

NATIONAL ARCHIVES MICROFILM PUBLICATIONS

Microcopy No. 179

MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Roll 289

October 17-31, 1868



THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES
NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS SERVICE
GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

Washington: 1964

San Francisco de Cuba
OCT
26

Wm. J. Smith
1902. 66

Honorable Sir,

The incapability of Mr. Manuel R. Ecay, present Consular Agent of the U. States at this place, induced me on the 13th June last to petition for that Office, and as Mr. Ecay, notwithstanding the outbreak of an Insurrection in the country on the 8th inst. and the Governor of this District proclaiming in consequence Martial law and declaring the town of Manzanillo in a state of Siege, continues secluded at his country seat at a large distant from town, without the least sign of our nationality being represented anywhere, I have thought proper to lay before you a statement of the late occurrences, the more so, as there is no likelihood of any other report reaching Your Honor from this quarter.

The rumours of a contemplated rising of the Natives in this Island, headed by some 8 or 10 Estate Owners, who were known to be highly dissatisfied with the late taxation imposed upon landed properties and their production, was confirmed on the 9th inst. when a woman from the country came crying to town, that her husband had been pressed by a band of insurgents to join them on the foregoing night. The Governor of this District, who had only 50 men regular troops at his command here in the town, applied to the wealthier natives of old Spain and citizens for assistance to guard the town against an attack. Immediately that afternoon all stores,

Shops and houses were closed and men and bo-
natives of old Spain all flocked armed to the
square to defend the same as well as the adjo-
Barraza, town hall and prisons, which latter
contained abt. 250 prisoners, mostly criminals
and was feared would be the chief view of the
Insurgents to liberate in order to swell their
numbers. Garasche were placed up kept a sharp
look out all night at the entrance to town.
The excitement and alarm increased the
following morning, the 10th inst, when the
mail carrier bound for Pajarero returned
after two hours at abt. 8 o'clock saying that
a band of abt. 100 men had challenged him
at a distance to deliver the mail or his life
would be taken, whereupon he had turned
his horse and fled at full speed back to town.
On receipt of these news the Governor declared
the town in a state of siege, proclaimed
martial law and took every possible pre-
cautionary measure for its defence.
The merchant frigate "Cruzcampo" which arrived
that day from St. Jago de Cuba on her way to
Bathurst, was without being allowed to
come to an anchor, dispatched at once back
to St. Jago to bring reinforcements. At the
same time the Governor dispatched an exp-
to Pajarero, where abt. 300 men Infantry &
Cavalry were stationed, to demand news
and had the news transmitted from the latter

place by wire to Havana and St. Jago de Cuba.
Some shopkeepers from the surrounding country,
mostly Catalans, who had availed themselves of
the first chance to get to town, and also some
women, whose husband had followed the In-
surgents, confirmed the previous reports, that
the Insurgents had already increased to over
1000 men and were scouting in bands of 100
to 200 men looking for arms and ammunition,
and trying to press everybody to follow their
ranks. The largest band of abt 500 men
under the command of an Estate owner, General
Carlos Manuel de Aspedes, had towards dusk
of the evening that the Insurgents entered Orindabanos.
By with 400 men Infantry & 12 men Cavalry sent
from Tanginica to this town, the village of Yara,
at opposite side. The troops on hearing the
Insurgents cry of "Viva Cuba Libre", had on
their approach opened fire. The Insurgents,
on their horses taking to flight that the first dis-
charge of the troops, shall have ~~desmounted~~
and have returned to the charge with the same
cry, but shall have fled on the first discharge
of the soldiers, who had placed themselves inside
the church. Owing to the darkness both parties
troops as well as Insurgents seem to have been
unaware of each other strength or numbers,
the soldiers had however only one man wounded,
whilst it is unknown yet how many the Insurgents,
who were not to be seen on the following morning,
excepting one man hanging to a tree with two bullets.

