supported by the North.”⁵⁹ The Baptist mission later conceded that DeRoux had much popular support and had been responsible for the success of the Baracoa field; the nationalistic pastor was brought back into the fold.

Cuban grievances centered around key areas such as funding distribution and salaries, but most important was greater Cuban participation in mission and church administration. The principle sources of Cuban grievances and conflict remained essentially the same in the 1920s and 1930s as they had been two decades earlier. This indicated not only the relative continuity of the ecclesiastical dimension of Cuban nationalism, but also the inadequacy or inability of eastern Protestant missions to address Cuban concerns in key areas of mission development—areas which had significant implications for the future of the Protestant Church in Cuba. Two decades of Protestant mission endeavor had resulted in the development of a substantial group of Cuban pastors, teachers, and laicos. The U.S. churches, however, appeared no closer to their presumed goal of Cuban control of Protestant institutions, nor to effectively addressing Cuban concerns. Cuban grievances remained largely unaddressed, a Cuban National Church still a very distant prospect.

As J. Merle Davis noted in a 1942 report on Protestant missions in Cuba, neither U.S. intervention nor Protestant mission policy were of a character to foster national self-reliance. Dependency persisted as a key factor in the policies and practices of both. The successful development of Cuban institutions—secular or ecclesiastical—was ultimately judged according to the degree to which they resembled U.S. forms. Whether in the building of churches and schools, or of a future Cuban leadership, U.S. resources and standards predominated. As Davis insightfully observed, the Protestant church in Cuba was contributing to a hegemonic legacy of its own:

The new congregations needed churches, and these were built with U.S. money; these churches needed pastors, and . . . the Cuban ministers were educated in U.S. seminaries. This training gave the young leaders . . . the model of U.S. church building, organization, ritual, discipline and program of activities. These standards were influenced by centuries of Anglo-Saxon tradition and development and were alien to social and economic patterns of Cuban life.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ *Actas de la CBCO*, 1932, pp. 103-106, 119, 125 and 131; *Actas de la CBCO*, 1935, p. 112; Routledge to Detweiler, Cristo, 18 April 1938, ABHS.

⁶⁰ J. Merle Davis, *The Cuban Church in a Sugar Economy* (New York: International Missionary Council, 1942), pp. 77-78.

While the Protestant mission campaign was deliberate, however, it was ultimately more historically and culturally-predetermined than conspiratorial: "The mission aim was to establish the Church of Christ in Cuba, rather than to adjust the Church to the economic standards and the peculiar culture of the country. This was inevitable under the missionary urge, and from the fact that the missionary was commissioned to establish the type of church which had trained him, and with which he was acquainted."⁶¹

Paternalism and ethnocentrism continued to play a considerable part in determining Protestant mission policy and practice, the contradictions of which sparked a significant response in the Cuban drive for mission reforms. North American missionaries maintained (implicitly or explicitly) that mission weaknesses and Cuban agitation were based in the culturally inferior conditions of the Cuban Church and "Cuban character."⁶² "The Cuban's background," Friends superintendent Henry Cox later concluded, "is such that someone just must order and some just obey."⁶³ Davis, who was thoroughly critical of the U.S. churches' policies in Cuba, asserted in the same report that Cubans were "a race still in the making and in the adolescent period of development."⁶⁴ Cubans continued to be deemed incapable of assuming the major responsibilities of the highest posts, which continued to be filled by U.S. missionaries until the Cuban revolution's radicalization in the 1960s. Furthermore, volatile economic and political conditions in Cuba in the 1920s and 1930s were not uncommonly blamed on "Cuban character," reinforcing the position of mission policymakers against the growing Cuban desire for an autonomous national church. In turn, crisis conditions likewise colored North American missionaries' attitudes toward the secular, political dimension of Cuban nationalism.

In the same vein that Cuban Protestants stepped up their call for a greater role in the affairs of mission and church, Cubans on a political level actively contributed to a renewed movement of Cuban nationalism in the 1920s. The rising demands of Cubans for control over their own national destiny played a part in influencing Cuban pastors' grievances regarding ecclesiastical affairs and vice versa.⁶⁵ A few were active in both dimensions.

