

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

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The Revolt of “the Ever-faithful Isle”: The Ten Years’ War in Cuba, 1868-1878

A Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy  
in History

by

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## ABSTRACT

The Revolt of “the Ever-faithful Isle”: The Ten Years’ War in Cuba, 1868-1878

by

Vanessa Michelle Ziegler

The Ten Years’ War (1868-1878) was Cuba’s first intensive struggle for independence from Spain. This insurrection, however, has been treated frequently in Cuban historiography as a less significant precursor to the more studied War of Independence (1895-1898). The collapse of the Ten Years’ War is intricately linked to the outcome of the War of Independence, which makes the Ten Years’ War an important subject for study and research. The disastrous political, social, and racial conflicts of the first independence war offered sobering lessons to the Cuban insurgents, which they failed to fully understand in the final struggle. Thus, a more thorough analysis of the Ten Years’ War will better explain the ambiguous results of the 1895 war.

In this dissertation, I argue that a multi-class and multi-racial coalition of men and women mobilized against the Spanish regime in response to political repression and economic crisis in Cuba. The Cuban separatist movement succeeded in enacting a republican constitution, establishing a national government with state and local administrations, in holding elections, and in operating an economy based on limited resources. Civil-military disputes, conflicts based on racial fears and annexation to the United States, a divided expatriate community, and U.S. opposition to the Cuban

insurgency contributed to its collapse, however. At the same time, political upheaval in Spain, conflicts between Spanish captain generals and conservatives in Cuba, and dilemmas confronting the Spanish Army on the island prevented a swift conclusion of the colonial armed struggle.

This dissertation is based on extensive archival research, and published primary and secondary source analysis. Most of the research for this dissertation was undertaken in various archives and libraries of Madrid, Spain. Additionally, in the United States, I studied microfilm from the U.S. National Archives and the Library of Congress, and conducted research in the Department of Special and Area Studies Collections at the University of Florida in Gainesville.

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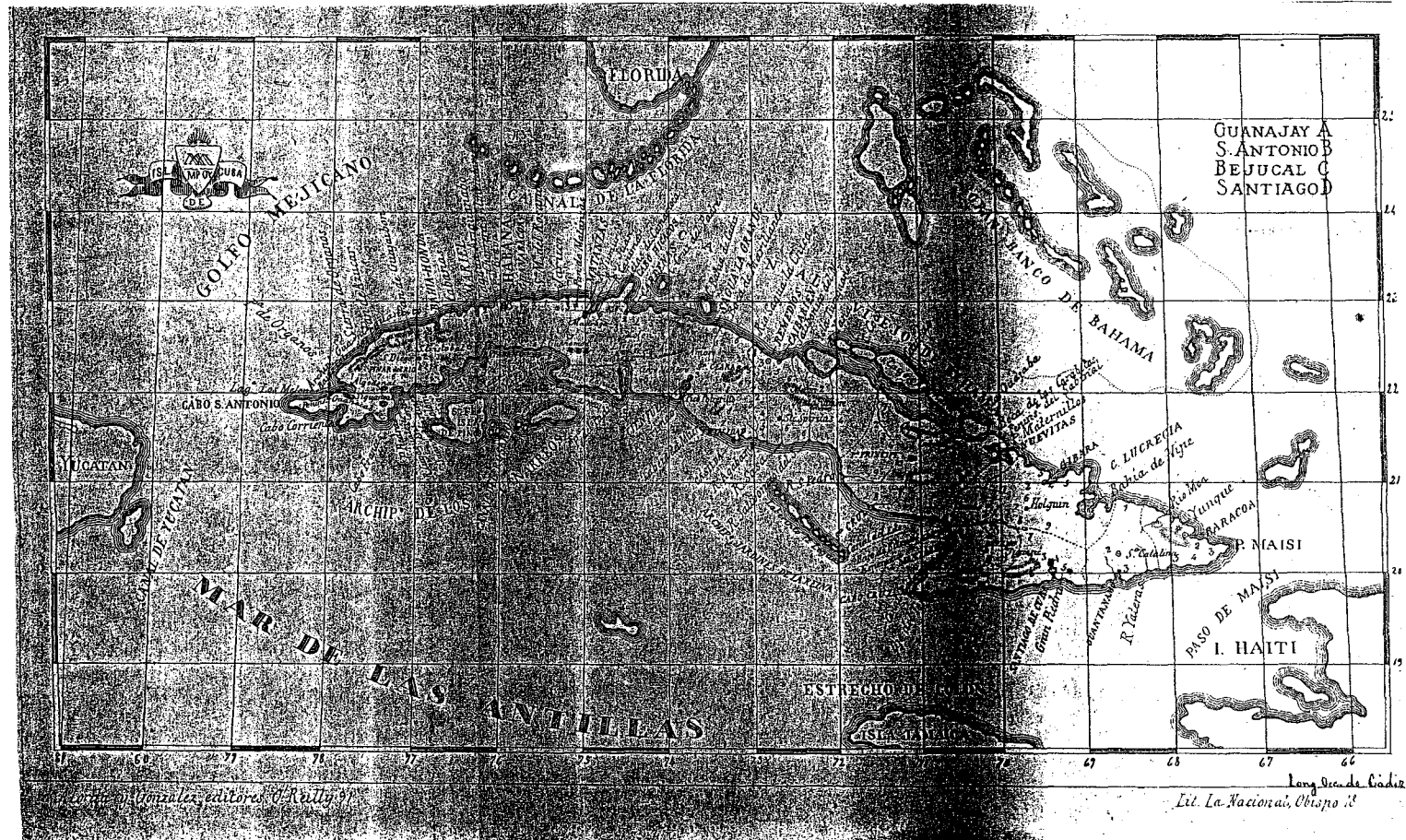
In addition to Dr. Dutra, I thank Dr. Sarah Cline and Dr. John Foran, also members of my dissertation committee, for their incisive critiques on drafts of my dissertation, which helped to improve it.

Finally and most importantly, I reserve my deepest gratitude for my family – my parents Victor and Lida Ziegler, my husband Yuriy Malikov, and my brother Alexander Ziegler. Their support and encouragement afforded the completion of this project. It is to my family that I dedicate my dissertation.

### **Abbreviations**

AHN	Archivo Histórico Nacional
AMAE	Archivo del Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores
BNM	Biblioteca Nacional (Madrid)
IHCM	Instituto de Historia y Cultura Militar
RAH	Real Academia de la Historia
Doc. no.	Document number
Exp.	Expediente
Leg.	Legajo
Ms.	Manuscrito
Sign.	Signatura
USNA	United States National Archives

# Cuba, 1875



Source: J[uan] M[iracle] de la C[oncepción], *Elementos de la geografía de la isla de Cuba, con un mapa conforme al texto, arreglados para las clases inferiores de primera enseñanza elemental*, 2d ed. (Havana: Alorda y González, 1875).

## Introduction

The Ten Years' War (1868-1878)<sup>1</sup> was Cuba's first intensive struggle for independence from Spain. This insurrection, however, has been treated frequently in Cuban historiography as a less significant precursor to the more studied Cuban War of Independence (1895-1898). While the War of Independence is a defining crossroads in Cuban history, the collapse of the Ten Years' War is intricately linked to the outcome of the War of Independence. This, in turn, makes the Ten Years' War an important subject for study and research. The disastrous political, socioeconomic, and racial conflicts of the first independence war offered sobering lessons to the Cuban insurgents, which they failed to fully understand in the final struggle. Thus, a

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<sup>1</sup> It remains unclear when the Ten Years' War got its name. Spanish historians who wrote in the nineteenth century referred to the Cuban struggle for independence as an "insurrection," a "war," a "rebellion," or "the uprising of Yara," but not as the Ten Years' War (See Antonio Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, vols. 1-3 [Madrid: Felipe González Rojas, 1895-1898] and Justo Zaragoza, *Las insurrecciones en Cuba. Apuntes para la historia política de esta isla en el presente siglo*, vol. 2, [Madrid: Imprenta de Manuel G. Hernández, 1873]). Likewise, insurgent veterans, such as Máximo Gómez, also identified it as "[t]he war of Cuba" and "the Revolution," instead of calling it the Ten Years' War (See Máximo Gómez, *Horas de tregua* [Havana: Imprenta Artística "Comedia" de Rodríguez y Ca., 1916], 27, 31). In two elementary and secondary-school primers used in Cuba – Ramiro Guerra y Sánchez, *Historia elemental de Cuba*, 8<sup>th</sup> ed. (Havana: Cultural, S. A., n.d.), and Edilberto Marbán and Elio Leiva, *Curso de historia de Cuba*, vol. 2, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Havana, 1951) – the Cuban rebellion is referred to as it is called today, but it is not explained when the term "Ten Years' War" became coined. At the same time, Cuban historian Emilio Roig de Leuchsenring wrote in 1952 that the Cuban insurrection was "popularly known" as "the Ten Years' War," but did not mention when the title began to be used (See Emilio Roig de Leuchsenring, *La guerra libertadora cubana de los treinta años, 1868-1898: Razón de su victoria* [Havana: Oficina del Historiador de la Ciudad de La Habana, Colección Histórica Cubana y Americana, 1952], 53). Finally, Cuban historian Ramiro Guerra states that the Ten Years' War had been named the Guerra Grande "[t]o distinguish it from the entitled *La Guerra Chiquita*," another Cuban rebellion fought in 1879-1880. He also quotes Captain General Joaquín Jovellar, who served as the governor of Cuba from 1873 to 1874 and 1876 to 1878, referring to the Cuban insurgency as "the Ten Years' War," but Guerra does not cite the source corresponding to the quote (See Ramiro Guerra, *Guerra de los 10 años*, vol. 2 [Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1972], 388).



more thorough analysis of the Ten Years' War will better explain the ambiguous results of the 1895 war.

The historiography on the Ten Years' War in Cuba is substantial, but far from being complete and not without its problems. Cuban scholars have produced works focusing, for the most part, on the military and political aspects of the war. While these facets are crucial to understanding why the Cuban insurgents ultimately failed to achieve independence, many of these works have included little, if any, archival research. Consequently, they fail to fully investigate particular issues, such as the precarious socioeconomic conditions in which many Cubans lived during the Ten Years' War; the insurgents' local administration of captured territories, including rural towns and cities; and the personal impact of the Spanish policy on confiscating property belonging to suspected or actual rebel fighters. In addition, Spanish and Cuban historians have tended to examine the war either exclusively from the Spanish or Cuban perspectives, which fail to provide a more complete depiction of the insurrection.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, some accounts lack objectivity by either eulogizing the

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<sup>2</sup> Some of the better known general Cuban works on the Ten Years' War include Guerra, *Guerra de los 10 años*, vols. 1-2; Jorge Ibarra, *Ideología mambisa* (Havana: Instituto del Libro, 1967); Francisco J. Ponte Domínguez, *Historia de la guerra de los diez años* (Havana: Imprenta "El Siglo XX," 1954); and Roig de Leuchsenring, *La guerra libertadora cubana*. While these general works provide excellent political and military history on the Ten Years' War, they often cite few, if any, archival sources. On the issue of race in the Ten Years' War, see Raúl Cepero Bonilla's groundbreaking study – "Azúcar y abolición. (Apuntes para una historia crítica del abolicionismo)," in *Escritos históricos* (Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1989) – and José L. Franco, *Antonio Maceo: Apuntes para una historia de su vida*, vol. 1 (Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1989). More recently, Cuban scholars have contributed important research focusing on specific aspects of the Ten Years' War based on archival and published primary sources. Some of these works include René González Barrios, *Los capitanes generales en Cuba (1868-1878)* (Havana: Ediciones Verde Olivo, 1999); and Fe Iglesias García, "El censo cubano de 1877 y sus diferentes versiones." *Santiago* 34 (June 1979): 167-214. At the same time, Spanish historians also have produced well-researched works on the Ten Years' War. Inés Roldán de Montaud has written two outstanding studies: *La Hacienda en Cuba durante la guerra*

Spanish or Cuban leaders, while lambasting leaders of the opposition. Praise of national heroes and criticism of their adversaries are common features in all histories. Taking such an approach to this period in Cuban and Spanish history, however, tends to hinder a more accurate analysis delineating why and how the Cuban separatists were able to carry on the insurrection as long as they did, as well as why the Spanish Army and insular government finally were able to declare victory over the Cubans in 1878.

At the same time, U.S. American and European scholars only have contributed brief general accounts on the Ten Years' War. Their analysis of the rebellion has been limited to single or, at best, several chapters.<sup>3</sup> In recent years, however, several scholars in the United States have produced excellent works regarding the role of Afro-Cuban participation in Cuba's thirty-year struggle for independence between 1868 and 1898.<sup>4</sup> Nonetheless, the historiography on the Ten

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*de los diez años (1868-1880)* (Madrid: Instituto de Cooperación Iberoamericana, 1990), which discusses the poor state of the Cuban Treasury as a result of the Ten Years' War, and *La Restauración en Cuba: El fracaso de un proceso reformista* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Centro de Humanidades, Instituto de Historia, Departamento de Historia de América, 2000), which concentrates on the rise of the Partido Unión Constitucional in Cuban politics in the second half of the nineteenth century. Another noteworthy Spanish work focusing on aspects of the Ten Years' War is Joan Casanovas, *Bread, or Bullets!: Urban Labor and Spanish Colonialism in Cuba, 1850-1898* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1998).

<sup>3</sup> See Louis A. Pérez, Jr., *Cuba: Between Reform and Revolution*, 2d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995) and Hugh Thomas, *Cuba, or the Pursuit of Freedom*, updated ed. (New York: Da Capo Press, 1998).

<sup>4</sup> See Arthur F. Corwin, *Spain and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba, 1817-1886* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1967); Ada Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba: Race, Nation, and Revolution, 1868-1898* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999); Franklin W. Knight, *Slave Society in Cuba during the Nineteenth Century* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1970); Karen Robert, "Slavery and Freedom in the Ten Years' War, Cuba, 1868-1878," *Slavery and Abolition* 14:1 (April 1993): 181-200; and Rebecca J. Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba: The Transition to Free Labor, 1860-1899* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985). There also are works focusing on race relations in late nineteenth and twentieth-century Cuba, which make references to the Ten Years' War, including Alejandro de la Fuente, *A Nation for All: Race, Inequality, and Politics in Twentieth-Century Cuba*

Years' War continues to lack a comprehensive study that examines the participation of all classes, races, and genders in the Spanish colonial insurrection.<sup>5</sup> I devote part of my study to this subject.

Lastly, as historian Sherry Johnson observes, "processes in Cuban history are seen in isolation; rarely are external influences considered when evaluating the outcome of events on the island."<sup>6</sup> It is fundamentally important to study U.S.-Spanish foreign relations during the Ten Years' War since the United States' policy on Cuba affected the results of the insurrection. Moreover, the histories of the United States and Cuba have long been closely linked, as a large body of documents in U.S. and Spanish repositories demonstrate. I dedicate one chapter of my dissertation to U.S.-Spanish diplomatic relations during the Cuban war of 1868-1878.

### **Objectives of the Dissertation**

This dissertation is a socioeconomic and political history of the Ten Years' War, which analyzes both Cuban insurgent and Spanish perspectives of the insurrection. Ultimately, my research in this dissertation endeavors to determine the causes of the collapse of the separatist movement. In studying archival documents,

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(Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Aline Helg, *Our Rightful Share: The Afro-Cuban Struggle for Equality, 1886-1912* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995); and Thomas T. Orum, "The Politics of Color: The Racial Dimension of Cuban Politics during the Early Republican Years, 1900-1912," (Ph.D. diss.: New York University, 1975).

<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, sociologists recently have produced works examining the role of human agency in twentieth-century revolutions in Latin America. Two outstanding studies include John Foran, Linda Klouzal, and Jean-Pierre Rivera, "Who Makes Revolutions?: Class, Gender, and Race in the Mexican, Cuban, and Nicaraguan Revolutions," *Research in Social Movements, Conflict and Change* 20 (London: Jai Press, 1997): 1-60; and Eric Selbin, *Modern Latin American Revolutions*, 2d ed. (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1999).

<sup>6</sup> Sherry Johnson, *The Social Transformation of Eighteenth-Century Cuba* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2001), 1.

published primary sources, and the secondary literature on the insurrection, I have concluded that four factors contributed to the Cuban separatists' failure. First, intense regionalism, military and civil leaders' concern with protecting their status, and competition over the possession of scarce resources created antagonism between separatist leaders, which weakened the unity of the independence movement. Second, conflict among Cuban insurrectionists over the issue of annexation to the United States created confusion and dissension with regard to the insurgency's objectives. Third, the white separatist leadership lacked foresight on the role of Afro-Cubans in the war against Spain and in a post-colonial Cuba. Consequently, fear of racial warfare prevented the insurgents' invasion of the Western Department (the present-day provinces of Matanzas, Havana, and Pinar del Río), which held the majority of Cuba's sugar plantations and slave population. Fourth, a lack of support from the Ulysses S. Grant administration and divided Cuban exile communities handicapped the Liberation Army since few arms and munitions from abroad reached the hands of insurgent soldiers. As a result of these weaknesses within the separatist movement, Spanish General Arsenio Martínez Campos's policy of political attraction and military force against the insurgents, which was implemented upon his arrival to Cuba in November 1876, hastened the collapse of the Cuban provisional government and Liberation Army in 1878. Therefore, I investigate to what extent issues of military and civil disputes, and conflict over annexation contributed to the downfall of the separatist movement. Additionally, I examine how race influenced military and civil struggles within the insurgent movement, and determine why and to what extent

Afro-Cubans participated in the Ten Years' War. Moreover, I determine why and to what extent other racial and social groups contributed to the independence effort. Finally, I study how conflict within the Cuban émigré communities and U.S. opposition to the separatists had a negative impact on the insurgency.

The central questions to be examined in the dissertation are: (1) What were the causes of the Ten Years' War; (2) Who participated in the Cuban insurrection and why; (3) How well or poorly did the Cuban government and Liberation Army function, and what was the relationship between these institutions; (4) What challenges did Madrid, the insular government in Havana, and the Spanish Army face during the Ten Years' War; which hindered a swift resolution to the armed conflict; (5) What role did the United States play in the Spanish colonial conflict; (6) Why did the Cuban insurrection last as long as it did, yet ultimately fail; and (7) What lessons were learned, if any, from the outcome of the war by both the Spaniards and Cubans?

It is my hope that this dissertation will be a unique contribution to the corpus of Cuban history. My dissertation is based on extensive archival research and published primary source analysis, some of which has not been incorporated in prior works. I also present both the Spanish and Cuban perspectives on the war, which few scholars have done, while also adding the U.S. viewpoint, since the failure of the 1868 insurgency is linked to the U.S. government's opposition to the Cuban separatist movement. More importantly, I examine subjects that previously have received little or no attention. From the Cuban standpoint, I determine which social and racial groups participated in the insurgency and for what reasons, I describe daily life under

the jurisdiction of the separatists, and I evaluate the relations between local military officers, civil leaders, and ordinary Cuban citizens. In addition to discussing the famous insurgents, I examine lesser-known ones, and I endeavor to provide a realistic portrayal of separatist leaders. From the Spanish perspective, important political events and dilemmas within the Spanish Army, which have received little or no coverage in recent works, are discussed. I also provide a detailed description of the peace negotiations at Zanjón using Spanish archival sources.

## Sources

Most of the research for this dissertation was undertaken in the archives of Madrid, Spain. The Spanish archives consulted include the Archivo Histórico Nacional, the Archivo del Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, the Instituto de Historia y Cultura Militar (formerly the Servicio Histórico Militar), and the Real Academia de la Historia. In addition, research was conducted at the Biblioteca Nacional (Madrid) and the Hemeroteca Municipal (Madrid).

The Archivo Histórico Nacional (AHN) holds a large collection of documents pertaining to the Ten Years' War. Of the Sección Ultramar, I consulted *legajos* (boxes of archival documents) which included the captain generals' correspondence with members of the Spanish government and military during the insurrection concerning such matters as filibuster expeditions, the military campaigns and political situation in Cuba, the state of U.S.-Spanish diplomatic relations, and peace negotiations. Other *legajos* contained confiscated insurgent documents; pro-Spanish

and Cuban separatist newspapers; letters of commendation for doctors who assisted in ending epidemics in different regions of Cuba during the Ten Years' War; reports on the crimes committed by Spanish soldiers during the insurrection; papers relating to the Spanish confiscation and/ or return of property to insurgents; and pardons and sentences carried out against separatists of different races and genders.

At the Real Academia de la Historia (RAH), I researched the Colección Fernández Duro, which holds ten *legajos*, six of which comprise of confiscated insurgent documents. The Colección Fernández Duro deals with such topics as the correspondence, orders, and proclamations issued by separatist leaders; the actions of the Junta Central Republicana de Cuba y Puerto Rico in New York; and the legislation enacted by the provisional government. Perhaps the most valuable information comes from the correspondence of insurgent officers, and the prefects and sub-prefects, who governed local districts. These documents provide insights into insurgent military and civilian life, the production of foodstuffs and manufactured goods, the supervision of elections, and the handling of shortages, and military and civil disputes.

In addition, the Instituto de Historia y Cultura Militar (IHCM) holds a valuable collection of Spanish military records on the Ten Years' War. Of particular importance are the rebel documents confiscated by the Spanish Army during the insurrection and Spanish military reports on encounters with insurgent troops. Other documents consulted include information on filibuster expeditions; the Spanish

relocation of families from the countryside to military camps; the surrender or capture of insurgents; and the separatist destruction of *ingenios* (sugar mills).

At the Archivo del Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores (AMAE), I studied correspondence dated in 1869 between officials of the Spanish Ministry of State discussing the Spanish execution of a U.S. citizen, insurgent filibuster expeditions, and the activities of the separatist Junta in New York. I also researched correspondence between U.S. Secretary of State Hamilton Fish and the Spanish plenipotentiary minister in Washington over the Spanish confiscation of property in Cuba belonging to a U.S. citizen.

Finally, I conducted research at the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid, Spain (BNM) and the Hemeroteca Municipal (Madrid). The BNM holds a rich collection of nineteenth-century books and newspapers, many of which provide accounts of the Ten Years' War. The books include political, military, and economic histories of Cuba. They tend to be written from the Spanish perspective, but the BNM also holds Cuban insurgent publications. In addition, the BNM manuscripts section contains the wartime correspondence, orders, and proclamations of the captain generals. From the Hemeroteca Municipal, I researched several insurgent and Spanish newspapers published in Cuba prior to and during the Ten Years' War.

In the United States, I utilized microfilm from the U.S. National Archives (USNA) and the Library of Congress, and conducted research in the Department of Special and Area Studies Collections at the University of Florida in Gainesville. From the USNA, I researched the dispatches written to the U.S. Department of State from



U.S. consular agents stationed in Santiago de Cuba, Trinidad, and Cienfuegos during the time period under study. These dispatches contribute an American perspective on the political and economic conditions in Cuba during the insurrection. Finally, the Library of Congress holds several newspapers published in Cuba and one in Key West during the Ten Years' War.

The University of Florida Department of Special and Area Studies Collections holds nearly four hundred rare books, manuscripts, and serials on Cuba, most of which date back to the nineteenth century. These works include memoirs of one captain general, two high-ranking Spanish officers, and one ordinary Spanish soldier, all of whom served in Cuba during the Ten Years' War, books on Cuban geography and military regulations, foreign relations studies, critiques on Spanish governance in Cuba, and the insurgent newspaper *La República*. Additionally, the University of Florida library holds political and economic histories of nineteenth-century Cuba, which provide important historical background for the insurrection. Finally, the University of Florida Department of Special and Area Studies Collections contains the *José Ignacio Rodríguez Papers*, a manuscript collection which discusses the arbitration process involving properties confiscated by the Spanish government in Cuba belonging to U.S. citizens during the Ten Years' War.

### **Organizational Framework**

This dissertation is organized thematically. The first chapter focuses on the origins of the Ten Years' War, and provides a discussion of which social and racial

groups participated in the insurrection and for what reasons. There are several factors, which led to the Cuban uprising on October 10, 1868. First, in the nineteenth century there had been rising economic and political discontent among Cubans against the Spanish government. In particular, there were sharp differences in socioeconomic development and political traditions between the wealthier western and poorer eastern regions of the island, which helps to explain why in 1868 many eastern Creoles (Cuban-born whites) and Afro-Cubans proclaimed independence from Spain and most western Creoles rejected the separatist movement. Although eastern Cubans hoped for the implementation of favorable economic and political reforms prior to the insurrection, the failure of the Junta de Información de Ultramar, which was created in 1865 to enact colonial reforms on commerce, labor, and taxes, pushed many easterners to revolt against imperial rule. Moreover, eastern Cubans may have taken advantage of the political chaos resulting from the *Septembrista* revolution of 1868 in Spain by rebelling against the Spanish Crown one month later.

Thus, in the first chapter I examine the state of the economy, society, and politics in the first half of nineteenth-century Cuba to obtain a clearer understanding for why the insurgency occurred. Much of the historiography on the Ten Years' War concentrates only on the immediate economic and political conditions leading up to the war. A broader examination of the socioeconomic and political environment would shed more light on why certain social and racial groups participated in the armed struggle. For this chapter, I use nineteenth-century general histories held at the Department of Special and Area Studies Collections at the University of Florida in

Gainesville and the BNM to examine the socioeconomic and political background of the insurrection.

The second chapter has two goals: (1) to examine the Cuban insurgents' establishment and operation of a provisional government and army; and (2) to analyze the extent to which the separatist leaders were able to resolve dilemmas within their movement and meet the challenges of the Spanish counterrevolution. The first section of the chapter begins with a study of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government, and of the civil administration from the national to the local level. In addressing the second goal of the chapter, I analyze the state of military-civil, inter-civil, and inter-military relations. Of particular importance is the study of the relationship between military and civil leaders, and ordinary citizens living under the jurisdiction of the provisional government. As we shall see, competition over scarce resources often placed the insurgents at odds with the civilian population. Resentment against the Liberation Army and local civil administration's seizure of crops and livestock, as well as Spanish persecution, caused many rural Cubans to assist the Spanish Army by becoming soldiers or spies. This chapter also describes how troubled race relations within the separatist movement impeded Cuban efforts to win independence from Spain. Finally, the extent to which Cuban military strategies were successful against Spanish forces is addressed. Both sections of this chapter rely principally on the confiscated rebel documents held at the AHN and the RAH, which are used to examine the civil and military administration of rebel territory.

Chapter 3 concentrates on the challenges which the Spanish insular government confronted during the Ten Years' War and its political responses to the Cuban insurrection. In the midst of the colonial rebellion, Spain also faced a series of revolts and successive governments in the Peninsula. Spain's turbulent struggle between political liberalism and conservatism reverberated in Cuba throughout much of the Ten Years' War. In 1869, Captain General Domingo Dulce's liberal political agenda met with heavy resistance from Spanish and Cuban conservatives on the island. Ultimately, the liberal-conservative clash resulted in the conservatives' ouster of Dulce, which had an impact on colonial politics and policymaking in Cuba for the remainder of the war.<sup>7</sup>

Chapter 4 continues with the study of the dilemmas facing the Spanish captaincy general in ending the decade-long Cuban rebellion. Political uprisings in Spain prevented the Madrid government from providing sufficient military and financial aid to the colonial administration for the suppression of the separatist revolt. Financial crisis and political conflicts between Spanish captain generals and conservatives in Cuba further extended the duration of the insurgency. In addition, I examine the obstacles confronting the Spanish Army, which also delayed a swift conclusion to the insurrection. For the third and fourth chapters on the Spanish standpoint, I use the correspondence of the wartime captain generals and conservatives in Cuba, which is held at both the AHN and the BNM. In addition, Spanish military reports from the IHCM are incorporated into Chapter 4. Finally,

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<sup>7</sup> Roldán de Montaud, *La Restauración en Cuba*, 23-25.

from the BNM and the University of Florida Department of Special and Area Studies Collections, I rely on first-hand political and military accounts written by loyalists of the Spanish regime to address the issues of colonial politics, policymaking, and the conditions within the Spanish Army during the Ten Years' War.

Chapter 5 concentrates on U.S.-Spanish foreign relations during the period under investigation and the ramifications for Cuban separatists of the Grant administration's decision not to support them. Important questions to be answered include: (1) What considerations shaped the United States' decision to oppose the Cuban insurrection; and (2) What effects did U.S. non-recognition of the insurgency have on the Cuban separatist movement? On the subject of U.S.-Cuban foreign relations, I find Louis A. Pérez's interpretations most persuasive. Pérez argues that, in the nineteenth century, "Cuba figured prominently in the meditations of nation, a means and a metaphor by which Americans took measure of their well-being, linked directly to the national concern for security and prosperity."<sup>8</sup> Moreover, he claims that the McKinley administration intervened in the Cuban War of Independence of 1895-1898 because

[t]he Cuban insurrection threatened more than the propriety of colonial administration; it also challenged the U.S. presumption of succession, for in contesting Spanish rule Cubans were advancing the claim of a new sovereignty. For much of the nineteenth century, the United States had pursued the acquisition of Cuba with resolve, if without results. The success of the Cuban rebellion threatened everything. In 1898 Cuba was lost to Spain, and if Washington did not act, it would also be lost to the United States.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Louis A. Pérez, Jr., *The War of 1898: The United States and Cuba in History and Historiography* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 3-4.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

Based on these assertions, it is likely that the United States did not interfere in the Ten Years' War since it appeared to members of the Grant administration that the Cuban separatist movement was not strong enough to jeopardize Spanish rule on the island.<sup>10</sup> For this chapter, I rely on secondary sources, archival documents from the USNA and the AMAE, and published volumes of *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant* to demonstrate how the U.S. position on the Cuban insurgency was formed, which American, Spanish, and Cuban diplomats and statesmen participated vigorously in this debate, and how the U.S. position on the colonial rebellion affected the Cuban insurgents.

At the same time in this chapter, I also study the Cuban Junta in New York and its relations with the U.S. government, the Cuban provisional government, and the exile communities in the United States. This segment of the dissertation is influenced by Gerald E. Poyo's *"With All, and for the Good of All": The Emergence of Popular Nationalism in the Cuban Communities of the United States, 1848-1898*.

Poyo argues that

[t]he [Cuban] conflict gained widespread support on the island but it failed to produce a powerful nationalist constituency united in vision and strategy, leaving the rebellion vulnerable to division, and ultimately, defeat. . . . To a large extent, political divisions within rebel ranks, especially in the émigré communities, detracted from the war effort. While Cuban *mambises* struggled to maintain the republic-in-arms and expand their reach with barest essentials of warfare, exiles engaged in bitter debates regarding the movement's essential character.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Gerald E. Poyo, *"With All, and for the Good of All": The Emergence of Popular Nationalism in the Cuban Communities of the United States, 1848-1898* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1989), 20.

The Cuban exile communities clashed over the issue of nationhood. According to Poyo, ex-reformists of the Junta leadership supported the annexation of Cuba to the United States “because they shared the concerns expressed by the annexationists of the 1850s: the consequences of extended revolution and the possible instability and economic chaos associated with independence.” At the same time, Poyo states that “nationalist partisans of independence focused on creating a self-sufficient military capable of defeating the Spanish.” Competing political goals caused “bitter conflicts” among Cuban expatriates, which hindered their ability to send much-needed military supplies to the insurgents in Cuba, thereby weakening the separatist movement.<sup>12</sup> To this discussion, I contribute new information concerning Cuban exile organizations outside of the United States and on the relations between the separatist administration of Tomás Estrada Palma (1876-1877), the Junta leadership, and the Cuban expatriate communities. For this section of Chapter 5, I incorporate archival sources from the AHN and the RAH, and nineteenth-century accounts of the Ten Years’ War from the BNM and Special and Area Studies Collections at the University of Florida at Gainesville.

Finally, Chapter 6 begins with an examination of the political and military meltdown of the insurgent movement, which started in 1875 when General Gómez attempted to lead an armed invasion of the western provinces. At this point, we shall see how regionalism, racial fears, and political egotism contributed to the demise of the insurgency. Next, I evaluate General Martínez Campos’s political and military

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 20-21.

campaigns against the separatists and the peace negotiations at Zanjón. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the repercussions of the Ten Years' War in the interwar period (1878-1895). For research on this chapter, I consulted sources from the AHN to discuss the Spanish perspective on the conclusion of the insurrection and published primary sources written by insurgent veterans of the Ten Years' War.

The conclusion first reconsiders the origins of the Ten Years' War. Then, I evaluate the reasons for the collapse of the Cuban separatist movement, again emphasizing the role of internal political, military, and racial conflicts, and the lack of material support from the Cuban exile communities in the collapse of the separatist movement. Finally, I determine the extent to which both the Spaniards and the Cubans learned lessons from the Ten Years' War, which they would apply to the War of Independence of 1895-1898. In the final struggle for independence, the Cuban separatists demonstrated greater unity by opposing annexation to the United States. Moreover, their swift invasion of the western provinces enervated the Spanish cause. Racial and civil-military disputes remained, however, which weakened the Cuban nationalist movement in the midst of U.S. armed intervention in 1898. On the other hand, Spanish political and economic interests in Cuba remained entrenched, which did not permit a radical change of policy in administering the island during the interlude between wars. In 1895 and 1896, promises of liberal reform fell on deaf ears as the Liberation Army swept through the entire length of the island. A return to harsh conservatism under Captain General Valeriano Weyler had the effect of consolidating the cause of *Cuba Libre*, which not even the Spanish enactment of



autonomy in January 1898 could alter. Nonetheless, U.S. military intervention, which occurred as a result of the U.S. government's longstanding policy on Cuba, left unresolved the question of whether the Cuban separatist movement would gain its independence from Spain through its own efforts.

## Chapter 1

### The Advent of the Ten Years' War

*When a people arrives to the extreme of degradation and misery in which we see ourselves, no one can condemn another who takes up arms to escape from a state so full of ignominy. The example of the greatest nations authorizes that ultimate recourse. The Island of Cuba cannot be deprived of the rights that other countries enjoy and it cannot consent for it to be said that it does not know more than suffering.*

- Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, insurgent leader<sup>1</sup>

The Ten Years' War in Cuba was a brutal, prolonged conflict which seriously disrupted the lives of all the inhabitants of the island. Both Spanish and insurgent troops raided the countryside, while the Volunteers, a Spanish irregular force, served as harsh sentinels of the towns and cities. It caused considerable damage to nearly two-thirds of the island, leaving ruined homes, public buildings, farms, and ranches in its wake. Most significantly, death claimed an estimated 50,000 Cuban and 100,000 Spanish lives in this gruesome armed struggle through combat, disease, and hunger.<sup>2</sup>

Scholars agree that the origins of the Ten Years' War were both socioeconomic and political. The rise of the sugar industry in the late eighteenth century caused great economic growth for Cuba in the nineteenth century, but also intensified inequalities between social classes. In addition, exorbitant taxes and a series of economic crises aggravated public dissatisfaction with the colonial

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<sup>1</sup> Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, "Manifiesto de la Junta revolucionaria de la Isla de Cuba dirigido á sus compatriotas y á todas las naciones," dated October 10, 1868, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4933, Caja 1, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Piralá, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, vol. 3 (Madrid: Felipe González Rojas, 1898), 683; Thomas, *Cuba, or the Pursuit of Freedom*, 269. Thomas's estimate of 50,000 Cuban fatalities includes both the Ten Years' War and the Guerra Chiquita of 1879-1880.

government, particularly in eastern Cuba, which lagged behind its prosperous western counterpart. Moreover, in 1825, Spain reacted to the loss of the last of its mainland American colonies by strengthening its control of Cuba. For the next forty years, Cubans suffered from a lack of basic political rights. The Crown's creation of the Junta de Información de Ultramar in 1865 momentarily gave hope to Cuban reformers, but this commission also failed to achieve socioeconomic and political reforms for Cuba, driving many eastern Cubans to wage war for independence from Spain in 1868.

In studying the causes of the Ten Years' War, scholars have tended to limit their investigation to the two decades prior to the 1868 uprising, instead of deeply exploring earlier periods in Cuban history. This dissertation highlights the political and socioeconomic situation in Cuba in the first half of the nineteenth century in order to gain a more lucid understanding of the causes of the 1868 uprising.

While recent works have focused on the role of Afro-Cubans in the Cuban wars of independence, the historiography on the Ten Years' War lacks a comprehensive study which examines the participation of diverse social, racial, and gender groups in the 1868 insurrection. What was it that convinced tens of thousands of Cuba's inhabitants to take up arms against the Spanish government in declaration of their independence? And, what motivated many of them to fight for as long as ten years against an imperial power which outmatched them in terms of military resources? In the final section of this chapter, I study who participated in the Ten Years' War and why. Although the Cuban rebellion was a multi-class and multi-

racial movement of men and women, the principal participants included middle and working-class Creoles and Afro-Cubans from rural areas.

### **The Causes of the Ten Years' War**

Cuba had been producing sugar since the early days of Spanish colonization. This production, however, remained small-scale until the late eighteenth century when Great Britain occupied Havana, along with several other cities in the Western Department, from August 1762 to July 1763. At this time, the British introduced thousands of African slaves into Cuba, more than had ever been brought to Cuba in one year, spurring the growth of the sugar industry.<sup>3</sup> The British occupation of western Cuba came as a tremendous shock to Spain. Following the return of Spanish rule, the Bourbon monarchy began to implement military and socioeconomic reforms in Cuba to improve the island's defenses and to maintain the loyalty of its inhabitants. In 1778, *comercio libre* (limited free trade) was granted between the Spanish American colonies and all the ports of Spain, which had the effect of "abolishing the monopolies of the major ports" of Cádiz and Seville.<sup>4</sup> Then, in 1789, Spain consented to the free importation of African slaves into Cuba for a period of two years. Up until this time, it is estimated that over 100,000 slaves had been imported into Cuba.<sup>5</sup> Between 1789 and 1791, over 20,000 slaves alone entered Cuba.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> José García de Arboleya, *Manual de la isla de Cuba. Compendio de su historia, geografía, estadística y administración*, 2d ed. (Havana: Imprenta del Tiempo, 1859), 36-37.

<sup>4</sup> Pedro J. Guiteras, *Historia de la isla de Cuba. Con notas e ilustraciones*, vol. 2 (New York: Jorje R. Lockwood, 1866), 106.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 2: 110, 114.

The expansion of sugar production is also attributable to the actions of Francisco de Arango y Parreño, a Cuban landowner and member of the city council of Havana.<sup>7</sup> Seeing an economic opportunity for Cuba following the 1791 uprising in the French colony of St. Domingue (Haiti), Arango persuaded the Spanish king to make concessions to Cuba on sugar, coffee, and tobacco to increase production and exportation. Indeed, the downfall of St. Domingue, the premier sugar producer of the eighteenth century, raised sugar prices and opened the door for the Cuban sugar industry. The Spanish government granted Cuba the right to import slaves from any country and duty-free, sugar mill machinery from Spain to augment sugar production. In addition, export duties on coffee were abrogated and a ten-year exemption of *diezmos* (ecclesiastical taxes on agriculture) and sales taxes on newly-built *ingenios* was implemented. In 1793, the Sociedad Patriótica o Económica de la Habana was established to further encourage economic development. Later, in 1795, Spain founded a Real Consulado (merchant guild) in Havana, on which Arango served as syndic, to control commercial transactions created by the subsequent agricultural boom. By 1794, Cuba exported 103,000 chests of sugar worth over five million pesos, much of it going to the United States in exchange for wheat and manufactures. New *ingenios* and *cafetales* (coffee farms) were built and slave importation increased substantially to further fuel agricultural production.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Ramiro Guerra, *Manual de historia de Cuba: Desde su descubrimiento hasta 1868* (Madrid: Ediciones R, 1975), 207.

<sup>7</sup> Guiteras, *Historia de la isla de Cuba*, 2: 125-126.

<sup>8</sup> Guerra, *Manual de historia de Cuba*, 207-210, 212-214.

Cuba experienced tremendous agricultural growth in the first half of the nineteenth century, particularly in sugarcane planting. In 1816, Cuba exported approximately 3.6 million arrobas<sup>9</sup> of sugar, a significant increase from the 1.4 million arrobas of sugar that Cuba exported in 1791.<sup>10</sup> While 1,700 acres were cleared per year for sugarcane cultivation in the late eighteenth century, by the 1840s, an estimated 13,000 acres were set aside annually for the construction of *ingenios*. Sugarcane plantations extended from Pinar del Río to Las Villas, and into the areas of Puerto Príncipe, Holguín, and southern Oriente. The introduction of steam-powered mills in 1817 increased production and the construction of railroad lines in western Cuba and parts of Oriente and Camagüey from the 1840s through the 1860s facilitated the transportation of sugar to the ports, both of which significantly increased sugar exports for Cuba. In 1840, Cuba exported 161,248 tons of sugar, which escalated to 428,769 tons in 1860, and 720,250 tons in 1868. Furthermore, Cuba raised its share of the world production from 15.8 percent in 1839 to 29.7 percent in 1868.<sup>11</sup>

The population in nineteenth-century Cuba grew significantly as a result of the development of sugar production. Between 1791 and 1827, the population increased from 272,301 to 704,487 and, by 1862, there were 1,396,470 people on the island. Approximately 750,000 African slaves were imported into Cuba between 1763 and 1862 to work primarily in agriculture. The slave population reached its peak in

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<sup>9</sup> One arroba is equal to twenty-five pounds.

<sup>10</sup> Guerra, *Manual de historia de Cuba*, 254.

<sup>11</sup> Pérez, *Cuba: Between Reform and Revolution*, 73-77.

1827 when it constituted over forty percent of the entire population. From that point on, it decreased steadily to twenty-eight percent in 1862 as a result of the slave trade weakening under British pressure, high mortality rates, and low birth rates. At the same time, the free black population increased from 106,494 in 1827 to 232,433 in 1862. Together with the slave population, the total number of people of color surpassed that of the white population from 1791 through much of the nineteenth century. The implementation of colonial plans to promote white immigration aided in increasing that population. By 1861, Europeans, North Americans, and Creoles regained the majority at sixty-one percent of the population.<sup>12</sup>

The expansion of sugarcane planting, coupled with Spanish mismanagement of the insular administration, also had damaging repercussions on the Cuban economy and society. Working and middle-class resentment against Spanish authorities grew as the number of taxes multiplied and Spanish immigration increased, leaving Creoles fewer options for employment. In addition, the rise of the planter elite harmed other segments of Cuban society. According to historian Louis A. Pérez, Jr., “the creole petite bourgeoisie” focused its anger “at the larger structures of the colonial system, and in this sense they were on a collision course with the creole planter class. . . . Their growing antipathy toward Spanish administration transferred easily enough into antagonism toward the creole elites who defended Spanish administration, and just as easily generalized into misgivings about the slave system upon which rested the

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<sup>12</sup> Guiteras, *Historia de la isla de Cuba*, 2: 312; Pérez, *Cuba: Between Reform and Revolution*, 85-87.

privilege and property of local elites.”<sup>13</sup> This situation leads back to what Sherry Johnson suggests: Many of Cuba’s residents at the end of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries became increasingly dissatisfied with the socioeconomic consequences of the growth of the sugar industry and the colonial government’s support of the sugar sector. According to her, “the Cuban people watched helplessly as an insensitive [Spanish] government pursuing a misguided official policy in service to special interests turned a blind eye to unrestricted slave imports to the island,” before arguing that “independence sentiment would have to wait until the majority of Creoles could overcome their loyalty to an institution that long ago had abandoned them.”<sup>14</sup> It is probable that Cubans not employed in the sugar industry or involved in the sugar sector, but not necessarily benefiting from it, would begrudge the Spanish government for favoring the sugar industry, particularly in terms of slave importation. The importation of large numbers of African slaves into Cuba caused many Creoles to fear the occurrence of a major slave revolt similar to Haiti’s and, hence, many continued to look to colonial authorities for protection even if they opposed the Spanish regime. Moreover, Cuban intellectual José Antonio Saco’s claim that Spanish officials would emancipate slaves in case Cubans ever sought annexation to the United States or independence kept many Cubans from rising against the insular government in the first half of the nineteenth century.<sup>15</sup> In the Ten Years’ War, the eastern planters who revolted only enjoyed marginal economic

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<sup>13</sup> Pérez, *Cuba: Between Reform and Revolution*, 94-95.

<sup>14</sup> Johnson, *The Social Transformation of Eighteenth-Century Cuba*, 180, 183, 189-190.

<sup>15</sup> Thomas, *Cuba, or the Pursuit of Freedom*, 209.



success when compared to the western *hacendados* (sugar planters and mill owners), yet they did not lose their old racial fears. Instead, the separatist elite continued to operate within colonial structures with regard to their demand for gradual abolition at the onset of the war and their questionable treatment of *libertos* (slaves freed by insurgents).

While tensions appeared to build over the growth of the sugar industry, the state of Cuban politics was also deteriorating. Following the loss of its American mainland colonies, Spain endeavored to tighten its grip around its remaining overseas possessions – Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. In May 1825, the captain generals of Cuba and Puerto Rico were bestowed with virtually unlimited powers to rule their respective islands. In the wake of several annexationist and liberation conspiracies, a military tribunal also was permanently established in the same month to rule over cases of treason. Moreover, the Spanish government's decision to prohibit Cuban representation in the Cortes in early 1837 after Cuban delegates had served in this parliament in 1810 and from 1820 to 1823 contributed to growing Creole antagonism against the metropolis.<sup>16</sup> Having reached economic prominence through investments in sugar production, western planters now sought to acquire political prestige. For the eastern *hacendados*, who were not as economically successful as their western counterparts, attaining political status was all the more important. Representation in the Cortes was one important way to accomplish this goal.

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<sup>16</sup> García de Arboleya, *Manual de la isla de Cuba*, 50; *Información sobre reformas en Cuba y Puerto Rico*, vol.1 (New York: Imprenta de Hallet y Breen, 1867), xx, xxvii-xxviii.

In the nineteenth century, Cuba endured a series of conspiracies and rebellions stimulated by the Spanish American independence movements, and growing socioeconomic disparities and political repression on the island. The first separatist conspiracies occurred between 1809 and 1812. Joaquín Infante, José Álvarez de Toledo, Luis F. Bassabe, and Román de la Luz sought the independence of Cuba from Spain, with Infante going so far as to prepare a republican constitution for Cuba. Spanish authorities, however, put an end to the conspiracies quickly, and the leaders either fled the island or were imprisoned.<sup>17</sup> The first actual rebellion took place in 1812 in Camagüey, led by José Antonio Aponte, a free person of color who, according to Spanish historian Antonio Pirala, had support among “several dozens of” Afro-Cubans. The possibility of the rebellion spreading to the slave barracks of the sugar plantations throughout the island kept Creoles from participating in the rebellion. After Aponte’s insurgency destroyed various farms in the eastern provinces, Spanish authorities suppressed the uprising, and executed Aponte and several other insurgents. Thus, what kept many white Cubans from joining other Spanish Americans in the wars of independence was a deep fear that a Creole insurrection would ultimately include the participation of free people of color and African slaves, and displace whites as had occurred in Haiti.<sup>18</sup> In the 1840s, slave conspiracies and revolts in western Cuba reinforced this apprehension among Creoles and kept many of them from seeking independence.

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<sup>17</sup> Guerra, *Manual de historia de Cuba*, 241-242.

<sup>18</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, vol. 1 (Madrid: Felipe González Rojas, 1895), 7.

Instead, a segment of the Creole elite sought annexation to the United States.<sup>19</sup> The annexation of Texas to the United States in 1845 gave Creoles hope that Cuba could be annexed as well. Creole planters pursued annexation as a way of sustaining their investments in slavery and sugar planting, and possibly increasing their assets under a power stronger than Spain that also supported slavery. The principal annexationists included Cuban planters Miguel de Aldama, José Luis Alfonso, Gaspar Betancourt Cisneros, and Francisco de Frías, the count de Pozos Dulces. The Cuban annexationists also received encouragement from Southern political leaders, who desired to see Cuba become another slave-holding state of the United States so that the Southern states could become more prosperous and politically stronger against Northern abolitionists. José Antonio Saco's denunciation of annexation and the two failed filibuster expeditions of Narciso López in 1850, however, caused the annexationist movement to dwindle, although it did not cease altogether.<sup>20</sup> Creoles considered annexation to the United States an option for Cubans in the Ten Years' War as a means of achieving political and socioeconomic stability.

Although the annexationist movement subsided in the 1850s, conspiracies and filibuster expeditions remained threats to the security of the island. In the mid-1860s, the Spanish Representative in the United States reported to the captain general of conspiracies developing in the United States, and between South Americans and

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<sup>19</sup> An exception to this movement was the *Soles de Rayos de Bolívar*, an organization which pursued the annexation of Cuba to either Colombia or Mexico. Spanish forces suppressed it in 1823. See Josef Opatrný, *Historical Pre-conditions of the Origin of the Cuban Nation* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1993), 55.

<sup>20</sup> Benito Besada Ramos, "Antecedentes económicos de la guerra de los diez años," *Economía y desarrollo* 13 (1972): 160; Thomas, *Cuba, or the Pursuit of Freedom*, 207-218.

Cuban exiles against Cuba.<sup>21</sup> At times, however, perceived threats were found to be baseless. For instance, it was reported in 1866 that Cubans fought with Spanish soldiers in Puerto Príncipe and, then, fled to the nearby mountains. Moreover, telegrams from New York alleged that Chilean vessels brought some 2,000 insurgents to Puerto Príncipe to stage a rebellion against the Spanish government. Although the report was inaccurate, it rattled the telegraph lines between Spanish officials in Madrid, Havana, and Washington, and resulted in a Spanish frigate being sent to Cuba.<sup>22</sup> Spain remained steadfastly committed to preserving its remaining Caribbean and Pacific colonies considering that it had lost a magnificent empire in the Americas.

In the 1860s, Creoles pressed for reformism in place of the failed annexationist movement. Leading reformists from the Creole elite included José Morales Lemus, Miguel de Aldama, José Luis Alfonso, Nicolás Azcárate, José Antonio Echeverría, and the count de Pozos Dulces. In 1865, the Reformist party was founded. Then, the reformists began publishing the newspaper *El Siglo*, which they used to espouse their agenda. Their socioeconomic and political program included the abolition of the slave trade, gradual emancipation, free trade, tax cuts, greater civil liberties, a division of civil and military powers in the island governorship, and Cuban representation in the Spanish Cortes.<sup>23</sup> The reformists' chance for success came in 1865, when the Junta de Información de Ultramar was created.

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<sup>21</sup> Letter to "Capitan General de Cuba D. D. Dulce" from the "Representante en los Estados Unidos D. Gabriel García Tassara," dated May 30, 1865, in BNM, Ms. 20283/2 (1); letter to "Capitan General de la isla de Cuba D. D. Dulce" from the "Representante de España en los Estados Unidos," dated March 25, 1866, in BNM, Ms. 20283/2 (5).

<sup>22</sup> "Sublevacion [*sic*] de Puerto Príncipe," in IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5746, Carpeta 15, pp. 1-16.

<sup>23</sup> Pérez, *Cuba: Between Reform and Revolution*, 112.

On November 25, 1865, the liberal ministry of Leopoldo O'Donnell promulgated a decree calling for the formation of a Junta de Información de Ultramar<sup>24</sup> to advise the Cortes on socioeconomic and political matters concerning Cuba and Puerto Rico. Twenty delegates, most of whom were reformists, were elected from the municipalities of both islands. The following November in Madrid, they began their work on the issues of the slave trade, immigration, labor, commerce, and administrative reform. Led by José Morales Lemus, the Junta de Información de Ultramar determined that Cuba should end the slave trade, gradually abolish slavery, liberalize trade, reduce taxes, and send representatives to the Cortes in Spain, among other decisions rendered. In July 1866, however, the more conservative ministry of General Ramón María Narváez displaced the O'Donnell government. The new administration looked unfavorably on the Junta de Información de Ultramar and refused to implement the proposed measures, much to the dismay of the reformists. Moreover, in February 1867, the Spanish government imposed on Cuba a direct tax of six percent on "income of real and industrial properties." According to historian Arthur F. Corwin, the failure of the Junta de Información de Ultramar and the subsequent implementation of the direct tax strongly contributed to the start of the Cuban uprising in October 1868.<sup>25</sup>

The 1860s were also difficult years for the Cuban economy. In 1867, Madrid charged other taxes on production and trade, as well as higher taxes on imports,

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<sup>24</sup> The proceedings of the Junta de Información de Ultramar can be found in *Información sobre reformas en Cuba y Puerto Rico*, vols. 1-2.

<sup>25</sup> Arthur F. Corwin, *Spain and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba, 1817-1886* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1967), 185-186, 191-198, 203, 206, 212-214.

which caused great dissatisfaction among a public still recuperating from the economic downturn of 1857.<sup>26</sup> According to one Cuban historian, “in the decade of 1860 there were in Cuba seventy-seven different taxes and twenty-two customs duties.”<sup>27</sup> In addition, Spain annexed the Dominican Republic in 1861 and, subsequently, the two countries became embroiled in a war, leading to Spain’s expulsion from Santo Domingo in 1865. The Cuban Treasury funded this war, which contributed to Cuba amassing a deficit of 400 million pesos at the time that the budget of 1868-1869 was prepared. Moreover, a lack of hard currency to support the circulation of paper bills caused the Spanish peso to depreciate in Cuba. The 1860s also witnessed an economic decline in Spain, a deferral of payments by the Banco de Comercio and Banco Industrial, and a fall in sugar prices and cultivation, all of which prompted another economic crisis on the island in 1866-1867. The large number of taxes imposed on Cuba to preserve the Madrid government and to cover the expenses incurred by Spain’s military campaign in the Dominican Republic had the effect of worsening anti-colonial sentiments against Spain.<sup>28</sup>

There had long been a growing disparity between eastern and western regional interests in Cuba, now made only deeper with the current economic downturn and collapse of the Junta de Información de Ultramar.<sup>29</sup> Western Cuba was heavily

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<sup>26</sup> Pérez, *Cuba: Between Reform and Revolution*, 120.

<sup>27</sup> Besada Ramos, “Antecedentes económicos de la guerra de los diez años,” 159.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 160-161; Pérez, *Cuba: Between Reform and Revolution*, 120.

<sup>29</sup> In 1827, Cuba was segmented into three military departments – Western, Central, and Eastern. The Western Department had eleven districts, while the Eastern Department had four – Baracoa, Bayamo, Holguín, and Santiago de Cuba. The Central Department was subdivided into five districts – Cienfuegos, Sancti Spíritus, Santa Clara, Trinidad, and Puerto Príncipe. The Eastern Department is comparable to Oriente province after 1902, the Western Department to Pinar del Río, Havana, and

invested in sugarcane planting, and slavery and Chinese indentured labor, whereas the eastern regions depended more on ranching and small-scale farming, thereby requiring less slave or contract labor. The percentage of slaves in the Western Department was 56.6 percent, whereas 40.8 percent of the population in the Eastern Department was comprised of slaves. In terms of free people of color, the proportion in Oriente and Camagüey combined was 47.5 percent. In Pinar del Río, Havana, Matanzas, and Las Villas, free blacks constituted only 25.1 percent of the population.<sup>30</sup> Although enclaves of sugarcane plantations existed in eastern areas, such as Bayamo, Holguín, Manzanillo, Puerto Príncipe, and Santiago de Cuba, eastern planters were behind in modernizing their *ingenios*, unlike their western counterparts, which meant less production. Moreover, there were fewer roads and railroads in the east than in the west connecting the *ingenios* to port cities, from where the sugar was exported. In addition, eastern planters and ranchers had less access to credit and, when they did, they were subjected to inflated interest rates, which left them in debt. Thus, the eastern Cubans had not profited from the growth of the sugar industry.<sup>31</sup>

In addition, eastern Cuba had a long, rebellious history, which helps to explain why *orientales* and *camagüeyanos* rose up against Spain in 1868. From the sixteenth century forward, the eastern part of the island engaged in contraband to maintain economic stability. In 1836, Captain General Miguel Tacón barely avoided a military

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Matanzas provinces, and the Central Department to Las Villas and Camagüey provinces. See Guiteras, *Historia de la isla de Cuba*, 2: 311-312.

<sup>30</sup> Guerra, *Guerra de los 10 años*, 1: 4-5.

<sup>31</sup> Pérez, *Cuba: Between Reform and Revolution*, 120.

conflict with the governor of Santiago, General Manuel Lorenzo, after Lorenzo implemented the liberal Spanish Constitution of 1812 against the wishes of the captain general.<sup>32</sup> Then, in 1851, Joaquín de Agüero and a group of Creoles, including Salvador Cisneros and Manuel de Jesús Arango, rebelled against the insular government near Puerto Príncipe. This annexationist insurrection spread into the area of Tunas, but Spanish forces quashed it within a month.<sup>33</sup> Spanish neglect of the Eastern Department's political and economic development largely accounts for eastern Cuba's tradition of autonomy and rebellion. It would be inaccurate to suggest, however, that since the east was not as tied to the sugar industry as the west was, it had less to lose in case war erupted on the island. Many eastern Cubans sacrificed their lives and livelihoods for the sake of gaining independence. Yet, because the east was not as entrenched in sugarcane planting and slavery, its inhabitants had a greater ability to envision a Cuba free from Spain and instigate that plan.

Spain's imposition of new taxes or tax increases in the 1860s, the economic crisis of 1866-1867, and the downfall of the Junta de Información de Ultramar all contributed to eastern Cubans rising up against Spain in 1868. However much western planters may have been dissatisfied with Spanish rule, most of them would not revolt against the imperial power for fear of a widespread slave uprising and the economic uncertainty that an independent Cuba would pose.

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<sup>32</sup> For a detailed account of the political showdown between Tacón and Lorenzo, see Guiteras, *Historia de la isla de Cuba*, 2: 371-389.

<sup>33</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 1: 88-93.



### ***The Grito de Yara***

Following the collapse of the Junta de Información de Ultramar in 1867, Creoles from Oriente and Camagüey began to conspire against the Spanish government. According to insurgent Commandant Enrique Collazo, however, few men joined in the planning and scant resources were gathered to stage the uprising.<sup>34</sup> Indeed, according to one Spanish document, only ten Cubans met on August 3, 1868 to plan the uprising. At this gathering on a farm outside of Tunas, conspirators decided that the revolution should begin on January 3, 1869 and, in the meantime, the leaders would collect money and stockpile arms. Cuban separatists Carlos Manuel de Céspedes and Francisco Vicente Aguilera, however, determined to move up the date of the rebellion to October 14, 1868 in case Spanish officials had already suspected their plans. Moreover, Céspedes sought to take advantage of the political chaos caused by the *Septembrista* revolution in Spain that dethroned Queen Isabel II<sup>35</sup> to stage the Cuban uprising. Then, Spanish officials obtained information on the conspiracy and sought to apprehend the insurgent leaders, which advanced the date of the rebellion further still.<sup>36</sup>

The *Grito de Yara*, or the Cuban insurrection, occurred on October 10, 1868 under the leadership of Carlos Manuel de Céspedes at his sugarcane mill and plantation, “La Demajagua,” outside of Manzanillo in the Eastern Department. A group of thirty-seven Creole landowners and professionals joined Céspedes in

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<sup>34</sup> Enrique Collazo, *Desde Yara hasta el Zanjón: Apuntaciones históricas* (Havana: Instituto del Libro, 1967), 2.

<sup>35</sup> This event is described in Chapter 3.

<sup>36</sup> IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5746, Carpeta 20, p. 2; Thomas, *Cuba, or the Pursuit of Freedom*, 243-244.

declaring Cuban independence from Spanish rule. They also called for liberalized commercial trade, gradual abolition of slavery with indemnities for the slave owners, and “national representation to decree laws and taxes.”<sup>37</sup> To accomplish these goals, the insurgents established a junta with Céspedes assuming the position of commanding general.<sup>38</sup> Thereafter, the Cuban insurgents endeavored to seize the nearby town of Yara, which was poorly defended, but due to the rebels’ lack of military experience, they were forced to retreat.<sup>39</sup>

Born in 1819 in Bayamo, Carlos Manuel de Céspedes belonged to a prosperous landowning family of some political importance. His father, Jesús María Céspedes y Luque, had been *alcalde ordinario* of Bayamo in the 1840s. Carlos Manuel received his formal training for a career in law at San Carlos in Havana and the University of Barcelona in the late 1830s and early 1840s. In Spain, he became a militiaman and opposed General Baldomero Espartero in favor of the regent María Cristina. Following a tour of Europe, Céspedes established a law practice in Bayamo, as well as a local Sociedad Filarmónica. He also wrote poetry and associated with future insurgents, José Fornaris and Lucas del Castillo. During the first half of the 1850s, however, Spanish officials deemed Céspedes suspect of loyalty to the Crown and, subsequently, he suffered imprisonment and exile. In 1852, he and his family moved to Manzanillo where he practiced law and became a landowner. Céspedes purchased “La Demajagua” in 1866. In early 1868, the future leader of the Cuban

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<sup>37</sup> Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, *Escritos*, edited by Fernando Portuondo del Prado and Hortensia Pichardo Viñals, vol. 1 (Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1974), 111.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 112.