in his body. The same day two policemen
captured near town a spy of the Insurgent
who had fired at them and he as well as others
who had either deserted or were arrested in and
outside the town divulged a good deal of the
Insurrection and its participants to the Governor
but this latter and other authorities observe a
rigorous silence as all matters of any concern
On the 10th inst. a shipkeeper of the town Ma
tanzas, a native, was arrested and among
his goods landed the following morning from
on board the Merchant Ship "Antonio" coming from
Gataband, were found several packages and
powder & ammunition in two cases which had
been manifested to custom in South America.
The same morning the 12th inst. the 1st Co. of the
returned in company of the Merchant Ship "Ho.
Brooks" which she had met near S. Juan de Ca
with 75 men Infantry on board. With these
soldiers the Governor started for Santa Fe
the assistance of these soldiers there and return
the following evening after searching several
places for the Insurgents, without the success
mentioned. The same day the 12th inst. the 1st Co. of the
besides some documents and books and some
arms and powder which the Insurgents had left
in and near Santa Fe in their flight of the 11th inst.
On the 14th inst. the Spanish Man of War "Ho.
Septima" arrived from Trinidad simultaneously
with the Merchant Ship "J. S. Leguado" from
Gataband, which latter had about 400 men on

infantry under command of a lieutenant Colonel. These troops were sent from Havana by rail to Batabanó, whence they arrived here in 36 hours. The Governor and their Colonel left the same evening of the 14th in the morning for Yara with all the troops excepting the abt 30 men Infantry and some volunteer cavalry, which with abt 200 armed citizens were left to guard the town. The following day they shall have reached the village Sibacóa, where they surprised a band of abt 200 Insurgents at dinner. The man of war 'Neptuno' has been making some excursions along the coast bringing in all the boats & coasters and has since yesterday remained to windward towards Cape Cruz, no doubt cooperating with the regular troops.

The merchant Mr. Tho. Brooks, which arrived yesterday from St. Jago de Cuba brought accounts of two British men of war having arrived there by request of the Spanish Government from Jamaica. At the same time it is stated in reliable quarters, that a band of Insurgents shall have carried off the Governor or Commandant and other Government officers at Sagunay with \$12,000 of the P. Treasury, and have cut the telegraph wires leading from Bayamo to St. Jago de Cuba. The communication from here to St. Jago being thus by land interrupted, induced the Government of latter place to send said Hennessy with despatches and to place the same at the disposal of the Governor of this town.

Some Spaniards and Shopkeepers arrived this morning in a boat from the coast, where they had fled on the approach of a band of 2 to 300 Insurgents headed by Francisco Aguilera, the wealthiest man in this District owning several Sugar estates and immense tracts of lands. This band shall have entered the village of Caimito after a fruitless attempt to carry the village of Las Tunas, where they had been repulsed and after providing themselves with food and whatever arms they could find at Caimito shall have the intention to renew their attack on Las Tunas.

It is stated to-day, that the Governor and Colonel at the head of the troops, which left here on the evening of the 14th inst, shall be in close pursuit of the Insurgents in command of Gen. Cespedes, from whose ranks many shall have deserted on approach of the regular troops and as several detachments of troops have been sent from Havana and are said to be on their way inland to cooperate with the soldiers from this District, there seems to be no chance of the Insurgents carrying their point, especially as long as the insurrection is confined to this District of Manzanilla.

There are but few American Citizens in this District and only one Amer^{ic}an vessel, the Brig. Isola of New York. F. W. Leach M^r, loading Tobacco for New York. Besides this there are only the Brit. Brig. Morning Star and the Gen.

barge T Diefeld in port, the former loading
also for New York - No men of war neither
foreign nor American have made their appearance
as yet. - The Custom-house has been shut
up since the 13th inst and the Officials have
all retired with their Books and valuables to the
Townhall on the Square, where the Collector how-
ever despatches the Shippers of produce -

Notwithstanding the great excitement and
alarm caused by the insurrection, the town
has remained quiet and perfect order prevails.
The slaves and coloured population have also
remained perfectly quiet, altho' great fear is
entertained on their account. -

Should the Insurgents maintain themselves
for some time, the consequences of abandon-
ment of agriculture, especially amongst the
poorer classes, will be severely felt and great
fears are entertained, that starvation will
follow the insurrection, as the season has
commenced for sowing Tobacco and attending
to the country provisions. -

The Insurgents proclamation shall be headed:
Viva Cuba libre! Republica y el G. Prim! -
and I have only to add: Dieu protège la
pauvre Ile! Remain most respectfully
Yours Honor
the 17th October 1868 } humble obt. servant
His Honor } C. W. F. Fithorne
Secret. W. Seward }
Washington }
Washington }
Washington }

Mr J. Smith, *Minister*
Consul General de Cuba
Treasury Department.

October 20th 1868.