The nationalist surge of the 1920s was represented by a range of social groups and political orientations, from the newly organized, but conserva-

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ Henry Cox to Merle L. Davis, 7 April 1939, WMFUMP.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ Parallels between the Cuban and Philippine mission experiences at some levels prove striking. See Clymer, *Protestant Missionaries in the Philippines, 1898-1916*.

tive and reformist bourgeoisie, to the mobilized and increasingly revolutionary students and working classes, all disaffected by U.S. interventions and a hollow independence. By the mid-1920s, intellectuals and women's organizations had joined the movement. For virtually all of these groups, the 1920-1921 economic crisis served as a catalyst with which to broaden demands for national reform through political action. These currents converged in the form of a rising tide of nationalism, and served to apply significant pressure on the Alfredo Zayas government from various directions.⁶⁶

Such currents coalesced in a renewed national opposition against the single most infamous symbol of U.S. hegemony in Cuba—the Platt Amendment. During the third decade of U.S. intervention and Protestant mission penetration, attacks against the Platt Amendment increased substantially from various quarters and with rare “unanimity of purpose.”⁶⁷

Neither U.S. armed intervention in eastern Cuba from 1917 to 1923 nor political intervention in 1920 to unilaterally reorganize the electoral and administrative system had proven to be anything other than short-term solutions to the much deeper problem of structural dependency. For most Cubans, political and economic crises persisted, whether under the Zayas administration or under the new Liberal president Gerardo Machado, elected in 1924. Once in power, Machado and the Liberals proved little more effective in combatting Cuban dependency on the U.S. than their predecessors. Machado's “business nationalism” program—a mixture of nationalistic rhetoric and limited economic reform that neither challenged the interests of North American capital nor altered the terms of dependency—gained the support of many Cubans among the entrepreneurial and professional classes. But the flawed experiment in industrial development and diversification proved a short-lived success vulnerable to the drastic cycles of Cuba's dependent economy.

When the depression struck Cuba in the late 1920s it did so unevenly. With the earlier eastward shift in sugar production, the provinces of Camagüey and Oriente became the largest sugar producers in Cuba, and, consequently, among the most devastated by the depression. In addition, foreign-owned mills withstood the depression better than Cuban-owned mills, while larger cane growers (*colonos*) did better than smaller *colonos*. The uneven distribution of the costs of sugar production thus gave the political and economic

⁶⁶ Sheldon Liss, *Roots of Revolution: Radical Thought in Cuba* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987), pp. 62-64; Louis A. Pérez, Jr., *Cuba: Between Reform and Revolution*, 2nd Ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 236 and 241-244.

⁶⁷ Pérez, *Cuba: Between Reform and Revolution*, p. 245.

crisis of the 1920s and early 1930s a “strongly nationalist inflection.”⁶⁸ The working class was among the hardest hit, and one of the first to mobilize. As wages plummeted and unemployment soared, strikes and demonstrations erupted, stifling production in countless mills and factories. Political opposition accompanied labor militancy in an escalating struggle with a government which, like its predecessors, responded to crisis with the protection of foreign property and repression of workers and other government opponents.

Against the backdrop of a volatile Cuban nationalism, continued government corruption and repression, and the endemic political and economic crisis which was both cause and effect, Protestant missionaries proceeded with the work of the mission. A scant few missionaries either supported the rising political opposition to the government, or appeared largely oblivious to the political and economic issues. Most, however, appeared to favor the status quo, and identified with the proponents, organizations and structures founded in U.S. hegemony, including its surrogate representatives in the state and government. Zenas Martin, superintendent of the American Friends mission, had earlier lamented that bands of “revolutionists” or “out-laws” had disrupted mission activity. “The government troops,” he observed, “are scouring the country after these bands. . . . It is thought that in a few days they will be cleaned up.”⁶⁹ Somewhat morbidly, Martin concluded: “This would be a good place for [Teddy] Roosevelt.”⁷⁰ Little had changed under Machado.

Machado’s “business nationalism” corresponded most to the interests of the most conservative elements of the bourgeoisie, to U.S. interests, and to those of the Protestant missions. It was consistent with the “*decadencia*” category of Cuban nationalism which missionaries appeared to fall most clearly under and which asserted that “Cuban culture was ill-suited to sustain a republic because it had been so misshapen by colonial rule. . . . [It] opposed heavy-handed intervention but applauded many of the aims of the [government’s] moralization program.”⁷¹ Not all missionaries supported the Platt Amendment. Many advocated a combination of Protestant education mixed with other “benefits of U.S. influence” as a formula which would foster a

⁶⁸ Barry Carr, “Mill Occupations and Soviets: The Mobilisation of Sugar Workers in Cuba, 1917-1933,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 28 (1996), pp. 130-131.