<sup>39</sup> Collazo, *Desde Yara hasta el Zanjón*, 4-5.

insurrection directed a Masonic lodge in Manzanillo and began planning the overthrow of the Spanish government with other Masonic leaders in the Eastern Department.<sup>40</sup>

Following the uprising at “La Demajagua,” other prominent *oriental* insurgents, including Aguilera, Calixto García, and Donato Mármol, began to recognize Céspedes’s leadership of the insurrection and gave him their backing. The rebellion quickly spread throughout Oriente, gaining much popular support. By the end of October, the *oriental* towns and cities of Baire, Barrancas, Bayamo, Cauto del Embarcadero, El Dátil, Guisa, Jiguaní, and Santa Rita came under insurgent control.<sup>41</sup> Then, on November 4, 1868 a group of seventy-six Cubans, led by Salvador Cisneros Betancourt, rebelled against the Spanish government outside of Nuevitas in Camagüey.<sup>42</sup> During this time, an estimated 15,000 separatist fighters operated in Oriente and Camagüey.<sup>43</sup>

### **Who Participated in the Insurgency and for What Reasons?<sup>44</sup>**

Spanish soldiers often referred to insurgents as “thieves” or “bandits.”<sup>45</sup> In addition, rebel leaders were designated by aliases or epithets (i.e., “Pedro Recio (a) el

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<sup>40</sup> Portuondo and Pichardo, “Introducción,” in Céspedes, *Escritos*, 1: 11-13, 15-16, 18-21, 25-33, 35, 50-51. Céspedes’s correspondence also reveals his curiosity regarding his aristocratic lineage, which is in BNM, Ms. 20284/4 (15).

<sup>41</sup> Guerra, *Manual de historia de Cuba*, 686-690.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 697.

<sup>43</sup> Piralá, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 1: 264.

<sup>44</sup> This section draws on the concepts delineated in Foran, Klouzal, and Rivera, “Who Makes Revolutions?”: 1-60.

<sup>45</sup> Letter to the “Excmo. Sor. Capn. Gral de esta Isla” from Joaquín Reixa del Manzano, dated June 29, 1870, in IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5738, Carpeta 13, p. 1; letter to the Capitán General from Brigadier

Mocho”) in an attempt to belittle the importance of the separatist movement and to suggest the base character of the insurrectionists fighting against the Spanish government.<sup>46</sup> These attempts to denigrate the Cuban insurgency did little, however, to calm loyalist fears or to mask the importance of the rebellion. At the mid-point of the war, there were approximately 40,000 rebels.<sup>47</sup> In all, the Cuban insurgents constituted a multi-class and multi-racial movement of men and women. While the separatists received some support from towns and cities, particularly in the early stages of the war, the countryside served as their base of operations and principal supply source.

Nonetheless, the extent to which diverse social groups participated in the insurrection is more difficult to determine. Rebecca J. Scott explains the situation accurately: “The question of the precise social and ethnic composition of the insurgency remains open, for we have neither a comprehensive record of participants nor a clear idea of the rates of participation of different groups.” Scott also argues that witnesses and historians of the war have either overestimated or underestimated the involvement of certain groups, particularly Afro-Cubans and Asians.<sup>48</sup> Taking this information into consideration, it is necessary to remain cautious in approximating the levels of participation of any group engaged in the Ten Years’ War.

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Comandante General Zacarías González Goyeneche, dated January 6, 1870, in IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5763, Carpeta 11, pp. 1-5.

<sup>46</sup> Letter to the “Esmo. Sr. Capitan [sic] General de esta Isla” from Comandante de Armas José Pascual y M., dated February 14, 1870, in IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5738, Carpeta 15, p. 4.

<sup>47</sup> Pérez, *Cuba: Between Reform and Revolution*, 121.

<sup>48</sup> Rebecca J. Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba: The Transition to Free Labor, 1860-1899* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 57.

The separatist civilian leadership consisted primarily of members of the Creole elite and middle classes. Besides Céspedes, Vice President Francisco Vicente Aguilera, a fellow *bayamés*, owned three *ingenios*.<sup>49</sup> Of all the insurgent leaders, Salvador Cisneros Betancourt, who would serve both as president of the representative assembly and the provisional republic, was the only one to hold a title of nobility, that of marquis of Santa Lucía. He was a wealthy rancher, slaveholder and, in the early 1860s, served as the mayor of Puerto Príncipe. Also from Puerto Príncipe, Major General Ignacio Agramonte was a lawyer by training and belonged to a distinguished family.<sup>50</sup> Finally, as a native of Havana, Miguel de Aldama was born into a wealthy family in 1820. He was educated in Europe before returning to Cuba to become one of the most prosperous *hacendados* of the island. He directed the Cuban separatist Junta in New York from 1870 to 1871 and 1873 to 1876.<sup>51</sup>

While civil leaders were usually members of the elite, the Liberation Army allowed for more social mobility. General Máximo Gómez lived on a *sitio de labor* (subsistence farm) and sold wood before the Ten Years' War began and General Antonio Maceo, a free person of color, worked on his family's farm in the small town of Majaguabo and sold the produce in nearby Santiago de Cuba.<sup>52</sup> As the war progressed, more Afro-Cubans of modest means became military officers, including José Maceo, Antonio's brother, Quintín Bandera, and Guillermo Moncada. They

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<sup>49</sup> Guerra, *Guerra de los 10 años*, 1: 13, 17.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 89-90.

<sup>51</sup> Emeterio S. Santovenia and Raúl M. Shelton, *Cuba y su historia*, 2d ed., vol. 1 (Miami: Cuba Corporation Inc., 1966), 322.

<sup>52</sup> Franco, *Antonio Maceo*, 1: 28-29; Benigno Souza, *Máximo Gómez: El Generalísimo* (Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1986), 32.

were able to rise in the army ranks due to their skill in battle. Creole insurgents began to abandon the separatist movement as Afro-Cuban participation in the insurgency grew and more nonwhites were promoted to the ranks of officers, which allowed for more Afro-Cubans to gain military leadership positions by the end of the war.<sup>53</sup>

White Cubans and Afro-Cubans from the countryside or small towns in the eastern and central regions of the island were the key participants in the separatist movement. Cubans who surrendered or were captured by Spanish troops were usually Creoles and Afro-Cubans from these areas. The Creoles were described as “poor,” a condition owing in no small part to the Spanish seizure of livestock and foodstuffs from the countryside.<sup>54</sup> Yet many rural Creoles were also of working-class origin. These insurgents often established settlements in the forests and mountains, and continued to engage in agriculture in their surrounding areas. They also stole vegetables and cattle from nearby farms and ranches under Spanish protection. Cuban insurgent settlements were organized and industrious. Workshops were built to manufacture everyday necessities or tools of warfare. In one particular camp, the Cubans even constructed makeshift sugar mills. What all of this meant was that rural Cubans were already fulfilling the goal of Cuban independence by living and

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<sup>53</sup> Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*, 57-59, 69; Orum, “The Politics of Color,” 18-21.

<sup>54</sup> Letter to the Comandante General de la Habana from Caballero, dated February 17, 1870, in IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5763, Carpeta 39, pp. 1-10; letter to the Teniente Gobernador de Remedios from Comandante Teniente Gobernador interino Francisco Garriga, dated March 31, 1870, in IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5763, Carpeta 52, pp. 1-6.

producing in settlements governed by the laws of the provisional government. That is why it was essential for Spanish forces to eradicate them.<sup>55</sup>

Rural Creoles and free Afro-Cubans from the eastern and central regions of the island joined the insurgent movement due to the heavy tax burden they bore, along with suffering from a lack of political rights, which made them unable to change their economic situation through the political process.<sup>56</sup> Moreover, eastern Cuba had very few Spaniards. The population breakdown in Oriente was as follows: 9,938 Spaniards, 278,622 Creoles, 84,444 free people of color, and 65,876 slaves. Meanwhile in Puerto Príncipe, or Camagüey, there were only 2,941 Spaniards compared to 34,504 white Cubans, 10,616 free people of color, and 12,602 slaves. According to Ramiro Guerra, with such an insignificant representation of 3.6 percent in Oriente and 5.09 percent in Puerto Príncipe “the power of Spain appeared in the eyes of Cubans to be almost non-existent. Spain was something very abstract, represented only by a few soldiers and bureaucrats.”<sup>57</sup> The implication is that eastern Cubans did not believe that poor Spanish representation in Oriente and Camagüey justified the imposition of a multitude of taxes, which worsened their economic condition. As a result of the colonial administration’s neglect of eastern Cuba and imposition of heavy taxes, independence became a promising alternative that many rural, eastern Cubans embraced when the *Grito de Yara* occurred.

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<sup>55</sup> James J. O’Kelly, *The Mambi-Land, or Adventures of a Herald Correspondent in Cuba* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1874), 184-185, 192.

<sup>56</sup> Pérez, *Cuba: Between Reform and Revolution*, 121.

<sup>57</sup> Guerra, *Manual de historia de Cuba*, 688.

Nonetheless, white Cubans also were represented in the Spanish camp and, as the war progressed, Creole numbers in the separatist movement began to decline. Cuban plantation owners joined both the insurgent and Spanish camps, but it is likely that the majority of them sided with the Spanish for two reasons. First, as Spanish forces began to reassert control over rebel-held territory, they began to regain the confidence of the *hacendados* that they could protect their property from destruction. Second, the insurgent policy of burning down sugar plantations, which was aimed at producing an economic breakdown in Cuba, was abhorrent to any *hacendado* who valued his livelihood. Thus, it is not surprising that in April 1869 a large group of Cuban planters and merchants from Villa Clara (or, Santa Clara) professed their loyalty to Spain and denounced the rebellion in a letter to the lieutenant governor of the city.<sup>58</sup> One administrator of a sugarcane plantation even lent twenty-three slaves of the *ingenio* to Spanish troops to dig a trench as another demonstration of support for Spain's dominion over Cuba.<sup>59</sup> In addition, other businessmen associated with the sugar industry tended to support Spanish rule for the sake of preserving their own investments. In one instance, the Compañía Anónima de Ferro-carriles de Caibarién a Santo-Espíritu offered the Spanish government free "transportation of troops and arms" to the battlefield.<sup>60</sup> Since railroads transported sugarcane to the mills to be processed and, then, the sugar to the ports to be exported, the railway companies had

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<sup>58</sup> Letter to the Coronel Comandante General Teniente Gobernador from Eduardo Abreu *et al.*, dated April 18, 1869, in IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5747, Carpeta 38, pp. 6-11.

<sup>59</sup> Letter to "Sor[.] Comte. gral. de Sta[.] Clara" from Brigadier Jefe de Estado Mayor Carlos Navarro, dated June 5, 1869, in IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5747, Carpeta 65, pp. 1-3.

<sup>60</sup> Letter to the Gobernador Superior Político from Presidente interino Juan de Orozco, dated July 13, 1869, in IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5747, Carpeta 41, pp. 2-3.



much to lose should the insurgents raze the *ingenios* in the zones where their trains ran.

Moreover, the constant Spanish military presence in Oriente, Camagüey, and Las Villas was intimidating for rural and urban residents, and was a principal reason why Cubans acted as informants for Spaniards. In one account, a Cuban man notified a commandant of a Spanish infantry regiment that his two brothers and their wives had joined the rebellion. More importantly, one of his brothers was a captain in the rebel army. Upon presenting himself, he turned over his horse and all the arms he carried, among which were a Spencer rifle, which he said belonged to one of his brothers, and a machete. It is unclear whether this Cuban had once been an insurgent – although he declared otherwise – since he carried weapons and his brothers were separatists.<sup>61</sup> The Spanish did not always obtain intelligence from Cubans so easily, however. In one military report, a detachment of infantry and Bomberos intruded on several men living in the mountains near Trinidad, who then informed them on the whereabouts of a local band of insurgents.<sup>62</sup>

Cubans also surrendered to Spanish forces out of fear of the separatists' own destructive presence. In one case, a foreman of an *ingenio*, three free Afro-Cubans, and seven slaves, all of whom were from Banao, a town in the district of Sancti Spiritus, turned themselves over to a battalion of Cazadores because they were

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<sup>61</sup> Letter to the "Esmo[.] Sor[.] Gral[.] Comte[.] Gral[.] del Depto. del Centro" from Comandante José Vigo, dated May 31, 1870, in IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5833, Carpeta 9, pp. 1-3.

<sup>62</sup> Letter to the Coronel Gobernador de Trinidad from Teniente Alferez Comandante Arturo de Castillo, dated June 26, 1870, in IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5833, Carpeta 28, pp. 1-3.

frightened of having heard so much gunfire and seeing fires, presumably from one of the insurgents' torch campaigns against the sugar plantations in the area.<sup>63</sup>

Recent works in Cuban race history clearly demonstrate that Afro-Cubans, both slaves, and free men and women, participated extensively in the island's independence wars. Some of the authors of these works also establish that people of color served in the Spanish counterrevolution.<sup>64</sup> There were cases in which slaves were sent to labor for either side of the armed struggle. In the early years of the rebellion Commanding General Manuel de Quesada ordered *libertos* to cultivate crops instead of taking up arms against Spanish troops.<sup>65</sup> In Major General Agramonte's jurisdiction of Camagüey, *libertos* were sent to work on farms or in workshops.<sup>66</sup> In addition, dwindling food supplies forced the Spanish government to borrow slaves from their owners to produce for Spanish consumption.<sup>67</sup> Meanwhile, free men of color served in Spanish Militias of Color. The black militiamen were employed to pursue rebels or reconnoiter possible insurgent camps. Headed by white officers, these units faced combat, though infrequently, and soldiers suffered injuries and death. It should be noted that in November 1869 the Spanish government

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<sup>63</sup> Letter "[a]l Sor. Comdte. Gral. de esta Jurisdiccion [sic]," from Comandante del Destacamento Zemándo Villegas, dated October 10, 1869, in IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5747, Carpeta 63, pp. 1-3.

<sup>64</sup> See Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*; Fuente, *A Nation for All*; Helg, *Our Rightful Share*; and Robert, "Slavery and Freedom in the Ten Years' War, Cuba, 1868-1878," on the role of Afro-Cubans in the wars of independence in Cuba. Both Ferrer and Robert demonstrate that slaves also sided with the Spanish during the 1868 insurrection. See Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba*, on the role of *libertos* in the Ten Years' War.

<sup>65</sup> Letter to "C. Mayor General" from M. Quesada, dated June 13, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/ 7911.

<sup>66</sup> See "Segunda epoca. División del Camagüey, Num. 2. Cuartel General. Copiador de Comunicaciones. 1870", in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/ 7912, for several examples.

<sup>67</sup> A copy of a letter from the Gobernador del Departamento del Centro, dated March 31, 1870, in IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5763, Carpeta 34, pp. 1-12.

authorized the distribution of compensations for wounds that soldiers received during a campaign. In one case, however, black militiaman José Aguilar López, who was injured in battle and subsequently died from his wounds, was not rewarded posthumously for his services, since his commanding officer did not have the information necessary to petition for compensation.<sup>68</sup> While it remains unclear if such treatment of Afro-Cuban militiamen was widespread, it may suggest a prejudice on the part of the metropolis in denying a person of color reimbursement for his support of the Spanish cause. At the same time, the captain general was adamant that wounded Spanish troops and officers be rewarded based on their merit in battle.<sup>69</sup>

On the issue of why people of color joined the insurrection, Ada Ferrer persuasively argues that they fought not only for Cuban independence from Spain, but also for the abolition of slavery and full citizenship based on racial equality and brotherhood. Ferrer also suggests that slaves and free people of color incorporated words like “Cuban” and “citizen,” as first expressed by insurgent leaders, in the formation of their national identity.<sup>70</sup>

The Chinese labor trade to Cuba began in 1846 and continued until 1877 when Spain and China signed a treaty to end it. It is approximated that from 1846 to

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<sup>68</sup> Letter to the “Sr. Comte. Gefé [sic] de la Columna de Yaguaramas” from the Comandante General de Operaciones de Cinco Villas Manuel Portillo y Portillo, dated January 22, 1870, in IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5833, Carpeta 23, pp. 1-2; letter to the “Sr[.] Brigadier Comandte. Gral. de Operacs. de cinco Villas” from Manuel Vinayno, dated March 22, 1870, and chart entitled “Columna de operaciones de Cartagena. Relación del Miliciano de color herido en los encuentros tenidos en los Montes del Rosario y Tierras Nuevas los días 11 y 12 del actual,” signed by Manuel Vinayno, dated March 22, 1870, both in IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5833, Carpeta 22, pp. 3-5, 6.1-6.2.

<sup>69</sup> Letter to the “Sor[.] Comte. del fuerte de San Gil” from Comandante de Armas Juan Gutiérrez, dated January 3, 1871, in IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5833, Carpeta 29, pp. 1-3. The captain general’s letter is reproduced in this one.

<sup>70</sup> Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*, 37-42.

the early 1870s about 126,000 Chinese indentured workers arrived in Cuba, where they worked in small-scale agriculture, artisanry, services, railroad construction, and public projects, but principally on sugarcane plantations.<sup>71</sup> Under Spanish law, these laborers were to serve eight-year contracts and to be paid four pesos per month. As the demand for cheap labor on Cuban plantations grew after mid-century due to the high cost of African slaves and the decline of the world market price for sugar with the introduction of beet sugar in Europe, *hacendados* and Spanish authorities usually forced the Chinese to sign another contract upon completion of the first one. The *Cuba Commission Report*, authorized by the Chinese emperor in 1873 to examine the life of the Chinese contract worker in Cuba and published in 1876, revealed the terribly inhumane working conditions and maltreatment that these laborers endured at the hands of their employers. The *Report* provoked such an outrage that it contributed greatly to the abolition of the Chinese labor trade to Cuba in 1877.<sup>72</sup>

The question of the role of Chinese contract workers in the Ten Years' War is a perplexing one. On the one hand, archival documents reveal that contract workers participated on the side of the insurgents during the decade-long rebellion. In one case, a Spanish military report describes a group of Asian and black insurgents invading an *ingenio* in Palmira, a town in the jurisdiction of Cinco Villas, and destroying part of it before fleeing from Spanish forces.<sup>73</sup> In another report, several

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<sup>71</sup> Denise Helly, "Introduction," trans. Sidney W. Mintz, in *The Cuba Commission Report: A Hidden History of the Chinese in Cuba* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 9-10, 14, 21, 23-24.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 6-7, 10, 14, 21, 23.

<sup>73</sup> Letter to the Comandante General de Cinco Villas from Teniente Comandante Antonio de Zaldívar, dated January 9, 1870, in IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5758, Carpeta 72, pp. 1-3.

Chinese and an Afro-Cuban in the mountains of Charcas in Las Villas were arrested for gathering fruits and vegetables from farms, apparently for the consumption of the insurgents stationed nearby.<sup>74</sup> Perhaps most significantly, fifty-four Chinese joined the Liberation Army in Camagüey in 1869.<sup>75</sup>

On the other hand, the *Cuba Commission Report* reveals that of a group of forty-seven Chinese who testified on the issue of participation in the Cuban rebellion, not one claimed to have actively sought to join the insurgents. Some claimed to have been kidnapped by rebel soldiers, but escaped shortly thereafter and either turned themselves over to Spanish authorities, were discovered by local officials, or found new employers. In the cases where the Chinese workers turned themselves over to Spanish officials, they sometimes acted as informants on the actions of their employers. At the same time, others stated that once their employers had fled to insurgent camps, they sought to escape the reach of authorities, one of whom fled to Havana, but most laborers who endeavored to run away from the officials were caught, and either sent back to work or imprisoned.<sup>76</sup>

In addition, while it was requested in 1870 that the Chinese labor trade end because the Chinese “impeded the pacification of the island; . . . the following year the suggestion was withdrawn, as ‘owing to the progress effected in the pacification of the island, measures formerly desirable had become needless.’” Then, in 1872, new

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<sup>74</sup> Letter to Comandante General del Distrito de Matanzas from José de Vilchy, dated September 20, 1870, in IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5839, Carpeta 4, pp. 1-5.

<sup>75</sup> Letter to Comandante Antonio Rodríguez from Major General Ignacio Agramonte Loynaz, dated July 7, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/ 7911, Carta no. 294. This letter also is reproduced in Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba*, 57.

<sup>76</sup> *The Cuba Commission Report: A Hidden History of the Chinese in Cuba*, 93-94.

regulations were created for the Asian laborers with the purpose of “inducing them to renew their engagements,” yet the rules did not reveal “any apprehension of participation by them in the insurrection.”<sup>77</sup> It appears that a labor shortage resulting from the war compelled Spanish authorities to continue the importation of Chinese workers in spite of any apprehensions they may have had regarding their allegiance to the Crown. Moreover, Chinese were sent to work on the Júcaro-Morón *trocha*,<sup>78</sup> which the *Report* regarded as further proof of Chinese fidelity to the Spanish government.

Why would the Chinese indentured laborers remain loyal to Spanish authorities, as the *Report* indicates? It can best be explained by some of the workers who provided testimony to the investigators. They state: “‘Again, though plantations and the Trocha are close to the districts held by the insurgents, we have heard of no instance of a Chinese flying to the latter. A Chinese labourer can scarcely be expected to return good for evil, but born in a country where the principles of right are respected, he is able to refuse to attach himself to disturbers of law and order. The people of Cuba, however, instead of recognising and being grateful for the display of such feelings deny their existence, and use this denial as an excuse for fresh prohibitions and restrictions.’”<sup>79</sup> Since many Chinese laborers suffered horrible treatment at the hands of their Cuban employers, they may have hesitated or refused to join their ranks against the Spaniards. In addition, this statement shows the

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 94.

<sup>78</sup> See Chapter 4 for a description of the Júcaro-Morón *trocha*.

<sup>79</sup> *The Cuba Commission Report: A Hidden History of the Chinese in Cuba*, 93.

workers' determination to abide by the law, upon which they depended for fair treatment, despite the many instances in which Spanish officials had failed them by not enforcing it. Furthermore, the Chinese being interviewed seemed to be straightforward in making their statements, particularly in describing their appalling treatment in Cuba, despite the fact that their supervisors and Spanish authorities witnessed their testimonies to the commission.<sup>80</sup>

It is unfortunate that the commissioners were unable to travel to the eastern regions of Cuba, where the insurrection raged, or to visit the separatist camps in Las Villas, which was an area of the island where they conducted their inquiry. Then, they could have better ascertained the extent to which Chinese laborers fought as insurgents. Since they worked primarily on sugar plantations, they would have been found extensively in Las Villas and, to a lesser degree, in the sugar-planting enclaves of Camagüey and Oriente.<sup>81</sup> According to Denise Helly, "[i]n 1870, the captain-general attested that from 1868 on," Chinese indentured workers fought as separatists "in exchange for a promise of emancipation" from their contracts.<sup>82</sup> Archival evidence suggests that Chinese contract laborers most likely served as insurgent fighters to a considerable extent in the Ten Years' War.

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 120-121.

<sup>81</sup> Helly, "Introduction," in *The Cuba Commission Report: A Hidden History of the Chinese in Cuba*, 24; Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba*, 57-58.

<sup>82</sup> Helly, "Introduction," in *The Cuba Commission Report: A Hidden History of the Chinese in Cuba*, 24.

Little research has been done on the role of women in the Ten Years' War.<sup>83</sup> Archival sources and brief accounts of women in works on the Ten Years' War reveal, however, that women played an important support role in the Cuban Republic as seamstresses, messengers, and manufacturers of cloth, twine, shoes, hammocks, and hats.<sup>84</sup> From abroad, Cuban women sent supplies to their kinsmen in Cuba. Additionally, in December 1871, two wives of separatist leaders, Ana Betancourt Agramonte and Emilia Casanova, lobbied President Ulysses S. Grant to convince the Spanish government to release Cuban medical students from imprisonment in Havana and to allow them to leave Cuba. Subsequently, in May 1872, the Spanish government released the prisoners and extradited them to Spain.<sup>85</sup>

Women, along with their children, suffered terribly in this war. If women surrendered or were captured by Spanish troops, they often were transferred to military camps or urban centers. As the war persisted and left behind more destruction in the countryside, less food was available in the towns and cities, which caused hunger and, even, starvation. It was in Santo Espíritu (or, Sancti Spíritus) where James J. O'Kelly, a journalist for the New York *Herald*, witnessed women begging for food. Moreover, the massive gathering of people in urban centers resulted

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<sup>83</sup> Few works have been produced on the role of Cuban women in the Ten Years' War owing to the high rate of illiteracy in nineteenth-century Cuba, particularly among women. Nonetheless, some noteworthy works on Cuban women in the 1868 rebellion include Armando O. Caballero, *La mujer en el 68* (Havana: Editorial Gente Nueva, 1978), and Nydia Sarabia, *Ana Betancourt Agramonte* (Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1970). Caballero provides information on the more prominent women of the insurrection, although he does not base his work on unpublished archival sources. Sarabia wrote on the life of Ana Betancourt Agramonte, who is best known for unsuccessfully requesting that women's civil and political rights be included in the separatist constitution (Sarabia, *Ana Betancourt Agramonte*, 59-61). Betancourt Agramonte also was married to *camagüeyano* insurgent Ignacio Mora. Sarabia's monograph incorporates unpublished and published primary sources, including Mora's diary.

<sup>84</sup> O' Kelly, *The Mambi-Land*, 184.

<sup>85</sup> Sarabia, *Ana Betancourt Agramonte*, 89-90, 92.



in the proliferation of diseases. Thus, forced relocation as a Spanish course of action prompted significant civilian fatalities.<sup>86</sup> In addition, women were imprisoned or exiled after having been accused of treason. They also could be exiled if they were found with their kinsmen in the insurrection, after which they were usually exiled from the eastern zones to the western regions of the island. For example, Juan Bautista Rodríguez, from the jurisdiction of Cienfuegos, was sentenced to exile in Pinar del Río, along with his wife Martina Rivero and her daughters Rosario, Trinidad, and María Baluja, all of whom were found guilty of treason.<sup>87</sup> In addition, women spent much time petitioning Spanish officials for the release of their relatives from prison or exile. In one case, José de Armas and Rosalia de la Cova, elderly landowners in Colón and the parents of Ramón de Armas, sent a letter to the Gobernador Superior Político of Cuba requesting the release of their son from prison. Ramón was suspected of treason for living in the mountains of Trinidad, an active insurgent zone, where he and his family owned property. It is unclear whether their son was freed from his imprisonment despite their assertions of loyalty to the Crown.<sup>88</sup>

Women usually participated in the insurrection because they had kinsmen involved in the separatist movement and they believed in the cause of Cuban

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 79-80.

<sup>87</sup> AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4342, Exp. 7, Doc. no. 1; "Testimonio de la sentencia recaída en el Consejo de Guerra verbal celebrado el día 11 de Marzo de 1871, decreto del Señor Comandante General al asesor, informe de este, aprobación del Señor Comandante General y notificación de la sentencia de estrañamiento [*sic*] fuera de la jurisdicción á Don José María Ramos por el delito de infidencia," in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4342, Exp. 7, Doc. no. 2.

<sup>88</sup> Letter to the Gobernador Superior Político from Gregorio de Armas on behalf of José de Armas and Rosalia de la Cova, dated November 25, 1870, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4340, Exp. 11, Doc. no. 2.

independence. As O'Kelly's account demonstrates, rebel camps often incorporated the families of the male insurgents. A semblance of ordinary family life persisted in the separatist camps, albeit under stressful circumstances. Women continued to cook meals for their husbands, care for children, sew, and collect food as they did before the war.<sup>89</sup> It is probable that many of these women shared with their kinsmen a belief in Cuban independence. On the other hand, women also may have surrendered to Spanish forces because they lost faith in the separatist movement, because they could no longer tolerate the difficult living conditions in their camps, or because they became increasingly afraid for their welfare and that of their children under the threat of Spanish attack.

Foreigners also participated to a small degree in the separatist movement. What made these men so important to the Cuban insurgents was that many of them had prior military experience, which would prove invaluable to the Cubans, almost all of whom were novices in the techniques of warfare. Thus, they provided the separatists with practical training, and military discipline and organization, which along with ten years on the battlefield, transformed the Cubans into skilled fighters. While it cannot be determined how many served as rank-and-file soldiers, there were several notable foreign officers. From the United States came General Thomas Jordan, a former Confederate officer, who served briefly as the chief-of-staff of the Liberation Army. In addition, W. A. C. Ryan, who was born in Ireland and lived in Canada, served in the Union Army during the U.S. Civil War before joining the

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<sup>89</sup> O'Kelly, *The Mambi-Land*, 181-184, 189, 198.

Cuban rebellion. According to one scholar, this adventurer “became a colonel” in the Liberation Army “with the self-brevetted title of general.” In 1873, Ryan was aboard the ill-fated *Virginus* when the Spanish Navy captured it. He was executed thereafter, along with many other passengers of the ship.<sup>90</sup>

In addition, there was a considerable number of Latin American officers in the Cuban military leadership. Some of the lesser known soldiers include Lieutenant General Amadeo Manuitt, a Venezuelan who commanded separatist forces in Guá in southwestern Oriente, and Lieutenant Colonel Juan Ríos Rivera, a Puerto Rican who led insurgent troops in Holguín.<sup>91</sup> The most important Latin American officers, however, were the Dominicans Modesto Díaz, Máximo Gómez, and Francisco and Luis Marcano because they helped to train Cuban soldiers and served as effective military leaders in the war. While all these Dominicans had prior military experience, the former two men had served in the Spanish Army in the Dominican Republic when their country was under Spanish rule from 1861 to 1865. Following the war which ousted the Spanish from the Dominican Republic, Díaz and Gómez moved to Cuba, both settling in the jurisdiction of Manzanillo. Díaz claimed that he became an insurgent because he “[felt] himself neglected and slighted by the government for which he had abandoned his own country” and Gómez considered the abolition of slavery as the underlying reason for him joining the uprising. Both men were instrumental in prolonging the war using guerrilla tactics.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Richard H. Bradford, *The Virginus Affair* (Boulder, Colorado: Colorado Associated University Press, 1980), 33-35.

<sup>91</sup> See RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Signs. 9/ 7909 and 9/ 7910 for Manuitt’s correspondence.

<sup>92</sup> Guerra, *La guerra de los 10 años*, 1: 57; O’Kelly, *The Mambi-Land*, 282-284.

In all, a vast array of men and women of different countries, social groups, countries, and races participated in the Cuban separatist movement. Their motives for joining the insurrection were also varied. Many Afro-Cubans sided with the insurgents based on the promise of abolition and the prospect of becoming a full Cuban citizen. Chinese contract workers may have fought for Cuban independence with the hope of escaping indentured service, and living freely in Cuba or returning to China. Some foreign soldiers, on the other hand, may have sought adventure. In addition, many middle-class Creole producers and professionals fought to overthrow an imperial power that was at once economically crippling and politically repressive. Without Spain, bureaucratic positions would become entirely open to Cubans. Moreover, a release from the heavy burden of Spanish taxes would facilitate greater economic productivity. Still other Creoles sought annexation to the United States, as we shall see in the upcoming chapter. Thus, the ideal of *Cuba Libre* had distinct meanings for the rebel fighters, which would ultimately obstruct the success of the separatist movement.

## **Conclusion**

The Ten Years' War was Cuba's first concerted struggle for independence from Spanish imperial rule. Spain's response to the loss of its mainland American colonies was to tighten political and socioeconomic control over its remaining overseas territories. The denial of basic political rights and socioeconomic reforms to Cuba, which was surrounded by free nations, were the principal reasons why Cubans

revolted against the Madrid government. Moreover, the native elites, having achieved at least some measure of economic prominence, would only tolerate being excluded from their own political and socioeconomic affairs for so long. While many wealthy Cubans in the Western Department refrained from entering the insurgency for fear of jeopardizing their slave and sugar investments, members of the eastern elite were less affluent than their western counterparts, being less linked to slavery and sugarcane planting. Years of neglect of the less prosperous eastern regions of the island, heavy taxes, an economic downturn, and the downfall of the Junta de Información de Ultramar served as the key motives behind the *oriental* uprising of October 1868.

This Cuban insurrection of men and women was multi-class and multi-racial. Creole and Afro-Cuban men were the leaders of the fight for a Cuban republic, yet the participation of Chinese indentured workers, women, and foreign soldiers contributed significantly to the strength of the separatist movement. As the war continued, more white Cubans began to abandon the movement. It has been argued that the Creoles feared the growing involvement of Afro-Cubans in the rebellion and the ramifications of this participation in a post-independent Cuba. This reason is important, but no less so than the years of deprivation and constant persecution that insurgent families endured in this low-intensity conflict.

The next chapter examines the organization and actions of the Cuban provisional government and Liberation Army. Civil-military relations are explored, as well as the relationship between the executive and the House of Representatives.

The separatist movement faced serious challenges, due primarily to the conflicts within the government, and between civil and military leaders over the direction and purpose of the revolution. In addition, the daily undertakings of local civil administrators – prefects and sub-prefects – and their relationships with their military counterparts and the Cuban citizens that they governed are other important subjects to be addressed.

## Chapter 2

### “Patria y Libertad”: The Cuban Republic and the Liberation Army<sup>1</sup>

*‘The Government has interfered with my duties, and in that manner I will not remain in the post in which I was placed with full authority.’*

- Major General Ignacio Agramonte<sup>2</sup>

During the early years of the Cuban separatist insurrection, one Spanish officer was noted to have stated: “I have surveyed the Eastern and Central departments, and I have seen that in them all the Cubans are insurgents; and I come to Havana and I find that here the insurgents are men, women, elderly people, children, blacks, and even the air that we breathe, and the paving-stones of the streets are insurgents.”<sup>3</sup> In 1868 and 1869, the Cuban rebellion grew strong and spread like wildfire. According to Cuban historian Ramiro Guerra, by late 1868, the separatist movement was counting on as many as 30,000 insurgents.<sup>4</sup>

The Cubans had several factors working in their favor. First, being preoccupied with the *Septembrista* revolution in Spain which overthrew Queen Isabel II, Captain General Francisco Lersundi initially deemed the Cuban rebellion insignificant, despite the fact that tensions on the island had been burgeoning steadily during the course of the nineteenth century over Spain’s failure to implement political

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<sup>1</sup> Cuban insurgents often ended their correspondence with the words “Patria y Libertad,” meaning “Homeland and Liberty.”

<sup>2</sup> A copy of a letter to the Secretario de la Guerra from Y. [sic] Agramonte Loynás [sic], dated May 17, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7912, “Papeles de Ygnacio [sic] Agramonte. 1868-69-70,” Doc. no. 81.

<sup>3</sup> Piralá, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 1: 363.

<sup>4</sup> Guerra, *Guerra de los 10 años*, 1: 151.

and economic reforms, which would favor the Cubans. Second, even when Lersundi realized that the insurgency was serious, the *Septembrista* government was unable to send reinforcements and munitions to Cuba since Spain itself was in the throes of a civil war. With few regular troops stationed on the island, the Spanish insular government could do little to stop rebel fighters from seizing towns and cities in the Eastern and Central Departments. On the other hand, during the early years of the insurgency, the separatist movement could rely on filibuster expeditions sent by the Cuban exile communities in the United States to furnish it with army recruits, guns, munitions, and medicines since the Spanish Navy was ill-equipped to protect the Cuban coastlines. Moreover, many island residents took advantage of Spain's weakened condition in Cuba and sided with the insurgents, in the hope of garnering socioeconomic and political benefits following the success of the war for independence.

The Cuban separatist movement reaped important achievements, which enabled it to endure for ten years. Within the first year alone, revolutionary organizations united under one republican government and one army although, due to ongoing Spanish persecution, the Cuban insurgent government did not have a fixed location. Separatist leaders claimed the United States as their standard in establishing the government institutions of a democratic republic. The insurgent legislative body, with the approval of the president, implemented a series of laws that organized the government and the army, and aimed at creating a liberal economy and society. Moreover, the separatists held elections in the midst of the civil war.



Despite the Cuban insurgents' accomplishments, they were not united under one political program which, ultimately, is why the first Cuban Republic collapsed in 1878. Power struggles arose between factions within the government and between military and civil leaders over issues, which led to the dismissal of several separatist leaders, including President Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, the resignation or the firing of several generals, and two army mutinies. Underlying these disputes were accusations of dictatorship and regionalism and, more seriously, disagreements over abolition and nationhood. The Creole leadership's position on slave emancipation and the role of Afro-Cubans in an independent Cuba remained ambiguous. Moreover, fears of racial warfare led many Creoles to favor the annexation of Cuba to the United States. The lack of solidarity among Cuban insurgents on these key issues of abolition and national sovereignty threw the separatist movement into jeopardy.

In this chapter, I have three aims. First, I determine how the initial separatist organizations united under one government and one army in April 1869. Second, I demonstrate how government institutions functioned and worked together to advance the Cuban cause of independence from Spain. I contend that one of the notable achievements of the Cuban separatist movement was its organization and maintenance of a republican government and an army for nearly nine years. Finally, I show the internal struggles within the separatist movement which, ultimately, would lead to the collapse of the insurrection in 1878. I argue that without a clear political program to unite them, the Cubans could not succeed in gaining their independence from Spain.

## The Rise of the Cuban Insurgent Movement: The First Forms of Organization

At the beginning of the insurgency in 1868, the separatist organizations of different provinces were not unified. Each rebel movement acted alone. In Oriente, the Junta Revolucionaria de la Isla de Cuba, headed by Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, had the most success of all the separatist organizations. Due to the confusion created by the *Septembrista* revolution in Spain and the scarce number of Spanish troops on the island, *oriental* rebel forces were able to strike and take several towns and cities in their department quickly. On October 30, 1868, 3,000 *orientales*, with the aid of many townspeople, seized the city of Bayamo, where Céspedes established his headquarters.<sup>5</sup> The *oriental* junta had been criticized by other rebels for rising up against Spain without having organized a republican government. Instead, the *oriental* junta continued to maintain the same undemocratic Spanish institutions, only replacing the Spanish officials with Cuban rebels. Separatists also found highly objectionable Céspedes's assumption of the title of captain general of Cuba. For many years, this title had been associated with Spanish dictatorship in Cuba and his detractors feared that, in assuming this title, Céspedes was himself a tyrant. At the same time, Céspedes became the commander-in-chief of the insurgent army.<sup>6</sup>

Following the November 4 uprising outside of Nuevitas, *camagüeyano* rebels formed the Comité del Centro, whose name was later changed to the Asamblea del

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<sup>5</sup> Vicente García Verdugo, *Cuba contra España. Apuntes de un año para la historia de la rebelión de la isla de Cuba, que principió el 10 de octubre de 1868* (Madrid: Imprenta y Librería Universal, 1869), 43.

<sup>6</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 1: 287, 289-290. For examples of insurgent military and civil positions in Oriente in 1868, see AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4439, Exp. 1.

Representantes del Centro. Leading this committee were Ignacio and Eduardo Agramonte, Salvador Cisneros Betancourt, and Ignacio Mora. At the head of the *camagüeyano* army was Napoleón Arango, at least until Manuel de Quesada could return to Cuba from abroad. The *camagüeyanos* supported the abolition of slavery, civil marriage, the separation between state and religion, and the establishment of a federal government. Although they favored slave emancipation because their province had few slaves, they were nonetheless social conservatives who desired to maintain their estates. Under the direction of Cisneros Betancourt, the *camagüeyano* government established workshops to produce manufactured goods, particularly gunpowder. As a result, the *camagüeyanos* were better equipped to fight in the early stages of the war than the *orientales* were. The *orientales*, however, came under heavier attacks in 1868 and 1869 than did the *camagüeyanos*. By the end of 1868, with the Lersundi government lacking enough troops to combat all separatist forces, most of the province of Puerto Príncipe came under insurgent control, with exception of the major cities of Nuevitas, Puerto Príncipe, and Santa Cruz.<sup>7</sup>

In the western provinces of Pinar del Río, Havana, and Matanzas, it was much more difficult for Cubans to rise up against Spain. This situation was due to several factors. First, the western part of the island was the center of Cuba's economic wealth as a result of its flourishing sugar and tobacco industries. Many landowners and their business partners did not join the uprising for fear of losing their economic prosperity as a result of the insurgents' destruction of property. Second, according to Guerra,

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<sup>7</sup> Collazo, *Desde Yara hasta el Zanjón*, 4, 6; Figueredo, *La revolución de Yara*, 58-59; Sarabia, *Ana Betancourt Agramonte*, 52.

the western provinces held “the majority of the inhabitants of Cuba, with an excess of more than 150,000 over those of Las Villas, Camagüey, and Oriente combined.”<sup>8</sup> Therefore, fears of the revolution causing slave uprisings were greater in the western part of Cuba than in the eastern side of the island. In addition, the greatest concentration of Spanish troops was located in the western provinces because of the large population of slaves and the great amount of wealth that was produced there. This fact made it difficult for Cuban rebels to rise up against Spain in the western provinces. Moreover, most Spaniards lived in Matanzas, Havana, and Pinar del Río, which also explains why the Western Department remained a bastion of Spanish loyalty.<sup>9</sup>

The Junta Revolucionaria de la Habana was the best known organization operating in the island capital. It was founded by former reformists, José Antonio Echeverría, Antonio Fernández Bramosio, José Manuel Mestre, and José Morales Lemus, among others, after having an unsuccessful meeting with Captain General Lersundi on October 24, 1868. Since Lersundi was unwilling to compromise with the liberals of the Creole elite, some of them felt that they had no other choice but to join the separatist movement. Ultimately, the violence of the Havana Volunteers against the Cuban population led the Junta leadership to escape to the United States. In New York, the Havana insurrectionists took control of the Cuban exile committee with the purpose of recruiting soldiers and raising funds for the purchase of arms and munitions to be sent to the separatist movement in Cuba. Meanwhile, other Havana

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<sup>8</sup> Guerra, *Guerra de los 10 años*, 1: 145, 154.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 1: 145, 148, 154.

insurgents fled to other countries only to invade Cuba later in filibuster expeditions or escaped to the eastern provinces to join the Cuban separatists in the actual fighting without delay.<sup>10</sup>

The most revolutionary of the Havana-based insurgent societies, however, appeared to be the Comité Republicano. This nationalist organization backed the Céspedes administration and enthusiastically supported the government's decision to burn down *ingenios*. Moreover, in a December 1869 proclamation, members of this group declared that Afro-Cubans and whites were equal, and that slavery should be abolished. They also advised slaves to rise up against their masters and burn down their sugar estates in order to gain their freedom. It was vital to the Comité Republicano that Cubans unite to overthrow the Spanish government and "to expel the Spaniard" from Cuban soil. The only distinction that they made was between Spaniards and Cubans, who seemingly were classified as those born on the island. They did, however, recognize that the battle for independence could not be won without the war being taken to the Western Department and without the assistance of the slaves living there.<sup>11</sup>

On February 6, 1869, the Cuban revolution struck the province of Las Villas. *Villareño* rebels from the provincial capital, Santa Clara, were in contact with the Junta Revolucionaria in Havana and, with the aid of the Havana insurgents, over 4,000 separatists rose up in arms outside of the provincial capital. Soon thereafter,

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 1: 149, 152, 157-159; Zaragoza, *Las insurrecciones en Cuba*, 2: 304, 313.

<sup>11</sup> A proclamation signed by the Comité Republicano, dated December 10, 1869, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4933, Caja 2, Exp. 6, Doc. no. 1.

the countryside was in a state of revolt, although the Spanish retained control of the major cities. As in Camagüey, the separatists in Las Villas began derailing the trains and severing the telegraph wires located in their province. Moreover, slaves and Asian contract workers were freed from their servitude, and either were forced to join the insurgent ranks or did so willingly.<sup>12</sup>

The uprising in Las Villas had the effect of forcing the liberal captaincy general of Domingo Dulce, who succeeded Lersundi in January 1869, into a more conservative position against the insurrection. Following the intensification of the Spanish military campaigns in Oriente and Las Villas, it became clear that the Cuban insurgent organizations would have to unite under one movement in order for the revolution to succeed. Moreover, as long as the Cuban separatist movement remained fragmented, it did not give the impression to foreign governments that it would succeed, thereby making it difficult for insurgents to gain political and financial support from other countries.<sup>13</sup>

### **The Constitutional Assembly of Guáimaro**

In early April 1869, Cuban insurrectionists met in the small town of Guáimaro<sup>14</sup> in Camagüey, which had been taken by *camagüeyano* insurgent troops shortly after the provincial revolt began. In a matter of several days, representatives from Las Villas, Camagüey, and Oriente wrote a constitution, which would serve to

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<sup>12</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 1: 421.

<sup>13</sup> Guerra, *Guerra de los 10 años*, 1: 239-240, 242-243.

<sup>14</sup> As of 1854, Guáimaro had a population of 450 inhabitants. See García de Arboleya, *Manual de la isla de Cuba*, 113, 124.

unite the separatist movement under the authority of one government and one army for the remainder of the war. Upon its completion, the representatives voted in favor of enacting Cuba's first constitution, the Constitution of Guáimaro, on April 10, 1869.<sup>15</sup>

Taking the U.S. Constitution as their inspiration, the authors of the Guáimaro Constitution established a civil government divided into three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial. The executive was comprised of the president of the Republic and his cabinet ministers. Only Cuban-born males aged thirty years or over were permitted to become president. The president's only prerogative, however, was to name ambassadors, consuls, and plenipotentiary ministers to foreign countries. The Cuban president's cabinet ministers had to be approved by the House of Representatives, the legislative power, and he was not allowed to declare war or raise troops without the consent of the legislature. At the same time, the general-in-chief of the Liberation Army remained under the supervision of the president, which meant that the constitutional authors intended to subject military power to civil authority during the course of the war and in post-independent Cuba.<sup>16</sup>

Unlike the president who had to be native-born, as in the U.S. Constitution, House representatives were required to be "[male] citizens of the Republic over twenty years [of age]," which does not necessarily mean that they had to be born in Cuba. The legislative assembly held the most authority of all the branches of government due to fears among numerous insurgents that the presidency could

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<sup>15</sup> Pichardo, ed., *Documentos para la historia de Cuba*, 1: 376-379.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

become a dictatorship. Hence, the legislature was responsible for designating the president of the republic, the commanding general of the Liberation Army, and the House president. Although the president had the right to veto any piece of legislation, after the House took the president's concerns into consideration, the president was required to accept the bill upon its subsequent presentation by the House. In addition, the legislative assembly had the right to impeach the president, the commanding general, and representatives of the House, while the judiciary held the power to render a verdict on those accused in the legislature of wrongdoing. Otherwise, the responsibilities of the judicial branch, as stated in the constitution, remained ambiguous.<sup>17</sup>

Despite the expeditious completion of the Guáimaro Constitution, disagreements arose over the addition of constitutional amendments. In an 1870 missive to the House of Representatives, Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, who became the president of the Cuban Republic at Guáimaro, expressed his astonishment at the executive leader's inability to veto constitutional amendments proposed by the House. There were no checks and balances within the government to prevent the legislature from amending the constitution. Céspedes was even more disturbed at what he perceived to be the executive administration's inferiority to the legislative assembly. Indeed, there was cause for alarm. Following the implementation of the constitution, the House enacted an amendment, which stated that "the representatives of the country are not responsible and are inviolable in the exercise of their

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid.



functions.” In other words, it would be extremely difficult to find a legislator guilty of committing any wrongdoing.<sup>18</sup>

More importantly, there was controversy regarding the number of representatives permitted to serve from each state.<sup>19</sup> If representation was based on population, then the *orientales* would dominate the legislature, in addition to the executive administration. While there were approximately 264,000 people in Oriente, Camagüey only possessed 71,000 inhabitants, or five percent of the island population. The *camagüeyanos* became seriously concerned at the prospect of an *oriental* majority and, with the support of the *villareños* and *occidentales*, campaigned against the so-called “tyranny of numbers.” As a result, the Cubans agreed to limit the number of representatives from each state to two, seemingly making each state equal. As Guerra argues, however, since the *camagüeyanos* collaborated with the *villareños* and *occidentales* against the perceived *oriental* domination of the rebel movement, the former group gained hegemony over the House of Representatives.<sup>20</sup>

Matters became worse when the House proposed to increase the representation of Las Villas by dividing the state into districts, at the head of each would serve one representative. Céspedes was flabbergasted by the plan, which was not adopted since it would strain even further the relations between the president and the legislature. Instead, Céspedes proposed that a senate be established in addition to

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<sup>18</sup> Collazo, *Desde Yara hasta el Zanjón*, 16; letter to the Cámara de Representantes from Presidente C. M. de Céspedes, dated March 5, 1870, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7913, Doc. no. 8.

<sup>19</sup> In the Constitution of Guáimaro, Cuban separatists organized Cuba into four states – Oriente, Camagüey, Las Villas, and Occidente. Oriente and Occidente were equivalent to the Spanish Eastern and Western Departments, and Camagüey and Las Villas corresponded to the Spanish Central Department.

<sup>20</sup> Guerra, *Guerra de los 10 años*, 1: 250-251.

the House as a means of “ending the many difficulties that arise daily in our present situation of Government.” Under this project, the House would have ten representatives elected from each state and, from these forty, twelve would be selected to become senators. The requirement for becoming a senator was to be “among the oldest” in the legislative body and to already “have served in public office during the revolution.” Since Céspedes did not suggest that an equal number of senators from each state be selected, the House scratched his proposal.<sup>21</sup>

### **The Executive Administration**

From 1869 to 1875, the Cuban Republic had two executive administrations – the first one under President Carlos Manuel de Céspedes (1869-1873) and the second one under President Salvador Cisneros Betancourt (1873-1875). Under Céspedes, institutions of government were created and set into motion. In addition, the territorial organization of the Cuban Republic was established along administrative and military lines. Perhaps the greatest number of laws was enacted in 1869, since the government remained in Camagüey, which did not experience nearly as much warfare as Oriente and Las Villas did that same year. Nonetheless, a struggle to establish a balance of power between the executive and legislative branches of government began from the advent of Céspedes’s tenure as president. It is clearly demonstrated in his repeated veto of legislative bills which, in some cases, he believed deprived the executive administration of powers that other presidencies enjoyed in other republics.

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<sup>21</sup> Letter to the Presidente de la Cámara from Presidente C. M. de Céspedes, dated August 31, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7913, Doc. no. 133.

For example, Céspedes disagreed with the House on not giving the president the power to nominate civil and criminal judges, and judges to the Supreme Court. Instead, the legislature retained this authority. Céspedes was quick to remind the legislators that “in none of the republics established in America is such a faculty only exercised by the legislative power.” The Cuban president advised that the House members follow the U.S. constitutional standard regarding the relationship between the executive administration and the judiciary. In the finalized version of the law, which organized the Cuban judiciary, the president was granted the privilege of nominating civil and criminal judges, and judges to the Supreme Court, while it was left to the House to accept the nominees.<sup>22</sup>

As a result of Céspedes’s frequent battles with the House over control of the provisional government, as well as conflicts with the army leadership, the House voted to remove the president from office in October 1873. Céspedes’s dismissal prompted elation from some rebels and consternation from others. According to Fernando Figueredo, the *camagüeyanos*, having accused the president of authoritarian tendencies, were satisfied with his removal from office and even more pleased that Salvador Cisneros Betancourt, one of their own, would replace him. While Céspedes had made both allies and enemies in Oriente, Figueredo claimed that the departure of the *oriental* liberator was “truly lamented” in Las Villas. Although some, like Brigadier General José González Guerra, may have condemned his dismissal, this news also comes as a surprise considering that in an 1869 letter, Céspedes notified the

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<sup>22</sup> Collazo, *Desde Yara hasta el Zanjón*, 18-20; Fernando Figueredo, *La revolución de Yara* (Havana: Instituto del Libro, 1969), 65, 69; RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7913, Doc. no. 48.

House that a disclaimer had to be forwarded to the *villareño* civil and military leaders stating that no guarantees had been made to them that they would receive arms.<sup>23</sup>

Following the House's removal of Céspedes as president, Salvador Cisneros Betancourt was nominated as the interim president. Members of Cisneros's cabinet included Secretary of War and Treasury Major General Vicente García, Secretary of State Francisco Maceo Osorio, and Secretary of the Government Council Federico Betancourt. One of Cisneros's first actions was to undo the organization of the military departments as implemented under Céspedes. Prior to Cisneros's presidency, the Cuban Republic had been separated into three military departments – the Department of Cauto, which included the districts of Bayamo, Manzanillo, Tunas, and Jiguaní; the districts of Santiago de Cuba, Guantánamo, Baracoa, and Holguín constituted the Department of Oriente; and the Department of Occidente, which was only composed of Camagüey since the *villareños* had withdrawn from their province in 1871. Under Cisneros, Cuban territory was split into two military departments – that of Oriente, which included all of Oriente province, and that of Occidente, which was comprised of Camagüey, Las Villas, and Occidente. Luckily for Cisneros, this reorganization did not complicate matters to a great degree even though there were four military commanders under Céspedes, who included Modesto Díaz, Calixto García, Vicente García, and Máximo Gómez, and, now, there could only be two. Díaz grumbled at having been removed from the *oriental* military leadership, but did not cause a rupture within the movement. Calixto García was named the new military

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<sup>23</sup> Figueredo, *La revolución de Yara*, 79; letter to the Cámara de Representantes from Presidente C. M. de Céspedes, dated July 23, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7913, Doc. no. 82.

chief of Oriente, while Máximo Gómez was placed at the head of the army of Occidente.<sup>24</sup>

### **Civil Governorships and Lieutenant Governorships**

The Law of Administrative Organization established state and local governments, and the responsibilities of their officials. Under the authority of the executive administration were the civil governors and lieutenant governors. A civil governor served at the head of each state and, under him, there were several lieutenant governors who each presided over a district. The principal duty of the governor was to implement the dictates and laws issued by the republican government. He also had the power to enact regulations which conserved effective state administration, allowed the clearing of woods and fields for agriculture as long as they did not endanger the war effort (rebel fighters used the woods, cane fields, and high grasslands as protective covers during their guerrilla attacks on Spanish troops), promoted public hygiene, enabled the safe passage of postal carriers, established the central office for resolving matters involving *libertos*, distributed livestock and other resources among the lieutenant governors for them to deliver to the prefectures and sub-prefectures, and castigated their subordinates who perpetrated wrongdoings with either a fine or imprisonment.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Figueredo, *La revolución de Yara*, 61, 65, 69, 71.

<sup>25</sup> Letter to the Presidente de la República from Presidente [de la Cámara de Representantes] Salvador Cisneros Betancourt and Secretario Antonio Zambrana, dated July 29, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7913, Doc. no. 87.

The duties of lieutenant governors remained obscure in the Law of Administrative Organization. It stated that the lieutenant governors “shall comply with the orders of the Governor in the territory of their command and shall have other attributions that are separated from their character of intermediary authority between the Governors and Prefects.” For all practical purposes, however, the lieutenant governors served as substitutes for governors, as the law stipulates, “in cases of an absolute lack of communication with the Governors.”<sup>26</sup>

Governors, lieutenant governors, prefects, and sub-prefects were subject to general elections by universal male suffrage. While the governors were elected by the male citizens living in their states, the lieutenant governors, prefects, and sub-prefects were elected by the insurgent men residing in their districts, prefectures, and sub-prefectures, respectively. Nonetheless, in the case that a position remained unfilled, the president of the republic had the authority to nominate an interim governor, who could name lieutenant governors who, in turn, could designate prefects who, then, could nominate sub-prefects. To hold public office, an administrative leader had to be a Cuban-born male aged twenty years or older.<sup>27</sup>

### **Prefectures and Sub-prefectures**

Prefectures and sub-prefectures were the local civil governments in the Cuban Republic. The territories of the prefectures generally were equivalent to the military districts formed by the Spanish government. Subsequently, the Cuban prefectures

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

were partitioned into sub-prefectures. According to historian Domingo Corvea Álvarez, the *camagüeyano* separatists were the first to establish prefectures and sub-prefectures in their province in January 1869. Corvea Álvarez argues that since some of the *camagüeyano* insurgent leaders had been educated in Europe, they would have learned of the ancient Roman prefectures located in that region of the world.<sup>28</sup> *Herald* correspondent James J. O’Kelly described the Cuban prefectures as small rural “settlements,” “hamlet[s],” or “encampment[s]” consisting of huts and makeshift sugar mills.<sup>29</sup>

At the head of the prefectures and sub-prefectures were the prefects and sub-prefects. It appears that they had the most responsibilities of all civil leaders in the Cuban Republic since they were to fulfill the day-to-day needs of insurgents living under their jurisdiction. The prefects served under the authority of the lieutenant governors, while sub-prefects reported to the prefects. In the initial legislation, which organized the government administration, the prefects’ duties included sanctioning civil marriages, establishing local offices for matters involving *libertos*, fining or imprisoning criminals, and informing the lieutenant governors “of the needs of the prefecture[s].” The sub-prefects had more responsibilities than the prefects: they were to notify the prefects of the needs of the inhabitants in their jurisdictions, maintain security in their territories, turn in runaway *libertos* or people without safe conduct passes to their local prefectures, jail military and civil criminals, record an

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<sup>28</sup> Domingo Corvea Álvarez, *Las guerras contra España y la administración civil mambisa en el centro oriental de Cuba (1868-1878 y 1895-1898)* (Las Palmas de Gran Canaria: Editorial Benchomo, 2002), 9, 14-16.

<sup>29</sup> O’Kelly, *The Mambi-Land*, 182-183, 198-199.

annual census of the people living in their sub-prefectures for the purposes of assigning military service and manual labor, and registering residents' personal assets, administer abandoned farms or ranches, and collect abandoned livestock. In order to maintain the welfare of the residents living in their territories, prefects and sub-prefects organized workers to be employed in agriculture and established workshops in which Cubans manufactured shoes, clothing, and military supplies. In subsequent laws, the responsibilities of the prefects and sub-prefects were expanded. For instance, sub-prefects supervised state and local elections, while prefects were responsible for helping to organize public-primary education in their jurisdictions. Prefects and sub-prefects also were required to provide their military counterparts with able-bodied male recruits for the Liberation Army. Moreover, the army received from the prefectures and sub-prefectures considerable provisions of food, clothing, and military supplies, such as gunpowder.<sup>30</sup>

In addition to these responsibilities, prefects and sub-prefects also served as investigators of civil and criminal court cases. Archival documents held at the Real Academia de la Historia in Madrid reveal that they prosecuted cases involving escaped *libertos*, the destruction of property, unfulfilled work contracts, robbery, and murder. The court process usually began with a citizen's written complaint sent to his local prefect or sub-prefect. The prefect or sub-prefect would then interview possible witnesses to the crime, documenting the interview in the form of a

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<sup>30</sup> Letter to the Presidente de la República from Presidente [de la Cámara de Representantes] Salvador Cisneros Betancourt and Secretario Antonio Zambrana, dated July 29, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7913, Doc. no. 87; "Ley de instrucción pública," in Francisco J. Ponte Domínguez, *Historia de la guerra de los diez años (Desde la Asamblea de Guáimaro hasta la destitución de Céspedes.)* (Havana: Imprenta "El Siglo XX," 1958), 380-383.



questionnaire. The prefect or sub-prefect was accompanied to the interviews by two assistants, who verified with their signatures that the submitted questionnaires were accurate. If the witnesses could write, then they also would sign their testimonies. At that point, the investigation was passed on to a civil or criminal judge of the state in which the crime occurred to render a verdict on the case. Unfortunately, the archival documentation for these cases ends with the evidence collected by the prefects and sub-prefects. Information on the judges' verdicts was not provided in the documents. In one civil case, José María Núñez, the overseer of the farm "El Destino," apparently complained to Sub-prefect Francisco Agüero in Camagüey that he had not been paid by his employer and the owner of the farm, Melchor Batista. Sadly for Núñez, none of the witnesses who lived in the area could provide any information regarding the overseer's work contract with Batista. The case was then forwarded to a civil judge.<sup>31</sup>

In a criminal matter, José Osorio informed the sub-prefect of Jagüeyes, Camagüey in June 1869 that his house had burned down on his *potrero* (ranch) "La Margarita." Thereafter, the case was sent to the Prefect of Urabo, Fernando Quiñones, to determine who had destroyed Osorio's property. According to members of the Osorio family, the fire had begun at around ten o'clock in the evening. Those in the house – the Osorio family and two of their farm workers – had been asleep when the fire began. According to Osorio's daughter, María Catalina, she saw a man on horseback fleeing the property once the house had been set ablaze. Since José Osorio asserted that he did not know of anyone who meant him any harm, it was

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<sup>31</sup> RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7911, Carpeta 2, Doc. no. 20. Carpeta 2 is entitled "Sumarios."

difficult to determine how the fire was started. Later, the case was sent to a criminal judge.<sup>32</sup>

Prefects and sub-prefects also became investigators in cases not brought to trial, but involving possible treason. In one instance, the prefect of Maguáños had asked the sub-prefect of Ciego to investigate Agustina Sosa, who had been accused by Commandant Santiago Bondat of “[having] cut off . . . the road” and of not turning over to the separatist movement several beasts of burden which she owned. In his report to the prefect, the sub-prefect determined that these allegations were false. He stated that, when it came to the livestock, “she only has two; one of which discharges the mail service of this Sub-prefecture, and the other [is used] to look for food or for help from her family.” The sub-prefect further noted that taking away Sosa’s only remaining beast of burden would be “unjust.”<sup>33</sup>

Although the prefects and sub-prefects performed many services for the Cubans in the areas they controlled, they also became the subject of many citizens’ complaints. In one example, insurgent Miguel Abad complained to Ignacio Agramonte about how the prefect of the area in which his family lived had left them destitute after the Spaniards had destroyed their house. As a result, Abad requested that Agramonte ask the governor of Camagüey to give Abad a sub-prefecture in the *partido* of Caunao to be closer to his family.<sup>34</sup> Since there were shortages of food, clothing, and other supplies during even the early days of the war, and it was the

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<sup>32</sup> RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7911, Carpeta 2, Doc. no. 13.