Sir,

An important trial is about to take place in the city of Philadelphia in which the United States Government is a party, and I am advised that the evidence of U.S. Consular Agent Ecay, now at Manzanillo, Cuba, is of the utmost importance. I will thank you, if there is no objection thereto, to temporarily recall Mr Ecay in order that he may be present in the city of Philadelphia, not later than the 14th proximo.

Should it be necessary to postpone the trial referred to, the evidence of Mr Ecay may be taken by a Commissioner, and thus enable him to return to his post without unnecessary delay.

I am, Very Respectfully,
Wm. C. Smith
Secretary of the Treasury.

To

Hon Wm H. Seward,
Secretary of State.

Treasury Department

October 21st 1868

Sir.

I have the honor to acknowledge
the receipt of your several communications
relative to the decree of the Spanish Gov-
ernment to equalize the exaction of nav-
igation and port dues in the islands of Cuba
Puerto Rico and the Philippines of foreign and
Spanish vessels. My reply has been delayed
from a question having arisen as to the
construction of the phrase in the decree
"for the collection of navigation and port
dues" and a doubt whether any action

Hon. W. H. Seward

Secretary of State

of the President or of this Department
was authorized under the acts of 1832
and 1834 in the present state of the
case. The enclosed brief sets forth the
difficulties which have presented
themselves to my mind. Possibly
however the above named phrase
may admit of a more comprehensive
construction, which a further corres-
pondence with the Spanish Minister
might satisfactorily settle. In view
of such satisfactory explanation
I have prepared a circular which
I herewith submit. Anything that I
can lawfully do towards reducing the
onerous duties hitherto required
from vessels of both nations engaged

in this trade, I shall take great pleasure in doing.

Very respectfully

John C. Caldwell

Secretary of the Treasury

Trade with Cuba & Porto Rico.

The decree of the Spanish Government dated June 4th 1868, so far as it relates to the islands of Porto Rico and Cuba, places vessels of all nations which concede equal benefits in their respective territory and possession beyond sea to vessels of the Spanish marine coming from the ports of these Islands, on the same footing with Spanish vessels "for the collection of navigation and port dues."

The 3^d Section of the Act of August 3. 1846 (Key's Digest 293) provides "That no discriminating tonnage duties shall be levied on Spanish vessels coming from foreign countries, except those coming from Cuba and Porto Rico."

It is evident that nothing remains to be done by the U. S. Government in response to the decree, save in regard to Cuba and Porto Rico; and how stands the case with these islands. The Acts of

July 13. 1832 and June 30. 1834 (Hyl 244 & 250) regulated the tonnage charges on Spanish vessels trading between them and the U.S. prior to the passage of the tariff act of July 14. 1862.

The 2^d section of the first named act provides "that vessels owned wholly by Spanish subjects coming from any of the colonies of Spain, either directly, or after touching at any other port or place, shall pay, in the ports of the United States, the same rate of duty on tonnage that shall be levied on American vessels in the Spanish Colonial port from whence such Spanish vessel shall have last departed; the said amount to be ascertained by the Secretary of the Treasury, who is hereby authorized, from time to time, to give directions to the officers of the customs of the United States for the collection of such duties, so as to conform the said duties to any variation that may take place in the duties levied on American vessels in such Spanish ports."

The first section of the act of 1834 imposes upon Spanish vessels coming from Cuba or Porto Rico, either directly or indirectly, such further tonnage duty in addition to the tonnage duty which may be payable under any other law, as shall be equivalent to the amount of discriminating duty that would have been imposed on the cargoes imported in the said vessels, respectively, if the same had been exported from the port of Havana, in American bottoms." and the 2^d section provides "That before any such vessel shall be permitted to clear out or depart from a port of the United States, with a cargo which shall be directly or indirectly destined to either of the said islands, the said vessel shall pay such further tonnage duty as shall be equivalent to the amount of discriminating duty that would be payable, for the time being, upon the cargo, if imported into the port of Havana, in

an American bottom".

It will be seen that the addi-
tional tonnage duties imposed by this act
are to be equivalent to the amount of dis-
criminating duties imposed at the port of
Havana, not upon the tonnage capacity of
vessels, but upon the cargoes, imported
and exported at that port in American
bottoms. It seems to me very clear that the
decree of the Spanish Government does
not in any way change or affect this dis-
criminating duty upon cargoes of American
bottoms, and that therefore no action of the
President or Secretary of the Treasury can be
based, in the present state of the case, upon
the provisions of the 4th or 5th sections of
this act.