⁶⁹ Zenas Martin to Eva and Samuel Haworth, 19 February 1917; Zenas Martin to Eva and Samuel Haworth, 8 April 1917; Zenas Martin to Eva and Samuel Haworth, 5 May 1917; Martin and Haworth Family Papers, FHC.

⁷⁰ Zenas Martin to Eva and Samuel Haworth, 5 May 1917, FHC.

⁷¹ Jules R. Benjamin, *The United States and the Origins of the Cuban Revolution: Empire of Liberty in an Age of National Liberation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 85.

“stronger, more capable citizenship.”⁷² From this perspective, the U.S. was perceived as an ally of reform.⁷³ When the depression hit Cuba, and the protection of U.S. interests at the expense of national interests once again became paramount, coexistence gave way to a polarization of interests, and conservative nationalism to a more radicalized form dominated by workers, students and intellectuals who denounced U.S. interventionism. Most Protestant missionaries, meanwhile, continued to identify with U.S. interests and with a narrower, deprecating nationalism which effectively advocated only a greater share in Cuba’s dependency on the U.S. market.

“Conditions in Cuba,” a Methodist missionary wrote in 1926, “are distressing, extreme poverty everywhere. Thousands without work wander about the streets and along the highways begging for bread, and the political unrest is everyday becoming acute.”⁷⁴ At the same time, the missions generally proceeded in a “business as usual” manner throughout the Machadato. Mission reports noted that the “business adversity” of the period caused some decline in school enrollment and church membership. Missions compensated for losses in membership by evangelizing among the communities of West Indian workers or *braceros* imported by North American companies to undercut the growing demands of Cuban workers for better wages and working conditions.⁷⁵ Mission stations continued to gradually expand, particularly at sugar mills where operations and labor populations underwent an expansion fed by bracero labor. After 1925, the Southern Methodist mission opened a new station in San German, and shortly after in the United Fruit company towns of Preston and Mayarí.⁷⁶ The Baptists expanded their work among Haitian braceros in Victoria de las Tunas, and several other milltowns.⁷⁷ Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, even when bracero numbers were later reduced by government deportation orders, U.S. missions continued to foster mission work among Haitian and Jamaican workers.⁷⁸

Not unlike their corporate compatriots, then, Protestant missionaries adapted to alternate sources for their labors in times of crisis, as they worked

⁷² *Ibid.*; *American Friends Board of Foreign Missions (AFBFM) Annual Report*, 1932 (Richmond, 1932), 23-24.

⁷³ Benjamin, *The United States and the Origins of the Cuban Revolution*, p. 84-85.

⁷⁴ Clements to Goddard, 27 July 1926, Cuba Conference Correspondence, UMCA.

⁷⁵ *ABHMS Annual Report*, 94th Sess., 1927 (New York, 1927), p. 44; *ABHMS Annual Report*, 97th Sess., 1930 (New York, 1930), pp. 46-69.

⁷⁶ Letter (n.a.) to E.H. Rawlings, 10 August 1925; Neblett to Wasson, 20 May 1936; “Reverend and Mrs. Daily are now serving in the Eastern District of Cuba,” Methodist Episcopal Church, South (MECS) newsletter, 1 March 1940, Cuban Conference Correspondence, UMCA.

⁷⁷ *ABHMS Annual Report*, 97th Sess., 1930 (New York), p. 69-70.

⁷⁸ *ABHMS Annual Report*, 1940, (New York, 1940), p. 49.

to make good Christians and reliable workers of braceros in Oriente and Camagüey. Bracero evangelization also tended to reinforce mission ties with local planters and mill officials, and in turn generated less sympathy for striking workers. Most missionaries attributed the crisis conditions of the depression less to the functioning of foreign capital and sugar monoculture than to Cuban failings. After all, as one missionary typically insisted, U.S. companies provided Cubans with employment.⁷⁹

One of the more striking instances of missionaries' close association and identification with U.S. business interests during this period was that of the Friends superintendent Zenas Martin. Since the dawn of Friends mission work in Cuba, the United Fruit Company had been an essential associate. A successful Iowa businessman and personal friend of then-president of United Fruit, Lorenzo Baker, Martin played a key role in guiding the mission-Company relationship through the years. Convinced, as Martin put it, that "the Lord gave me a place among the men of the United Fruit Company," the missionary appeared confident in being able to avoid a conflict of interests.⁸⁰ Yet, as in the cases of other Protestant missions and missionaries, the line between mission and Company interests soon became blurred.