<sup>33</sup> Letter to the “C. Prefecto accidental de Maguáños” from Carlos Bisisuelas, dated February 21, 1870, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 5837, Caja 1, Exp. 20, Doc. no. 7.

<sup>34</sup> Letter to [Ignacio Agramonte] from Miguel Abad, dated March 25, 1870, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7912, “Papeles de Ygnacio [sic] Agramonte. 1868-69-70,” Doc. no. 69.

responsibility of the prefects and sub-prefects to supply insurgents with food and other necessities, it is not surprising that they suffered the brunt of Cubans' criticisms. The reality was that the Liberation Army was demanding in its requests, which prompted rural inhabitants to migrate to Spanish military camps, and peninsular-controlled towns and cities.<sup>35</sup>

### **The House of Representatives**

At Guáimaro, the House representatives were selected from the gathered group. Salvador Cisneros Betancourt served as the President of the House of Representatives, while Miguel Jerónimo Gutiérrez became the Vice-President. Other ranking members included Ignacio Agramonte and Antonio Zambrana, who served as the Secretaries, and Miguel Betancourt and Eduardo Machado, who became the Vice-Secretaries. The members of the House governing committee were either *camagüeyanos* or *villareños*, meaning that the legislative leadership was not in the hands of the *orientales*.<sup>36</sup>

Between 1869 and 1871, the House of Representatives, in alliance with President Céspedes, enacted twenty-four laws and regulations which organized the republican government, the economy, the army, and the society. The implementation of a number of social and economic laws revealed the liberal character of the legislative assembly and the executive administration. For instance, the House of

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<sup>35</sup> For examples on rebel shortages of all kinds, see RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7910 and AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 5844.

<sup>36</sup> Guerra, *Guerra de los 10 años*, 1: 255.

Representatives passed the Law of Free Trade, the Law of Civil Marriage, and the Law of Public Instruction, the latter guaranteeing free elementary education to all Cuban citizens regardless of race or gender. It is of no surprise that the Law of Free Trade was one of the first pieces of legislation to be implemented in *Cuba Libre* considering the Creole elite's hatred of Spanish export duties on primary products and all Cubans' disgust with the high taxes imposed on imports.<sup>37</sup>

In addition to the conflicts that the House of Representatives had with the executive administration, the legislative assembly experienced another difficulty. A serious matter among legislators was that they were sent away on assignments. For instance, a representative could be asked by the government to investigate the state of the war in a particular province. This situation became problematic for the House, however, because from 1871 onward a quorum of seven representatives was required for the legislative body to pass any piece of legislation. Since representatives were often away from their posts fulfilling other duties, it became difficult to enact laws to govern the republic. Moreover, as the military struggle for independence became more intense, there were fewer opportunities for representatives to meet to pass legislation. For this reason, most Cuban laws were enacted before 1871, the year that the insurgents deemed one of the worst in the war's history.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Ponte Domínguez, *Historia de la guerra de los diez años*, 375-449. The appendices of this book include the laws and regulations enacted by the Cuban government during the Ten Years' War.

<sup>38</sup> Figueredo, *La revolución de Yara*, 54; letter to the Cámara de Representantes de la República from the Secretario del Interior Eduardo Agramonte, dated October 12, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7913, Doc. no. 216.

## **The Judiciary**

The judiciary was the least developed branch of the Cuban republican government. Disagreements between Céspedes and the House over judicial matters, along with the Spanish persecution of insurgents, made it difficult to establish a court system in separatist territory. The first Law of Judicial Organization, enacted in 1869, established a Supreme Court of Justice, which included a President, two assistant judges, and a prosecutor, and decided political cases against the republican president and the House representatives, cases involving judicial and executive matters, and civil and criminal decisions being appealed. In addition, civil and criminal judges served below the Supreme Court in districts to be established in each state, while prefects and sub-prefects were positioned below them. Military tribunals were established to judge cases involving army matters. Taking into account the complaints of the president and the conditions of the war, the judicial law was revised in 1871. The Supreme Court was enlarged to include five judges, among which was a President and a prosecutor. Instead of simply having civil and criminal judges as described in the first law, the second one established Judicial District Courts to rule on criminal matters, while prefects were to oversee civil cases, but not surpassing the value of 200 pesos. District Courts also were allowed to repeal decisions issued by the military tribunals in their jurisdiction. Since circumstances of war did not always permit the Supreme Court to meet or allow for the establishment of District Courts, the House permitted District Court judges to substitute for those of the Supreme Court and military tribunals served in the place of District Courts in regions where

there were none. Thus, it appears that the District Courts and military tribunals exercised more power than the actual Supreme Court.<sup>39</sup>

## Elections

One of the important achievements of the Cuban Republic was its holding of state and local elections, in which both white and Afro-Cuban men voted. Although women did not gain the right to vote in the Cuban separatist movement, the holding of elections was a notable step forward in terms of civil rights for Afro-Cuban men.<sup>40</sup> On September 25, 1869, elections for the civil governor and two House representatives of Camagüey were held in the sub-prefectures of that state. To vote, one had to be male and twenty years of age. Voting was held all day until sunset. The sub-prefects and their assistants were responsible for collecting and tallying the votes and, then, reported the results to the local prefectures. Ultimately, the results were sent to the secretary of interior to have them legalized. While many of the elections held went smoothly, problems arose in others. Some of the difficulties reported were relatively minor. For instance, at the *ingenio* “Horqueta,” Sub-prefect Manuel Agustín García reported that “seventy whites and [men] of color” postponed voting due to heavy rains, although the elections were carried out later on October 10 of that year. On the other hand, cheating was a more serious problem. In one case, the sub-prefect of Tiquí, Francisco Agüero Zaldívar, was on the ballot for governor of

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<sup>39</sup> Ponte Domínguez, *Historia de la guerra de los diez años*, 386-389.

<sup>40</sup> Letter from Agustín T. Rojas *et al.*, dated September 11, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7913, Doc. no. 191.

Camagüey. At noon, when he had received enough votes to elect himself governor, he closed down the polling station, much to the shock of the local populace. In protest to the results, insurgent Adolfo Arteaga demanded that the election be nullified, but it does not appear that the matter was resolved.<sup>41</sup>

In a probable related case, a group of separatists headed by Gregorio Agüero accused the sub-prefect of Pacheco of collecting an unequal number of votes (195 voted for the governor and 356 voted for two representatives) and closing the polling station in the early afternoon, at which time only 100 electors had voted. In response to the complaints, the prefect of Maragüán, Lino Aguirre, conducted an investigation and replied that no such irregularities had been found in the *cuartón*. He found that 177 votes were actually counted for the governor and 354 for the representatives, which was accurate since the electors voted for two representatives. Moreover, Aguirre asserted that Gregorio Agüero had abused the electoral system by pushing *libertos* to vote for the candidates that he supported, forcing the son of a sub-prefect to vote when he was too young to do so, and voting several times in different sub-prefectures for his brother, Francisco Agüero, who was running for representative. Although the name of Francisco Agüero appears in the prior case, it is unclear if it was the same person since, in the aforementioned matter, he was running for governor and, in this case, he was running for representative. The position for which

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<sup>41</sup> Letter from Manuel A. García *et al.*, dated September 25, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7913, Doc. no. 151; letter to Salvador from Adolfo Arteaga, dated September 28, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7913, Doc. no. 177.

Francisco Agüero was running may have been a mistake on the part of Prefect Aguirre.<sup>42</sup>

### **The Cuban Liberation Army**

The separatist government enacted the Law of Military Organization in July 1869. Able-bodied men between the ages of eighteen and fifty years were required to serve in the army. The law also established organizations of administration, artillery, cavalry, engineers, general inspection, infantry, sanitation and police, and a general staff. The army was separated into divisions, brigades, regiments, battalions, and companies. According to the law, two platoons created a company, “[t]en companies form[ed] a battalion, two battalions a regiment: two regiments a brigade: two brigades at least one division: several divisions one Army corps.” The military ranks in descending order are as follows: a general-in-chief, lieutenant generals, major generals, brigadier generals, colonels, lieutenant colonels, commandants, captains, lieutenants, sub-lieutenants, sergeants, corporals, and soldiers. The military division of territory followed the political one, thereby establishing four states – Oriente, Camagüey, Las Villas, and Occidente. With a general-in-chief at the head of the army, a lieutenant general was to serve as the chief-of-staff and the commanding general’s second-in-command. In addition, at the head of each military state served a lieutenant general, while major generals commanded districts within each state. At

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<sup>42</sup> Letter from Lino Aguirre, dated September 30, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7913, Doc. no. 179; letter from Lino Aguirre, dated September 30, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7913, Doc. no. 181.



the same time, a brigadier general led a brigade, a colonel commanded a regiment, a lieutenant colonel held authority over half of a regiment, a commandant headed five companies, a captain commanded one company, and a lieutenant supervised half of a company.<sup>43</sup>

This Law of Military Organization granted substantial freedom of action to both the republican president and the commanding general, but it kept the military leader under the control of the civil chief. Although the commanding general was ordered to carry out the dictates of the executive branch and to inform the secretary of war of his actions, the law stated that “[t]he General-in-Chief [,] when the necessities of war demand it, can immediately adopt the measures which he esteems convenient.” The commanding general also was permitted to elevate or demote officers “in urgent cases.” The president, however, had the authority to reject the general-in-chief’s actions. At the same time, the president’s authority was checked by the House of Representatives. The executive leader was granted the right to nominate officers from the rank of sub-lieutenant to that of colonel, while the nominations of colonels to lieutenant generals required the sanction of the legislative assembly. Moreover, if the president accepted changes made to the Law of Military Organization by the commanding general, then the revised law had to be submitted to the House for approval.<sup>44</sup>

Following the Assembly of Guáimaro in April 1869, Manuel de Quesada, a *camagüeyano* who had served Benito Juárez as a general in the Mexican War of

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<sup>43</sup> “Ley de organización militar,” in Ponte Domínguez, *Historia de la guerra de los diez años*, 409-417.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 410-411.

French Intervention (1864-1867), became the commanding general of the Cuban Liberation Army. In 1870, Major General Thomas S. Jordan, a veteran of the U.S. Civil War, became the chief-of-staff. The First Division was known as the Army of Camagüey, which was led by Major General Ignacio Agramonte. This army had six brigades, headed mostly by colonels, and three battalions, also commanded by colonels. The Army of Oriente represented the Second Division, which was headed by Major General Francisco V. Aguilera, who also was the vice-president of the Cuban Republic. Unlike Camagüey, the *oriental* army only had three brigades, all of which were led by generals. Finally, the Third Division was known as the Army of Las Villas, which was led by Major General Federico Cavada, who also had fought in the U.S. Civil War. In addition, the *villareño* army had three brigades commanded by generals.<sup>45</sup>

The principal military strategy employed by the insurgents throughout the course of the Ten Years' War was guerrilla and trench warfare since the Spanish Army outmatched them in terms of men and weapons. Separatist forces were particularly skilled in hit-and-run attacks made on Spanish columns passing through forests or high grasses. As the commanding general of the Liberation Army, Quesada implemented a defensive strategy because he understood that, in order for the separatist movement to succeed, the insurgents could not compete with Spanish

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<sup>45</sup> *Almanaque cubano para 1870* (New York: Imprenta de Hallet y Breen, 1870), 19-20, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4933, Caja 2, Exp. 6, Doc. no. 2.

forces on an open field due to their scarce supplies of men and arms. Moreover, the arrival of filibuster expeditions to Cuba occurred seldom following 1870.<sup>46</sup>

Only in cases where Cubans had the resources did Quesada instruct separatist forces to strike offensively.<sup>47</sup> In his Camagüey campaign, General Máximo Gómez had several offensive victories at the battles of La Sacra (November 9, 1873), Palo Seco (December 2, 1873), El Naranjo (February 10, 1874), and Las Guásimas (March 15, 1874). Spanish General Jiménez Castellanos reported that, at El Naranjo, Spanish forces numbering 3,000 suffered 300 casualties, whereas the Cubans, with a contingent of 1,500 men, endured only sixty. Moreover, at Las Guásimas, where Spanish Brigadier General Manuel Armiñán amassed nearly 3,000 infantry and cavalry, Gómez's 1,600 troops were still able to inflict the Spanish Army with 1,000 casualties and leave the battlefield with only twenty-nine insurgent deaths. As a former commandant in the Spanish cavalry in the Dominican Republic, Gómez was able to use his cavalry effectively to defeat Spanish forces in Camagüey.<sup>48</sup> Such victories gave insurgents the opportunity to collect Spanish arms. Gómez's petition to invade Las Villas and take the revolution to the western provinces would receive heavy criticism from civil and military leaders, however. Although Creoles objected to the racial implications of such a campaign, they also opposed the Dominican general's offensive strategy when, by 1875, the number of separatist troops had dwindled considerably. More on this matter is discussed in Chapter 6.

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<sup>46</sup> Letter to Ygnacio [sic] Agramonte from M. Quesada, dated January 20, 1870, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7912, "Papeles de Ygnacio [sic] Agramonte. 1868 -69-70," Doc. no. 31.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Souza, *Máximo Gómez: El Generalísimo*, 27, 29, 64-68.

Military policies changed as the war progressed. For instance, at the beginning of the war, the Cuban policy on the treatment of Spanish military prisoners was lenient. Prisoners were not executed and could be released unharmed. Subsequently, some Spanish soldiers and Volunteers joined the Liberation Army. As the Cuban rebels gained more territory, causing the loyalist population to panic, Spanish regulars and Volunteers took a hard-lined approach to dealing with the insurgency. Rebel prisoners were often executed. The Spaniards' violence and hardened resolve exasperated many separatist fighters. Thus, in February 1869, the House of Representatives enacted a law, which called for a "war to the death against our enemies," after which the Cuban insurgents began to execute prisoners, but took precautions to not mutilate the bodies.<sup>49</sup>

More importantly, the insurgent policy on destroying *ingenios* and sugarcane fields wavered. General Manuel de Quesada supported the destruction of sugarcane fields.<sup>50</sup> If western planters believed that Spanish authorities could not protect the sugar economy, they might side with the insurgents, thereby throwing Spanish rule in jeopardy. In Las Villas, however, separatist leaders postponed the demolition of *ingenios*. Las Villas had more invested in sugar, coffee, and slavery than the eastern provinces did. Thus, the *villareño* chiefs would have been more hesitant to destroy

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<sup>49</sup> A circular directed to Antonio Rodríguez, dated April 24, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7911, Carpeta 3. Carpeta 3 is entitled "Papeles de Antonio Rodríguez (a) Madriñales, Jefe del batallón ó de Punta de Piedra. 1868, 69 – 70."

<sup>50</sup> Letter to Mayor General Ygnacio [*sic*] Agramonte from General en Gefe [*sic*] M. Quesada, dated April 21, [18]69, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7911, Carpeta 1. Carpeta 1 is entitled "Cuartel general de M. Quesada y de F. Cavada. 1869 – 70."

sugar and coffee estates for fear of jeopardizing the country's wealth and sparking racial warfare.<sup>51</sup>

Despite the Liberation Army's early victories and mastery of guerrilla warfare, it also battled numerous conflicts within its organization. First, a scarce supply of troops diminished the separatists' chances of military and political success. Historians have varied in their estimation of the numerical size of the separatist army. According to Spanish historian Antonio Pirala, in late 1869 rebel soldiers "did not reach six or seven thousand, whereas the Spanish element counted on sixty to seventy thousand armed [V]olunteers, [and] sixteen or twenty thousand soldiers."<sup>52</sup> Pérez asserts that, "[b]y the early 1870s, the separatist uprising had attracted an estimated 40,000 supporters," while Pirala argues that Spain sent nearly 175,000 troops to Cuba between September 1868 and March 1878.<sup>53</sup> In contrast to Pérez, historian Hugh Thomas contends that there were no more than 12,000 insurgents by the early 1870s. Although the number of insurgent troops remains unclear, what is certain is that, throughout the war, Cuban forces were seriously outmatched by the Spanish in terms of number of soldiers.<sup>54</sup>

Separatist troop levels varied in different regions of the insurgency. For instance, in April 1870, the First Brigade of Artillery of the Division of Camagüey

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<sup>51</sup> Letter to the Prefecto de la Degollada Flores D. Medinilla from Comandante Militar Marino Jiménez, dated November 7, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7910, Carpeta 4, Doc. no. 194. Carpeta 4 is entitled "Documentos de las Villas[.] 1869 – 1870."

<sup>52</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 1: 650.

<sup>53</sup> Pérez, *Cuba: Between Reform and Revolution*, 121; Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, vol. 3 (Madrid: Felipe González Rojas, 1898), 683.

<sup>54</sup> Thomas, *Cuba, or the Pursuit of Freedom*, 260.

had ninety-seven troops.<sup>55</sup> While the troop numbers in Camagüey were significantly low due to the small population of the province, the number of officers and soldiers in Oriente was considerably higher. In October 1869, the division, which comprised of three brigades, had 249 active officers and 850 active troops. As it can be seen, there were too many officers in the Division of Oriente, which sparked rivalries between them over territorial jurisdiction.<sup>56</sup> For example, in May 1869, General Amadeo Manuitt, who conducted operations in Guá, was fired from his position for not following the instructions of Modesto Díaz, another “general of operations.” Manuitt argued that he had the understanding that “generals of operations” were autonomous and answerable only to the commanding general of the Liberation Army and the central government. Manuitt remained in Cuba at least until November 1869 and was transferred to Holguín, but he may have died or returned to his native country of Venezuela thereafter since little information is known of him after 1869.<sup>57</sup>

Within the Liberation Army recruitment of soldiers seemed to lag even during the early years of the war. Major General Ignacio Agramonte often granted military exemptions to Cuban men living in rebel territory “for reasons of health, character,

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<sup>55</sup> Document entitled “Estado general y demostrativo del personal de dicho cuerpo[,], su armamento[,], municios [*sic*], equipo, caballos y mulos = con espresión [*sic*] del alta y baja ocurrida del ppo. del antr. hasta fin del mismo,” signed by José Carrillo, dated April 1, [18]70, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7911, Carpeta 1.

<sup>56</sup> Document entitled “Estado numérico de las fuerzas de la Div.,” signed by the Mayor General interino J. M. Aurrecoechea F., dated October 22, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7911, Carpeta 1.

<sup>57</sup> Letter to “C. Gral. Modesto Díaz, Gefé [*sic*] de oper. entre Bayamo y Manzanillo” from “Gral. Gefé [*sic*] de operacs. A. Manuitt,” dated May 25, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7910, Carpeta 1, Doc. no. 82. Carpeta 1 is entitled “Archivo del Teniente General Amadeo Manuit [*sic*]. 1868 – 1869 – 70.”; letter to General Amadeo Manuit [*sic*] from Pedro de Céspedes, dated November 18, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7910, Carpeta 1, Doc. no. 95.

and family” for a month, several months, or indefinitely.<sup>58</sup> This decision, however, did not stop Agramonte from suspecting that some offered the excuse of caring for their families merely to evade military service.<sup>59</sup> Moreover, in one case, Francisco Martínez was discharged in order to provide for his family, yet he offered to work at a rebel post office, a civil employment, though one that could be nearly as dangerous as being a soldier.<sup>60</sup> If many Cubans living near rebel camps sought to avoid military service either by offering the aforementioned excuses or serving in civil posts, it is not surprising that the insurgent army would be lacking in troops. This point is further supported by Agramonte’s issuance of an urgent order for “an energetic recruitment” of “all person, without any exception, who is apt for the service of arms and who does not have a legal occupation.”<sup>61</sup> Other military leaders, such as Major General Vicente García of Tunas, also pushed local military officers to implement an aggressive draft and collect arms in their districts so that their armed forces would not deteriorate, a situation which would result in the decline of a commanding officer’s prestige, and

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<sup>58</sup> Order from Ignacio Agramonte, dated March 18, [no year given], in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7912, “Copiador, Segunda Epoca, No. 1, Comunicaciones nos. 1 al 334,” Comunicación no. 264. Other examples of military exemptions include RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7912, “Copiador, Segunda Epoca, No. 1, Comunicaciones nos. 1 al 334,” Comunicaciones nos. 213, 221, 226, 260, 311, 317.

<sup>59</sup> Communications to Sub-prefect José Sánchez from Ignacio Agramonte, dated March 20, [no year given], in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7912, “Copiador, Segunda Epoca, No. 1, Comunicaciones nos. 1 al 334,” Comunicaciones nos. 308-309.

<sup>60</sup> Communication to Administrador General de Correos from Ignacio Agramonte, no date given, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7912, “Copiador, Segunda Epoca, No. 1, Comunicaciones nos. 1 al 334,” Comunicación no. 226.

<sup>61</sup> Order from Ignacio Agramonte, dated March 18, [no year given], in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7912, “Copiador, Segunda Epoca, No. 1, Comunicaciones nos. 1 al 334,” Comunicación no. 265.

could possibly reduce his opportunities to reap socioeconomic and political rewards in post-independent Cuba.<sup>62</sup>

In addition, maintaining army discipline was a constant struggle for military leaders. From the beginning of the war, military commanders, such as Manuel de Quesada and Ignacio Agramonte, permitted their soldiers either to leave the military camps to care for their families or to bring their families to live in the camps. This situation became a point of contention between Ignacio Agramonte, whose own family resided in Camagüey, and Thomas Jordan, who succeeded Quesada after he was deposed in December 1869. Jordan opposed the idea of bringing women and children into the camps, while Agramonte believed that if rebel families were ruled out of them, the insurgent soldiers would surrender to Spanish forces. As a result, Agramonte resigned his post, but was later reinstated when Jordan quit the military leadership the following February, claiming that he was not specialized in guerrilla warfare and that he could not lead the army if military commanders continued to act independently of the central army command. Thus, what Jordan objected to was what he perceived to be a lack of discipline among the generals, who set a poor example for rank-and-file soldiers by not obeying his orders.<sup>63</sup> This argument is supported by a case in which an insurgent officer named S. Martín Rodríguez informed his

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<sup>62</sup> Letter to Capitán Manuel Cruz y Agüero from Mayor General V. García, dated April 23, 1870, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 5844, Caja 2, Exp. 44, Doc. no. 54.

<sup>63</sup> Ponte Domínguez, *Historia de la guerra de los diez años*, 263-266.



commander that he was unable “to punish the disorder” in his unit “because the other soldiers” believed “that privilege has a way of disobeying those who give orders.”<sup>64</sup>

In addition, James J. O’Kelly, having witnessed a group of insurgent soldiers go to their outposts only to return a short time afterward, forewarned: “This absence of proper vigilance is full of danger, and if one day the Cuban cause receives a crushing blow, it will be due, in all probability, to the want of proper precautions against surprise.” Although he also deemed the Spanish forces “exceedingly careless,” he did note that, at times, regular troops had “succeeded in surprising Cuban forces in a country where all the advantages were against them, and where the most ordinary precautions should have rendered surprise impossible.” The “very lax manner” in which the Cuban soldiers carried out the defense of their encampments, as O’Kelly described, suggests that they lacked the discipline necessary to defeat the Spanish forces.<sup>65</sup> Indeed, once the Spanish Army came under the authority of General Arsenio Martínez Campos, who brought 14,000 reinforcements with him to Cuba and insisted on a relentless pursuit of the insurgents, the Cuban *mambises* surrendered in a little over one year.

Moreover, members of the military leadership feared that roaming groups of vigilantes would ruin the separatist movement’s chances of gaining popular support. In one case, two Cubans known as “the C. C. [Citizens] Molina,” asked either Ignacio Agramonte or Manuel de Quesada “for permission to form an isolated group.”

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<sup>64</sup> Letter to the Teniente Coronel from S. Martín Rodríguez, no date given, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7911, Carpeta 3, Carta no. 1.

<sup>65</sup> O’Kelly, *The Mambi-Land*, 212-213.

Quesada ordered Agramonte not to allow the request because “it would be an example of lamentable consequences.” Quesada feared that if groups of vigilantes were allowed to operate at will, army discipline would deteriorate. He instructed Agramonte: “[I]f they [the Molinas] present difficulties[,] situate [them] in other jurisdictions and in convenient posts where they cannot jeopardize [army] discipline.” Quesada may have decided to retain the service of these soldiers to keep the number of insurgent military forces from decreasing.<sup>66</sup>

The military leadership’s opposition to independent forces extended to matters of race. For instance, Quesada accused an Afro-Cuban and former insurgent captain named Saavedra and the one hundred soldiers under his command of “commit[ing] disorders” and insinuated that Saavedra had stolen clothing. As a result, the commanding general instructed Agramonte to have them captured and chastised.<sup>67</sup> In another case, Quesada ordered Agramonte to send troops to the *ingenio* “Chiquito” to disarm a group of thirteen Afro-Cubans, who had been “committing excesses,” without explaining what these “excesses” were. Additionally, Quesada commanded Agramonte to “employ them conveniently according to their aptitudes in shoemaking and agriculture.” Although slaves in rebel territory were declared free by the Cuban Republic, Quesada did not separate Afro-Cubans from their experience as slaves in the service of Spaniards and Creoles.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Letter to the Mayor General from General en Jefe [sic] M. Quesada, dated June 29, [18]69, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/ 7911, Carpeta 1, Carta no. 459.

<sup>67</sup> Letter to Mayor General Ygnacio [sic] Agramonte from General en Jefe [sic] M. Quesada, dated July 13, [18]69, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7911, Carpeta 1, Carta no. 631.

<sup>68</sup> Letter to the Mayor General from General en Jefe [sic] M. Quesada, dated June 13, [18]69, RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7911, Carpeta 1, Carta no. 248.

Cuban rebel fighters also faced conflicts with the citizens in the districts where they operated. Citizens often complained to their local prefects, sub-prefects, or commanding officers over the seizure of crops or livestock, and the destruction of property. In one case, “the C. C. [Citizens] Rámirez and Gómez” informed the provisional government that Lieutenant Colonel Antonio Rodríguez’s forces in Punta de Piedra were making raids on their *potreros*. Consequently, the army chief-of-staff, Major General Thomas Jordan, ordered Major General Ignacio Agramonte “to take convenient measures to end the stated abuses.” It was important that the separatist military leadership take the complaints of Cuban civilians seriously so that they would not turn to the Spanish government for help.<sup>69</sup>

The army’s chronic shortage of food explains why soldiers resorted to stealing livestock and crops from farmers living in their territory. There are many examples of rebel correspondence which detail the scarcity of food, along with other vital supplies, such as clothing, shoes, medicines, and military resources, from even the early days of the insurgency. Although prefects and sub-prefects were responsible for the welfare of the rebel families living under their jurisdiction, they were often busy procuring food and other supplies for Cuban soldiers and civil leaders. For instance, in Sibanicú, Prefect Carlos Varela made several requests of the sub-prefect of El Zanjón, Luis Rojas, for food, horses, and medical supplies to fulfill the needs of the

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<sup>69</sup> Letter to Teniente Coronel Antonio Rodríguez from Mayor General Y. [sic] Agramonte Loynaz, dated December 20, [18]69, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7911, Carpeta 3, Carta no. 2217.

army.<sup>70</sup> As a result, civilian insurgents – men who were infirm or too old to fight, women, and children – suffered the greatest hardships, particularly hunger, disease, and lack of clothing. Understanding the plight of rural Cubans and desirous of retaining their loyalty, insurgent civil leaders began implementing measures to relieve ordinary rebels. For example, the House issued a circular in July 1869 which ordered the consumption of cattle belonging to loyalists of the Spanish cause before seizing the livestock of separatist ranchers.<sup>71</sup>

A decrease in the food supply caused by growing numbers of Spanish troops in the countryside made it difficult, however, for Cuban civil and military leaders to cease making demands on rural Cubans. For example, in April 1870, the civil governor of Camagüey, Manuel R. Silva, rescinded a circular promulgated on March 15, 1870, which forbade the seizure of horses from insurgent farms and ranches, since the cavalry was in urgent need of them.<sup>72</sup> Rural Cubans seemed to resent insurgent troops seizing their property in the name of the revolution, which may have been one

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<sup>70</sup> Letter to Subprefecto Luis Rojas from Prefecto Carlos Varela, dated May 1, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7910, Carpeta 9, Doc. no. 269. Carpeta 9 is entitled “Documentos de la prefectura de Sibanicú. 1868-69-70.”; letter to the Subprefecto del Sanjon [sic] from Prefecto Carlos Varela, dated October 30, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7910, Carpeta 9, Doc. no. 279; letter to the Subprefecto del Sanjon [sic] from Prefecto Carlos Varela, dated January 19, 1870, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7910, Carpeta 9, Doc. no. 287.

<sup>71</sup> Letter to the Prefecto de Porcayo from the G[obernador] del E[stado] Carlos L. de Mola, dated July 5, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7910, Carpeta 10, Doc. no. 310. Carpeta 10 is entitled “Documentos de B. Varona (Bembeta) y del Gob. civil del Camagüey. 1868-69-70.”

<sup>72</sup> Letter to the Teniente Gobernador del Camagüey [sic] Meridional from Gobernador del Estado Manuel R. Silva, dated April 3, [18]70, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7910, Carpeta 10, Doc. no. 340.

of the reasons why the rebels began to lose their support.<sup>73</sup> As of 1870, thousands of Cuban separatists had capitulated to Spanish troops.<sup>74</sup>

The Spaniards also contributed greatly to the hardships that Cubans endured. In addition to stealing crops and livestock, Spanish troops were known to demolish insurgent workshops that manufactured such items as shoes and gunpowder. In addition, the Spanish Army transferred rural residents to military encampments, towns, or cities, which deprived the insurgent government of an adequate workforce for cultivating crops and manufacturing goods. The Spanish insular government also destroyed or embargoed the property of known or suspected insurgents, thereby making it more difficult for the separatists to gain much-needed supplies.<sup>75</sup>

Finally, the Cuban provisional government could not provide adequate medical services to their citizens, particularly to their sick and wounded soldiers. The Spanish camp faced a similar situation, but Cubans received fewer medical supplies from their filibuster expeditions than Spaniards had in Cuba or received from abroad. In 1869, when a cholera epidemic raged in Oriente, Secretary of War Pedro Figueredo requested that Ignacio Agramonte send medicines and doctors from Camagüey since they were both scarce in Oriente.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Order entitled "Al publico [*sic*]," IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5749, Carpeta 3, p. 71.

<sup>74</sup> Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*, 43-44.

<sup>75</sup> Letter to Teniente Coronel Antonio Rodríguez from Sub-teniente Vicente Marrero, dated January 25, 1870, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7911, Carpeta 3.

<sup>76</sup> Letter to the Mayor General del Camagüey from Pedro Figueredo, dated September 29, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7911, Carpeta 1, Carta no. 231.

### **Conflicts within the Cuban Separatist Movement**

The Cuban Republic collapsed as a result of insurgents being unable to overcome a series of conflicts. One of the most bitter struggles of the revolution occurred between President Carlos Manuel de Céspedes and the House of Representatives. There was an intense battle for power over the separatist movement. As discussed above, Céspedes and House members first began having problems over the passage of legislation which organized the state and the army. Then, following the House's dismissal of General Manuel de Quesada, Céspedes's brother-in-law, in December 1869, the president responded by sending Quesada to the United States as the Confidential Agent of the Republic of Cuba to organize filibuster expeditions, thereby frustrating the efforts of the legislative assembly. He further complicated matters by declaring in 1871 that Quesada soon would lead an expedition back to Cuba, implying that Quesada would hold a prominent position in the army once again.<sup>77</sup>

Moreover, in January 1871, the House extended to the Cuban president the right to enact laws or to modify those already in existence when conditions of the insurrection made it impossible for the legislative assembly to meet. Throughout most of 1871, the House was unable to reunite to pass legislation. Although Céspedes did not enact laws that were deemed controversial, when the House was finally able to meet in March 1872, Céspedes refused to accept the representatives' change in the law regarding the legislative quorum. Because few representatives were able to meet,

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<sup>77</sup> Ponte Domínguez, *Historia de la guerra de los diez años*, 352.

most likely due to ongoing Spanish persecution, they decided that having five, instead of seven, representatives was enough to establish a quorum to pass legislation. Since Céspedes was unwilling to make this concession to the House, the legislature closed its session in May 1872. At this point, relations between the legislative and executive branches of government reached a nadir.<sup>78</sup>

Political and military pressures led the House to reconvene on October 27, 1873 in Bijagual, Oriente with the purpose of deposing the president of the Cuban Republic. At the start of the session, Ramón Pérez de Trujillo, a representative from Havana, proposed the removal of President Céspedes from office. At this point, the House representatives began to present their case against Céspedes. First, the president was accused of nepotism, not only for keeping Quesada in the government, but also for transferring Modesto Díaz's command of the district of Bayamo to his brother Francisco Javier de Céspedes. In general, Céspedes's nomination of military officers angered the army leaders because they viewed many of these incoming officers as lacking the experience to lead a large military force. Indeed, according to Pirala, a group of army officers, led by Calixto García, pushed the representatives to oust Céspedes. It should be noted, however, that nepotism was rampant throughout the separatist leadership and, in some cases, hostility generated by the president's nominations may have been more personal than professional. Furthermore, the *oriental* liberator was accused of grossly mismanaging the war in Las Villas by not

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 351-355.

distributing enough arms among the *villareño* soldiers, thereby leaving them no choice but to abandon their province and fight in Camagüey or Oriente.<sup>79</sup>

Ultimately, the House representatives found him guilty of being a dictator for withholding elections, prohibiting the legislature from meeting, and for amending laws passed by the House. Although Céspedes did not make a concerted effort to hold elections, in some regions of *Cuba Libre* local officials were unable to hold them due to the presence of Spanish troops in their areas. Céspedes's refusal to accept any piece of legislation without the established quorum meant that there was no point to the House convening. Moreover, even though the House granted the president the right to pass or amend laws, it was only in the case of the legislature not being able to meet. It would have been prudent of the president to have made more of an effort to work with the House. Following the debate, the House members voted to depose President Céspedes and designated Salvador Cisneros Betancourt as the interim president.<sup>80</sup>

Although Céspedes believed that his dismissal was against the will of the people, he accepted it since he had little backing among civil and military leaders. He had long been aware that this situation could occur considering his past conflicts with the House and the army. He also had grown exhausted due not only to the struggles within his own government, but also because of the ongoing Spanish pursuit of Cuban separatists. Twice he had offered his resignation to what was left of his cabinet in

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<sup>79</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 2: 599-602, 637-639, 647-648, 651-653.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 2: 599-602, 637-639, 648, 651, 653, 655.



1871 and 1873, though they did not accept it.<sup>81</sup> Céspedes's removal from office, however, set a precedent for the occurrence of a series of internal uprisings within the separatist movement, which made it politically unstable for the remainder of the war.

Poor military-government relations were another source of conflict within the Cuban separatist movement. The Guáimaro Constitution established the superiority of the insurgent government over the Liberation Army. Nonetheless, insurgent officers often objected to civil leaders interfering in military affairs. In some cases, the military's skepticism of the civil leaders' decisions was justified. The case of Céspedes nominating his brother to command *bayamés* forces has already been mentioned. In another instance, disagreement arose over Cuban government policy toward Spanish prisoners. In a letter to the House of Representatives, two insurgent military leaders complained of a decision made to give weapons to a group of forty Spanish prisoners who had been pardoned.<sup>82</sup> The authors reported that several Cuban civilians had moved to Tunas after being harassed by these Spaniards. It is clear from the tone of the rebels' objection that these former prisoners who, according to the authors, had been provided with excellent equipment, could not be trusted to live among Cubans armed after possibly having killed separatist troops before being pardoned.<sup>83</sup>

Still more serious conflicts arose between civil and military factions over perceived threats to one's authority. The first attacks were directed at the head of the

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 2: 229, 637, 656.

<sup>82</sup> Letter to the Cámara de Representantes de la R. de Cuba from Secretario Diego F. Milanés and General Ramón Muñoz, dated June 25, 1869 in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7913, Doc. no. 78.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

Liberation Army, Manuel de Quesada. The commanding general had been criticized for withdrawing Cuban troops from their eleven-hour siege of Tunas on August 16, 1869 after running low on ammunition and hearing that a Spanish regiment was on its way to rescue the city. Since Tunas had been poorly defended, numerous insurgents, including Commandant Enrique Collazo, condemned Quesada as being a poor military strategist and leader.<sup>84</sup> Moreover, Quesada had gained a reputation among civil leaders for having despotic tendencies in suggesting that the government not meddle in military affairs. He had encouraged the idea that the Cuban Republic should remain under a “state of siege” so long as the war persisted and that “the laws will have to, indispensably, become modified in that sense.”<sup>85</sup> Then, in October 1869, when Major General Thomas Jordan became the army chief-of-staff with the full approval of the insurrectionist government, Quesada deemed this move a threat to his position and petitioned the House for extraordinary powers to end the war quickly. Moreover, on December 15, 1869, he held a meeting with various military officers, including Ignacio Agramonte and Ignacio Mora, to see if they would support him in his endeavor to gain independence from civil control. The implications of Quesada’s actions horrified the representatives of the legislative assembly, who feared that Quesada sought to establish a military dictatorship in Cuba. Ultimately, the House of

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<sup>84</sup> Ponte Domínguez, *Historia de la guerra de los diez años*, 104-105; letter to the Secretario de la Guerra, dated August 20, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7910, Carpeta 5, Doc. no. 214. Carpeta 5 is entitled “Disposiciones del Gobierno de Céspedes. 1869-70. Toma de la fortaleza del Asiento – Ordenes – Reclutamiento – etc.”

<sup>85</sup> Letter to Ygnacio [sic] Agramonte from M. Quesada, dated January 20, 1870, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7912, “Papeles de Ygnacio [sic] Agramonte. 1868-69-70,” Doc. no. 31.

Representatives deposed Quesada on December 17, 1869 due more to his controversial political views than to his abilities as a military chief.<sup>86</sup>

In another contentious situation, Major General Ignacio Agramonte came into conflict with President Céspedes. The battle for the leadership of the separatist movement between *oriental* and *camagüeyano* forces was a rivalry which Agramonte felt intensely. Before the constitutional convention at Guáimaro, Agramonte considered the *oriental* movement to be a military dictatorship headed by Céspedes, which he believed threatened the popularly elected Comité de Puerto Príncipe and the revolution as a whole.<sup>87</sup> That this committee was democratically elected is questionable. Martínez Campos's assertion that the vote of the people in the Cuban Republic was actually that of the army is perhaps a more accurate evaluation in this case.<sup>88</sup> Nonetheless, when, in December 1868, Céspedes sought the unification of the two provinces under his provisional authority in order to gain the resources of Camagüey for war-ravaged Oriente, Agramonte and other *camagüeyanos* balked at his proposal. They rejected the "absolute command of one Chief," instead supporting the creation of a central government with individual committees controlling the operations of their respective states.<sup>89</sup> This *camagüeyano* proposal for federalism only

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid.; Ponte Domínguez, *Historia de la guerra de los diez años*, 105-109.

<sup>87</sup> "Ynstrucciones [*sic*] dadas a Martín pa. su viage [*sic*] al T. pr. Ygno. [*sic*] Agramonte y Sánchez Loynaz," no date given, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7912, "Papeles de Ygnacio [*sic*] Agramonte. 1868-69-70," Doc. no. 65.

<sup>88</sup> "Despacho Oficial" to the Capitan [*sic*] General from A. Campos, dated February 8, 1878, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4937, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 2.

<sup>89</sup> "Ynstrucciones [*sic*] dadas a Martín pa. su viage [*sic*] al T. pr. Ygno. [*sic*] Agramonte y Sánchez Loynaz," no date given, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7912, "Papeles de Ygnacio [*sic*] Agramonte. 1868-69-70," Doc. no. 65.

highlighted the intense regionalism in Cuba, which may have colored Agramonte's judgment of Céspedes.

On April 17, 1870, Ignacio Agramonte resigned as the major general of the Division of Camagüey because he objected to President Céspedes taking control of a shoe workshop that Agramonte established to send supplies to other provinces. Agramonte believed that the president was infringing upon his authority, which again demonstrates the major general's regionalist tendencies. In addition, it reveals the rise of *caudillismo* in the Cuban insurrection – that is, of local military chiefs gaining the loyalty of their troops and the civilian population by maintaining an edge over the Spanish Army and keeping order in their territories. These political phenomena of regionalism and *caudillismo* demonstrate a lack of centralized civil authority, which only served to divide the separatist movement. Nonetheless, Céspedes worsened the situation by discontinuing the allowance which Agramonte's family received in New York after Agramonte's renunciation of his post. Following the deterioration of *camagüeyano* forces, Agramonte was welcomed back to his position in January 1871.<sup>90</sup>

One particular conflict, however, threatened the power of both the government and the army. In May 1869, *camagüeyano* Colonel Manuel de Jesús "Chicho" Valdés created "a Club Revolucionario with the object of watch[ing out in judgment of] the operations of the House and the General-in-Chief, so that when these proceeded badly they could be accused, and that if it was necessary, and they did not heed the

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<sup>90</sup> Ponte Domínguez, *Historia de la guerra de los diez años*, 267, 282.

warnings which the Club made to them, the sovereign people had the right to depose it [*sic*] of their employments or charges.”<sup>91</sup> The Club Revolucionario counted on the support of conservatives, including fellow *camagüeyano* Ignacio Mora, who served as the Club’s president and secretary, and deemed “that the House was not legally constituted, and consequently neither was the Government . . . legal, because the people had not nominated it.” What Valdés actually objected to was Quesada and other military officers burning down estates “whenever they considered it convenient.” In protest to Valdés’s actions, General Honorato del Castillo and House Representative Francisco Sánchez Betancourt, both *camagüeyanos*, claimed that the actions of the Club would seriously damage the separatist movement. Sánchez Betancourt further added that “the Spanish Government has circulated in the United States and in foreign nations, that here we are in a civil war and that currently we are trying to kill Carlos Manuel Céspedes and General Quesada.” Without a resolution to this dispute, Sánchez Betancourt argued, the Cuban Republic could not gain “the Recognition of Mexico and the United States,” which insurgents deemed necessary for the continued arrival of filibuster expeditions carrying arms, munitions, and rebel soldiers.<sup>92</sup>

Although the cases of Quesada, Agramonte, and Valdés were resolved peaceably, they point to the military threats made against the civil pre-eminence of

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<sup>91</sup> Letter to [Ignacio Agramonte] from Francisco Sánchez Betancourt, dated May 31, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7912, “Papeles de Ygnacio [*sic*] Agramonte. 1868-69-70,” Doc. no. 17.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.; Letter to Mayor General Ygnacio [*sic*] Agramonte y Loynaz from Francisco Sánchez Betancourt, dated May 29, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7912, “Papeles de Ygnacio [*sic*] Agramonte. 1868-69-70,” Doc. no. 16.

the Cuban Republic. While the government remained unscathed by these attacks, it would not be the case in 1875 when the army mutinies of Lagunas de Varona and Santa Rita brought down two executive administrations. Ten years of warfare left the separatist movement more susceptible to power struggles between the government and the army.

The insurgent government's ambiguity on slave emancipation and the proliferation of racial conflicts within the separatist movement also jeopardized the Cuban rebellion. In July 1869, the Cuban government enacted the *Reglamento de Libertos*, which assigned freed slaves, now designated *libertos*, to forced labor on farms and ranches, and in workshops. Although they were to earn a monthly wage of three pesos, the status of former slaves and their working conditions did not change significantly. Farm workers or manufacturers were forced to work a specific number of hours. Additionally, although *libertos* had the right to seek a different master at the Office of Libertos, they were prohibited from living freely without the supervision of a master. Furthermore, according to Scott, "[m]asters were allowed to discipline *libertos*, if necessary, by denying them their days of rest."<sup>93</sup>

By the end of 1870, the Cuban government's racial policy became radicalized for two reasons. First, former slaves and free people of color joined the separatist ranks in the hope of attaining the abolition of slavery and racial equality in an independent Cuba. According to Ferrer, people of color viewed themselves as

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<sup>93</sup> Raúl Cepero Bonilla, "Azúcar y abolición: Apuntes para una historia crítica del abolicionismo," in *Escritos históricos* (Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1989), 90, 95-96, 104-105, 107-112; Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*, 22-24, 26-28; Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba*, 46-48.

“Cubans” and “citizens,” terms first employed by the Creole leadership to attract people of all races and classes to their cause. As Ferrer argues, “[e]ven the most revolutionary statements about freedom and equality, however, appeared to waver continually between inclusion and exclusion. On the one hand, they clearly asserted the equal right of all Cubans to make or serve the nation; on the other, they made evident that each group had different degrees of right to the very title of ‘Cuban.’” Thus, in theory, Afro-Cubans were equal to Creoles fighting for independence yet, in practice, Creoles did not accept this equality because of the way in which slavery shaped society in Cuba. Nonetheless, Afro-Cuban rebels embraced this propaganda to gain greater social mobility and political rights, which is exemplified in several Afro-Cubans achieving positions of military leadership within the separatist movement.<sup>94</sup>

Furthermore, the separatist racial policy became less conservative after the Spanish government enacted the Moret Law of 1870 in Cuba in reaction to the separatist movement’s liberation of slaves. Written by Minister of Ultramar Segismundo Moret, this decree proclaimed the freedom of all slaves born after September 17, 1868 and those who were over sixty years of age. Young slaves were enrolled in a *patronato* (tutelage) under the supervision of their masters until the age of eighteen. The masters were responsible for the welfare of their former slaves, now known as *libertos*. It also liberated *emancipados*, slaves belonging to the state, and slaves who had aided the Spanish government during the Cuban insurgency. Although implementing the Moret Law in Cuba proved rigorous due to the steadfast

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<sup>94</sup> Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*, 37-42, 68.

opposition of the planter class and insular officials, this piece of legislation was largely responsible for a decline in the slave population between 1871 and 1877 from 287,653 to 235,710 slaves.<sup>95</sup> As a result of these two events, President Céspedes abolished the Reglamento de Libertos on December 25, 1870 which, according to Raúl Cepero Bonilla and Rebecca J. Scott, finally added an abolitionist character to the rebellion.<sup>96</sup>

The results of this radicalized policy were mixed. On the one hand, Afro-Cubans who had proven themselves in battle ascended the military ranks to become officers, such as the famed Antonio Maceo, Flor Crombet, and Guillermo Moncada. In addition, the revolution witnessed a decline in the numbers of the enslaved, and an endeavor to transform racial relations between whites and Afro-Cubans.<sup>97</sup> On the other hand, despite these developments, Afro-Cubans continued to face racial prejudice, which created dissension among insurgents and contributed significantly to the demise of the Cuban Republic.<sup>98</sup>

The ultimate reason behind the collapse of the Cuban Republic was the lack of unanimity on the issue of independence. Some Cubans preferred to remain under Spanish rule on the condition that the metropolitan government implement political and socioeconomic reforms. For instance, many *camagüeyanos* supported either annexation or reforms. In Cascorro, Ignacio Zaldívar reported in February 1869 that

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<sup>95</sup> Knight, *Slave Society in Cuba during the Nineteenth Century*, 172-174, 176; Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba*, 72.

<sup>96</sup> Cepero Bonilla, "Azúcar y abolición," 112; Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba*, 48.

<sup>97</sup> Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*, 57-59, 68-69; Franco, *Antonio Maceo*, 1: 86-87; Orum, "The Politics of Color," 18-21.

<sup>98</sup> Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*, 57-59, 68-69; Orum, "The Politics of Color," 18-21.



many of the town's residents would rather support the implementation of the 1812 Spanish constitution in Cuba than fight for independence from Spain.<sup>99</sup> In addition, there was a faction of the insurgent movement, which supported annexation to the United States instead of independence. On April 28, 1869, a group of 121 Cuban men, including Eduardo Agramonte, Clodomiro Betancourt (the publisher of *Cuba Libre* and *La República*, the official government newspapers), Fernando Figueredo Socarrás, Donato del Mármol, and Ignacio Mora, petitioned the House of Representatives for the annexation of Cuba to the United States to "assure in a permanent and glorious way, the best political and social well being of the country." They further added that annexation was a part of "their destinies" and that "an immense majority of Cubans" aspired to join the United States. Many of the petitioners, if not all of them, were Creoles of middle and upper-class origins. Maintaining their respectable social status and economic prosperity in a post-independent Cuba was their principal concern. Creoles feared that since Cuba had a large Afro-Cuban population, the country would experience, at best, political and socioeconomic instability and, at worst, Afro-Cubans would supplant the whites in a situation similar to what had occurred during the Haitian Revolution. On April 29, 1869, the Cuban House of Representatives voted in favor of seeking the annexation of Cuba to the United States and, subsequently, President Céspedes sanctioned the

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<sup>99</sup> Letter to Ygnacio [sic] Agramonte from Ygnacio [sic] Zaldívar, dated February 1, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7912, "Papeles de Ygnacio [sic] Agramonte. 1868-69-70," Doc. no. 20. In the letter, Zaldívar refers to the 1812 Constitution as "the program of Cádiz."

legislation.<sup>100</sup> Moreover, Céspedes sent the secretary of state in the Department of Foreign Relations, Cristóbal Mendoza, to Washington to put pressure on the Grant administration to annex Cuba.<sup>101</sup>

Some Cuban historians have argued that the insurgents sought annexation to the United States as a means of avoiding a bloody civil war that could possibly end in the defeat of the untrained Cuban forces. The destructive campaign of Spanish General Blas Villate y de la Hera, the count of Valmaseda, in Oriente in 1869 lent particular credence to this proposal. Although it is doubtful that many ordinary insurgents supported annexation, particularly with the growth of Afro-Cuban participation in the separatist movement, many of those in the Cuban leadership, who determined government policy, fought for the union of Cuba to the United States. Guerra asserts that annexation was favored more among *camagüeyanos*, *villareños*, and *occidentales*, who had more to lose in terms of wealth from the insurrection, than by *orientales*, who were mostly small landholders. Preventing long-term warfare was necessary if Creole landowners were to recover economically, which is why it was one of the factors that induced lawmakers to seek annexation. The preservation of property was closely linked to maintaining the established social structure, which was another underlying reason why the separatist leadership sought the annexation of Cuba to the United States.<sup>102</sup> Since members of the separatist leadership hesitated on

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<sup>100</sup> Letter to the Cámara de Representantes de la República Cubana from Manuel Villanova *et al.*, dated April 28, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7913, Doc. no. 36.

<sup>101</sup> Letter to the Presidente y Vocales de la Cámara de R. from C. M. de Céspedes, dated May 7, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7913, Doc. no. 238.

<sup>102</sup> Guerra, *Guerra de los 10 años*, 1: 166, 302-304; Ponte Domínguez, *Historia de la guerra de los diez años*, 15-16.

the issue of independence due to socioeconomic and racial fears, however, the insurgency could not succeed.

## **Conclusions**

In early January 1875, insurgent General Máximo Gómez launched an invasion of Las Villas from Camagüey with the intention of spreading the revolution to the Western Department, the heart of the Cuban economy and the stronghold of African slavery. The potent racial implications of such an endeavor, along with heated disputes regarding the Liberation Army's ability to direct an offensive campaign, sparked two army mutinies and the fall of the Cisneros Betancourt presidency. The insurgents' hesitant positions on slave emancipation and independence were the defining points in their downfall.

In Chapters 3 and 4, I examine the Spanish counterinsurgency. Understanding why it took ten years for the Spanish government to suppress the Cuban insurrection is the central aim of these two chapters. The political and socioeconomic instability of Spain itself figures largely in this situation. The rapid succession of governments in Spain usually was followed by the replacement of captain generals in Cuba, which had a destabilizing effect on the insular government. The captain generals' reliance on Spanish conservatives for volunteer troops and funding of the war further intensified the divide between Cubans and Spaniards, thereby extending the war. Finally, dilemmas facing the Spanish Army in Cuba also delayed the suppression of the Cuban insurgency until 1878.

### Chapter 3

#### **A Failed Experiment in Liberalism: The Spanish Party and the Captaincy General (1868-1869) in Cuba**

*'[The loss of Cuba] would mean the certain ruin of our merchant marine, a mortal blow for commerce and industry, and a degrading confession of our impotence. Spain without Cuba would be relegated to the category of a fourth-rate power. The loss of that rich and flourishing province would be a great shame for the revolution of September.'*

- *La Epoca*, July 2, 1870<sup>1</sup>

The preceding words express the principal reasons why maintaining Cuba within the Spanish empire was a vital objective of the Madrid government. Throughout much of the Ten Years' War, Spain endured political turmoil and armed conflict on the Peninsula as a result of the *Septembrista* revolution of 1868, which was a dynamic endeavor on the part of Spanish military officers and civilian leaders to implement liberal reforms in Spain and its overseas colonies. Although there was a rapid succession of administrations of diverse political creeds – ranging from conservative monarchist to republican – from 1868 to 1878, most Spanish political leaders agreed that preserving Cuba's colonial status was indispensable to Spain's economic stability and national honor. Regrettably for Spain, it had little manpower or financial resources to spare for the suppression of the Cuban insurgency, which aided in prolonging the separatist war. As a result, officials of the insular government in Cuba, Spanish loyalists, and a debilitated colonial army were forced to keep the

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Nicolás Pardo Pimentel, *La isla de Cuba. Su prosperidad o su ruina. Breves observaciones sobre su cuestión social y política* (Madrid: Imprenta de T. Fortanet, 1870), 20.

Cuban separatists from attaining their objective until 1876 when, following the conclusion of the second Carlist war in Spain, the Madrid government was able to direct its full attention to ending the insurrection in its premier Caribbean colony.

The Spanish party – a conservative political action group devoted to maintaining its economic and political interests in Cuba – also played a decisive role in the Cuban rebellion. The party's unbending attitude and actions against the insurgents had the effect of intensifying the divide between Cubans and Spaniards, and extending the armed conflict. Moreover, Spanish and Cuban conservatives threatened to disrupt Spanish rule over the island by vehemently opposing the implementation of *Septembrista* policies in Cuba, which had been designed with the aim of ending the insurrection. This chaotic situation culminated in the ouster of Captain General Domingo Dulce, a political liberal and one of the leaders of the *Septembrista* revolution. As Spanish historian Inés Roldán de Montaud argues, future attempts by the Madrid government to introduce liberal reforms in Cuba through the office of the captain general would not succeed due to the Spanish party's opposition.<sup>2</sup>

In this chapter, I begin to explore why it took the Spanish government ten years to suppress the Cuban rebellion. The chapter starts with an examination of the Spanish party's origins, its political and socioeconomic positions, and the means it employed to achieve its conservative objectives. Secondly, I analyze the administrations of the first two captain generals who governed Cuba during the Ten

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<sup>2</sup> Roldán de Montaud, *La Restauración en Cuba*, 23, 25.

Years' War – Francisco Lersundi and Domingo Dulce. I present their political and military backgrounds before they assumed command of the insular government in Cuba, describe their military and political approaches to the Cuban rebellion, and highlight the challenges that they faced in ending the war.

### **The Spanish Party**

The Spanish party in Cuba had its genesis in the 1820s when the sugar boom on the island colony led to the political ascension of a group of Spanish slave merchants known as the *camarilla del general Tacón*. According to Roldán de Montaud, this *camarilla* “achieved enormous power in the 1830s, imposing its decisions on Madrid.” As a result, she asserts that “the creole oligarchy that had dominated all spheres of Cuban life was decidedly relegated to local political life and lost its power in the capital of the Monarchy.”<sup>3</sup> An increasing number of separatist conspiracies and uprisings occurred after 1837, the year that Spain discontinued Cuban representation in the Cortes. By the 1860s, the Reformist party, led by members of the Cuban elite and intelligentsia, gained popularity among island-born residents and liberal Spaniards for proposing a rectification to the existing political and socioeconomic system, which would give Cubans a greater role in the island’s governance. Consequently, a reactionary political faction known as the *comité conservador* rose to challenge the Reformists by defending imperial mercantilist policies and peninsular domination of Cuba’s political administration. The collapse

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 1.

of the Junta de Información de Ultramar in 1867 was synonymous with the failure of Reformism and initiated the Ten Years' War. From 1868 to 1874, liberal governments in Madrid proposed the enactment of reforms as a means of ending the war in Cuba, which caused conservatives to become intransigent. Spanish and Cuban conservatives consistently rejected reforms that challenged their political and socioeconomic primacy. In addition, they refused to enter negotiations with the Cuban revolutionaries. It was during the Ten Years' War that conservatives began referring to themselves as members of the Spanish party. They also called themselves "good Spaniards" and *integristas*, the latter term signifying that they sought to defend the "national integrity" of Spain.<sup>4</sup>

The Spanish party found its representation in numerous organizations, the most important of which were the chain of Spanish Casinos and the Corps of Volunteers. The first Spanish Casino was established in Havana prior to the arrival of Captain General Antonio Caballero de Rodas in June 1869. Thereafter, Spanish Casinos sprung up all over the island. According to Spanish historian Joan Casanovas, "[t]he society's purpose was to maintain the cohesion, direct the activities, and protect the interests of all 'good Spaniards' in Cuba." The Casinos carried tremendous clout with captain generals and Spanish leaders in the Peninsula since these organizations had strong backing from peninsular residents all over Cuba and government officials depended on the wealthy oligarchs who belonged to these

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 1-2; Joan Casanovas, *Bread, or Bullets!: Urban Labor and Spanish Colonialism in Cuba, 1850-1898* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1998), 98.

societies for their financial assistance in ending the insurrection.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, the Casinos were reinforced by their counterparts in Spain, the Centros Hispano-Ultramarinos, which acted as political lobby groups on behalf of conservative interests in Cuba. According to Roldán de Montaud, these Centros “[o]nly admitted on their boards of directors important people who had resided in the Antilles, established subsequently in the Peninsula with their wealth; but many of them still conserved properties, farms, shares in banks and other Cuban societies. Others, without having properties directly, were producers, industrialists and ship owners, and the expansion of their businesses was linked to the power of a protected market, which they feared to lose with the introduction of any reform. Also in the Centros Hispano-Ultramarinos figured representatives of the colonial bureaucracy whose interests were merged with those of the other sectors.”<sup>6</sup>

While the Casinos served as centers of conservative policymaking, the Volunteers endeavored to enforce the agenda of the Spanish party through military force. Captain General José Gutiérrez de la Concha formed the Corps of Volunteers on February 12, 1855 upon learning that a separatist filibuster expedition would attack Cuba. Concha’s purpose in establishing this irregular military force was to give support to the scant regular troops who were stationed in the colony. Both Cuban and Spanish men between the ages of eighteen and fifty years could volunteer to protect the island against internal and external assaults. As a result of Concha’s call for enlistment, there were 12,330 Volunteer infantrymen assembled in “12 battalions, 36

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<sup>5</sup> Casanovas, *Bread, or Bullets!*, 105-106.

<sup>6</sup> Roldán de Montaud, *La Restauración en Cuba*, 70.