Whether they, or either of them, can
do any thing under the act of 1832, seems
to me to depend entirely upon the con-
struction given to the words "navigation
and port dues" in the decree. If they
do not include tonnage duties, I do
not see that any thing can be done

even under that act. If tonnage duties are included, then probably the discriminating tonnage duties levied on Spanish vessels in our ports under that act, ought to be abolished. But neither the despatches of the U.S. Consuls nor the letter of the Spanish Minister seem to me to afford any additional light upon this subject, as both adhere strictly to the very language of the decree "navigation and port dues". It seems to me therefore, that the first and only thing at present to be done, is to ascertain what the Spanish Government intended to include in these words.

In regard to the abolition of duties upon certain importations into Porto Rico, of which notice was given in the Consular despatch of Jan'y 7. 1868. No 22. Congress alone can act; as we have seen, that the act of 1834 requires the discriminating

6

duty under its provisions to be regulated by the Spanish ~~exactions~~ ^{exactions} upon cargoes imported or exported at Havana, without regard to the duties at the actual port of importation or exportation, whether in Cuba or Porto Rico.

The 917th Art. of the Genl. Treasury Regulations of 1857 (pp. 486-7-8) gives the rule for the assessment of tonnage duties on the vessels in question previous to the tariff acts of 1862 + 1865. Under these acts (Hurl 419 & 412.) a tonnage duty of 30 cents per ton is required to be paid on all vessels entering at our custom houses "in addition to any tonnage duty there (1862) imposed by law".

Respectfully submitted.

Treasury Department
October 21. 1868

The Spanish Government having decreed that "in the islands of Cuba, Porto Rico and the Philippines there shall be regarded on equal footing with Spanish vessels for the collection of navigation and port dues, vessels of all nations which concede equal benefits in their respective territory and possession beyond sea to vessels of the Spanish marine coming from the ports of those islands, and ports of the Peninsula and islands adjacent;" and the third section of the act of August 3, 1846. (Chap. 73.) having provided "that no

way of trade.

discriminating duties shall be levied
on Spanish vessels coming from foreign
countries, except those coming from Cuba
or Porto Rico", so that no change of the
regulations in regard to the Phillip-
pine islands is necessary. it is hereby
ordered that the discriminating ~~tonnage~~
duties now exacted from Spanish vessels
trading between our ports and those
of Cuba or Porto Rico be so modified
as to equalize the same, with the chan-
ges which shall appear, to be made
under the provisions of the said
decree at the ports of Cuba and
Porto Rico respectively, whether in the
form or name of tonnage duties or
import or export duties on cargoes.

Secretary of the Treasury

To Collectors of Customs
Secretary of State.

Send him
the names & address
of the Consul General
of Havana
of New York
Nov. 13. 68.

M. J. Smith

New York, Oct. 30. '68.

Havana

Will you be so kind
as to give Governor Mayan
the name of the American
Consul General of Cuba. if
we have one there now.

With much respect
Yours.

L. L. Doty
Sec.

J. W. Seward Esq
Asst. Sec. of State

Department of State, W. S. A.
TELEGRAM.
copy

Dated Auburn N. Y. Oct. 30th 1868.

Time received, 4 P.M. " " "

To Frederick M. Seward

Acting Secretary of State,

The revolutionists in Cuba want the presence of a United States naval force in that Island for moral effect in their own favor.

LaFeintrie recommends at their instance, it is not pretended that there is any danger to the rights and personal liberty of American Citizens there now,

on the contrary the Governor General deprecates such a proceeding because it would favor revolution and assure us that the persons and property of

Department of State, U. S. A.
TELEGRAM.

Dated _____, 186

Time received, _____

To _____

American Citizens are safe and will
be protected,

To these representations I have simply
answered the Government of the United
States is just and tranquil.

It is my judgment that, in the absence
of any actual outbreak in Cuba infringing
the rights of American Citizens, the
naval visits to there ought to be just as
they have been without increase or diminution
of frequency or force,

Submit this to the President with the
suggestion that he take advice of

Department of State, W. S. A.
TELEGRAM.

Dated _____, 186

Time received, _____

To _____

the Secretary of the Navy) and direct
you in the matter,

If no change is to be made it will
be unnecessary to reply to La Reintrie,

The sending of a naval force
would be regarded as indicating an
impatience for revolution in Cuba,
and would perhaps injure the
Republican Cause in Spain.