Like other missions during the first decade of Protestant mission-building, the Friends received "by gift" land and property in various sites from United Fruit and other companies. Martin also acquired several cane plantations that, by 1920, earned him local prominence among the eastern region's cane growers or colonos. He employed 40 cane workers on a seasonal basis, and sold his crops to company mills in northern Oriente.⁸¹ Martin, however, was not averse to following the companies' lead either in opposing fellow growers' demands for higher cane prices, or in replacing striking sugarworkers: "I have been enjoying another strike in the canefield for a week. . . . Have things somewhat organized again with what you might call 'scabs.'"⁸²

Highly regarded both as missionary and businessman, Martin was not atypical in his business and mission interests. Some missionaries regarded his business practices as "natural," behavior not unbecoming the "right kind" of Christian citizen.⁸³ Those missionaries who, like Martin, mixed

⁷⁹ *AFBFM Annual Report*, 1932 (Richmond, 1932), pp. 23-24.

⁸⁰ Zenas Martin to Susan Martin, 11 July 1902, Martin and Haworth Family Papers, FHC; Hilty, *Friends*, p. 10.

⁸¹ Martin to Samuel and Eva Haworth, 1 May 1921; Zenas Martin, "Christmas in a Canefield," n.d.; Martin to Eva and Samuel Haworth, February 1927; Martin to Eva and Samuel Haworth, 25 May 1926; Martin to Eva and Samuel Haworth, 30 March 1930, Martin and Haworth Family Papers, FHC.

⁸² Martin to Samuel Haworth, 23 February 1925; Martin to Eva and Samuel Haworth, 29 October 1925, Martin and Haworth Family Papers, FHC.

⁸³ Susan Martin to Zenas Martin, 17 July 1907, Martin and Haworth Family Papers, FHC.

business ventures with mission work, identified more with conservative “business nationalists” like Machado than with the more radical elements among the students and working class. Most missionaries appear to have identified with and supported the state under Machado.

Throughout the late 1920s and early 1930s, furthermore, most missionaries in eastern Cuba continued to express the “altruistic side of the white man’s burden.”⁸⁴ They did so in the form of “moralization programs,” run independently and in conjunction with the Machado government in 1927.⁸⁵ Created to combat political corruption, gambling, prostitution, and other presumably Cuban failings, moralization programs helped perpetuate missionaries’ lack of confidence in Cubans’ ability to govern themselves independently. As the failings of a dependent Cuban polity persisted—armed rebellion, government corruption, police repression, labor agitation, fraudulent elections—missionary reformers “sought to solve them with doses of North American middle class values and behaviour.”⁸⁶ “Moralization” became the new watchword for an era of mission endeavor that, not unlike earlier ones, promoted political and economic stability in Cuba as much for the sake of mission work as for foreign capital.

The promotion of “moralization,” therefore, was not inconsistent with missions’ support of a pro-U.S. dictatorship over and above the less predictable—and more radical—forces of Cuban nationalism. The U.S. government continued to support the “effective president” Machado long after the illegal, “pseudo-constitutional extension” of his mandate in 1928.⁸⁷ Mission moralization aims likewise continued long after the defunct government moralization program and increased repression by the government of workers, students and other political opponents. As the depression in the sugar industry deepened, and as the government’s crackdown broadened and intensified, Protestant missionaries’ actions—or inaction—further betrayed the doctrine of political neutrality.

Like some missionaries’ earlier confidence that “[Mario García] Menocal would handle things” in 1917, missions in eastern Cuba at least tolerated the Machado dictatorship.⁸⁸ By 1930, the heightened and pervasive government repression of student demonstrations and labor strikes merited little or no mention in mission reports, save for occasional comment on the lingering

⁸⁵ “The Memory Books of Sylvester and May Mather Jones,” 1900-1960, p. 263, Sylvester and May Mather Jones Papers, FHC.

⁸⁶ Benjamin, *The United States and the Origins of the Cuban Revolution*, p. 77.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 80-82.