. . . companies and 172 sections,” discounting the number of officers.<sup>7</sup> The mobilization of the Volunteers, however, was short-lived. Once the external threat was resolved, the Volunteers were disbanded in September 1855. They would not serve again until Captain General Francisco Lersundi requested their enlistment in November 1868 when less than 10,000 regulars were available to fight, most of whom were sent directly to the eastern provinces. The captain general re-assembled the old Volunteer infantry battalions from Havana, which totaled four. He also formed three new battalions, in addition to one of artillery and one of engineers. At the same time, Volunteers were mobilized in the provincial towns and cities as well. As of January 1876, Luis Otero Pimentel calculated that the number of infantry and cavalry in the Volunteers of Havana totaled 18,871 men. Additionally, he estimated that the number of Volunteers throughout the island amounted to some 85,000 soldiers.<sup>8</sup>

While Spain could not send army reinforcements to Cuba, the captaincy general relied on the Volunteers to supplement regular forces in the east and to defend the cities, towns, and *ingenios* from insurgent attacks throughout the island. Subsequently, they gained a pre-eminent status in Cuban politics. Although Volunteers participated in field operations, their limited military training induced the army command to employ them more commonly as sentries in urban and rural posts. The captain general designated the Volunteer officers, who were either illustrious

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<sup>7</sup> Luis Otero Pimentel, *Memoria sobre los Voluntarios de la isla de Cuba. Consideraciones relativas a su pasado, su presente y su porvenir* (Havana: La Propaganda Literaria, 1876), 1-3, 7, 10.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 37, 49-51, 177.

oligarchs or members of the peninsular middle classes. In addition, the Volunteers had the right to bear arms when they were off duty, a privilege that not even regulars possessed. Finally, they had their own uniforms and were usually well-equipped with Peabody, Remington, or Winchester rifles or pistols.<sup>9</sup>

Officers and soldiers in the Corps of Volunteers belonged to diverse social classes and backgrounds. While officers were largely members of the elite or professionals, the rank-and-file were predominantly of lower middle-class or working-class origins. Both Cubans and Spaniards became Volunteers, although the latter outnumbered the former in the jurisdictions of Havana and Matanzas.<sup>10</sup> It was not atypical to find Spanish artisans, clerks, or small shopkeepers serving as Volunteer soldiers. According to Guerra, uneducated, working-class *peninsulares* “were markedly hostile to the cultured Cuban class of ‘sons of the country’ and to many Cubans [who] occupied elevated positions due to their wealth or other circumstances,” further adding that once such a person was “[d]ressed in uniform and bearing his rifle, the Volunteer, proud and resentful, felt himself disposed to revenge and reprisals, a facile instrument of his commanders, who provoked and used him [*sic*] for their own ends.”<sup>11</sup> Although Guerra employs anti-colonial rhetoric, the growing animosity between *peninsulares* and creoles in nineteenth-century Cuba has been well documented, particularly when enumerating the reasons for why the Ten

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<sup>9</sup> Casanovas, *Bread, or Bullets!*, 99; *Ibid.*, 178, 180-182, 184.

<sup>10</sup> Roldán de Montaud, *La Restauración en Cuba*, 28. There is debate on whether Cubans or Spaniards formed the majority of the Volunteers. Whereas Roldán de Montaud postulates that more Cubans enlisted in the Corps of Volunteers than did the Spaniards, Guerra claims that working-class Spaniards constituted the bulk of this irregular force. See Guerra, *Guerra de los 10 años*, 1: 193.

<sup>11</sup> Casanovas, *Bread, or Bullets!*, 98-99; Guerra, *Guerra de los 10 años*, 1: 193-194.

Years' War began. The decade-long insurrection further aggravated the enmity between the two groups, considering the many hardships, brutalities, and losses endured by both Cuban insurgents and Spanish loyalists.

The Volunteers contributed to the growing antagonism between Cubans and Spaniards as a result of the mayhem that they inflicted on the colonial population. At the very least, they were known to harass town inhabitants and disrupt the peace.<sup>12</sup> At worst, they committed murder or ordered the deaths of many Cubans, whom they deemed traitors. The shootings in Havana at the Villanueva theatre and the Louvre café, and the executions of eight medical students are some of the atrocities perpetrated by the Volunteers. These are discussed in the next section.

Additionally, the Volunteers' actions created international disturbances. In most cases, these conflicts involved the United States. During the Ten Years' War, U.S. consuls in Cuba often were engaged in negotiating the release of U.S.-born or naturalized citizens, whom the Volunteers had incarcerated on the suspicion of treason. At times, however, they did not provide any justification for a person's arrest. For instance, in January 1869, a group of Volunteers imprisoned Ramón Luaces without offering his wife any explanation as to why the arrest was made.<sup>13</sup> The Volunteers exacerbated diplomatic relations with the United States by executing its citizens. In one account, the acting U.S. consul in Santiago de Cuba, A. E. Phillips, wrote anxiously to Secretary of State Hamilton Fish concerning the shooting

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<sup>12</sup> Letter to the Gobierno de Matanzas, dated October 26, [18]69, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4360, Exp. 17, Doc. no. 1.

<sup>13</sup> Letter to the "Ecsmo[.] Señor Gobernador Superior Civil y Capitan [*sic*] General de esta Isla" from Vice-Consul General A. R. de La Reintrie, dated January 25, 1869, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4362, Caja 1, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 1.

of U.S. citizens Charles Speakman and Albert Wyeth in 1869. Philips ascertained “that they were executed without any form of trial or just cause, sacrificed by the Governor to satisfy the bloodthirsty [*sic*] desire of the Catalan Volunteers who look upon all Americans as hostile to the peace of the country.” Although it was implied that Speakman and Wyeth may have joined the ranks of the separatist movement, which was why they were killed, Philips focused his attention on the brutality of the Volunteers in order to convince the Grant administration to send “some naval protection” to the harbor of Santiago de Cuba. In the quotation above, he also emphasized the weakness of Spanish authorities against the terror inflicted by the Volunteers on the public.<sup>14</sup> Despite these instances of Volunteer atrocities, the United States postponed intervention in Cuba since it did not appear to political leaders in Washington that the Cuban separatists would succeed in gaining their independence from Spain.<sup>15</sup>

As stated above, the Spanish party was not a homogeneous entity, but a socially versatile community. While the Spanish party continued to represent the peninsular and Creole oligarchy on the island, it also incorporated middle and working-class Spaniards.<sup>16</sup> As a result of these class differences, Roldán de Montaud claims that “[b]etween the men of the *comité* and these sectors of the middle class a battle for control of the Corps of Volunteers and the Spanish Casino was produced.

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<sup>14</sup> Letter to Hamilton Fish from A. E. Phillips, dated July 15, 1869, in USNA, “Despatches [*sic*] from United States Consuls in Santiago de Cuba, 1799-1906,” Microcopy no. T-55, Roll 6, Volume 6.

<sup>15</sup> Pérez, *The War of 1898*, 12. The issue of Spanish arrests and executions of U.S. citizens in Cuba during the Ten Years’ War and its impact on U.S.-Spanish foreign relations are examined in detail in Chapter 5.

<sup>16</sup> Casanovas, *Bread, or Bullets!*, 98-99, 105.

Both sectors maintained a tedious struggle for control of political power on the island, in their [*sic*] form of influence over the governor.”<sup>17</sup> The principal difference between the peninsular middle and working classes, and the conservative elite was the first two groups’ hatred of the Cubans, a sentiment which some in the peninsular upper classes did not share due to their commercial partnerships with members of the Creole elite. As a result, middle and lower-class Spaniards questioned the patriotism of the members of the *comité*, for some had been associated with the reformist movement of the 1860s, and begrudged the elite’s wealth. At the same time, however, the peninsular middle classes gained considerable political authority. While this conflict for political control of Cuba persisted throughout the Ten Years’ War, all class sectors of the Spanish party were unified in their anti-reformist position, so that Cubans could not attain political power in their own country. As Roldán de Montaud aptly maintains, the Spanish party “sustained the *status quo*.”<sup>18</sup>

The Spanish party’s positions were widely known in Cuba and Spain, partly as a result of its frenzied use of the printing press. In its most obvious position – the rejection of Cuban independence and republicanism – Spanish conservative Juan de Almansa y Tavira emphasized that should Cuba become a republic, it would follow the same path of political anarchy and economic malaise traveled by other Latin American nations that had once been Spanish colonies.<sup>19</sup> Additionally, the *integristas* adamantly opposed the abolition of slavery in Cuba due to the institution’s

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<sup>17</sup> Roldán de Montaud, *La Restauración en Cuba*, 30.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 30-31, 37-38, 40-41.

<sup>19</sup> Juan de Almansa y Tavira, *La revolución de Cuba y el elemento español* (Havana: Imprenta y Encuadernación de la “Sociedad de Operarios,” 1870), 7-8, 10.

profitability for peninsular merchants. Nicolás Pardo Pimentel, the founder and editor of the Havana newspaper *Diario de la Marina*, staunchly supported the institution of slavery in Cuba in heinous terms, going so far as to repugnantly assert that, “at all times our [Spanish] laws on slavery are humanitarian.” As was typical of conservative propagandists, Pardo Pimentel intimidated the Creole population with the prospect of a racial war should the slaves be emancipated: “[I]s it humanitarian,” he asked, “is it philosophical to ruin, to kill the whites in order to liberate the slaves?” Predictably, *integristas* also linked abolition to the destruction of the Cuban economy. If the Spanish party made any concession at all on the issue of slave emancipation, it was only in rhetoric. During the Ten Years’ War, the Spanish party arduously resisted the implementation of the Moret Law in Cuba.<sup>20</sup> Finally, the political reforms proposed by the metropolitan governments, such as universal suffrage, freedom of the press, elections of Cuban deputies to the Cortes, and the allocation of administrative positions to Cubans, did not find any support among the *integristas*, who argued that political reforms would eventually lead to Cuban independence from Spain.<sup>21</sup>

### **The Captaincy General of Cuba**

The captain general of Cuba presided over the insular government in all political, socioeconomic, and religious matters.<sup>22</sup> Serving in place of the Spanish

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<sup>20</sup> Pardo Pimentel, *La isla de Cuba*, 15, 18-20, 23, 27. See José Ferrer de Couto, *Cuba puede ser independiente: Folleto político de actualidad* (New York: Impr. “El Cronista,” 1872) as another example of Spanish propaganda being used to incite racial fear among Creoles.

<sup>21</sup> Pardo Pimentel, *La isla de Cuba*, 23-24.

<sup>22</sup> The title of “captain general” was a military one. At the same time, the captain general was also the “superior civil governor” and, during the Ten Years’ War, the “superior political governor” of Cuba.

monarchy, he also commanded the colonial army and navy. During the Ten Years' War, captain generals usually held the army rank of lieutenant general and they designated a *segundo cabo* (second-in-command) to represent them when they were away from Havana. Spanish military officers considered the captaincy general of Cuba a highly desirable office. Not only was it a stepping stone for military advancement in the Peninsula, but it also provided these office holders with financial security.<sup>23</sup>

As a result of his pre-eminent status and accommodation of the conservative colonial elite, the captain general also became a growing focus of Cuban resentment and hostility, which is presented admirably in political scientist Octavio Avelino Delgado's depiction:

The absolute powers vested in the Captain General – always an Army officer even in peacetime – provoked among the creoles a feeling of profound malaise, which would eventually play a pivotal role in the creation of an independentist spirit among many Cubans. The systematic inclination of the highest authority in the Island to side with the Peninsular party whenever disputes and conflicts arose would contribute to intensify these feelings.<sup>24</sup>

Positing that the military governor would have mollified the friction between the *peninsulares* and the Creoles if he had acted “as arbiter and mediator with positive results for both the metropolis and the colony,” Delgado also understood the improbability of the captain general fulfilling this function, averring that “the highest representative of the colonial government owed his appointment to the same political

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<sup>23</sup> According to Octavio Avelino Delgado, during the mid-nineteenth century, captain generals grossed 20,000 pesetas per month. In contrast, captain generals in Spain only earned an annual salary of 31,560 pesetas. See Octavio Avelino Delgado, “The Spanish Army in Cuba, 1868-1898: An Institutional Study,” vol. 1 (Ph.D. diss.: Columbia University, 1980), 47-49.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 1: 46.

parties and pressure groups in the Peninsula whose ties were tightly intertwined with the insular oligarchy, mostly Spanish-born.”<sup>25</sup>

Below is an examination of the first two captain generals who served during the Ten Years’ War – Francisco Lersundi and Domingo Dulce.<sup>26</sup> This section is not meant to present a comprehensive study of either captain general. I place emphasis on the key political, socioeconomic, and military events of their terms in office, which demonstrate the obstacles that impeded a rapid conclusion of the colonial rebellion.

**Francisco Lersundi y Ormaechea (May 31, 1866 – November 3, 1866; December 21, 1867 – January 4, 1869)**

Francisco Lersundi y Ormaechea was born in Oñate in the Basque Provinces on January 28, 1817. His father had been a colonel in the Spanish infantry and, although Lersundi enrolled at the University of Oñate to pursue a degree in the humanities in 1833, he soon left the university to fight in the first Carlist war (1833-1840) in northern Spain. In January 1835, Lersundi joined the infantry as a sub-lieutenant. Despite being of Basque origin at a time when the Basque Provinces served as the center of operations for the Carlist rebels, Lersundi rejected the monarchical pretensions of Don Carlos and remained faithful to the descendants of Fernando VII – Isabel II (r. 1833-1868) and Alfonso XII (r. 1875-1885). In the art of warfare, Lersundi appeared a natural and soon rose through the military ranks,

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> This section of Chapter 3 and the first part of Chapter 4 are organized chronologically by captain general. This organizational pattern is similar to the ones established in René González Barrios, *Los capitanes generales en Cuba (1868-1878)* (Havana: Ediciones Verde Olivo, 1999) and Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, vols. 1-3. Only modest attention is paid to the interim captain generals due to the brevity of their terms in office.



ultimately becoming a commandant and in charge of the Regiment of the Princess. Lersundi did not remain idle following the conclusion of the Carlist conflict. His opposition to the regency of General Baldomero Espartero resulted in his death sentence, which Lersundi evaded by fleeing to France, where he stayed for two years. With the fall of Espartero in 1843, Lersundi returned to Spain and, a year later, was promoted to the rank of colonel at the head of the Regiment of America.<sup>27</sup> Throughout the 1840s, Lersundi continued to earn military honors and promotions as a result of his military successes in the Spanish campaigns of Galicia, Portugal, and the Papal States.<sup>28</sup>

In the 1850s, Lersundi gained experience in politics and administration. In 1850, he was elected deputy to the Cortes from the district of Vergara in the Basque Provinces and, in 1851, became the minister of war in the government of Juan Bravo Murillo.<sup>29</sup> In 1852, Lersundi was awarded the rank of lieutenant general and, in 1853, served as an interim minister of state. He was associated with the Moderate party, which made him a political conservative. In addition, Lersundi aligned himself with Manuel and José Gutiérrez de la Concha, famed generals also linked to the Moderates. Being a part of the “Concha clan,” as Raymond Carr denominated this

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<sup>27</sup> Francisco Vargas Machuca, *Vida política militar y pública del Excmo. Sr. Don Francisco Lersundi, actual Ministro de la Guerra* (Madrid: Imprenta de El Libro de la Verdad, 1851), 41, 55-57, 106, 109, 128-130, 143-144, 148-149, 151, 179-180, 185, 189, 193, 221.

<sup>28</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 1: 152.

<sup>29</sup> Vargas Machuca, *Vida política militar y pública del Excmo. Sr. Don Francisco Lersundi, actual Ministro de la Guerra*, 340, 344-345.

political faction, Lersundi opposed the ministries of Ramón María Narváez, the Concha brothers' adversary.<sup>30</sup>

In 1866, Leopoldo O'Donnell, then the Spanish prime minister and leader of the Liberal Union, assigned Lersundi the captaincy general of Cuba as a result of political differences. Lersundi, like many of Cuba's captain generals, had no prior experience in colonial matters and, therefore, was ignorant of the political and socioeconomic situation of the island. He relied on the conservative elite for information, after which he abolished the reformist committees that Serrano had inaugurated for fear that the reformists would spark political upheaval. Although the reformist movement was on the wane during Lersundi's first term as captain general, the Cuban separatists continued to conspire. Meanwhile, Lersundi was dismissed from his post since Narváez had resumed power in Madrid. General Joaquín del Manzano replaced Lersundi in late 1866, though his tenure as military governor witnessed the colony's economic decline and a boom in rebel conspiracies.<sup>31</sup>

Lersundi became captain general of Cuba for the second time in December 1867. He discovered Cuba in a state of political agitation as a result of the Madrid government's enactment of new taxes proposed in the Junta de Información de Ultramar. Moreover, the Cuban Treasury was nearing insolvency as a result of the insular government paying for the Spanish war in the Dominican Republic.

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 207, 230-231, 252, 268, 306, 344; Raymond Carr, *Spain, 1808-1975*, 2d. ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 240, 243; Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 1: 152.

<sup>31</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 1: 152-155.

Lersundi's warnings, however, went unheeded since the royal family was vacationing in San Sebastian for the summer.<sup>32</sup>

On September 18, 1868, Spain was engulfed by a liberal military and popular uprising, which succeeded in dethroning Queen Isabel II. Known both as the Glorious Revolution of 1868 or the *Septembrista* Revolution, its origins can be traced to the queen's refusal to make concessions to the Progressive party. The monarch believed that the Progressives' desire to implement liberal reforms would cause a revolution, thereby endangering the Bourbon dynasty. Therefore, she prohibited the party from forming a ministry. The *Septembristas*, a loose coalition of Democrats, Liberal Unionists, and Progressives, were led by Generals Francisco Serrano and Juan Prim. While the Provisional Government of the Revolution was established in Madrid, liberal juntas handled the local needs of cities and towns. The new government enacted a constitution in June 1869, which granted Spaniards numerous civil liberties, such as universal suffrage and freedom of religion, and called for the establishment of a constitutional monarchy. On the other hand, the *Septembristas* refused to restore the Bourbon dynasty to the Spanish throne. The Glorious Revolution of 1868 heralded an unprecedented era of liberal and democratic reforms for Spain. At the same time, it also ushered in a tumultuous six-year period of political and socioeconomic unrest for the Peninsula, to such an extent that, in the words of Carr, the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy in 1874 "was accepted with relief."<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> "Estado de la isla de Cuba al principiar el año de 1869," in BNM, Ms. 20283/1 (1).

<sup>33</sup> Carr, *Spain, 1808-1975*, 290-292, 299, 305-306, 310.

As a steadfast *isabelista*, Lersundi's opposition to the *Septembrista* revolution has been widely documented in Cuban and Spanish history. Also well known is his initial nonchalance to the Cuban uprising in the face of revolutionary upheaval in Spain. Lersundi had reason to be preoccupied with recent events in the Peninsula since at least one high-ranking Spanish officer in Cuba named Colonel Juan Modet demanded that Lersundi establish a *Septembrista* junta in Havana.<sup>34</sup> Subsequently, Lersundi reprimanded Modet and sent him back to Spain expeditiously. Despite this incident, however, these Spanish reformists found little support among members of the colonial elite, who feared an alteration to the status quo.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, it was not until October 15 that Lersundi first notified the minister of Ultramar, Adelardo López de Ayala, of the insurrection. He dismissively reported to the colonial minister that the uprising had been met with "more than enough forces to defeat it in a few days," quickly adding that "the rest of the island is calm and public opinion [remains] on the side of my authority."<sup>36</sup> In mid-October, Lersundi sent reinforcements to Oriente, but some would not arrive in the region until the beginning of November. By this time, the insurgents had already seized several towns and cities in Oriente.<sup>37</sup>

Although Lersundi was heavily criticized for his sluggish response to the Cuban insurrection, the Spanish Army in Cuba faced its own challenges. First, few Spanish troops garrisoned the island. As Spanish Commandant Leopoldo Barrios y

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<sup>34</sup> Colonel Modet would return to Cuba once fellow liberal, Domingo Dulce, became Cuba's captain general in 1869.

<sup>35</sup> BNM, Ms. 20283/1 (14).

<sup>36</sup> Telegram to the Ministro de Ultramar from Lersundi, dated October 15, [1868], in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4933, Caja 1, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 28.

<sup>37</sup> BNM, Ms. 20283/1 (14).

Carrión noted, even though there were 20,000 troops theoretically, in actuality, only between 8,000 and 10,000 were active due to the proliferation of illnesses among them and numerous delays in sending replacements from Spain. To make matters worse, only 1,500 troops were stationed in Oriente, which meant that it would take precious time to send reinforcements to that region. Furthermore, hardly any Spanish soldiers had knowledge of Cuba's eastern terrain or sufficient experience in battle. Thus, the Spanish Army would have had considerable difficulty in suppressing the revolt despite Lersundi's initial blunder.<sup>38</sup>

As the rebellion gained momentum by the end of the month, Lersundi ultimately began to recognize the gravity of the situation. With few regulars stationed on the island, the Spanish governor was forced to activate several battalions of Volunteers, as well as petition for more troops from Spain.<sup>39</sup> On October 26, Lersundi called for "at least 3,500 replacements," but as the rebellion blazed into Camagüey in early November and Spain continued to be in political turmoil, the Spanish governor suggested in December the need for over 20,000 regular troops in

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<sup>38</sup> Leopoldo Barrios y Carrión, *Sobre la historia de la guerra de Cuba. Algunas consideraciones*, 2d. ed. (Havana: Imprenta del "Diario del Ejército," [1892]), 1: 43-44, 47, 51; Gil Gelpi y Ferro, *Album histórico fotográfico de la guerra de Cuba desde su principio hasta el reinado de Amadeo I* (Havana: Imprenta "La Antilla," 1872), 23.

<sup>39</sup> Thomas, *Cuba, or the Pursuit of Freedom*, 247; "Estado que manifiesta los Cuerpos del instituto organizados en esta capital, con espresion [sic] de la fecha en que el E. S. Capitán Gral. los aprobó.", in BNM, Ms. 20284/4 (17). These battalions of Volunteers had, at the most, between 700 and 800 soldiers.

Cuba.<sup>40</sup> On December 4, the minister of Ultramar cabled Lersundi, notifying him that only as many as 5,000 troops were being sent to Cuba.<sup>41</sup>

The *Septembristas* further compounded the situation for Lersundi by considering a wide range of political and socioeconomic reforms for Cuba. Despite the captain general's protestations against these plans, arguing that they would seriously hinder governance of the island, it quickly became clear that neither Lersundi nor the *Septembrista* leaders could bridge the ideological divide which separated them.<sup>42</sup> Thus, in early November, the captain general announced his resignation to the president of the council of ministers. His replacement, General Domingo Dulce y Garay, however, would not arrive until the first week of January 1869 and, since it soon became known to the Cuban public that Lersundi was being replaced, he could do little as a lame duck to quell the revolt.<sup>43</sup>

**Domingo Dulce y Garay, the Marquis of Castell-Florite (December 14, 1862 – May 31, 1866; January 4, 1869 – June 2, 1869)**

In 1808, Domingo Dulce y Garay was born in the Spanish province of Rioja. At the youthful age of sixteen years, he became a second lieutenant in the Spanish cavalry. Like many high-ranking military officers of his generation, Dulce gained

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<sup>40</sup> Letter to the Ministro de Ultramar from Francisco Lersundi, dated October 30, 1868, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4933, Caja 1, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 57; telegram to the Ministro de Ultramar from Lersundi, dated December 7, [1868], in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4933, Caja 1, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 83.

<sup>41</sup> Telegram to the Capitán General de Cuba from the Ministro de Ultramar, dated December 4, 1868, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4933, Caja 1, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 72.

<sup>42</sup> Copy of a letter from Francisco Lersundi, dated October 24, 1868, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4933, Caja 1, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 56; letter to the Ministro de Ultramar from Francisco Lersundi, dated October 30, 1868, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4933, Caja 1, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 57.

<sup>43</sup> Telegram to the Presidente del Consejo de Ministros from Lersundi, dated November 10, 1868, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4933, Caja 1, Exp. 2, no document number.

recognition for his heroic feats against the Carlists in the 1830s in the form of military honors and a promotion to the rank of lieutenant colonel of cavalry. By the late 1840s, he was again battling the Carlists but, by the first half of the 1850s, he had gained political experience as the governor of Lerida, and as the vice-governor of Andalusia and Aragon. A liberal in Spanish politics, Dulce was aligned with such military men as Generals O'Donnell, Serrano, and Juan Prim. In the 1860s, the marquis of Castell-Florite served for the first time as captain general of Cuba, where he gained a reputation among the colonial elite as an overzealous combatant of the Atlantic slave trade. Dulce's relentless prosecution of criminal slave traffickers even resulted in the imprisonment of a shipment of over 1,000 African slaves belonging to Julián de Zulueta, one of the wealthiest and most influential Spanish plantation owners in Cuba.<sup>44</sup>

As captain general, Dulce supported other reforms in Cuba besides the abrogation of the lucrative slave trade and the gradual emancipation of slaves. Additionally, the captain general favored a reform of the Spanish tax system in Cuba, most notably advocating "the suppression of the customs houses and the replacement of the direct tax." At the same time, Dulce encouraged Cuba's political integration with the rest of the Spanish provinces, arguing that "[t]he divergence in aspirations between the majority of those inhabitants and a minority of the *peninsulares* will disappear with the reforms that the Government proposes to introduce, and principally with those of the political order." According to Dulce, Cubans "and many

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<sup>44</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 1:148-150.

of the *peninsulares* . . . aspire, they say, to be Spaniards, because they understand that the state in which they find themselves for more than thirty years implies a kind of estrangement or expulsion from the great family to which they pertain.” Furthermore, the captain general explained that the island’s inhabitants considered it a matter of “dignity” for Cuba to be placed on par with other Spanish provinces.<sup>45</sup>

No one was more aware of the opposition that Dulce’s report would receive from Spanish and Cuban conservatives than Dulce himself. He understood that plantation owners and slave merchants would reject a proposal to abolish slavery, and he knew that Spanish merchants would resist any modifications to the customs-house system. Moreover, Spanish bureaucrats would oppose political reforms that would limit their employment and disrupt their fraudulent activities.<sup>46</sup> According to Pirala, Dulce’s enthusiasm for reform in Cuba went so far as to foster the rise of a separatist movement, a view shared by many conservative Spaniards and Cubans. As a result of conservative opposition to his rule, Dulce left the captaincy general and returned to Spain, where he would join the *Septembrista* uprising of 1868.<sup>47</sup>

When Dulce assumed control of the captaincy general for the second time on January 4, 1869, he discovered that the separatist movement was on the rise in the eastern provinces. Moreover, a report from Spanish diplomats in Europe notified the captain general that three filibuster expeditions carrying munitions for rebel soldiers were headed for Cuba. As a result, Dulce considered it imperative that the Serrano

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<sup>45</sup> Domingo Dulce, *Informe presentado por el Excmo. Sr. D. Domingo Dulce[,] Marqués de Castelflorite[,] al Ministro de Ultramar en Enero de 1867* (Madrid, 1867), 6-10, 13-14, 18.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 6-14.

<sup>47</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 1: 150-151.



government send reinforcements of 4,000 soldiers since, between November 1868 and January 1869, only some 3,500 replacements had reached Cuba.<sup>48</sup>

Initial military operations during Dulce's captaincy general had mixed results. When Dulce arrived in Cuba, Valmaseda was on campaign in Oriente struggling to regain the towns and cities held by the Cuban insurgents. By mid-January 1869, Spanish forces had re-conquered Bayamo, the separatist capital, and the town of El Dátil, but only after the Cubans had burned them to the ground.<sup>49</sup> Dulce himself could not assume leadership of any military campaign due to his poor health. Besides, the captain general preferred to negotiate an end to the war by conveying Spanish commissioners to the insurgent headquarters in the eastern provinces.<sup>50</sup>

Additionally, Dulce endeavored to implement the *Septembrista* program of political reforms as a means of ending the war. Bolstered by the support of some in the elite to resolve the Cuban situation peacefully, on January 10, the captain general promulgated a decree allowing for freedom of the press.<sup>51</sup> Ironically, the Spanish party took advantage of this decree to express their dissatisfaction with Dulce's liberal agenda. At the same time, conservatives criticized the decree, arguing that it

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<sup>48</sup> Telegram from Domingo Dulce, dated January 8, [1869], in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4933, Caja 1, Exp. 3, Doc. no. 3; telegram to the Gobernador Capitán General de la Isla de Cuba from the Subsecretario interino [del Ministerio de Ultramar,] dated January 15, 1869, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4933, Caja 1, Exp. 3, Doc. no. 7; letter to the Ministro de Ultramar from Subsecretario [del Ministerio de Estado] Juan Valera, dated January 11, 1869, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4933, Caja 1, Exp. 3, Doc. no. 9; García Verdugo, *Cuba contra España*, 126.

<sup>49</sup> Telegram to the "Ministros de la Guerra y de Ultramar" from Domingo Dulce, dated January 18, [1869,] in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4933, Caja 1, Exp. 3, Doc. no. 12.

<sup>50</sup> Gelpi y Ferro, *Album histórico fotográfico*, 112, 117.

<sup>51</sup> Domingo Dulce, decree on freedom of the press, dated January 9, 1869, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4933, Caja 1, Exp. 3, Doc. no. 4; letter from Domingo Dulce, dated January 9, 1869, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4933, Caja 1, Exp. 3, Doc. no. 23.

allowed separatists to spread their propaganda without fear of government persecution.<sup>52</sup>

Not fazed by conservative disapproval, on January 12, Dulce issued another decree, this one granting amnesty to political prisoners who were classified as insurgents. The majority of these inmates were freed in the western provinces of Havana, Matanzas, and Las Villas. Havana authorities alone released 120 political prisoners from the Castillos del Morro and del Príncipe, the La Cabaña fortress, and the city jail. At the same time, eight political prisoners were released in the city of Matanzas and, in Cienfuegos and Santa Clara, eight more were discharged. On the other hand, in the eastern provinces of Camagüey and Oriente, fewer political prisoners were released. In Manzanillo forty-two men and one woman were let go. The *comandante militar* of Holguín, Francisco de Campos, released sixteen male convicts. In Nuevitas, Lieutenant Governor José Gutiérrez Ortiz discharged fifteen inmates. In a sampling of 210 prisoners released throughout the island, 206 were white and Afro-Cuban men, one was an Asian man, and three were women. There were more political prisoners in the western provinces because these had a denser population than the eastern ones. Nonetheless, one must also consider the possibility that, if Spanish administrators who were working in the areas of the insurrection dismissed Dulce's order as unwise, they may have kept many of their political prisoners incarcerated without reporting it to the captain general. This also may be

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<sup>52</sup> Gelpi y Ferro, *Album histórico fotográfico*, 112-113. As a result of this decree, numerous *integristas* founded newspapers, including *La Voz de Cuba*, the mouthpiece of the Corps of Volunteers. Gelpi himself established the conservative newspaper *La Constancia*. Under pressure from the Spanish party, Dulce later rescinded this decree on freedom of the press, although ultra-conservative newspaper firms established prior to the suppression of the decree were allowed to continue operating.

why fewer political prisoners were released in the eastern provinces than in the western ones.<sup>53</sup>

This decree was not popular with Spanish and Cuban conservatives for a number of reasons. First, *integristas* believed that placing convicts jailed on the grounds of treason back into circulation would only increase the size of the insurrection. Instead, conservatives, such as Vicente García Verdugo, a one-time *fiscal* of the *audiencia* of Puerto Príncipe, urged the use of military force to suppress the insurgency. Besides, before the general pardon was announced, Dulce had sent commissions to insurgent territories in an attempt to negotiate an end to the war, but to no avail. The rebellion continued to grow, which led loyalists to assert that offering concessions to the separatists only encouraged them to continue fighting. Moreover, some conservatives were irate that the insurgents had ruined their properties and livelihoods. For them, the possibility of exonerated insurgents not having to repay loyalists for their losses as a result of the rebellion was unacceptable to say the least. Finally, of serious concern to *hacendados* and merchants was how the insular government would interpret this decree if slaves joined the separatist movement. Would slave rebels be granted their freedom for surrendering to Spanish forces? Considering Dulce's famed hostility to slavery, many in the elite must have concluded that the captain general would not be averse to such a prospect.<sup>54</sup>

Dulce's liberal decrees did not have the desired effect that the Provisional Government in Madrid expected: instead of petering out, the insurrection grew

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<sup>53</sup> AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4360, Exp. 37, Doc. nos. 3-18.

<sup>54</sup> García Verdugo, *Cuba contra España*, 137-139.

stronger. Consequently, the Spanish party's growing impatience with Dulce threatened to cause political upheaval in Havana. Toward the end of January, skirmishes between rebels and Volunteers in Havana culminated in the latter's "reign of terror" over the capital. First, on January 23, public pronouncements of sympathy for the insurrection at the Villanueva theatre provoked a bloody clash between the Volunteers and insurgents, and several deaths and numerous injuries ensued. Then, on January 24, the deaths of several Spanish regulars and Volunteers led the Volunteers to retaliate by ransacking the Aldama mansion and firing into the Louvre café and Tacón theatre, killing several people. Gunfights between separatists and Volunteers persisted on January 28 and 29.<sup>55</sup>

The thinly-veiled rebellion of the Spanish party against Dulce ruined the captain general's chances of suppressing the Cuban insurgency. The captain general's attempt to broker a peace settlement with the insurgents foundered when, on January 26, a Spanish policeman killed rebel leader Augusto Arango, who was on his way to Puerto Príncipe to discuss terms of surrender with Brigadier General Julián Mena. As a result, Dulce's hopes of resolving the Cuban conflict quickly were dashed since insurgent leaders who had been open to deliberations with the colonial administration while Arango was alive rejected them following his death.<sup>56</sup> To make matters worse, on February 6, a Cuban uprising occurred in Las Villas.

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<sup>55</sup> Emilio A. Soulère, *Historia de la insurrección de Cuba (1869-1879)* (Barcelona: Establecimiento Tipográfico-Editorial de Juan Pons, 1879), 1: 45-47.

<sup>56</sup> Guerra, *Guerra de los 10 años*, 1: 210-211, 213-214.

Starting in February, Dulce began to implement conservative measures in an attempt to halt the spread of the rebellion and to placate the loyalist faction of Cuba. First, on February 12, Dulce issued a decree declaring that those who committed the crime of “infidencia” would be subjected to a court-martial.<sup>57</sup> The definition of infidencia remained unclear, however. So, the following day, the Superior Political Government endeavored to issue a clarification, yet further complicated the matter by presenting a broad list of meanings. Infidencia could mean “treason,” “insurrection,” “conspiracy,” “intelligence with the enemy,” “expressions, cries or subversive or seditious voices,” “propagation of alarming news” and, even, “coalition of day laborers or workers and leagues.”<sup>58</sup> Under such a broad definition, it was clear that the purpose of the decree was to incarcerate as many people as possible or to intimidate them into silent submission to the state.

Then, in late February, the captain general ordered the deportation of some 250 political prisoners, most of whom were wealthy Cubans, to the Spanish prison colony of Fernando Póo under the pressure of the Volunteers in Havana.<sup>59</sup> Additionally, Spanish General José Luis Riquelme argued that Dulce employed this measure when military operations in the east went awry. Nonetheless, exiling

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<sup>57</sup> Dulce, decree of February 12, 1869, in *Datos y noticias oficiales referentes a los bienes mandados embargar en la isla de Cuba* (Havana: Imprenta del Gobierno y Capitanía General, 1870), 3.

<sup>58</sup> The secretary of the Superior Political Government, José María Díaz, made this clarification on February 13, 1869, in *ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> Spain acquired the African island of Fernando Póo from Portugal in 1778 in the Treaty of San Ildefonso. Today, the island is known as Bioko and is a part of the nation of Equatorial Guinea. Francisco Javier Balmaseda, *Los confinados a Fernando Póo e impresiones de un viage [sic] a Guinea* (New York: Imprenta de La Revolución, 1869), 5, 7, 10-11, 20.

members of wealthy Cuban families to that dreadful prison colony did little to improve the captain general's standing with the Creole elite.<sup>60</sup>

Dulce's order of February 12 set the stage for the promulgation of the decree of April 1, which enabled the government to confiscate property belonging to insurgents. This property included farms and its crops, livestock, stockholdings, houses, furniture, and other personal possessions. On April 17, Dulce called for the formation of a Consejo Administrativo de Bienes Embargados, which would manage the cases of embargoed properties. The sixteen members of this Consejo Administrativo included the political governor of Havana, who acted as president, a Treasury official, a secretary of the Political Government of Havana, three *vocales* of the *ayuntamiento* of Havana, three merchants, three plantation owners, and four personnel who the political governor of Havana selected. The Consejo Administrativo would grow considerably in positions and personnel over the course of the rebellion, but many of its administrators were members of the peninsular elite. The Serrano ministry gave Dulce its approval to sell the crops and livestock of the confiscated properties to fund the war budget.<sup>61</sup>

Thousands of island residents had their properties confiscated as a result of the decree of April 1, 1869. According to Zaragoza, between April 16 (the date of the law's enactment) and August 31, 1869, there were 1,184 confiscations, the majority

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<sup>60</sup> [José Luis Riquelme], *Contestación á la Memoria publicada por el Señor Marqués de la Habana sobre su último mando en Cuba* (Madrid: Imprenta de Gil Gelpi y Ferro, 1876), 18.

<sup>61</sup> Dulce's decrees of April 1, 17, and 20, 1869, in *Datos y noticias oficiales referentes a los bienes mandados embargar en la isla de Cuba*, 3-8. On the subject of embargoes imposed by the Spanish government on insurgent properties during the Ten Years' War, see also *Disposiciones relativas a bienes embargados e incautados a los infidentes* (Havana: Almacén de Papel y Efectos de Escritorio, de Castro, Hermanos y Compañía, 1874) and AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4941, Cajas 1 and 2.

of which occurred during the captaincy general of Antonio Caballero de Rodas. By the end of 1870, the Spanish administration had imposed some 4,000 embargoes on its colonists.<sup>62</sup>

The Spanish confiscation of properties belonging to insurgents during the Ten Years' War is a subject that has begun to pique the interest of historians of Cuba. Although little has been written on the topic thus far, it nonetheless has sparked debate among historians. According to Ponte Domínguez, "[s]ince the first steps of the *Consejo Administrativo* the purpose of a large-scale plunder of properties owned by thousands of Cuban families was clear." For him, however, these decrees were devastating for Cuba's economic development. Ponte Domínguez asserts that Spain's embargo on Cuban properties "was not only an essential factor in the development of the country during the three decades in which Spanish domination still continued on the Island, but also its deplorable consequences persisted in the definitive stage of Cuba as a sovereign nation, hindering its economic independence."<sup>63</sup> Unfortunately, Ponte Domínguez did not explain how he made the connection between Spanish embargoes on Cuban properties during the Ten Years' War and Cuba's economic struggles in the twentieth century.

On the other hand, Roldán de Montaud seems to reject the argument that Spanish confiscation of insurgent properties resulted in the economic ascent of the Spanish party, at the expense of the Cuban population. She argues that while officials

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<sup>62</sup> Zaragoza, *Las insurrecciones en Cuba*, 2: 508. Between April 15, 1869 and September 30, 1870, there were 3,331 files on embargoes. See *Datos y noticias oficiales referentes a los bienes mandados embargar en la isla de Cuba*, 109-218.

<sup>63</sup> Ponte Domínguez, *Historia de la guerra de los diez años*, 118-120. Ramiro Guerra makes a similar argument in *Guerra de los 10 años*, 1: 222.

of the Consejo Administrativo desired the sale of embargoed properties, the government refused to oblige them, not even if they had belonged to insurgents who had been executed.<sup>64</sup> On this matter, Roldán de Montaud states:

Although this topic is pending a conclusive study[,] it does not seem that there was a purchase of farms originating from embargos. What there was were leases, such as it remained stipulated since 1871, and also, it cannot be denied, speculation on the part of the administrators. Only in this way can the strong resistance of the members of the Consejo de Administración de Bienes Embargados to proceed with the leasing of some farms be explained, in the shadow of whose administration since 1869 interests had already been created.<sup>65</sup>

For instance, members of the Consejo Administrativo and other loyalists assumed responsibility of large, modernized farms, from which they profited immensely.<sup>66</sup>

Dulce's efforts to end the rebellion and generate support among members of the Spanish party proved fruitless. By April 1869, the separatists had formally organized a central government and an army, while insurgent leaders of the New York Junta<sup>67</sup> were occupied with sending filibuster expeditions to Cuba and enlisting the support of U.S. politicians to end Spanish colonialism in their homeland. As the revolution extended further westward, Spanish and Cuban loyalists became vindictive in their censure of Dulce. In May, several distinct pamphlets authored anonymously

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<sup>64</sup> Roldán de Montaud, *La Restauración en Cuba*, 98-99.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 99. Members of the Spanish party were adamant about denying rebels their property. According to Brigadier General José María Velasco, "[t]hat great benefit that the rebellion has made, consists in having destroyed almost all that existed in the interior of the greatly under-populated part of the island, thereby facilitating the reconstruction of the country in zones of simple defense and communication, and establishing in them troops in permanent encampments and fortifications with insurgent lands and abundant livestock, [used] as an indemnity of war. Even now during the war [and] in this way, the army can excuse a considerable expenditure in rations, and in peace become a powerful element of development and progress." José María Velasco, *Guerra de Cuba. Causas de su duración y medios de terminarla y asegurar su pacificación* (Madrid: Imprenta de El Correo Militar, 1872), 28.

<sup>66</sup> Roldán de Montaud, *La Restauración en Cuba*, 99.

<sup>67</sup> The Cuban separatist Junta in New York is discussed in Chapter 5.



and condemning Dulce's captaincy general were distributed in Cuba and Spain. The authors of these leaflets demanded Dulce's resignation and several of his generals, all of whom were deemed too incompetent to terminate the war. In particular, one pamphlet dated May 15, 1869 indicted Dulce of despising the Volunteers, of provoking the 1868 insurrection due to his reformist rule as captain general of Cuba in the early 1860s, and of actually defending the Cuban revolutionaries. As Zaragoza persuasively argues, the pamphlet of May 15 "could be considered as the preliminary to Dulce's deposition."<sup>68</sup>

On his voyage back to the Peninsula, Dulce wrote to the Madrid government a detailed missive explaining the events leading to his ouster. On May 25, 1869, Dulce met with the administrative and military leaders of Havana to discuss how to mitigate the growing disquiet among members of the Spanish party. It was decided that in order to restore harmony between the colonial government and the *integristas*, Dulce should submit his resignation to the Madrid government, which he did that same day. On the night of June 1, however, masses of armed Volunteers congregated outside the captain general's palace and demanded that he abandon the island immediately. Without any military officers or soldiers coming to his aid, Dulce was coerced into relinquishing his post on the early morning of June 2.<sup>69</sup>

The *integristas* forced Dulce out of office because they perceived him to be making more concessions to the Cuban insurgents than he was making to them. The

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<sup>68</sup> Zaragoza, *Las insurrecciones en Cuba*, 2: 402-404.

<sup>69</sup> Dulce's letter to the Madrid government, dated June 18, 1869, is reproduced in Carlos de Sedano, *Cuba: Estudios políticos* (Madrid: Imprenta a cargo de Manuel G. Hernández, 1872), 396, 400, 402-403, 405-406.

captain general referred to this situation in his final report to the Serrano ministry, first stating that he refused to grant certain dispensations to Spanish merchants prior to his overthrow: "Days before a person representing some merchants of Havana presented himself to me asking that their debts on products which had been loaded into the storerooms of the customs house be reduced by twenty-five percent, supposing that the situation of the market would not permit them to remove them [from the warehouses]." Dulce believed that this case should have been submitted to the *intendente* of the Treasury. At the same time, he told the commercial representative that he personally would reject the request if it were presented to the Superior Political Government, for it reeked of administrative corruption. Additionally, he fired Lieutenant Governor González Estéfani from his post in Cienfuegos upon discovering that he was excessively authorizing the confiscation of Cuban properties in the jurisdiction, which Dulce asserted was the reason why the rebellion grew in this area after it had subsided. On removing González Estéfani from office, the marquis of Castell-Florite explained: "That same conduct, causing injustices, fraud and depredations, could only gain my attention; as soon as I had official knowledge of it, I arranged the dismissal of this civil servant." According to Dulce, his action, which deprived Spaniards of Cuban properties, caused *integristas* in the Western Department to call for his removal from the captaincy general.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 401-402.

## Conclusion

Dulce's ouster insinuated that those captain generals who did not comply with conservative demands would have ephemeral governorships in Cuba and their reputations sullied. As we shall see in Chapter 4, subsequent captain generals upheld the Spanish party's conservative agenda during the Ten Years' War. Although Dulce indicated that the implementation of reforms in Cuba caused the rebellion to briefly subside, he also admitted that the reforms encouraged some separatists to continue their armed struggle.<sup>71</sup> It was not until 1876 that the insular government began making significant concessions to the separatists again. By that time, however, the Bourbon monarchy had been restored and the wars in Spain had ended, which meant that the Madrid government could send more soldiers to Cuba with the purpose of ending the insurgency. Moreover, by 1876, the Cuban separatist movement had begun to founder as a result of internal political and racial conflicts, and a scarcity of military supplies. Nonetheless, as Roldán de Montaud asserts, until the metropolis was able to devote itself to ending the colonial rebellion, "[t]he peninsulares [in Cuba] . . . were sustaining the war."<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 397-398, 406.

<sup>72</sup> Roldán de Montaud, *La Restauración en Cuba*, 96.

## Chapter 4

### **In Defense of the “National Integrity” of Spain: The Captaincy General (1869-1876) and the Spanish Army in Cuba**

*[T]he conduct taken with General Dulce, who perhaps would have attained the peace so desired by all the good people, . . . ended, as it is known, in sweeping away the principle of authority for the first time in Cuba and establishing a lamentable precedent. . . . [A]lso the creation of newspapers . . . , like El Tribuno, prior to my command, and La Voz de Cuba, which had long been defending retrocession, . . . favored, perhaps without wanting to, the cause of the insurrection[,] and they sustained and advanced more and more the division and rancor [among Cuba's inhabitants].*

- Lieutenant General Cándido Pieltain, captain general of Cuba in 1873<sup>1</sup>

This chapter continues with the examination of why the Spanish government could not put a swift end to the Cuban insurrection of 1868-1878. To begin with, I study the captain generals who served in Cuba during the Ten Years' War in the aftermath of the Spanish party's ouster of General Dulce. From 1869 to 1876, subsequent captain generals tended to pursue conservative policies in deference to the Spanish party, yet often in defiance of the liberal governments of Spain.<sup>2</sup> Some of these policies included a rejection of slave emancipation and a refusal to reform the tax code. Additionally, captain generals sought to end the insurrection through military means, which required over 100,000 Spanish soldiers and hundreds of millions of pesos to pay, feed, clothe, and equip them. Observance of these conservative policies, as suggested by Captain General Cándido Pieltain's remarks on

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<sup>1</sup> Cándido Pieltain, *La isla de Cuba desde mediados de Abril á fines de Octubre de 1873* (Madrid: La Universal, 1879), 29.

<sup>2</sup> Roldán de Montaud, *La Restauración en Cuba*, 83-84.

*La Voz de Cuba*, a Spanish party newspaper, in the epigraph above, widened the divide between Cubans and Spaniards, and rendered an early conclusion to the insurgency impracticable.

In addition, this chapter analyzes the dilemmas facing the Spanish Army in the Ten Years' War. The proliferation of diseases, troop shortages, the lack of discipline, the underestimation of the separatists' military skill, and the exercise of poor military judgment all impeded the effectiveness of the Spanish Army, which also extended the duration of the war.

### **Felipe Ginovés Espinar y de la Barra (June 2, 1869 – June 28, 1869)**

Field Marshal Felipe Ginovés Espinar was Dulce's *segundo cabo* when he replaced the marquis of Castell-Florite as interim governor. Dulce held Ginovés Espinar in poor esteem because he had not warned him of the impending revolt against his authority and he did not refuse the Volunteers' request that he temporarily replace Dulce.<sup>3</sup>

Since the Spanish party only would accept Dulce's *segundo cabo* as the island governor on an interim basis, Ginovés Espinar lacked the political and moral authority to extinguish the insurrection. Without reinforcements, Spanish military operations languished. To make matters worse, Spanish troops were attacked by an epidemic of cholera in Oriente and Camagüey. Additionally, Cuba was threatened by incoming filibuster expeditions sent by the separatist Junta in New York. For Spanish

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<sup>3</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 1: 539.

and Cuban conservatives, the next captain general could not come soon enough to replace Ginovés Espinar.<sup>4</sup>

#### **Antonio Caballero de Rodas (June 28, 1869 – December 13, 1870)**

Born in Madrid, Antonio Caballero de Rodas became a sub-lieutenant of infantry at age twenty. He had fought in several Spanish civil wars, as well as in the war against Morocco (1859-1860). Caballero de Rodas was awarded high military commands, first of a regiment and, then, of a brigade. By 1864, he ascended to the rank of field marshal. He was linked politically to the Liberal Union in the 1850s and, then, to the *Septembrista* revolution of 1868. Although Caballero de Rodas was a liberal, he rejected republicanism and favored a Spanish monarchy under Alfonso XII. By the time of his departure for Havana in June 1869, he had already attained the rank of lieutenant general.<sup>5</sup>

During the time span that Caballero de Rodas served as captain general in Cuba, major changes were implemented in Spain under the *Septembristas*. The monarchical constitution had been enacted by the Cortes in June 1869. The election of a ruling dynasty became a subject of great debate, yet ultimately Amadeo Savoy, the Italian duke of Aosta, was chosen as Spain's new monarch in November 1870. The beginning of the reign of Amadeo I, however, coincided with the assassination of General Juan Prim, who had been instrumental in getting Amadeo elected. With support for the restoration of the Bourbon dynasty on the rise in Spain, Amadeo was

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<sup>4</sup> García Verdugo, *Cuba contra España*, 313-315, 317, 330.

<sup>5</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 1: 589-590.

an unpopular king, yet he was able to include Liberal Unionists, Democrats, and Progressives into the ministries that served under him.<sup>6</sup>

Loyalists of the Spanish empire greeted Caballero de Rodas's arrival in Cuba with enthusiasm. Caballeros de Rodas's energy pleased them and, more importantly, the new captain general brought 4,000 reinforcements with him. The summer campaign of 1869 was more successful for Spanish forces than it was for the Liberation Army, considering the Spanish Army's energetic pursuit of the insurgents and Quesada's failed attempt to take Tunas in August, which caused the rebellion to diminish until early 1870. Meanwhile, Caballero de Rodas focused on safeguarding the Cuban coastline from the arrival of filibuster expeditions which, until this point, had fostered the growth of the revolution with the delivery of separatist army recruits, weapons, and munitions. The arrival of thirty Spanish war ships in early 1870 was greatly welcomed by loyalists in Cuba.<sup>7</sup>

As early as August 1869, however, conservatives began to criticize Caballero de Rodas's military and political performance. Mauricio López Roberts, the Spanish minister in Washington, D.C., stated that there were "alarming symptoms of doubt in the peninsular element with respect to the politics of the Captain General founded in great part on the lack of military results and the increase of rebel bands." López Roberts suggested that Minister of Ultramar Adelardo López de Ayala go to Cuba to resolve the island's political and administrative problems, thereby liberating the

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<sup>6</sup> Carr, *Spain, 1808-1975*, 317-320.

<sup>7</sup> [Riquelme], *Contestación á la Memoria publicada por el Señor Marqués de la Habana sobre su último mando en Cuba*, 19.

captain general of these duties so that he could devote himself entirely to defeating the insurgents through military means.<sup>8</sup> Ironically, the plan recommended by the Spanish diplomat would not be implemented until 1876 (albeit with modifications) when Captain General Joaquín Jovellar remained in Havana to direct administrative and political matters, while General Arsenio Martínez Campos became the commander-in-chief of military operations. It was this political-military partnership that oversaw the collapse of the separatist movement in 1878.

Caballero de Rodas's popularity continued to fade in 1870. At the start of the year, Caballero de Rodas ordered the *fiscales* to recommend to the *comandantes generales* or *militares* which prisoners captured by the military and incarcerated on the grounds of treason could be released as a result of insufficient evidence. The decision to release these prisoners was left to the *comandantes generales* or *militares*, although they had to explain to the captain general in specific terms why the released prisoners had been jailed. They also had to provide the captain general with personal information on the ex-convicts, such as their home addresses.<sup>9</sup> Perhaps the release of prisoners suspected of treason contributed to the rise in separatist forces.

The botched winter campaign of 1870 also contributed to the captain general's growing unpopularity. First, the military commander in Puerto Príncipe, General Puello, and his column were ambushed by rebel troops in the locale of Mina Rodríguez. Entrenched insurgent forces caused some 400 casualties. Moreover,

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<sup>8</sup> Telegram to the Ministro de Estado from the Representante de España [Mauricio] López Roberts, dated August 25, 1869, in IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5748, Carpeta 11, pp. 1-3.

<sup>9</sup> Letter to the Comandante General de Sancti Spiritus y Morón from Caballero, dated January 31, 1870, in IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5748, Carpeta 36, pp. 7-11.



Liberation Army troops seized the Spanish fort of Sabana la Nueva and, in the western jurisdiction of Güines (Havana province), there was an uprising of eighty insurgents. Although this revolt was terminated quickly, it sent shockwaves through the Spanish and Cuban elites since these wealthy island residents had large investments in agriculture and slavery. Furthermore, Caballero de Rodas's military campaign in Puerto Príncipe in the spring of 1870 did not bring the war to a conclusion as the captain general had anticipated.<sup>10</sup> By December 1870, Caballero de Rodas was replaced by a favorite of the Spanish party, General Blas Villate, the count of Valmaseda.

**Blas Villate y de la Hera, the Count of Valmaseda (December 13, 1870 – July 11, 1872; March 8, 1875 – December 25, 1875)**

Born in 1824 in Vizcaya, Blas Villate y de la Hera, the count of Valmaseda, entered military service in 1837 during the first Carlist war. He established an illustrious career in the Spanish cavalry, serving under both Generals Narváez and O'Donnell. In addition, Valmaseda served in Cuba for eighteen years which, in the Ten Years' War, made him the captain general with the most experience in Cuban matters. After his first colonial tour of duty from 1840 to 1845, he returned to Cuba in the early 1860s as the *comandante militar y político* for Trinidad and Puerto Príncipe and, then, as the *comandante general* for Oriente. Following a failed military campaign in the Dominican Republic, Valmaseda returned to Cuba and became

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<sup>10</sup> [Riquelme], *Contestación á la Memoria publicada por el Señor Marqués de la Habana sobre su último mando en Cuba*, 20-21.

Captain General Manzano's *segundo cabo*, a position which he also held during Lersundi's second term as colonial governor.<sup>11</sup> Upon the outbreak of the Cuban insurrection in 1868, Lersundi designated Field Marshal Villate as commander of the military campaigns in Camagüey and Oriente.<sup>12</sup>

While leading field operations in the eastern provinces, Valmaseda initially determined that granting amnesty was the most effective means of ending the rebellion quickly. Yet, the vulnerability of the Spanish Army and recent insurgent victories continued to encourage the growth of the revolution. In his proclamation to the *camagüeyanos*, the commanding general pledged to them that compromises would be reached if they stopped fighting. These guarantees seemed to fall on deaf ears since insurgents continued capturing towns in Camagüey.<sup>13</sup>

When negotiations failed, Valmaseda employed violent repression in Camagüey and Oriente, which gained him the adoration of the Spanish party. According to Spanish conservative José de Granda, "[t]he victories obtained by this commander, the incessant persecution with which he harassed the enemy, and the good results that he achieved wherever he operated, caused . . . the public spirit, favorable to Spain, to be firmly maintained in its ardent enthusiasm." For Granda,

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<sup>11</sup> José de Granda, *Reflexiones sobre la insurrección de Cuba* (Madrid: Imprenta de los Señores Rojas, 1876), 40; Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 2: 42-43.

<sup>12</sup> "Disposiciones de Valmaseda," dated November 1868, in BNM, Ms. 20283/1 (6).

<sup>13</sup> "Proclama de Valmaseda. A los habitantes de la ciudad y jurisdicción [*sic*] de Puerto-Príncipe," signed "El Conde de Valmaseda" and dated November 20, 1868, in BNM, Ms. 20283/1 (5).

Valmaseda's operations in the eastern provinces in 1868 and 1869 aided Spain in keeping Cuba a part of its empire.<sup>14</sup>

Valmaseda continued conducting operations in rebel territory throughout the administrations of Dulce, Ginovés Espinar, and Caballero de Rodas. Then in December 1870, the Serrano ministry, which served under Amadeo I, nominated Valmaseda as Caballero de Rodas's replacement, a position which the field general gladly accepted. For much of 1871, Valmaseda's energetic military operations received praise from the *integristas*. A disastrous event in November, however, triggered the unraveling of Valmaseda's captaincy general.<sup>15</sup>

Perhaps the most notorious incident which occurred during Valmaseda's first term as captain general was the execution of eight medical students in Havana at the behest of the Volunteers.<sup>16</sup> On November 23, 1871, a group of first-year medical students were waiting for their anatomy professor outside of their classroom, an

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<sup>14</sup> Granda, *Reflexiones sobre la insurrección de Cuba*, 18. While Valmaseda was a darling of the Spanish party, Cuban revolutionaries despised him for his bloody campaign against them. For an example of this hatred for Valmaseda, see the Cuban separatist periodical *La Estrella Solitaria*, April 1, 1875.

<sup>15</sup> Granda, *Reflexiones sobre la insurrección de Cuba*, 40-42.

<sup>16</sup> This catastrophe garnered Spain international condemnation partly as a result of an account written by one of the student survivors, Fermín Valdés Domínguez (1852-1910). Born into the Cuban elite, Valdés lived and attended school in Havana with his friend, José Martí. Like Martí, Valdés was critical of the insular government, which landed him in jail for six months in 1869 when several regular troops discovered a letter in Valdés's home denigrating Spanish imperial rule. He entered the medical school of the University of Havana in 1871 and was again imprisoned when the tragic events of that November occurred, this time receiving six years of hard labor. Following his early release in 1872, Valdés was exiled to Spain, where he came into contact with Martí and began writing his depiction of the ordeal. The resulting work – *Tragedy in Havana: November 27, 1871* – was widely read and went through six editions. Its sympathetic portrayal of the Cuban medical students contributed in no small part to the cause of *Cuba Libre*. Thereafter, Valdés served in the Cuban independence movement in both military and civil positions. Information used to write this biographical sketch of Valdés is found in Consuelo E. Stebbins, "Introduction to the English Translation," in Fermín Valdés Domínguez, *Tragedy in Havana: November 27, 1871*, ed. and trans. Consuelo E. Stebbins (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000), xvi-xxi.

amphitheater called San Dionisio. Next to the amphitheater was the Espada cemetery. Since the students were aware that their professor would be late, four of them began to create mischief by driving and riding on top of a cart carrying cadavers. One student picked a flower from the cemetery, but then replaced it, after which the students returned to the classroom unaware of having done anything wrong. The custodian of the cemetery, however, informed the political governor of Havana, Dionisio López Roberts,<sup>17</sup> that the students had committed the crime of scraping the glass on the vault of Gonzalo Castañón, the founder of the Volunteer newspaper *La Voz de Cuba*, who was killed by Cuban separatists in Key West. López Roberts arrived on November 25 to accuse the medical students of having committed treason, even though the priest who tended to the cemetery asserted that the scrapes on Castañón's grave had been there long before the students romped through the yard. Most of the freshman medical students were promptly arrested and interrogated. The four youths confessed to unruly behavior in the cemetery, but not to scraping the glass on Castañón's vault. By November 27, however, the Spanish Casino of Havana, the Volunteers, and newspaper editors, worsened the situation by claiming that the students had broken into Castañón's grave and defiled his remains. The Volunteers of Havana, numbering some 10,000, insisted that General Romualdo

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<sup>17</sup> Dionisio López Roberts was detested by Cubans and Spaniards alike as a result of his corruption. In Valdés's view, López Roberts sought political advancement by exploiting the situation of the medical students. Dionisio was the brother of Mauricio López Roberts, the Spanish plenipotentiary minister in Washington, D.C., from 1868 to 1872. The Spanish minister was dismissed as a result of his brother's role in the execution of the medical students in Havana. Dionisio also was replaced as political governor of Havana. According to Cuban attorney José Ignacio Rodríguez, the López Roberts brothers never recovered politically from this scandal. See Valdés Domínguez, *Tragedy in Havana*, 20-21, 28, 33, 155, 193.