Inform me how the President decides,

Send by mail copy San Juan
Protocol,

William H. Seward,

Honorable Sir,
Santiago de Cuba
21 Oct. 68

Without any of your esteemed communications to reply to, I take the liberty of enclosing press copy of my last resp. of the 24th inst. and also of the Insurgents' Manifest therein referred to, since when nothing of importance has occurred.

This town remains quiet, but all business is at a stand still and the only communication open with other places is by Sea.

The inhabitants live in a constant dread of an attack by the Insurgents and the stringent measures taken lately by the Authorities indicate a general mistrust of all natives and foreigners, and fears of a more formidable enemy in the field, than was anticipated in the beginning.

The troops, regular and volunteers, here in town numbering now abt. 2000 men in all, have been only occupied this week in the defence, strong picquets being placed at the entrances and ^{erected} ~~erected~~ barricades under the direction of engineers sent from Havana. - Three of the wealthiest natives residing in this town have been arrested, as is stated, merely because they have many relatives amongst the Insurgents; all arms in hands of private individuals not taking part in the defence of the town have been called in by the Governor and even the Vice-Consul of H. R. M. and N. German Confederation, on special inquiry, has not been exempted from this measure.

There are at present three American vessels in port loading for New York and the funds

belonging to commercial houses and citizens
of the U. States in hands of merchants here
must be of some importance considering the
extent of business transacted with said quarter.

To judge by the tenor of the U. States A. Cons. V.
Consular Agent, Mr. Man? R. Eca's despatch to
the U. States A. Consul at St. Jago de Cuba on
the 26th inst. and previous report of the 15th inst.
which he pretended to have sent over land,
both of which by Mr. Eca's request I had to
translate from Spanish into English, no doubt
reports of a very agreeable and trifling nature
in reference to the insurrection may reach your
Honor, and although in official quarters a
desire is evident to give it such appearance,
I beg to convey the assurance, that my statements
are based upon facts and are derived of reliable
sources, having no other aim but to place the
same impartially before your Honor, so as to
enable you to take whatever measures you
may deem convenient under these circum-
stances for the protection of U. States citizen
interest etc.

As even letters sent to other parts of the Is-
land by steamer via Portugal have not been
received, I have placed this line under cover
addressed to Messrs. J. & C. Williams, Sons of New
York and avail of a reliable passenger to for-
ward same to Havana with instructions that
to mail it on board the first steamer leaving
for the U. States and I hope it may
reach you safely.

belonging to commercial houses and citizens
of the U. S. States in hands of merchants here
must be of some importance considering the
extent of business transacted with said quarter.

To judge by the tenor of the U. S. States A. Cons.
ular Agent, Mr. Man. R. Eay's despatch to the
U. S. States A. Consul at S. Jago de Cuba on
the 26th inst. and previous report of the 15th inst.
which he pretended to have sent over land,
both of which by Mr. Eay's request I had to
translate from Spanish into English, no doubt
reports of a very acquiescent and trifling nature
in reference to this insurrection may reach Your
Honor, and although in official quarters a
desire is evident to give it such appearance,
I beg to convey the assurance, that my statements
are based upon facts and are derived of reliable
sources, having no other aim but to place the
same impartially before Your Honor, so as to
enable you to take whatever measures you
may deem convenient under these circum-
stances for the protection of U. S. States citizens
interest etc.

As even letters sent to other parts of the Is-
land by Steamer via Portaband have not been
received, I have placed them in a covered ad-
dressed to Messrs. Thos. H. Vetterlein & Sons of New
York and avail of a reliable passenger to for-
ward same to Havana with instructions that
he mail it on board the first Steamer leaving
for the U. S. States and I hope it may
reach you safely.

remaining,

Your Honour's,
most respectful & obt. servt
C. H. Pithorn.

Manzanillo/Cuba }
the 31st October 1868-3

The Honorable Secretary of State
Wm. B. Seward Esq
Washington.