⁸⁸ Susan Martin to Eva and Samuel Haworth, 13 May 1917; Martin to Eva Haworth, 16 July 1917, Martin and Haworth Family Papers, FHC.

effects of “business depression” on mission work. Reports on temperance and hygiene campaigns appeared as higher social priorities.⁸⁹ On another level, mission organs like *El Mensajero* defended Machado’s masonic background against Catholic criticism, and later announced the baptism of “a very close relative of our President.”⁹⁰ Mission reports’ references to “our president” after 1925 were tantamount to tacit recognition of the Machado government at a time when its political legitimacy was being violently questioned on a national scale.⁹¹

Protestant missions in eastern Cuba naturally rejected armed struggle or popular rebellion. They also maintained a general silence over government repression. In 1929 Baptist secretary Charles Detweiler conceded the option of peaceful protest, but also advised cooperation in order to help “moderate” the government’s martial position.⁹² Methodist Sterling Neblett acknowledged the widespread opposition to the Machado regime, then “forged ahead” with Methodist doctrine which counselled “all men to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness for then and only then would peace and justice prevail.”⁹³ Temporal solutions for addressing conditions under a national dictatorship were less numerous. The practical tendency of most missionaries toward identification with and support for the government of the day, and antipathy toward opposition forces—however popular—became more pronounced into the 1930s. “Christian cooperation with the state” remained the rule.⁹⁴ As communism replaced Catholicism as the new societal menace, mission support for the Machado dictatorship sometimes became explicit.

As popular opposition to the Machado regime escalated, mission reports reflected other interests. The American Baptist mission suggested that Cubans needed to be saved from themselves “by the strong hand” of a more capable dictator like the former President Plutarco Elías Calles of Mexico.⁹⁵ The Southern Methodist mission demonstrated government support even more directly by offering, through its Pinson school in Camagüey, the “inno-

⁸⁹ *ABHMS Annual Report*, 1928 (New York, 1928), pp. 39 and 56; *ABHMS Annual Report*, 1930 (New York, 1930), pp. 45-46; *MECS, Anuario Cubano*, 1927, Registro oficial de la Conferencia Anual de Cuba de la Iglesia Metodista Episcopal del Sur (AC) (Habana, 1927), pp. 62-63 and 68; *MECS, AC*, 1931 (Habana, 1931), p. 32; *AFBFM Annual Report*, 1931, pp. 23-27.

⁹⁰ “El General Machado oyo misa en el pueblo del Cobre,” *El Mensajero* 7 (July, 1926), p. 15; “Mensajeros de Santiago de Cuba,” *El Mensajero* 8 (August, 1926), p. 15.

⁹¹ Neblett, *Methodism’s First Fifty Years*, p. 147.

⁹² Detweiler, Charles S., “La etica Cristiana: El Cristiano y el gobierno,” *El Mensajero* 10 (December, 1929), pp. 15-16.

⁹³ Neblett, *Methodism’s First Fifty Years*, p. 170.

⁹⁴ Detweiler, “La etica Cristiana: El Cristiano y el gobierno,” pp. 15-16.

⁹⁵ *ABHMS Annual Report*, 99th. Sess., 1932 (New York, 1932), p. 43.

vation” of military instruction toward developing “good soldiers” as well as good Christians.⁹⁶ Pacifist Friends missionaries likewise were not averse to endorsing the government’s use of “strong iron hand” tactics to “moderate” the “extreme nationalistic feeling” among striking workers and students.⁹⁷

Missionary consensus, though by no means absolute, was a logical reflection of North American interests in Cuba generally. Yet, in the case of at least one denomination, consensus for the status quo was a function of deliberate recruitment policy. In a letter to Methodist bishop Warren Candler in mid-1928, O.E. Goddard reaffirmed the bishop’s orders to keep missionaries branded liberal “black sheep” out of the Cuban field: “Cuba thus far had been free from liberalistic views and you wanted to keep it that way.”⁹⁸ Missionary unity, therefore, was not always a reflection of general ideological convergence among missionaries per se. Historical evidence strongly suggests, nevertheless, that the majority of missionaries in eastern Cuba feared a progressive or radical Cuban nationalism more than they did the Machado government. Protestant missions’ attacks on the Catholic Church endured into the 1930s, in sharp contrast to a relatively muted Protestant Church vis-a-vis the government. Yet if there was little ambivalence among North American missionaries toward Cuban nationalism and the Machadato, there is evidence of dissension among the ranks of Cuban pastors.