Crespo, who was substituting for Valmaseda since the captain general was on campaign in the eastern provinces, order the execution of the students. Unable to withstand the pressure of the Volunteers, Crespo resolved to court-martial the students, eight of whom were condemned to death. Although only four students were at the cemetery, four more names were drawn from a lottery to satisfy the Volunteers' bloodlust. These victims, who were between the ages of sixteen and eighteen years, were executed by a Volunteer firing squad on November 27, 1871. The majority of the other members of the freshman class received between six months and six years in prison even though they were not at the cemetery.<sup>18</sup>

As for the count of Valmaseda, he accepted the conservative version of events, repeating López Roberts's accusation that "the body of a revered patriot, Gonzalo Castañón, was violated," adding that "[t]he political governor in Havana was promptly informed of the crime, and he proceeded immediately to detain the alleged criminals." In another statement, the captain general wrote: "After a military parade, numerous groups surrounded the jail where they demanded that the criminals be tried for their offense." Here, Valmaseda dropped the term "alleged" when referring to the students as "criminals," which reveals his pessimistic opinion of them. At the same time in this statement, the captain general alluded to the unruly behavior of the Volunteers. As further evidence of their disruptiveness, he reported that "the crowds shouted their demands" and, after the executions were carried out, informed the minister of Ultramar that López Roberts "assures us that honor has been restored, and

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 17-28, 30-45, 51-55.

he is confident that there will be no further disturbances.”<sup>19</sup> This incident demonstrated both the Spanish party’s strong influence over the insular government and its willingness to create political bedlam in order to attain its objectives.

As a result of this catastrophe, on November 28 Valmaseda returned to Havana to assess the political situation. In December 1871, the Serrano ministry was replaced by that of Práxedes Mateo Sagasta, at that time the political leader of the Progressive party. It appeared that as a result of the executions of the students<sup>20</sup> and at the insistence of the conservative elite in Cuba, Valmaseda would be dismissed in favor of José Gutiérrez de la Concha. With the support of the peninsular middle and working classes, however, Valmaseda, remained in the captaincy general until July 1872, when he abandoned Cuba as a result of not being able to suppress the insurrection in the period of time that he specified. According to Granda, Valmaseda should not have postponed operations to oversee political matters in Havana, since this suspension obstructed the Spanish war effort. Moreover, Valmaseda was a spendthrift, who increased the island’s debt with his military expenditures. Furthermore, Granda seemed to take personal offense at Valmaseda’s untimely departure when politics in Spain were becoming more liberal. Granda suggested that,

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 60.

<sup>20</sup> The Cuban population and, even, some *peninsulares* found the executions grossly unjust. The father of one of the victims was a Spanish Volunteer, who wrote a letter to the king asking that his son be acquitted for not having committed any crime. According to a *Boston Globe* report, another father of one of the victims “died from grief and the mothers of two others” went mad. Consequently, the Savoy monarchy pardoned the imprisoned students in May 1872. Valdés Domínguez, *Tragedy in Havana*, 70-75, 92-94, 186.

as a staunch conservative, Valmaseda could have halted the implementation of Madrid's reformist agenda, which was attempted in 1873 under Pieltain.<sup>21</sup>

Valmaseda's second term as captain general, which coincided with the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy, was not nearly as productive as his first one.<sup>22</sup> Although Valmaseda believed that the ministry of Antonio Cánovas del Castillo would dispatch between 15,000 and 20,000 reinforcements to Cuba, the captain general only received 653 Spanish troops in July 1875 which, by chance arrived in Cuba when they had originally been destined for Puerto Rico.<sup>23</sup> Then, Minister of Ultramar López de Ayala indicated in a telegram to Valmaseda that in September "one thousand infantrymen, one regiment of cavalry and five organized battalions" would leave for Cuba, but it appears that only the 1,000 infantry troops and the cavalry regiment arrived. As a result, Valmaseda continued to demand reinforcements without receiving any further reply from López de Ayala on the matter. For Valmaseda, not having enough troops contributed significantly to the collapse of field operations under his command.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Granda, *Reflexiones sobre la insurrección de Cuba*, 42-43; Roldán de Montaud, *La Restauración en Cuba*, 30-31; Valdés Domínguez, *Tragedy in Havana*, 160.

<sup>22</sup> In December 1874, the Bourbon monarchy was restored and, in January 1875, Alfonso XII ascended the Spanish throne.

<sup>23</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 3: 205; telegram to the Ministro de Ultramar from the Conde de Valmaseda and Carbó, dated July 6, 1875, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4935, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 247; telegram to the "Gobr. gral. de la isla de Cuba" from Ministro de Ultramar [López de] Ayala, dated July 10, 1875, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4935, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 249.

<sup>24</sup> Telegram to the "Gobr. gral. de la isla de Cuba" from Ministro de Ultramar [López de] Ayala, dated September 4, 1875, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4935, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 269; telegram to the Gobernador General de Cuba from Ministro de Ultramar [López de] Ayala, dated September 8, 187[5], in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4935, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 273; telegram to the Ministro de Ultramar from Valmaseda, dated September 18, 1875, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4935, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 279.

Valmaseda's downfall, however, resulted largely from his conflict with the royal commissioner of the Cuban Treasury over the island's financial crisis. After receiving numerous protests from the captain general, and the Spanish and Cuban press concerning the corruption within the administration of the Treasury, the metropolis designated Tomás Rodríguez Rubí, a former minister of Ultramar, as the royal commissioner of the Cuban Treasury to ameliorate the financial situation of the country.<sup>25</sup> Rodríguez Rubí's suspension of payments to civil bureaucrats, Spanish soldiers, and merchants contracted by the insular government to dress the soldiers met with Valmaseda's stern disapproval for it tarnished his reputation as captain general. López de Ayala, however, notified Valmaseda that the Jovellar ministry fully supported the commissioner's actions, since it was the Madrid government's goal to reduce administrative malfeasance in the Cuban Treasury. The Treasury only was allowed to pay for the Spanish troops' rations until it was better organized. Consequently, Valmaseda offered his resignation, which King Alfonso promptly accepted.<sup>26</sup>

Following the conclusion of Valmaseda's second term of office, his *segundo cabo*, Field Marshal Buenaventura Carbó, replaced him until General Jovellar arrived to assume the captaincy general in January 1876. Pirala characterized the period of

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<sup>25</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 3: 272-273; telegram to the "Gobr. gral. de la isla de Cuba" from Ministro de Ultramar [López de] Ayala, dated December 15, 1875, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4935, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 309.

<sup>26</sup> Telegram to the Ministro de Ultramar from Valmaseda, dated December 13, 1875, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4935, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 308; telegram to the "Gobr. gral. de la isla de Cuba" from Ministro de Ultramar [López de] Ayala, dated December 15, 1875, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4935, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 309; telegram to the Ministro de Ultramar from the Conde de Valmaseda, dated December 16, 1875, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4935, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 311; telegram to the "Gobr. Gral. de la isla de Cuba" from Ministro de Ultramar [López de] Ayala, dated December 18, 1875, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4935, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 312.



Carbó's interim rule as one of military "indolence" and "indiscipline." A lack of vigilance in Las Villas allowed rebels to operate with less difficulty and to gather supplies from country towns. Additionally, the dispersion of Spanish troops in Oriente gave Antonio Maceo's forces the upper hand in the southeastern portion of the department.<sup>27</sup> If the Cuban separatist movement had avoided divisive political and racial conflicts in 1875, it may have advanced into the Western Department during Carbó's provisional term in office.

**Francisco de Ceballos y Vargas, the Marquis of Torrelavega (July 11, 1872 - April 18, 1873)**

Born on October 9, 1814 in the province of Santander, Francisco de Ceballos y Vargas belonged to a family of Spanish nobility. Drawn to the military, Ceballos joined the Guards of the Royal Person in 1833 and later fought with distinction in the first Carlist war which, in 1836, earned him the Cross of St. Ferdinand (first class) and the rank of captain in the infantry. Following the end of the civil war, Ceballos was stationed in La Coruña working as an assistant to the captain general of Galicia until 1843, when he was transferred to Old Castile to join General Santos San Miguel. That same year, the Espartero uprising occurred and Ceballos participated in laying siege to Zaragoza, which resisted Espartero, which fell in October 1843. As a result, Ceballos was awarded another Cross of St. Ferdinand and, in 1844, became a second commandant in the infantry. In 1845, he was awarded the rank of lieutenant colonel and joined the insular army of Cuba. He served fifteen years in Cuba, where he

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<sup>27</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 3: 298-299.

gained stellar reviews from high-ranking officials on the island, including Captain Generals O' Donnell and José de la Concha, and defended Cuba against filibuster expeditions with the purpose of annexing the island to the United States. In 1852, Ceballos became the lieutenant governor of Cienfuegos and briefly of Santa Clara, in both cities launching projects of public works, such as the construction of cemeteries and hospitals. In 1854, he married the daughter of wealthy family from Cienfuegos. Ceballos returned to Spain to fight in the war against Morocco, during which he ascended to the rank of brigadier general. In 1872, he returned to Cuba to serve as the interim captain general until 1873, by which time he was awarded the rank of lieutenant general.<sup>28</sup>

In August 1872, King Amadeo was forced to accept the Radical ministry of Manuel Ruiz Zorrilla and Radical control of the Cortes upon the threat of an insurgency, which could have toppled his rule. As a result, O'Donnell's Liberal Union and Sagasta's Progressives abandoned the Savoy monarchy. By February 1873, however, matters between Amadeo and the Radical party came to a head when Ruiz Zorrilla presented the king with a military reform to sign into law, which the latter rejected. The bill sought to impose civilian control over the military and replace the artillery corps's elitist officers with non-commissioned ones or infantry

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<sup>28</sup> "El Teniente General de los Ejércitos Nacionales D. Francisco de Ceballos y Vargas, Marqués de Torrelavega, Senador del Reino y Gentil-Hombre de Cámara de S. M. con ejercicio, ex-Ministro de la Guerra, actual Director de Infantería, condecorado con las Grandes Cruces: de San Hermenegildo, Isabel la Católica, la Roja del Mérito Militar; de las Extranjeras de San Mauricio y San Lázaro de Italia, la Gran Placa de Nisham I Fijar de Túnez y la Medalla de Oro de la Gran Bretaña; comendador de la Real y Distinguida Orden de Carlos III; Caballero de San Fernando por tres de primera y una de tercera clase; honran además su pecho las Cruces del Segundo y Tercer Sitio de Bilbao y la de Benemérito de la Patria, y las Medallas de la Guerra de África, y de la Civil, de Alfonso XII, etc., etc.," 87-94, in *Reseña histórica de las altas jerarquías del ejército y de la armada*, in IHCM, Biblioteca Central Militar, Sign. 1852-B1.

officials. King Amadeo opposed dismissing the artillery officers, yet to reject this reform would have been to lose the support of the Radicals and Democrats. Thus, in February 1873, King Amadeo enacted the law and, then, relinquished the Spanish throne.<sup>29</sup>

The Spanish military situation under Ceballos improved, but not to the point where the colonial government could win the war. Although separatists briefly sacked the city of Holguín, there were no other noteworthy incidents which favored the insurgent cause in the second half of 1872 or in early 1873. During this period, rebel operations centered in Oriente and, to a lesser extent, in Camagüey and Las Villas. Ceballos was preparing to begin an army campaign in the Sierra Maestra when he was recalled to Spain in April 1873.<sup>30</sup>

Ceballos's greatest challenge as the acting captain general was handling the issue of slave emancipation, which the Radical government had proposed for Puerto Rico. Despite attempts to assuage the fears of plantation owners, Ceballos found it "impossible" to dissuade them from their belief that this reform would be disastrous to their investments if it were implemented in Cuba.<sup>31</sup> In a missive to Tomás María Mosquera, the colonial minister, Ceballos seconded the viewpoint of the plantation owners and other conservatives with economic interests on the island.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Carr, *Spain, 1808-1975*, 322-324.

<sup>30</sup> [Riquelme], *Contestación á la Memoria publicada por el Señor Marqués de la Habana sobre su último mando en Cuba*, 30-31.

<sup>31</sup> Telegram to the Ministro de Ultramar from Ceballos, dated January 8, [1873], in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4935, Caja 1, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 101.

<sup>32</sup> Letter to the Ministro de Ultramar from Francisco de Ceballos, dated January 15, 1873, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4935, Caja 1, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 108.

As a result of his temporary status, Ceballos garnered little support or enthusiasm from the island royalists or government officials in Madrid. Without any reinforcements from Spain, he could not suppress the insurrection. Moreover, the political ideology of the Spanish governments in power conflicted with Ceballos's own politics. According to Zaragoza, the Radical ministers of Ruiz Zorrilla's cabinet left Ceballos in power for an extended period, "having the undoubted confidence that, as a locum, he would not oppose presenting the disastrous projects that they would transmit to him."<sup>33</sup> They soon learned, however, that Ceballos was a conservative captain general, who allied himself with the *integristas* in order to maintain Spain's political and economic control over Cuba. Therefore, Ceballos opposed the liberal political agenda of the Radicals and the Republicans, which included the abolition of slavery, among other reforms.<sup>34</sup> After the Republicans came to power in February 1873, Ceballos was replaced by General Cándido Pieltain.<sup>35</sup>

Following the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy in 1874, Ceballos served as minister of war in the Cánovas administration from December 1875 to March 1879. His first duty as war minister was to end the second Carlist rebellion (1872-1876), which was accomplished in March 1876. For this feat, King Alfonso XII awarded Ceballos the title of marquis of Torrelavega. That same year, Ceballos sent Martínez Campos to Cuba with 20,000 reinforcements to extinguish the insurrection.

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<sup>33</sup> Zaragoza, *Las insurrecciones en Cuba*, 2: 615-617.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 2: 616-617; Roldán de Montaud, *La Restauración en Cuba*, 74.

<sup>35</sup> The Republic of Spain, which lasted nearly a year, had four ministries headed by Estanislao Figueras (February 24 – April 24, 1873), Francisco Pi y Margall (April 24 – July 18, 1873), Nicolás Salmerón y Alonso (July 18 – September 6, 1873), and Emilio Castelar (September 6, 1873 – January 3, 1874).

Thus, by 1878, Ceballos had the admirable distinction of overseeing the conclusion of two of Spain's wars.<sup>36</sup>

### **Cándido Pieltain y Jove Huergo (April 18, 1873 – October 30, 1873)**

Born in Gijón in 1822, Cándido Pieltain y Jove Huergo joined the Spanish infantry before he was a teenager. This *asturiano* had a distinguished military career, proving his skill against the Carlists and, then, in the war against Morocco. A liberal in politics, he was affiliated, first, with General O'Donnell, then, with the *Septembrista* Revolution and, finally, with the Radical party. In 1868, General Prim awarded Pieltain the rank of field marshal. Until the ministry of Estanislao Figueras selected Pieltain as the captain general of Cuba in 1873, he served in the same capacity in the provinces of Aragon, Galicia, and Valencia, attaining the rank of lieutenant general in 1871.<sup>37</sup>

It is a wonder that the Figueras ministry chose Pieltain as the governor of Cuba, considering that Pieltain had no prior service on the island, particularly when such experience was crucial. It appears, however, that Pieltain was the Republicans' first choice because Radicals worked within the Republican ministries of 1873, whereas other generals under consideration, such as José Gutiérrez de la Concha, were conservatives who rejected the liberal rule of the Radicals and Republicans.

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<sup>36</sup> "El Teniente General de los Ejércitos Nacionales D. Francisco de Ceballos y Vargas," 94-96, 98, in *Reseña histórica de las altas jerarquías del ejército y de la armada*, in IHCM, Biblioteca Central Militar, Sign. 1852-B1.

<sup>37</sup> Pieltain, *La isla de Cuba*, 16; Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba* (Madrid: Felipe González Rojas, 1896), 2: 559-560.

Strangely enough, Pieltain was sent to Havana without obtaining any orders until he arrived in the Cuban capital. These orders, sent by Minister of Ultramar José Cristóbal Sorní, were paradoxical. On the one hand, the Figueras ministry insisted that Pieltain abolish slavery in Cuba as it had been abrogated in Puerto Rico previously, recommended that all colonists be granted freedom of the press (as long as anti-peninsular diatribes were not printed), encouraged the captain general to dispense administrative positions to both Cubans and Spaniards with the aim of creating greater equality between the two groups and, therefore, of reducing the animosity between them, endorsed the idea of simplifying the tax code in Cuba, and pressed Pieltain to maintain amicable relations with the United States in order to avoid any conflicts with this nation. On the other hand, the Republicans urged caution in implementing these reforms in order to preserve the interests of the island elite, whose financial support was tantamount to Spain retaining Cuba. As expected, Spanish bureaucrats rejected any political reform which introduced competition from Creoles for administrative positions and any financial proposal to lower government tax revenues. Meanwhile, peninsular merchants deemed any plan to reduce import and export duties as detrimental to the conservation of their fortunes gained in the Caribbean. As a result of their opposition to the Republic of Spain, conservatives gave Pieltain a chilly reception when he arrived in Havana.<sup>38</sup>

While most of the aforementioned plans failed to take root as a result of conservative intransigence, the Republican government remained determined to

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<sup>38</sup> Pieltain, *La isla de Cuba*, 17-22; Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 2: 558, 561.

abolish slavery in Cuba.<sup>39</sup> Pieltain favored slave emancipation as well, considering slavery's continued existence "an ignominy." On the other hand, the captain general also stated: "[I] have the duty of telling the Government the imperious necessity of presenting, at the same time as liberty [is granted], a law which determines the manner in which the slaves can be replaced, since on the other hand, sugar and tobacco, which constitute the immense wealth of this country, would be finished quickly." At the behest of the *hacendados*, Pieltain proposed a period of "dependency on a free, salaried labor regulation," which he later defined as "obligatory contract work," in order to avoid the economic collapse that the Creole and peninsular elite feared would occur with abolition. Although Pieltain felt in May 1873 that "[t]he question of the slaves is, in my judgment, the first one which should be resolved," after assessing the disastrous financial situation of the country, in a telegram sent in June to the minister of Ultramar, he revised his view to state "that the social and political reforms that are accorded for the Island shall be implemented after the war ends."<sup>40</sup> While Pieltain was progressive in terms of allowing more liberal and republican newspapers to be printed in Cuba, he also endeavored to postpone the

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<sup>39</sup> Telegram to the Gobernador Superior Civil de Cuba from Ministro de Ultramar [Eduardo] Palanca, dated August 10, 1873, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4935, Caja 2, Exp. 3, Doc. no. 44.

<sup>40</sup> Pieltain, *La isla de Cuba*, 225-228, 236, 240; telegram to the Ministro de Ultramar from Pieltain, dated June 20, 1873, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4935, Caja 2, Exp. 3, Doc. no. 28. With respect to Cuba's financial crisis, in April 1869, the Cuban debt reached eight million pesos yet, by December 1873, it had grown to sixty million. To pay for the costs of the war, the Spanish government authorized the Banco Español to produce millions of peso bills. Since the Treasury lacked the gold to back up the bills in circulation, the peso depreciated by forty-one percent between December 10, 1873 and April 7, 1874. On this matter, see [José Gutiérrez de la Concha], Marqués de la Habana, *Memoria sobre la guerra de la isla de Cuba y sobre su estado político y económico desde Abril de 1874 hasta Marzo de 1875* (Madrid: Establecimiento Tipográfico de R. Labajos, 1875), 115-117.

enactment of most social and political reforms until the war concluded, which was a similar tactic employed by the *integristas*.<sup>41</sup>

In terms of military performance, conservatives widely condemned the field operations instigated under General Pieltain. Commandant Barrios y Carrión referred to Pieltain's tenure as island governor as a period of "decadence in the methods and procedures of war," based on the defensive position that Spanish troops took against the Liberation Army, which he deduced was the reason why numerous towns came under insurgent fire, why various Spanish officers were killed during the summer campaign, and why the colonial army experienced considerable losses in the battle of La Sacra on November 9, 1873.<sup>42</sup> General Concha elaborated even further, enumerating every military defeat under Pieltain's watch:

On the other hand we had to deplore the sacking and burning of the settlement of Auras on April 10; the battle given by Lieutenant Colonel Abril at Cocal del Olimpo on May 7; that of Zarzal on June 4; that of Yucatán on the 11<sup>th</sup> of the same month; . . . an ambush against the regiment of Talavera on August 12; the attack and sacking of Nuevitas and Santa Cruz the same month; the defeat of Lieutenant Colonel Dieguez's column, of 400 men, on September 26; the attack against Zanja on October 14, and that against Manzanillo on November 1. Our losses at such events were considerable, and the enemies made themselves lords of a great number of Remington rifles and a great quantity of munitions.<sup>43</sup>

In his memoir, Pieltain endeavored to vindicate himself of his opponents' charges. First, he cited the lack of troops as one reason why it was difficult to defeat

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<sup>41</sup> Pieltain, *La isla de Cuba*, 113-114. For an example of the conservatives' insistence to delay the implementation of reforms in Cuba until the war was over, see Vicente Vázquez Queipo, *Breves observaciones sobre las principales cuestiones que hoy se agitan respecto de las provincias ultramarinas* (Madrid: Imprenta de J. Noguera a cargo de M. Martínez, 1873), 4. At one time, Vázquez Queipo had been a *fiscal* of the Treasury in Cuba.

<sup>42</sup> Barrios y Carrión, *Sobre la historia de la guerra de Cuba*, 1: 71-73.

<sup>43</sup> [Gutiérrez de la Concha], *Memoria sobre la guerra de la isla de Cuba*, 21.



the insurgents. Although there were 54,000 troops on paper, fewer than two-thirds of them were active, largely as the result of the proliferation of tropical diseases among non-acclimated Spanish troops. Three divisions were placed in Oriente, and one each in the Central Department and Las Villas. Meanwhile, the Western Department only held a small number of reserves. Moreover, Pieltain found the Spanish forces in Las Villas and in the western provinces considerably disorganized. Consequently, Pieltain was forced to employ irregular forces on campaign, although they were not nearly as well trained as the regulars. The captain general even resorted to sending convicts into battle because there were so few troops available. At the same time, the Spanish Army confronted another challenge, which Pieltain specified as an array of shortages ranging from clothing, to arms and munitions, to food. The captain general attributed these dilemmas to the Spanish companies which transported and sold food and military supplies to the insular government at inflated prices. Nonetheless, Pieltain increased the number of daily rations which, while necessary, also raised Cuba's debt.<sup>44</sup>

Pieltain also provided his critics with ample explanations of his military operations and even submitted a list of what he considered to be his victories. To begin with, the captain general reasoned that he could not instigate a vigorous campaign between April and October 1873 since this period fell during the rainy season in Cuba. Torrential downpours during these months rendered roads impassible and caused the proliferation of diseases. Consequently, the Spanish Army normally

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<sup>44</sup> Pieltain, *La isla de Cuba*, 24-25, 35-36, 44, 46-52, 54-55.

did not launch an offensive until the dry season, the months between November and April. Pieltain endeavored to terminate the war through field operations, which the Republican government expected of him, but considering the weather conditions during his tenure of authority, little could be accomplished militarily. On the other hand, acclimated revolutionaries exploited the Spaniards' vulnerability during the summer months by initiating their own campaign against the colonial government. Pieltain, however, found solace in the fact that, even though the separatists attacked numerous towns and defeated Spanish troops in several battles, ultimately the insurgents were driven out of these towns, rebels were hounded, and several of their camps were devastated.<sup>45</sup>

Due to the aforementioned military defeats explained by Pieltain's detractors and the Republican government's inability to dispatch troops to Cuba with Carlist and cantonalist rebellions occurring in the Peninsula, Pieltain asked for his dismissal in September 1873, which the ministry of Emilio Castelar conceded.<sup>46</sup> Once Pieltain left Cuba on October 30, General Cayetano Figueroa y Garaondo served as interim captain general until November 4, 1873, when General Jovellar took charge of the insular government.

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 69-71, 97-99.

<sup>46</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 2: 619, 626.

**Joaquín Jovellar y Soler (November 4, 1873 – April 6, 1874; January 18, 1876 – June 18, 1878)**

Born on December 28, 1819 in Palma de Mallorca, Joaquín Jovellar y Soler came from a modest and ill-reputed family. His father was a military official who supported the liberal military coup of 1820, which restored the Constitution of 1812. With the return of absolutism in 1824, he found himself out of favor with the royal government until an amnesty was decreed in 1832. Jovellar was to become a lawyer, but he preferred a career in the military and joined the army as a sub-lieutenant in 1836. From 1842 to 1848, Jovellar was stationed as a captain in an infantry regiment in Cuba, serving in various cities, including Havana, Sancti Spíritus, Santa Clara, Trinidad, Baracoa, and Santiago de Cuba. It was in this latter city that he married the daughter of a prosperous family. From 1854 to 1859, Jovellar served in the ministry of war, specifically working to reform the military organization of Cuba, raise salaries for troops and officers, and limit the amount of trips that officers took back to Spain. It was also during this time that Concha's plans to form the Militias of Color and the Corps of Volunteers were enacted on the island. Jovellar left the war ministry with a promotion to the rank of lieutenant colonel. In 1863, he was awarded the rank of brigadier general and, by 1871, he became a lieutenant general. In terms of politics, Jovellar was a conservative and a supporter of Alfonso XII.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> "El Excelentísimo Señor Don Joaquín Jovellar y Soler, Capitán General de Ejército y Senador del Reino, Presidente, que ha sido, del Consejo de Ministros de la Junta Superior Consultiva de Guerra; condecorado con la Gran Cruz de quinta clase laureada de San Fernando Pensionada, Grandes Cruces de San Hermenegildo, Isabel la Católica, de San Benito de Avis, Comendador de Número de Carlos III é Isabel la Católica, Caballero, Cruz y Placa de San Hermenegildo, de la de San Fernando dos veces de primera clase y Oficial de la Orden de la Legión de Honor de Francia, honran además su pecho: las Cruces de la Batalla de Chiva, y la de Benemérito de la Patria, y las Medallas de la Guerra de África, la

On the evening of October 31, 1873, the *Virginus*, while carrying the U.S. flag, was taken by the Spanish warship *Tornado* and brought to the harbor of Santiago de Cuba.<sup>48</sup> According to U.S. Consul at Santiago de Cuba A. N. Young, the Spanish Navy captured all 155 members of the *Virginus* crew. Although most of the insurgents on the *Virginus* were Cubans, there were also North Americans, Latin Americans, Europeans, and natives of Africa, Barbados, Nassau, and Jamaica arrested on board the vessel. Most of these men were single and under the age of forty years, although the four youngest prisoners were only thirteen years of age.<sup>49</sup> The prisoners were tried by a naval court-martial and condemned as “pirate prisoners.”<sup>50</sup> On November 4, the *comandante general* of Santiago de Cuba, General Juan N. Burriel,<sup>51</sup> ordered the execution of the four insurgent generals captured on board the *Virginus* – Pedro de Céspedes (the ex-president’s brother), W. A. C. Ryan, Jesús del Sol, and Bernabé Varona. Three days later, thirty-seven more members of the crew, including the U.S.-born captain of the ship, Joseph Fry, were shot.<sup>52</sup> The final executions

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de Cuba y la de Alfonso XII, etc., etc., etc.,” 219-221, 223-225, 228-229, in *Reseña histórica de las altas jerarquías del ejército y de la armada*, in IHCM, Biblioteca Central Militar, Sign. 1852-B1.

<sup>48</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 2: 678-679.

<sup>49</sup> “List of 155 people captured on board the American Steamer ‘Virginus’ by the Spanish Steamer ‘Tornado’ brought to the port of Santiago de Cuba, and turned over to the Authorities,” signed by A. N. Young, dated December 18, 1873. This list is attached to a letter to Hamilton Fish from A. N. Young, dated December 18, 1873, in USNA, “Despatches from United States Consuls in Santiago de Cuba, 1799-1906,” Microcopy no. T-55, Roll 7, Vol. 7.

<sup>50</sup> Newspaper clippings from *El Gorro Frigio* and *La Legalidad*, both dated November 6, 1873, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4937, Caja 1, Exp. 1, Doc. no. 70.

<sup>51</sup> Before becoming the *comandante general* of the district of Santiago de Cuba, Brigadier General Juan N. Burriel had been the *comandante general* of the district of Matanzas since 1869, where he was occupied with the persecution of insurgents in the jurisdiction of Colón. See IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5723, Carpeta 9.

<sup>52</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 2: 684; “List of crew captured in the *Virginus* and who never came to the jail, except for a few hours before their executions.” This list was sent to Hamilton Fish from E. G. Schmitt, dated December 4, 1873, in USNA, “Despatches [sic] from United States Consuls in Santiago de Cuba, 1799-1906,” Microcopy no. T-55, Roll 7, Vol. 7.

occurred on November 8, when twelve more prisoners were killed. According to Bradford, General Burriel stopped the shootings only because the H. M. S. *Niobe* arrived at the port of Santiago de Cuba to ensure that no further British subjects were executed.<sup>53</sup>

The Emilio Castelar ministry in Madrid wished to maintain the peace and resolve the issue of the *Virginius* diplomatically. At that time, the Spanish Republican government confronted a Carlist uprising in northern Spain and cantonal rebellions in Alcoy, Andalusia, and Cartagena, all of which convinced Castelar to negotiate with the Grant administration. He believed that Spain would lose Cuba if it went to war against the United States since the Spanish Navy was occupied with the rebellions in the Peninsula and, consequently, the government could not afford to send any more troops to Cuba until the political situation in Spain improved.<sup>54</sup>

On the other side of the Atlantic, Captain General Jovellar faced his own political crisis. He had assumed command of Cuba on November 4, 1873, the same day that the four insurgent generals were shot in Santiago. Due to a rupture in telegraphic communication apparently caused by the Cuban rebels, Jovellar was not informed that the *Virginius* had been captured until November 5. As a result of a continuing breakdown in telegraphic communication, he did not learn of the executions which took place on November 7 and 8 until November 11. While the Castelar ministry urged Jovellar to stop the executions and to abide by the decisions resulting from the diplomatic talks between Spain and the United States, the Spanish

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<sup>53</sup> Bradford, *The Virginius Affair*, 54.

<sup>54</sup> Carr, *Spain, 1808-1975*, xxiii; Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 2: 696, 699-700.

party in Cuba felt that Spain was fully justified in condemning the insurgents to death. For conservatives, to return “the pirate ship” to the United States and to salute the U.S. flag were deemed both shameful and demoralizing to the Spanish cause. A failure to fulfill the demands of the Spanish party implied that the *peninsulares* could revolt against the captain general as they had done in 1869 against Dulce. On November 28, when Castelar informed Jovellar that Spain had to place the *Virginus* and the prisoners of the filibuster expedition in U.S. custody, Jovellar convened meetings with his military staff and members of the conservative elite to discuss the matter, after which Jovellar replied to Castelar:<sup>55</sup>

*‘Public opinion can not be prepared instantaneously for such a serious matter. I also have had a meeting with more than fifteen influential people. According to them they will be on the side of the [Spanish] authority and they will work in this sense in subordinate circles. It seems to me that the superior classes will share that manner of feeling but I do not have the same confidence with respect to the inferior classes because their patriotism lends itself more to the nobility of sentiments than to reflection. In any case the power of Spain will be left very weakened in Cuba.’<sup>56</sup>*

Given the grim condition of Cuban politics, Jovellar resolved to delay the return of the *Virginus* and its passengers to U.S. naval authorities until the public outrage subsided. Although the Spanish party was offended by the results of the diplomatic negotiations, on December 16, the conservatives largely remained peaceful while the Spanish Navy transferred the *Virginus* to U.S. naval authorities at Bahía Honda. On December 18, the passengers of the filibuster were transported to the U.S. *Juniata* in Santiago de Cuba. Jovellar had made it clear to the island

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<sup>55</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 2: 682, 690, 693, 696, 701-703, 705.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 2: 701. The italics are those of Pirala.

residents that if war occurred between Spain and the United States, Spain would be unable to support Cuba due to the ongoing insurrections in the Peninsula, a warning which sobered Spanish loyalists. The selection of Bahía Honda, a minor port in Pinar del Río, as opposed to that of Havana, also aided in preventing an eruption of Spanish violence.<sup>57</sup>

The resolution of the *Virginus* crisis enabled Jovellar to focus his attention on the Cuban insurgency. On January 26, 1874, Jovellar sent a circular to the *comandantes generales* of the island, which focused on the building and security of towns. Since the early years of the war, the Spanish need for food and hospitals, and the surrender or capture of rural inhabitants fostered the establishment of new towns in the countryside. Jovellar condemned the foundation of some of these rural settlements for not being of any “political or military convenience,” additionally asserting that many of them served as “centers of espionage and supply for insurgent bands.” Brigadier General Francisco de Acosta y Albear explained that the reason why rural inhabitants became rebellious was because the Spanish food supply was stretched so thin that the government could not provide adequately for cities and small towns alike. Consequently, the peasantry joined the insurrection in the hope of gaining some sustenance from the rebels. Thus, with the aim of reducing the size of the insurgency, Jovellar ordered the *comandantes generales* to notify him whether

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 2: 702, 704, 719-724.

these rural settlements should be retained or abandoned. To make this determination, they were to observe certain regulations:<sup>58</sup>

First: Of the towns newly created, only those that fulfill a concrete political or military objective, and whose disappearance will not occasion a grave disturbance or desertions that consequently cause a rise of some importance of enemy bands should be conserved[.] – Second: The inhabitants of the towns that should disappear shall be added to those closest [towns] which are conserved, the authorities shall provide them with working lands in the vicinity, if it is possible, equivalent to those that they lost, transporting at the expense of the State from one point to another farming implements, furniture and [other] possessions. – Third: Until the lands that newly are to be possessed begin to produce, able-bodied males who are capable of bearing arms, shall enlist in the *guerrillas locales* and their families shall be paid one ration each for two persons by age bracket. . . . – Fourth: In the new constructions, the towns and their fortifications shall endeavor to follow the attached plan or model as much as possible. – Fifth: If it is believed preferable to the incorporation the transfer of towns from one point to another, it may be done in the manner deemed most convenient.<sup>59</sup>

In early 1874, the Spanish Army was in a state of demoralization due to its military defeats at Palo Seco and Naranjo during the winter campaign in Camagüey. Moreover, the Spanish Army suffered from a lack of troops, rations, and payment for their services. As a result, Jovellar requested that the Cánovas ministry dispatch 14,000 replacements to Cuba. Additionally, on February 7, the captain general issued a series of decrees with the aim of mobilizing 16,000 soldiers, who resided on the island, for military operations. One important order was the call for a mobilization of

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<sup>58</sup> Francisco de Acosta y Albear, *Compendio histórico del pasado y presente de Cuba y de su guerra insurreccional hasta el 11 de Marzo de 1875, con algunas apreciaciones relativas a su porvenir*, 2d. ed. (Madrid: Imprenta a cargo de Juan José de las Heras, 1875), 13; Joaquín Jovellar, “Circular sobre la construcción, conservación y defensa de los poblados,” dated January 26, 1874, in *Disposiciones dictadas por el Excmo. Señor Capitán General en 7 de Febrero de 1874, publicadas en la Gaceta Oficial* (Havana: Imprenta del Gobierno y Capitanía General, 1874), 31.

<sup>59</sup> Jovellar, “Circular sobre la construcción, conservación y defensa de los poblados,” dated January 26, 1874, in *Disposiciones dictadas por el Excmo. Señor Capitán General en 7 de Febrero de 1874, publicadas en la Gaceta Oficial*, 31-32.



ten percent of the Volunteers throughout the island. Jovellar criticized the use of regular troops to defend *ingenios* and towns as a waste of manpower that, instead, could be used on campaign. Thus, the captain general proposed that the Volunteers replace the regulars at these posts. Under this new decree, ten percent of the Volunteers were to serve for a period of six months, yet were guaranteed payment of 100 pesos if they promised to serve for one year. Those who were not Volunteers at the time of the draft and who were between the ages of twenty and forty-five years would be incorporated into the militias.<sup>60</sup> Another order announced a general recruitment in both the white and Afro-Cuban militias. The goal for each regiment of white militia was to attain the numerical size of 500 men. To serve in the militias of color, an Afro-Cuban man had to be free and between the ages of twenty and forty-five years. Militiamen of color were promised to earn “the same salaries . . . as the Army, and a bonus for enlistment of one hundred pesos for every six months that their service last[ed].” In these decrees regarding military recruitment, draftees were forbidden to exempt themselves from service through payment; exemption only could be authorized if the draftee offered a replacement to the government.<sup>61</sup>

In another decree not related to military recruitment, Jovellar expounded that slave owners were “obligated to lend the Government, until the conclusion of the war, one percent of their slaves” to perform such labors as tending to the supply stores,

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<sup>60</sup> This regulation appears to have conflicted with the aforementioned January 26<sup>th</sup> draft of rural inhabitants into the *guerrillas locales*.

<sup>61</sup> Jovellar, “Sobre la movilización de Voluntarios,” “Sobre la movilización de Milicias,” and “Sobre la movilización de las clases de color libres,” all of which are dated February 7, 1874, in *Disposiciones dictadas por el Excmo. Señor Capitán General en 7 de Febrero de 1874, publicadas en la Gaceta Oficial*, 7-17; [Riquelme], *Contestación á la Memoria publicada por el Señor Marqués de la Habana sobre su último mando en Cuba*, 38, 61.

transporting the sick and wounded soldiers to hospitals and caring for them there, and establishing camps for the troops “whatever their genders and ages” were. Thirty slaves from each farm would constitute a section headed by a foreman, while four sections would be supervised by a warrant officer. While the decree stipulated that the foreman should be a slave, the race and status of the warrant officer is not clarified. The foreman, however, was to be paid sixty pesos each month for providing for the welfare of the section slaves, but how well or poorly the slave laborers were treated remains unclear. Following the organization of the sections, they were incorporated into the army divisions. Jovellar pledged to emancipate those slaves who contributed to the Spanish cause upon the end of their service “whenever they had followed an exemplary conduct” and if the state could indemnify the owners.<sup>62</sup> It should be noted, however, that “[t]he slave owners who had fought against Spain remained in the disposition of reclaiming their confiscated slaves.”<sup>63</sup>

The promulgation of Jovellar’s decrees of February 7 received some criticism, particularly the drafts of the Volunteers and the militias. The Volunteer draft called for the enlistment of two companies in each department totaling 600 men. In Brigadier Acosta’s view, drafting the island’s peaceful inhabitants into the Volunteers and militias would do more to drive them away from the insular government than to maintain their allegiance. Jovellar did not realize that this recruitment would interfere significantly with the operation of businesses throughout the colony and reduce the state’s collection of revenue. Moreover, the government would bear the terrible

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<sup>62</sup> Jovellar, “Sobre la prestación de esclavos,” dated February 7, 1874, in *ibid.*, 17-20.

<sup>63</sup> Cepero Bonilla, “Azúcar y abolición,” in *Escritos históricos*, 160.

financial burden of paying for the transportation of irregular forces to and from the field of battle, thereby increasing Cuba's debt. Instead, Acosta suggested that the captain general call up the Spanish Volunteers who had served previously in the army, since they were professional soldiers. This way, there would be a greater chance of the Spanish military remaining disciplined and the Cuban economy would experience less disruption.<sup>64</sup>

On March 11, 1874, the Serrano ministry informed Jovellar that Concha would replace him as captain general. The Madrid government was unable to provide Jovellar with the replacements that he requested because Spanish forces were needed to defeat the ongoing Carlist uprising. Moreover, cabinet ministers were pleased with an alternative presented by Concha. As a result, Jovellar was discharged as the island governor upon the arrival of Concha on April 6, 1874.<sup>65</sup>

Jovellar became the captain general of Cuba for the second time in 1876.<sup>66</sup> The Cubans' brief seizure of Tunas on September 23, 1876 was instrumental in Madrid's decision to make Martínez Campos the commanding general of the Spanish Army in Cuba, thereby relieving Jovellar of this military duty so that he could devote himself exclusively to socioeconomic and political matters in the island capital.<sup>67</sup> This decision implied that there were now two governors of Cuba, one civil and the

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<sup>64</sup> Acosta y Albear, *Compendio histórico*, 24-26.

<sup>65</sup> "El Excelentísimo Señor Don Joaquín Jovellar y Soler," 242-243, in *Reseña histórica de las altas jerarquías del ejército y de la armada*, in IHCM, Biblioteca Central Militar, Sign. 1852-B1.

<sup>66</sup> Between his governorships in Cuba, Jovellar served four times as the minister of war and once as the president of the council of ministers in Spain. Ibid., 243, 252, 265-266.

<sup>67</sup> Emilio A. Soulère, *Historia de la insurrección de Cuba (1869-1879)*, vol. 2 (Barcelona: Establecimiento Tipográfico-Editorial de Juan Pons, 1880), 234, 236-237.

other military. The subject of how the Ten Years' War came to an end under these two generals, Jovellar and Martínez Campos, is examined in Chapter 6.

**José Gutiérrez de la Concha e Irigoyen Mazón y Quintana, the Marquis of Havana (April 6, 1874 – March 2, 1875)**

Born in 1809 in Córdoba de Tucumán, located in the Spanish viceroyalty of La Plata, José Gutiérrez de la Concha came from a respected aristocratic family. His father, Juan Gutiérrez de la Concha, was a naval brigadier and had served as the governor of Córdoba province prior to the uprising of Buenos Aires in 1810. Insurgent forces, however, captured and killed him as he endeavored to flee with Viceroy Santiago Liniers to Peru. Thereafter, the Concha family moved to Cuba. Concha's older brother, Manuel (b. 1808), became the marquis of El Duero and had the military distinction of defeating the Carlist rebels in the 1830s, although he died fighting them again in the 1870s. As for the younger Concha, he joined the Spanish artillery as a sub-official in the Fifth Regiment of the Corps as a young teenager. Then, he was transferred to serve in the Corps of the Royal Guard. Like many soldiers of his generation, he battled the Carlists in the 1830s. Concha ascended quickly through the military ranks, becoming a field marshal in 1844, the captain general of the Basque Provinces in 1845, and a lieutenant general in 1846. The following year, he served as the vice-president of the Spanish Congress.<sup>68</sup>

Minister of Ultramar Víctor Balaguer nominated Concha as captain general in early March 1874 after Jovellar requested from Spain reinforcements of 14,000

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<sup>68</sup> González Barrios, *Los capitanes generales en Cuba (1868-1878)*, 155-156.

regulars and published the decrees of February 7, both of which the Serrano ministry found distressing. The insurgent victories of Naranjo and Las Guásimas in the early months of 1874 also contributed to Madrid's decision to dismiss Jovellar. Moreover, Concha's intimation that he would not need reinforcements from Spain was important in the Madrid government's selection of the marquis of Havana. Finally, the cabinet ministers were comforted by the fact that Concha had twice been captain general of Cuba, first from 1850 to 1852 and second from 1854 to 1859. On the first occasion, Concha captured the second filibuster expedition of Narciso López and, during his second term, he suppressed Ramón Pintó's annexationist conspiracy. For these reasons, Concha was named captain general of Cuba for his third and final term.<sup>69</sup>

Shortly after his arrival in Cuba in early April 1874, Concha came into conflict with Field Marshal Manuel Portillo y Portillo, the *comandante general* of the second and third divisions, stationed in the Central Department and Las Villas, respectively. Portillo had been criticized in the Havana newspapers and by fellow soldiers for the Spanish loss at Las Guásimas, which was the name of a farm located in southern Camagüey. Portillo sent Brigadier Generals Armiñan and Báscones as his field commanders with eight battalions of infantry, 800 horses, and heavy artillery in an attempt to defeat Gómez's forces at the aforementioned farm. Instead, Spanish forces suffered 1,000 casualties and 400 wounded. Consequently, the Spanish military situation worsened in the Central Department and, according to peninsular soldier Juan V. Escalera, "those who prior had presented themselves to lend

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<sup>69</sup> [Gutiérrez de la Concha], *Memoria sobre la guerra de la isla de Cuba*, 25, 27-32.

obedience and submission to the Spanish government, marched anew into the insurrectionist ranks, taking [with them] more hope than ever of the triumph of the rebellion.” Moreover, Escalera condemned Portillo who “upon being named . . . comandante general of the Central [D]epartment, . . . took with him to Puerto Príncipe” from Las Villas “two strong battalions of cazadores, two companies of guerrillas and one regiment of cavalry.” As a result, Las Villas was left vulnerable to an insurgent invasion.<sup>70</sup>

Portillo had been a favorite of the Volunteers, and of the members of the Spanish Casinos in Cuba and the Centros Hispano-Ultramarinos in Spain because he had restricted insurgent activity in the sugar-rich province of Las Villas. Portillo sent a telegram to Concha on April 17, 1874 revealing to him the news that the president of the Centro Hispano-Ultramarino in Madrid had asked Concha to keep Portillo at his post even though Concha was disgruntled with his performance in Cuba. Certain that he could not satisfy Concha, particularly with his increasingly poor health, Portillo offered his resignation to the captain general.<sup>71</sup> In a quick response to Portillo, Concha argued that

[t]he importance of the military command that Your Excellency has continued holding since my arrival, the gravity of the state of the war, as it is deduced from the reports that you have sent to me, should obligate Your Excellency to continue at your post, not appreciating any other pieces of information than the official ones to evaluate if you can continue exercising your command well in the service of the State and of your own reputation. With this idea in mind, I cannot accept the resignation that Your Excellency makes of the

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 36; Juan V. Escalera, *Campaña de Cuba (1869 á 1875). Recuerdos de un soldado* (Madrid: Imprenta de los Señores Rojas, 1876), 138-140, 165.

<sup>71</sup> Telegram to [Concha] from Manuel Portillo, dated April 17, 1874. Reproduced as “Apéndice núm. 1” in [Gutiérrez de la Concha,] *Memoria sobre la guerra de la isla de Cuba*, 169. Portillo’s health was indeed deteriorating. He died on June 20, 1874 in Madrid. On Portillo’s death, see BNM, Ms. 20123.

charge of *comandante general* and commander of the second and third divisions of this army, hoping that you will battle the rebel force concentrated in that department, and impede its plan to pass the *trocha* of Júcaro, taking the war to Cinco Villas, for which Your Excellency can count on all my support as captain general and commander-in-chief of this army.<sup>72</sup>

Unsurprisingly, Portillo did not find Concha's stern words reassuring. Moreover, Portillo opposed Concha's decree of April 21, 1874, which circumscribed "the faculties of the *comandante general* of the third division," meaning Portillo's political power in Las Villas. As a result, Portillo declared that if he could not employ "preventive measures believed to be convenient against the persons that could compromise the law," then the insurrection would gain potency in the region. Furthermore, Portillo evaluated Concha's decision to incorporate Las Villas into the more tranquil Western Department as "harm[ful] to the Spanish cause." Without having both political and military authority in Las Villas, he believed the province would be subjected to serious rebel assaults. Portillo concluded his correspondence by, once again, resolving to leave his command, but this time due to his rejection of Concha's administrative project.<sup>73</sup>

Additionally, Portillo opposed Concha's military plans to instigate "a vigorous campaign" in the Central Department to thwart rebel columns from attacking Las Villas, perhaps due to an insufficient number of troops available to carry out such an undertaking.<sup>74</sup> Also, Portillo may have been critical of Concha due to his frail health;

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<sup>72</sup> Telegram to the "comandante general del Centro, jefe de la segunda y tercera división" from Concha, dated April 18, 1874. Reproduced as "Apéndice núm. 2" in [Gutiérrez de la Concha], *Memoria sobre la guerra de la isla de Cuba*, 169-170.

<sup>73</sup> Telegram to [Concha] from Manuel Portillo, dated April 30, 1874. Reproduced as "Apéndice núm. 3" in *ibid.*, 170-172.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

it appeared that he could not match Concha's energy to launch new assaults on Gómez's army.<sup>75</sup>

In his *Memoria*, Concha could not contain his frustration with Portillo. The marquis of Havana declared that "[i]t was time to take a firm hand with a general who had lacked respect for the captain general of the island and who wished to take part in the questions of government which did not pertain to him, since only the superior authority of the island and the supreme Government of the nation was charged to resolve them." Concha argued that ever since Portillo had reduced the insurrection in Las Villas to the point that it was deemed "pacified," he "began presenting himself face to face with the captain generals" and "officially arrived to ask the superior civil governor not to enact any order that would affect the territory of [L]as Villas without first sending it to him for consultation."<sup>76</sup> In fact, Concha held Portillo's combat strategies in poor esteem. In an article written by an official of Concha's army staff and published in the *Diario de la Marina*, Portillo's military failures were enumerated with gusto. The anonymous author criticized Portillo for concentrating forces in small *villareño* outposts, claiming that this service demoralized troops and wasted precious manpower which could have been used in reconstruction efforts. Moreover, according to the author, by congregating the majority of troops in Las Villas and Camagüey during the initial years of the war, the insurrection grew in Oriente and again returned

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<sup>75</sup> Telegram to [Concha] from Manuel Portillo, dated April 17, 1874. Reproduced as "Apéndice núm. 1," in *ibid.*, 169.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 39-40.



to Camagüey in 1873. As a result, bands of rebels were able to cross over into Las Villas through weak points in the *trocha*.<sup>77</sup>

What may have offended Concha even more than Portillo's military strategies or blunt criticism was his steadfast support among the Spanish Casinos and Corps of Volunteers, since such encouragement threatened the captain general's authority. The president of the Spanish Casino of Puerto Príncipe, Fernando Bueno, sent a telegram to the Havana society *Integridad Nacional* expressing his displeasure with Portillo's resignation, intimating that he hoped the captain general would not accept it. This telegram was then remitted to other Casinos throughout the island. Concha, however, resolved to dismiss Portillo and asserted his political pre-eminence by refusing to receive any advice from Casino leaders.<sup>78</sup>

On the surface, this incident appeared to have been a conflict of egos. Both men had built up illustrious military careers in Cuba and each had their own cohorts inside and outside of the island. Since the 1869 expulsion of Domingo Dulce, however, the authority of captain generals in Cuba had been threatened by the Spanish party. The executions of the medical students in Havana in 1871 and the crew members of the *Virginus* in 1873 attest to the decline of the captain general's authority as the influence of the *integristas* rose to new heights. By accepting the resignation of Portillo, an ally of Spanish and Cuban conservatives, and rejecting the counsel of the Spanish Casinos, Concha avowed that, as the principal representative

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<sup>77</sup> "Artículo publicado en el "Diario de la Marina" de un Oficial de Estado Mayor, y dirigido a oscurecer el mérito de los planes militares del General D. Manuel Portillo en las Cinco Villas," in BNM, Ms. 20285/1 (2).

<sup>78</sup> [Gutiérrez de la Concha], *Memoria sobre la guerra de la isla de Cuba*, 39-40, 173.

of the Spanish monarch in Cuba, his authority would not be compromised. To the *comandantes militares* of Las Villas, Concha explained in the following telegram:

The Spanish casino of Puerto Príncipe has directed the casinos of Cinco Villas, so that they all will present themselves before my authority, with the goal of suspending the removal of the general Portillo. – Let the Spanish casino of that city know that, if they [*sic*] try to send a commission with this objective, that finalized the removal of the general Portillo, after [offering] his third resignation, any step that tends to damage my authority as commanding general, decided as I am to maintain the proper subordination of all classes of this army, which is the best guarantee of the national integrity, whose first defender is the captain general of the island.<sup>79</sup>

Following the dismissal of Portillo, Concha increasingly faced criticism from the Spanish party. His downfall in Cuba is attributed to two principal incidents. First, Concha was blamed for insurgent General Gómez's invasion of Las Villas in January 1875. General Riquelme, who had been the army chief-of-staff under Jovellar from 1873 to 1874, criticized Concha's immediate repeal of Jovellar's decrees of February 7, 1874. As a result of this revocation, there was an insufficient amount of troops available for operations. Concha soon realized his mistake and announced a draft of twenty percent of the Volunteers, but popular dissent against this measure led him to drop the draft percentage to five. Then, he called for a draft of 1,000 white militiamen, "who would serve for six years," an order which, according to Riquelme, contributed to an increasing number of desertions to the ranks of the Liberation Army.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Telegram to the *comandantes militares* of Cienfuegos, Trinidad, Villaclara, Sagua, Remedios and Sancti Spiritus from Concha, dated May 5, 1874. Reproduced as "Apéndice núm. 5" in *ibid.*, 173.

<sup>80</sup> [Riquelme], *Contestación á la Memoria publicada por el Señor Marqués de la Habana sobre su último mando en Cuba*, 34, 61-62, 64, 67.

With few troops at his disposal, Concha was forced to withdraw many soldiers from Las Villas. Bonifacio Álvarez Mijares, a Volunteer officer and the president of the Spanish Casino of Santa Clara, argued that the captain general's action left Las Villas "in a poor condition to resist an invasion." He added, however, that "the damage would not have been so great if we had not had the disgrace of the General coming here to personally *direct* the operations." Indeed, once the invasion occurred in early January 1875, Concha immediately ordered twelve battalions consisting of 30,000 soldiers into the region and led the military operations himself. In spite of concentrating the bulk of the Spanish Army in Las Villas, Concha failed to suppress the insurgent assault. Moreover, Antonio Borrell, the *comandante general* of western Las Villas, exclaimed that some sixty *ingenios* were destroyed in the second month following the separatist invasion, which infuriated Spanish and Cuban conservatives.<sup>81</sup>

Second, the marquis of Havana's decision to impose a new tax of five percent "on all rural, urban and speculative capital" over two years met with strong opposition from the Spanish party. An editorial in *El Cronista*, a pro-Spanish newspaper published in New York, condemned the measure. "For those who possess an immense fortune, the burden is not intolerable," the editorial stated, while also determining that this new tax was excessively burdensome on the middle and working classes, which made it so reviled.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Letter to Federico Montero de Espinosa from Antonio Borrell, dated February 26, 1875, in BNM, Ms. 20285/1 (6); Letter to Federico Montero de Espinosa from Bonifacio Álvarez Mijares, dated February 26, 1875, in BNM, Ms. 20285/1 (7).

<sup>82</sup> Clipping from *El Cronista*, February 16, 1875, in BNM, Ms. 20285/1 (4).

Following the restoration of the Bourbon dynasty in December 1874, the Cánovas ministry determined that the count of Valmaseda should replace General Concha. In a letter to the king following his nomination as captain general, Valmaseda alluded to all that had gone wrong during Concha's tenure as the island governor: increased debt, high inflation, unpaid, demoralized soldiers, and the destruction of Las Villas.<sup>83</sup>

Once again, General Figueroa acted as the temporary captain general from March 2 to March, 8, 1875, when Valmaseda arrived in Havana to assume control of the island.

### **The Spanish Army**

The Spanish Army encountered numerous obstacles during its campaign in Cuba, which hindered its ability to end the separatist insurrection quickly. The spread of infections and diseases among peninsular troops was the principal reason why the Spanish Army had such difficulty defeating the Cuban revolutionaries. The captain general often proposed to the minister of Ultramar that certain doctors in Cuba be inducted into "the Civil Order of Beneficence" for treating sick Spanish or Cuban loyalist troops, and civilians in towns and cities. Spanish reports recorded which diseases the recognized doctors treated, and when and where epidemics occurred. For instance, outbreaks of yellow fever occurred in Santa Clara in 1871 and Havana in 1872. Smallpox epidemics also erupted in Santiago de Cuba in 1870 and in Santa

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<sup>83</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 3: 203-205.

Clara in 1871. The most common illness, however, seemed to be cholera. It was prevalent in Oriente, Camagüey, and Las Villas – the war zones of Cuba. Outbreaks of cholera particularly affected Santiago de Cuba several times in 1868-1869 and in 1870. Considering the poor sanitation and hygiene in military camps and cramped towns, it is not surprising that these cholera epidemics occurred.<sup>84</sup>

As explained above, captain generals often asked their superiors for reinforcements to end the Cuban insurgency. Over the course of a decade, 174,948 Spanish troops were sent to fight in Cuba. This number seems considerable for a country experiencing war at home and overseas. Yet, according to Pirala, during the Ten Years' War "Spain had lost close to one hundred thousand men, without counting the more than eleven thousand who were left disabled and the close to fourteen thousand sick [who were] sent to the Peninsula." What is sobering about Pirala's calculations is that only 8,112 Spanish soldiers died in battle, while 91,112 perished from disease. These statistics help to explain the shortage of Spanish troops available to conduct military operations, but also suggest that the colonial medical facilities left much to be desired.<sup>85</sup>

Another major problem facing the Spanish Army was the submission of exaggerated military reports to the captaincy general regarding the state of the war. Often, army officers sent communiqués to their superiors describing military victories

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<sup>84</sup> See AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4746, Caja 2. Cuban insurgents also suffered from the spread of epidemics. In late 1868, insurgent military camps, and separatist-controlled towns and cities suffered from cholera. On how Cuban separatists dealt with this outbreak, see a letter to the General en Gefe [sic] from Ramón J. Barrios, dated December 22, 1868, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 5837, Caja 1, Exp. 7, Doc. no. 6.

<sup>85</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 3: 683-684.

in which Spanish troops suffered hardly any casualties or wounded in comparison to the insurgents. For instance, in an 1869 engagement, artillery Colonel Adolfo Morales de los Ríos reported to General Antonio Peláez, the *comandante general* of Cienfuegos, that an unspecified number of rebels confronted 520 Spanish soldiers near Potrerillo. Peláez was informed that the colonial troops killed 150 of the insurgent force, yet only five Spanish soldiers suffered injuries. No deaths were reported.<sup>86</sup> Of course, the *mambises* were novices in warfare at the beginning of the insurrection, but many of the soldiers in the Spanish Army, whether they were *peninsulares* or Creoles, also were green. Insular forces were not well trained and many Spanish troops arriving in Cuba were recent draftees, also with little military experience. Undoubtedly, Spanish officers embellished the results of military engagements with separatist forces with the aim of getting promoted.<sup>87</sup> For example, a number of General Manuel Portillo's reports listed rebel casualties, while Spanish deaths or injuries remained incredibly low or were not reported at all.<sup>88</sup> As it has been explained above, Portillo later would ascend to the *comandancia general* of the Central Department. Nonetheless, his contention that the insurgent groups near

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<sup>86</sup> Letter to the Capitán General de esta Isla from Antonio Peláez, dated March 16, 1869, in IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5723, Carpeta 6, pp. 1-5. There are numerous reports in Caja 5723 pertaining to the results of Spanish military engagements with rebel forces. See also the numerous "successes" of the Volunteers presented in Otero Pimentel, *Memoria sobre los Voluntarios de la isla de Cuba*.

<sup>87</sup> According to Brigadier General Velasco, the ambition of some military officers, who submitted overstated reports to their commanders in the hope of getting promoted, hindered the Spanish cause because this practice prevented other officers, who were honest and skilled in battle, from climbing the military ranks. The implication that Velasco makes is that the officers who ascended the military ranks deceitfully were inept field commanders. See Velasco, *Guerra de Cuba*, 41-43.

<sup>88</sup> Telegram to the Capitán General from the Comandante General de Cuatro Villas Manuel Portillo y Portillo, dated June 21, 1869; telegram to the Capitán General from the Comandante General de Santa Clara Manuel Portillo y Portillo, dated June 23, 1869; letter to the Capitán General de esta Isla from Manuel Portillo y Portillo, dated June 26, 1869, all in IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5723, Carpeta 2, pp. 20-21, 24, 33-35.

Cienfuegos were “small and insignificant” upon being dispersed by Spanish troops gave the false impression that the Spanish Army had taken the upper hand against the rebels. In fact, separatist military forces would continue to operate in Las Villas throughout the war, never being fully suppressed, in part because the Spanish officer class misinformed the insular government in order to gain the esteem of their senior authorities.<sup>89</sup>

Other aspects of these reports are worth mentioning. For instance, military accounts frequently stated that battles would conclude with the “complete dispersion” of rebel forces, which insinuated not only a Spanish victory, but also cowardly conduct on the part of the insurgents, considering that Spanish regulars were not accustomed to guerrilla warfare in the tropics.<sup>90</sup> Moreover, as stated in Chapter 1, Spanish officials endeavored to denigrate the status of a separatist leader by referring to him by his nickname (i.e., Pancho Jiménez instead of Francisco Jiménez). On the other hand, peninsular administrators and military officers usually addressed each other as “Excelentísimo Señor” in their correspondence. By downplaying the importance of the separatist movement, Spanish forces left themselves unprepared to combat the insurgents effectively and to defeat them completely.

Ultimately, the Spanish Army began to adapt to the unique military situation in Cuba employing a number of options. First, in 1869, the irregular forces of the guerrillas were created to compensate for the scarcity of Spanish cavalry units and, in

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<sup>89</sup> Telegram to the Comandante General de Cinco Villas from Comandante General de Santa Clara Manuel Portillo y Portillo, dated October 26, 1869, in IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5723, Carpeta 23, p. 6.