Honorable Sir,

In addition to my last letter of the 17th inst. I beg leave to send you another copy of the Revolutionary, Insular, Manifest dated the 10th inst., a document, which, should it not have reached your hands already, may prove of some interest, as it plainly shows the designs of the Insurgents. -

The insurrection, altho' confined yet to the surrounding country, is becoming daily more formidable and the repeated faint attempts of the troops here to crush it tend only to increase the Insurgents' confidence, their number and strength swelling daily. -

The troops some 500 Infantry and 100 men Cavalry, which latter arrived here on the 20th inst. from Havana have twice this week started, it is said, for Bayamo but owing to bad roads, continued fatiguing marches and alarms, combined with occasional skirmishes, in which they were convinced, that they had no discernible enemy to deal with, were obliged to return to this town. -

It is evident, that the Government either dreads the ruinous result of a warfare, which has cost so many lives and much treasure within these late years or the rising of other towns and districts; otherwise more troops would have been despatched to this quarter. It is stated, that the Insurgents are already in possession of Bayamo and have driven back several detachments of troops sent from Holguin and St. Jago. -

I am,

Yours Honors

most ob. servt.

Bayamilla 24th October
1868.

C. H. Withorn

Honor Wm B. Howard Esq
Secretary of State
Washington -

Manifiesto de la Junta Revolucionaria de la
Isla de Cuba á sus Compatriotas y á todos los Americanos.

Al levantarnos armados contra la opresión del tiránico gobierno Español, siguiendo la costumbre establecida en todos los países civilizados, manifestamos al mundo las causas que nos han obligado á dar este paso que en demanda de mejores bienes siempre produce trastornos inevitables, y los principios que queremos cimentar sobre la ruina de lo presente para felicidad del porvenir.

Nadie ignora que España gobierna á la isla de Cuba con un brazo de hierro ensangrentado; no solo no le deja seguridad en sus propiedades arrojándole la facultad de imponerla tributos y contribuciones á su antojo, sino que teniendo la privada de toda libertad política, civil y religiosa sus desgraciados hijos se ven espulsados de su suelo á remotos climas ó ejecutados sin forma de proceso por comisiones militares establecidas en plena paz con mengua del poder civil. Les tiene privada del derecho de reunión como no sea bajo la presidencia de un jefe militar; no puede pedir el remedio á sus males sino que se le trate como rebelde, y no se le concede otro recurso que callarse y obedecer.

La plaga infinita de empleados hambrientos que de España nos mandan, nos devora el producto de nuestros bienes y de nuestro trabajo al amparo de la despotica autoridad que el Gobierno Español pone en sus manos y priva á nuestros mejores compatriotas de aprender en el desempeño de los empleos públicos que requiere un buen gobierno, el arte de conocer como se dirige los destinos de una nación; porque auxiliada del sistema restricto de enseñanza que adopta, desea España que seamos tan ignorantes que no conozcamos nuestros mas sagrados derechos y que si lo conocemos no podamos reclamar su observancia en ningún terreno.

Armada y considerada esta Isla por todas las naciones que la rodean, que ninguna es enemiga suya, no necesita de un ejército ni de una marina permanente, que agasta tan con sus enormes gastos hasta las fuentes de la riqueza pública y privada, y sin embargo España nos impone en nuestro territorio una fuerza armada, que no lleva otro objeto que darnos doblar el cuello al yugo feroz, que nos degrada.

Los productos naturales, producidos en el país, por las representaciones de la parte de los mercaderes extranjeros, y que el sistema actual de España para costearlos en el comercio, es tal, que en los puertos de otras naciones, aquellos productos no alcanzan siquiera para cubrir sus gastos, de modo que sin la subsidio se verían en la miseria. -

En suma la Isla de Cuba no puede prosperar porque la inmigración blanca, única que en la actualidad le conviene se ve alejada de nuestras playas por las innumerables trabas en que se la enreda, y la prevención y ojeriza con que se la mira. -

Así pues los Cubanos no pueden hablar, no pueden escribir, no pueden ni siquiera pensar, y recibir un agasajo de los huéspedes, que sus hermanos de los otros pueblos les envían. Innumerables han sido las veces que España haya ofrecido respetar sus derechos; pero hasta ahora no ha visto el cumplimiento de su palabra, o menos que por tal no se tenga la moja de asomarse un vestigio de representación para disimular el impuesto, único en el nombre tan crecido con que arruina nuestras propiedades al abrigo de todas las demás cargas que le acompañan. -