Among the writings of Cuban ministers which exist, there is evidence that some Cuban mission workers dissented with their mission boards on the political dimension of Cuban nationalism. Few if any Cuban pastors actively opposed governments like Machado’s. Individual Cuban Protestants, workers and students, during and after the Machadato, certainly did. Student strikes disrupted Protestant school programs, forcing closure of at least two Methodist schools. For the most part, those who took part did so against the wishes of missionaries and pastors.⁹⁹

Among the American Baptists, however, a few Cuban pastors clearly conveyed their opposition toward the corrupt governments of both Zayas and Machado. Their statements suggest a need to generate a progressive form of nationalism that combined evangelical Protestantism with Cuban patriotism, something missionaries were less likely to contemplate. Alfredo Santana, Juan Barrios and other Cuban pastors exhorted other Cuban ministers to protest the violations of civil and human rights carried out by the govern-

⁹⁶ *MECS, AC*, 1918 (Habana, 1918), 30-31; *MECS, AC*, 1936 (Habana, 1936), pp. 22-23.

⁹⁷ *AFBFM Annual Report*, 1935 (Richmond, 1935), p. 12.

⁹⁸ Goddard to Candler, 27 April 1928, Warren Aiken Candler Papers, ESCD.

⁹⁹ See chapters 5 and 6, in Jason M. Yaremko, “United States Protestant Missions in Eastern Cuba, 1898-1935.”

ment.¹⁰⁰ The contrast between these pastors' vocal protests against government violence and U.S. missionaries' criticisms of the popular forces opposing the Machado regime is striking. The Cuban pastors criticized the general corruption of the Cuban political system, and declared it to be "without the moral strength to govern the masses" (while missionaries tended toward skepticism of the masses' moral strength).¹⁰¹

Cuban pastors, however, were not likely to exhort their congregations to take action. Out of habit, protests were at times directed at the Catholic Church which was blamed for Cuba's crisis conditions.¹⁰² Like the missionaries, many Cuban pastors criticized only the symptoms of U.S. hegemony in Cuba, not the sources of dependency. Yet, the positive references made by the Cubans to Cuban nationalism, and their critique of national leaders, were significant statements conspicuous by their absence in the writings and reports of missionary colleagues.

The relative dissent of some Cuban pastors appeared not to have caused any significant rift within the principle Protestant missions. While there was a more concerted response by Cuban pastors toward the ecclesiastical dimension of Cuban nationalism—Cubanization of the Church—that within the realm of national politics appeared less organized and more atomized. At a fundamental level, Cuban ambivalence over both dimensions of Cuban nationalism seemed to be contained by the paternalism of the North American churches. At the same time, most missionaries continued to oppose popular Cuban nationalism.

Whether over the question of Cubanization of the Protestant Church, or of Cuban nationalism, Cubans were divided. This proved one of the mainstays of the U.S. churches' prolonged dominance no less so than that of U.S. hegemony generally. For the U.S. churches and missionaries, a consensus that an independent Cuban Church was premature and Cuban nationalism dangerous, endured well beyond the Machado era. At the same time, the typological paternalism of the U.S. missions and their affinity with the forces of U.S. hegemony, helped reinforce the conditions of dependency that Cubans experienced outside the Church on a daily basis.

If the Protestant churches in eastern Cuba in 1932 were, as Neblett observed, "less disturbed than other institutions and groups of society" by

¹⁰⁰ Alfredo Santana, "El esperanza de Cuba," *El Mensajero* 11 (June 1924), p. 8; *Actas de la Convención Bautista de Cuba Oriental (CBCO)*, Estadísticas Anuales, 1924, pp. 94-97; *Actas de la CBCO*, 1925, p. 155.

¹⁰¹ *Actas de la CBCO*, 1925, 155; *Actas de la CBCO*, 1928, pp. 75-82.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

the Machadato's violence, most ordinary Cubans were not so fortunate.¹⁰³ While a few Cuban pastors openly advocated a change in government, they along with their congregations remained vulnerable to deepening depression and rising rebellion. Unlike the thousands of Cubans—Protestant and otherwise—who by the early 1930s moved to salvage and regenerate Cuban nationalism and then formed the first genuinely independent government in Cuba, the Protestant Church in Cuba made no such move toward ecclesiastical independence. The early 1930s saw the violent culmination of Cuban nationalism. It was an era of great change within the Cuban nation; this was much less so the case for the Cuban Protestant Church.

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¹⁰³ Neblett, *Methodism's First Fifty Years*, p. 170.