<sup>90</sup> Telegram to the Capitán General from Comandante General Juan de Lesca, dated July 19, 1869, in IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5723, Carpeta 2, p. 41.

the words of Delgado, “to counteract the mobility of the rebels, most of whom were excellent horsemen.” They functioned as messengers and scouts, locating insurgent forces for Spanish army battalions. Since Cubans had greater knowledge of the island terrain than the Spaniards possessed, they constituted the majority of the guerrillas. At first, a group of twenty guerrillas operated in each battalion, but quickly the Spanish government raised the number to 100 per battalion. Since guerrillas were offered a small stipend for their services, many island residents desired to enlist. Accordingly, “[b]y 1872, a multitude of skilled and expert soldiers were [sic] available to the military, which prompted the government to increase the number of guerrillas beyond those corresponding to each battalion.” Henceforth, guerrillas were divided into *guerrillas locales* (local guerrillas) and *guerrillas volantes* (flying guerrillas). The local guerrillas were Cuban in origin, recruited from their hometowns to serve as infantrymen. They operated only in the hinterlands of their towns and received a monthly salary of fifteen pesos. On the other hand, the flying guerrillas were organized in groups of 130 soldiers and 100 horses, comprised of both cavalry and infantry, and conducted their reconnaissance missions over broader zones. They were paid a monthly wage of thirty pesos and two-thirds of them were Cubans.<sup>91</sup>

The roots of the guerrillas’ strength, however, also proved to be the sources of their weakness. First, administrative payments to the guerrilla forces drew too many recruits. Moreover, as Delgado asserts, “a relaxation in the admission standards perceptibly diminished the quality of the recruits and detracted from the flexibility

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<sup>91</sup> Delgado, “The Spanish Army in Cuba, 1868-1898,” 1: 267-268.



and mobility which had characterized this type of force in its beginnings and which had produced such excellent results in that type of warfare.” Additionally, the general disorganization of these forces damaged the Spanish war effort in 1873 and 1874. As a result, the guerrillas would be reorganized twice before the insurrection ended, but according to Delgado, by this time, “the guerrillas once again constituted truly special forces, having recovered their initial effectiveness.”<sup>92</sup>

Additionally, indiscipline among the army ranks damaged the Spanish cause. Spanish officers faced court-martials for acts of insubordination, incompetence, desertion to the insurgent camp, intoxication, and theft. The Supreme Court-Martial in Havana rendered judgments on these cases, though these decisions were subject to the minister of war’s review.<sup>93</sup> In one case, infantry Lieutenant Carlos Mercader y Armengo deserted his Spanish unit to become an insurgent and committed embezzlement, for which he was dismissed from the army, had his possessions confiscated to refund the army the money he had stolen, and was sentenced to six years in the presidio.<sup>94</sup> Spanish desertions to the separatist movement seemed to occur more frequently during periods in which the Liberation Army made advances at the expense of ineffectual Spanish military leadership. Theft or misappropriation of army supplies was another common crime among army troops. In one account, an infantry captain named Fernando A. Montero could not explain why 24,726 pesetas

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 1: 269-270.

<sup>93</sup> See an expediente entitled “Comunicaciones remitidas por Guerra, relativas a causas instruidas a varios Jefes y oficiales del Ejército de la Isla de Cuba, por diferentes motivos, de las cuales se dio traslado al Gobernador General,” in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4746, Caja 1.

<sup>94</sup> Letter to the Ministro de Ultramar from Francisco de Ceballos, dated November 23, 1877, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4746, Caja 1.

and thirteen centimos were missing from the battalion treasury, for which he had been the custodian in the early 1870s. He was ordered to pay over 12,000 pesetas, unless accounting errors were made, in which case he would be exonerated.<sup>95</sup> In another incident, Second Lieutenant Manuel Vidal Nadal pilfered merchandise from a store “in the name of his Captain without his authorization.” For this crime, Vidal had to reimburse the storeowners for the stolen items and he served a prison term of six months.<sup>96</sup> Lapses in discipline did not make the Spanish Army unique among military organizations. As described in Chapter 2, the Cuban Liberation Army faced a similar problem. Nonetheless, as some rural inhabitants resented Cuban insurgents who seized their livestock, support for Spanish troops also must have diminished in areas where they committed excesses.

In terms of organization and strategy, another dilemma facing the Spanish Army was the dispersion of rural inhabitants throughout the island interior, which hampered both field operations and the defense of towns. According to Brigadier General Velasco, the rural population should have been congregated in several encampments. In this way, the insurgents would be deprived of food, supplies, and army recruits from the towns that they once frequented, but now were abandoned. Moreover, with the inhabitants of the countryside focused into few areas, more troops would be liberated from guard duty so that they could conduct more field operations. Furthermore, such a policy would be cost-effective. In early 1872, the Spanish

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<sup>95</sup> Letter to the Ministro de Ultramar from Francisco de Ceballos, dated October 11, 1877, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4746, Caja 1.

<sup>96</sup> Letter to the Ministro de Ultramar from Francisco de Ceballos, dated July 31, 1877, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4746, Caja 1.

government began implementing a program of reconcentration, by which rural inhabitants were resettled along the main thoroughfares of Oriente and Camagüey, and protected by colonial military forces.<sup>97</sup>

Finally, the Júcaro-Morón *trocha* received mixed reviews. The *trocha* was a defensive line of fortifications spanning ninety-five kilometers from Morón, a coastal town in northern Camagüey, through Ciego de Avila, and to “the bay of Júcaro on the south shore of the same province.” At the same time, a railroad ran from Nuevitas parallel to the fortified line, which was used to transport troops and supplies to the *trocha*, from which point they could be dispersed to surrounding areas. Authorized by the Spanish government to begin its construction in 1871, the purpose of the *trocha* was to prevent rebel forces from invading Las Villas, where they would launch a torch campaign against the *ingenios*, *cafetales*, and *vegas* (tobacco farms) of the region.<sup>98</sup> A considerable number of Spanish and Cuban conservatives praised its construction, which was epitomized by Vicente Vázquez Queipo’s declaration: “I have considered always and still believe today very convenient, the system of the *trochas*, by which preventing the insurgents’ crossing from one department to another, permits concentrating the forces, and fighting them more easily. The configuration of the island lends itself marvelously to this system.” Although Vázquez Queipo admitted that the construction of the *trocha* was expensive, he asserted that it would protect the Western Department against rebel destruction in

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<sup>97</sup> Velasco, *Guerra de Cuba*, 49-51, 56.

<sup>98</sup> Delgado, “The Spanish Army in Cuba,” 1: 106-107.

both the present and the future, a view which many other loyalists shared.<sup>99</sup> From Barrios y Carrión's military perspective, the *trocha* was a necessary part of the Spanish war strategy because it permitted Spanish troops to quickly give chase to the insurgent forces operating in the region due to the telegraph lines connecting the three aforementioned towns.<sup>100</sup> On the other hand, it became clear in 1875, when Gómez crossed the *trocha* into Las Villas with over 1,000 troops, that the *trocha* could not realistically fulfill its original aim of preventing the separatist invasion and devastation of the Central and Western Departments.<sup>101</sup>

## Conclusion

A multitude of obstacles prevented the swift conclusion of the Cuban insurrection. While civil war raged in Spain throughout much of the Ten Years' War, the Madrid government could not devote itself exclusively to ending the insurgency until 1876. Frequent changes of government in the metropolis were mirrored in the numerous successions in the captaincy general of Cuba, which also undermined a prompt suppression of the separatist movement, considering that each captain general brought his own army staff to Cuba, and implemented distinct military strategies. Additionally, the financial crisis in Cuba caused by the insurrection prevented captain generals from adequately supplying or paying the salaries of Spanish troops, which hurt army morale and impaired military operations. Moreover, as suggested by

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<sup>99</sup> Vázquez Queipo, *Breves observaciones*, 10.

<sup>100</sup> Barrios y Carrión, *Sobre la historia de la guerra de Cuba*, 1: 69-70.

<sup>101</sup> Gómez, *Horas de tregua*, 54-57.

General Pieltain's statement at the beginning of this chapter, the *integristas'* inflexibility and violence contributed to widening the divide between Cubans and Spaniards, and threatened to undermine the authority of the captain general, both of which delayed a quick conclusion to the war. Although the separatist movement would not have surrendered while it had supplies, troops, military successes, and political stability, the concessions offered by Martínez Campos from 1876 to 1878 were appealing to the insurgent government and army since, during the final years of the revolt, the separatists possessed meager resources and were on the verge of political collapse. This situation is examined in Chapter 6. Finally, the Spanish Army endured numerous problems in terms of disease, troop shortages, lack of discipline, an underestimation of the insurgents' military aptitude, and the discharge of poor strategy, all of which enabled the separatist movement to continue its struggle for independence from Spain.

In the next chapter, I analyze U.S.-Spanish diplomatic relations over Cuba. This matter also proved to be a tremendous challenge for the metropolis, although not to the point of engulfing Spain in a war with the United States over the possession of Cuba.

## Chapter 5

### U.S.-Spanish Foreign Relations over Cuba and the Cuban Separatist Junta in New York

*I candidly confess that I have ever looked on Cuba as the most interesting addition which could ever be made to our system of States. The control of which, with Florida Point, this island would give us over the Gulf of Mexico, and the countries and the Isthmus bordering on it, as well as all of those whose waters flow into it, would fill up the measure of our political well-being.*

- Thomas Jefferson<sup>1</sup>

*One of the causes which has most directly influenced the damage which is deplored, is the lack of harmony between Cubans of the emigration and the representatives of the Government of the Republic in it [the emigration].*

- Tomás Estrada Palma<sup>2</sup>

Diplomacy was a vital component in determining the outcome of the Ten Years' War. While Cuban separatists endeavored to obtain the political support of the United States, the Spanish government made a concerted effort to avoid any entanglements with the aforementioned country for fear of losing its colony. Ultimately, the position of the United States on the Cuban insurrection contributed to its unsuccessful denouement.<sup>3</sup>

This chapter begins with a synopsis of the development of U.S. foreign policy on Cuba from its origins in the 1820s to the 1860s, or the years immediately leading up to the Ten Years' War. Due to Cuba's geopolitical and commercial importance,

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Pérez, *Cuba and the United States: Ties of Singular Intimacy*, 39.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in *La República*, April 1, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 2: 699-700; Herminio Portell Vilá, *Historia de Cuba en sus relaciones con los Estados Unidos y España*, reprinted ed., vol. 2 (Miami, Florida: Mnemosyne Publishing Inc., 1969), 535.

policymakers in Washington sought either to acquire Cuba or to indirectly rule the island once Spanish dominion came to an end.<sup>4</sup> Consequently, the U.S. government did not support the Cuban separatist uprisings of 1868 and 1895 because it viewed the insurgents as competitors vying for hegemony over the island. In the Cuban War of Independence (1895-1898), the separatists appeared to have defeated the Spanish Army by 1898, which prompted U.S. intervention in the armed conflict. In the Ten Years' War, however, the Cuban insurgent army stagnated in the eastern provinces, so the U.S. government may not have interfered directly in the rebellion since it did not consider its interests in Cuba to be endangered.<sup>5</sup>

In the second section of the chapter, the Ulysses S. Grant administration's role in the Ten Years' War is analyzed. Secretary of State Hamilton Fish steered the administration away from recognizing Cuban belligerency, in keeping with longstanding U.S. policy to control Cuba. The United States also obstructed the organization of Cuban filibuster expeditions in its territory, which prevented the Liberation Army from receiving much needed arms and recruits, thereby weakening the insurgent war effort.<sup>6</sup>

The final segment of the chapter focuses on both the diplomatic and militant activities of the Cuban Junta in New York – the ruling émigré council representing the Cuban Republic outside of the island. A divergence in the political objectives pursued by annexationists and republicans caused a rupture within the Cuban émigré

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<sup>4</sup> Jules R. Benjamin, *The United States and the Origins of the Cuban Revolution: An Empire of Liberty in an Age of National Liberation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 18; Pérez, *The War of 1898*, 3-5.

<sup>5</sup> Pérez, *The War of 1898*, 12, 19.

<sup>6</sup> Poyo, "With All, and for the Good of All," 31, 33, 35, 50.

communities, which also contributed to the downfall of the Cuban separatist movement in 1878.<sup>7</sup>

### **United States Foreign Policy on Cuba in the Nineteenth Century**

The U.S. government had sought the acquisition of Cuba since the 1820s. The extension of the southern border of the United States, beginning with the purchases of the Louisiana territory in 1803 and Florida in 1819, piqued U.S. American interest in the annexation of Cuba. As suggested by Jefferson in the epigraph above, the geopolitical importance of Cuba was not lost on the United States.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, the U.S. government opposed Cuba becoming the possession of another European nation after Spain lost authority over it. According to Secretary of State Edward Everett, “the transfer of Cuba from Spain to any other European power . . . could not take place without a serious derangement of the international system now existing, and it would indicate designs in reference to this hemisphere which could not but awaken alarm in the United States.” This statement implies that the United States would lose political and economic influence in the region if another European nation colonized Cuba. As a result, U.S. policymakers, such as Secretary Everett, resisted European intervention in Cuba.<sup>9</sup>

The United States also had growing commercial ties with Cuba. Trade between Cuba and the United States started slowly in the eighteenth century, but by

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Pérez, *Cuba and the United States: Ties of Singular Intimacy*, 38-39.

<sup>9</sup> Letter to the Comte de Sartiges from Edward Everett, dated December 1, 1852, in *Correspondence on the Proposed Tripartite Convention Relative to Cuba* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1853), 28, 30, 44.



the mid-nineteenth century, the United States held the largest share of Cuban commerce at thirty-nine percent. By 1865, the United States purchased sixty-five percent of Cuba's sugar, in addition to coffee, molasses, and tobacco. In return, Cuba relied on the importation of an array of American products including flour, rice, salt, textiles, and other manufactures.<sup>10</sup>

In 1823, John Quincy Adams, the secretary of state in the James Monroe administration, formulated what historian Jules R. Benjamin identified as "the most lasting verdict on U.S. relations with Cuba" in the following communication to the U.S. American envoy to Spain:<sup>11</sup>

'There are laws of political as well as physical gravitation; and if an apple severed by the tempest from its native tree cannot choose but fall to the ground, Cuba, forcibly disjoined from its own unnatural connection with Spain, and incapable of self-support, can gravitate only toward the North American Union, which by the same law of nature cannot cast her off from its bosom.'<sup>12</sup>

In this letter, Adams indicated that Cuba could not maintain political or socioeconomic stability, which automatically ruled out the prospect of Cuban independence. Instead, the secretary of state deemed Spain's possession of Cuba a temporary encumbrance to the island's destined incorporation into the United States. This political frame of mind became prominent among U.S. policymakers for the geopolitical and commercial reasons explained above.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Pérez, *Cuba and the United States: Ties of Singular Intimacy*, 1, 13-15.

<sup>11</sup> Benjamin, *The United States and the Origins of the Cuban Revolution*, 8.

<sup>12</sup> Quoted in *ibid.* This quote also is reproduced in Pérez, *Cuba and the United States: Ties of Singular Intimacy*, 38.

<sup>13</sup> Benjamin, *The United States and the Origins of the Cuban Revolution*, 8-9; Pérez, *Cuba and the United States: Ties of Singular Intimacy*, 38-39.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the United States pursued the annexation of Cuba either through purchase or military conquest. The first attempts at annexation occurred in the 1840s during an expansionist phase of U.S. history fueled by the ideology of “manifest destiny.” During this period, the United States seized and purchased large portions of the northern Mexican frontier, which included the future states of Arizona, California, Nevada, New Mexico, Texas, and Utah. The administrations of James K. Polk and Franklin Pierce each sought to purchase Cuba from Spain in 1848 and 1854, respectively, though the Spanish government declined both proposals, which led U.S. political leaders to consider using force of arms against Spain to gain Cuba. This course of action was demonstrated by the Cuban filibuster expeditions of the late 1840s and 1850s, previously discussed in Chapter 1. Additionally, in 1854 the U.S. foreign ministers to France, Great Britain, and Spain gathered in Ostend to discuss the future of Cuba. In their estimation, the national security of the United States depended on the acquisition of the island through purchase or military conquest. The enactment of the divisive Kansas-Nebraska Act plunged the United States deeper into social turmoil over the issue of slavery, which explains why the document produced from this summit, termed the “Ostend Manifesto,” created an uproar among the U.S. American populace and forced the Pierce administration to abandon its annexationist project.<sup>14</sup>

U.S. aspirations of acquiring Cuba subsided in the 1860s due to the abolition of slavery in the United States, difficult Reconstruction efforts following the U.S.

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<sup>14</sup> Foner, *A History of Cuba*, 2: 20-23, 30, 96-97, 99-104.

Civil War, and American racial prejudices against the Cuban population. After 1865, U.S. policymakers, while not discarding their belief that Cubans were incapable of self-governance, no longer insisted that control of Cuba required annexation.<sup>15</sup> At the same time, historian Philip S. Foner asserts that the United States continued to support the plan of annexing Cuba once Spanish domination of the island proved unsustainable.<sup>16</sup>

### **U.S.-Spanish Diplomatic Relations during the Ten Years' War**

The administration of Ulysses S. Grant (1869-1877) presided over the U.S. government throughout most of the Ten Years' War in Cuba. His secretary of state, Hamilton Fish, largely determined U.S. policy on Cuba during this period. As a native of New York City, Hamilton Fish was born in 1808 to Colonel Nicholas Fish and Elizabeth Stuyvesant, who according to Joseph V. Fuller, was a "descendant of the last Dutch governor and heiress of a large part of his estate." Fish was educated at Columbia University, studied law, and established a law firm in New York. After 1833, he became involved in local politics and joined the Whig party. Fish was once elected a representative to the U.S. Congress, served as a one-term governor of the state of New York, and in 1851, was elected a U.S. senator after his two challengers dropped out of the race. Following the demise of the Whig party, Fish joined the Republicans due, at the time, to the conservative nature of their foreign policy.

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<sup>15</sup> Benjamin, *The United States and the Origins of the Cuban Revolution*, 16-18; Pérez, *Cuba and the United States: Ties of Singular Intimacy*, 47.

<sup>16</sup> Foner, *A History of Cuba*, 2: 202, 204.

According to Fuller, Fish opposed “that of the Democratic party, symbolized by the Ostend Manifesto, as ‘unsafe and belligerent.’” During the U.S. Civil War, Fish directed the Union Defense Committee in New York, “one of the private organizations which rendered indispensable help to the Government in mobilizing the public sentiment and material resources of the North in the chaotic conditions of the early months of the struggle.” Following the conclusion of the war, Fish championed the presidential candidacy of Ulysses S. Grant. Despite being Grant’s second choice, Fish reluctantly accepted the president’s offer to serve as his secretary of state, a position which he filled from 1869 to 1877.<sup>17</sup>

Fish decided against supporting the Cuban separatist movement for numerous reasons. First, according to historian Allan Nevins, Fish “placed a low estimate upon the intellectual and moral qualities of much of the [Cuban] population” owing to its racial composition and, consequently, was dubious that Cubans could maintain a stable government. Fish also was determined to settle the *Alabama* lawsuit against Great Britain, which declared itself neutral in the U.S. Civil War, thereby permitting the building of Confederate ironclads, one of which was the C.S.S. *Alabama*. This Confederate warship caused destruction to the U.S. merchant marine, for which the Grant administration demanded reparations. As historian Richard H. Bradford convincingly argues, “[t]he analogy between the Confederacy and Cuba was close. Fish knew the United States could not do the very thing vis-à-vis Cuba for which it had condemned Britain. Secretary Lord Clarendon had carefully noticed this situation

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<sup>17</sup> Joseph V. Fuller, “Hamilton Fish,” in *The American Secretaries of State and Their Diplomacy*, edited by Samuel Flagg Bemis, vol. 7 (New York: Pageant Book Company, 1958), 125-128.

in 1869 when he wrote that ‘The Spanish government may consider itself lucky that. . . the United States government. . . if it had not been afraid to damage its case with us would long since have recognized the Cuban insurgents as belligerents.’”<sup>18</sup> Finally, it appeared that the United States was not prepared for war with only 25,000 soldiers and a decrepit collection of warships.<sup>19</sup>

While all these reasons contributed to Fish’s decision not to recognize Cuban belligerency, the most convincing argument for why the secretary of state opposed the separatist movement is due to his observance of the longstanding policy of the United States to dominate Cuba. The “no transfer” tenet of this policy, as implied in Secretary of State Everett’s letter to the Comte de Sartiges, did not condone the transfer of authority over Cuba from Spain to another European country for fear of upsetting the balance of power in the Western Hemisphere.<sup>20</sup> Pérez goes farther in his analysis of the “no transfer” rule, arguing that “[i]f the United States could not permit Spain to transfer sovereignty to another power, neither could the United States allow Spain to relinquish sovereignty to Cubans.” This incisive point helps to explain why Fish could not support the insurgents’ war of liberation against Spain.<sup>21</sup>

Like his predecessors at the State Department, Hamilton Fish pursued U.S. hegemony over Cuba during his tenure in office. For Fish, however, authority over Cuba did not necessitate annexation. Benjamin suggests this point when he states that

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<sup>18</sup> Allan Nevins, *Hamilton Fish: The Inner History of the Grant Administration*, revised ed., vol. 1 (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1957), 180-181; Bradford, *The Virginius Affair*, 15.

<sup>19</sup> Bradford, *The Virginius Affair*, 135.

<sup>20</sup> Letter to the Comte de Sartiges from Edward Everett, December 1, 1852, in *Correspondence on the Proposed Tripartite Convention Relative to Cuba*, 28, 30.

<sup>21</sup> Pérez, *The War of 1898*, 12.

although “Fish embraced the thesis of absorption,” the secretary of state “was moving toward a U.S. relationship with Cuba similar to the one actually worked out between 1898 and 1902.”<sup>22</sup> In July 1869, Fish proposed U.S. mediation in the war between the Cuban insurgents and the Spanish government. He recommended that Spain sell Cuba its independence for no more than \$100 million. The payments were to be made in U.S. bonds backed by Cuban customs revenues. Moreover, he called for the “[e]mancipation of slaves” and “[a]n armistice pending the negotiations.” Additionally, he sought to secure a favorable position for the United States in its commercial relations with Cuba by dictating that “[d]iscriminating duties, prejudicial to American productions . . . be abolished” and that “[a]ll other duties (export and import) . . . remain unchanged unless with the consent of the United States.” This arrangement made the United States directly responsible for Cuba. In turn, Cuba was answerable to the United States if it was unable to make the payments necessary to ensure its independence. Thus, this proposal suggested that the United States would have implicit political and economic control of Cuba. In all, Fish’s proposal served as a forerunner to the Platt Amendment (1901) and the commercial reciprocity treaty between Cuba and the United States (1903).<sup>23</sup>

For this mission, Fish selected Paul S. Forbes, a prosperous international businessman, as the special agent to Spain on June 26, 1869. In July, Forbes met with General Juan Prim, at that time the president of the Council of Ministers of Spain, to discuss Fish’s proposition. Prim entertained the idea since Spain was heavily

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<sup>22</sup> Benjamin, *The United States and the Origins of the Cuban Revolution*, 18.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.; Nevins, *Hamilton Fish*, 1: 193-194.

indebted. Following the meeting, Forbes informed the secretary of state that Prim desired \$150 million in exchange for Cuba. Forbes also stated that “Prim wishes to negotiate himself alone through me” and, later, that the general desired “to calm [the] public mind,” meaning that the plan had to be discreetly handled to avoid a confrontation with the *integristas*. Once news of the project was revealed to the public, however, Spanish conservatives denounced the plan, which caused the Prim ministry to backpedal on the negotiations. Ultimately, the U.S.-Spanish talks concluded unsuccessfully by the end of September 1869 as a result of the Spanish government’s refusal to part with a colony in which it was deeply invested both politically and economically.<sup>24</sup>

Once the proposal for U.S. mediation failed, Fish decided that the United States should maintain neutrality in the Spanish colonial conflict. While the United States was not always successful in observing this policy, the Grant administration took measures to prevent the separatist émigré leadership in the United States from organizing filibuster expeditions. To this end, President Grant issued an order, co-signed by Fish, proscribing “the carrying on of any such expedition or enterprise from the territories or jurisdiction of the United States against the territories or dominions of Spain with whom the United States are at peace.” Grant assigned U.S. District Attorney Edwards Pierrepont and U.S. Marshal Francis C. Barlow, both representing

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<sup>24</sup> Soulère, *Historia de la insurrección de Cuba*, 1: 167, 169-170; telegram to the Secretary of State from Forbes, dated July 20, 1869, and telegram from Forbes, dated September 14, 1869, both in USNA, “Despatches [*sic*] from Special Agents of the Department of State[,] 1794-1906,” Microfilm Publication M37, Roll 11, Vol. 24. At the beginning of Forbes’s correspondence on this roll of microfilm there is a note which states that Forbes was “appt’d June 26, 1869.” The note is dated “Dec. 21/81.”

the Southern District of New York where many Cuban émigrés lived, to fulfill this objective, for which “land or naval forces of the United States” were placed at their disposal.<sup>25</sup> As a result, the U.S. Navy arrested the filibuster ship designated the *Hornet* off the coast of North Carolina in October 1869.<sup>26</sup> Additionally, according to one New York newspaper, the leaders of the separatist Junta were imprisoned briefly for “having broken the laws of neutrality” of the United States.<sup>27</sup>

Fish’s intention to keep the United States neutral in the Spanish colonial rebellion did not go unchallenged, however. To begin with, there was a divergence of opinion within the Grant administration over the issue of neutrality. As an unabashed expansionist, Secretary of War John A. Rawlins favored the recognition of the Cuban provisional government as a precursor to the annexation of Cuba to the United States. Rawlins’s position on Cuba was influenced by his acceptance of bonds from the New York Junta which, as Nevins states, “were worthless when Rawlins took them, but intervention would have given them their face value.” In August 1869, Rawlins persuaded Grant to order “the preparation of a proclamation” recognizing the Cuban provisional government, which Fish suggested would not have been tabled had Rawlins not died soon after the document was written.<sup>28</sup> Additionally, according to Benjamin, President Grant sided with the insurgents due to his “hostility to Spain and

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<sup>25</sup> Order signed by U. S. Grant and Hamilton Fish, dated July 14, 1869, in *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*, ed. John Y. Simon, vol. 19 (Carbondale, Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 1995), 210-211.

<sup>26</sup> Numerous letters and telegrams, and one diary entry recorded by Hamilton Fish relating to the case of the *Hornet* are located in *ibid.*, 19: 545-547.

<sup>27</sup> Soulère, *Historia de la insurrección de Cuba*, 1: 110.

<sup>28</sup> Nevins, *Hamilton Fish*, 1: 183-184; Hamilton Fish’s diary entry, dated September 16, 1873, in *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*, edited by John Y. Simon, vol. 24 (Carbondale, Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 2000), 209.



desire to spread U.S. influence.”<sup>29</sup> With regard to supporting Cuban belligerency, in September 1873, Fish remarked in his diary that Grant had “once or twice suggested that it might be proper now to make the recognition,” before adding, “I do not know who is talking to him about it,” which implied that he thought Grant was easily influenced on the issue of U.S. policy toward Cuba. Ultimately, however, Fish convinced the president not to recognize Cuban independence.<sup>30</sup>

In addition, several U.S. consuls serving in Cuba and Jamaica expressed their support for the Cuban rebels, some even suggesting the U.S. annexation of Cuba. In Manzanillo, acting Consular Agent C. H. Bithorn informed William Stedman, the U.S. consul in Santiago de Cuba, that “[t]he acrimony, with which the present struggle between the Spaniards and Natives is carried on, gives room to fear, that unless this Island be soon annexed to the U[nite]d States, where all its interests lay, much distress and ruin will prevail for years to come.” Although Bithorn claimed that this view was “generally entertained by the more enlightened class of its [Cuba’s] inhabitants,” it is possible that he also shared this outlook since he wrote of it to the consul in Santiago.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, the U.S. consul in Kingston went so far as to attend two dinners hosted by Cuban separatists, the second of which commemorated the anniversary of the *Grito de Yara*. The Spanish minister in Washington, Mauricio López Roberts, noted that the consul had uttered “offensive terms toward Spain.” For

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<sup>29</sup> Benjamin, *The United States and the Origins of the Cuban Revolution*, 17.

<sup>30</sup> Hamilton Fish’s diary entry, dated September 16, 1873, in *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*, 24: 209.

<sup>31</sup> Letter to General William Stedman from C. H. Bithorn, dated June 30, 1869, in USNA, “Despatches [sic] from United States Consuls in Santiago de Cuba, 1799-1906,” Microcopy no. T-55, Roll 6, Vol. 6.

his lack of discretion, President Grant accepted Secretary Fish's recommendation to dismiss the U.S. consul from his post.<sup>32</sup>

In the most serious case, the life of a U.S. consul was threatened for his anti-Spanish stance. In March 1870, a letter in which A. E. Phillips fiercely criticized the colonial government and army was published in *La Bandera Española*, a conservative Spanish newspaper, upon which the Volunteers of Santiago de Cuba intended to kill him. As a result, the Spanish governor had to provide Phillips with an armed escort as he boarded a ship departing for Jamaica. Before his passport was returned to him, however, the governor forced Phillips to resign his post.<sup>33</sup>

In addition, the deaths in Cuba of U.S. citizens, both native-born and naturalized, jeopardized U.S.-Spanish diplomatic relations. As a result of *integrista* radicalism, some U.S.-born citizens were killed after having been accused of joining the insurrection. The cases of Charles Speakman and Albert Wyeth have been discussed already in Chapter 3. In addition, on February 15, 1869, U.S. citizen John Baery was executed outside of Gibara, a small port in Oriente. Although no explanation was provided for why he was shot, during the Ten Years' War, many Spanish executions were carried out against suspected or actual insurgents.<sup>34</sup>

More often, however, Cubans with U.S. citizenship were executed by Spanish forces. In Santiago de Cuba in June 1869, acting Consul A. E. Phillips reported to

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<sup>32</sup> Letter to the Ministro de Estado from Mauricio López Roberts, dated November 19, 1869, in AMAE, Leg. 1472, "Correspondencia Embajadas y Legaciones. EE Unidos 1865 [-] 1869."

<sup>33</sup> Letter to J. C. B. Davis from J. W. Parsons, dated March 9, 1870, in USNA, "Despatches [*sic*] from United States Consuls in Santiago de Cuba, 1799-1906," Microcopy no. T-55, Roll 7, Vol. 7.

<sup>34</sup> Letter to the Ministro de Estado from Mauricio López Roberts, dated April 22, 1869, in AMAE, Leg. 1472, "Correspondencia Embajadas y Legaciones. EE Unidos 1865 [-] 1869."

Secretary Fish that “a few prisoners, naturalized citizens of the U.S. who” had arrived in Cuba aboard the filibuster ship *Grapeshot*, “were brought to this city and publicly shot.” Of the situation in Santiago, which was near the insurrection, Phillips remarked: “[T]he city has been under continual excitement, executions have followed executions and the destruction of property by both parties has been immense.”<sup>35</sup> Then, in 1870, John Francis Portuondo, also a Cuban with U.S. citizenship, was executed along with forty other Cubans in the countryside surrounding Santiago de Cuba on the order of *Contraguerrilla* Commander Carlos Boet. According to a peninsular officer who had spoken confidentially with Phillips, “the revenge for the death of [Gonzalo] Castañón was the principal cause of the perpetration of the act.”<sup>36</sup>

Additionally, the seizure of U.S.-owned properties in Cuba during the Ten Years’ War strained relations between Spain and the United States. For example, J. N. Casanova, a naturalized U.S. citizen, had been an *hacendado* who had his sugar exports sequestered, as well as his investments in the Banco Industrial de la Habana. According to Mauricio López Roberts, since he was suspected of treason, Spanish authorities seized his properties.<sup>37</sup> To resolve the cases involving the seizure of U.S. properties in Cuba, the Grant administration succeeded in convincing Spain to ratify

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<sup>35</sup> Letter to Hamilton Fish from A. E. Phillips, dated June 11, 1869, in USNA, “Despatches [*sic*] from United States Consuls in Santiago de Cuba, 1799-1906,” Microcopy no. T-55, Roll 6, Vol. 6.

<sup>36</sup> Letter to Hamilton Fish from A. E. Phillips, dated February 12, 1870, in USNA, “Despatches [*sic*] from United States Consuls in Santiago de Cuba, 1799-1906,” Microcopy no. T-55, Roll 7, Vol. 7.

<sup>37</sup> Letter to the Ministro de Estado from Mauricio López Roberts, dated April 23, 1869, and letter to M. L. Roberts from Hamilton Fish, dated April 22, 1869, both in AMAE, Leg. 1472, “Correspondencia Embajadas y Legaciones. EE Unidos 1865 [-] 1869.”

an accord which established a Claims Commission in 1875. By April 1877, the Spanish government had returned most U.S. properties to their owners.<sup>38</sup>

The most significant incident which jeopardized U.S. neutrality, however, was the Spanish capture of the filibuster *Virginius* and the subsequent execution of many of its crew, which included U.S. citizens.<sup>39</sup> After receiving the news of the imprisonment of a supposed American ship and the execution of a number of its passengers, on November 14, Secretary Fish wrote to General Sickles, requiring that the Spanish government salute the U.S. flag and that the *Virginius* be transferred into U.S. custody, along with any of its survivors.<sup>40</sup> The following day, after discovering that fifty-three crewmen had been put to death, Fish sent another dispatch to Sickles, this time averring that “[i]f Spain cannot redress the outrage committed in her name the United States will. If Spain should regard this act of self-defense . . . as necessitating her interference, the United States, while regretting it, cannot avoid the results.” It was not until Fish received news that same day that the *Virginius* was most likely a Cuban filibuster that he began to reassess the situation. According to Bradford, however, Fish “still intended to be his nation’s advocate, not giving an inch until either the Spanish government proved the truth of the charges or the American government received full restitution.”<sup>41</sup> Later in early December, Fish wrote in his diary that Grant would not let the matter of where the Spanish government should return the *Virginius* “stand in the way of a friendly settlement.” If the president

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<sup>38</sup> Nevins, *Hamilton Fish*, vol. 2: 881, 885.

<sup>39</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 2: 678-679.

<sup>40</sup> *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*, 24: 244, 246.

<sup>41</sup> Bradford, *The Virginius Affair*, 62-63.

sought peace, it seems that the secretary of state led him to reach that decision.<sup>42</sup> Given the gravity of the *Virginus* incident and Fish's policy on Cuba, it appears that the secretary of state sought war against Spain only as a last recourse. What he favored was a diplomatic resolution to the crisis which would be deemed honorable to the United States.<sup>43</sup>

Ultimately, the Grant administration decided that the *Virginus* was not a U.S. vessel. At first, there had been confusion over the nationality of the boat. It had been to the advantage of the Cuban émigré leadership to argue that it was a ship of the United States.<sup>44</sup> Additionally, when reporting this incident to Secretary Fish, the U.S. vice-consul at Santiago de Cuba, E. G. Schmitt, referred to the *Virginus* as an "Amer[ica]n Steamer."<sup>45</sup> Although it appeared that the *Virginus* was owned by John F. Patterson, a U.S.-born citizen, the Grant administration later determined that the New York Junta actually paid for its purchase. As a result, Attorney General Ebenezer R. Hoar declared that the *Virginus* had illegally flown the U.S. flag, which signified that a Spanish salute to the North American flag was unnecessary.<sup>46</sup> In all, neither Spain nor the United States was prepared to wage war at this time, which facilitated a diplomatic resolution to the *Virginus* incident. Moreover, the Cuban Liberation Army had not vanquished the Spanish forces, which meant that colonial

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<sup>42</sup> Hamilton Fish diary entry, dated December 5, 1873, in *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*, 24: 248.

<sup>43</sup> Bradford, *The Virginus Affair*, 63.

<sup>44</sup> Letter to Ulysses S. Grant from Manuel de Quesada *et al.* (fifty signatures), dated November 6, 1873, in *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*, 24: 245.

<sup>45</sup> Letter to Hamilton Fish from E. G. Schmitt, dated November 23, 1873, in USNA, "Despatches [*sic*] from United States Consuls in Santiago de Cuba, 1799-1906," Microcopy no. T-55, Roll 7, Vol. 7.

<sup>46</sup> Bradford, *The Virginus Affair*, 25-26; letter to Ulysses S. Grant from George S. Boutwell, dated December 24, 1873, in *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*, 24: 252-253.

rule on the island was not imperiled. As a result, the United States lacked an incentive to intervene in the Spanish-Cuban armed struggle.<sup>47</sup>

### **The Cuban Separatist Junta in New York**

Cuban exiles in the United States first established their central headquarters in New York City in the late 1840s. A group of annexationists headed by Gaspar Betancourt Cisneros formed an émigré council comprised of Cuban land and slave owners, including José Luis Alfonso and Cristóbal Madan, and various merchants and professionals, such as José Sánchez Iznaga, Porfirio Valiente, Cirilo Villaverde, and Juan Clemente Zenea. These leaders supported the annexation of Cuba to the United States to prevent Cuba from following the same path as other Spanish American nations in terms of economic and political instability. Moreover, according to historian Gerald E. Poyo, they believed that, under the protection of the United States, Cuba could avoid the social unrest linked to slavery. While this exile council funded the failed 1848 filibuster expedition of Narciso López, after 1855, many émigrés returned to Cuba as it became clear “that the United States could not be expected to press the issue [of annexation] outside diplomatic channels” and as a result of the implementation of Spanish liberal reforms in Cuba.<sup>48</sup>

The Cubans’ failure to achieve annexation in the 1840s and 1850s resulted in the growth of Cuban nationalism and a readjustment in U.S.-Cuban relations. In

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<sup>47</sup> Bradford, *The Virginius Affair*, 135; Pérez, *The War of 1898*, 10-12; Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 2: 699-700.

<sup>48</sup> Poyo, “*With All, and for the Good of All*,” 4-10.

1865, some Cuban exiles who had stayed in the United States, such as Plutarco González, Juan Manuel Macías, and Cirilo Villaverde, and Puerto Rican José Bassora, formed the *Sociedad Republicana de Cuba y Puerto Rico*, which was a nationalist organization. The members of the *Sociedad Republicana* renounced annexation to the United States and formal U.S. American support for their achievement of independence from Spain. The disastrous results of Narciso López's two filibuster expeditions to Cuba convinced many Cubans that the United States would not assist them in their endeavor because such support could possibly create an international crisis involving Europe. In addition, José Antonio Saco's firm denunciation of the potential annexation of Cuba to the United States on account of Cubans losing their cultural heritage struck a nerve in many Cubans. Also, writers for the separatist newspapers *La Voz de América* and *El Pueblo* encouraged the participation of all classes in the revolution, including slaves, asserting that the Cuban oligarchy had been more preoccupied with safeguarding its investments in the 1850s than with achieving independence for Cuba. While some exile leaders feared that abolition would incite racial conflict, others warned that the end of slavery in the United States signified that it also would be eradicated in Cuba and any attempts to postpone its demise would provoke social strife.<sup>49</sup>

In November 1868, the *Sociedad Republicana* offered its support to Céspedes's uprising. A change in leadership in the exile council in New York, however, would reveal that annexationism had not disappeared from the Cuban

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 10-18.

political agenda. Although annexation lost its appeal for many Cubans after the 1850s with the ascent of pro-independence opinion, it remained a viable option for the Cuban separatist elite during the Ten Years' War.<sup>50</sup>

At the onset of the insurgency, Céspedes designated José Valiente as the Cuban Republic's representative in the United States. "[I] have determined to direct to you this communication," Céspedes wrote to Valiente, "so that you will serve to represent us before that Government and make all possible efforts, as a good patriot, in order to obtain the protection of the American Government and the recognition of our provisional Government." Additionally, the Cuban president informed Valiente that he was "empowered . . . to establish communications with other foreign nations, which offer, if not to help us to be neutral in our war with the oppression and tyranny of Spain."<sup>51</sup>

In December 1868, Céspedes also instructed Valiente to speak with President Andrew Johnson's secretary of state, William H. Seward, who according to historian Walter LaFeber, "wanted to hold islands in the Caribbean which would serve as strategic bases to protect an Isthmian route to the Pacific and also prevent European powers from dabbling in the area of the North American coastline." Although Seward favored the U.S. annexation of Cuba, which was why the separatist leadership sought his support, his term as secretary of state would end by March 1869. Thus, as a lame

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 18-19, 22.

<sup>51</sup> Letter to José Valiente from Carlos M. de Céspedes, dated December 3, 1868, in Céspedes, *Escritos*, 1: 136.



duck, he had little influence in determining Cuba's future.<sup>52</sup> Nonetheless, Céspedes continued to pursue annexing Cuba to the United States, arguing that "the mind of the majority of the Cubans . . . is always fixed on the idea of . . . annexation as a last resort to not fall into the abyss of evils, which according to them would launch us into a bloody race war; and since to that they add, that they know the nature and the character of the dependents of Spain, born in America and so given to form political parties and to sustain ambitions, an argument that here has many supporters, it is convenient to investigate the spirit of that Government over the matter, to be able to direct the course of events in any case."<sup>53</sup>

During the Ten Years' War, Cuban annexationists dominated the émigré council in New York. In January 1869, many Cuban liberals began to emigrate to the United States once the repression of the Spanish party became widespread. In the first months of 1869, a group of reformists arrived in New York and assumed control of the Sociedad Republicana with the full support of the Céspedes administration. José Morales Lemus<sup>54</sup> became the new president, thereby succeeding Valiente, and restructured the council by changing its name to the Junta Central Republicana de Cuba y Puerto Rico and substituting the separatist leaders of the Sociedad Republicana with other reformists, such as Miguel de Aldama, José Antonio

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid.; Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860-1898* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1963), 28.

<sup>53</sup> Letter from Carlos M. de Céspedes, dated January 3, 1869, in Céspedes, *Escritos*, 1:146-150.

<sup>54</sup> Born in Gibara, Oriente in 1808 to parents from the Canary Islands, José Morales Lemus established a career in law. In the 1860s, he was one of the leading representatives of the reformist movement, spearheading the Cuban delegation of the Junta de Información de Ultramar in Madrid. As a reformist, he favored reducing taxation on farmers and expanding elementary-level education. He served as the first president of the New York Junta until his death in 1870. Santovenia and Shelton, *Cuba y su historia*, 1: 296.

Echeverría, and José Manuel Mestre. Most reformists had been entrepreneurs and professionals linked to the sugar industry. According to Poyo, “the New York émigrés probably controlled directly fewer than 3,000 of the 300,000 slaves in Cuba,” which leads him to conclude that “they represented not the slaveholding class, but an emergent capitalist elite who saw slavery as an anachronistic institution incompatible with the laissez-faire economic system they hoped Cuba would eventually embrace.”<sup>55</sup> This group preferred gradual slave emancipation and an expeditious conclusion to the war in order to preserve the property and economic prosperity of the Cuban elite. In order to achieve both objectives, these reformists supported the use of diplomacy to gain Cuba’s annexation to the United States. They lent their support to Céspedes because they believed him to be judicious on the issues of slavery and annexation, at least in the early stage of the insurrection. Although the Junta leaders later accepted the direct abolition proclaimed in the Constitution of Guáimaro in the hope of gaining U.S. recognition, they continued to maintain that annexation was necessary to preserve the Cuban social structure and economy, and to prevent political discord.<sup>56</sup>

In the early months of 1869, the Junta of New York was concerned with the unification of the insurgent movement in Cuba. At this point, *oriental* and *camagüeyano* forces continued to have separate governments, of which the exile leaders did not approve. In the view of Morales Lemus, the international community would not recognize a Cuban separatist movement that was divided. He argued:

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<sup>55</sup> Poyo, “*With All, and for the Good of All*,” 20-23.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 22-29.

“[T]he entire world will only see the ambition of authority, and this will completely discredit our revolution and those who have taken part in it, and we will be made indignant of all protection, since in the end we will be held in the same low esteem as the Spaniards.” In Morales Lemus’s view, solidarity was paramount to achieving the Junta’s objectives of gaining U.S. recognition of the insurgency and intervention in the Spanish-Cuban conflict. Moreover, Morales Lemus was aggravated by the fact that the Comité del Camagüey had sent its own envoy to the United States, who Morales Lemus probably saw as a rival to the authority that Céspedes had bestowed on him.<sup>57</sup> To the *camagüeyano* leaders, Morales Lemus insisted that they accept Céspedes’s authority and join with the *orientales* to establish one government so that “we can obtain recognition as belligerents [from the United States] and a Loan of two or three million pesos, which perhaps will be enough to conclude the war that we sustain today.” The Junta president ended his letter with the following statement: “Despite all these inconveniences we are working to form new expeditions to take to all of the island the necessary assistance of arms and ammunition.” This remark implied that if the *camagüeyanos* did not join with the *orientales* to establish one government, the rebellion would not receive the support of the United States and the *camagüeyanos* would not obtain any weaponry from the Junta.<sup>58</sup> By April 1869, the

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<sup>57</sup> Letter to the Comité del Camagüey from José Morales Lemus, dated March 25, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7910, Carpeta 8, Doc. no. 236; letter to Carlos Manuel Céspedes from José Morales Lemus, dated April 22, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7910, Carpeta 8, Doc. no. 240.

<sup>58</sup> Letter to the Comité del Camagüey from José Morales Lemus, dated March 25, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7910, Carpeta 8, Doc. no. 236.

Junta achieved its objective of unifying the separatist movement when the Guáimaro Constitution was ratified.

The Junta had two responsibilities: to gain the diplomatic, financial, and military support of other nations, and to send filibuster vessels loaded with arms and insurgent soldiers to the separatist movement in Cuba. In December 1870, Céspedes directed Morales Lemus to send Cuban representatives to Great Britain, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela.<sup>59</sup> Of all the Latin American nations to which the Cuban provisional government sent representatives, Mexico was the first to recognize the Cuban Republic on April 6, 1869. Mexico had favored the independence of Cuba since the 1820s for fear that Spain would assault Mexico from Cuba. Moreover, in an attempt to take advantage of Mexico's poor financial situation, Spain, along with France, sent military forces to hold the port of Vera Cruz in 1861.<sup>60</sup> Chile and Peru, both of which had been at war against Spain in the 1860s, followed suit by announcing their backing of the Cuban provisional government on April 30, 1869 and August 13, 1869, respectively. Additionally, the Peruvian government gave \$80,000 to the exile Junta to fund its filibuster expeditions. On June 10, 1869, the Bolivian administration of Mariano Melgarejo gave its support to the Cuban separatist government with Céspedes at its head. Finally, Colombia offered its

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<sup>59</sup> Letter to Carlos Manuel Céspedes from José Morales Lemus, no date given, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7910, Carpeta 8, Doc. no. 237; Céspedes, *Escritos*, 1: 219-221.

<sup>60</sup> Samuel Flagg Bemis, *A Diplomatic History of the United States*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1955), 389-390; *Cuba; or the Policy of England, Mexico, and Spain, with Regard to That Island* (London: James Ridgway, 1830), 14-16; Guerra, *Guerra de los 10 años*, 1: 178-179, 394.

recognition of the separatist movement on February 22, 1870.<sup>61</sup> As a result of their recognition of Cuban independence, these Spanish American nations opened their ports to Cuban filibusters, and the separatists were able to collect funds and organize expeditions in these countries.<sup>62</sup>

While gaining the recognition of these nations for the Cuban insurgency was important to the separatist cause, the Junta leadership considered the support of the Grant administration to be essential to gaining U.S. intervention in the rebellion and the annexation of Cuba to the United States.<sup>63</sup> For this purpose, the Diplomatic Corps was created and headed by José Morales Lemus, who served as the “General Agent,” and “Plenipotentiary Minister and Extraordinary Envoy in the Republic of the United States of America” until he died in 1870.<sup>64</sup> Morales Lemus had met with Secretary Fish and had agreed to the failed plan of mediation. Additionally, Morales Lemus failed to achieve a vote from the U.S. Congress for Cuban independence, even after U.S. investigators calculated that “the Cuban Junta paid four dollars for each thousand signatures collected” from the public.<sup>65</sup> Following his death, the new Junta directors, Miguel de Aldama and José Antonio Echeverría, pursued the same unsuccessful policy. In a pamphlet addressed to the U.S. Congress in 1875, Aldama

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<sup>61</sup> Letter to the Ministro de Estado from Mauricio López Roberts, August 4, 1869, in AMAE, Leg. 1472, “Correspondencia Embajadas y Legaciones. EE Unidos 1865 [-] 1869”; Guerra, *Guerra de los 10 años*, 1: 178-179, 394.

<sup>62</sup> Letter to Carlos Manuel Céspedes from José Morales Lemus, no date given, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7910, Carpeta 8, Doc. no. 237; letter “A Su Excelencia Presidente de la República de Chile” from C. M. Céspedes, dated December 16, 1870, in Céspedes, *Escritos*, 1: 220.

<sup>63</sup> Letter to Carlos Manuel Céspedes from José Morales Lemus, dated April 22, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7910, Carpeta 8, Doc. no. 240; Poyo, “*With All, and for the Good of All*,” 30, 33-34.

<sup>64</sup> *Almanaque cubano para 1870*. (New York: Imprenta de Hallet y Breen, 1870), 20, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4933, Caja 2, Exp. 6, Doc. no. 2.

<sup>65</sup> Portell Vilá, *Historia de Cuba*, 2: 259, 299-300.

and Echeverría indicated that once Spanish rule in Cuba came to an end, the United States would be able to dominate at least the Cuban market for cotton and flour. Based on this lucrative prospect, the émigré leaders concluded their leaflet with a thinly veiled demand for U.S. intervention in the Cuban insurrection: "Hence, the fact should be apparent, that there is not one State in the American Union in whose industrial development and prosperity the whole people of the Union have so heavy a stake involved, as that of the Island of Cuba."<sup>66</sup> This effort to gain U.S. recognition for the separatist movement collapsed as well.

Additionally, the Cuban Junta in New York was to purchase vessels to convey weapons and army recruits to the revolutionary movement in Cuba. These filibuster expeditions originated in the United States, Great Britain, Nassau, and Jamaica, although the only completed voyages occurred in the early years of the rebellion. The successful filibusters included the *Anna*, the *Galvanic*, the *George B. Upton*, the *Grapeshot*, the *Perit*, and the *Salvador*, some of which made several voyages to Cuba.<sup>67</sup> Perhaps the most successful conductor of filibuster expeditions to Cuba during the Ten Years' War was Francisco Javier Cisneros. A native of Santiago de Cuba, Cisneros was born in 1836 to Cuban parents, his father having been an attorney. In 1857, the future separatist earned a degree in civil engineering from the University of Havana. After receiving additional training in the United States, a

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<sup>66</sup> Miguel de Aldama and José Antonio Echeverría, *Facts about Cuba. To the Congress of the United States of America Now Assembled* (New York: N. Ponce de León, 1875), 31-32.

<sup>67</sup> Between December 1868 and September 1870, fourteen filibuster expeditions had been carried out, although not all of them were successful. According to Ramiro Guerra, it is difficult, if not impossible, to determine the actual number of boats sent to Cuba or how much money was spent to send them considering that there are no records for many of the smaller expeditions. See Guerra, *Guerra de los 10 años*, 2: 52.

British company employed Cisneros to build railways in the Western Department of Cuba. In the 1860s, he became the editor of *El País*, a newspaper in which Cisneros revealed his receptiveness to Cuban independence. In 1869, he left Cuba for the United States, where he joined the Junta in New York. From mid-1869 to late 1871, Cisneros directed seven filibuster expeditions to Cuba, five of which brought weaponry and insurgent troops to the Liberation Army. After the arrival of his final expedition, the separatist government awarded him the military rank of general before he departed again for the United States, of which he became a citizen. In the following statement, Cisneros alluded to his political aspiration: “[As a] decided adversary of the Spanish colonial regime in Cuba, it was my ideal, since adolescence, to establish myself in the United States and become a member of that magnanimous and free society.” This declaration suggests that Cisneros may have favored the annexation of Cuba to the United States.<sup>68</sup> Cisneros may have left the separatist movement in 1871, after a nationalist émigré faction gained control of the New York Junta.

In addition, there were many aborted filibuster expeditions, such as those of the *Atlanta*, the *Catherine Whiting*, the *Guanahani*, the *Hornet*, the *Mary Lowell*, the *Memphis*, the *Quaker City*, the *Santiago de Cuba*, the *Tybes*, and the *Virginus*.<sup>69</sup> A greater effort on the part of the Spanish consuls in the United States and the Caribbean to gather intelligence on the Cuban filibusters, an improvement in Spanish and North American naval defense, the Junta’s inability to collect sufficient funds,

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<sup>68</sup> Alfredo D. Bateman, *Francisco Javier Cisneros* (Bogotá: Editorial Kelly, 1970), 5-9, 12-13, 22-24.

<sup>69</sup> Guerra, *Guerra de los 10 años*, 2: 52; Portell Vilá, *Historia de Cuba*, 2: 270, 284, 360.

and conflict within the Cuban émigré communities prevented the arrival of insurgent ships to Cuba after 1873, which contributed significantly to the collapse of the rebel army and provisional government.<sup>70</sup>

The actions of the insurgent Junta did not receive unanimous support from the Cuban separatist movement. Ex-leaders of the Sociedad Republicana, including Juan Bellido de Luna, Juan Manuel Macías, and Cirilo Villaverde, opposed the annexationist scheme of Morales Lemus, Aldama, and Echeverría. Cuban nationalists, who entered the United States following the outbreak of the Ten Years' War, rebuffed the diplomatic undertaking of the Junta to achieve U.S. backing for the rebellion. They included José de Armas Céspedes, Francisco Váldez Mendoza, and José J. Govantes. These insurgents concurred with José Antonio Saco that annexation would lead to the loss of Hispanic culture in Cuba.<sup>71</sup>

In addition, the annexationist Junta was unable to amass funds or obtain loans in the exterior, which were to be used to finance the purchase of ships and war materiel to be sent to Cuba. According to separatist Carlos del Castillo Leizaga, the Junta leaders had three chances to acquire loans, one being worth six million pesos, but due to their lack of "sound judgment," they bungled them all. As a result, few boats were purchased for the expeditions and, since only a small percentage of these

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<sup>70</sup> Guerra, *Guerra de los 10 años*, 2: 55-56.

<sup>71</sup> Poyo, "With All, and for the Good of All," 35-37. During Dulce's captaincy general, Armas Céspedes was commissioned to negotiate an end to the war with the *camagüeyano* and *oriental* rebels in exchange for reforms in Cuba. When this project failed, he left Cuba for the United States and, then, for Paris, from where he sent a letter to Spanish Prime Minister Antonio Cánovas del Castillo asserting that he supported Cuban independence, but would not be averse to Cuba becoming a part of the United States. See José de Armas Céspedes, *Manifiesto de un cubano al gobierno de España: Carta dirigida al Excmo. Sr. D. Antonio Cánovas del Castillo, Presidente del Consejo de Ministros de la Corona de España, etc., etc., etc.* (Paris: Librería Española de E. Denné Schmitz, 1876), 18-19, 30.



were successful, the insurgents in Cuba operated with scarce military supplies from the exterior, instead having to steal weapons from Spanish fortresses or dead peninsular soldiers. Even when the exile leaders had the ability to obtain ships, they often failed in this endeavor. In one instance, the Peruvian ambassador to the United States offered the separatist Junta four warships to be paid for after the insurgents ended Spain's dominion over Cuba. The Junta also rejected these, though for reasons not made clear.<sup>72</sup>

Moreover, the nationalists in exile opposed the conduct of the Junta leaders in organizing filibuster expeditions. According to Castillo Leizaga, the Junta was to blame for not planning the voyages in a methodical manner. In a letter to Céspedes, Castillo Leizaga notified the president of the Junta's inability to organize Thomas Jordan's voyage: "The Junta dispatched it, although it did not pay for it or organize it, and you – [P]resident Céspedes, - cannot ignore why Jordan lost part of the armament, and why, the steamer *Perit*, returned to New York with many arms and ammunition on board."<sup>73</sup> In this statement, Castillo Leizaga alluded to the annexationists' aversion to sending weapons to Cuba since they were used in the devastation of farms. Ultimately, the torrent of criticisms directed at the exile leadership persuaded Céspedes in 1870 to dispatch Manuel de Quesada, a fervent nationalist, to the United States to organize filibuster expeditions and, then, to dismiss Aldama, Echeverría, and Mestre from the Junta leadership in 1871. By the following year, Céspedes selected republicans Castillo Leizaga, Félix Govín, and Quesada to

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<sup>72</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 1: 654, 656-657.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 1: 654-655.

direct the émigré council in New York.<sup>74</sup> This change in leadership, however, did not resolve the problems within the Cuban emigration. On the contrary, Spanish consuls in the United States reported on the growing discord between the Cuban nationalists and annexationists in the exile communities, which was illustrated in Aldama's condemnation of Quesada and the general's desire to depart for Cuba in order to avoid further entanglements with the conservative émigrés in New York. This conflict between republicans and annexationists caused Cuban expatriates to lose faith in the ultimate victory of the separatist movement.<sup>75</sup>

Following the insurgent House of Representatives' dismissal of Carlos Manuel de Céspedes in October 1873, the new provisional president, Salvador Cisneros Betancourt, sent Echeverría and Aldama back to the Junta leadership.<sup>76</sup> The Junta's conservatism led to the rise of numerous émigré republican committees. For instance, in Paris in 1877, a group of Cubans established the Sociedad Auxiliadora de la Independencia de Cuba. Little seems to be known about this small organization, except that it wished to send supplies to the separatist movement in Cuba. It also included an opponent of the New York Junta, José de Armas Céspedes. According to the Spanish minister in France, the marquis of Molins, it did not appear that these insurgents possessed either the financial or political clout needed to support the Cuban revolution. The committee's secretary, Lucas Agüero, nearly gambled away all his wealth, while the treasurer, Carlos de Varona, was implicated in some criminal

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<sup>74</sup> Poyo, "*With All, and for the Good of All*," 37-38, 45-46.

<sup>75</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 2: 62-63; *ibid.*, 20, 46.

<sup>76</sup> Poyo, "*With All, and for the Good of All*," 46.

activity. Thus, the Sociedad Auxiliadora, like other small exile organizations, was unsuccessful in providing the Liberation Army with the troops and weaponry that it was sorely lacking.<sup>77</sup>

The conflict between the annexationist and nationalist factions had the effect of enervating the separatist movement. For separatist President Estrada Palma, a unified émigré community under the authority of one “official management” would have a better chance of financing and undertaking filibuster expeditions than small, unconnected separatist committees. Moreover, Estrada Palma argued that under one central command, “the Executive will find itself in the aptitude of judging with certainty, on the capacity or incapacity that its delegates in the Exterior will demonstrate in the completion of their mission; and then it [the Executive] can work with full confidence in its acts and with a good effect on public matters.”<sup>78</sup> As an annexationist, however, Estrada Palma preferred to place central authority in the conservative New York Junta rather than in a nationalist committee.

By this time, the Junta in New York had reached the nadir of its operations. Miguel de Aldama stepped down from his post in January 1877 after, according to the Spanish minister in Washington, being blamed for “carelessness in the dispatch of expeditions to Cuba.” The Spanish minister claimed that Aldama preferred “formal expeditions,” which took considerable time to prepare, and could be easily detected and captured, over the delivery of numerous, smaller vessels favored by the working-

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<sup>77</sup> Letter to Cristóbal Martín de Herrera from the Marqués de Molins, dated April 4, 1877, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4936, Caja 2, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 58; letter from Secretario Lucas Agüero, dated February 5, 1877, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4936, Caja 2, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 60.

<sup>78</sup> *La República*, April 1, 1876.

class Cuban exiles. Consequently, they found it difficult to financially support Aldama's separatist projects.<sup>79</sup>

Although Aldama left his position, President Estrada Palma retained him as a representative in New York, which meant that the annexationists continued to be influential in the Cuban Junta. At the same time, however, Estrada Palma proclaimed: "The émigré patriots have, in the exercise of their own initiative, broad liberty, without restriction of any kind, to directly send [to Cuba] at the disposal of the Government of the Republic of Cuba, elements of war or whatever other kind of aid that they can gather on a small or large scale." Although the Cuban president believed that an integrated émigré organization under the authority of conservatives would benefit the insurgency, in this statement he accepted the reality of a decentralized exile community because, at this point in the war, the separatist movement in Cuba was desperate for supplies in the face of Martínez Campos's military campaign and conciliatory political program.<sup>80</sup>

Estrada Palma designated brothers Julio and Manuel Sanguily as the new Junta leaders following Aldama's resignation.<sup>81</sup> One U.S. newspaper implicated that, like the annexationists before them, these emigrant leaders sought to gain recognition from Washington for the Cuban Republic. As of March 1877, the Rutherford B. Hayes administration had succeeded that of the Ulysses S. Grant. On the appointment of William Evarts as the new secretary of state, one article stated:

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<sup>79</sup> *La República*, February 15, 1877; letter to the Subsecretario del Ministerio de Ultramar from Subsecretario [del Ministerio de Estado] Rafael Ferraz, dated May 9, 1877, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4936, Caja 2, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 82.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Guerra, *Guerra de los 10 años*, 2: 272-273.