Viendonos expuestos a perder nuestras haciendas, nuestras vidas y hasta nuestra honra, todo nos obliga a exponer esas adoradas prendas para reconquistar nros derechos de hombre, ya que no podemos con la fuerza de la palabra en la discusión, con la fuerza de nuestros brazos en los campos de batalla. Cuando un pueblo llega al extremo de

degradación y miseria en que nos vemos, no se puede
reprocharle que ceda manos á las armas para salir de
un estado tan lleno de aflicción. El ejemplo de las mas
grandes naciones autoriza ese ultimo recurso. La isla
Cuba no puede estar privada de los derechos que gozan
otros pueblos y no puede conseguir que se diga, que no
sabe mas que sufrir. A los clamores pueblos civilizados
leca interponer su influencia para sacar de las garras
de un barbero opresor á un pueblo inocente, ilustrado,
sensible y generoso. A ellos apelamos y al Dios de
nuestra conciencia con la mano sobre el corazon. No
nos estravian rencores, no nos halagan ambiciones;
solo queremos ser libres é iguales como hizo el creador
á todos los hombres.

Nosotros consagramos estos dos venerables principios,
nosotros creemos que todos los hombres somos hermanos,
amamos la tolerancia, el orden y la justicia en todas
las materias; respetamos las vidas y propiedades
de los ciudadanos pacíficos, aunque sean los mismos
Españoles residentes en este territorio; admiramos
el sufragio universal que asegura la soberanía del
pueblo; deseamos la emancipación gradual y bajo
indemnización de la esclavitud; el libre cambio
con las naciones amigas que usen de reciprocidad,
la representación nacional para decretar las leyes
é impuestos en general; demandamos la religiosa
observancia de los derechos imprescriptibles del
hombre, constituyendolos en nación independiente,
porque así cumple á la grandeza de nros futuros
destinos y porque estamos seguros de que bajo el estro
de España nunca gozamos del franco ejercicio de
nuestros derechos.

En vista de nuestra moderación, de nuestra
misericordia y de la razón que nos asiste; que pecho noble
habrá, que no lata con el deseo de que obtengamos el
objeto sacrosanto que nos proponemos? ¿que pueblo

no se horrorizará á la simple consideracion de que para
preservar hasta los derechos de Cuba, á cada momento lo
tiene que decimar la sangre de sus valientes hijos.
No; que Cuba no puede pertenecer mas á una potencia
que como Cain á sus hermanos y como Saturno de-
vora á sus hijos. Cuba aspira á ser una nacion
grande y civilizada para tender un brazo amigo
y un corazon fraternal á todos los demas pueblos,
y si la misma España consiente en dejarla libre y
tranquila la estrechará á su seno como una hija
amante de su buena madre; pero si persiste en su
sistema de dominacion y exterminio, segará todos
nuestros cuellos y los cuellos de los que en pos de
nosotros vengán antes de conseguir hacer de Cuba
un vil rebaño de esclavos. —

En consecuencia hemos acordado unánimamente
un jefe unico que dirija todas las operaciones con
plenitud de facultades y bajo su responsabilidad,
autorizado especialmente para designar un segundo
y los demas subalternos que necesite en todos los
ramos de administracion, mientras dure el estado
de guerra, y conocido, como lo está el caracter de los
governantes Españoles, forzosamente ha de seguirse
á la proclamacion de la Libertad de Cuba. —
Tambien hemos nombrado una comision gubernativa
de cinco miembros para auxiliar al general en jefe
en la parte politica, civil y demas ramos de que se
ocupa un pais bien reglamentado. Asimismo decretamos,
que desde este momento quedan abolidos todos
los derechos, impuestos, contribuciones y otras emaciones
que hasta ahora ha cobrado el Gobierno Español, cual-
quiera que sea la forma y el pretexto con que lo ha hecho,
y que solo se pague con el nombre de Ofrenda Patrio-
tica, para los gastos que ocurran durante la guerra,

el cinco por ciento de la renta concebida en la actualidad
calculada desde este treinta, como reserva de que sin
fuera suficiente pueda aumentarse en la sucesiva la
adoptarse alguna operacion de credito segun la estimo
mas conveniente la junta de ciudadanos que al efecto
deben celebrarse. -- Declaramos, que todos los servicios
prestados a la patria serán debidamente remunerados
que en los negocios en general se observe la legislacion
vigente, interpretando en sentido liberal hasta que
otra cosa se determine, y por ultimo, que todas las
disposiciones adoptadas son puramente transitorias
mientras que la nacion, ya libre de sus enemigos y
mas ampliamente representada, se constituya en el
modo y forma que juzgue mas aurtado. --

Manzanillo Octubre 10 de 1868.

Es Copia

El Secretario General

(firma) Ignacio Martiner
Rogue