A feeling of renewed hope was shown among the friends of Cuba Libre in this city [New York] yesterday. It was caused by the expectancy that Mr. Evarts, the new Secretary of State, will take a more decided position for the struggling patriots than his predecessor in the State Department. At the headquarters of the Junta it was said that Mr. Evarts had always sympathized with the efforts of the revolutionists to gain their freedom, and had on more than one occasion rendered material assistance.<sup>82</sup>

Meanwhile, it was reported that the Madrid newspapers denounced the selection of Evarts to the State Department, arguing that he had “supported the Cuban filibusters.” The Spanish minister in Washington, however, dismissed these accounts, stating that “they certainly did not express the opinions or sentiments of the Spanish Government, nor of well-informed Spaniards, who appreciate the friendly relations existing between the two governments, which were never more satisfactory than at the present time, and which there is no possible reason or motive to disturb.”<sup>83</sup> Nonetheless, the letters of the editor of *El Cronista*, José Ferrer de Couto, discovered after his death in 1877, suggested that the U.S. government desired for the war in Cuba to end in 1878, leaving Ferrer de Couto to deduce that if the war was not terminated by then, the United States would “[try] to dismember our nationality.” While Spanish officials had been apprehensive of U.S. motives toward Cuba throughout much of the nineteenth century, the growing success of Martínez

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<sup>82</sup> Newspaper clipping entitled “Secretary Evarts’ Cuban Policy. [By Telegraph to the National Republican.],” dated March 11, [1877], in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4936, Caja 2, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 71. The clipping is attached to a letter to the Subsecretario del Ministerio de Ultramar from Subsecretario [del Ministerio de Estado] Rafael Ferraz, dated April 20, 1877, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4936, Caja 2, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 71.

<sup>83</sup> *The World*, March 13, 1877, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4936, Caja 2, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 71. The clipping is attached to a letter to the Subsecretario del Ministerio de Ultramar from Subsecretario [del Ministerio de Estado] Rafael Ferraz, dated April 20, 1877, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4936, Caja 2, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 71.

Campos's policy of appeasement in the face of a destitute and demoralized separatist movement diminished the prospect of a U.S. invasion of Cuba.<sup>84</sup>

Despite the rupture within the exile communities in the United States, Cubans endeavored to send filibuster expeditions to their homeland up to the very end of the war. For instance, in November 1877, Miguel de Aldama endeavored to launch a filibuster expedition from Great Britain, which appears to have been obstructed after letters from one of his associates were intercepted by the Spanish government. It is particularly ironic that in one confiscated letter to Aldama, his collaborator expressed his confidence in the measures he had adopted to keep their plans from being discovered. This incident helps to explain that, without military supplies from the separatist emigration, the achievement of Cuban independence would remain elusive.<sup>85</sup>

## Conclusion

The objective of the conservative leaders of the Junta Central Republicana to gain U.S. support for the Cuban insurgency as a forerunner to annexation ruined the nationalist aspirations held by many Cubans. Consequently, the disunity among the Cuban émigrés complicated the collection of financial and material resources, without which few filibuster expeditions could be sent to Cuba. A cessation in shipments of supplies and recruits depleted insurgent stores of war materiel and reduced the size of

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<sup>84</sup> *La República*, "Hoja Suelta," September 10, 1877.

<sup>85</sup> Letter to the Subsecretario del Ministerio de Ultramar from Subsecretario [del Ministerio de Estado] Rafael Ferraz, dated January 11, 1878, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4936, Caja 2, Exp. 3, Doc. no. 14; letter to M. Aldama from R. Walpole Carlin, dated November 20, 1877, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4936, Caja 2, Exp. 3, Doc. no. 16.

the Liberation Army. Insurgent veterans of the Ten Years' War attributed the paltry supplies sent from the exterior to Cuba as an important factor leading to the collapse of the separatist movement in 1878.<sup>86</sup>

For its part, the U.S. government had no intention of recognizing Cuban belligerency during the Ten Years' War due to its longstanding policy of controlling Cuba directly or indirectly once Spanish rule came to an end on the island. Therefore, even if the Liberation Army had succeeded in defeating Spanish forces, the United States probably would have intervened in the armed conflict to prevent Cubans from achieving national sovereignty. The Spanish-American War of 1898 and the subsequent implementation of the Platt Amendment in Cuba attest to this possibility. Even if the separatist movement had been decidedly nationalist in 1868, it remains unclear if the Cuban revolutionaries would have established a republic liberated of U.S. interference. After all, even though the Cuban separatist movement had been nationalist and had not requested U.S. intervention in 1895, the United States interceded in the Spanish-Cuban conflict in 1898.<sup>87</sup>

Chapter 6 returns to the ongoing insurrection in Cuba to examine the conclusion of the Ten Years' War.

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<sup>86</sup> Collazo, *Desde Yara hasta el Zanjón*, 99-100; Gómez, *Diario de campaña*, 207.

<sup>87</sup> Benjamin, *The United States and the Origins of the Cuban Revolution*, 18; Pérez, *The War of 1898*, 3-5, 10-12, 19-21; Poyo, "With All, and for the Good of All," 50-51, 112.

## Chapter 6

### War's End and a Tentative Peace

*The year has concluded, one of the most lamentable for the revolution of Cuba – besides the terrible campaign which the Spanish General Martínez Campos sustains, with his great resources of men and money, the Cubans[,] divided and in disaccord[,] have impressed a stamp of weakness and decadence upon the revolution which will make it very difficult to guide it on a secure path to its triumph. - I[,] for my part[,] should believe that I have already concluded in representing my role in this bloody drama, being despised and censured, to say it like that, by the Cubans, since the events of Las Villas and lately by those of Holguín, I should so I do not appear rash and ambitious to abandon a cause, that has brought me so much disappointment and sorrow; therefore it is my duty to leave the country, employing the means that do not damage my honor – in order to go to find in another country, a home where I can end my days in tranquility.*

- Máximo Gómez, December 31, 1877<sup>1</sup>

In the epigraph above, insurgent General Máximo Gómez expressed profound sadness and disillusionment in a cause to which he had dedicated ten years of his life. Like him, by the end of 1877, many Cuban insurrectionists had grown weary of the internal political and racial struggles within the separatist movement, which had degenerated into different factions headed by distinct caudillos following their own dictates rather than those of the republican government. Moreover, as a result of continuing discord in the Cuban expatriate communities and increased vigilance on the part of the U.S. and Spanish governments, filibuster vessels carrying army recruits and weaponry stopped arriving in Cuba after 1873, which undermined the Liberation

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<sup>1</sup> Gómez, *Diario de campaña* (Havana: Instituto del Libro, 1969), 192.



Army. As a result of this deplorable situation, the Cuban insurgency collapsed in 1878.<sup>2</sup>

Spanish authorities and representatives of the insurgent Comité del Centro signed a peace agreement known as the Pact of Zanjón on February 10, 1878. At best, this peace was a fragmented one. Despite the painstaking efforts of the Spanish military command to reach an accord with the insurrectionists, not all of them agreed to surrender. The war would not conclude until May 1878 when the Protest of Baraguá, headed by General Antonio Maceo, drew to an end. Even then, many insurgents believed that the Cuban battle for independence would only be postponed until the circumstances were right for a renewed armed conflict.<sup>3</sup>

Post-war Cuba witnessed an array of demographic, socioeconomic, and political changes. Prospects of a veritable reconciliation between Cubans and Spaniards remained elusive, however. By the early 1890s, Spanish intransigence to the implementation of meaningful political and economic reforms in Cuba resulted in the organization of a new Cuban separatist movement under the leadership of José Martí, Antonio Maceo, and Máximo Gómez. It also led to the initiation of a three-year civil war in Cuba, which ended in U.S. military intervention in 1898 and the Spanish loss of its remaining overseas colonies.

This final chapter of the dissertation has three objectives. First, it determines why the first Cuban separatist war failed in 1878. Second, I examine the process of

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<sup>2</sup> Collazo, *Desde Yara hasta el Zanjón*, 95; Poyo, "With All, and for the Good of All," 20, 50.

<sup>3</sup> Gómez, *Horas de tregua*, 82, 111-112; letter "[t]o the editor of *The Evening Post*" from José Martí, dated March 23, 1889, in José Martí, *Selected Writings*, ed. and trans. Esther Allen (New York: Penguin Books, 2002), 263, 267.

peace negotiations, the terms of the Pact of Zanjón, and the political ramifications of the peace agreement. The Spanish government's inability to fulfill the Pact of Zanjón's conciliatory spirit damaged its credibility with Cubans. Third, I ascertain why post-war socioeconomic and political conditions on the island led to start of the Cuban War of Independence of 1895.

### **Why the Cuban Separatist Movement Collapsed**

Although the Cuban Republic confronted difficulties throughout the Ten Years' War, events began to take a turn for the worse in 1875 and continued to deteriorate from that point forward. Between 1875 and 1878, the insurrectionist movement was beleaguered with both military and civil mutinies, the deaths and captures of high-ranking military officers and civil leaders, and a scarcity of army recruits and weapons. This situation triggered the breakdown of the insurgent government, the desertion of rebel troops, the surrender of thousands of Cuban separatists to Spanish authorities and, ultimately, the acceptance of the Pact of Zanjón.

The incident of 1875, which set off a chain reaction of disastrous events, was the separatist invasion of the western provinces, beginning with Las Villas. This enterprise sparked disputes between factions either in support of offensive attacks or defensive military strategies. Furthermore, this invasion underscored the island's strong regionalism, the tendencies of *caudillismo* among some military commanders, and the racial fears plaguing the Cuban insurrection.

The plan of a western invasion was a heated matter of contention among separatist leaders throughout the Ten Years' War. The more conservative patriots, such as Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, sought to gain the favor of western *hacendados* by advocating the gradual emancipation of slaves. Hence, for insurgent conservatives a western invasion involving military attacks on sugar plantations and the immediate liberation of slaves, which was the plan that the more radical members of the separatist rebellion supported, would jeopardize whatever chance the *mambises* had of gaining financial and military support from western planters. According to Cuban historian Nydia Sarabia, Céspedes believed that the matter of immediate slave emancipation “was an extremely delicate social question.”<sup>4</sup>

Historian Ada Ferrer explains why the liberation of slaves as a result of an insurgent-led offensive into the Western Department raised concerns among conservative separatists. According to her, in 1873, General Máximo Gómez's request from “the government for five hundred men under the command of Antonio Maceo to carry out the western invasion . . . produced suspicion and consternation among elements of the white civilian rebel leadership.”<sup>5</sup> On the Creoles' racial fears, Ferrer further argues:

Now the idea of Maceo leading the rebels into western territory, the economic center of the Cuban colony, and freeing slaves in zones where slaves far outnumbered the free white population fed speculation about Maceo's role not only in the rebellion but in the free republic it sought to create. Maceo, rumor had it, sought nothing other than to convert Cuba into a free black republic and to declare himself its undisputed leader.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Sarabia, *Ana Betancourt Agramonte*, 57.

<sup>5</sup> Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*, 58-59.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

According to Pérez, General Gómez pressed the separatist administration to authorize an assault on the Western Department because “[h]e believed that the incorporation of slaves in the rebellion was both militarily necessary and morally correct.” Pérez further asserts that “[t]he incorporation of slaves into the separatist armies also promised to add numbers to insurgent columns while disruption of sugar production denied revenues to loyalist coffers.”<sup>7</sup> Moreover, the *villareños* were in dire need of assistance as O’Kelly explains: “The construction of the *trocha* southward had the effect of causing the majority of the bands to abandon the district [of Trinidad, Las Villas], from fear of being cut off from their friends in the Central and Eastern Departments, where from the outset the chief strength of the insurrection has lain.”<sup>8</sup> The Júcaro-Morón *trocha* and the presence of Spanish forces in Las Villas for the protection of sugarcane and coffee estates made the struggle for independence an uphill battle for the *villareños*. Being cut off from their partners in the east meant that soldiers and arms were scarce in Las Villas. Thus, an invasion of the western provinces would ensure the continuation of the war in Las Villas, its introduction into Matanzas, Havana, and Pinar del Río, and the collapse of the Cuban economy.<sup>9</sup>

General Gómez submitted his proposal for the invasion of the western provinces to the insurgent government in October 1871 but, for the reasons explained above, it was not accepted until December 1873. After considerable planning and organization, on January 6, 1875, Gómez crossed the *trocha* and invaded Las Villas

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<sup>7</sup> Pérez, *Cuba: Between Reform and Revolution*, 124.

<sup>8</sup> O’Kelly, *The Mambi-Land*, 75-76.

<sup>9</sup> Thomas, *Cuba, or the Pursuit of Freedom*, 256.

with 1,164 soldiers and 464 horses. Most of the horses used in the operation came from Camagüey, while most of the troops originated from Las Villas itself. For the assault, Gómez also had 1,639 guns and 22,761 bullets at his disposal.<sup>10</sup>

Once in Las Villas, Gómez quickly realized that he was unfamiliar with the territory and did not have enough resources to combat Spanish forces. He called for reinforcements from the east and, while some came from Camagüey, a revolt soon occurred within the Cuban separatist movement regarding the sending of more troops to Las Villas.<sup>11</sup> Known as the Protest of Lagunas de Varona, the uprising occurred on April 26, 1875 near Tunas. Major General Vicente García was said to lead some 2,000 officers, troops, and civil leaders from Oriente in rebelling against government orders to reinforce the insurgency in Las Villas. Instead, the protestors called for the resignation of President Cisneros Betancourt, arguing that the two-year interim government was undemocratic and that it could not gain the confidence of either Cubans or other nations because of its illegitimacy. Moreover, they blamed Cisneros Betancourt for the Liberation Army's shortage of arms. As a result, the manifesto called for the election of new legislators, who then would select a new president.<sup>12</sup> In an attempt to settle this political crisis, Cisneros Betancourt stepped down from the presidency in late June 1875. He was replaced by another interim president, Colonel Juan B. Spotorno, the House leader from Las Villas.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Gómez, *Diario de campaña*, 59-60, 90-91, 101, 114-115.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 121, 132, 135-137.

<sup>12</sup> Hortensia Pichardo, ed., *Documentos para la historia de Cuba*, vol. 1 (Havana: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1977), 389-393.

<sup>13</sup> Figueredo, *La revolución de Yara*, 240.

While several published primary accounts disparage García's conduct, a closer examination of this conflict can lead us to a clearer understanding of why the failed invasion of Las Villas in 1875 sparked the downfall of an already weakened Cuban separatist movement.<sup>14</sup> According to Florencio García Cisneros, the grandson of Vicente García, Gómez's aim of placing Cuban troops on the offensive in Las Villas created opposition within the Liberation Army because a large contingent of Spanish troops was stationed in Las Villas, which would overwhelm the smaller insurgent army. Moreover, there was great disorganization in Las Villas, which meant that sending reinforcements from the eastern provinces would be a serious waste of military resources. For these reasons, García Cisneros believes that Gómez's plan of western expansion was unpopular and doomed to failure.<sup>15</sup> In addition, it appears that there was a significant number of military protesters, both high-ranking officers and rank-and-file soldiers, who favored a defensive military strategy reminiscent of what Manuel de Quesada had advocated over offensive strikes due to the scarcity of men and arms in the face of a larger and better-equipped Spanish Army.<sup>16</sup>

In addition, according to Fernando Figueredo, a strong sense of regionalism in Cuba hindered the separatist movement from attaining solid unification. The rivalries

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<sup>14</sup> See Figueredo's *La revolución de Yara* and Ramón Roa's *Pluma y machete* for accounts in support of Gómez's actions and in opposition to those of Vicente García with regard to the Las Villas campaign. Fernando Figueredo, a *bayamés*, joined the rebel movement in October 1868 and was the nephew of Major General Luis Figueredo. He became a colonel in the Liberation Army and served as President Céspedes's secretary. In 1878, Figueredo fought with General Antonio Maceo in the Protest of Baraguá. Roa, a *villareño*, became Gómez's secretary following the death of Ignacio Agramonte in 1873. He attained the rank of lieutenant colonel in the Ten Years' War.

<sup>15</sup> Florencio García Cisneros, *Máximo Gómez, ¿Caudillo o dictador?* (New York: Ediciones Universal, 1986), 24-27.

<sup>16</sup> See Chapter 2 for Quesada's military strategic viewpoint.

were particularly intense between Camagüey and Oriente, and Las Villas and Camagüey. The issue of regionalism between Camagüey and Las Villas does help to explain, in part, the *villareños*' rejection of Major General Julio Sanguily and some *camagüeyano* military leaders who served under Gómez. *Villareños* Comandante Manuel Barrera, Chief of Sanitation José Figueroa, and Colonel Francisco Jiménez spoke out against Sanguily, the *camagüeyano* officers, and Gómez himself to Tomás Estrada Palma, who became the president of the republic on March 29, 1876. Gómez was criticized, perhaps due to the fact that he was Dominican-born, or because of his propensity for strict discipline and authoritarian rule over his troops, to which the *villareños* may not have been accustomed or willing to endure. The argument of regionalism, however, becomes faulty when it is juxtaposed with the *villareños*' wish for Major General Carlos Roloff, a native of Poland, to replace Gómez as the head of their army, which is exactly what occurred on October 1, 1876.<sup>17</sup>

Another important factor in the collapse of the Las Villas campaign and the Cuban insurgency as a whole was the inability of the separatist movement to overcome internal racial conflicts. Conservative members of the separatist leadership opposed an invasion of the Western Department out of fear that it ultimately would result in the foundation of "a free black republic."<sup>18</sup> Moreover, Gómez had worked extensively with Afro-Cuban officers, including Emiliano and Flor Crombet, the Maceo brothers, Moncada, and Policarpo "Rustán" Pineda, who served under him in

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<sup>17</sup> Figueredo, *La revolución de Yara*, 290-291, 294, 304-305; Guerra, *Guerra de los 10 años*, 2: 269, 272; Pichardo, *Documentos para la historia de Cuba*, 1: 389; Manuel Sanguily, *Obras de Manuel Sanguily: Frente a la dominación española: Escritos políticos*, vol. 8 (Havana: Molina y Ca., Impresores, 1941), 27; Collazo, *Desde Yara hasta el Zanjón*, 58-60.

<sup>18</sup> Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*, 58-59; Thomas, *Cuba, or the Pursuit of Freedom*, 264-265.

his campaigns in the jurisdictions of Santiago and Guantánamo in 1870-1871.<sup>19</sup> Along with these officers, he also had many Afro-Cuban rank-and-file soldiers under his command in Oriente. Deemed “a populist” by Ferrer, Gómez was not looked upon favorably by some in the white *camagüeyano* separatist elite, particularly Ignacio Mora, who alleged that the Dominican general was not instilling discipline in his Afro-Cuban troops. On a wider scale, as Ferrer argues, this perceived lack of discipline within the insurgent movement is why Mora doubted that Cuban independence would prevail. The white *villareño* leadership may have rejected Gómez’s command of their army due to his prior reliance on Afro-Cuban officers and soldiers in conducting his military campaigns, in addition to the island’s intense regionalism.<sup>20</sup>

The ultimate motive behind the collapse of the western invasion was the rise of *caudillismo* within the separatist insurrection, which the Cuban provisional government failed to curtail. Cuban scholar Ramiro Guerra has criticized Estrada Palma for submitting too easily to the demands of *villareño* officers with regard to the removal of Gómez as the head of the Las Villas army. In addition, the *camagüeyano* and *oriental* officers stationed in Las Villas soon returned to the eastern provinces rather than face attacks from the *villareños*. As Guerra correctly states, Estrada Palma’s inability to control the *villareños* led to “the cessation of plans for the invasion of Occidente, the last hope of defeating the Spaniards and ejecting them from Cuba.” The republican president further complicated matters when he

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<sup>19</sup> Souza, *Máximo Gómez: El Generalísimo*, 45, 47-51.

<sup>20</sup> Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*, 52, 58-59.



nominated Vicente García as the new commander of the Las Villas army due to his brief capture of Tunas in September 1876, a charge which he accepted in February 1877. Taking into account García's previous actions at Lagunas de Varona, this appointment only foreshadowed more misfortunes for the Cuban insurgency.<sup>21</sup>

Although the republican administration called on Vicente García to replace Gómez as the military chief of Las Villas, the *tunero* soldiers accompanying him to his new assignment quickly abandoned him, which caused García to reconsider his march across the *trocha*. Subsequently, in May 1877, members of García's staff promulgated a manifesto declaring García as the leader of their rebellion known as the Protest of Santa Rita. Consequently, this internal revolt against the separatist administration contributed to a large-scale desertion and surrender of *camagüeyano* forces to General Martínez Campos, thereby dealing a lethal blow to the insurgent cause.<sup>22</sup>

Meanwhile, the *villareños* continued to fight sporadically in small bands, as they did throughout the war. The arrival of Spanish reinforcements in 1876 under Martínez Campos's leadership, however, posed an awesome, even insurmountable challenge to the dwindling Cuban forces in Las Villas, which the Spanish government considered "pacified" by 1877.<sup>23</sup> By failing to invade the Western Department, insurgent forces were unable to free large numbers of slaves, who could have fulfilled the separatist camp's urgent need for manpower.

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<sup>21</sup> Guerra, *Guerra de los 10 años*, 2: 272-274.

<sup>22</sup> Collazo, *Desde Yara hasta el Zanjón*, 60-64.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 60-61.

As the separatist war in Las Villas faced defeat, the insurrection in Holguín, a city and a jurisdiction of the same name in northeastern Oriente, also confronted internal divisions, which threatened to cause the collapse of the Cuban Republic. Holguín was a sugar and coffee-producing enclave with one of the largest populations in the eastern provinces. In 1862, Holguín held 52,123 inhabitants, of whom 40,852 were whites (seventy-eight percent of the jurisdiction's population) and 11,271 were Afro-Cubans (twenty-two percent). Of those 11,271 Afro-Cubans, 4,226 were slaves.<sup>24</sup> The significant distance from Holguín to the southern jurisdictions of Oriente instilled in the *holguineros* a sense of independence. Moreover, by 1877, they were isolated from other insurgent forces and had repeatedly failed to take the city of Holguín, which deeply wounded army morale. Hence, this situation was ripe for an internal struggle for power. It only needed a spark, which is exactly what the Protest of Lagunas de Varona did for Holguín.<sup>25</sup>

The Cuban separatist movement faced two specific crises in Holguín. First, a military split occurred when Lieutenant Colonel Limbano Sánchez and his followers refused to be led by Lieutenant Colonel Juan Ríos Rivera, a Puerto Rican who headed the Fifth Regiment of Holguín, or Brigadier General Antonio Maceo, whom Sánchez threatened to kill. In an attempt to resolve the situation, General Máximo Gómez partitioned Holguín between Sánchez and Ríos's forces, which had the effect of creating disorder in the region. Moreover, Sánchez and his men undoubtedly rejected

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<sup>24</sup> *Los censos de población y viviendas en Cuba: Estimaciones, empadronamientos y censos de población de la época colonial y la primera intervención norteamericana*, tomo 1, vol. 2 (n.p.: Comité Estatal de Estadísticas, Instituto de Investigaciones Estadísticas, n.d.), 114-116.

<sup>25</sup> Figueredo, *La revolución de Yara*, 420, 453, 459.

Maceo based on his race. Since sugar and coffee production founded on slave labor were the chief industries in Holguín, racial attitudes were more rigid there, making it difficult for Creoles to accept an Afro-Cuban as a military commander, since such a person could upset the existing social structure in the jurisdiction.<sup>26</sup>

Second, political turmoil erupted when José Enríquez Collado, the House representative of Holguín, proclaimed the jurisdiction a free canton separated from the authority of the Cuban provisional government under Estrada Palma. Collado became the cantonal president and several military commanders in the region sided with him. In *La revolución de Yara*, Figueredo suggests that Collado opposed the Estrada Palma administration because it could not maintain “order,” though Figueredo does not explain what order meant for Collado. Perhaps the Collado faction abandoned the Cuban separatist movement because it objected to the rise of Afro-Cubans in the insurgent military leadership, particularly in southern Oriente. Ultimately, the *holguinero* cantonalists supported autonomy over independence, and most of them deserted or surrendered to Spanish forces by early February 1878.<sup>27</sup>

Other destabilizing factors contributing to the demise of the Cuban Republic included the deaths, captures, and surrenders of high-ranking civil and military leaders. In October 1877, House President Eduardo Machado and representative Colonel Francisco La Rúa, both outspokenly in favor of independence, were killed by Spanish troops. At the same time, insurgent Esteban de Varona presented proposals of surrender from the Spanish camp. For this crime of treason, Varona was executed.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 438-441, 453, 458.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 458-460, 495-497, 554.

Worse still, Spanish forces captured President Estrada Palma later that month, dealing yet another blow to an already debilitated movement. In December, the House of Representatives nominated Vicente García to replace Estrada Palma as president, a position which García accepted. Consequently, separatists, who had little faith in García's ability to win the struggle for liberation due to his past actions, either abandoned the movement or became more receptive to peace talks.<sup>28</sup>

Finally, a growing lack of Cuban exile support resulted in a severe shortage of army recruits and weaponry, which hindered the Liberation Army in defeating Spanish forces and advancing westward across Cuba. Exile support in the United States declined drastically as a result of political conflicts in the Cuban expatriate communities, and increased Spanish and U.S. vigilance against Cuban filibuster expeditions. Nonetheless, as Gerald E. Poyo argues, the Cuban insurgency "failed to produce a powerful nationalist constituency united in vision and strategy, leaving the rebellion vulnerable to division, and ultimately, defeat."<sup>29</sup>

### **The Mission of Martínez Campos**

During the Ten Years' War, the captain generals of Cuba faced the immense difficulty of acting as both the highest civil and military authority of the island. This situation signified that they could not devote their attention exclusively to military operations since they also had pressing administrative matters to attend to in Havana.

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<sup>28</sup> Once García was nominated, Máximo Gómez resigned as the secretary of war, a position that he held since his departure from Las Villas in 1876. Collazo, *Desde Yara hasta el Zanjón*, 75-77; Guerra, *Guerra de los 10 años*, 2: 340, 347-348; Roa, *Pluma y machete*, 207-208.

<sup>29</sup> Poyo, "With All, and for the Good of All," 20, 50.

Seeing how these circumstances complicated the Spanish effort to end the Cuban insurrection, particularly following the debacle of Tunas, the Cánovas ministry sent Martínez Campos to Cuba as the new general-in-chief of the Spanish Army, leaving Captain General Jovellar in charge of political and socioeconomic issues in Havana. The Spanish government hoped that this plan would ensure a more expedient resolution of the war. Although Jovellar was skeptical of Cánovas's decision, he accepted the separation of civil and military powers for the sake of ending the insurgency.<sup>30</sup> Martínez Campos, fresh from his victory over the Carlists, embarked for Cuba with 14,000 reinforcements. Twenty-four thousand men had already gone before him, giving him command of between 52,000 and 70,000 troops in Cuba in 1876.<sup>31</sup> He arrived in Havana on November 3, 1876.

Jovellar and Martínez Campos's working relationship was marked by a conciliatory tone. Both agreed that Martínez Campos would head the military operations and "issue [political] proclamations with the force of the law" to facilitate an end to the war, and Jovellar would preside over "the civil and economic administration" of the insular government.<sup>32</sup> While several accounts indicate that

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<sup>30</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 3: 363-366.

<sup>31</sup> Earl R. Beck estimates the total number of forces at the disposal of Martínez Campos at 70,000, whereas Antonio Pirala approximates the total number of troops at 78,000, subtracting the sick and the wounded, the dead, and those who completed their tours of duty, which leaves the number of available forces down to 52,785 men. According to Pirala, 26,132 Spanish troops were delivered to Cuba between September 20 and December 20, 1876. Finally, the Spanish minister of war, General Francisco de Ceballos, calculated that between August 15 and November 20, 1877, 11,315 troops and officers were sent to Cuba from Spain. See Earl R. Beck, "The Martínez Campos Government of 1879: Spain's Last Chance in Cuba," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 56:2 (May, 1976): 269-271; Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 3: 378, 403-404; letter to the Ministro de Ultramar from Francisco de Ceballos, dated November 27, 1877, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4936, Caja 2, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 239.

<sup>32</sup> Letter to the Ministro de la Guerra, dated January 28, 1877, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4936, Caja 2, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 22.

Jovellar and Martínez Campos had a harmonious working relationship, Jovellar appeared to have been more conservative than Martínez Campos in confronting the insurgency as his prior record in Cuba demonstrates. Thus, Jovellar took seriously Spanish conservatives' criticisms of Martínez Campos's liberal political policy for ending the Cuban insurrection. Nonetheless, the relationship was a stable one considering that there was not any public rupture between them and since they both worked diligently to end the war in Cuba.<sup>33</sup>

Once in Cuba, Martínez Campos introduced a "politics of attraction," a policy similar to that of Dulce in the extent of clemency granted to Cuban insurgents. As a result, the Spanish general's political policies had their share of criticism from conservatives in Cuba and Spain, yet as Martínez Campos wrote in a letter to insurgent Lieutenant Colonel Esteban Duque Estrada, he had "a true desire of peace," and sought an end to "this fratricidal war" and a return to "tranquility for this beautiful country."<sup>34</sup> There were great expectations in Cuba that Martínez Campos would defeat the rebellion because of his previous victories at Sagunto and in Catalonia, which were not lost on the Spanish general. His correspondence written during the peace negotiations reveals both a sincere hope for peace and despair at the possibility of continued warfare.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 3: 408; Thomas, *Cuba, or the Pursuit of Freedom*, 266.

<sup>34</sup> Letter to "Estéban [*sic*], Duque de Estrada" from Campos, dated February 3, [1878], in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4937, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 2. Document no. 2 is entitled "Documentos referentes á las conferencias del Centro, Cámara y Gobierno insurrecto. De 17 Diciembre 1877 á 5 Marzo 1878."

<sup>35</sup> See AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4937, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. nos. 2 and 4. Document no. 4 is entitled "Documentos pertenecientes á conferencias con Vicente García. Del 24 de Enero al 17 de Marzo de 1878."

Martínez Campos's political policy was the first vital component in his two-pronged attack on the insurgency. In unison with his swift military strategy, the general-in-chief began promulgating a series of concessions aimed at pacifying Cuba. Soon after he arrived in Havana in November 1876, he and Jovellar announced that all Spanish deserters who had joined the ranks of the Cuban Liberation Army would be fully pardoned and returned to their previous posts. After December 31, 1876, however, any traitor taken prisoner would be executed. Although the last clause of the decree was harsh, it was appealing in that terms of surrender were lenient and it gave deserters the opportunity of redeeming themselves. In addition, the exile of island residents for political reasons was rescinded; embargoes on insurgents, who had surrendered or were pardoned, were revoked, unless they were military or civil leaders, or those who were pardoned and later returned to the separatist ranks; confiscated properties of dead insurgents or exiles were returned to their families; and residents incarcerated without any evidence proving their treason were released.<sup>36</sup>

The military strategy of 1876-1877 had multiple parts. The chief-of-staff, Field Marshal Luis Prendergast, took a tour of Oriente and Camagüey, collected the advice of the officers on the field, and produced a report calling for specific improvements in the army. First, he discovered the Volunteers and local guerrillas in a weakened state. Both irregular forces were important components of the Spanish military, particularly the latter one, which was comprised of Cubans who knew the terrain and used similar tactics to those employed by the insurgents. The guerrillas

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<sup>36</sup> Newspaper clipping entitled "Del Diario español del 22 de Mayo de 1877," in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4936, Caja 2, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 79; Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 3: 370, 401-402.

and Volunteers had been underpaid and the Volunteers had suffered ill treatment at the hands of their Spanish superiors, thereby making their service unreliable and something less than fervently patriotic. Some of the Volunteers of Baracoa even deserted to Maceo's camp. Moreover, these forces were averse to fighting outside of their home districts, particularly since the Volunteers held other jobs there. In order to keep Spanish regular forces from merely maintaining a defensive war, it was imperative that the aforementioned irregular forces be paid in a timely manner and not be withdrawn from their native districts to procure the best results from them. Second, Prendergast believed that the system of detachments and fortifications took too many troops away from operations and demoralized them. Thus, it was determined that having Volunteers and guerrillas fortify agricultural communities was the appropriate solution, since it freed up regular forces for military operations, reduced banditry, and helped to augment food supplies for troops and loyalist civilians. Finally, Prendergast sought to improve sanitation, medical care, and the delivery of food provisions by convoy.<sup>37</sup>

With regard to the military reorganization, Martínez Campos named new *comandancias generales*, which were then separated into brigades. At the head of the Central Department was Brigadier General Federico Esponda y Morella; Remedios was led by Field Marshal Adolfo Morales de los Ríos; Field Marshal Manuel Cassola oversaw Sancti Spíritus; command of the *trocha* fell on Brigadier General Alejandro Rodríguez Arias; Brigadier General Sabas Marín headed Holguín; and Field Marshal

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<sup>37</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 3: 389-395.



José Sáenz de Tejada led Santiago de Cuba. Some of these generals would later serve as captain generals of Cuba during the interim war period due to their military experience in the Ten Years' War. In addition, Martínez Campos gave precise instructions to field commanders, specifying that they should keep detailed lists of troop numbers and prisoners, and provide summaries describing the "defensive situation of the camps," and the expanse between one Spanish column and another.<sup>38</sup>

Martínez Campos inaugurated a military course of action that emphasized the constant pursuit of the enemy. Upon his arrival in Havana, he left almost immediately for Las Villas to quell the rebellion there. In Las Villas alone, the general-in-chief concentrated seventeen battalions by March 1877. At the same time, nine battalions were stationed along the *trocha* and the remaining Spanish forces were destined for Camagüey and Oriente. The majority of the troops, however, stayed in Las Villas and along the *trocha* to keep insurgent forces from filtering back into Camagüey and Las Villas. This plan proved successful, partly due to a considerable rise in insurgent casualties and prisoners. Moreover, with Martínez Campos at the command of Spanish military operations, army morale improved.<sup>39</sup> In July 1877, Jovellar reported that the telegraph line running from Havana to Puerto Príncipe was re-connected after three years of being severed. Likewise, other telegraph lines in Oriente had been re-established. While operations in the Sierra Maestra remained difficult, Jovellar boasted that Maceo's forces had "diminished" considerably.<sup>40</sup> By

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 3:368-369.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 3: 372, 376, 402-403, 410.

<sup>40</sup> Telegram to the Ministro de la Guerra and the Ministro de Ultramar from Jovellar, dated July 12, 1877, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4936, Caja 2, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 152.

the end of October 1877, numerous insurgent officers had surrendered in Manzanillo, including Colonels Antonio Bello, Francisco Marcano, and Jaime Santiesteban. As a result, Brigadier General Ruiz was the only separatist military leader remaining in this district with some thirty soldiers under his command. Meanwhile, in Tunas, General José Miguel Barreto, a Venezuelan who had served under Vicente García, and a prefect were captured. Additionally, according to Jovellar, surrenders occurred regularly in Oriente and Camagüey, not only of insurgent troops and civil leaders, but of hundreds of separatist civilians as well.<sup>41</sup>

Another important reason behind the surrender of many insurgent troops and officers following the arrival of Martínez Campos was his policy of making payments to separatist fighters who capitulated to Spanish forces. The general-in-chief of the Spanish Army was said to offer “30,000 pesos in paper currency for each one hundred men,” yet if 500 troops surrendered at one time, the price would increase to 40,000 pesos for each one hundred men. Furthermore, the Spanish government was reported to present “fifteen thousand pesos in paper currency to each military chief” who surrendered.<sup>42</sup> According to Martínez Campos, the House and executive administration were “worth as much as one-third” of the total payments. At the same time, the *villareño* insurgent leaders General Serafín Sánchez, Brigadier General Francisco Jiménez, and Lieutenant Colonel Francisco Carrillo “[were] worth 10,000 duros each” if they surrendered, with Jiménez being worth “perhaps more.” This

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<sup>41</sup> Telegram to the Ministro de la Guerra and the Ministro de Ultramar from “El Capitan [*sic*] general,” dated October 22, [1877], in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4936, Caja 2, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 202; telegram to the Ministro de la Guerra and the Ministro de Ultramar from the Capitan [*sic*] General, dated October 28, 1877, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4936, Caja 2, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 214.

<sup>42</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 3: 521-522.

policy, however, only increased Cuba's war debt. At one point, Martínez Campos groused that "in Bayamo 700 men and 2,000 families ha[d] cost some 70,000 pesos in paper currency." Moreover, Martínez Campos believed that the *villareño* insurgents were delaying the peace process "only to raise [the] price," which deeply offended his sense of military honor.<sup>43</sup>

It is unclear how many insurgents accepted Spanish payments. General Máximo Gómez's claim that he declined Martínez Campos's "offers of money and positions of importance on the Island" appears to be confirmed by the poverty that he and his family endured in Jamaica following the conclusion of the Ten Years' War.<sup>44</sup> On the other hand, separatist Lieutenant Colonel Ramón Roa states that, following the insurgent capitulation, Martínez Campos presented "to the Cuban officers pay of two months in accordance with their ranks and our [insurgent] law of salary." According to Roa, "many accepted [the Spanish proposal] to make donations to our prisoners and needy families," while also maintaining that "some did not accept because it was not necessary for them." The extensive deprivation that many separatists had suffered by the end of the insurgency led them to accept the Spanish disbursements.<sup>45</sup>

Martínez Campos's successful political and military campaigns also appear to have demoralized the Cuban exile communities. Writing in the autumn of 1877, the Spanish consul in Jamaica argued that a "change . . . has taken place in this Island in

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<sup>43</sup> Communication to the "Comandante Gral. de Spíritus" from Campos, no date given, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4937, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 8; communication to Fuentes from Campos, no date given, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4937, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 8. Document no. 8 is entitled "Documentos referentes á las negociaciones en las Comandancias Generales de las Villas y Trocha. Presentación de las fuerzas de Roloff, Giménez [*sic*], Carrillo, Gómez etc."

<sup>44</sup> Gómez, *Diario de campaña*, 202, 207; Roa, *Pluma y machete*, 218-219.

<sup>45</sup> Roa, *Pluma y machete*, 218-219.

the public opinion on the question of Cuba, and even in the very conduct of the majority of the Cubans residing in Jamaica . . . due to the beneficent resolutions of that [Spanish] Government.”” According to the consul, many Cuban exiles in Jamaica were receptive to the Spanish decree which allowed them to return to Cuba.<sup>46</sup>

Additionally, the Spanish insular government in Cuba sought to revitalize the Cuban economy by distributing plots of state land to those rural people whose livelihoods had been devastated by the war. Moreover, Captain General Jovellar requested a five-year moratorium on taxing farms that had been destroyed and a three-year tax suspension ““on new industries”” in the eastern provinces, which King Alfonso XII approved. Then, on October 27, 1877, Alfonso XII authorized Jovellar to allocate state-owned land to soldiers of the Spanish Army and Volunteers, to poor loyalists living in towns, and to insurgents who surrendered and were pardoned. Following a trial ownership of three years, the allotment would not be taxed for a period of five years. This decision was made to reward loyalists and to provide former insurgents with some means of subsistence to keep them from returning to the separatist ranks. Since military and civilian loyalists took precedence over ex-rebels, however, the latter would have received less land, which would have made it difficult for the Cuban rural working and middle classes to recover economically in the aftermath of the insurrection. In socioeconomic and political terms, this situation

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<sup>46</sup> Letter to the Subsecretario del Ministerio de Ultramar from Subsecretario [del Ministerio de Estado] Rafael Ferraz, dated November 21, 1877, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4936, Caja 2, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 243.

would marginalize many Cubans and increase their resentment toward the metropolis.<sup>47</sup>

In another economic matter, Jovellar petitioned for female livestock to be imported duty-free into Oriente and Camagüey for a period of two years to encourage the reproduction of farm animals since many of them had been slaughtered during the course of the insurrection. The minister of Ultramar, in conjunction with the Banco Colonial, granted his request.<sup>48</sup>

The allotment of state land to loyalists and pardoned insurgents, and the importation of tax-free livestock spoke to a larger issue in Cuba, which was the terrible devastation that the insurgency had wrought on agricultural production. In Alfonso XII's decree relating to the land distribution, it was emphasized that, in order for one to keep his plot, it had to be farmed for the first three years that it was held. Thus, cultivation for personal and local consumption was a high priority of the Spanish administration.<sup>49</sup> It also should be noted that Cuba frequently suffered hurricanes, which could ruin much of the island's crops. In late October 1876, Cuba was struck by a hurricane which, according to Jovellar, wiped out as much as twenty-

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<sup>47</sup> Telegram to the Ministro de Ultramar from the Gobernador General de la Isla de Cuba, dated October 23, 1877, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4936, Caja 2, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 205; telegram to the "Gobernador general de la isla de Cuba" from the Ministro de Ultramar, dated October 24, 1877, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4936, Caja 2, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 210; "Real Decreto," signed by Alfonso XII and Ministro de Ultramar Cristóbal Martín de Herrera, dated October 27, 1877, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4936, Caja 2, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 213. In this last document, Cristóbal Martín de Herrera stated in an exposition dated October 27, 1877 that over 800,000 hectares of land in Cuba remained "uncultivated and disposable."

<sup>48</sup> Telegram to the Ministro de Ultramar from the Gobernador General de la Isla de Cuba, dated October 23, 1877, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4936, Caja 2, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 205; telegram to the "G[obernador] G[eneral] [de] Cuba" from the Ministro de Ultramar, dated November 3, 1877, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4936, Caja 2, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 221.

<sup>49</sup> "Real Decreto," signed by Alfonso XII and Ministro de Ultramar Cristóbal Martín de Herrera, dated October 27, 1877, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4936, Caja 2, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 213.

five percent of crops from Cienfuegos to Guanajay in Pinar del Río province. Under peaceful conditions, Cuba would be able to bounce back from such a natural disaster, but since the island had endured eight years of ravaging warfare, this hurricane proved to be a more serious matter for the Spanish government, since it decreased an already dwindling food supply.<sup>50</sup>

To pay for new military and economic expenditures, the insular government was guaranteed a loan of between fifteen and twenty-five million pesos from a group of Spanish creditors to be repaid over a ten-year period with an exorbitant annual interest rate of ten percent. It was determined that payment of the debt would be settled through the collection of Cuba's customs revenues. While this method promised the amortization of the loan, it also guaranteed a rise in Cuba's budget deficits and an increase in tax exactions imposed on the Cuban populace.<sup>51</sup> In order to end the insurrection, however, considerable expenditures were required. In over one month alone, Martínez Campos estimated that he had lost 1,000 troops and spent two million pesos on the war. In January 1877, Jovellar obtained two million pesos of the loan to cover military costs. By December, the insular government would receive five million pesos more from the Banco Colonial.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Telegram to the Ministro de Ultramar from Gobernador General Jovellar, dated October 24, [1876], in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4936, Caja 1, Exp. 1, Doc. no. 212.

<sup>51</sup> *Empréstito de Cuba. 1876* (Madrid: Imprenta Nacional, 1876), 5, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4936, Caja 1, Exp. 1, Doc. no. 260.

<sup>52</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 3: 511; telegram to the Ministerio de Ultramar from Jovellar, dated January 10, [1877], in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4936, Caja 2, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 5; telegram to the "Gobernador general de Cuba" from the Ministro de Ultramar, dated January 14, 1877, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4936, Caja 2, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 8; telegram to the "Gobernador general de la isla de Cuba" from the Ministro de Ultramar, dated October 4, 1877, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4936, Caja 2, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 193.

The political, military, and economic measures taken by the Spanish government in 1877, in addition to the debilitating internal conflicts within the separatist movement, underscored the rapid decline of the Cuban Republic.

### **The Pact of Zanjón**

The political downfall of the Cuban separatist government and the demoralization of the Liberation Army, coupled with the shrewd politics and swift military offensive of the Spanish captaincy general and army, paved the way for peace negotiations by December 1877. Technically, the rebels were barred from negotiating with the Spanish due to the promulgation of the Spotorno decree of 1875, which declared “that all individuals proceeding from the enemy camp who presents in speech or writing propositions of peace not founded on the basis of the Independence of Cuba shall be taken and judged as spies.” In other words, a separatist would be executed for negotiating terms of surrender with the Spanish, which was why Esteban de Varona had died.<sup>53</sup> Following the election of Vicente García to the republican presidency in December, House representatives, along with army officers General Máximo Gómez, Brigadier General Gabriel González, and Lieutenant Colonel Aurelio Duque Estrada, gathered at Loma de Sevilla in Camagüey to resolve how the separatist movement would proceed. Gómez recommended that the insurgent government request a ceasefire from Martínez Campos to determine whether the rebels would initiate peace negotiations or continue the war effort. If the

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<sup>53</sup> Collazo, *Desde Yara hasta el Zanjón*, 52.

latter point was approved, the Liberation Army would have bought time to regroup during the postponement of operations. Gómez's proposal was accepted, yet the representatives decided in favor of peace and, subsequently, abolished the Spotorno decree. Then, House President Salvador Cisneros Betancourt sent Aurelio Duque Estrada to meet with his uncle, Esteban Duque Estrada, whom the Spaniards had made a prisoner in Santa Cruz del Sur, to initiate peace talks with Cassola. At this time, Martínez Campos declared neutral the southeastern zone of the Central Department and Esteban Duque Estrada was dispatched to offer the Spanish proposal to postpone operations to rebel Brigadier General Gregorio Benítez, and other military and civil leaders in Camagüey. The Benítez camp, which included Cisneros Betancourt, accepted the plan to begin peace negotiations under a ceasefire, which was authorized until January 13, 1878.<sup>54</sup> Later, Martínez Campos extended the truce to February 10, 1878.<sup>55</sup>

The neutralization of a portion of southeastern Camagüey, however, did not occur without the criticism of some in the military leadership. For instance, General Cassola feared that the neutral zone would envelope the whole of the Central Department "where today all the operations are concentrated," adding with alarm that "it would be sterilizing the efforts of the troops," whom he regarded as the reason

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 75-76; Gómez, *Diario de campaña*, 190-191; Roa, *Pluma y machete*, 208-209; communication to the General en Jefe from Cassola, dated December 17, 1877, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4937, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 2; communication to Cassola from Campos, dated December 21, 1877, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4937, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 2; communication from Prendergast, no date given, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4937, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 2; communication to the Comandante General from the Jefe de Estado Mayor, no date given, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4937, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 2.

<sup>55</sup> Collazo, *Desde Yara hasta el Zanjón*, 78.



behind the downfall of the Cuban Republic.<sup>56</sup> While Martínez Campos conceded that rebels sought “to gain time” in requesting a neutral zone and beginning negotiations, he believed that the insurgents had “los[t] moral force” and averred that “[t]he neutralizing of a zone for them is the guarantee of dejection in others,” meaning in Oriente and Las Villas.<sup>57</sup>

The subordinates of Martínez Campos were also wary of the extended ceasefire granted to the insurgents, which they feared would serve as a façade for the rebel fighters to regroup and attack Spanish forces. For instance, chief-of-staff General Prendergast anticipated a rise in rebel activity in Manzanillo if the truce continued to be prolonged.<sup>58</sup> Moreover, as long as the break in hostilities endured, the Spanish Army had to suspend its winter campaign. One Spanish general, having grown weary of the House’s deliberations, feared that the army was squandering “the best season of the year” for fighting.<sup>59</sup>

Nonetheless, peace negotiations continued through the first two months of 1878. Martínez Campos conveyed peace terms to Vicente García through intermediaries. Among the most important of the Spanish proposals were that Cuba would receive the same rights and privileges that the Puerto Ricans enjoyed under their constitution; a general amnesty would be granted to Cuban and Spanish

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<sup>56</sup> “Contestacion [*sic*] Cassola,” no date given, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4937, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 2.

<sup>57</sup> Communication to Cassola from Campos, dated December 21, 1877, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4937, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 2.

<sup>58</sup> Communication to the Comandante General from the Jefe de Estado Mayor, no date given, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4937, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 2.

<sup>59</sup> “Telégrama [*sic*] del Gral. Arias,” no date given, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4937, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 8. Winter is the coolest and driest season in Cuba, which facilitated Spanish military operations.

insurgents and deserters of the Spanish Army; slaves and Asian contract workers fighting for the independence of Cuba would be freed from their services; ex-insurgents would not be forced to serve in the Spanish Army for the remainder of the war; and anyone wishing to go into exile would be allowed to leave Cuba. On February 5, García and some of his *tunero* forces met with the House and Benítez in Calilla to inform them of the peace proposal. Soon thereafter, Martínez Campos met with García, who promised to present the insurgent camp's own peace terms to the Spanish general. Although some insurgents believed that the ceasefire would lead to renewed fighting, others realized that the newly implemented policies of the Spanish government and the surrender of hundreds of separatists were too great to ameliorate the depressed state of army morale. Nonetheless, the representatives of the legislative assembly were displeased with García's actions and refused to submit a peace plan to Martínez Campos. Thus, on February 8, in San Agustín del Brazo, the military chiefs decided to resolve the issue and they voted overwhelmingly in favor of peace, leading the House to disband.<sup>60</sup>

In place of the House and executive administration, a Comité del Centro of seven members was established to continue negotiations for surrender, while García served as the military head of the insurgent movement. Of this committee, Emilio Luaces and Lieutenant Colonel Ramón Roa met with Martínez Campos to finalize the terms of peace. Although the committee members sought to attain the implementation of the Spanish Constitution of 1876 in Cuba, which would grant

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<sup>60</sup> Collazo, *Desde Yara hasta el Zanjón*, 78-84; Roa, *Pluma y machete*, 211-212.

Cuba a status on par with other provinces in Spain, Jovellar denied their request fearing that it would eventually lead Cubans to demand a “distinct system of taxation.” Subsequently, the committee settled for equal status with Puerto Rico. The rebels also sought to insert in the peace pact a measure calling for Martínez Campos to become Cuba’s governor and ensure the realization of reforms. This clause too was abandoned, even though Martínez Campos would later serve as captain general after the war and, under his tenure, Cuba would have actual economic and political reforms. What the insurgents were able to achieve was a distinct wording of the clause relating to the general amnesty, which the Spaniards wished to include only Spaniards and Cubans, while the rebels sought to include all nationalities, considering that numerous separatists were Latin Americans, U.S. Americans, and non-Spanish Europeans. In addition, the Spanish government accepted an amnesty for all insurrectionists who had rebelled since 1868, putting aside that part of the initial proposal, which only pardoned those who were current insurgents. Once the peace accord had been completed, it was determined that all forces agreeing with it would formally surrender their arms on February 28, 1878.<sup>61</sup>

The Pact of Zanjón,<sup>62</sup> which was signed on February 10, 1878, guaranteed that Cuba would observe the same rights and privileges granted to Puerto Ricans in their constitution, conceded amnesty to all insurrectionists and “deserters of the Spanish Army,” emancipated slaves and Chinese indentured workers who sided with the Cuban separatist movement, did not require former insurgents to serve in the Spanish

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<sup>61</sup> Collazo, *Desde Yara hasta el Zanjón*, 84-87; Roa, *Pluma y machete*, 212.

<sup>62</sup> See Appendix D for a translation of the peace agreement.

military so long as the war continued, and allowed any inhabitant of Cuba to go into exile.<sup>63</sup> In its final form, the peace pact changed little from the proposals which Martínez Campos first offered to Vicente García.<sup>64</sup>

While the Comité del Centro, whose supporters were mostly *camagüeyanos*, accepted the peace accord, some rebel groups in Las Villas and Oriente continued their resistance to Spanish rule. In Las Villas, insurgent forces did not surrender until late February and into mid-March 1878. While some insurgent leaders, such as former House representative Marcos García, Brigadier General Francisco Jiménez, and General Serafín Sánchez favored peace, Generals Miguel Maestre and Carlos Roloff, and Lieutenant Colonel Francisco Carrillo were said to be seeking more compromises with the Spanish government, which Martínez Campos firmly denied to them. At the same time, the Spanish commander in the region received 60,000 pesos to ensure the surrender of *villareño* forces.<sup>65</sup> On February 28, 1878, the date of the capitulation for the *camagüeyanos* in Puerto Príncipe, the *villareños* also began surrendering their arms in Ojo de Agua, an encampment southwest of Santa Clara. The Spanish commander Arias reported: "Today the forces of Giménez [*sic*] and Sánchez have turned in their arms at Ojo de Agua . . . , there reunited in the number of 425 men, 71 women and 30 children." That same day, José Gómez's soldiers were

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<sup>63</sup> Pichardo, ed., *Documentos para la historia de Cuba*, 1: 403-404. There is an error in the document, which states that the peace agreement was signed in 1877, instead of 1878 – the correct year. The Pact of Zanjón also can be found in Gómez, *El Convenio del Zanjón* (Trinidad: Imp. de "El Imparcial," 1884), 16.

<sup>64</sup> Collazo, *Desde Yara hasta el Zanjón*, 87; Roa, *Pluma y machete*, 212.

<sup>65</sup> Communication to Campos from Arias, no date given, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4937, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 8; communication to Campos from Arias, dated February 20, [1878], in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4937, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 8; communication to Arias from Campos, no date given, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4937, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 8.

to relinquish their weapons at the *trocha*. Carrillo's troops in Remedios, which were estimated at fifty, would surrender on March 5, while Maestre's division of western Las Villas was reported to capitulate on March 15.<sup>66</sup>

Still, peace had yet to be achieved in all of Oriente. This fact weighed heavily on the mind of Martínez Campos since he had devoted all of his efforts to bringing the war to a definitive end. Additionally, both Martínez Campos and Jovellar were concerned with the effect that the peace pact would have in Spain.<sup>67</sup> Indeed, Spanish conservatives would later denounce the settlement as too lenient. As the victors in the decade-long insurrection, many *peninsulares*, as Pérez states, "were ill-disposed to support a policy of reconciliation that involved granting in peace concessions opposed during war." Moreover, "[b]y the end of the 1870s, many resident *peninsulares* had emerged as uncompromising advocates of stronger metropolitan authority in Cuba."<sup>68</sup>

The insurrection continued with the Protest of Baraguá, where a group of *oriental* insurgents led by Antonio Maceo met with Martínez Campos on March 15, 1878 to declare that they would not surrender until Cuban independence and slave emancipation had been achieved. Among the insurgent officers and troops who continued fighting the insurrection were Quintín Bandera, Manuel Calvar, the

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<sup>66</sup> Communication to Campos from Arias, no date given, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4937, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 8; communication to the General en Jefe from Arias, dated February 28, 1878, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4937, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 8.

<sup>67</sup> Communication from Campos, dated February 28, [1878], in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4937, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 2; communication from General Jovellar, no date given, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4937, Caja 2, Exp. 4, Doc. no. 2.

<sup>68</sup> Pérez, *Cuba between Empires, 1878-1902* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1983), 9-10, 12.

Crombet brothers, Fernando Figueredo, Vicente García, José Maceo, Guillermo Moncada, Limbano Sánchez, and Juan Ríos Rivera. There was not, however, enough popular support inside or outside of Cuba for the rebellion to succeed. Moreover, the Cubans were outnumbered in Oriente by Spanish columns and suffered a severe shortage of arms. Thus, on May 9, 1878, Maceo, in agreement with other members of the insurgent government, departed for Jamaica with the permission of Martínez Campos, yet did not formally surrender. Like Maceo, many insurgent officers only deemed the Pact of Zanjón a momentary truce. Suspecting that the Spanish government would not honor the provisions of the peace agreement, they believed that renewed warfare for independence would occur once a new movement could be organized and properly funded.<sup>69</sup>

### **The Aftermath of the Ten Years' War**

Cuba witnessed an important shift in demographics following the Ten Years' War. In 1862, the total population in Cuba was 1,359,238, increasing to 1,434,747 by 1877, and reaching 1,631,687 people by 1887. In terms of race, in 1862 there were 764,750 whites, among which there were 34,050 Chinese and 743 Yucatecans, and 594,488 Afro-Cubans (221,417 freedmen and women, 4,521 *emancipados* [slaves who were supposedly liberated following their capture from outlawed slave ships], and 368,550 slaves). By contrast, in 1877, the number of whites rose to 906,482, as did the number of Chinese to 47,116. Meanwhile, the number of Afro-Cubans -

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<sup>69</sup> Figueredo, *La revolución de Yara*, 574, 586, 620, 624-625.

471,272 - decreased (272,178 free Afro-Cubans, 3,531 *coartados* [slaves who purchased their emancipation], and 195,563 slaves). By 1887, the number of Afro-Cubans rose to 528,798 and the number of whites increased to 1,102,889.<sup>70</sup> The rise in the white population is due to Spanish immigration before and during the Ten Years' War. The increase in the Asian population can be explained by the fact that the Chinese labor trade to Cuba did not cease until 1877. The reduction in the Afro-Cuban population, which occurred before and during the Ten Years' War, can be explained by wartime casualties, along with an end to the slave trade and high mortality rates among slaves, which have already been mentioned in this dissertation. The growth in the number of people of color between 1877 and 1887 is attributed to an increase in the number of births following the end of the Cuban insurrection, "especially in the east, where emancipation was completed first."<sup>71</sup>

A regional demographic analysis demonstrates that, in 1862, there were 1,034,416 people in western Cuba and 324,822 inhabitants in the east. By 1877, the western provinces of Pinar del Río, Havana, Matanzas, and Santa Clara (Las Villas) had 1,175,883 people, while 258,864 persons lived in the provinces of Puerto Príncipe (Camagüey) and Santiago de Cuba (Oriente). Thus, as a result of wartime casualties, and immigration or migration to the western part of the island, the population in the east declined considerably. The population in the west, however, grew steadily as a result of migration from other provinces, immigration from Spain,

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<sup>70</sup> *Los censos de población y viviendas en Cuba*, tomo 1, vol. 2, 114-116, 130, 166-167. For an alternative version of the 1877 census, which was supervised by the Dirección General de Hacienda de la Isla de Cuba, Sección de Estadística Preparatoria and published in 1881, see Fe Iglesias García, "El censo cubano de 1877 y sus diferentes versiones," *Santiago* 34 (June 1979): 167-214.

<sup>71</sup> Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba*, 247-249.

and many Cuban exiles returning to the island near war's end. By 1887, the populations in both regions of the country would increase again with 340,168 people residing in the provinces of Puerto Príncipe and Santiago de Cuba, and 1,291,519 inhabitants living in the western provinces.<sup>72</sup>

The immediate effects of the conclusion of the separatist rebellion were significant in terms of economic changes. The damage done to the Cuban economy was acute as Roldán de Montaud states:

[M]any properties had been destroyed and the slaves had abandoned the farms. It was calculated that forty-five percent of the territorial wealth of Cuba had disappeared. It was estimated that the net revenue had decreased from 59,416,100 pesos in 1868 to 32,518,552 in 1878. From the year 1870 or 1871 to 1880 landowners had been losing annually, some five percent, [but] the majority ten percent of their capital.<sup>73</sup>

Hugh Thomas presents a similar picture of Cuba's post-war economy. Sugar production declined from 718,000 tons in 1875 to 590,000 tons in 1876, with output reaching a nadir in 1877 at 520,000 tons. Thomas writes that "though the crop of 1879 was high, the early 1880s saw a drop back to the averages reached in the 1860s, of a little over 500,000 tons per year." The late 1880s witnessed some improvement in sugar output as Cuba began producing over 600,000 tons per year and, in the first

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<sup>72</sup> *Los censos de población y viviendas en Cuba*, tomo 1, vol. 2, 116, 130-136, 167. The region of Puerto Príncipe (cities of Nuevitas and Puerto Príncipe) was not included in the Eastern Department in the 1862 Census. I added the populations of Nuevitas and Puerto Príncipe to that of the Eastern Department to obtain a population total for the eastern zone of Cuba for 1862.

<sup>73</sup> Roldán de Montaud, *La Hacienda en Cuba durante la guerra de los diez años (1868-1880)* (Madrid: Instituto de Cooperación Iberoamericana, Sociedad Estatal Quinto Centenario, and Instituto de Estudios Fiscales, 1990), 221-222.



half of the 1890s, sugar production increased significantly, catapulting past 1,000,000 tons for the first time in 1894 and again in 1895.<sup>74</sup>

The decline in sugarcane production in the aftermath of the Ten Years' War was due not only to the destruction of land wrought by both the Spaniards and the insurgents, but also by slaves' rightful unwillingness to return to the status quo following the end of the insurrection. Slave emancipation under the Cuban Republic caused many slaves to stop producing or to leave their plantations. Thus, sugar output plummeted, forcing planters to seek new methods of production.<sup>75</sup> In 1880, the Spanish colonial government enacted a law of emancipation under a system of labor called the *patronato*, which required slaves to work as apprentices to their former owners and "theoretically freed a portion of total slaves each year beginning in 1884." The *patronato* was established to hasten the shift from slavery to wage labor yet, when slavery was ultimately abolished in 1886, few wage workers had supplanted slave laborers, which also reduced sugar output.<sup>76</sup>

To combat the decline in labor, the actual mode of production required innovation. A division in sugarcane planting and sugar production had to occur in order for planters to remain financially afloat. Thus, the *colonia* was introduced in the post-war period as a means of solving this economic disaster. This term refers to tracts of land rented or owned by farmers who only produced sugarcane, which they later sold to mill owners to process into sugar. The *colonos*, as these renters or

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<sup>74</sup> Thomas, *Cuba, or the Pursuit of Freedom*, 271, and Appendix XIII: "Sugar Tables," 1574-1578.

<sup>75</sup> Laird W. Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society in the Nineteenth Century: The Social and Economic History of Monoculture in Matanzas* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 263.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 272-273.

landowners became known, were paid based on the amount of sugarcane that they conveyed to the *ingenio*. *Hacendados*, on the other hand, sought to increase production by modernizing their mills. The *central* was a highly mechanized mill, more so than the *ingenio*, which permitted an increase in output and a drop in the labor force. By the 1890s, the *central* would dominate the sugar industry. In addition, more railways were built in the interim war period connecting cane fields to the sugar mills to further encourage sugar production. These new inventions and accommodations allowed for the development of dynamic socioeconomic groups and for the Cuban sugar sector to recover by the first half of the 1890s.<sup>77</sup>

Closer commercial ties between Cuba and the United States also aided in Cuba's economic recovery in the early 1890s. Cuba and the British American colonies had engaged in trade since the early eighteenth century. By the nineteenth century, there was an increased demand for Cuban sugar and tobacco in the United States and, in return, the United States sold primarily wheat flour, manufactures, and lumber to Cuba. In 1891, Spain and the United States signed the Foster-Cánovas commercial treaty, in which Cuba and the United States each lowered tariffs on the other country's exports. This agreement had the effect of significantly increasing Cuba's sugar production to more than one million tons in 1894 and 1895. At the same time, U.S. Americans invested increasing large amounts of capital in the Cuban sugar industry.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 276-278, 283, 292.

<sup>78</sup> Pérez, *Cuba and the United States: Ties of Singular Intimacy*, 3, 62-63.

Despite the implementation of these necessary economic changes and stronger commercial ties with the United States, Cuba's financial situation remained precarious in the aftermath of Zanjón. Cuba was saddled with the payment of the financial liabilities incurred during the Ten Years' War. According to Roldán de Montaud, the estimates of the total war debt vary dramatically. While Pirala approximated the debt accumulated between October 1868 and March 1878 at 247 million pesos, former Minister of Ultramar Segismundo Moret estimated that "the debts of the Treasury and the capital taken through loans" amounted to 621 million pesos. Higher still, Spanish officer Félix "Camps y Felú assert[ed] that 700 million pesos in hard currency were spent, a number also furnished by [G]eneral Jovellar."<sup>79</sup> At any rate, the costs of the insurrection overwhelmed the Cuban Treasury. In the following statement, Roldán de Montaud accurately asserts that the war debt seriously damaged ties between Cuba and Spain:

Cuban public opinion, without distinction of parties, while the difficulties that faced sugar and tobacco production increased, manifested its opposition to [the idea] that only the Cuban Treasury would be charged in satisfying a great debt that had originated with the war, and that obligated successive governments to burden the budgets of spending with great quantities destined to satisfy the attentions of a debt whose holders resided outside of the country, and supposed that annually practically half of the budget of revenue would leave the country, while reproductive expenditures remained neglected.<sup>80</sup>

Partly as a result of this heavy debt burden, the financial status of Cuban *hacendados* became bleak. Spanish merchants charged inflated rates on credit as high as thirty percent which, along with the extensive devastation done to the land during

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<sup>79</sup> Roldán de Montaud, *La Hacienda en Cuba*, 260-262.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 260-261.

the insurrection, resulted in bankruptcy for many *hacendados* and a high turnover rate in the ownership of *ingenios*.<sup>81</sup> Additionally, the decline in the world price for sugar in the 1880s and 1890s, due to a rise in beet sugar production in Europe, also devastated planters. They were replaced by island residents, some of whom were newly arrived Spanish immigrants, with multiple business investments. In other cases, plantations were partitioned into *colonias*.<sup>82</sup>

Martínez Campos became the captain general of Cuba following the end of the Ten Years' War, replacing Jovellar and serving in Cuba until February 1879. Historian Earl R. Beck argues that the Spanish general "identified himself strongly with Cuban complaints and Cuban interests," adding that "the general emphasized that peace could be preserved only at the cost of reform."<sup>83</sup> In his brief tenure as Cuba's governor, Martínez Campos recommended a reduction of income taxes, and a lowering of tariffs between Cuba and Spain to boost exports from both countries. At the same time, he decreased taxes on livestock and began the economic development of isolated mountain regions. Martínez Campos also gave land allotments to loyalists who had served Spain during the war. On the political front, the captain general allowed the formation of political parties and promulgated elections of local delegates to be sent to the Cortes. When the general returned to Spain to head a government organized by Cánovas, however, his plans for reform in Cuba were severely criticized. The failure of Martínez Campos's agenda on tariff reductions for Cuba was

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<sup>81</sup> Thomas, *Cuba, or the Pursuit of Freedom*, 271.

<sup>82</sup> Bergad, *Cuban Rural Society in the Nineteenth Century*, 275, 292-298.

<sup>83</sup> Beck, "The Martínez Campos Government of 1879," 273.

rejected largely due to the political rivalry between Martínez Campos and Cánovas, and Cánovas's loyalty to Spanish manufacturers and merchants, who feared that economic reforms in Cuba would jeopardize their own commercial interests.<sup>84</sup> Likewise, actual political reform seemed out of the question for Cuba.

Politics in Cuba continued to be divisive following the end of the Ten Years' War. In July 1878, the Liberal, or Autonomist, party was founded. It was comprised of primarily Cuban elite landowners and middle-class professionals. The party's socioeconomic goals included gradual emancipation of slaves, lower import duties, an end to export tariffs, and the ability to make trade agreements with other countries. The Liberals' political agenda demanded self-government, with bureaucratic positions being filled by Cubans. In addition, they called for the observance of the Spanish constitution of 1876 in Cuba, and a division between military and political powers, which was an old request dating back to the days of the Junta de Información de Ultramar.<sup>85</sup> At the same time, conservatives, many of whom were Spanish planters, bureaucrats, merchants, and soldiers, formed the Partido Unión Constitucional, a political party dedicated to keeping Cuba "a colonial entity, subservient to and for the benefit of metropolitan interests." This meant that the Spanish conservatives pushed for a repressive political program in Cuba and mercantilist trade policies benefiting Spain, all of which was in direct opposition to the demands of the Autonomists.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 273-274, 279, 288-289.

<sup>85</sup> Pérez, *Cuba between Empires*, 7.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 10.

“In theory, a measure of constitutional reform had been instituted,” argues historian Philip S. Foner, “[b]ut in practice, the situation had hardly changed.”<sup>87</sup> These words aptly describe the lack of real political reforms enacted in Cuba during the interlude from war. Although the Spanish Constitution of 1876 was implemented in Cuba in 1881 and the Spanish government guaranteed Cubans the same rights bestowed on *peninsulares*, censorship of speech and press remained, and the right of assembly faced restrictions. Only white propertied men were allowed to vote in local elections, marginalizing women of all types, Afro-Cuban men, and the poor. Additionally, while municipal administrations and provincial assemblies were formed, the captain general had the authority to disband them. Moreover, island representatives elected to the Cortes could not vote on bills of legislation. Furthermore, Spaniards continued to control the insular bureaucracy and Cubans were refused the right to submit proposals for economic reforms to the Spanish government. What all of this signified was that the Autonomist party had failed to steer Cuba on to a course of political and socioeconomic transformation, as it had pledged. By the early 1890s, the party fell into disfavor with Cubans due to its ineffectiveness in dealing with the Spanish conservative opposition.<sup>88</sup>

Historian Alfonso W. Quiroz helps to determine why the Autonomist party collapsed in the 1890s. According to Quiroz, the Spanish campaign of seizing Cuban property during the decade-long insurrections had not only serious socioeconomic ramifications, but political ones as well. He states that through expropriation and

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<sup>87</sup> Foner, *A History of Cuba*, 2: 290.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 2: 289-292.

destruction of property, “the stunting and weakening of the island’s middle sectors contributed not only to the continued colonial domination of Spain but also to the perpetuation of social conditions that were adverse for democratic and nonelite reformist solutions to Cuba’s problems.” For Quiroz, one of the reasons why the Autonomist party failed to achieve political and socioeconomic reforms “was due to the relative political, economic, and social weakness of the middle sectors. Because of this weakness, a historic opportunity was lost to bring about a truly peaceful, gradualist transition toward Cuban independence.” Thus, the loss of Cuban wealth allowed Spanish conservatives to prolong “their economic and social domination of the island.” This situation, as Quiroz persuasively argues, led to the radicalization of the Cuban émigré communities, which carried weight in Cuban politics, and a violent severance of Cuba from Spain.<sup>89</sup>

While reformist projects floundered, Cuban émigré communities in the United States became galvanized under the radical leadership of José Martí, the Cuban president of the New York Junta. Although attempts had been made to revitalize the independence struggle in the Guerra Chiquita of 1879-1880 and the Gómez-Maceo plan of 1886, both movements lacked a strong base of popular support and necessary funding. Military leadership alone would not achieve independence. Martí firmly believed that in order for the separatist movement to succeed, it had to be one that included all races and classes, particularly the working poor, from whom he would receive considerable financial support. For Martí, the insurgents needed to dispense

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<sup>89</sup> Alfonso W. Quiroz, “Loyalist Overkill: The Socioeconomic Costs of ‘Repressing’ the Separatist Insurrection in Cuba, 1868-1878,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 78:2 (May, 1998): 305.

with racial and class differences, which caused the collapse of previous independence struggles, and unify themselves based on their shared Cuban identity. Through his dynamic rhetoric and painstaking cultivation of relationships with predominantly working-class exile communities, Martí paved the way for the formation of a strong independence movement based on civil leadership and popular backing. In January 1892, the Cuban Revolutionary Party was founded to unify the exile communities and to direct Cuba's war of liberation. Its program called for the independence of Cuba without annexation to the United States, democratic rule, and economic self-sufficiency. With these preparations already made, Martí asked Máximo Gómez to take the military command, which the Dominican-born general accepted. Other military officers who had served in the Ten Years' War, including Antonio Maceo, Guillermo Moncada, Julio Sanguily, and Bartolomé Masó, also joined the organization.<sup>90</sup>

In 1894, an economic development occurred in Cuba, which was favorable to the revolutionary movement. The United States began charging a tax of forty percent on Cuban sugar, thereby abrogating the Foster-Cánovas trade pact, which led Spain to react in a similar manner. Partly as a result, Cuban sugar production declined in 1896 to 225,000 tons, and export profits dwindled from \$64 million in 1893 to \$13 million in 1896.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Foner, *A History of Cuba*, 2: 305-311, 318-327.

<sup>91</sup> Pérez, *Cuba and the United States: Ties of Singular Intimacy*, 73-74. The success of the insurgent western invasion, which was completed by the end of 1895, also caused a sharp decline in Cuban sugar production.



Then, in January 1895, the Cuban Revolutionary Party announced that the Cuban insurgency would begin in February. Thus, on February 24, 1895, revolutionaries in the town of Baire in Oriente rose against Spanish rule and were seconded by insurgents in the town of Ibarra in Matanzas. A widespread insurrection would have to wait, however, until invading forces, led by Martí, Gómez, Maceo, and other veterans of the Ten Years' War, began disembarking in Oriente and Las Villas in the late spring of 1895. At this time, Pérez states that "[t]he 1895 sugar harvest had just ended, and thousands of sugar workers completing the cycle of semiannual employment found the call to arms in behalf of Cuba Libre an irresistible summons." With their aid and that of other Cubans, by January 1896, separatist forces had invaded every province of the island.<sup>92</sup>

## **Conclusion**

The failure of the Cuban separatist movement in the Ten Years' War had numerous causes. A dominant reason behind the collapse of the insurgency was the republican government's inability to promulgate a clear program of objectives to secure independence, which is exemplified in its inconsistent stance on independence without annexation to the United States, its ambiguous position on slavery, and its indecision in launching the western invasion. Additionally, conflicts between civil and military authorities, exhibited in the Protests of Lagunas de Varona and Santa Rita, and the cantonalist rebellion in Holguín, for control of the separatist movement

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<sup>92</sup> Pérez, *Cuba between Empires*, 43-45, 52.

further debilitated the insurgency. Regionalism, most prominently demonstrated in the *villareños* ' rejection of Gómez's military command in 1875 and his *camagüeyano* subordinates, was another divisive issue separating the insurgents from their common cause of independence from Spain. Moreover, a lack of racial cohesiveness hindered advances toward Cuban liberation. Lastly, U.S. opposition to the insurgency, and the Cuban exile community's inability to send troops and weaponry via filibuster expeditions also weakened and discouraged the Liberation Army. With the arrival of Martínez Campos in Cuba in 1876, the Spanish insular government implemented a liberal political program and a relentless military campaign to finally end the protracted Cuban armed conflict. The political and military breakdown of the Cuban separatist movement, however, greatly facilitated Spanish victory in the war.<sup>93</sup>

In the conclusion, I reexamine the causes of the Ten Years' War, as well as the reasons for the downfall of the Cuban insurrectionist movement in 1878. Additionally, I discuss the important lessons, which emerged from the peace of Zanjón, and the extent to which both the Spaniards and the Cubans learned from them as they entered the 1895 independence war.

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<sup>93</sup> Collazo, *Desde Yara hasta el Zanjón*, 89-92, 95.

## Conclusion

The Ten Years' War (1868-1878) was a low-intensity conflict, which ravaged the island colony of Cuba in terms of its agricultural production and resident population. Some 11,000 Cubans emigrated to the United States between the 1860s and 1870s, while other Cubans remained on the island, yet migrated either willingly or forcefully away from the areas of armed conflict.<sup>1</sup> Some 50,000 insurgents perished fighting for independence from Spain, while nearly 100,000 Spaniards died defending the "national integrity" of the declining Iberian empire.<sup>2</sup>

This study has argued that men and women of diverse social classes and racial backgrounds rallied against the Spanish regime in response to long-term economic stagnation, political repression, and social inequities in Cuba. The Cuban separatist movement succeeded in enacting a constitution, establishing a national government with state and local administrations, abolishing slavery in its territory, holding elections, and operating an economy based on limited resources. Civil-military disputes, and conflicts based on racial fears and annexation to the United States weakened the Cuban separatist movement, however. For their part, the Spanish captain generals maintained a conservative policy against the rebellion throughout much of the war in response to the Spanish party's overthrow of the liberal-minded General Dulce. This conservative policy called for the military defeat of the rebellion

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<sup>1</sup> Poyo, "*With All, and for the Good of All*," 42-43.

<sup>2</sup> Piralá, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 3: 683; Thomas, *Cuba, or the Pursuit of Freedom*, 269. Thomas's estimate of 50,000 Cuban fatalities includes both the Ten Years' War and the Guerra Chiquita of 1879-1880.

without making political or economic concessions to the insurgents, which deepened the rift between Cubans and Spaniards, prolonged the armed conflict, and required tens of thousands of Spanish troops and hundreds of millions of pesos from the Cuban Treasury. The restoration of the Bourbon monarchy in December 1874 and the defeat of the Carlists in March 1876 permitted the Madrid government to focus its attention on suppressing the insurrection in Cuba. Although the Spanish party criticized General Martínez Campos for promising amnesty and political reforms to the rebels, conservatives did not revolt against the insular government because they themselves were supporters of King Alfonso XII. Only internal dissension within the Cuban insurrection and a lack of military supplies from abroad, however, made Martínez Campos's propositions attractive to the beleaguered separatists. Even then, it remained uncertain if the Spanish government could successfully broker a peace agreement with the insurgents in 1878 due to the resolve of many separatist fighters to continue the battle for independence.<sup>3</sup>

In addition, this dissertation has contributed new research to the historiography on the Ten Years' War. For instance, I examined the relations between insurgent officials and soldiers, and the rural civilian population in the prefectures and sub-prefectures using substantially more archival documentation than has been used previously on this subject. In Chapter 5, my analysis includes substantial amounts of new information concerning the actions and attitudes of U.S. consular agents serving in Cuba during the Ten Years' War, as well as on the breakdown in

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<sup>3</sup> Roldán de Montaud, *La Restauración en Cuba*, 96, 113-114.

relations between the Cuban Junta and the exile communities during Estrada Palma's provisional presidency, using published primary sources which have not been used previously. Lastly, in Chapter 6, I provided a detailed analysis of the peacemaking process at Zanjón, particularly from the perspective of the Spanish insular government, using archival sources.

In this three-part conclusion, I review the causes of the Ten Years' War in Cuba and the reasons why the separatists failed to achieve independence from Spain. In the final section, I evaluate the lessons that the participants of the war of 1868 – the Cuban insurgents and the Spanish government leaders – learned or failed to learn from the armed struggle. It is essential to explain these lessons in order to understand why these participants pursued the courses of action that they did in the later war of 1895-1898. To this mix, I add the United States. Although the U.S. government only indirectly participated in the Ten Years' War, it later directly intervened in the civil war between the Cuban separatists and the Spanish Crown in 1898. Thus, I reconsider the principal tenets of U.S. foreign policy on Cuba in the nineteenth century to determine why the United States waged war against Spain at the end of the century.

### **The Origins of the Ten Years' War**

The causes of the Ten Years' War are clearly expressed in Carlos Manuel de Céspedes's manifesto of October 10, 1868. First, Cubans were increasingly outraged by Spain's imposition of taxes on production, as well as duties on imports and exports

– trademarks of Spain’s antiquated mercantilist system. In his manifesto, Céspedes spoke out against Spain “usurping the power of imposing taxes and contributions at its whim” and lamented that “for the unhappy producer [prices] do not reach even to cover his expenditures.” The economic crises dating from the late 1850s to the late 1860s further exacerbated the financial situation of many Cubans, particularly those living in the eastern provinces. The socioeconomic disparities between east and west convinced the declining eastern Creole elite that the implementation of economic and political reforms was indispensable to retaining any vestige of influence with the insular government. At the same time, Cuban planters in the western provinces also looked to gain political status having already attained economic prosperity. Again in his manifesto, Céspedes decried the authoritarian political system in Cuba manifested in “an armed force that does not have any other objective than to make us bend our necks under the iron yoke that degrades us.” Moreover, the insurgent organizer was dismayed that Spain “[kept] its unfortunate sons bereft of all political, civil and religious liberty,” going on to express his frustration that “the Spanish Government . . . prohibits our best compatriots from learning the discharge of public offices which requires from a good government the art of knowing how the fortunes of a nation are directed.” Indeed, Madrid’s predilection for placing Spaniards, rather than Creoles, in bureaucratic positions and their consumption of colonial revenue served as points of contention for the Cuban revolutionaries. In 1867, the imposition of additional taxes and the breakdown of the Junta de Información de Ultramar, seen by eastern landowners as the last hope for economic and political reforms from which they

would benefit, persuaded Cubans to revolt against Madrid in October 1868. As a result of Spain's exploitative mercantilist policy and political repression, socioeconomic disparities between the eastern and western regions of the island, and the collapse of the Junta de Información de Ultramar, Cuban men and women of diverse classes and races united, at least initially, to overthrow the Spanish imperial government.<sup>4</sup>

### **The Reasons for the Collapse of the Cuban Insurrection of 1868-1878**

Veterans of the Ten Years' War and scholars of Cuba have offered numerous explanations why the Cuban separatists failed to achieve independence from Spain. According to General Máximo Gómez, the failure of the revolution lay in "the state of the army and resources," the lack of assistance from Cuban exile communities, and the death of so many insurgent leaders without "anyone arriving to replace them."<sup>5</sup>

Enrique Collazo elaborated even further:

[W]e, in ten years of fighting, did not find one friendly hand extended to aid the weak: All of the Americas witnessed our destruction impassively.

The American Colossus . . . not only remained inactive, but also lent effective support to the cause of Spain, facilitating ships and armaments to the country, while it detained our expeditions and held the only battleship that we could put to sea: the . . . *Hornet*.

The same people of Cuba denied us their assistance[,] remaining largely on the side of the enemy, in the cities as well as in the army, offering extremely valiant services, as *guerrilleros* . . . [and] as guides.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, "Manifiesto de la Junta revolucionaria de la Isla de Cuba dirigido á sus compatriotas y á todas las naciones," dated October 10, 1868, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4933, Caja 1, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 21.

<sup>5</sup> Gómez, *El Convenio del Zanjón*, 20.

<sup>6</sup> Collazo, *Desde Yara hasta el Zanjón*, 109.

In U.S. American historiography on Cuba, Louis A. Pérez, Jr. blames the insurgents' defeat on their wish that Cuba be annexed to the United States, stating that "[i]ndependence from Spain was envisioned principally as a transition to union with the United States." Yet, according to Pérez, "annexation as a function of Cuban initiative had never elicited a favorable response in the United States. . . . In fact, North Americans had from the outset conceived of annexation principally in one of two ways: either as an outright act of colonial succession, in much the same fashion as the acquisition of Louisiana and Florida, or as a spoil of war, much in the manner in which the Mexican territories were seized." Additionally, U.S. policymakers rejected admitting Cuba into the Union as a state due to their prejudices against Afro-Cubans and Catholic Hispanic culture. Cubans, however, favored statehood because it "would guarantee their own local political ascendancy." Instead, the U.S. government favored obtaining Cuba as a territory, which Cubans opposed since they "would enjoy no more right of self-government as a territorial possession of the United States than . . . [they] had as a colony of Spain."<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, scholar Ada Ferrer describes the demise of the separatist movement in 1878 as a result of the Creoles' racial fears of Afro-Cuban political ascendancy following liberation from Spain:

The response to widespread black participation and to the emergence of powerful black and mulatto leadership was, for many white insurgents, withdrawal and condemnation of the rebellion as destructive of Cuba's best interests. Although these surrendered insurgents were still partial to the idea of Cuban independence, they rejected the early movement's implications for racial politics in postindependence Cuba. They surrendered in large numbers,

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<sup>7</sup> Pérez, *Cuba and the United States: Ties of Singular Intimacy*, 50-52.



protesting, among other things, the extent and character of black involvement in independence.<sup>8</sup>

Together, Pérez and Ferrer's arguments form one of the principal explanations for why the Cuban insurrection of 1868 collapsed. Although the preliminary goal of the separatist movement was independence from Spain, white Cubans in the insurgent leadership preferred annexation to the United States in order to assuage their fear of racial warfare, and to ensure their political and socioeconomic pre-eminence following Cuba's liberation from Spain. As more freed slaves joined the separatist movement, more white Cubans abandoned the war effort, thereby sacrificing the cause of independence so that the social and racial hierarchy in Cuba would remain unchanged.<sup>9</sup>

In addition, Cuban historians, including Emilio Roig de Leuchsenring and Ramiro Guerra, have focused mainly on political and economic reasons behind the failure of the Ten Years' War. For his part, Roig de Leuchsenring believes the "arguments and divisions between many of their [insurgents'] leaders and localisms that impeded the extension of the war throughout the Island's territory" to be principal factors behind the revolution's downfall.<sup>10</sup> A master of detail, Guerra also enumerates the causes of the demise of the separatist movement:

In 1877, Camagüey and Oriente, the direct objectives of the grand political and military offensive of Martínez Campos, were totally devastated and almost exhausted, [and] the same can be said for not a small part of Las Villas. The fact of that devastation; the death of thousands and thousands of insurgents, among them a great majority of the most energetic, capable, and

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<sup>8</sup> Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*, 69.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 69, 197.

<sup>10</sup> Roig de Leuchsenring, *La guerra libertadora cubana*, 74.

distinguished leaders, in a battle converted into a war of erosion; the near total depopulation of the countryside, all of the rural population [becoming] victim[s] of hunger, a lack of clothing, misery, and plagues of malaria, cholera, and smallpox . . . , with a complete lack of medicines and medical assistance; the implacable and fierce malice of the guerrillas and the methods of not a few Spanish military chiefs decidedly partisans of Valmaseda's war without quarter, as a typical example, and the total privation of aid from abroad due to the indifference or the hostility of governments and the final ruin of the Cuban émigrés, even those of great wealth at their disposal, such as Miguel Aldama.<sup>11</sup>

Moreover, Guerra found that following the Spanish restoration of the Bourbon dynasty in 1874, Madrid was able "to concentrate its effort on putting an end to the insurrection in Cuba" through a "more powerful force of arms, [and] politics of abatement and pacification with offers and promises of reforms."<sup>12</sup> Certainly, civil-military, inter-governmental, and inter-military conflicts demoralized and weakened the separatist movement. The House of Representatives' dismissal of President Céspedes, and the army mutinies of Lagunas de Varona and Santa Rita are proofs of the decline of the insurrection. What is more, the insurgents' failure to launch a western invasion devastated the cause of independence since it deprived them of much needed manpower in the form of liberated slaves and small farmers, bribes from planters who did not want their *ingenios* destroyed, which could have been used to purchase arms, and a boost in army morale. Finally, the failure to begin a military offensive in the western provinces divested the Cuban separatists of popular support. It is doubtful that Cubans would support a revolution unless they believed that its instigators could win it.

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<sup>11</sup> Guerra, *Guerra de los 10 años*, 2: 339-340.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 2: 340.

Finally, as a result of longstanding U.S. policy on Cuba, the Grant administration hindered the cause of *Cuba Libre* by interfering in Cuban exile activities in the United States, which were destined to aid the rebels fighting on the island. Since the early nineteenth century, Washington policymakers “expounded on the strategic, economic, and ideological necessities that tied the island’s fate to the empire of liberty being constructed in North America,” wrote Jules R. Benjamin, adding that “[e]ach in his own way expected Cuba to become either a part of the Union or an appendage to it.”<sup>13</sup> The United States opposed Cuban independence “for reasons of geography, racial composition, and cultural heritage.” At the same time, the North American Union feared that a strong European nation, such as France or Great Britain, would wrest Cuba from Spanish hands, thereby depriving the United States of the Caribbean isle. Since Spain was “the weakest of the European imperial powers and hence constituted no strategic threat,” the United States did not have any qualms about supporting Spanish sovereignty over Cuba until the United States could succeed Spain as the island’s governor.<sup>14</sup> It has already been demonstrated in Chapter 5 the different methods employed by the Grant administration to thwart the Cuban rebellion, which included the U.S. government’s failure to recognize the Cuban provisional government, its interception of insurgent filibuster expeditions, and its imprisonment of Junta leaders working in New York. The U.S. arrest of Cuban filibusters hindered the Liberation Army from receiving weaponry and new recruits,

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<sup>13</sup> Benjamin, *The United States and the Origins of the Cuban Revolution*, 7.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 8-10.

which were essential to the continuation of the armed struggle against Spanish imperialism.<sup>15</sup>

### **Lessons Learned?**

The Cuban separatists drew several key lessons from the collapse of the 1868-1878 insurrection. First, Spain's inability to fulfill the stipulations of the Pact of Zanjón taught the separatists to resist future promises of reform from the Spanish government.<sup>16</sup> Thus, the Cuban provisional republic and Liberation Army refused to accept Spain's offer of self-government in January 1898, opting instead to continue the struggle for independence which, by that time, they already appeared to have won. More importantly, it was necessary for the Cubans to establish a broad-based revolutionary movement which was united by common goals. In preparation for the Cuban insurrection of 1895, José Martí, the Delegate of the Cuban Revolutionary Party, was successful in creating a wide-ranging insurgent movement that encompassed Cubans of all social classes, diverse races, and both genders, united by the objectives of gaining independence from Spain and founding a sovereign republic. Martí's painstaking cultivation of the revolutionary ideals of independence and nationhood, and Máximo Gómez and Antonio Maceo's fervent nationalism ensured that neither U.S. intervention nor annexation to the United States would be courses pursued in the 1895 war.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, the collapse of the Ten Years' War

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<sup>15</sup> Portell Vilá, *Historia de Cuba*, 2: 283-284, 298.

<sup>16</sup> Horatio S. Rubens, *Liberty: The Story of Cuba*, reprinted ed. (New York: Arno Press and the New York Times, 1970), 332; Thomas, *Cuba, or the Pursuit of Freedom*, 299-300.

<sup>17</sup> Pérez, *The War of 1898*, 8-9, 12, 19-20.

demonstrated to the Cuban army leadership the importance of conducting a swift military campaign across the island to ensure the survival of the Cuban insurgency, which the emancipation of slaves in 1886 facilitated. As a result, by January 1896, General Maceo's forces had taken the separatist offensive from Oriente to the westernmost province of Pinar del Río. This revolutionary development was in stark contrast to the 1868 rebellion in which, over a period of ten years, the Cuban insurgents only reached as far as western Las Villas.

Cuban insurgents failed to learn some important lessons from the Ten Years' War. To begin with, civil and military factionalism continued, though perhaps not to the same degree as it did during the Ten Years' War. For instance, at La Mejorana in the province of Camagüey, Maceo initially rejected Martí's proposal to establish a revolutionary government, preferring instead to recognize only military authority in order to circumvent the civil-military discord of the Ten Years' War. To avoid conflicts with Martí and Gómez, however, Maceo assented to the formation of an administration. Following the death of Martí in May 1895, a Council of Government was composed of a president, vice president, various secretaries, and the military leadership, but it seldom convened to promulgate laws. According to Cuban historian José L. Franco, "[t]aking into account the errors suffered in the prior war, and, in conformity with the revolutionary thinking of [G]eneral Maceo, the renewed implementation of the Constitution of Guáimaro was opposed, and the idea of

maintaining, while the Spaniards were not totally defeated, unified military rule without the dangerous interferences of the past was defended.”<sup>18</sup>

In addition, racism continued against Afro-Cuban insurgents. Maceo, being Gómez’s second-in-command, became the principal target of criticism. A faction led by Salvador Cisneros Betancourt, the first president of the provisional government during the 1895 rebellion, feared that Maceo’s high status in the separatist movement would make Maceo politically ambitious. In a letter to Tomás Estrada Palma, the head of the Junta in New York following Martí’s death, Cisneros Betancourt warned: “It would be good if you advise [Maceo] to conform himself to being the expeditionary leader and leave politics to the side, since we and part of Oriente will not accept anything that is not a democratic republican government.”<sup>19</sup> The implication of this statement, as Ferrer argues, is that if an Afro-Cuban military commander were “to appear to assume anything resembling a political position,” it would have “resulted in grave accusations about selfish ambitions and less than noble ends.”<sup>20</sup> Underlying racial fears among white insurgents continued to surface in the 1895 war of independence, despite the revolutionary leaders’ insistence on “antiracism” and racial unity, which contributed to the separatists’ failure to gain national sovereignty in 1898.<sup>21</sup>

What were the differences between Spain’s approach to the Ten Years’ War and the Cuban War of Independence (1895-1898)? First, Spain expended

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<sup>18</sup> Franco, *Antonio Maceo*, 2: 115-117, 165-166; Thomas, *Cuba, or the Pursuit of Freedom*, 319-320.

<sup>19</sup> Franco, *Antonio Maceo*, 2: 159.

<sup>20</sup> Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba*, 146.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 195-198.

significantly more men and money during the three years of the Cuban insurrection in the 1890s than during the 1868-1878 rebellion. According to Pirala, Spain sent nearly 175,000 troops to Cuba between September 1868 and March 1878. As Pirala wrote, "Spain had lost close to 100,000 men, without counting more than 11,000 rendered useless and nearly 14,000 infirm sent to the Peninsula."<sup>22</sup> To terminate the decade-long rebellion, Spain also expended 700 million pesos. Nonetheless, from 1895 to 1898, Spain sent nearly 200,000 troops to Cuba, enlisted over 80,000 Volunteers, and spent about 1.8 billion pesetas in a desperate attempt to maintain control over its Caribbean colony.<sup>23</sup> Spain mobilized more resources in the 1895 war than in the 1868 insurrection because the Cuban revolutionaries were more effectively prepared and unified, and led a swifter military campaign in the final struggle than in the initial one.<sup>24</sup>

Spain also alternated between liberalism and conservatism in its policy on the Cuban insurrection of 1895-1898 just as it did during the Ten Years' War. With the outbreak of fighting in 1895, the Spanish Prime Minister Antonio Cánovas del Castillo, the leader of the Conservative party, sent General Arsenio Martínez Campos to Cuba in an effort to pacify the island again as he had done in 1878. The famed peacemaker of the 1868 insurrection arrived in Cuba in April 1895 with the intention of both combating and negotiating with the rebels, though to no avail. Faced with defeat, Cánovas recalled Martínez Campos and sent the darling of the Spanish

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<sup>22</sup> Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 3: 683.

<sup>23</sup> Roig de Leuchsenring, *La guerra libertadora cubana*, 70, 227-229, 277; Roldán de Montaud, *La Hacienda en Cuba*, 262.

<sup>24</sup> Pérez, *The War of 1898*, 7.

military establishment, General Valeriano Weyler, to Cuba as the new captain general. Weyler's harsh approach to the Cuban revolt was in stark contrast to that of Martínez Campos. On Weyler's military strategy, John L. Offner explains:

Weyler initiated a plan of warfare designed to eliminate insurgency from the economically developed western and central portions of the island and to restrict it to the eastern mountainous region, where it could be gradually reduced. He divided the island into several war zones, separated by north-south military barriers of trenches, barbed wire, and watchtowers. His plan was to concentrate his forces in the west to defeat the insurgents there and to use the military barriers to prevent insurgent reinforcements from the east. After reestablishing control of the west, he intended to move his troops to the central portion of the island, where they would end that insurgency, thereby containing the remaining Cuban forces in the eastern portion of the island, sealed off by a military barrier.<sup>25</sup>

Weyler's policy required a large supply of troops and firepower. Roughly half of the 200,000 troops sent to Cuba during the 1895-1898 war came to the island during his tenure as captain general. In addition, the Mariel-Artemisa-Majama *trocha* in Pinar del Río, spanning thirty-two kilometers with over 600 works, including forts, trenches, and stockades, and 13,000 men, was constructed and deemed an effective barrier to insurgent onslaughts. The Júcaro-Morón *trocha* in Camagüey, which had been built during the Ten Years' War, was less successful in preventing the safe passage of *mambises*, however. As a result, modifications and additions were started with the expenditure estimated at some 440,000 pesetas. Even though Weyler had several *trochas* in operation and his forces greatly outnumbered those of the insurgents (280,000 Spanish troops to 50,000 Cuban insurgents), he could not extinguish the rebellion. In large part, poor nutrition and the proliferation of tropical

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<sup>25</sup> John L. Offner, *An Unwanted War: The Diplomacy of the United States and Spain over Cuba, 1895-1898* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 12.



diseases, such as malaria and yellow fever, among non-acclimated Spanish soldiers hampered the efficacy of the imperial army. In August 1897, General Fitzhugh Lee, the U.S. consul general in Havana, estimated that only between 75,000 and 80,000 Spanish troops were on campaign. Moreover, between 1895 and 1897, nearly 14,000 Spanish soldiers perished as a result of disease.<sup>26</sup>

In addition to rigorous military operations, Weyler launched a policy of reconcentration – forced removal – against the *campesinos*, evacuating some 400,000 Cubans from the countryside and moving them into cities, towns, or fortified encampments, which quickly became overcrowded and unsanitary. Since Weyler ordered the halt of sugarcane and tobacco cultivation after Gómez had already issued a circular forbidding agricultural production, the consequences of the reconcentration policy, not surprisingly, were poverty, the spread of disease, starvation, and death. Between 1896 and 1898, the mortality estimates as a result of reconcentration ranged anywhere from 300,000 to 600,000 deaths.<sup>27</sup>

As a result of massive expenditures of men and money with few results to show for them, Spain faced financial crisis and grave civil strife at home. Thus, it became necessary for the Metropolis to pursue a different course with respect to the insurrection in Cuba. Moreover, as during the Ten Years' War, the Madrid government endeavored to avoid possible conflicts with the United States between 1895 and 1898 for fear that Spain would become embroiled in a war against the

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<sup>26</sup> Pérez, *The War of 1898*, 7, 12; Roig de Leuchsenring, *La guerra libertadora cubana*, 227-228, 256; U.S. War Department, Adjutant-General's Office, Military Information Division, *Military Notes on Cuba* (Washington, D.C., 1898), 159-161.

<sup>27</sup> Offner, *An Unwanted War*, 13, 80, 112-113.

United States over the island. Following the assassination of Cánovas on August 8, 1897, Práxedes Mateo Sagasta, the head of the Liberal party, formed a new ministry at the request of the queen regent, María Cristina of Austria. Due to these internal and external pressures, Sagasta replaced Weyler with the more moderate Ramón Blanco as captain general and implemented in Cuba a series of political reforms, including autonomy. Despite Sagasta's determination to resolve the Cuban crisis and retain the island colony, both Spanish conservatives and Cuban loyalists rejected political reforms, as did the Cuban insurgents, who took the proposition of self-government for Spanish weakness.<sup>28</sup>

As for the United States, its foreign policy on Cuba remained unchanged from the early nineteenth century. Political and economic control of the island either through acquisition or tutelage persisted as the central objective of American policymakers in 1898. When it became apparent that the Cuban Liberation Army would defeat the Spanish Army that same year, President William McKinley gained congressional authorization to go to war against Spain, and invaded the island in order to end Spanish rule in Cuba and prevent Cubans from attaining national sovereignty. Following the U.S. victory over the Spanish, the McKinley administration gained indirect control of Cuban political and economic affairs through the implementation of the Platt Amendment in 1901.<sup>29</sup>

What was most significant about the Ten Years' War, at least for the Cuban and Spanish parties, was that it was recognized that Cuba's struggle for liberation

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 52, 65, 69-71, 225-226, 228; Pérez, *The War of 1898*, 8-10.

<sup>29</sup> Pérez, *The War of 1898*, 3-7, 12, 15-17, 20-21, 33, 35, 129.

would not end in 1878, but rather would continue until Cuba gained its independence from Spain. In the concluding paragraph of *Desde Yara hasta el Zanjón*, which was first published in 1893, Enrique Collazo made such an allusion:

[B]ut, at least, the effort has not been lost completely, and if the country did not advance significantly in its political life, we have demonstrated to the world that the Cuban People are not an indolent people who divide their life between the hammock, cock fights and dancing, but a sober people, tenacious in their purpose and with an aptitude for war.<sup>30</sup>

Calixto García would have seconded Collazo's assertions. In 1882, General García wrote: "Despite the grief and despite the disappointments, in my breast beats the same sentiment that was beating in 1868."<sup>31</sup> Perhaps the most striking observation came from Captain General Joaquín Jovellar, who reasoned that "from the roots of the Ten Years' War would sprout another, because the people of Cuba were separatist[s]."<sup>32</sup> Indeed, the Ten Years' War was only the beginning of what would be a hard-fought Cuban struggle for independence and national sovereignty. While the objectives of the 1868 rebellion were flawed, from them developed the Cuban ideals of independence, national sovereignty, racial equality, and social justice.

### **Unanswered Questions and Future Projects**

The Ten Years' War in Cuba is a fascinating subject of research because of the breadth of possibilities for future studies. In writing a broad political and socioeconomic history of the insurrection, inevitably some topics are neglected or not

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<sup>30</sup> Collazo, *Desde Yara hasta el Zanjón*, 109.

<sup>31</sup> Quoted in Juan J. E. Casasús, *Calixto García (El estratega)*, 2d ed. (Havana: Oficina del Historiador de la Ciudad de La Habana, Colección Histórica Cubana y Americana, 1962), 128.

<sup>32</sup> Quoted in Guerra, *Guerra de los 10 años*, 2: 388.

examined thoroughly. For instance, the role of the Cuban émigré communities in Europe, the Caribbean, and Latin America during the Ten Years' War has been neglected in Cuban historiography. Indeed, researching this subject would be arduous, since a scholar would need to conduct research in European, Latin American, and Caribbean archives. Additionally, national archives may have very little, if any, documentation on Cuban exile organizations operating in their countries in the 1860s and 1870s. My dissertation only has been able to touch upon this matter using archival sources from the AHN. Nonetheless, it is fundamental to the study of Cuban expatriate history that linkages be made between the Cuban Junta in New York and its Diplomatic Corps in France, Great Britain, Peru, and Venezuela to gain a deeper understanding of why the Junta was unsuccessful in uniting exile communities in the struggle for independence from Spain and in collecting resources to be sent to the Liberation Army in Cuba.<sup>33</sup> At the same time, it is necessary to investigate the attitudes and activities of other exile organizations not associated with the Junta to gain greater insight into the collapse of the Cuban émigré effort to assist the Cuban separatist movement. Other questions include: (1) How effective was the Diplomatic Corps of the Junta in establishing connections with foreign governments and Cuban exile communities; (2) How successful were all exile associations in collecting financial and military resources for the Cuban insurgents; (3) Were there conflicts between Junta officials and other Cuban exiles and, if so, why; (4) What was the relationship between officials of Cuban exile organizations and members of

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<sup>33</sup> *Almanaque cubano para 1870*, 20, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4933, Caja 2, Exp. 6, Doc. no. 2.

foreign governments (5) In what commercial and/or political activities were Cuban émigrés involved in these foreign countries; (6) What became of the Cuban expatriates once the Ten Years' War ended in 1878; and (7) Did these Cuban exiles participate either in the Guerra Chiquita (1879-1880) or the War of Independence (1895-1898)?

I remain most interested in studying the socioeconomic and political features of the separatist movement in Cuba from 1868 to 1878. This topic is one on which I already have completed a significant amount of research in the Spanish archives, but also is a subject that I did not investigate fully in this dissertation. Using the correspondence of insurgent leaders, both major and minor, I plan to continue examining the separatists' political and military decision-making, their development of social and economic policies, and their administration of territory under their control. Additionally, I will continue to investigate prefectures and sub-prefectures by comparing and contrasting the living conditions, the local economies, and the civil and military administrations in different regions of the island. This analysis also would determine how the Spanish military presence in these regions affected the operation of prefectures and sub-prefectures, and the allegiance of their inhabitants.

With these studies, I hope to deepen the scholarly community's understanding of the Ten Years' War, an important event in Cuba's national history.

## Appendix A

### **Translation of the “Manifiesto of the Revolutionary Junta of the Island of Cuba Directed to Its Compatriots and to All Nations”<sup>1</sup>**

Upon rising up armed against the oppression of the tyrannical Spanish government, following the established custom in all civilized nations we manifest to the World the causes that have obligated us to take this step which in demand of the greater good, always produces inevitable upheavals, and the principles that we wish to found on the ruins of the present for the happiness of the future.

No one can ignore the fact that Spain governs the Island of Cuba with a bloody iron fist; not only does Spain not leave it secure in its property, usurping the power of imposing taxes and contributions at its whim, but also keeping its unfortunate sons bereft of all political, civil and religious liberty they see themselves expelled from their soil to remote climates or executed without due process by military commissions established in full peace with the decline of civil power. Deprived of the right of assembly since [Cuba] is under the presidency of a Military Commander, she cannot ask for the remedy to her ills without her being treated like a rebel and she is not given any other recourse than to keep silent and obey.

The infinite plague of greedy public employees that inundate us from Spain, devour the product of our property and work; under the protection of the despotic

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<sup>1</sup> Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, “Manifiesto de la Junta revolucionaria de la Isla de Cuba dirigido á sus compatriotas y á todas las naciones,” dated October 10, 1868, in AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 4933, Caja 1, Exp. 2, Doc. no. 21. This copy of the manifesto located in the AHN was used for the translation.

authority that the Spanish Government places in their hands and prohibits our best compatriots from learning the discharge of public offices which requires from a good government the art of knowing how the fortunes of a nation are directed; because assisted by the restrictive system of teaching that it adopts, Spain desires that we be so ignorant, that we do not know our most sacred rights and that if we do know them we cannot reclaim their observance in any sphere.

This island[,] beloved and esteemed by all the nations that surround it, that not one of them is its enemy, does not need an Army nor a permanent Navy which exhaust with their enormous expenditures even the fountains of public and private wealth and nonetheless Spain imposes upon us in our territory an armed force that does not have any other objective than to make us bend our necks under the iron yoke that degrades us.

Our valid products looked upon with ill will by the Republics of foreign mercantile nations which provoke the Custom-house system of Spain to limit their trade if they sell well at high prices in the ports of other nations: here for the unhappy producer [prices] do not reach even to cover his expenditures; in such a way that without the fecundity of our soil, we would perish in misery.

In short the Island of Cuba cannot prosper because the white immigration, the only one that is to our advantage at present, is seen far removed from our shores by the limitless obstacles with which it is ensnared and the prevention and dislike with which it is looked.

Thus, the Cubans cannot speak, cannot write, cannot even think and receive guests with kindness, which their brothers from other places send to them.

Countless have been the times that Spain has offered to respect her [Cuba's] rights, but until now it has not kept its word unless it does not have the mockery of displaying a vestige of representation to dissemble the tax, only in name and so high that it ruins our property under the cover of all other charges that accompany it.

Seeing ourselves exposed to lose our farms, our lives and even our honor, I am obliged to expose those same beloved jewels, to re-conquer our rights as men now that we cannot with the force of words in discussion, with the force of our arms in the battle fields. When a people arrives to the extreme of degradation and misery in which we see ourselves, no one can condemn another who takes up arms to escape from a state so full of ignominy. The example of the greatest nations authorizes that ultimate recourse. The Island of Cuba cannot be deprived of the rights that other countries enjoy and it cannot consent for it to be said that it does not know more than suffering. It is time for other civilized nations to interpose their influence to take an innocent, illustrious, sensitive, and generous people out the claws of a barbarous oppressor. We appeal to them and to God of our conscience with our hand over our heart. We do not mislead with rancor, we do not adorn ourselves with ambitions[;] we only wish to be free and equal as the Creator made all men.

We consecrate these two venerable principles: we believe that all men are equal; we love tolerance, order and justice in all matters; we respect the lives and property of all peaceful citizens, even though they may be the same Spaniards



residing in this territory, we admire universal suffrage which assures the sovereignty of the people; we desire gradual emancipation and under indemnity of slavery, free trade with friendly nations that use reciprocity, national representation to decree laws and taxes and in general we demand religious observance of the unalienable rights of man, constituting ourselves into an independent nation; because this is how the greatness of our future destiny is to be achieved, and because we are certain that under the scepter of Spain we will never enjoy the free exercise of our rights.

In view of our moderation, of our misery and the reason that assists us what noble heart will not be bothered with the desire that we obtain the sacrosanct objective that we propose? What civilized nation will not reject the conduct of Spain which will horrify the simple consideration of trampling these two rights of Cuba, at each moment has to spill the blood of its most valiant sons. No; already Cuba, cannot pertain anymore to a power that like Cain kills his brothers, and like Saturn devours his sons. Cuba aspires to become a great and civilized nation to extend a friendly hand and a fraternal heart to all other nations, and if the same Spain consents in leaving her free and peaceful, it will hold her in its bosom as a loving daughter of a good mother; but if it persists in its system of domination and extermination, it will cut down all our necks and the necks of those who come after us always making Cuba a sordid flock of slaves.

Consequently we have accorded unanimously to nominate one leader to direct operations with plenitude of faculties and under his authorized responsibility especially to designate a second-in-command and other subalterns who are needed in

all branches of administration, while the state of war endures, which knowing how the character of the Spanish governors is, will be forceful following the proclamation of Cuban freedom. We also have named a governing commission of five members to assist the General-in-Chief in political and civil matters[,] and other branches of which a well-regulated country occupies itself. At the same time we decree that from this moment all duties, taxes, contributions and other exactions are abolished, which until now the Government of Spain has charged whatever the form and pretext with which it has been done and is only paid with the name of “Patriotic Gift,” for the costs that occur during the war[,] the five percent of the profits known presently calculated from this trimester, with reserve, which if it is not sufficient can be augmented hereafter or some operation of credit can be adopted according to the most convenient estimation of the juntas of citizens, who consequently should celebrate them. We declare that all services rendered to the homeland will be properly reimbursed; that in general business observes the enforced legislation, interpreted in a liberal sense, until something else is determined and finally that all adopted dispositions be purely transitory; while the nation finally free of its enemies and more extensively represented is constituted in the mode and form that is judged most proper. = Manzanillo[,] 10<sup>th</sup> of October of 1868 = The General-in-Chief, Carlos Manuel de Céspedes.

## Appendix B

### The Insurgent Postal Service

The insurgent post was a vital service of the Cuban separatist movement. Having postmen was necessary to the Cuban government and Liberation Army since they delivered military orders, intelligence on the Spanish Army, laws and decrees enacted by the Cuban government, news of the arrival of filibuster expeditions carrying weapons and soldiers, the latest accounts of the actions of the United States and Spanish governments, and the Cuban émigré communities with regard to the insurrection, and personal letters from insurgents' families detailing their location, living conditions, and state of health. These postmen operated as a pony express, using farms as their stations. The chain of command placed an *administrador general de correos* (general mail administrator) at the head of the service, followed by regional *administradores de correos* (mail administrators) and, then, by *jefes de posta* (postal chiefs), who supervised local postal stations. Finally, *postillones* (postmen) delivered the mail to military encampments and rebel households in the environs of the station. The mail administrators also worked with prefects, sub-prefects, and military officers to gain access to horses and men who were available to become postal riders.<sup>1</sup>

Although the insurgent mail service was of great importance to the Cuban separatist cause, it endangered the lives of the Cuban citizens living in the countryside considering that Spanish authorities exiled, imprisoned, or executed suspected or

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<sup>1</sup> AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 5844, Caja 2, Exp. 44, Doc. nos. 71-77, 79-85.

actual insurgents, and confiscated their property. A postman would find himself deeply incriminated in the eyes of the Spanish armed forces, if he were caught carrying a sack of rebel correspondence and, consequently, would most likely suffer the penalty of death for committing treason. The captured correspondence also would reveal to Spanish commanders the identities of insurgents and their location, thereby throwing their lives and those of their families into jeopardy. Moreover, the confiscated mail could expose the conflicts and factions within the separatist movement, of which the Spanish government could take advantage to further debilitate the Cuban Republic. Thus, while the insurgent post was an indispensable service to the separatist insurgency, it also posed grave dangers to the lives of rebel fighters and those of their families.

Along with being captured, the postmen endured other difficulties. The central problem facing mail administrators and postal chiefs was the lack of *postillones* available to deliver correspondence. Infirmary was one reason behind the scarcity of postal employees, although those who were ill at times recommended other individuals for their replacement. Also, men eligible for military service could be drafted whether or not they were postmen, implying that military needs for personnel outweighed those of the mail service. In addition to male recruits, the postal service competed with the army for horses, which lessened in supply as the war progressed since both Spanish and insurgent soldiers vied for possession of them.<sup>2</sup> Struggles over men and horses may have placed postal administrators at odds with military

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<sup>2</sup> AHN, Ultramar, Leg. 5844, Caja 2, Exp. 44, Doc. nos. 71-72, 75-77, 79, 82, 84.

officers. In one case, commanding General Manuel de Quesada prohibited soldiers and other insurgents from taking horses, men, and riding gear away from postmen until the mail service was well supplied, a protective decree which the army general and the *administrador general de correos* ordered reproduced and exhibited to soldiers and civilians to keep them from seizing horses, men, or equipment from the postal service. The *administrador general* knew, however, that at least some would continue to exploit the insurgent post despite the publication of Quesada's decree and, although the *administrador general* ordered postal employees to inform him of any abuses, it appears that the postal service was fighting a losing battle against the army.<sup>3</sup> As a result of these deprivations, it probably became increasingly difficult for the mail couriers to fulfill their duties. The fact that, in January 1878, separatist military and civil leaders were sent to Las Villas and Oriente to discuss the possibility of surrender with the insurgent commanders of these provinces attests to the degradation of the postal service, which had been a necessary part of maintaining the daily operations of the Cuban separatist movement.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Letter to Manuel Ballagas from Administrador Mariano García, dated May 7, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7910, Carpeta 9, Doc. no. 271. See also a letter from Inspector General Eduardo Trinidad, dated December 11, 1869, in RAH, Colección Fernández Duro, Sign. 9/7910, Carpeta 9, Doc. no. 280.

<sup>4</sup> Figueredo, *La revolución de Yara*, 509, 511.

## Appendix C

### Cuban Filibuster Expeditions

Below are descriptions of several insurgent filibuster expeditions carried out during the Ten Years' War.

#### ***Galvanic:***<sup>1</sup>

Point of departure: Nassau

Date of disembarkation: December 27, 1868

Place of disembarkation: La Guanaja (Camagüey province)

Cargo: One cannon, 3,000 rifles, and ammunition; over fifty insurgent soldiers

Destination of cargo: Camagüey province

#### ***Perit:***<sup>2</sup>

Point of departure: New York City

Date of disembarkation: May 11, 1869

Place of disembarkation: Bay of Nipe (Oriente province)

Cargo: Six artillery pieces, 200 Remington rifles, 4,000 other rifles, ammunition, lances, machetes, and a printing press; 300 insurgent soldiers (Much of the cargo fell into Spanish hands)

#### ***Salvador:***<sup>3</sup>

Point of departure: Nassau

Date of disembarkation: May 14, 1869

Place of disembarkation: Nuevas Grandes (Camagüey province)

Cargo: One artillery piece and 1,000 rifles; 129 insurgent soldiers

#### ***Grapeshot:***<sup>4</sup>

Point of departure: New York City

Date of disembarkation: May 31, 1869

Place of disembarkation: Near Baracoa (Oriente province)

Cargo: Two artillery pieces and 600 rifles; twenty-seven insurgent soldiers  
(The arms were sunk and only seven insurgents survived the disembarkation)

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<sup>1</sup> Information obtained for each filibuster expedition is footnoted next to the name of the ship. For the *Galvanic*, see Portell Vilá, *Historia de Cuba*, 2:228.

<sup>2</sup> Ponte Domínguez, *Historia de la guerra de los diez años*, 93.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 93-94.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 94-95.

***Anna:***<sup>5</sup>

Date of disembarkation: 1870

Cargo: Guns, gunpowder, and ammunition

Destination of cargo: Oriente province

***Virginus:***<sup>6</sup>

Point of departure: New York City

Date of disembarkation: October 1870

Cargo: four howitzers and a couple hundred boxes of ammunition; twenty insurgent soldiers

***Virginus:***<sup>7</sup>

Soubriquet: “Expedición de los Burros” (“Voyage of the Donkeys”)

Point of departure: Puerto Cabello, Venezuela

Date of disembarkation: June 21, 1871

Place of disembarkation: Near Santiago de Cuba

Cargo: 400 Remington and Spencer rifles, ammunition, medications, clothing, and donkeys; 200 insurgent soldiers of Venezuelan origin

Destination of cargo: Oriente province

Listed below is information pertaining to some of the filibuster expeditions which failed to bring supplies of arms and soldiers to the separatist movement in Cuba.

***Mary Lowell:***<sup>8</sup>

Date of capture: March 15, 1869

Place of capture: In international waters, near Ragged Island, Bahamas, by the Spanish warship *La Andaluza*

Seized cargo: Armaments

***Quaker City:***<sup>9</sup>

Date of capture: May 1869

Place of capture: New York City

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<sup>5</sup> Guerra, *Guerra de los 10 años*, 2: 38-40.

<sup>6</sup> Bradford, *The Virginus Affair*, 26.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 26-27; Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 2: 197-198.

<sup>8</sup> Nevins, *Hamilton Fish*, 1: 187; Ponte Domínguez, *Historia de la guerra de los diez años*, 95.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 1: 186.

***Catherine Whiting:***<sup>10</sup>

Date of capture: June 1869

Seized cargo: Guns and ammunition; insurgent General Domingo Goicuría

***Hornet:***<sup>11</sup>

Insurgent name: *Cuba*

Date of capture: October 7, 1869

Place of capture: Cape Fear, off the coast of North Carolina, by the U.S. *Frolic*

***Salvador:***<sup>12</sup>

Point of departure: Nassau

Date of capture: September 20, 1870

Place of capture: Jagua (Las Villas province)

Seized cargo: Due to the boat sinking, insurgents lost half of weapons shipment;  
seven captives (six from Nassau and one Haitian)

***Virginus:***<sup>13</sup>

Point of departure: New York City

Date of capture: October 31, 1873

Place of capture: At sea between the southeastern coast of Cuba and Jamaica  
(twenty-three miles from Jamaica), by the Spanish frigate *Tornado*

Seized cargo: 155 crewmen, of which fifty-three were executed

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<sup>10</sup> Ponte Domínguez, *Historia de la guerra de los diez años*, 95; letter to the Gobernador Superior Político de la Isla de Cuba from A. M. de Zea, dated July 1, 1869, in IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5748, Carpeta 26, pp. 1-4.

<sup>11</sup> Ponte Domínguez, *Historia de la guerra de los diez años*, 96; Portell Vilá, *Historia de Cuba*, 2: 298.

<sup>12</sup> "Relación nominal de los siete individuos presos en Jagua y que tripulaban el vapor apresado 'Salvador,'" signed by Teniente Coronel Comandante Gefé [sic] de Estado Mayor Luis Castellói, dated September 21, 1870, in IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5749, Carpeta 10, p. 12; letter to the "Brigadier Comandante General de operaciones" from Ramón Franch, dated September 21, 1870, in IHCM, Archivo, Caja 5749, Carpeta 10, pp. 14-19.

<sup>13</sup> Bradford, *The Virginus Affair*, 39-40, 47, 53-54; Pirala, *Anales de la guerra de Cuba*, 2: 677-678, 692; "List of 155 people captured on board the American Steamer 'Virginus' by the Spanish Steamer 'Tornado' brought to the port of Santiago de Cuba, and turned over to the Authorities," signed by A. N. Young, dated December 18, 1873, in USNA, "Despatches [sic] from United States Consuls in Santiago de Cuba, 1799-1906," Microcopy no. T-55, Roll 7, Vol. 7.



## Appendix D

### Translation of the Pact of Zanjón<sup>1</sup>

*Gathered in an assembly the people and the armed forces of the Central department and several associations belonging to the other departments, as the only suitable measure of putting an end to the pending negotiations in one or another sense and taking into account the list of proposals authorized by the General-in-Chief of the Spanish Army; for their part they resolved to modify those proposals presenting the following articles of capitulation:*

Art. 1: Concession to the Island of Cuba the same political, organic and administrative conditions that the Island of Puerto Rico enjoys.

[Art.] 2: Forgetting of the past with respect to the political crimes committed since 1868 until the present and liberty of those prosecuted or who find themselves serving a sentence inside or outside of the Island. General pardon to the deserters of the Spanish Army, without distinction of nationality, making extensive this clause to those who had taken a direct or indirect part in the revolutionary movement.

[Art.] 3: Liberty to the Asian Indentured Workers and slaves who are found today in the insurrectionist ranks.

[Art.] 4: No one who in virtue of this capitulation recognizes and remains under the action of the Spanish Government shall be compelled to lend any service of war while peace is not established in all the territory.

[Art.] 5: All individuals who in virtue of this capitulation desire to leave the Island, is authorized and the Spanish Government shall furnish the means of doing so without it affecting the populace, if that is how it is desired.

[Art.] 6: The Capitulation of each force shall be made in an uninhabited place where they shall deposit beforehand arms and other elements of war.

[Art.] 7: In order to facilitate the means by which the other departments can be reconciled, the General-in-Chief of the Spanish Army shall cross all sea and land routes of which can be made use.

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<sup>1</sup> The copy of the Pact of Zanjón used in this translation is located in Gómez, *El Convenio del Zanjón*, 16.

[Art.] 8: The pact of the Central Committee shall be considered as general and without any particular restrictions by all the departments of the Island which accept these conditions. Encampment of San Agustín[,] February 10, 1878. – *E. L. Luaces*. – *Rafael Rodríguez, Secretary*.

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